

DART

A dart is basically a tuck in the fabric that is sewn. It is used to define the shape of a garment making a two dimensional piece of fabric into a three-dimensional garment. Darts are usually seen where the body curves: bust, waist, and hip.

Darts are straight stitch lines that connect areas of fabric that must fit properly to the body. For example, darts may take in bulk in the centre back of a woman's fitted shirt. They may be placed at back shoulders to allow the shirt to be looser at the shoulder blades, but taper in up at the shoulder seam. They can also be placed on the sides or under the bust line. The top of a skirt often has darts to allow the skirt to be full at the hips, but taper in at the waist.

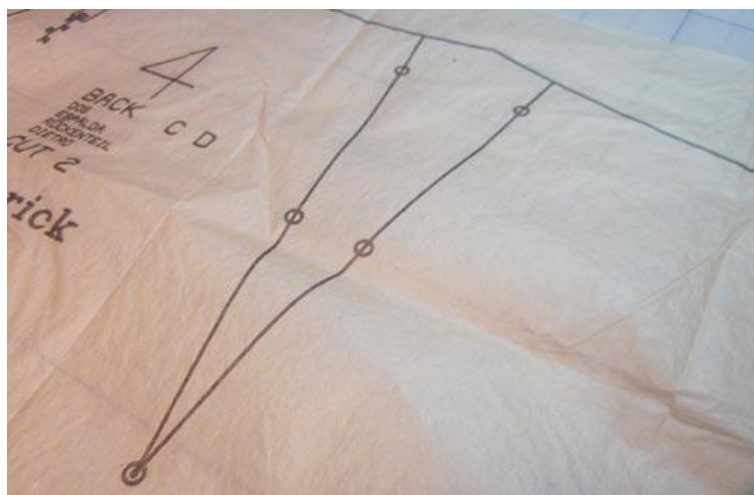
A dart starts and stops without creating any puckers in the fabric. So basically, the dart lies flat on the fabric. When sewing a dart, careful tapering from the largest part of the dart, to the end of the dart, is important. If the dart ends abruptly, it will get puckering. A dart is made by folding the fabric, and then sewing from one end of the dart to the other end of the dart.

Types Of Darts

The following are the basic types of darts:

Waist Darts

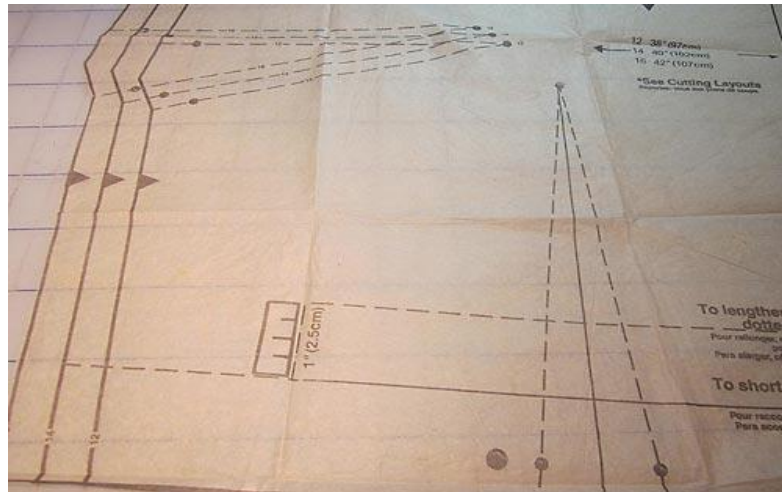
These bring in the shape of the garment from the waist to the hip. Below picture is for a pant pattern with waist darts.



Bust Darts

These start under the arm at the side seam and point toward the fullest part of the bust. Sometimes, on over fitted garments, these are used in conjunction with another set of bust

darts that go from the waist to just underneath the bust. Below picture is for a dress with two sets of bust darts.



French Darts

The French darts are used in place of bust darts. It's one long dart, beginning at the bust and curving down to the side seam. Since these are so long and/or so wide, usually a portion of the fabric is cut away, to reduce bulk.

Elbow Darts

Darts created at the elbow are usually seen in elaborated styles sleeves or fitted sleeves made of two pieces. Sometimes, when the sleeves need to be very fitted but the elbow still needs room to move. There, one, two or three small darts are sewn from the sleeves underarm seam to the elbow point.

Dart Tucks

Contrary to all the other types of darts, these are not sewn in the shape of a point. Instead they are sewn straight for a set length. They are really only used along with the waist line.

Contour Darts

These darts are shaped as a diamond. These are normally seen on longer garment styles like a tunic, jacket or dress. They can be sewn on the front and/or the back. Since they are diamond shaped, they add shape to the bust, waist and hips all at once. Below pictures shows the back of a jacket where contour darts are used to add shape at the waist back.



