

how to make sewing patterns by donald h mccunn

How to make sewing patterns by Donald H McCunn is a timeless resource for both novice and experienced sewers looking to enhance their skills in creating custom patterns. Donald H. McCunn, a renowned figure in the sewing community, has dedicated his work to demystifying the process of pattern making. His insightful techniques and straightforward methods empower individuals to create beautiful garments that fit perfectly. In this article, we will delve into McCunn's approach, exploring the fundamental principles of pattern making, the tools required, and step-by-step guidance to help you create your own sewing patterns.

Understanding the Basics of Sewing Patterns

Before diving into the specifics of how to make sewing patterns, it's essential to grasp the basics of what sewing patterns are and why they are necessary. Sewing patterns serve as templates for cutting fabric pieces, ensuring that your final garment fits well and looks professional.

The Importance of Custom Sewing Patterns

Creating custom sewing patterns allows you to:

- Achieve a perfect fit tailored to your body shape.
- Express creativity by designing unique garments.
- Save money by making your clothes instead of purchasing them.
- Gain a deeper understanding of garment construction.

Essential Tools for Pattern Making

To get started on making your sewing patterns, you will need a few essential tools. Having the right tools can make the process smoother and more enjoyable.

Basic Tools Required

Here's a list of essential tools you should gather:

1. **Pattern Paper:** Use large sheets of pattern paper or brown kraft paper for your designs.
2. **Ruler:** A clear ruler, preferably a French curve or hip curve, will help you draw smooth lines.
3. **Measuring Tape:** Accurate measurements are crucial, so invest in a good-quality measuring tape.
4. **Pencil and Eraser:** A pencil for marking your designs and an eraser for making corrections.
5. **Scissors:** Use dedicated fabric scissors to ensure clean cuts.
6. **Weights or Pins:** These will help keep your pattern pieces in place as you trace and cut.

Steps to Make Sewing Patterns by Donald H McCunn

Now that you have your tools ready, let's explore the step-by-step process of creating sewing patterns based on Donald H. McCunn's methods.

Step 1: Taking Accurate Measurements

The first step in creating a custom sewing pattern is to take accurate measurements of the individual who will wear the garment. Here are the key measurements you need:

- **Chest/Bust:** Measure around the fullest part.
- **Waist:** Measure around the narrowest part.
- **Hip:** Measure around the fullest part of the hips.
- **Shoulder Width:** Measure from shoulder tip to shoulder tip.
- **Arm Length:** Measure from the shoulder to the wrist.
- **Garment Length:** Measure from the shoulder down to the desired length of

the garment.

Step 2: Creating a Basic Block

A basic block is the foundation for any sewing pattern. McCunn emphasizes the importance of creating a well-fitted block that can be modified for different designs.

1. Draw a Rectangle: Use your measurements to create a rectangle on your pattern paper. The width will be your bust or hip measurement divided by four, and the length will be the garment length.
2. Add Ease: Incorporate ease into your block—generally 2-4 inches depending on the style and fit desired.
3. Mark Key Points: Identify and mark the bust, waist, and hip lines, as well as the shoulder and neckline.

Step 3: Drafting the Pattern

Once you have your block, it's time to draft your pattern.

1. Neckline and Armholes: Use your ruler and French curve to create a neckline shape and armholes.
2. Side Seams: Connect the bust, waist, and hip lines with smooth curves to create the side seams.
3. Hemline: Draw the hemline at your desired garment length.
4. Seam Allowance: Add seam allowances (typically 1/4 to 1/2 inch) around the entire pattern.

Step 4: Cutting the Pattern

With your pattern drafted, it's time to cut it out.

1. Pin or Weigh Down the Pattern: Secure the pattern to prevent shifting while cutting.
2. Cut Carefully: Use sharp scissors to cut along the outer lines, ensuring clean edges.

Step 5: Adding Notches and Markings

Adding notches and markings to your pattern helps with garment assembly.

1. Notches: Cut small notches at key points, such as the bust, waist, and

hips.

2. Marking: Use symbols or labels to indicate grain lines, darts, and stitch lines.

Finalizing Your Pattern

After creating your pattern, it's essential to finalize it for use.

Testing the Pattern

Before cutting your fabric, consider making a muslin (a test garment) to check the fit. This allows you to make any necessary adjustments before using your final fabric.

Adjustments and Alterations

If your muslin doesn't fit perfectly, make the necessary adjustments:

- Take in or let out seams.
- Adjust the neckline or armhole shape.
- Lengthen or shorten the garment as needed.

Conclusion

How to make sewing patterns by Donald H McCunn provides a comprehensive guide to mastering the art of pattern making. With the right tools, accurate measurements, and a solid understanding of the drafting process, you can create custom patterns that fit beautifully and reflect your personal style. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced sewer, McCunn's techniques will equip you with the skills to bring your creative visions to life. So gather your materials, follow these steps, and start designing your next favorite garment!

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the primary focus of 'How to Make Sewing Patterns' by Donald H. McCunn?

The book primarily focuses on teaching readers how to create their own sewing patterns from scratch, including techniques for drafting and adapting patterns to fit individual measurements.

Who is the target audience for Donald H. McCunn's book on sewing patterns?

The target audience includes both beginners and experienced sewists who wish to learn the art of pattern making and improve their sewing skills.

What tools does McCunn recommend for making sewing patterns?

McCunn recommends tools such as a ruler, measuring tape, French curve, scissors, and pattern paper for drafting sewing patterns.

Does the book cover fitting techniques for sewing patterns?

Yes, the book includes sections on fitting techniques, helping readers understand how to adjust patterns to achieve the best fit for their body shapes.

Are there any illustrations or diagrams in 'How to Make Sewing Patterns'?

Yes, the book is filled with illustrations and diagrams that visually guide readers through the pattern-making process.

Can beginners successfully use this book?

Absolutely, the book is designed to be accessible for beginners, with clear instructions and step-by-step guidance.

What types of patterns can you create using McCunn's methods?

Using McCunn's methods, you can create a variety of patterns including garments such as dresses, shirts, and pants, as well as accessories.

Does McCunn discuss the importance of fabric choice

in pattern making?

Yes, the book includes discussions on how fabric choice can affect the fit and drape of the final garment, which is crucial for successful sewing.

Is 'How to Make Sewing Patterns' suitable for those interested in fashion design?

Yes, the book is suitable for aspiring fashion designers as it provides foundational skills in pattern making that are essential for creating clothing.

What is a key takeaway from Donald H. McCunn's approach to pattern making?

A key takeaway is the empowerment of sewists to create custom patterns that fit their unique bodies and styles, fostering creativity and individuality in sewing.

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