

Marking reference points

Edited from *Threads Magazine* #106 article “How to Measure Up” by Barbara Emodi, who is a contributing editor of *Threads*.

Mark your body so you'll have consistent reference points while you measure. This is best done with a buddy. As you measure, be sure to check the points of intersection. Be sure all horizontal markings clearly intersect all vertical markings so you'll be able to identify the exact center front, center back, and other reference points. (Note the center front of your waistline may not be in line with your navel.)

1. Neckline

Identify the natural neckline just below the slight hollow at the base of the neck in front. Mark the neckline with masking tape around the back of the neck and across the front.

- Mark the exact front of neckline on the tape with a pen dot.
- Mark the prominent vertebra at the top of the spine with a pen dot. (Bend the head forward to make the vertebra easier to find.)
- Mark a point on each side of the neck, in line with the hollow just behind the earlobe.

2. Bust point

Mark the nipple location with a cross of two pins on the bra fabric.

3. Shoulder point

Feel for the end of the flat bone at the end of the shoulder, or raise your arm until a dimple appears at the end of your shoulder and feel for the shoulder bone in this depression. It is important to identify an exact shoulder point.

- Mark it with a cross of two pins.

4. Shoulder seamline

Tape across the shoulder from the side-neck point marked on the neckline, along the top of the shoulder, to the shoulder point. Your buddy should be able to see the tape from both front and back.

5. Waistline

Find the natural waist by feeling for the space between the hip bone and the rib cage at the side. In the front, the waist is usually slightly above the belly button. Tie a piece of elastic around the waist, and bend from side to side to see if the elastic will settle comfortably in this hollow around the middle of the body; take the waist measurement here.

- Once established, do not move around too much, as the elastic can shift while measuring.

6. Armhole (Armhole)

Place a ruler with the level up under the armpit, leveling the ruler front to back. From the shoulder point, down into the crease formed by the body joining the arm, on both the front and back, measure to the bottom of the ruler. This is the armhole depth.

7. Abdomen and Midriff

Measure a line parallel to the floor across the fullest part of the abdomen, same for midriff. Be sure to reference the vertical measurement so this number will be of use to you when checking a pattern.

8. Hips

Find the widest part of the lower body by wrapping a measuring tape around the hip area and sliding it down the body, note that the widest part may be anywhere from a few inches to more than 12 inches below the waist.

- Where the measurement is largest, measure a line exactly parallel to the floor all around the body.