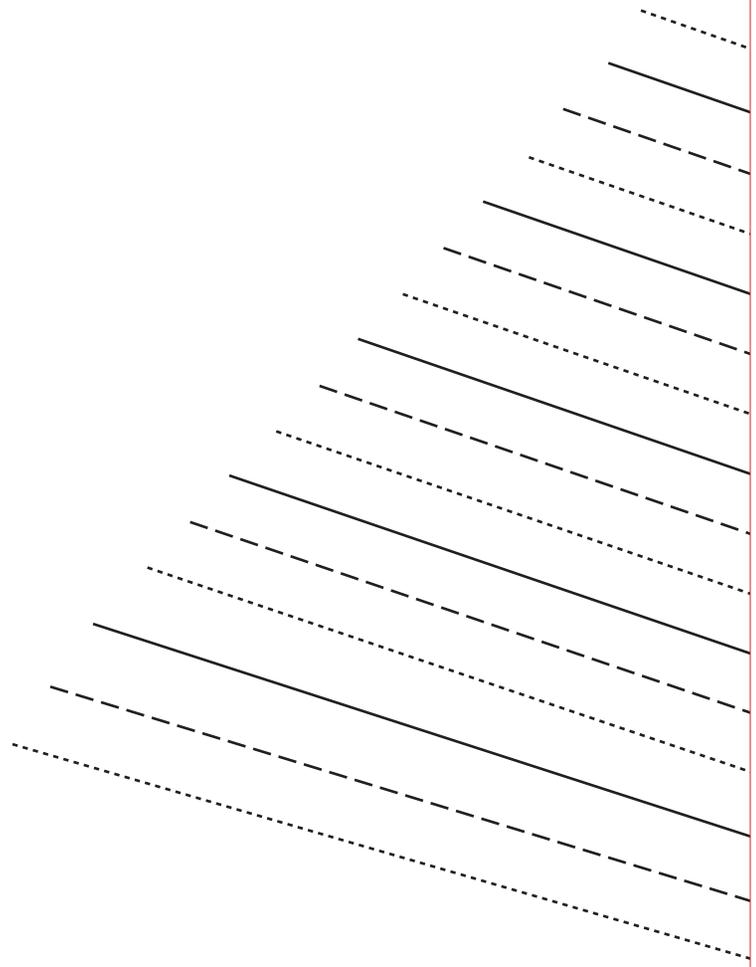


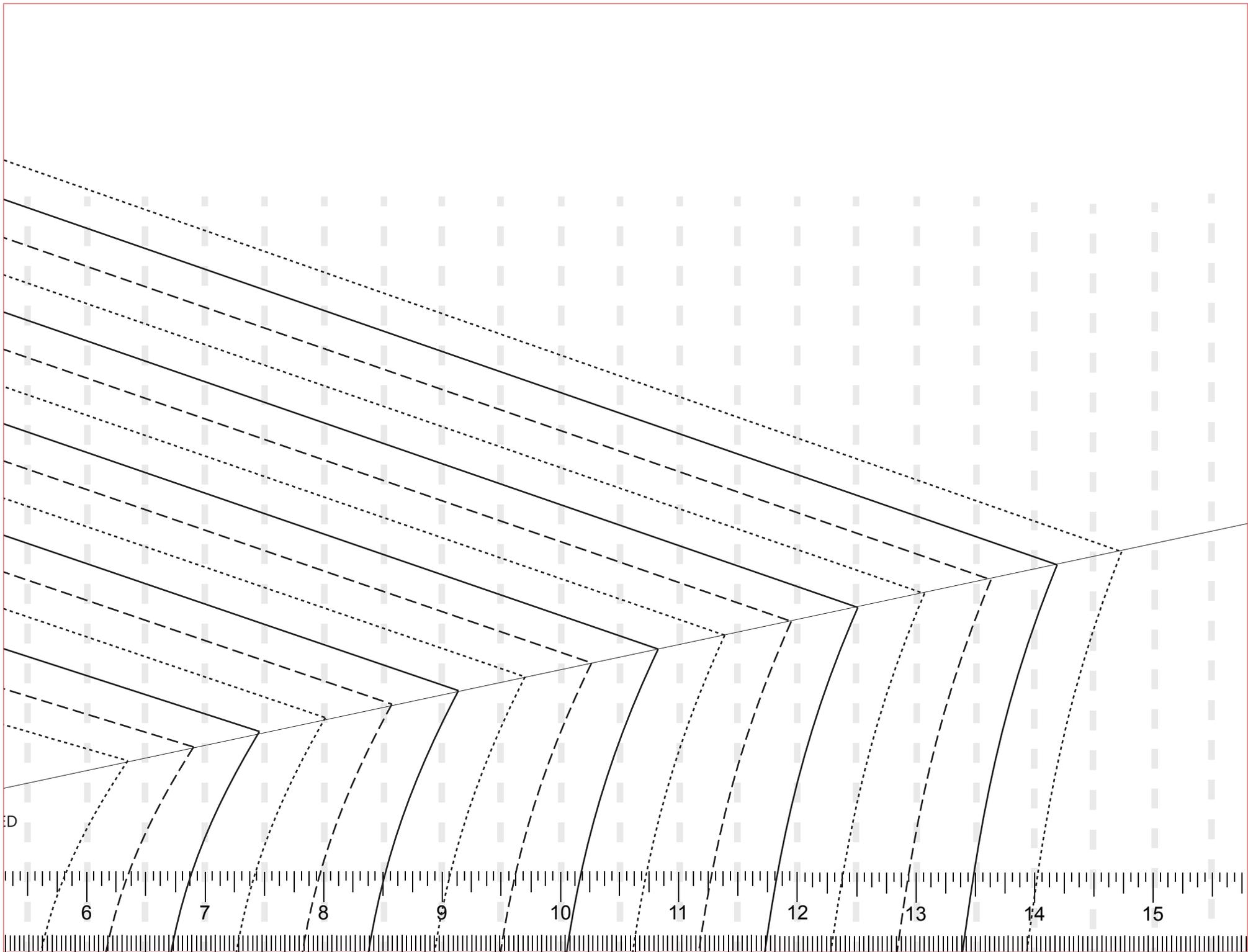


YOKES



ALL ENDS SCALE





PATTERN TOOLS FOR SEWING SHIRTS WITH A PERFECT FIT

I call the graded shape collections here “Pattern Tools” rather than simply “patterns” because they don’t stand alone to be used as is, but are intended to be used together with the methods, directions, and additional materials provided in the book and online. It’s only then that these will come into their own as part of a complete tool set for creating fully customized shirts and shirt patterns for any body, any gender, any shape, any size. I call this process “draping to fit.”

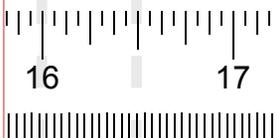
What follows is a quick overview of how draping to fit works in general, and specifically how these pattern tools function within it. You’ll soon see that many other similar pattern shapes from other sources, including