

CUTTING OUT THE JOB

1 PREPARING THE CLOTH

(1.1) The cloth should be laid out folded in half, with the right sides together and the selvedge running parallel to the edge of the table. To ensure the cloth isn't twisted or warped, match the letters woven into the selvedge on either side. If the cloth has a check or stripe, ensure they match on both sides. (1.2) Concertina the cloth up and take it to the pressing board. Using only the weight of the iron, lightly steam the cloth on one side and then the other, making sure the selvedge (and check or stripe) is still aligned. The heat and steam will reset any twisted yarn, helping the cloth to settle

back into its natural place. (1.3) This is a good time to look for damages or imperfections in the cloth. Many cloth suppliers will identify a damage before retailing the fabric. They are marked with a string tagged to the selvedge, directly in line with the damage. Extra cloth is given to allow for adjusting the lay and cutting around. If an unstrung damage is found, mark it clearly with chalk and avoid laying the pattern pieces over it when it is time to strike out (chalk around the pattern). (1.4) Lay the cloth back on the table as per step one and smooth it out ready to place the pattern pieces. •

2 THE TROUSER LAY

The lay refers to the order in which the pattern pieces are arranged on the cloth. This is particularly important because it allows the maker to minimise the amount of cloth needed for each garment. The tighter the pieces slot together, the less cloth required, the more money saved.

(2.1) The first consideration should be whether the cloth has a nap or not. This will dictate whether the pieces are laid in one direction (one-way cloth) or opposite directions (two-way cloth). If the cloth does have a nap, the fibres are long and brushed in one direction (corduroy and velvet) and the trousers must be cut one way. The colours can differ depending on what direction they are cut, given the way the light hits the nap. If the rough runs down the piece, the colour appears darker. If the smooth runs down the piece, the colour appears lighter. If the trouser legs are

cut in opposite directions, the shading created by the nap would make the trousers appear to be two different colours. Most cloths without a nap are fine to be cut two-way, but it is a good idea to check by looking down the piece of cloth from both directions and seeing if the colour changes. If there is a noticeable difference, it is best to presume the cloth is one-way. If there is no change, the cloth is two-way. (2.2) The second consideration should be the grainline. Always lay the pattern pieces with the grainline running parallel to the selvedge (warp). This is particularly

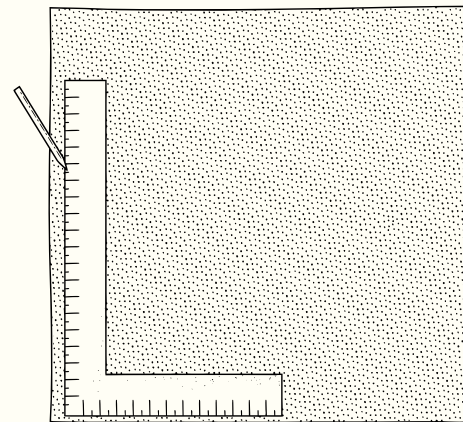


FIG. 1.1

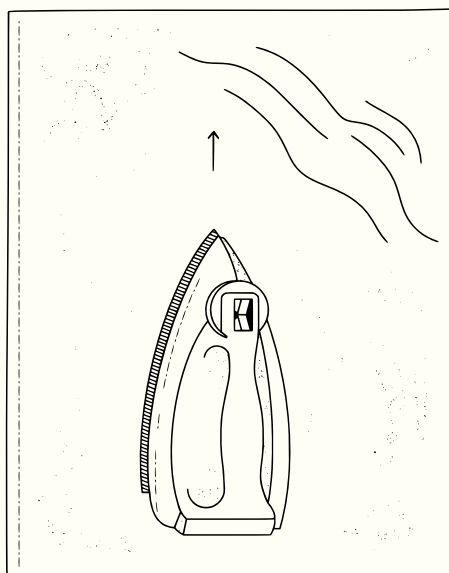


FIG. 1.3

important on stripes and checks, to ensure the trousers don't appear twisted on the wearer. (2.3) It is also important to consider the space around the pieces and ensure that there is sufficient room for the inlays and fit-up, before striking out. Inlays are the extra cloth added to the seams (not seam allowance) for letting out in the future. On the topside (front trouser

