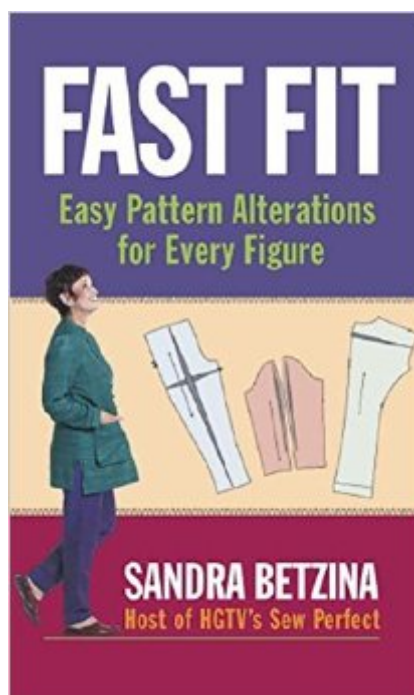


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# Fast Fit: Easy Pattern Alterations For Every Figure



## Synopsis

Sandra Betzina's tried and true--and easy to do--techniques for creating clothes that fit and flatter your unique shape.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have to start this review by stating that I adore Sandra Betzina. I have seen her in person several times and she is a generous teacher full of wonderful ideas. Her books are normally full of wonderful photographs worth the price of the book alone. The photos in this book are not great - even one of Sandra in a most unflattering outfit. I also found some of the techniques shown quite strange. I was puzzled by the knock-knee alteration, which would actually make my pants look worse, not better and the full-bust alteration, which does not allow for extra length (only width). If you are serious about learning to fit yourself, *Fit For Real People* by Palmer/Pletsch or *Fitting Finesse* by Nancy Zieman are better books.

You will be disappointed by poor quality photos. I have 20/20 vision and had to use a magnifying glass. Additionally, only one or two photos were used to illustrate a six to eight step instruction ("Power Sewing" uses at least twice that many along with closer more-detailed pictures). Many times her instructions lacked detail or were unclear which, along with bad photos, left me puzzled over her fitting "solution". Fast Fit is a misleading name as Sandra wants you to make a basic fitted shell for each company you purchase patterns from then, for every adjustment made, make a

pretest garment in scrap fabric. Cartoon drawings are used to illustrate fitting problems (swayback, narrow shoulders, etc.) when a "real" person photo would be more effective in seeing how things wrinkle or hang. Sometimes, after adjustments are made or for just a better fit, it's necessary to reposition button holes, collars or lapel lines--this is not addressed anywhere in her book. For beginning to intermediate sewing levels, *Fitting Finess* by Nancy Zieman or *A Perfect Fit* by Singer have clearer more-detailed instructions and better photos.

When I first got this book, I didn't think it was all that useful, except for the bust adjustment (which, by the way DOES add length and width) and a couple of others. However, the more I actually work on fitting, the more I find myself referring to it and understanding the rationale behind the adjustments. Here's the bottom line: the book is not so well organized, and the adjustments will not work in every scenario. You have to be aware of exactly where your fitting problem originates and then decide if the recommended adjustment in this book addresses that particular area. I would not recommend this book as your only fitting book, or as your introduction to fitting. I would say, instead, get a good general book like others recommended, and use this one as a reference when a different approach is needed for specific areas. P.S. the bust adjustment is the best one I've found for dartless tops.

This is by far my favorite pattern fitting book. Every pattern you sew must be fitted--and differently for every person you sew for. Every fitting solution I have tried from this book turns out great. Each fitting solution in this book is given in one-paragraph summary form (the "Fast Fit") for the extremely experienced tailor, and then given in simple, numbered steps for the very beginner. In each fitting solution Ms. Betzina makes an extra effort to find the simplest modification that affects the fewest pieces of the pattern, unlike some alteration books that have you shredding the pattern into small pieces. She even gives you the sequence in which to make your modifications. I often refer to her ease charts that tell how many inches each area of a garment should measure beyond the body measurement. She includes suggestions for how to modify knit patterns for woven fabric (i.e. where to add extra ease to make up for the loss of stretch). She directs you through taking body measurements, altering a fitting shell, making measurements on the flat pattern, comparing your pattern to clothes in your closet and making a pretest garment. Throughout the book there are little windows with helpful fitting tips, e.g. "To make length adjustments, alter both above and below the knee--not just at the pants bottom--to preserve the integrity of the pants or skirt style." There are also little workshop sections throughout the book with special features, like "Adding Pleats,"

"Duplicating Pants You Love," "Creating a Princess Seam" (on a pattern where there was none), and "Sleeve Swap" for using sleeve designs from other patterns. Most of the book is composed of specific fitting problems (like "Large Upper Arms," "Round Upper Back," "Rounded Body," "Thick or Thin Neck," "Small Waist," "Uneven Shoulders"), how to identify the problem and then 2 or 3 well-illustrated pages with step-by-step solutions for altering the pattern. My favorite is Ms. Betzina's adjustment for narrow shoulders which is simple and perfect--it adjusts the shoulders and raises the underarms and does not change the sleeve. I can't say enough good things about this book, so I'll add a few more. The book is published with a sturdy hardcover and a spiral spine so it lays flat on the table so you can easily refer to it as you work. There is plenty of white space for your own notations or for post-its. There is a comprehensive index and even a list of the patterns Sandra wears in her photos that appear throughout the book. As I make each adjustment I actually learn the logic behind it and add it to my knowledge for the future. This book is the perfect link to grow from being an amateur sewer to being a tailor without a lot of effort. Every sewer who wants their garments to fit should have this book on their sewing table. Well Done Sandra Betzina!

I was disappointed in this book. The photos of the altered patterns are sometimes frustratingly small, and often it is not clear exactly what alteration was done to the pattern piece. In addition, some of the fitting advice is not very good. For example, if you have a wide base of neck, simply making the collar circumference larger will not improve the fit, because you do not have a thick neck--only the base of the neck needs to be accommodated. This book would be suitable for beginning sewists, but it will not satisfy people with advanced sewing and fitting skills.

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