conventional shirt patterns, online or self-made shirt drafts, and tracings from existing shirts, could be used as well. The shapes provided here allow any reader to proceed with the process with nothing else needed, but please feel free to explore similar shapes elsewhere if you prefer. These may offer some advantages if you’ve already tested them.

My complete shirt-fitting and fitted-shirt pattern-making process using these and other shapes is fully described in the first chapters of the book, but in outline, it’s quite simple. I drape fabric directly on a specific body or custom dress form to find answers to two basic shirt-fitting questions in the most direct, precise, and flexible way I know of, especially suited to fitting bodies that can’t be as easily fitted using less direct, flat-pattern, measured, and drawn methods.

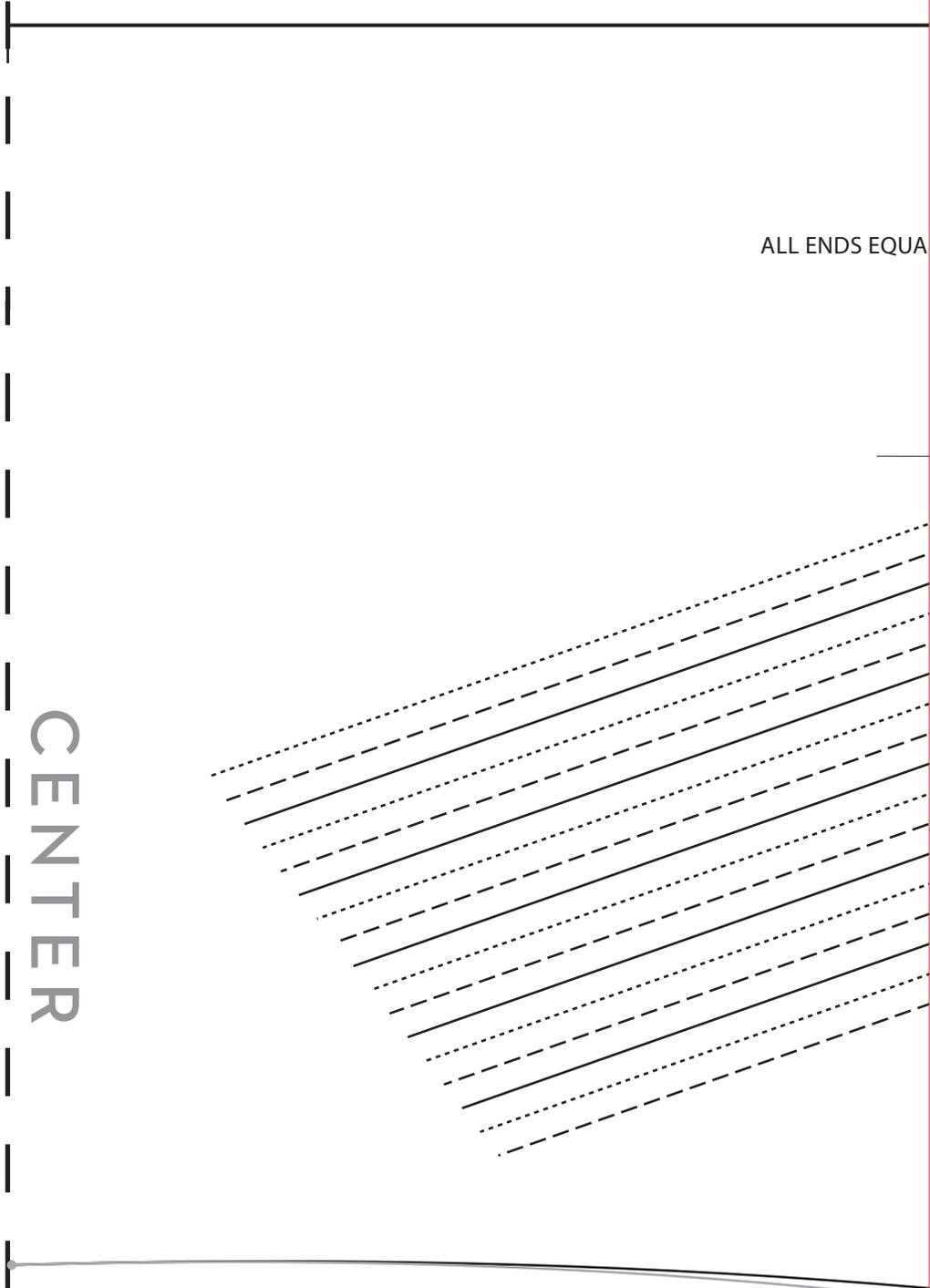
The questions are:

