

How to "Personalize Your Pattern"

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How many times have you said to yourself, "I'll never wear this dress because it doesn't fit me properly", or "I've made a dress from this pattern five times now. Isn't there some way I can make it look different?" Now there is a way to achieve perfect fit and update your old patterns — Personalize Your Pattern!

Personalize Your Pattern is a new Senior Training School Course being offered by the Home Economics Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The training school, composed of Leaders from women's groups in the County, is an action-packed two day learning experience concentrating on two areas — how to achieve perfect fit and how to make simple design changes using old patterns.

In the section on fitting, the Leaders learn such basic information as the suitable style and line for various figure types, what body measurements should be taken for proper fit and how to measure the figure and tissue pattern accurately. As well, three methods of fitting and the alterations for common figure problems are discussed.

The designing section (and the most fun!) concentrates on how to update the patterns you already have by learning simple design principles. Wouldn't you like to know how to move bodice darts from one location to another, how to convert darts into tucks or gathers, and how to make simple neckline changes? The Leaders are also shown how to combine various patterns eg. taking a sleeve and collar from one pattern and putting them into another. Skirt designing is also emphasized in the course and the Leaders learn how to design flared and pleated skirts from a basic A-line skirt. Easy-to-follow instructions are also given for designing the very popular quarter circle skirt. It is so easy to make because personal body measurements are used.



A rewarding course.

What is the Summary Day Project? Any garment can be made — dress, skirt, blouse, jacket etc. — using either a knitted or woven fabric. It is important that the garment fit as well as possible, using the methods taught in the course. Making simple design changes to the garment is optional for those who wish to exercise their creative talents.



Why was "Personalize Your Pattern" created? After reviewing the most frequently asked-for courses, the clothing section found that most ladies were interested in simple designing and achieving proper fitting garments. Indeed, it was surprising to learn that many women were already redesigning patterns on their own. The object of the project then, was to provide some background knowledge in fitting and designing and to show beginner designers just how easy and simple pattern changes could be. Because this was the first time a course of this type had been offered, the clothing section was a little apprehensive about how well it would be received. However any doubts were soon squashed as Leaders' and participants' responses have been overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Many creative talents have been rejuvenated resulting in beautifully redesigned patterns which fit perfectly.

Two Summary Days have been held so far — one in York and one in Niagara — with tremendously successful results. Sewers who previously had been frustrated with their attempts at fitting commented that, after taking the course, it was the first time they had completed a garment in which they were truly satisfied with the fit. Those who decided to redesign their patterns too, were rewarded with a "personal" and fashionable look. The most popular designs were the skirts — the quarter circle and converting the basic A-line to a flare skirt. They were tried in both short and long versions with smashing success.

Comments on the project? Encouraging enthusiasm for "Personalize Your Pattern"! Even though many had been sewing for years, they found that this course gave them a broader understanding of patterns.

From York East with 124 participants came comments such as "This was the first time I've completed a garment in which I was truly satisfied with the fit."

Miss Barnett continued to say, "Many designs from the manual had been tried. They had been executed very well and continued to enhance the look of the garment. I was especially pleased that two or three had had the courage to try changing the basic dress to a princess. This design is fairly difficult and involves a lot of time. Mrs. Hunter (the leader from Laskay) even put pleats in her princess dress and the overall look was terrific."