

# What does Plus Size even mean?

By Jen (<http://abbeypost.com/blog/author/jena/>)

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The truth is that plus size clothing is whatever a manufacturer says it is. Depending on who you ask, the threshold can be size 16 or size 12. And some plus sized models

[http://www.nycastings.com/dmxreadyv2/blogmanager/v3\\_blogmanager.asp?post=that%27s-a-plus!](http://www.nycastings.com/dmxreadyv2/blogmanager/v3_blogmanager.asp?post=that%27s-a-plus!)) wear a size 8. But thanks to [vanity sizing](http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/design/2012/01/clothing_sizes_getting_bigger) ([http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/design/2012/01/clothing\\_sizes\\_getting\\_bigger](http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/design/2012/01/clothing_sizes_getting_bigger)) not all size 16s are the same size. So you can wear one designer's plus sizes while fitting into another designer's straight sizes.

There simply isn't a standard sizing system in place for women's clothing. A little over a century ago, most women's clothing was custom made. Even women who couldn't afford a dressmaker would make their clothes at home. Who needs standard sizes when you're making everything [to your measurements](http://abbeypost.com/made-to-measure/?v=2&utm_expid=68762964-1.4VOxJRduQ-2uKeDpEVKsXg.1) ([http://abbeypost.com/made-to-measure/?v=2&utm\\_expid=68762964-1.4VOxJRduQ-2uKeDpEVKsXg.1](http://abbeypost.com/made-to-measure/?v=2&utm_expid=68762964-1.4VOxJRduQ-2uKeDpEVKsXg.1))?

The creation of department stores changed this, but not all at once. No one stopped to create a universal sizing system. Each designer and clothing manufacturer was figuring it out as they went along. Attempts have been made over the years to create standards, but vanity won out. Some designers make their clothes larger than others because they think that women will be so thrilled to wear a "smaller" size that they'll buy more.

All because of the number on a label that no one else sees. And this applies to [cheap clothes](http://abbeypost.com/blog/cheap-plus-size-clothes-arent-worth-cost/) (<http://abbeypost.com/blog/cheap-plus-size-clothes-arent-worth-cost/>) you buy at a box store as well as designer boutiques. It's amazing that any woman finds clothing that fits.

There can be a stigma to wearing anything over a size 8, let alone a 18. But really, [you're YOU sized](http://abbeypost.com/made-to-measure/?v=2&utm_expid=68762964-1.4VOxJRduQ-2uKeDpEVKsXg.1) ([http://abbeypost.com/made-to-measure/?v=2&utm\\_expid=68762964-1.4VOxJRduQ-2uKeDpEVKsXg.1](http://abbeypost.com/made-to-measure/?v=2&utm_expid=68762964-1.4VOxJRduQ-2uKeDpEVKsXg.1)). There's nothing wrong with wearing a size 24 or a 5X or whatever a label says. It's just a number. You can [look fantastic](http://abbeypost.com/blog/plus-size-women-almost-always-look-fantastic/) (<http://abbeypost.com/blog/plus-size-women-almost-always-look-fantastic/>) at any size.

Since more than 60% of American women wear size 14 and up, you can't say that plus size is "larger than average." But that doesn't mean that we should necessarily start making all clothing in all sizes. Everyone's body is shaped differently, and larger bodies are no exception. Plus size clothing isn't just larger than straight sized, it's shaped to accommodate curvier curves.

So many women ask "am I plus sized?", and they're afraid of the answer. Yet there's no reason to feel bad if you wear plus size clothes. Whether you shop in the Ladies' or Women's department is just a practical matter. So even if you're an [in-betweenie](http://www.stylehasnosize.com/category/inbetweens/) (<http://www.stylehasnosize.com/category/inbetweens/>), you might find a better fit by wearing plus size clothing instead of straight sizes – a size 14W could fit you better than a size 14. And as we all know, fit is the key to flattering clothes at any size!

But until the women's clothing industry gets its act together and agrees on standard sizing, it'll be impossible to say which sizes are plus size. That's why it's worth it to [check sizing charts](http://abbeypost.com/blog/what-everyone-should-know-about-buying-plus-size-clothing/) (<http://abbeypost.com/blog/what-everyone-should-know-about-buying-plus-size-clothing/>) and [bring a tape measure to the mall](http://abbeypost.com/blog/what-everyone-should-know-about-buying-plus-size-clothing/) (<http://abbeypost.com/blog/what-everyone-should-know-about-buying-plus-size-clothing/>) – so you can figure out which department you should be looking in.

So, what's plus size? It depends. And that's OK!



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