1. How to arrange and shape a shirt body (its fronts and back together) so it will fall smoothly over any unique body shape, while allowing any degree of ease the wearer prefers.
2. How to position and shape the yoke, armholes, and sleeve caps in relation to that shirt body so they look, feel and move just as the wearer prefers while accommodating any asymmetries between the wearer’s shoulders or upper arms.

To answer the first question, I almost always start with uncut, roughly measured rectangles of fabric rather than any predetermined body-pattern shapes, as shown in many photo demonstrations in the book, starting on page 15. In other words, I usually prefer to shape shirt-body pieces entirely from scratch, because these pieces are usually easier to shape into whatever unique solution the body in question will need right on the form than to pre-measure or even partially pre-cut them from any sort of pattern. This is why I like draping to begin with, and why these pattern tools don’t include front or back body-pattern starting pieces. You will see, at middle left, that these tools do include a scaled range of classic shirt-tail hem curves, which are easier to trace, from these here or from some other existing pattern or garment, onto already draped-to-fit body pieces than to invent or drape from

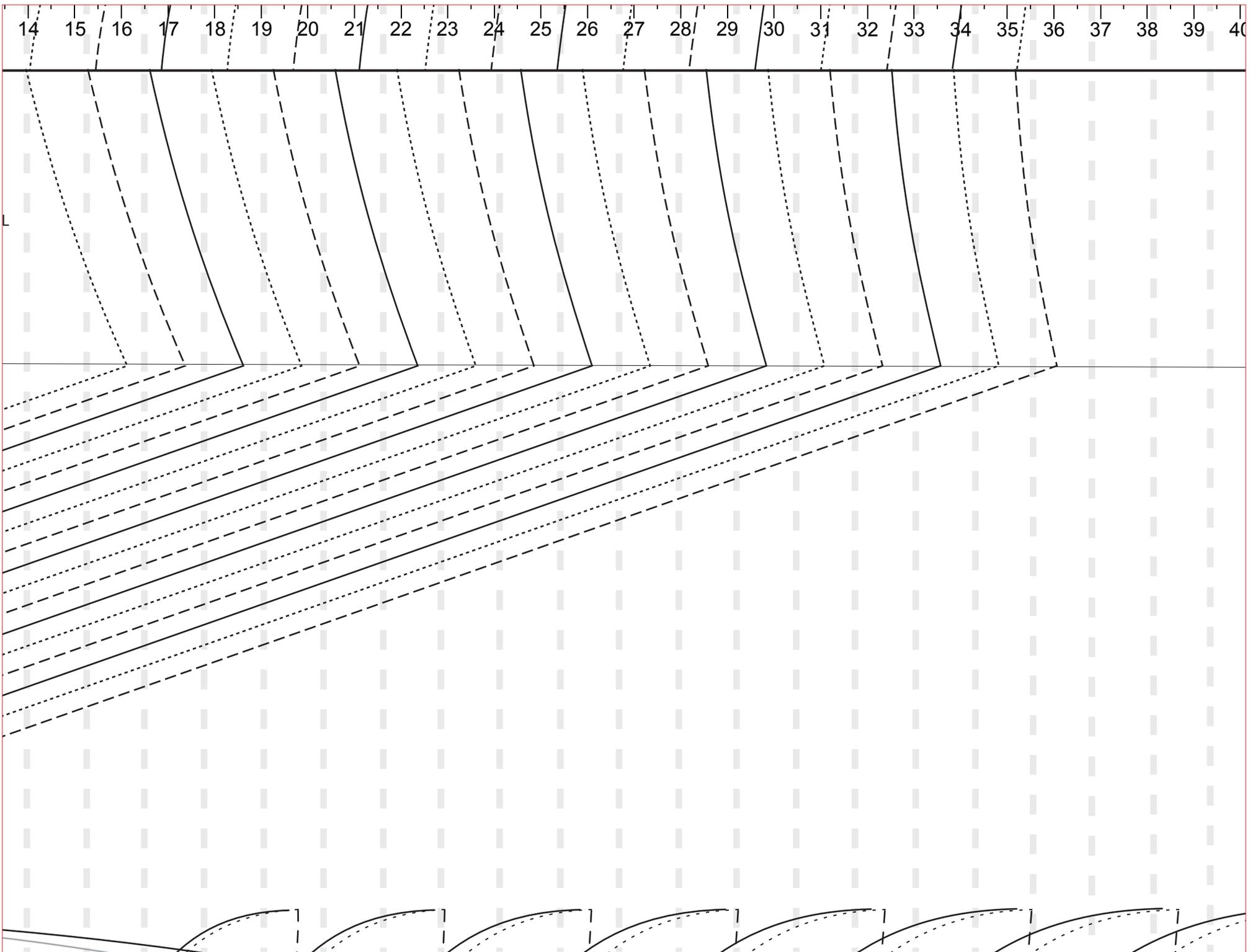


0^{CM} 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13



ALL ENDS EQUA

CENTER





scratch, if you can find a curve that will suit whatever final design you're planning.

