

Example of a Fitting Critique in Don McCunn's Online Classes

In my classes for fitted slopers I provide fitting critiques using photos submitted by students. This is an example of the fitting critique I did for Judith Branham during the "How to Make a Lower Torso (aka Skirt) Sloper" class. It is provided with her permission.

Note: Judith's fitting issues are particularly challenging because she has an asymmetrical body. Most people will find the fitting process much easier because they will only need to fit one side.

First Photos from Judith:



Judith's Comment:

My sloper still needs work and I am stymied. My lower torso has a high hip on the right side due to a nasty break. I first tried raising the left hip one inch based on my measurement from the floor to each hip, and I sloped the waist to zero on the right hip, with 1/2" at the CF. The result was that the center front line was not vertical. I then lowered the left hip to 1/2", sloping to the RS waist and the center front remains tilted.

I think I should be raising the right side hip and sloping down to the LS?

Thanks again, Judy Branham

My Response:

Before answering your question I need to ask one of my own.

Do you wear corrective shoes? If so what does the sloper look like when you are wearing these shoes? If just changing from shoes to no shoes corrects the tilt, I'd say don't change the pattern.

If you don't wear corrective shoes and this is the tilt of your body when you go out, we will figure out how to progress with the sloper.

I look forward to your response.

Best,
Don McCunn

Fitting Critique for Judith, cont'd

Judith's Response:

Thank you for your response! I don't wear corrective shoes. Therefore, my right hip is always higher than my left hip. (And my left shoulder is always lower than my right shoulder...looking forward to your upper torso class.)



My Response:

I have drawn lines on your photo showing how I think you will need to adjust your sloper pattern. My suggestion is to create waist and hip lines that are parallel to the floor. It is good that you started from the right hip because it is higher. Try the following steps:

1. Increase the length of the front and back darts on the left side. From looking at the photos I think you can just increase their length by about 1-1/4" (or 5 gingham squares) but keep them the same width. I would try that first.
2. Check the fit of the skirt and see if those darts fit okay. Adjust them as necessary.
3. Redo the side seam on the left side. I'm not quite sure what adjustment you may have to make to this side seam--so I'm not going to guess. The problem here is that we usually work with the skirt turned wrong side out, then turn it right side out to verify the final fit. You don't have that option. You might try using the taping technique because you can tape from the right side, turn it inside out and adjust the sewing from the inside.
4. Once the skirt is hanging so that the waist and hip lines are parallel to the floor, I think you are going to need to find a comfortable waistline for the top of your skirts (and pants). Your natural waistline is tilted. It looks like your left side will be closer to the rib cage and your right side will be closer to your pelvic bone. But you need to make this determination on your body as to what is comfortable for you.

I think you are going to find the contoured waistband (or facing) a nice alternative as you can let that waistband hold up your skirts and pants at the most comfortable location on your body whether it is high or low.

Of course, you realize that you will need to take extra caution when you cut out garments, always having separate patterns for the left and right side. No cutting on the fold as it were.