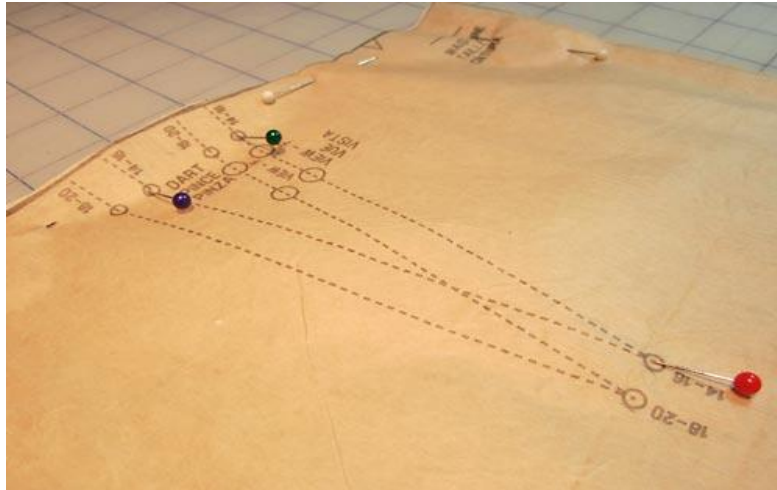
Ways To Make A Dart

Darts are made in a mirror image to one another; matching darts on the left and right side of the garment or identical darts on the front and the back. If the mirrored darts are not sewn precisely, these will be noticed on the finished garment. The best way to end up with successfully sewn darts is to start with careful marking. Mark the pattern pieces on the wrong side of the fabric after these are cut out.

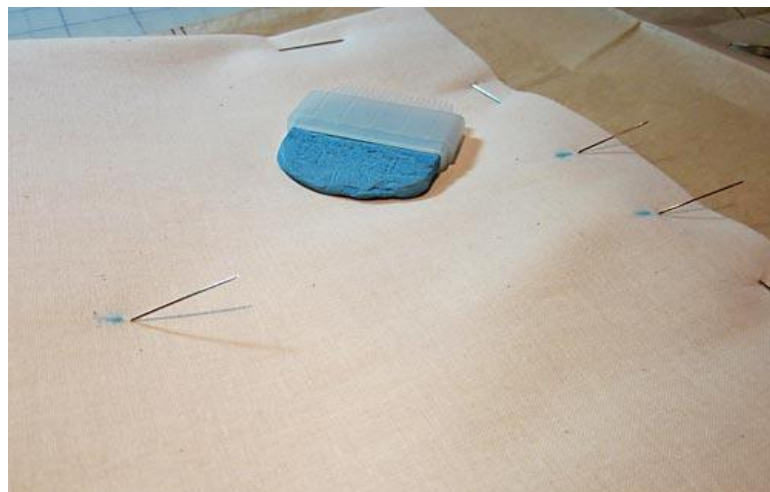
The majority of the time the pattern pieces are cut with the fabric right sides together. This means that the darts are marked on both pieces (right and left). But one of the pieces that need to be marked is under the pattern piece, and can't be moved because we need to know where to mark the dart. And, the other piece is underneath the first piece and the fabric can't be moved too much to mark that one because it could easily skew the dart position.

Therefore, the below is step by step process of cutting darts:

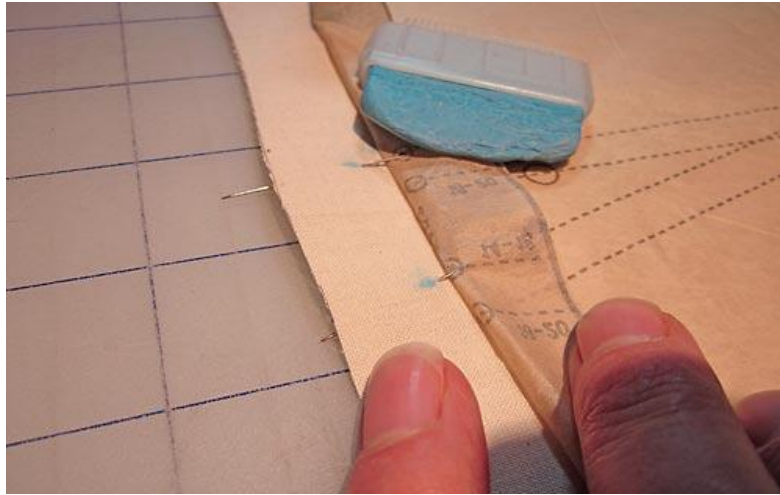
- With the fabric right sides together and the pattern firmly pinned in place, cut the dart
- Place pins in the indicated dart points on the pattern. This keeps from having the pattern pieces too much. Sometimes, small snips can be made with a scissor in the fabric at the top of each side of the dart