To answer the second question, I often start instead with pre-cut, pre-measured yoke, armhole, and sleeve-cap pattern pieces, the latter two already matched in seam length, using the draping process to only focus on the precise placement of these parts without worrying about any reshaping of them nor making any changes to their pre-cut seam lines, a helpful simplification for newcomers to draping, and a good strategy for any wearers who can already comfortably fit into common sleeve and armhole shapes, letting them take advantage of the already solved answers these provide for typical shoulder, armhole, and sleeve fitting questions. This is why the pattern tools here consist primarily of a wide range of pre-measured, pre-shaped, and seam-line matched patterns for exactly these parts of any typical, basic shirt pattern.

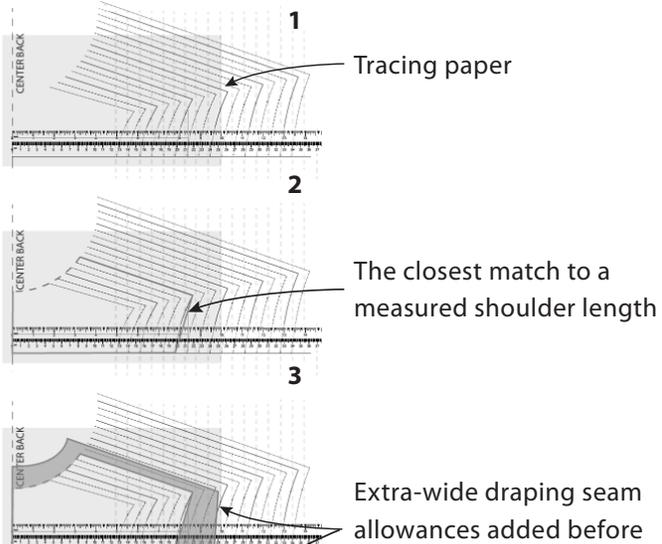
For those who can easily find some existing shirt with sleeves and/or armholes that fit them comfortably, regardless of how the shirt may fit anywhere else, or who has a shirt with a yoke shape they already like, I'd suggest the even easier path of tracing these shapes from those shirts, as demonstrated on page 27, compared to using the more generic shapes offered here, which of course will need at least some further testing and possible adjustment while those on the existing shirts are already tested, able to be selected from try-ons rather than just from measurements.

Draping to fit shirts and make patterns as just described is very powerful and quite easy. You can do it with fashion fabrics during the construction of garments to customize the fit and fall of specific fabrics, or with muslin test fabrics to develop basic shirts patterns, tracing the shapes you find onto paper. But somewhere between the extremes of these two approaches (starting completely from scratch and using pre-cut, precisely measured shapes as is) lies the real power of draping to easily fit otherwise hard to fit body shapes.

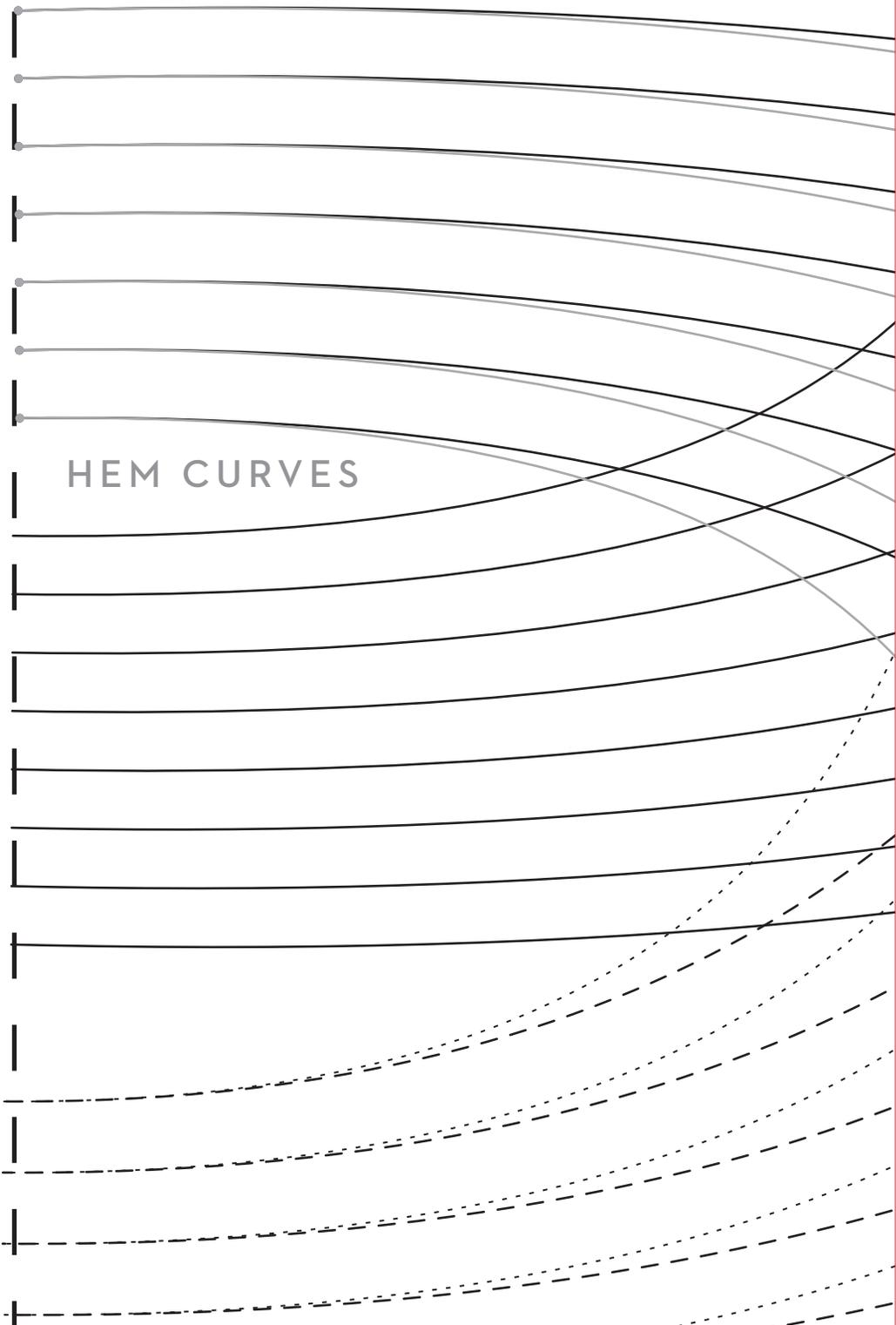
This means simply treating every shape that you cut from fabric to drape with and every edge you position while draping, as potentially re-shapable in response to what you're seeing the fabric do while you drape. This not only frees the process to access the non-typical, unique shapes at every edge that are often needed for a good fit on unique bodies, but also begins to blur the line between fitting and design, as with more edge allowance, you can try a wider range of edge options and more freely make choices driven by more than wrinkle management.

