



A Compendium of Seams

By Austin Coody

What are seams?

- A seam is the join between two or more layers of fabric, leather, or other sheeted material, held together with stitches.



There are many types of seam, such as...

The Plain Seam

The Flat/Abutted Seam

The Lapped Seam

The French Seam



The Plain Seam

- A plain seam is made by attaching your material together, usually right sides together. This seam does not take care of your hems, which will need to be finished separately.

The Flat/ Abutted Seam

- A flat seam is sewn by attaching the layers of fabric together, then rolling and tucking the hems and topstitching them down.



The Lapped Seam

- A lapped seam is achieved by folding the right side to the wrong side of the fabric and folding the seam allowance underneath to prevent raveling.





The French Seam

A French seam is made by attaching the layers of fabric, right sides together, and then folding them in an S-shape so that both right sides face outward, and the seam allowances are beneath the fabric layers.

There are
also many
positions for
seams, such
as...

Center Back/ Front Seam

Inseam/ Outseam

Sideseam

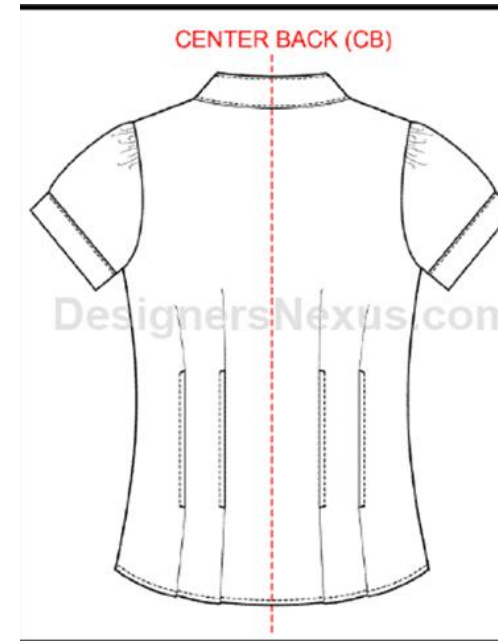
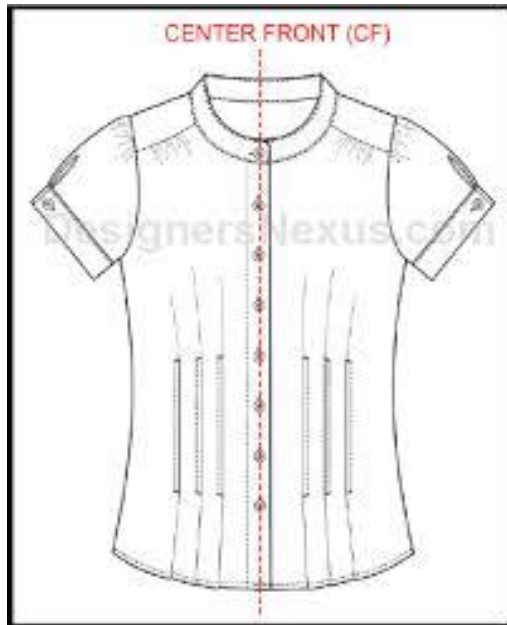
Shoulder Seam

Armseye Seam

Princess Seam/ Darting /Tucking

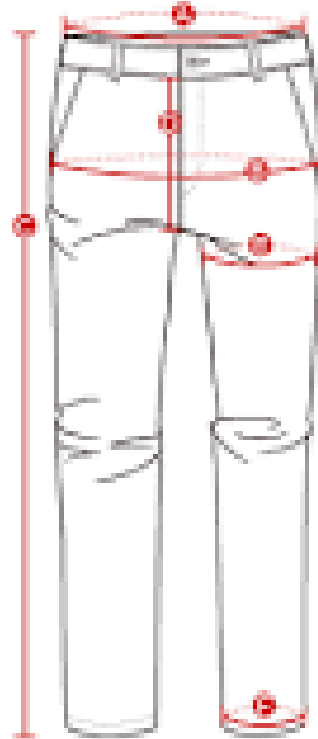
The Center Front and Back Seams

- Goes down the front of a garment, in the center.
- Goes down the back of a garment, in the center.