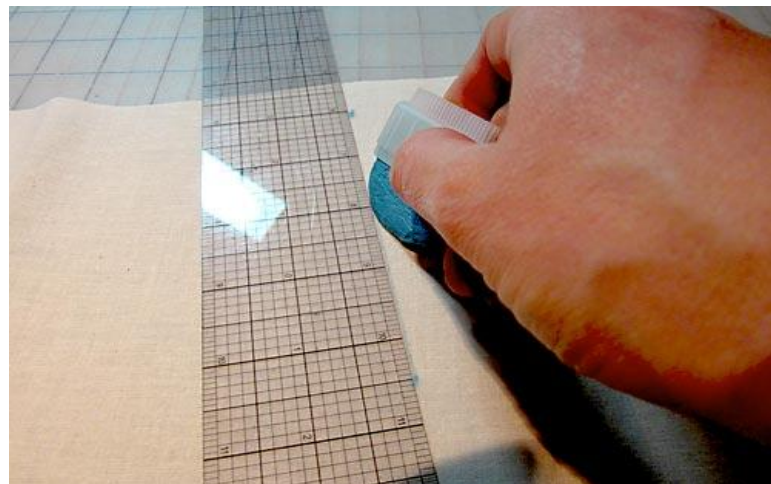
- Gently fold over the piece onto itself, with the pattern still pinned in place. Fold to just beyond the end to the dart, exposing the underside with the pins sticking through
- With the fabric marking tool (preferably a tailor's chalk), make a small mark where each pin comes through underneath



- Gently unfold the pattern piece back to place
- Remove the pins holding the paper pattern in place on either side of the top of the dart
- Pull back the paper pattern gently to expose the pins on the top piece. Mark the dark points



- Remove the pins at the top of the dart and any additional pins on the pattern piece to expose the bottom point of the dart. Mark this bottom point where the dart ends
- When these three points are in place, completely remove the paper pattern piece. Each of the points marked for each dart will be there
- Using a ruler and the fabric marking tool, connect the dots on the either side of the dart



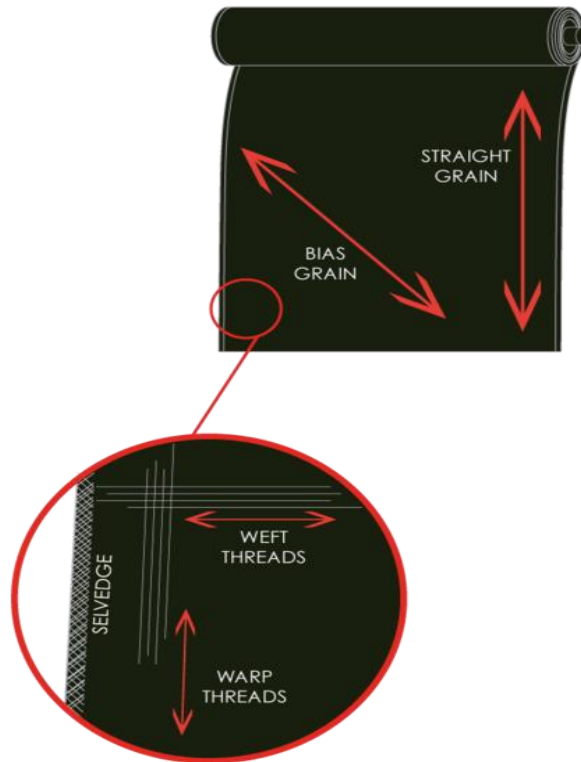


GRAIN LINE

Grain lines are generally unnoticed aspect of the garment that is until they are either used in the incorrect way and thus cause fit problem, or used in interesting ways to mould the fabric in different ways to the body. Sometimes, the grain lines can also be used to turn a print onto a different angle for interesting visual effect.

For the fashion designers and pattern makers, the grain lines is the way the pattern is cut out when it is laid out on a piece of fabric, Basically, fabric is weaved from thread going in two different directions (warp and weft) and it is sometimes easier to remember that fabric is built on tiny squares of threads which criss-cross each other.

The warp thread runs up and down while the weft thread runs right to left. These threads are important to grain lines because they each react in different ways. The warp thread is generally stronger than the weft thread and thus is least likely to stretch out of shape. A good example is a straight front placket of a shirt. The wearer won't want it to go out of shape so if we align it with the stringers threads then it will hold its shape better.



