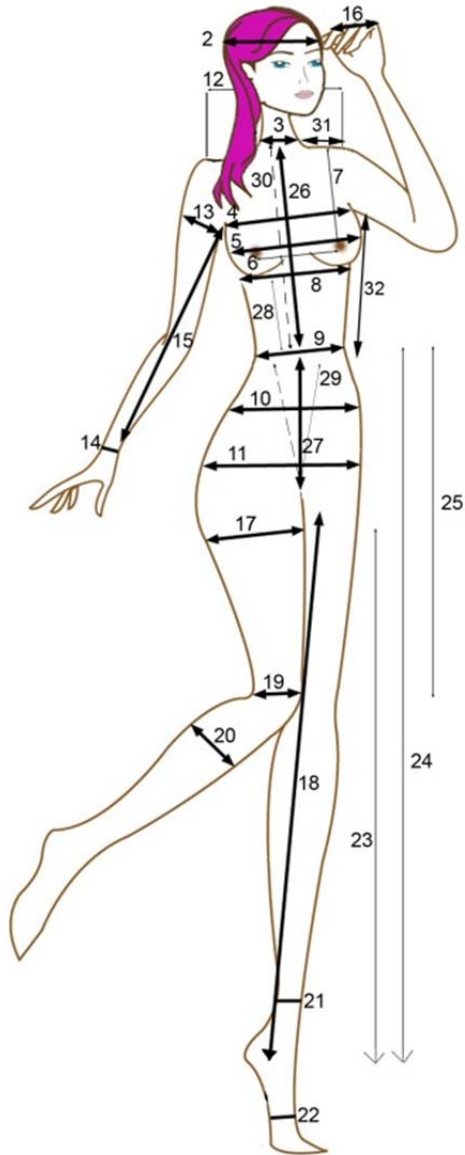


Measuring Guide

Ladies Clothing & Shoes

How To Get The Right Fit Every Time...



How to Take Women's Measurements



Every woman should know her bust, waist, and hip measurements, along with her bra size. Other measurements, including inseam, shoulder width, and sleeve length, are used less often. Women interested in looking at high-end formal clothes, custom clothes, or tailor-fit clothes should keep even these rarely used measurements on hand, however.

Steps

Bust

This is the first of your basic measurements, and is useful when buying any top, jacket, or dress.



1. **Stand with your back straight in front of a full-length mirror.**
2. **Wrap a soft tape measure around your back, across your shoulder blades and under your arms.** The tape should be straight and parallel with the floor. It must also wrap around the fullest part of your bust.
3. **Place your thumb beneath the tape measure and keep yourself from pulling too tight.**
4. **Bring the ends together in the center front.**
5. **Look at this number in the mirror.** If you cannot distinguish it, carefully bend your head down while keeping your back straight to get a closer look.
6. **Use a pencil and paper to mark the measurement down.**

Waist

This is the second of your basic measurements, and is used for nearly every item of clothing you purchase—including tops, bottoms, and dresses.



1. **Strip down to your underwear and stand in front of a full-length mirror.**
2. **While standing straight, bend over to the front or side and make a note of where your body creases.** This is your natural waist. It should be the narrowest part of your waist, and it is generally located between your rib cage and belly button.
3. **Return to an upright position.**
4. **Wrap the tape measure around your natural waist, keeping it parallel to the floor.**
5. **Do not hold your breath or suck your stomach in.**
6. **Stick your thumb beneath the tape measure to prevent yourself from drawing it too tight.**
7. **Bring the tape measure together in the center front of your body.**
8. **Look at the number in the mirror or carefully look down at it while keeping your back straight.**
9. **Mark the number down on paper.**

Hips

This is your final basic measurement, and is useful when shopping for any pant, skirt, short, or dress.



1. **Stand in front of a full-length mirror with your back straight and your heels together.**
2. **Wrap a tape measure around the fullest part of your hips and buttocks, usually located 7 to 9 inches below your natural waist.** Keep the tape measure parallel to the floor.
3. **Stick your thumb beneath the tape measure to prevent yourself from drawing it too tightly.**
4. **Bring the tape measure together in the center front.**

5. **Look at the number in the mirror and bend your head down while keeping your feet together and your legs straight.**
6. **Mark the measurement down on paper.**

Bra Size

You need this number when shopping for bras, swimwear, lingerie, and any garment with a built-in bra.

1. **Remove your shirt but leave your bra on.**
2. **Stand with your back straight in front of a full-length mirror.**
3. **Wrap a tape measure around your bra, directly under your bust.** Keep the tape parallel to the floor.
4. **Look at the number in the mirror, or bend your head down while keeping your back straight.**
5. **Add five, and round the sum up to the nearest even whole number.** This is your strap (*band*) size.
6. **Round up your bust size to the nearest whole number.**
7. **Subtract your band size from your rounded-up bust size.** For instance, if you have a 36 inch bust, and a 34 inch band size, that leaves you with a difference of two inches.
8. **Add approximately one cup size for every inch difference.** A difference of 1 leaves you with an A cup, while a difference of 2 equals a B cup, 3 equals a C cup, 4 equals a D cup, and so on.
9. **Mark down both your band and cup size on paper.**

Shoulder Width

This somewhat obscure measurement is most often used for custom tops, blazers and tailored dresses.