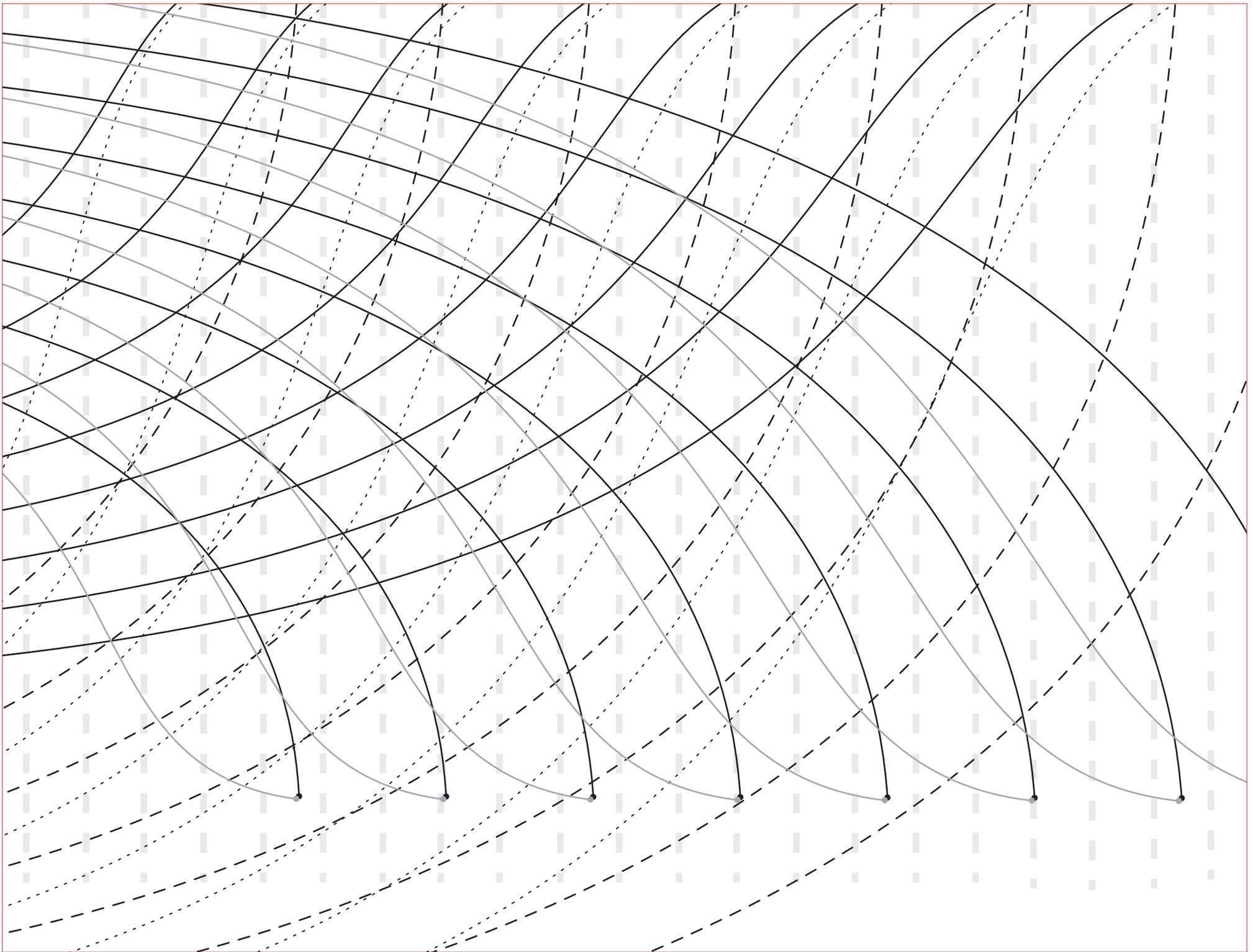
To work this way, I still pre-cut measured yokes and matched armhole/sleeve-cap pairs rather than starting completely from scratch with these pieces, but always with the simple addition of extra-wide seam allowances (of at least an inch or several centimeters if not more), just as I demonstrate for yokes on page 33 and show again at right, as well as in many other examples further on in the book.

