

PART 2: INTERMEDIATE DRAPING

Introduction

In Part 2, as the garments become more complex, the challenge is to develop a good eye for balance, proportion and silhouette. The goal is for students to be able to recognize when these are achieved: from the smallest construction details to the collar or sleeve of an individual garment, from the individual shapes of the garments to whether the silhouettes of an ensemble are working together.

Precision and dexterity come with practice as students work with creating volume and movement using tucks, pleats, and gathers in section 2.1: *Skirts*; experiment with the complex curves of sleeves and collars in section 2.2: *Blouses*; the fitting of trousers in section 2.3: *Trousers*; and the manipulation of stretch fabrics into different looks in section 2.4: *Knits*.

As students continue to make the myriad decisions involved in the construction of garments and ensembles in these sections their individual styles and looks should hopefully begin to emerge.

2.1: Skirts

Objectives: The main goal of this section is to enable students to learn different methods for creating volume and movement. Utilizing these techniques on various styles of skirt will help students see how to sculpt specific shapes.

General Guidance:

- An important part of a designer's skill set is in knowing which technique to use for the desired effect. The exercises and draping project in this section are intended to teach students how to use different types of darting, gathering, tucking and pleating to create a specific effect.
- After a group finishes their drapes, it is often useful to do a review or critique and let the students observe each

other's work. Pointing out subtle differences in the drapes will help them hone their observational skills.

Student Pitfalls:

- Students tend to place darting and tucking in skirts fairly arbitrarily. Remind them that the purpose of darting and tucking is to accommodate fit below the waist, the fullness of the tummy or the derrière. The darts/tucks should, therefore, emanate towards those areas.
- The sides are where women prefer to look slim so, whenever possible, encourage students to arrange gathering or pleating away from the sides.
- Students sometimes find it difficult to grasp that flare is created by an upward curve from the centre front, and that, for example, when draping the A-Line skirt (page 99), or the bias circle skirt (page 101), the first pinning needs to be down a few centimetres from the top edge of the toile so that the piece can be clipped and dropped as the flare is created.

Teaching Hints:

- A useful demonstration is to put three different sections of fabric – one cut on straight grain, one horizontal grain, and one bias grain – on the mannequin as a kind of skirt panel to show how differently the three grains fall.
- Beginning to work with gathering can be awkward and often results in fabric that is bunching and uneven. Demonstrate the technique of pulling the fabric on both sides of the elastic so that students can observe close-up how this evens out the gathers (page 111).
- When determining skirt lengths, students need to decide whether the skirt is being made for a fit model (who would be of average height) or a catwalk model (who would be very tall). Students should figure out where on the cage of the mannequin the knee will be and then use that point as a reference for marking length.

Exercises/projects:

An additional project for this section is available in the Tutor's Resource Guide.

Video:

24. Draping the Bias Circle Skirt

Key Terms:

A-line skirt: A skirt that fits narrowly at the waist and flares at the hem, creating an "A" silhouette.

Dirndl skirt: A traditional style of skirt made from a rectangle drawn in at the waist.

Pleats: Fabric that is folded together and then pressed flat; often stitched down from the inside or on top.

Tucks: Fabric that is pulled together and stitched down; usually smaller than a pleat.

Yoke: An upper, fitted piece of a skirt, a blouse or shirt, or trousers that supports another, usually fuller section of fabric.

2.2: Blouses

Objectives: The main goal of this section is to teach students how to work with the complex curves of sleeves, understanding how lift and crown height work, and also to establish what makes a well-fitting sleeve. The basics of draping a collar are also covered.

General Guidance:

- With sections 1:2 Dresses and 1:3 Bustiers, the emphasis is on accommodating the bust and executing a close fit. In this section more ease is needed. The challenge in the blouse exercises is to create beautiful bodice shapes away from the mannequin, not fitted closely to it.
- Train the students' eyes by constantly pointing out how the height of the collar stand, or amount of volume of a sleeve, change the look of the garment and how slight differences can make it look either dated or on-trend.

Student Pitfalls:

- When working with the many elements of a blouse, one issue for students seems to be that the drape gets easily out of control and often messy. To help with this, the foundation of the blouse – the bodice – needs to be firmly set on the mannequin. Encourage your students to pin the bodice securely at the centre front and to turn and resolve shoulder and side seams before moving on to the collar or sleeve.
- Precision is crucial for a collar drape. Before draping the collar, the neckline has to be resolved either by taping it or marking it with a chalk line.
- Before draping the sleeve, the armhole needs to be delineated either with a chalk line or tape.

Teaching Hints:

- Before draping a blouse, discuss with your students the amount of ease needed to create a bodice shape that is not closely fitted to the mannequin.

- Make sure students use a stuffed arm when draping the sleeve. It may be easier for students to drape the bodice first, turn the side and shoulder seams to the inside, then remove the bodice from the form, attach the stuffed arm, and continue with the draping of the collar and sleeve.
- Draping collars takes precision. Check that shoulder seams are turned to the inside and necklines and break points are resolved before students begin.
- Sleeves can be difficult to drape. If the student seems to be floundering, simply mark what he or she has draped so far, remove it from the mannequin, and place it on the table next to a classic sleeve block or pattern. Allowing the student to see what his or her shape looks like compared to a classic sleeve shape will help him or her to visualize how to smooth out the curves and finish the sleeve drape on the mannequin.

Exercises/projects:

An additional project for this section is available in the Tutor's Resource Guide.

