Chapter 10
Shaping Fashion

Learning Objectives
- Evolution of garment styling through the range of cut-and-sew garments
- Structure and style variations of cut-in-one dresses
- Seams and darts as ways to shape flat fabric into a hollow form resting on the armature of the body
- Styling and positions of waistline seams
- Separates — jackets, skirts, pants — as families linked by characteristics of the patternmaking and structure

Introduction
Fabric as a structural material requires an armature — the body.

The body is complex because:
- The form is symmetrical from the front and asymmetrical from the side
- Circumference measurements vary; the waist is narrower than the shoulders, bust or chest, and hips
- Circumference measurements vary in contour

Strategy 1: Avoid Cutting the Fabric and Wrap
Ancient Egyptians working with linen kept the fabric intact with few seams and little sewing.

The same strategy is used in traditional societies and often imitated in fashion.

Strategy 2: Cut Fabric into Shaped Pieces and Reassemble
Strategy changes from keeping fabric intact to cutting fabric into pieces and reassembling them into garments.
The Cut-in-One Dress

The shift, sheath, and princess-line silhouettes are cut-in-one dresses — those lacking a waistline seam.

The Shift Dress

Shift dress circumference allows the broadest part of the body to fit inside.

The triangle runs from edge to edge and the stitching line becomes a seam.

A dart is a removal of a triangle of fabric to fit a curve.

The Shift Dress

Patternmakers create a sloper.

Most important location marks on the sloper are the centerfront and centerback.

Graduated flare below the waist turns the shift into an A-line dress.

The Sheath Dress

Molds to the body shape.

Patternmakers distribute the subtracted inches around the body at the two side seams and in double-pointed darts front and back.

The Princess-Line Dress

Shifts the bust dart from the side seam to the shoulder then links the shoulder and waistline darts into vertical seams that follow the contour of the body’s curves.

In dressmaking terms, a panel is called a gore.

Infinite styling options:

- Change the size of panels
- Increase the flare on each panel
- Insert extra godets
- Create a coat-dress
- Add collar and sleeves
- Use pockets, trim, and buttons.
Adding a waistline seam increases the fitting and styling options while giving the wearer greater mobility.

The shoulder supports the bodice, and the waistline supports the skirt — the bodice and skirt move more independently.

Opportunity to pair the fitted or semi-fitted top with skirts ranging from straight to full.

The basic sloper for a shirtwaist dress has a waistline seam with darts above and below in the front and back.

Dart equivalent or a traditional dart.

The classic shirtwaist dress often had a yoke.

Ignoring the natural waist creates new silhouettes.

- Empire waist raises the horizontal seam from the natural waist to just below the bustline.
- Drop waist lowers the seam to a point on the hips.

The drop-waist style points the way to styling two-piece ensembles: a top or jacket that ends below the waist combined with a skirt.

Designer’s task is to find the best combination of top and bottom and complete the look with design details.
Jacket Styles

Part of a two-piece ensemble meant to be worn closed without a blouse (dress maker suit).

Part of a three-piece ensemble worn as an outer layer over other garments.

Cardigan-style jacket with a center front opening and no collar.

One row of buttons makes a single-breasted jacket; two rows make a double-breasted jacket.

Skirt Styles

4 silhouette categories
- Straight
- Flare
- Draped and pegged
- Pleated

Different hem lengths
Straight skirts can use gathers or pleats to control waistline fullness.

Gore skirt, trumpet skirt
Draped-and-pegged skirts

Straight pleats (no shaping)
Contoured pleats
### Skirt Styles
- Tapered pleats
- Inverted pleats
- Box pleats
- Knife pleats
- Sunray, sunburst, or crystal pleats

### Pant Styles
- Basic garment remains the same for men, women, or children — a bifurcated garment with a fitted waist
- Style variations depend on:
  - Fit
  - Leg shape
  - Waistline fit
  - Waistline styling
  - Details
- Bell bottoms
- Palazzo
- Trousers
- Jeans
- Darts or dart equivalents reduce the circumference at the hip line to the waistline measurement
- Back darts often omitted from patterns for men
- A dhoti is a pant-like garment, which fullness substitutes for the crotch seam

### Chapter Summary
The evolution of cut began with increasing volume, keeping the fabric whole, and wrapping.
With cut-and-sew, designers gained a repertoire of methods to shape flexible, flat fabric into three-dimensional forms to enclose the body.
Adding a waistline seam increases design options because the top and bottom of the dress move more independently.
The secret to exploring variety depends on understanding the sloper and how to manipulate it during patternmaking.