How to take upper body measurements

You can take all measurements by yourself but you might find it easier to get someone to help you. Always measure over underwear, not over bulky clothes, and make sure you don’t pull the tape measure too tight.

1. **Bust:** Measure around the fullest part of the bust, the tape measure must be straight across the back.
2. **Waist:** Bend to either side to find the natural crease of your waist and tie a piece of elastic. Leave it in place because this will help when taking other measurements. Measure over the top of the elastic.
3. **Hips:** Measure around the fullest part of your hips, keeping the tape the same distance from the waist all the way around (usually between 18cm – 23cm below the waist).
4. **Neck size:** Measure around the base of the neck.
5. **Front shoulder to waist:** Measure from the shoulder seam, starting close to the neck and measuring down to the waist, over the bust to the waist.
6. **Sleeve length:** Measure from the shoulder cap, along the outside of a slightly bent arm to the wrist.
7. **Shoulder:** Measure from the base of the neck to the tip of the shoulder cap.
8. **Back width:** Measure across the peaks of the shoulder blades between the inner edges of the upper arm.
9. **Nape to waist:** Bend your head forward to find the most prominent bone in the back of your neck and measure from here down the spine to the back waist.

Making measurement chart

(Adapted from ‘Metric Pattern Cutting for Women’s Wear’ by Winifred Aldrich, 5th edition, John Wiley & Sons, 2008)

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<th>Size</th>
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<th>16</th>
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<td>41</td>
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(All measurements are in cms)

Other useful guides to measuring

www.threadsmagazine.com/item/4610/how-to-measure-up
www.simplicity.com/t-sewing-how-to-take-body-measurements.aspx
How to take upper body measurements

Diagram showing measurements:
- 1: Shoulder to shoulder
- 2: Bust to bust
- 3: Waist
- 4: Neck to shoulder
- 5: Shoulder to waist
- 6: Arm length
- 7: Back height
- 8: Back waist to neck
- 9: Arm length

Suzanne Rowland 06/02/2011
Grading a tunic pattern up or down

Grading or re-sizing is a tricky business – it would be great if we could just add a couple of centimetres all the way around a pattern to make it into the next size up. Unfortunately it’s not that easy because some parts of the pattern stay the same for all sizes while other parts increase. To grade a tunic pattern by one size, follow the diagram and refer to the size chart.

For example, if the tunic pattern is a size 10 and you are a size 12, grade up once. For a size 14 double the grading measurement, a size 16 x 3, size 18 x 4 and so on. For a size 8 just do the same in reverse, so grade down once.

You need to be as accurate as possible when adding or taking away measurements, a small slip could result in a very odd shape.

To grade up one size

**SLEEVE**
- A: Measure out 6.5mm, away from the sleeve
- B: Measure out 8.5mm, away from the sleeve
- C: At the back notch, measure 2mm away from the sleeve and 2.5mm up
- D: At the front notch, measure 1mm across and 3.5mm up
- E: At the very top of the sleeve measure up 4.5mm
- F: Measure 8mm out, away from the sleeve
- G: Measure 9.5mm out, away from the sleeve

Join all points keeping your lines curved at the top of the sleeve
(Add sleeve length by adding the extra measurement to the bottom of the sleeve)

**BACK**
- A: Measure up 5mm
- B: Measure up 5mm, then 2.5mm across, measuring away from the neck
- C: Measure 4mm up and then 4.5mm across, measuring away from the armhole
- D: Measure 2mm across and 6mm up
- E: Measure 10mm across, away from the side seam

Join all points keeping your lines curved at the armhole and neck

**FRONT**

We have left the front neck and split the same for all sizes
- A: Measure up 5mm and 2.5mm across, away from the neck
- B: Measure up 5.5mm and 10mm across, away from the armhole
- C: Measure 1mm across, away from the armhole, and 10mm up
- D: Measure 15mm across, away from the side seam

Join all points keeping your lines curved at the armhole and neck

**FACINGS**

To make new facings – use the old pattern pieces and grade using the same method.