Videos:

- 25. Draping the Sleeve
- 26. Draping the Convertible Collar

Key Terms:

Bodice: The top part of a dress or blouse; the front and back sections not including collars or sleeves.

Collar stand: The part of the collar that stands up from the neckline before the collar rolls over and lays on the blouse back/shoulder area.

Ease: The extra fabric allowed in the fit of a garment.

Sleeve crown (or 'cap'): The section of the sleeve above the underarm line.

2.3: Trousers

Objectives: The main aim in this section is to provide students with an understanding of the basic premises of pant construction. The historical examples are intended to help students conceptualize that the legs of the trousers are basically two rectangles.

General Guidance:

- The exercises in this section should be done quickly, with more attention to precision given to the main draping project, where proportion and fit are key.
- After a group finishes their drapes, it is often useful to do a review or critique and let the students observe each other's work. Pointing out subtle differences in the drapes will help them hone their observational skills.

Student Pitfalls:

- As the pant is being adjusted on the form, students often let the grainlines shift as they focus on the waistline and pocket treatments. The lengthgrains should remain vertical and firmly attached to the waistband or top edge.
- A common mistake is in using too many pins. Encourage your students to notice when their side seams are falling smoothly. If there are a lot of pulls and puckers, suggest they try removing some pins to figure out where the seamlines may not be smooth enough.
- Pinning in the wrong direction is also a common error. Remind students that the pin enters the fabric at the folded edge, and that the pins should be perpendicular to the seamlines. Pinning properly will help to reduce puckering and improve the appearance of the drape.

Teaching Hints:

- Make sure each student's fabric sections are perfectly on-grain and well pressed. Trousers need to be hanging smoothly to see the silhouette and if the calico panels are off-grain, the seams will tend to twist.

- Students may sometimes need to correct and re-angle their pant legs during draping, and it is better to get the two pieces set on the mannequin, and then to go back and refine the volume and fit, placing more pins in between existing ones as necessary.
- Point out that darts and tucks are accommodating fullness of the front tummy area. If they are too close to the centre, the fullness gets lost in between the legs and causes wrinkles in the crotch area (page 178).
- Remind students that finessing the pant fit has to do with how the crotch curve is cut away and joined from centre front to back.
- Once a pant is up on the mannequin with inseam and outseam pinned, make sure students know that once balanced, any further taking in or letting out of the volume needs to be done equally to both seams.
- Encourage your students to stand back occasionally to check their silhouettes. It is easy for them to become too focused on the details and not see the bigger picture. Having a mirror close by is useful in checking the drape from a distance.

Exercises/projects:

An additional project for this section is available in the Tutor's Resource Guide.

Videos:

27. Draping the Crotch

28. Fitting the Pant

Key Terms:

Crotch curve: The curved seamline that runs from the waist to the top of the inseam.

Inseam: The inner leg seamline from crotch to hem.

Outseam: The side seamline from top edge at waist to hem.

2.4: Knits

Objectives: Knits are an essential fabrication in today's fashion industry, a staple of T-shirts and bathing suits, but also of evening wear. The main purpose of this section is to help students appreciate the distinction between utilizing the stretch, as in a bathing suit, or not using it, as in a flowing gown.

General Guidance:

- When introducing the concept of knits, clarify that garments which utilize the stretch of the knit are more often drafted from blocks, as they usually need to be overlapped or sewn together to really see the silhouette.
- In general, the grainline of the knit that has the most stretch goes around the body, not up and down. This could be either straight grain or horizontal grain, so the direction of the knit needs to be identified before draping can begin.
- It is very difficult to locate and mark grainlines on knits as they tend to stretch off-grain when they are rolled onto tubes for shipping. Knits tend not to follow the selvage edge as wovens do, and are often difficult to re-block.
- Garments that use the flow of a knit can be draped, but need a special technique (page 188, Making a Grid) as they stretch during draping.
- After a group finishes their drapes, it is often useful to do a review or critique and let the students observe each other's work. Pointing out subtle differences in the drapes will help them hone their observational skills.

Student Pitfalls:

- Students should guard against not draping on-grain. The grainline cannot be determined by measuring from the selvage edge. Developing an eye for seeing the grain of the knit is essential.
- Students may tend to drape tightly when working with stretch fabrics. Remind them that even if they are utilizing the stretch of the knit, it should be pulled gently to fit, not tightly.

- Students may tend to cut excess fabric away too closely to the seamline, causing knits to curl, run or weaken at the edges. Encourage them to cut only minimally, using tape or chalk to mark the seamlines.

Teaching Hints:

- If working with a flowing style of garment that does not utilize the stretch of the knit, the student should be encouraged to work first with the fabric on the mannequin in order to get a feel for the way it drapes before cutting into the knit.
- If the knit is very heavy and volume is being created, the use of safety pins while draping can help keep the sealines stable, as straight pins tend to pop out.
- Encourage your students to stand back occasionally to check their silhouettes. It is easy for them to become too focused on the details and not see the bigger picture. Having a mirror close by is useful in checking the drape from a distance.

Exercises/projects:

An additional project for this section is available in the Tutor's Resource Guide.

Key Terms:

Batwing sleeve: A sleeve that is cut in one with the bodice.

Coco Chanel: The designer who first popularized knits in the 1920s.

Knit: Fabric constructed by means of interlocking loops between weft and warp.

Overlock: A machine that finishes the edges of fabrics with a series of threads that retain the stretch of the fabric.

Single knit: Basic knit construction, most commonly referred to as 'jersey.'