piece) they measure: $\frac{3}{4}$ " along the waistband seam, 3" at the hem flared out to turn under for plain bottoms and 6" for PTU (permanent turn up or cuff). On the underside (back trouser piece): 1" along the waistband seam, $2\frac{1}{4}$ " at the centre back to $\frac{3}{8}$ " around the curve and top of the fork, $1\frac{1}{2}$ " at the fork to 1" at the knee and hem through the inseam. 1" down the side seam

and 3" at the hem for plain bottoms, and 6" at the hem for PTU. The fit-up is the cloth left over after the main pattern pieces have been cut out. This cloth is used for making the extra pieces within the trousers, for example the waistband, fly, pocket facings, jets and side adjusters. It is important to keep as large pieces of extra fabric as possible. •

3

STRIKING OUT THE TROUSERS

Striking out is the act of chalking around the pattern pieces onto the fabric, and adding the inlays (extra allowance that is hidden inside the garment for future alterations).

(3.1) Ensuring the grainline of the pattern pieces run parallel to the selvedge, use weights to hold the pattern pieces in place. (3.2) Sharpen a piece of chalk using a chalk sharpener or, failing that, a sharp blade. (3.3) Chalk around the pattern pieces firmly, but not enough to drag or pucker the fabric. Think of the chalk as a speedboat. Push with the back edge, lifting the front as it gathers speed. (3.4) Extend the chalk marks out beyond the pattern to ensure the finish points are clearly defined. Mark the darts and notches clearly. (3.5) Remove the paper patterns from the cloth and chalk in the inlays and waistband. The waistband should measure $2\frac{1}{2}$ " wide by half the finished waist measure, plus 9". •

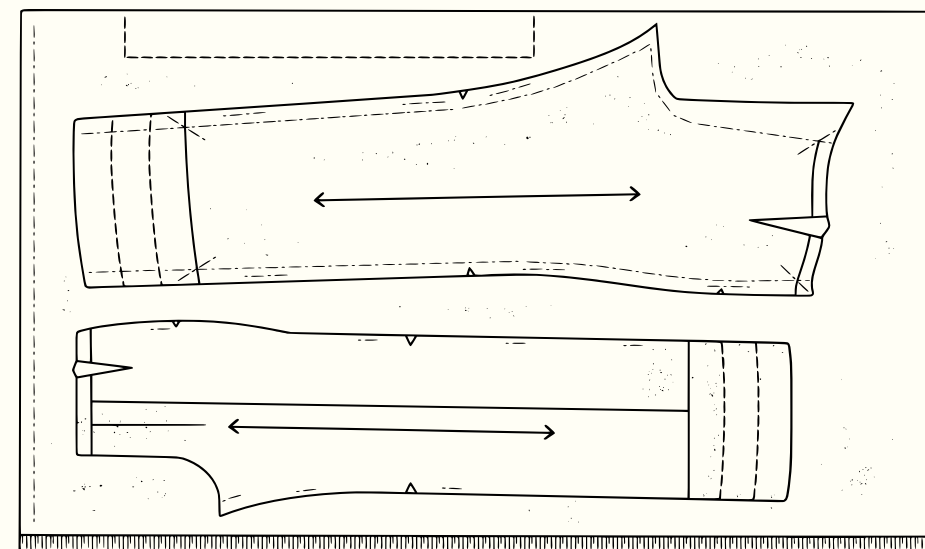


FIG. 2 & 3

4

CHOPPING OUT

Chopping out is the act of cutting the pieces out of the fabric. It is important here to be accurate, especially on the pieces that are cut net (without inlay).

(4.1) The bottom edge of most tailors' shears is flat on the blade and the bottom of the handle. As the cloth is cut, use the flat edge of the shears to keep contact with the board. This will help to maintain balance and control. (4.2) Let the cloth drape over each side of the blade and use the weight of the shears to guide the pressure. Use the

entire length of the blade, making long, confident cuts. (4.3) Think of the shears like a race car. Go fast down the straights and slowly around the corners. At this stage, accuracy is much more important than speed. (4.4) Start from the selvedge and cut out the topside first. Then cut out the underside. Cut neatly around the outer edge

of the chalk lines and avoid cutting across any large pieces of the remaining fabric, as these odd bits of leftover fabric will become on in the making process. (4.5) Roll the trouser pieces, fit-up and trimmings into a bundle and tie them up with an offcut of selvedge. •