

CLOSELY FITTED PANTS

This book is another sequel to my first book, *European Cut*. You need to have the first book to work on my third book.

One of my customers told me that she wanted to make a pair of pants that are closely fitted, but she did not want to make a pair of jeans. I did not plan to write a separate book about such pants, but I realized that I could write a spin-off of my second book, *Making a Jeans Pattern*. Many of the designing, drafting, and sewing steps are similar, and yet, the whole process is much less complex than making a pattern for jeans.

If you already have the *Making a Jeans Pattern* book, you will be very familiar with all the steps in the *Closely Fitted Pants* book. However, if you do not have the *Jeans* book, you can use the *Closely Fitted Pants* book as a stand-alone book. The instructions are clear and easy-to-follow.

Traditionally, pants that are closely fitted are sporty, made of some sturdy woven fabric, and with a little looser fit than jeans. These pants are the quintessential weekend pants. I would not call those pants the office-appropriate pants, but I know that young and shapely women will disagree with me.

Just like in *Making a Jeans Pattern*, you will start by tracing a copy of your *European Cut* pants sloper. That copy becomes your development pattern. From this copy you will develop your sewing pattern. You will plan your design and draft your pattern pieces into a complete sewing pattern, while following the necessary patternmaking procedures. Finally, you will sew your pants according to the list of specific sewing steps and pressing directions.

The design of these pants is classic and simple. The waistband will be straight, the darts stitched closed, and the legs narrowed. The in-seam side pockets and the zipper will be added only to the pant front. Like in my *Jeans* book, the right pant front will overlap the left pant front. However, unlike in my *Jeans* book, there will be a little bit of basic ease added to the waistband, waistline, hipline, and crotch height (see the Ease Chart on page 1).

The *Closely Fitted Pants* book has three illustrated chapters. The illustrations are grey and black. Both inches and centimeters are used throughout the book.

Chapter 1 – PLAN YOUR DESIGN

This short chapter consists mainly of calculating dimensions necessary for drafting. You will choose and write down the waistband, waistline, and hipline ease. You will also choose the shape of your pattern's legs: straight, tapered, or flared.

Your sloper's legs are very wide. You will have to narrow the legs, while at the same time add basic ease. This procedure requires measuring your legs at five levels: the upper thigh, mid-thigh, knee, calf, and instep. The same procedure is featured in the *Making a Jeans Pattern* book, but this time I used different calculating sheets. I used one page for each level of your legs, hoping to make the calculating of the pattern's legs widths as easy as possible.

Since there is a little ease added to the sides of the pants at the hiplines, you will have to move the grainlines a bit. This procedure, although minor, is important in drafting the legs of the pattern.

Chapter 2 – MAKE YOUR SEWING PATTERN

There is a specific set of steps to follow in the conversion of the pants sloper into a complete sewing pattern.

You will start by drafting a simple and straight waistband with basic ease built in. Next, you will add the crotch height ease by cutting and spreading the pattern at the hipline (not at the crotchline). Since you just “dropped” the crotchline, you will have to “raise” the kneeline by bringing it back to the original position. You will also have to shorten the hemline to about the ankle level. Next, you will shorten just a bit the back crotch curve, providing close fit under the seat.

Next, you will add side ease, initially only at the waistline and hipline. This procedure calls for moving the grainlines toward the outseams by one-half of one-quarter of the total ease just added to the hiplines (see the calculation on page 10). Now, it is time to mark the widths of the pattern’s legs, with the basic ease included, and then draft the chosen shape of your pants legs.

You will also draft the in-seam side pocket and the fly extensions for inserting the zipper. Both procedures are very easy to follow.

After drafting any additional pattern pieces, such as facings and interfacings, the pattern is ready for the finishing steps.

There are patternmaking procedures that are necessary for finishing any development pattern. Although occasionally some of the procedures can be skipped or combined, in most cases you will have to do the following:

- Balance the stitchlines and add markings on them, such as matchpoints and precision points.
- Label all pattern pieces.
- Add seam allowances.
- Add markings on the cutlines, such as notches.
- Plan your sewing steps and pressing directions and write them down (in commercial patterns they are written for you).
- Balance the cutlines.
- Cut out your pattern.

Sometimes, in the process of the conversion, the development pattern becomes rather messy, and a drafter traces a fresh copy. That new copy is then used for the finishing steps. In such a case, use your own judgement.

Also, name or number and date your pattern. Your development pattern is finished, and now it is called “the sewing pattern.”

Chapter 3 – SEW YOUR PANTS

There are three major parts to sewing these pants: first, cut your fabric; second, mark your fabric; third, sew your fabric.

The general sequence of the sewing steps is very simple:

- Stitch the darts of the pant back.
- Stitch the darts, pockets, and zipper of the pant front.
- Stitch the pant back and pant front together at the inseams, crotch curve, and outseams.
- Add the waistband.
- Finish the hemlines.

The zipper installation is almost the same as it is in the *Making a Jeans Pattern* book, but the pocket installation is slightly different.

There are six very detailed steps for stitching the zipper, and the seventh step is an optional zipper shield. The shield is needed only for metal zippers, but some sewers like to insert it for all zippers.

I really like my sporty pocket. The traditional in-seam side pocket has the front pouch attached to the pant front and the back pouch attached to the pant back. The stitched pocket is then pressed toward the front, but the side seam of the pants (the outseam) is pressed open. I never liked this design, because when pressing the seam open, the back seam allowance is clipped, creating a weak spot in the seam.

The non-traditional in-seam side pocket presented in this book is similar to the jeans pocket, except that the pocket entry is located on the side of the pants in the side seam. The side seam can be pressed open without any clipping. When the pocket entry is topstitched, it looks casual and sporty, perfect for casual and sporty *closely fitted* pants.

BONUS SECTION

On the last page of the book, there is a small BONUS with ease charts for *fitted* and *semi-fitted* pants. With small changes, you could make sporty pants that are a little looser than *closely fitted* pants.

Final Note: Overall, this book is a simple example of easy-going sporty pants. All the necessary patternmaking procedures are included for your learning. I hope that my instructions are detailed and illustrated enough to practice patternmaking at a slow pace. While patternmaking is a complex knowledge, the individual steps are easy to follow.

[Return to Home Page](#)