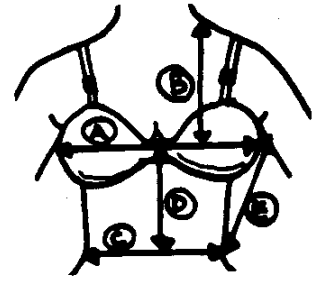


THE BODYCE



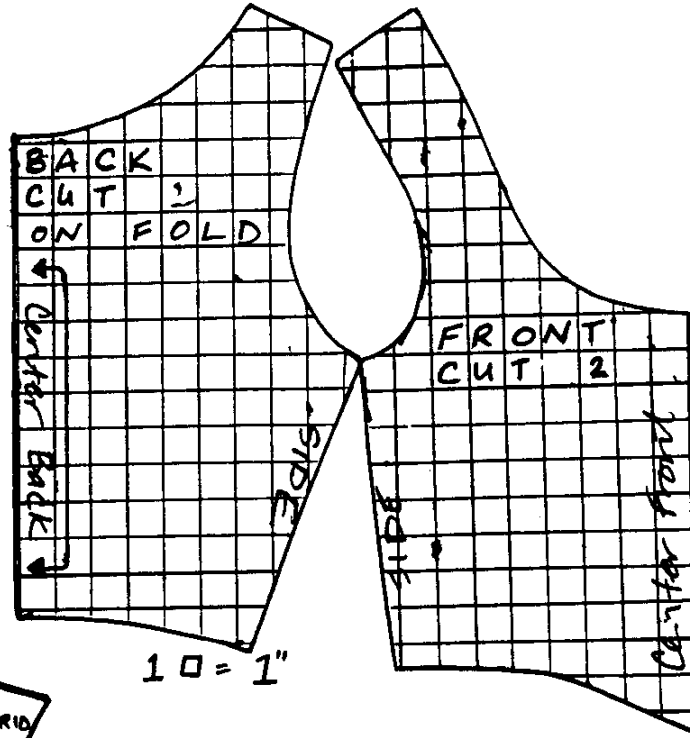
The bodyce or "bodies" that Elizabethan women wore was their way of achieving a fashionable shape. Your bodyce should give you cleavage. When fitted right for peasants, the neckline's lowest point is just above the bust tip. For your first bodyce, a good rule of thumb is: if you take a size 12 normally, you will take a size 10.



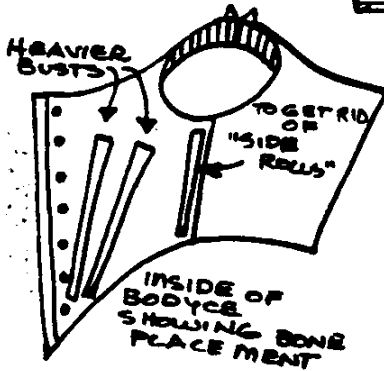
"A" = bust circumference
 "B" = shoulder to bust tip
 "C" = waist circumference
 "D" = length from "A" to "C"
 "E" = under arm seam
 "F" = back of neck to waist
 (For best measurements wear a bra that is adjusted high.)

Suggested fabrics: Wool, brushed denim, (except jean lookalikes), and other sturdy fabrics, or leather (don't interface.) Sew-in Pellon 930 is what we use for interfacing. Lining: tight weave cotton or blends.

You will need: 1 1/2 yds fabric
 3 yds interfacing
 1 1/2 yds lining
 Pellon or fabric for a "muslin"
 boning
 trim, if desired



The bodyce is a snug fitting garment. Have someone help you measure yourself. Make sure you measure the center back of the neck to waist, also (F). Shorten or lengthen pattern as necessary. Trace the pattern on an old paper bag and make alterations according to your measurements and the diagram.



Muslin: a short cut and a savings. Always make up your bodyce pattern in a heavy-weight pellon or inexpensive fabric. Put in bones and make the lacing holes down the front. Put it on inside out and lace it up so that the two center front edges meet. This is how an Elizabethan bodice should be closed in the front. Have a friend pin up any baggy areas and pin up or let out seams. If arm hole curve is too tight, mark with a pen where it should be. Take off bodyce. Duplicate arm hole lower if needed. Pick out seams carefully. This is now your pattern. Flatten it on a paper bag and trace carefully. Make sure all seam allowances are correct.

Bones: spring steel works best. Scavenge from old orthopedic corsets (thrift stores). In desperation you can use chopsticks, venetian blinds or bamboo slats, but these are very weak. Polyboning (at fabric stores) works only for slender, small busted people and it will bend permanently.

