

The Sewsmith

For immediate release
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What people are saying about Jacque ...

"You're a pillar of knowledge! Thanks for the great lessons and good times."
--Crystal C.

"Thank you for your snappy demos and wit."
--Emilia K.

"You are so professional and so nice! I learned a lot in your class. Thank you."
--Juliar C.

"Thank you for all you've taught me and for your energy and wicked sense of humor. I've so appreciated your fun little gimmicks and contests – it really did make a difference. You make learning fun."
-- Lucretia S.

"Thanks so much for everything – help, expertise, support and (most important) fashion advice! I have enjoyed your classes and learned a lot!"
-- Sharon R.

"You make sewing fun and fit easy. Thanks for sharing all your great tips and industry knowledge."
--Diane T.



*"Remember the three
"F's" of a great garment.
Fabric, fit and function."*

Jacque Goldsmith is The Sewsmith

Jacque's sewing philosophy is simple: Create home sewn garments with a ready-to-wear look. She is known for inspiring students to create fashionable garments that fit their individual personality, lifestyle and body shape. She has over 25 years of experience in the apparel industry and shares her knowledge with humility and humor. Jacque's love for sewing began as a child at her mother's side. Small projects of bean bags and doll clothes lead to more advanced sundresses and shorts. A limited clothing budget and a desire for an overflowing closet necessitated constructing complete wardrobes through high school. Her wardrobe received many compliments and home economics classes focused her selection of college major. She earned a degree in clothing and

textiles from Seattle Pacific University which included a year of studying merchandising and buying at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City

Jacque's professional career includes positions as alterations manager, tailor, buyer, designer and international product developer. She is uniquely qualified to construct a custom garment, develop thousands for the consumer market or alter a mass produced garment to individual fitting needs. In 2001, Jacque left the apparel industry to focus on educating the next generation of apparel designers and sewing hobbyists. She is a faculty member at Seattle Central Community College and Lake Washington Technical College. She teaches all

levels of apparel construction including Introduction to Apparel Construction, Mass Production Techniques, Tailoring, Alterations and Active Sportswear Construction. She shares her knowledge with sewing hobbyist at the LWTC Sewing Lab, a fully equipped lab that gives students the opportunity to work on garments of their choice with advice and encouragement from the instructor.

This year, in cooperation with Nancy's Sewing Basket and Bernina Northwest, Jacque developed ABC Sewing (Absolute Beginning Construction) to teach garment sewing skills to the growing number of fashion sewing enthusiasts. Jacque keeps her love for sewing alive with one eye on her sewing machine and the other on Seventh Avenue.

Confessions of a Sewing Instructor

My name is Jacque. I have a fitting problem.

As an apparel design instructor, I spend my days teaching students to make and fit clothing. I should have no problem fitting clothing for myself. But I do.

I am a middle-aged female. HWP as they say in the personal ads. My stats are height 5'4", weight 115 lbs. My BMI (Body Mass Index) is 19.7, which is in the slender range. According to the Metropolitan Insurance Height and Weight tables, I have a small frame.

So what is the problem? I should be able to go into any store and buy clothes I like, right? Unfortunately, the trip to the dressing room is downright depressing. Poochy, puckery and slouchy describes the fit of most garments in my size.

Given my experience in the dressing room, I can only conclude I have a problem. There is some thing wrong with me.

Of course I know it is not politically correct to say "fitting problem." The current vernacular is "fit variation," "fit exception" or "fit deviation."

But I like to use the word "problem" because it implies there is a solution. This gives me hope.

People often misunderstand the difference between size and fit. Proper size means the garment fits around the circumferences of your body. When you try on a garment, you can zip or button it up.

Proper fit means the grain lines are parallel and perpendicular to the floor as they flow over the angles and contours of your body without puckering or pulling.

It is more difficult to get the proper fit than it is to get the proper size.

Most clothing companies make styles using a sample size. The sample size is taken

from a mannequin specifically designed for this purpose. Mannequin makers conduct research to survey the current population, analyze body shapes and establish average body sizes.

However, I am not average and neither is 90 percent of the female population. So, I alter or sew my clothes so they fit my unique shape.

America has four major pattern companies: Vogue, Simplicity, McCalls and Butterick, each offering a range of styles. All four companies use mannequins similar to the ones clothing manufacturers use to determine fit.

There are also small, independent pattern companies that specialize in petites, plus size or mature figures, but I do not fall into any of those categories.

I have tried foreign pattern companies: Marfy from Italy, Mrs. Stylebook from Japan and Burda from Germany. As a pre-Mayflower American, my body type does not fall into the "average size" from Asia or Europe, much to my fitting frustration.

I still have hope that one day a pattern will fit my body. I buy patterns like some women buy face cream. Each time, I'm hoping this will be the one that fits and makes me look tall, lean and proportional.

Still finding it hard to believe my clothes don't fit? According to the clothing industry's fit bible written by Judith A. Rasband, "Fitting & Pattern Alterations - A Multi-Method Approach," I have the following variations: long neck, forward shoulder joint, prominent shoulder blades, long arms, prominent bust, long waist, high hips, sway back, forward pelvis, short thigh, large calf and high instep.

It may seem that your foot doesn't have anything to do with clothing but if you try to slide your foot into a pair of skinny jeans, you will understand.

The problem with having fit variations is that clothes pull, twist and pinch as you wear them. My forward shoulder joint causes shirts to pull across the sleeves. This is compounded by my prominent chest which pulls up from the bottom and bubbles at the armhole. Sometimes it feels like my shirt is on backwards or creeping up to my chin.

Long arms make all the sleeves too short which give flashbacks to childhood. I hate to feel like an adult in kid's clothes, especially when I've paid full price.

The waist is a major motion point on the body. With a long waist, my shirts and jackets cling to my rib cage. When I move, the shirt creeps up and I have to give it a tug to put it back in place. It may seem like a small thing, but think about how many times you move and bend in a day.

Tugging gets old after, say, four decades.

Pants are the hardest to fit and my problems emphasize the difficulties. Pants hang from the hip bones. A forward pelvis tilts the hip bones and naturally throws the grain line off. That makes the fabric bubble and pucker all the way down the leg.

Add the high hip to the mix and every hip curve is too low. A woman's body should be shapely and round at the hips. Mine is, just 2 inches higher than average.

That means pants and skirts curve out on the thigh and give me the look of an Oompa-Loompa from "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory."

If I wear unaltered clothing, I spend most of the day tugging and twisting my clothing into place. Not the most professional look for a fit specialist.

According to chiropractor Dr. Steve Polenz, about 50 percent of fit problems are genetic. The balance of these can be corrected with proper diet, muscular/skeletal adjustment and exercises. It seems like a big commitment just to get dressed in the morning.

Even with Dr. Polenz' services, I don't expect miraculous changes in my body. So, until it happens, I expect to fit, rip and sew, before I wear a new garment in public.

It's the price I pay for my position at the front of the classroom.

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