



OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

4-H Fabrics & Fashions

Consumer Education

Intermediate Level (12-14 Years)

Menswear

A man's wardrobe should be built around his lifestyle, career, and personal taste.

The first step in selecting a wardrobe is to determine size and what to look for in a good fit.

Size

Men's clothes are sized by body dimensions. Always try on jackets, slacks, and suits before purchasing them. Most men's clothing stores will have someone who is knowledgeable in taking measurements. If not, get a friend or parent to help, using the following procedures:

- **Neck** – Measure at the base of the neck to the nearest inch. Make certain the tape measure is not too tight.
- **Chest** – Measure around the fullest part of the chest. Keep tape under the arms and over the tips of the shoulder blades.
- **Sleeve length** – Hold arm slightly bent and away from the body.
- **Waist** – Measure where you wear your waistband. Pull the tape so it is snug but not tight.

Take these measurements on a pair of slacks that fit:

- **Slack length** – Measure from the top of the waistband down the side to the finished edge of the slack leg. If the waistband is more than 1 ½ inches wide, measure approximately where the natural waist falls.

- **Inseam** – Measure from the point where the crotch seam and inseam meet to the finished edge of the slack leg.

Fit

When determining the fit of menswear, consider the following.

- Activity of the wearer.
- Personal preference.
- Style of the garment.

Clothes that are worn by very active individuals will need to fit more loosely than those worn for business and inactive times. Garment style may often determine how loose or closely-fitted a garment should be. Test clothes for comfort and sufficient ease in walking, sitting, and standing.

Coats, Jackets and Blazers

Coats, jackets, and blazers are sized by the chest measurement and are proportioned by height (short, regular, long, and extra long). Consider the following when checking for fit:

- An all-weather coat or top coat should be large enough to be worn over a jacket or sweater.
- Coats should fall naturally from the shoulders, with the lower edge being parallel with the floor.
- Jackets should always cover the seat of the slacks.

- To check jacket sleeve length, place your arms at your side and cup your hand. The lower edge of the jacket should end in the cupped hand.
- Buttons should close without stretching or pulling.
- The collar should hug the back of the neck and about ½ inch of the shirt should extend above the jacket collar.
- The lapels should lie flat against the body and end in a soft roll at the top button.
- The back should fit smoothly without wrinkles. The vent should lie flat.
- The sleeve of a jacket should fall straight from the shoulder and end just below the wrist bone. This will allow between ¼ and ½ inch of the shirt to show.

Slacks

Slacks are sized by waist and inseam measurements. The waist measurement is always given first. Slacks labeled 34/32 will fit a 32-inch inseam. Purchase unhemmed slacks for a better fit in length.

Slacks that fit well will hang without wrinkles and bulges. They will allow enough room in the crotch, seat, and thigh areas for ease in sitting and walking. Slacks are cut with a short, average, or long rise (distance from crotch to waistband). The crease will fall in the center of the leg. A well-fitted pair of slacks will have a waistband that is not too loose or too tight and fits at the natural waist. The width of the slack leg, style of slacks, and shoe heel height will determine the slack length. When having slacks hemmed, always wear the shoes you will wear with the slacks. The slacks should fall straight to the top of the shoe. The slack leg may break slightly or not at all. The hem of a cuffed slack leg is straight from front to back. The hem of a plain slack leg slants down to the top of the heel in back.

The construction details on trousers will also determine how they look and fit.

Cotton and cotton blends are popular for men's shirts, work pants, jeans, overalls, and underwear. Cotton, an absorbent fiber, makes a cool, comfortable fabric for hot, humid weather.

Sport shirts provide colorful patterns and textures for the casual look with casual clothing.

Fibers such as rayon, ramie, silk, and linen usually are blended with other fibers to enhance the appearance and quality of the workmanship in a garment.

Selecting a color and weight of fabric that can be worn year-round will extend the wardrobe. Stick with basic colors when buying quality clothes you plan on wearing for several years. Avoid high fashion colors and fabrics that will go out of style quickly.

Shirts

A long-sleeved tailored or dress shirt is sized by the neck and sleeve length. Dress shirts with short sleeves are sized by the neck. Neck sizes come in ½-inch increments. Sleeve sizes are measured in one-inch increments. Sizes can be found inside the shirt collar band. Neck size is listed first, followed by sleeve length, for example, a shirt with a 16½-inch neck and 34-inch sleeve would be sized 16½ 34. Casual, sport, and work shirts that are sized small, medium, large, and extra large do not allow for the variety of sizes found in tailored shirts. Shirts sized S, M, L, XL fit the following neck sizes: S – 14/14½; M – 15/15½; L – 16/16½; XL – 17/17½. Shirts will come in regular, tapered and full cuts. The regular cut is slightly tapered at the waist. The full cut does not taper at the waist, and the tapered is very tapered at the waist.

A shirt that is well-fitted will be comfortable to wear and have a pleasing appearance. The collar will not gap at the neck nor will it be too tight. A long sleeve will end approximately ¼ to ½ inch below the wrist bone when the arm is bent slightly. The shirt will have enough fullness to

prevent gapping at the buttons when seated but will not have an excess of fullness. The shirttail will be long enough to remain neatly tucked into the waistband.