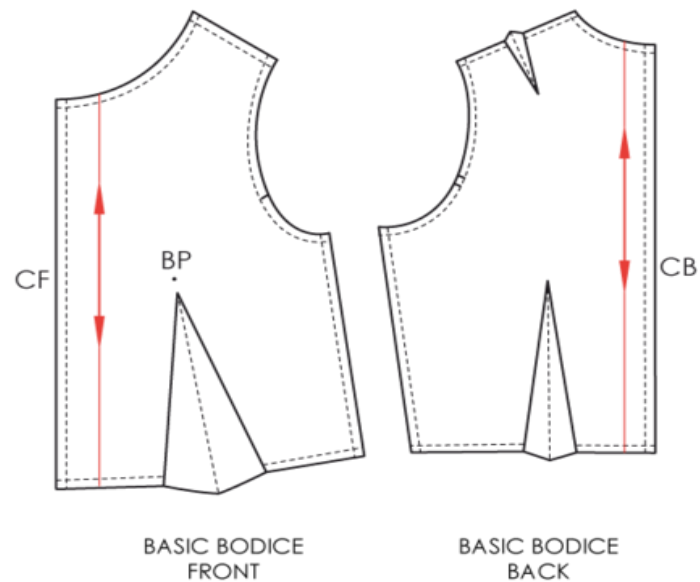
The straight grain is the grain used mainly in garments. The straight grain generally runs up centre front and centre back of garments and up through the centre of sleeves and pant legs. When the garment is cut slightly off grain, this may cause sleeves or pant legs to twist around the body. This problem is often seen in cheap t-shirts because the fabric weave does not hold a solid grid pattern, thus making the fabric hard to cut correctly and causing the garment to be made up out of pieces which are off grain.

On areas which hold tension, such as waistbands, it's always the best for the strongest thread to run around the body so the best way is to cut the waistband patterns following the straight grain i.e. parallel to the selvedge. The selvedge is the band of more tightly weaved fabric that runs up either side of the fabric meterage. If the fabric is being weaved on a loom then these are the edges where the thread turns back on itself to begin weaving the next row.

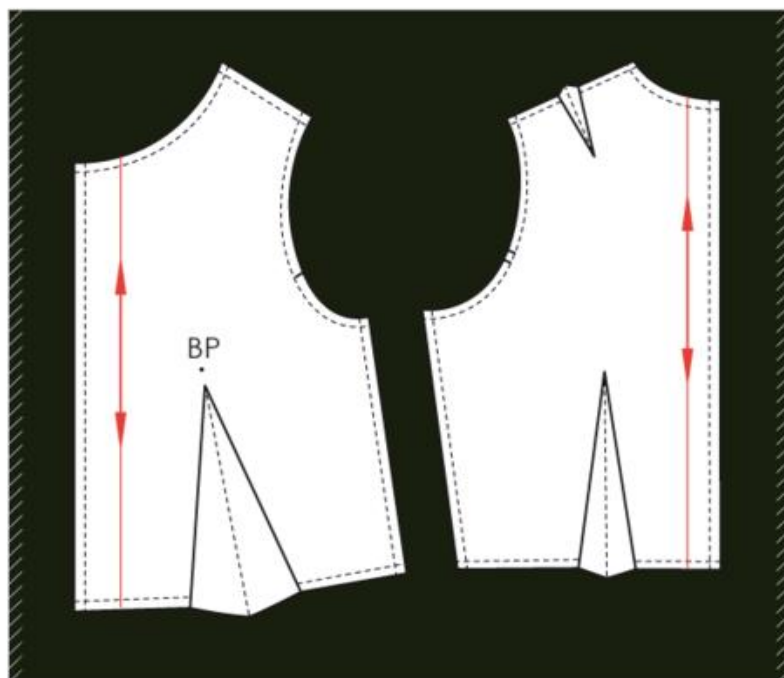
In contrast to the straight grain, there are some design garments in which the designer use the grain at 45 degrees angle, this is called Bias Cut. This means that of that tiny weave of fabric we are going diagonally across the squares and thus making the fabric much more unstable. But while unstable sounds negative, it can sometimes be what makes the garment different from the ones made out of straight grain. The Bias cut creates the ideal flexibility which makes the fabric to mould better to the body and will probably allow for less darts.

The designer also needs to be careful about how the different grain lines affect each other when they meet at the seams as sometimes seams can stretch when cut at a strange angle or on different grains to each other and this can cause puckering.

On patterns, the grain line is usually marked with a line with arrows on it.



When cutting out, the pattern will be laid with the grain line parallel to the selvedge.



HEM LINE

Generally, the hemline is the line formed by the lower edge of a garment, such as a skirt, dress or coat, measured from the floor. The hemline is perhaps the most variable style line in fashion, changing shape and ranging in height from hip-high to floor-length.

In pattern making terms, the hemline is a solid line near the lower edge (often 3" above the cutting line) and it indicates where to fold the hem so the garment is the length indicated on the pattern envelope. The hemline is not always drawn in, but the depth may be written along the lower edge cutting line.

