

Adjusting a pattern to work with a different stretch using a fish or luggage scale.

Instructions brought to you by Travis Halsey & Carole Klinko.

Start with your original stretch fabric and pick any number of inches. For these instructions, I've decided to use 5". Most often I use 10".

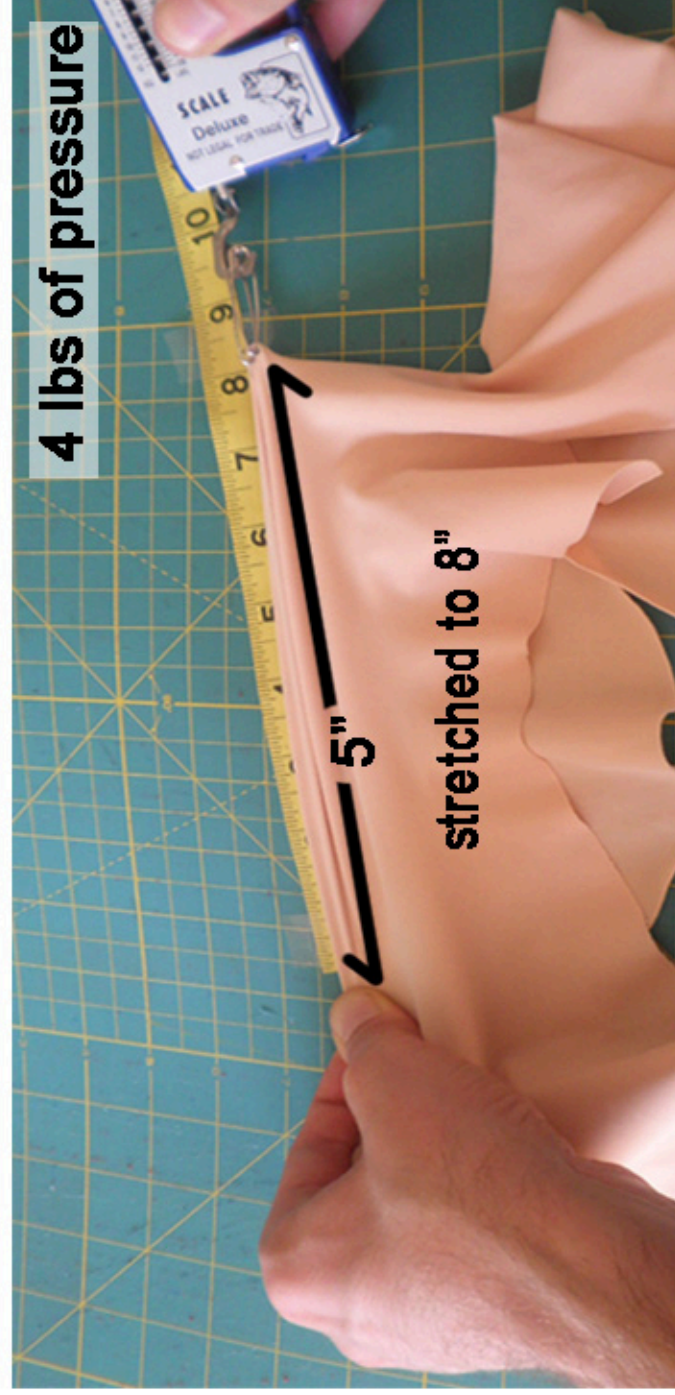
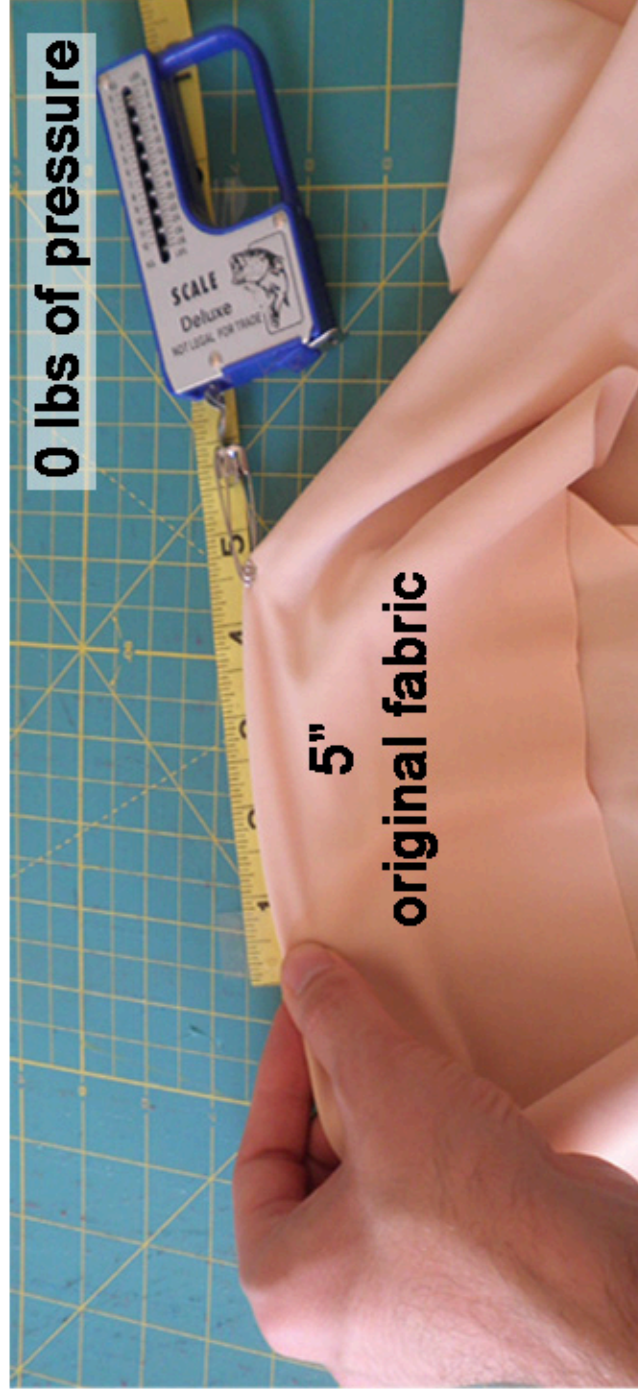
First I pin my scale using 2 safety pins to the original fabric.