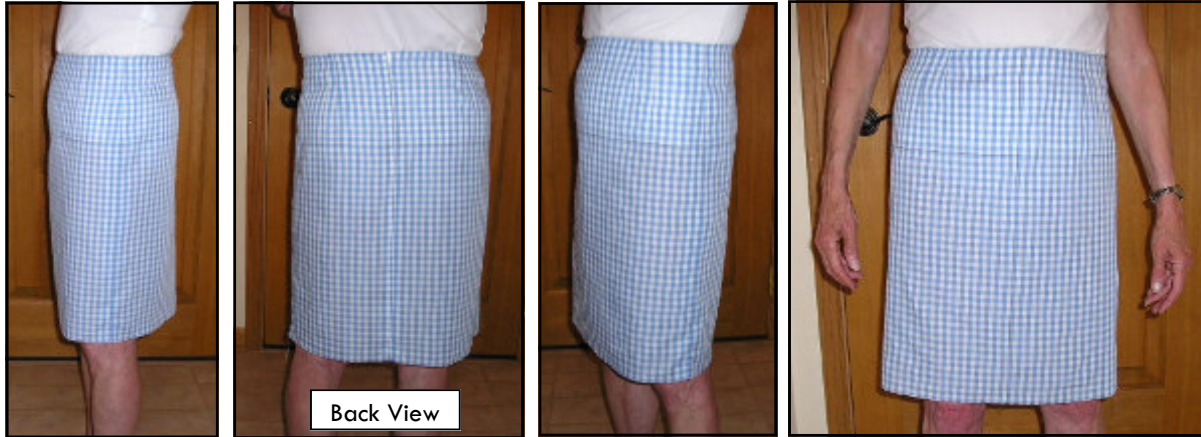
Please keep me posted as you progress. And if you need to ask questions here, please do so. I always keep the classroom open and really want to see how you resolve the patterns for yourself. As far as I am concerned, there is no last day of class for you until you have a sloper that fits.

Judith's Response:

Thank you so very, very much, Don! I've read the marked up photo and understand your very clear suggestions/directions. I'll definitely keep you posted as this sloper progresses. Oh, my very huge rib cage at each side of my body is approximately only one thumb's width from my hip bone. My rib cage makes me look heavier than my 111 lbs! I am looking forward to this new challenge.

With much appreciation, Judy

Fitting Critique for Judith, cont'd



Judith's Comment:

I was able to post four pictures of the new sloper.

What I found with the new sloper is...with the sloper level at the waist, the hip line that is sewn around the skirt in black thread is not level. This is because my left side is flat and the right side is rounded at the high hip and into my waist. The rounded right side pulls the skirt up on that side. This makes creating darts without wrinkles very difficult. It was also near impossible to keep the skirt up and level on the left side because there is nothing there to hold it up.

The only solution that comes to mind is suspenders with an a-line skirt? 😊 Yes, I can still smile.

Seriously though, I guess I should take another look at the possibility of a shoe that will elevate the left side. Perhaps my insurance has improved and will cover part of the cost. It would certainly make life and, of course, pattern design, easier.

I apologize for the delay in posting pictures today. DH was tied-up and couldn't take pictures until this evening.

Also sending my sincere thanks for your support and patience...I do appreciate it!!

Judy Branham

My Response:

Your sloper is looking real good. But I can see in the back view that the grain of the hip is off. I am not sure what the solution will be.

What comes to my mind is to use a natural waist at a level that will keep the skirt up. What would happen if you lower the waistline about 2"? There seems to be a little bit of an indentation on your left side that might just hold the skirt up at that point so that both the waist and hip line could stay parallel to the floor. It means that a little bit of your pelvic bone would be above the "waist" on the right side, but if that level holds the skirt level, that would be a big help.

That said, I think your solution for getting a shoe that stabilizes and evens out your back is the best idea. When your torso is twisted, it can cause problems if not now then when you add some more birthdays. What my wife does is to get a pair of shoes she likes then take them to a shoe specialist who reworks the sole by adding height to one. It is a lot cheaper than having a custom made shoe. She spends about \$90 on the fix. The money you spend on shoes will be a lot cheaper than risking injuring your back further by a twisted torso. This is basically none of my business but I do hope you will look into it as an option.

Judith's Response:

Regarding the use of a natural waist at a lower level, I slipped on my present sloper and pulled it down to just below the belly-button level. Remarkable difference! The hip line now appears level. DH will take a picture and I'll post it in my remaining space.

Thank you for the information on the elevated shoe! I'll ask my Orthopedic Surgeon for a shoe specialist recommendation. Please don't say that it is none of your business...helping others is your business! I sincerely appreciate all the information that you provide and will follow up on it.

Thank You!
Judy

Fitting Critique for Judith, cont'd



Judith's Comment:

Don, a photo of the lowered (pulled down) sloper is posted. As you can see, the top inch or so of the sloper is pulled too tight and the darts need to be slightly opened. This does appear to be the solution!

