

Bra Fitting Tips From The Experts

By Jen (<http://abbeypost.com/blog/author/jena/>) Tuesday, September 30, 2014 0

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Let's face it. You hate your bra. I hate my bra. We spend all day distracted by the band digging into our sides, the slipping straps, and the underwires that are always poking us somewhere. The thing is, it's not your body's fault, or the bra's fault. It's our fault – yours and mine – because we buy bras that don't fit.

Bra fitting is so much more complicated than band measurement and cup size, though we like to pretend that it is. So we buy bras that we think should fit us, but they really don't. And then they hurt.

We deserve better. We're all way too busy during the Holiday season to be distracted by ill-fitting, agonizingly uncomfortable bras. You really want to go to parties after work, but will you really do it if all you can think about is getting home so you can take off your bra? Let's treat ourselves to some bras that actually fit – think of it as a Holiday present to yourself.

It's not just a matter of grabbing the first expensive bra you find. That crazy uncomfortable bra you're wearing would be super comfortable on someone else, and we should've left it in the store so it could realize it's boob-lifting destiny instead of living in the back of a drawer. A well fitting bra can change your life – because you're not distracted by the dang thing all day. Yes, it'll look spectacular, but a bra that you don't mind wearing? Where do I sign up? I spoke to some bra fitting experts to find out how we can actually get bras that fit.



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The right bra can make (or break) your look!

What Are We Doing Wrong?

Our biggest mistake comes from trying to buy bras in stores that don't have cup sizes larger than DD. We get creative (or desperate) in our quest to find a size that will sort of do the job and we doom ourselves to failure. Linda Becker, aka [Linda the Bra Lady \(http://www.lindasonline.com/\)](http://www.lindasonline.com/), says, "Women buy bras that are too big in the band and too small in the cup." Cups do get larger as the band size increases, so we go bigger to get a cup that fits, but then the band doesn't fit and we don't get any support.

Lori Kaplan, Co-founder and Director, [Bra Tenders \(http://bratenders.com/\)](http://bratenders.com/) says, "The biggest problem I see is that women buy the band of the bra too big, when what they really need is a fuller cup. Many women come in wearing say a 40DD, when what they really need is a 36G. The measuring guides don't really inform women how a bra should fit, and the add three inches here, and deduct a number there, do not work."

It's time to admit that the place where we've been buying our bras doesn't actually carry our size. That's super painful, especially if you're already hard to fit (plus size, petite, tall, etc.) but acknowledging the problem is the first step towards solving it.

Get Professionally Fitted

And not just by someone with a measuring tape who works in the lingerie department fitting room. Go to a boutique that only sells bras, or to a bra fitting event at a store so you can be fitted by a bra fitting expert. Lori recommends that, "women get fitted at least once, and learn how a bra should fit, what to look for, how to adjust herself, and the bra." That way you'll have the knowledge to shop for a bra on your own if you want to. Though you may choose to let the experts do most of the work for you. Linda suggests getting fitted, "every six months because your body changes and you need new bras every six months anyway."

Seeing a professional bra fitter will also help you find the right style of bra for you (wide-set straps, or narrower-set, fuller on the bottom or top – the options go on and on). Not only are bra sizes different from manufacturer to manufacturer, but Linda says, “bras in the same company can be different.” An expert will know which size you need in each bra.

Build Your Bra Arsenal

According to Linda, every woman needs “5 to 7 bras depending on your lifestyle.” Some women need more t-shirt bras than lacy numbers and vice versa. A strapless bra may be essential for some women, but it’s completely useless for others.

But all women need more than one of each style of bra they wear. Linda says, “You need to rotate them. If you wear a bra every day, it will stretch out.”



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It all starts with an accurate measurement!

Go It Alone

No one is expecting you to leave a professional bra fitting with seven new bras (unless you want to, of course). Once you've been professionally fitted and educated about which bras are best for your girls, you can buy more online. Lori says it's even possible to get a good fit on your own, "if someone has patience and a lot of time for trial and error." And money for return shipping.

If you don't live near a good bra shop, you may be on your own anyway. Lori says:

"A good starting size is to measure around the upper ribcage, under the bust for band size. Then measure around the fullest part of the bust. If the underbust measurement is 32, and the overbust measurement is 36, in theory, the bra size should be 32D. The 4 inch difference = one inch for each cup, so A,B,C,D. The band of the bra provides 90% of the support, and should be snug, and parallel – same place in back as in front. If the band is too big, and sits high between the shoulder blades, then the front will droop."

Remember – if you're shopping for bras without the help of a professional bra fitting expert, try everything on and expect the process to take a while. Don't settle on a bra that's sort of OK – the perfect for you bra is out there.

Do I Have to Wear Underwires?

Well, yes – especially if you're plus size. But that's no reason to despair – an underwire bra that fits properly is comfortable. For realies. Linda says, "underwires give better shape and more support."

Lori agrees, “Wireless bras don’t give a very attractive shape – the boobs sometimes are spread too wide, have an “east-west” appearance, or sit too low, which causes the body to look wider. When the breasts are contained within the frame provided by underwires, they sit more centered on the front of the body. An underwired bra is not uncomfortable when it’s the right size, and the best style, for someone’s shape.”

Why Won’t My Bra Straps Stay Hidden?

If your bra strap is always peeking out of your neckline, you’re wearing the wrong style bra for your body (or for your shirt). Linda says, “some women need wider straps, some need racerback bras.” A bra expert (or trial and error) can help you find the right style for you.

Lori suggests experimenting with convertible straps. “Many bras come with a convertible strap feature that can be changed to accommodate different necklines. There are bra accessories which can turn a regular bra into a racer back, for instance. We carry a few styles of strapless bras that have detachable straps that can be worn 6 different ways.” Play around and see which strap configuration keeps your bra straps hidden.

Lori has another tip that works whether it’s your bra straps moving around, or your shirt: “Have a tailor sew lingerie loops into tops or dresses, that keep the bra strap in place and prevent it from peeking out.”

Lori also says that you can keep your bra hidden by wearing clothes that fit you properly. “I must caution full busted women to stop shopping in the junior sections! I see so many women who wear D or larger cups with tops that are ill fitting and designed for a smaller bust, so smarter choices about our wardrobes goes a long way.”

What About Front-Closing Bras?

I’ve been all about the front closing bras since injuring my shoulder a few

months ago, but it turns out that I'm not doing my chest any favors. Lori's not a fan. "In my experience, front close bras do not pull the breasts together like a back close bra does, and allows for more space/separation of the breasts, which doesn't always give an attractive look. Again it's the east-west, wide body look that I am not such a fan of."

Is It Worth It?

Whether you search for the perfectly fitting bra on your own, or go to a boutique and let a bra fitting expert do the heavy lifting, finding the right bras for you are a bit of an effort. But the payoff makes it totally worth it. For one thing, your clothes will hang better – and why waste all your clothes shopping effort by ruining the look with a bad bra? And for another thing, a bra that fits right is so comfortable that you won't spend all day looking forward to taking it off. That comfort lets you focus on everything else you need to do. With the right bra, you'll find yourself enjoying the Holidays that much more.





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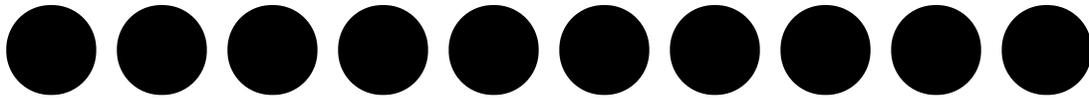
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