This is really all it takes to make any pattern shape more flexible, and more useful for draping with, freeing you from any effort to follow a specific seam line and letting these locate themselves as you arrange the fabric to fall well, look good, and mesh smoothly with other pieces already in place, purely by eye and touch. All the generic "pattern tool" shapes here make ideal starting points for this approach as they're so simple. It's much more likely that shapes from other sources



HEM CURVES





will have seam lines at least a little more carefully shaped and already worked out than these here, not expecting that their specific lines will be disregarded and replaced with unique ones based on being draped to suit some specific, unique individual's body and/or vision. This doesn't make them less potentially useful as starting "tools," just unnecessarily complex.

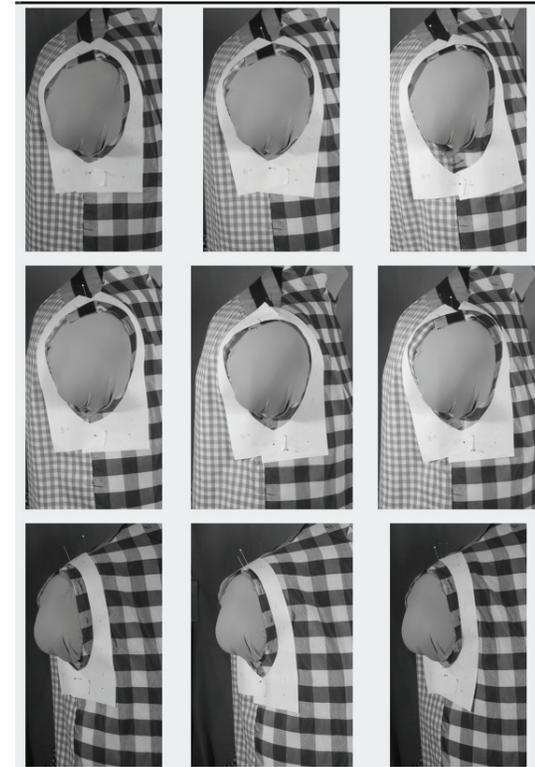
Applying this same logic to armhole and sleeve-cap curves, it's not just extra-wide seam allowances (in other words, not yet exactly defined seam-line curve shapes) that should be considered as up for revision, but the total curve lengths as well, regardless of any measurements you may have already made from a garment or on a body. An easy way to explore this is to first cut a pair of paper armhole curves (front and back) traced from any complete armhole curve that you want to test, rather than starting with cut fabric. The shape tools given here are ideal for this because they are measured to meet at the shoulder line, as you can see at right, ignoring at this stage whatever yoke-end length that will eventually have to be deducted when finalizing the pattern.

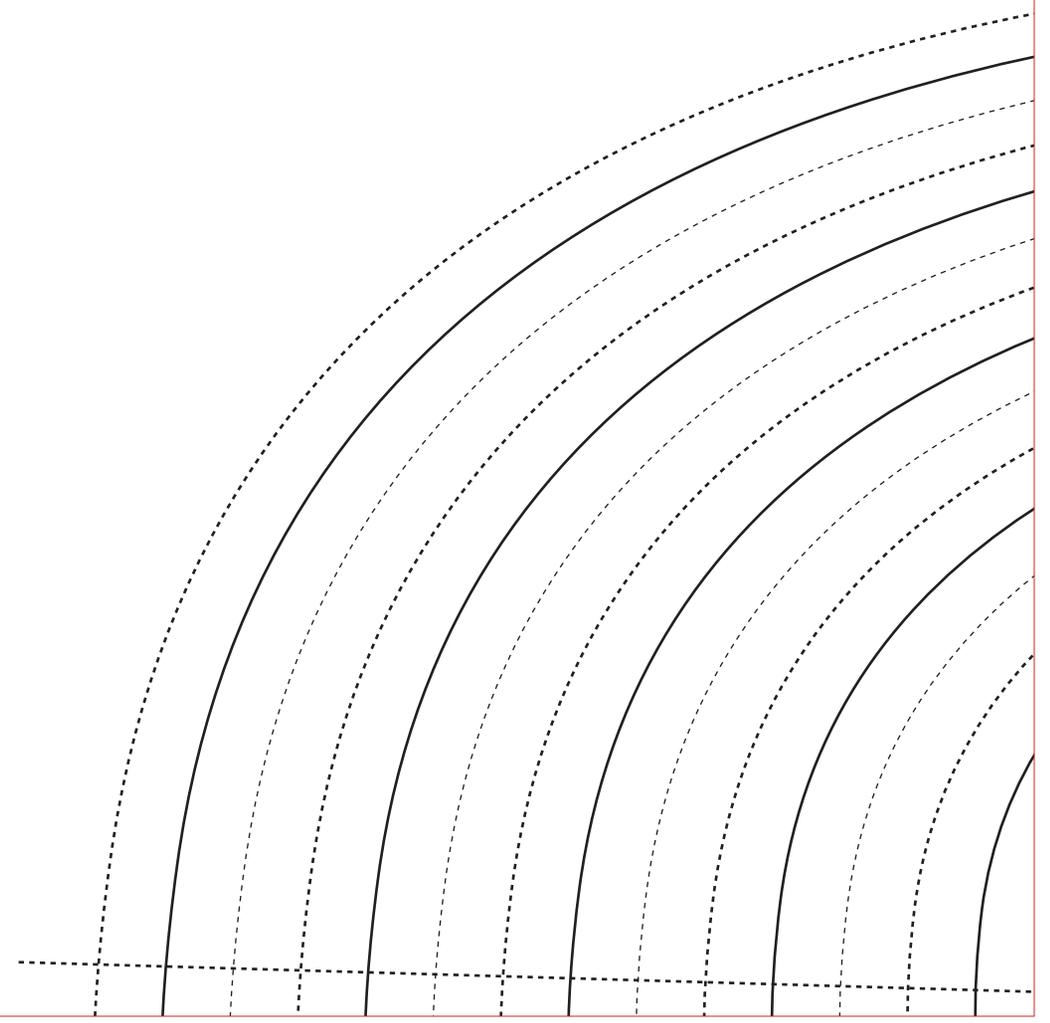
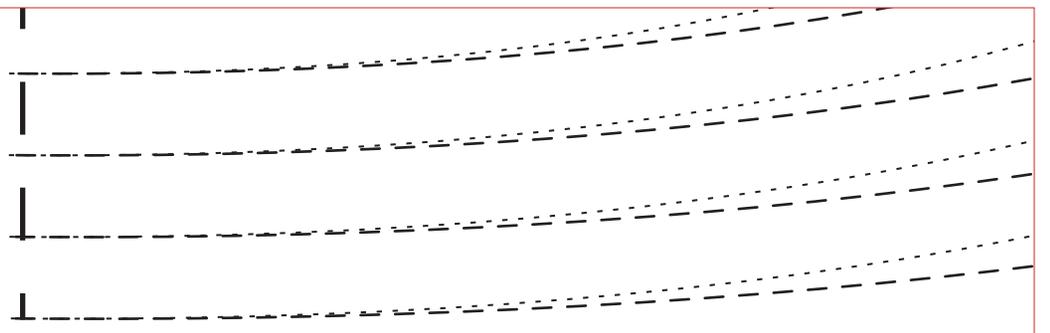
You can explore the position of a fixed-length pair of curves like this, but if the paper ends at both shoulder and underarm are cut long, and if you allow yourself to overlap these to various extents as you experiment with possible shapes as well, you can also rethink the actual length that might work best at the same time, as I'm doing at right, finding many potential variations with a single paper pair. Capture any shape by marking along the inner edges. (Note that you'll need to relocate the side seam marks on any paper curves, once they're positioned, to match the seams on the draped body. Its position on the curves here is an estimate.)