Judy 😊

My Response:

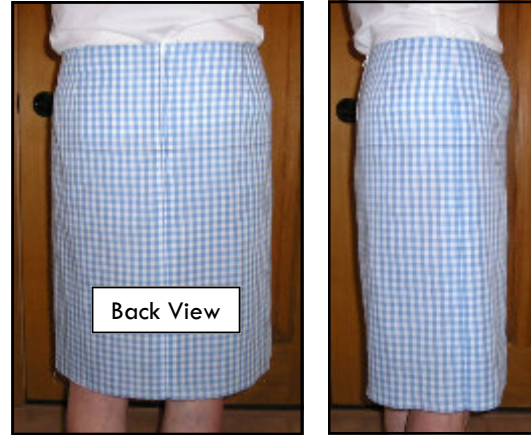
I think you totally have found a solution. I am thrilled. All your efforts have paid off. The way your hem hangs in the photos above, you'd never know there is a difference in your leg lengths.

This means that any skirt you derive from this sloper will give you a perfect hem length regardless of whether it is fitted or full. Congratulations. I am very excited to see what you have accomplished.

Judith's Response:

Thank you so very much Don! I remain in somewhat of a daze because this worked out for me. I will now reduce the darts' widths followed by new pictures of the completed sloper. I'm hoping they'll be posted tonight.

I am so grateful that I found your book, then your Yahoo Group, and was elated when you started classes! My sincere thank you for your support!



My Reply:

Great photos thanks. The only thing I can see at all that is just a hair off is your right hip dart which seems like it might be slightly too large when you look at back view. You can see how it kind of tugs at the zipper. My guess is you can make it smaller about 1/4" at the waist.

Overall brilliant work and thank you so much for sharing such detailed photographs. The grain stands out so clearly indicating a wonderful fit. And the hem is wonderful to look at.

Judith's Response:

I'm still shaking my head in amazement over the process leading to my skirt sloper.

Thank you for noting the tight, right hip dart. I completely missed it, and I'll correct my sloper in the morning, prior to transferring all adjustments to the paper sloper pattern.

While reading the comments you posted on the photos, I discovered that I have no photos posted of the sloper's back left side. If you want them, let me know.

I'm certainly looking forward to your next class...without the least bit of trepidation. 😊

Sincerely, Judy

Fitting Critique for Judith, cont'd



My Reply:

The sloper's back left side would certainly fill out and provide a nice complete picture of your work.

As a point of interest, did you have help with the measuring or fitting or was this entirely a Do-It-Yourself project except for the photos of course?

Judith's Response:

Don, I had no help with measuring or fitting the lower torso sloper. Measurements are usually no problem for a skirt. For fitting, there is one full-length mirror on the room side of my sewing room door and another on the wall, which is at right angles to the mirror on the door...[] . By using both mirrors and opening the door at varying degrees, I had pretty good visuals of all angles of the sloper. Pins were stuck into the front of my blouse, and a washout or air erasable marker was in my hand (or mouth). Obviously, this usually has to be repeated a few times until I am satisfied with the alteration. And it does require deep concentration to coordinate my physical movement with the mirror image 😊. I don't know if this will work for the upper torso as the twisting/lifting of the arm(s) to make adjustments will probably cause distortion. I'm also "somewhat" ambidextrous, using either hand at times for marking, pinning out fabric, and pinning.

I was very pleased to read that your next class will be the pants sloper class! This is a natural sequence to the lower torso class. I look forward to the start of class in September!

Thank you! Judy

Judith's Entry in the Class Design Contest



The skirt Judith designed using her sloper was selected for a special award by Pam Erny for 2 yards of Pam's special 60" wide Pro-Weft Fusible Interfacing.

At the time Pam selected Judith's skirt, she had no idea that Judith had compensated for her asymmetrical body in creating this skirt.