1. **Stand in front of a full-length mirror with your back straight and your shoulders relaxed.**
2. **Extend the tape measure from the outer edge of one shoulder to the outer edge of the other.** Keep the tape parallel to the floor.
3. **Look at the number in the mirror or carefully bend your head to look at it without changing your posture.**
4. **Mark the number down with pencil and paper.**

Rise

This measurement is typically used for certain types of formal trousers.

1. **Stand in front of a mirror with your back straight and your feet and legs slightly apart.**
2. **Hold the end of the tape measure at the center back of your natural waist.**
3. **Gently and loosely pull the tape between your legs and over your crotch, keeping the other end positioned at the center front of your natural waist.**
4. **Look at the measurement in the mirror or by cautiously bending your head down without changing your posture.**
5. **Mark the number down on paper.**

Inseam

This is another measurement used for dress slacks and other pants, and is especially helpful in determining the best length to search for.

1. **Enlist the help of a friend.**
2. **Ask your friend to use a tape measure to measure the length of your leg from your ankle up to the bottom of your crotch.** You should be standing with your leg straight while this is done.
3. **Select your best fitting pair of jeans to measure your inseam alone.**
4. **Extend the tape measure from the bottom hem straight up to the lowest point of the crotch area.**
5. **Round the number up to the nearest half-inch and mark it down on paper.**

Thigh

This somewhat obscure measurement is most often used for stockings and custom-made pants.

1. **Stand in front of a mirror with your legs slightly apart.**
2. **Wrap a tape measure around the thickest part of your thigh.** Keep it parallel to the floor and taut, but do not pull so tight that it digs into your flesh.
3. **Bring the ends together in the front of your thigh.**
4. **Read the number using the mirror or by looking down while keeping your leg and the tape measure still.**
5. **Mark the number down on paper.**

Sleeve Length

This measurement is used for certain types of formal, professional, and custom tops.

1. **Ask a friend for help.**
2. **Stand with your elbow bent at a 90-degree angle with your hand resting on your hip.**
3. **Instruct your friend to hold the tape measure at the center back of your neck.**
4. **Have your friend extend the tape measure to your outer shoulder, down over your elbow, and down to your wrist.** This should be one full measurement. Do not break it up into pieces.
5. **Mark the number down using pencil and paper.**

Upper Arm

Use this somewhat obscure measurement when looking at getting a custom or tailor-fit top or dress.

1. **Stand in front of a mirror with your arm extended outward.**
2. **Wrap a tape measure around the thickest part of your upper arm, starting and ending at the front.**
3. **Keep the tape measure somewhat taut, but do not let it dig into your skin.**
4. **Look at the measurement in the mirror or by turning your head without moving your arm or the tape measure.**
5. **Record the number on paper.**

Height

Measure your height. This is important to know for a variety of clothing.

1. **Stand barefoot or in socks with your feet flat on the ground.** Keep your feet slightly apart and your back against a wall.
2. **Ask a friend to measure from the back of your heels to the top of your head, keeping the tape measure straight and perpendicular to the floor.**
3. **If taking the measurement alone, hold a book or other stiff, flat object flat on the top of your head.**
4. **Use a pencil to mark the bottom edge of the book, where it meets the wall.**
5. **Step away from the wall.**
6. **Measure from the floor to the mark.**
7. **Record the number with the rest of your measurements.**

Dress Length

This is, as its name implies, a measurement used in dress shopping and tailoring.

1. **Ask a friend for help.**
2. **Stand with your back straight and your legs together in front of a full-length mirror.**
3. **Instruct your friend to hold the end of the tape measure at the top center of your shoulder.**
4. **Direct your friend to extend the tape measure along the front of your body, over the fullest part of your chest and down to your knees or your preferred, desired hemline.**
5. **Mark the number down on paper.**

Tips

- Measure yourself after a large meal, like lunch or dinner, to get measurements for comfortably fitting clothes.
- Take your measurement a few days after or before your menstrual period to account for water weight.
- Ask a professional tailor or seamstress to take precise measurements if you doubt the accuracy of your own.
- If you feel comfortable doing so, ask a department store lingerie department or a lingerie store if they will measure your bra size for you. Many women have difficulty finding this size on their own.

Things You'll Need

- Soft (cloth) tape measure
- Pencil
- Paper
- Full-length mirror
- Hardback book or flat object

Sources & Citations

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