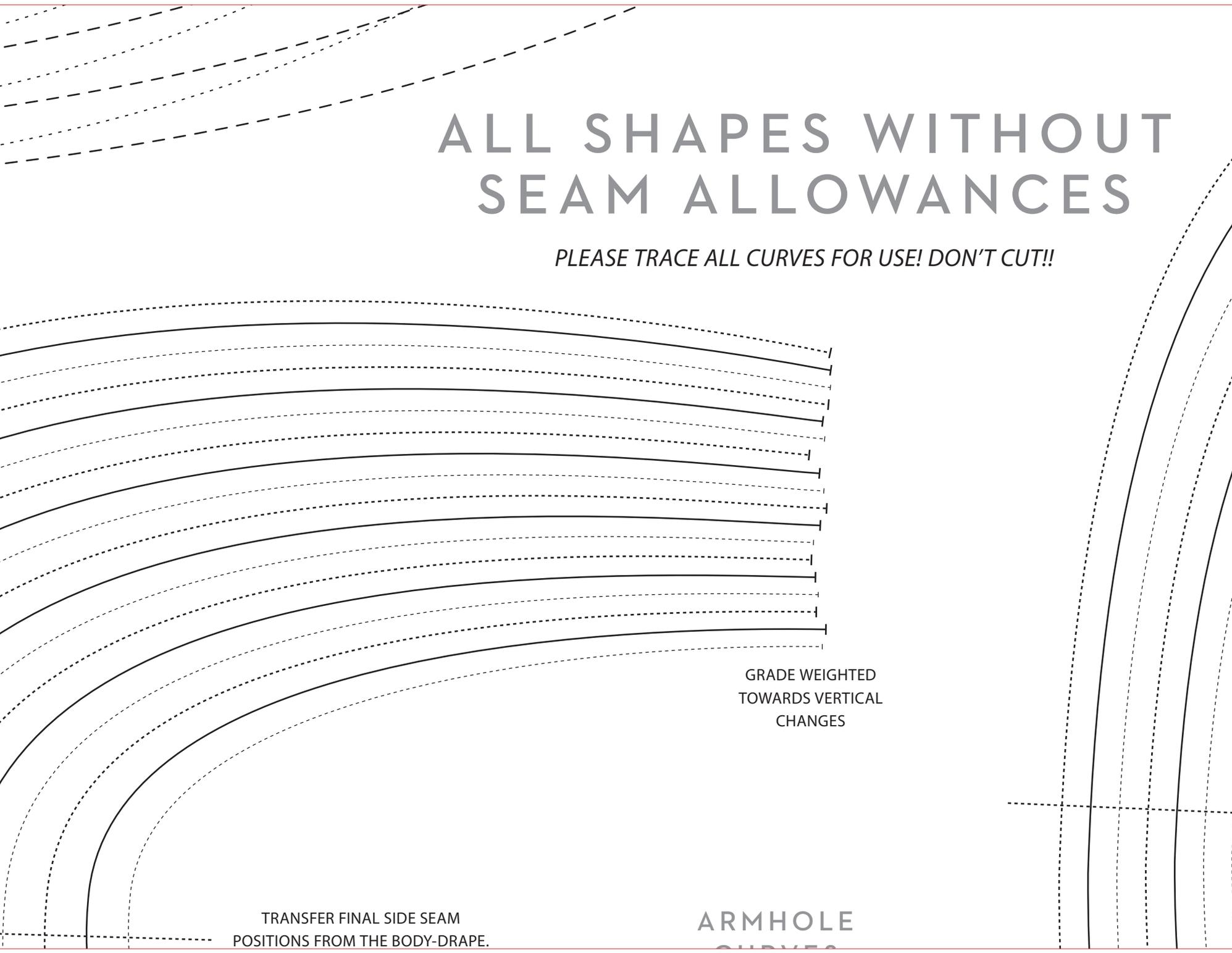
Select a sleeve cap height appropriate to your armhole position (see the diagrams near each cap-height set here, and page 21 for more detail), or the medium set if you're not sure (it's the most typical), and one specific curve from that set that best matches the length of whatever armhole curve you've shaped and marked as just described. Add extra seam allowance width along the curve and at each underarm as usual for increased flexibility as you drape the muslin sleeves to your marked armhole, so you can find and mark whatever unique final cap-curve shape works best regardless of the shape you initially chose.