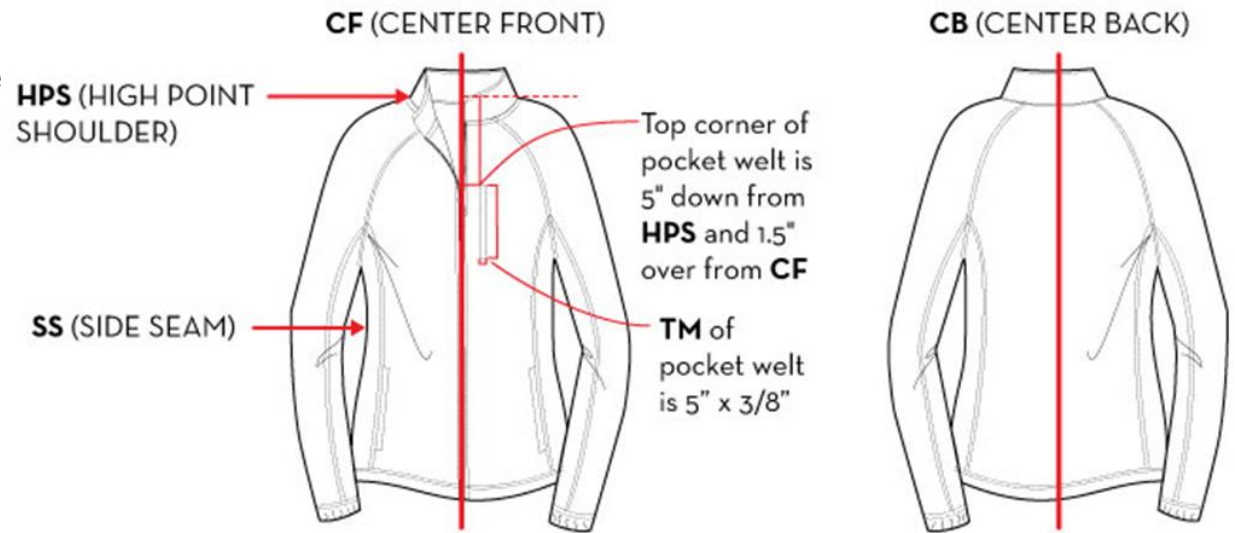
The Inseam and Outseam

- The inseam refers to the vertical line that travels down the interior of the pant. The inseam goes up to the crotch, on the inside of the leg. The pants outseam, however, goes all the way up to the waist.
- The inseam is also a determining factor in what size of pants will fit you.



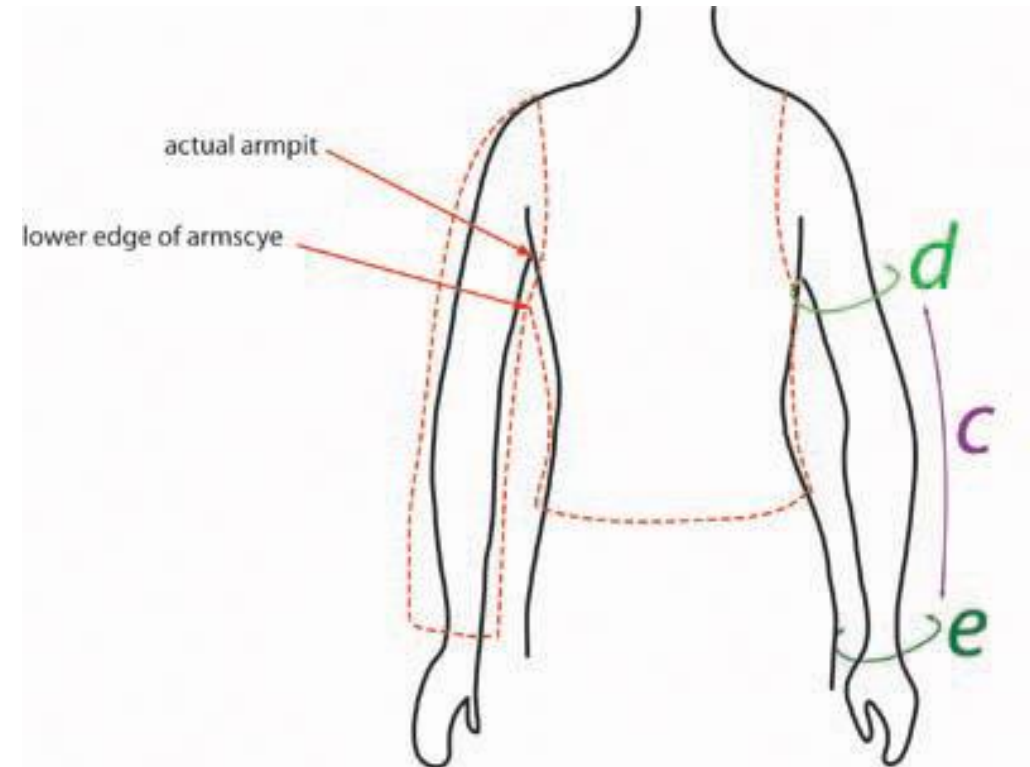
The Sideseam and Shoulder Seam

- A sideseam is a seam running from the bottom of the armhole and down to the hem of the garment.
- A shoulder seam runs from the side of the neckline to the top of the armhole.



