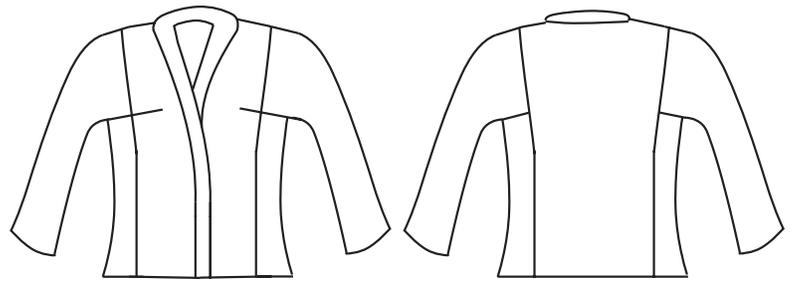


Guidelines for

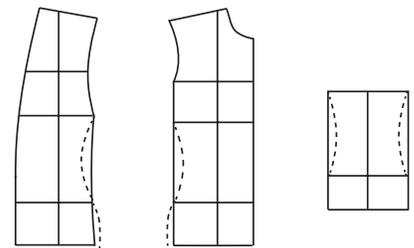
a Trimmer Fitting Tabula Rasa Jacket



Do you want a more fitted looking Tabula Rasa Jacket? Here we outline two methods for making a less boxy version of the Tabula Rasa Jacket. The fitted jacket will have curvier lines, so it is not well suited to heavy or extensively pieced fabric but will work well with any fabric that will not be distorted by adding darts or curved seams.

Method 1: TAKE IN SIDE SEAMS

Put your mock-up on and, with the help of a friend if possible, pin in at the waist along all four side seams where the side panel joins the front and back. If you do not have a friend to help, pin out some fabric at the waist yourself, then put the mock-up on to check your work in front of a mirror. Sew along the pinned lines with a basting stitch, press gently and then try on the mock-up to be sure you are satisfied with the result.

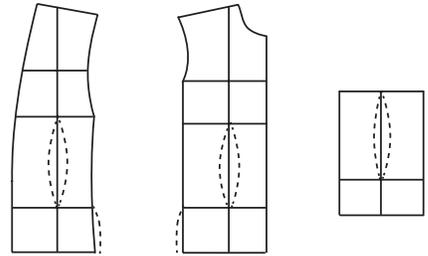


When making these alterations, be mindful to keep the grainlines perpendicular to the floor so your jacket will hang properly and still overlap at the front band. If the grainlines are skewed, you may need to take less out of each seam, or add a little extra into the side seams at the hip (below the lower HBL). Remember that you are taking out twice the depth of your adjustment at each seam and that you are making the change at four seams, so the curve does not need to be very deep. For example, if your deepest point of the curve is $\frac{1}{4}$ " in from the current seam, you will be taking $\frac{1}{2}$ " out of each seam times four, adding up to a total of 2" reduction in ease at the waist.

Once you are satisfied with the fit in your mock-up, transfer the alterations to your paper pattern. Consider tracing a new pattern off of your adjusted jacket pattern then make these alterations on the new copy; that way you will have both versions for future jackets! Generally, the reduction should fall between the middle and lower horizontal balance lines. Use a fashion ruler or similar tool, if you have one, to form a smooth and gradual arched line on your paper pattern. The deepest point of the curve should land at your waist then gradually ease back out to zero around the middle and lower HBLs. If you need to add a bit of ease into the hip area to keep the grainlines straight and front bands meeting or overlapping at center front, tape a strip of paper to each pattern piece along the side seam starting slightly above the lower HBL. Use your fashion ruler to draw a slight and gradual curve outside the current cutting line from the lower HBL to the hem line.

Method 2: ADD CONTOUR DARTS TO FRONT, BACK OR SIDES

An alternate approach is to insert long contour darts in the back, the front and/or the side panels. These darts typically originate one to two inches below the bust point in front or below the broadest area of the back. The dart gets wider as it moves toward the natural waist and then eases back to zero above the hip line. You can use the middle and lower horizontal balance lines and the grainlines as a guide to placement of front and back darts. Darts in the side



panel can be placed along the grainline or evenly spaced to either side of the grainline. Check the darts for depth and position by basting them into the mock-up; press lightly and try the mock-up on. As in Method 1, be mindful that narrowing the waist to achieve a very fitted look often results in the need to release the side seams at the hip in order to keep the grainlines perpendicular to the floor and to allow the front bands to hang straight and overlap.

Once you are pleased with the size and placement of your darts, transfer them to the pattern paper. Again, you may find a fashion ruler or similar tool helpful for drawing smooth gradual curves. Place several pairs of dots along the length of the dart and a single dot at each end to aid you in matching up the sides of the darts when stitching them. If you need to add ease into the hip area to keep the grainlines straight and the front bands meeting or overlapping at center front, tape an additional strip of paper to each pattern piece along the side seam and below the middle HBL. Use your fashion ruler to draw a slight and gradual curve outside the current cutting line from the lower HBL to the hem line.

There are several alternatives to a contour dart that can be used to trim a jacket but give different decorative effects.

- For a contemporary, artful look, sew the darts on the outside and topstitch them decoratively after pressing them in the desired direction.
- For softer fabrics, make tucks at the waist rather than complete darts. A tuck is a stitched out section that leaves a loose pleat above and below the tuck. Try grouping the waistline tucks at the center back and under the bust in front.
- For crisp fabrics, very narrow pintucks about 2" to 3" long can be evenly spaced around the jacket at the waistline to create a cinched-in fit.
- See a general sewing reference book for more information about sewing tucks into a garment. Our website, www.FitforArtPatterns.com, includes a list of helpful sewing resources under the link *Helpful Hints*.