

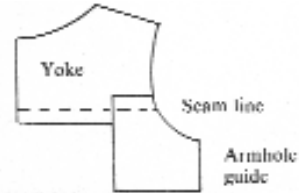
## A Guide to Measuring and Fitting

Excerpted from  
**The Busy Mother's Guide to Sewing Children's Clothes**  
 by Nancy Coburn

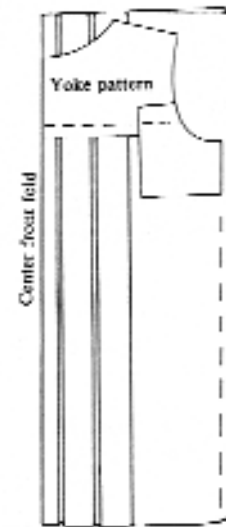
The child's measurements are right in front of you. You have sewn a size 4 in the past and it worked great, but the child has grown in the past few months. How do you know which pattern size to choose, especially when you choose a pattern from a different pattern company? Because of the wide size variations due to ease allowances among pattern companies, a size 4 dress may fit a child in a pattern marketed by one company, but another company's size 4 may be too small. What can you do to avoid a sewing disaster, especially where there is a wide variation in design ease among dress styles?

The easiest and safest thing to do is to find a basic yoke dress pattern that you like and buy it in all available sizes. This will assure you a uniform size graduation in basic yoke dresses. (The same is true for empire waist, dropped waist, etc., according to your preference.) Then, when you want to check the sizing of a different dress style, use the yoke and skirt armhole guide (i.e., the neck, shoulders, and armhole) of your favorite pattern as a gauge to check the pattern sizing of other patterns. This insures that you will be working with neck, shoulder, and armhole measurements that you are familiar with.

To check the sizing of another style dress pattern, **pin** your favorite yoke and armhole guide pattern pieces together at the seam line and **place** it on the new pattern, *matching* the center fronts and center backs. Using a washable marker, **draw** the neck, shoulder, and armhole cutting line from your favorite yoke pattern on to the fabric. I also substitute the sleeve and collar pattern pieces from my favorite pattern because I know how they fit.



When sewing a dress which has gathers or pleats involved in the neck or shoulder edge, I cut out the dress by roughly blocking it out around the neck and armhole edges or I complete the pleats on a rectangular piece of fabric the size of the pattern piece. After completing the gathered or pleated area, I **fold** the fabric at the center front or center back, **place** the pattern piece on it, matching the center points, and **cut** it out.



### Too close for comfort

When I am undecided about choosing a pattern size, especially when a size fits the child at the moment and I am anticipating a growth spurt, I make the following two adjustments:

(1) **Cut** the *armhole* 1/4" deeper at the side seam and taper just past the curved area of the armhole. This will give the child a little more ease of movement across the back.



(2) If my child is about to outgrow her present size pattern but does not quite fill out the shoulders of the next larger size pattern, I use the next larger size and make an adjustment in the shoulders, as shown below. This gives me the growth room of a deeper armhole and wider yoke without having the garment hang off the shoulders.