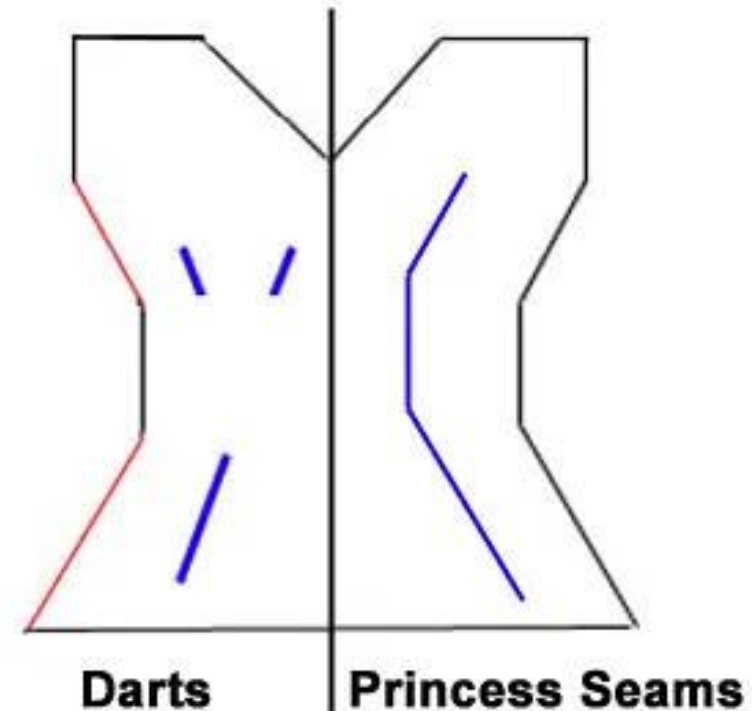
The Armscye Seam

- The armscye is the hole left for sleeves to be attached, and circles around the shoulder joint.
- Historical fun fact: these positions were typically cut much smaller to allow for ease of movement and to achieve a slim-fitting sleeve, as opposed to now, where armscyes are cut larger for comfort.



The Princess Seam/ Darting and Tucking

- The princess seam is used to make a garment form-fitting in the bust and hips.
- Darting and tucking are small seams joining the same layer of fabric together to make the surface area of a garment smaller, for a fitted effect.



5 Question Quiz:

- Can you define a seam?
- What are two types of seams?
- Which seam position determines your pants size?
- Which seam position is now cut for comfort?
- Can you identify one type of seam in your current garment?

Bibliography

- Case, Jill. “How To Sew Flat-Felled Seams - A Sew Daily Tutorial.” Sew Daily, 8 Mar. 2019, www.sewdaily.com/online-sewing-classes/flat-felled-seams.
- Colgrove, Debbie. “Learn How to Choose the Best Seam Finish to Preserve Your Seams.” The Spruce Crafts, The Spruce Crafts, 20 Oct. 2019, www.thesprucecrafts.com/choose-a-seam-finish-2977482.
- “Garment Terms and Abbreviations in the Fashion Industry.” Courses & Free Tutorials on Adobe Illustrator, Tech Packs & Freelancing for Fashion Designers, 26 Jan. 2017, successfulfashiondesigner.com/abbreviated-lingo-in-the-apparel-industry/.
- Gibson, Liesl. “French Seams.” Oliver + S, 8 Feb. 2016, oliverands.com/community/blog/2010/04/french-seams.html. “How to Spec a Garment: Basic Points of Measure for Apparel.” Designers Nexus, 11 Feb. 2019, www.designersnexus.com/fashion-design-industry-information/how-to-spec-a-garment-basic-points-of-measure-for-apparel/.
- Kimbro, Mitchell. “Seams to Me.....Part 1: Basic Seam and Slot Seam.” 60 Threadneedle Lane, 20 Feb. 2012, 60threadneedlelane.wordpress.com/2011/12/19/seams-to-me/.

Bibliography, cont'd.

- “Lapped Seam.” My Costume History, 20 June 1970, mycostumehistory.wordpress.com/tag/lapped-seam/.
- “Modifying a Pattern to Suit Your Shape (Darts or Princess Seams).” [Knittingharpy.wordpress.com](http://knittingharpy.wordpress.com), 11 Nov. 2008, knittingharpy.wordpress.com/2008/08/28/modifying-a-pattern-to-suit-your-shape-darts-or-princess-seams/.
- “Pants Size Numbers To Find The Perfect Fit.” Berle, berle.com/blogs/announcements/49728900-the-numbers-you-need-to-know-to-buy-pants-that-fit.stitchesandsunflowers.
- “How to Finish Seams without a Serger: My Five Favorite Seam Finishes.” Stitches and Sunflowers, 13 July 2017, stitchesandsunflowers.com/finish-seams-without-a-serger/.
- Wilson, Jenna. [Knitty.com](http://knitty.com), knitty.com/ISSUEwinter04/FEATwin04TBP.html.