cutting out the tracing







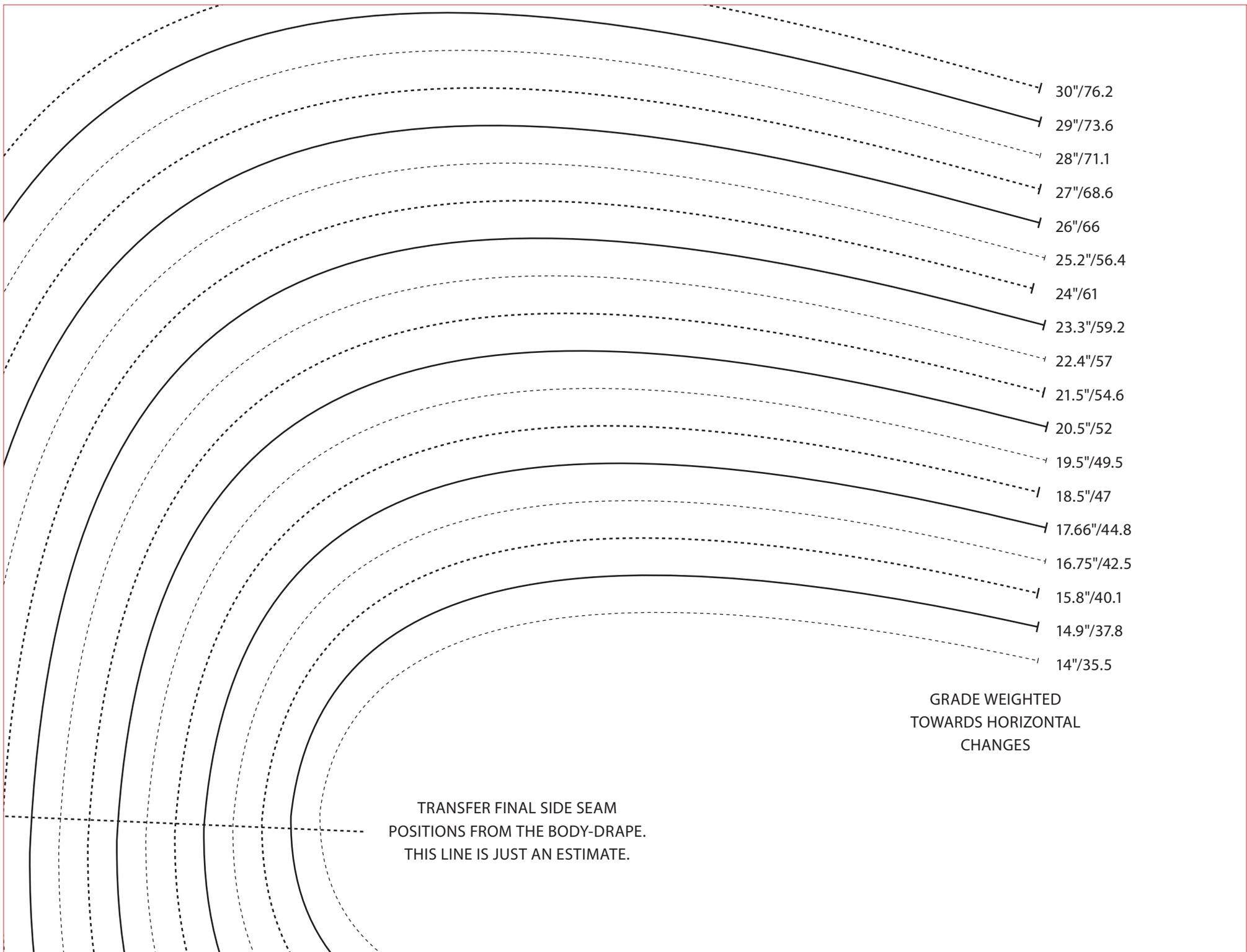
ALL SHAPES WITHOUT SEAM ALLOWANCES

PLEASE TRACE ALL CURVES FOR USE! DON'T CUT!!

GRADE WEIGHTED
TOWARDS VERTICAL
CHANGES

TRANSFER FINAL SIDE SEAM
POSITIONS FROM THE BODY-DRAPE.

ARMHOLE
CURVES



THIS LINE IS JUST AN ESTIMATE.

CURVES