Hold the free end of the 5" and apply pressure to the fabric.

I apply 4 lbs of pressure to the 5" of fabric and notice that it is stretched to 8".

So I know that under 4lbs of pressure my original 5" stretches to 8".

Next on the new fabric we have to determine how many inches of fabric, plus or minus, it will take to stretch 8" under 4 lbs. of pressure.



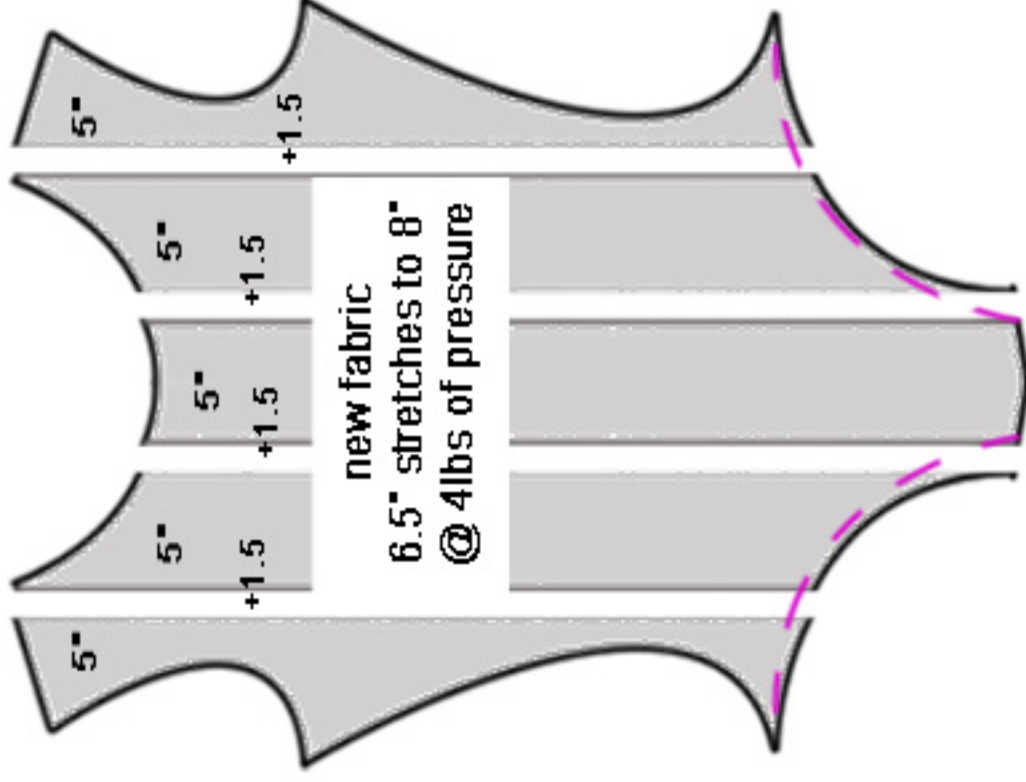
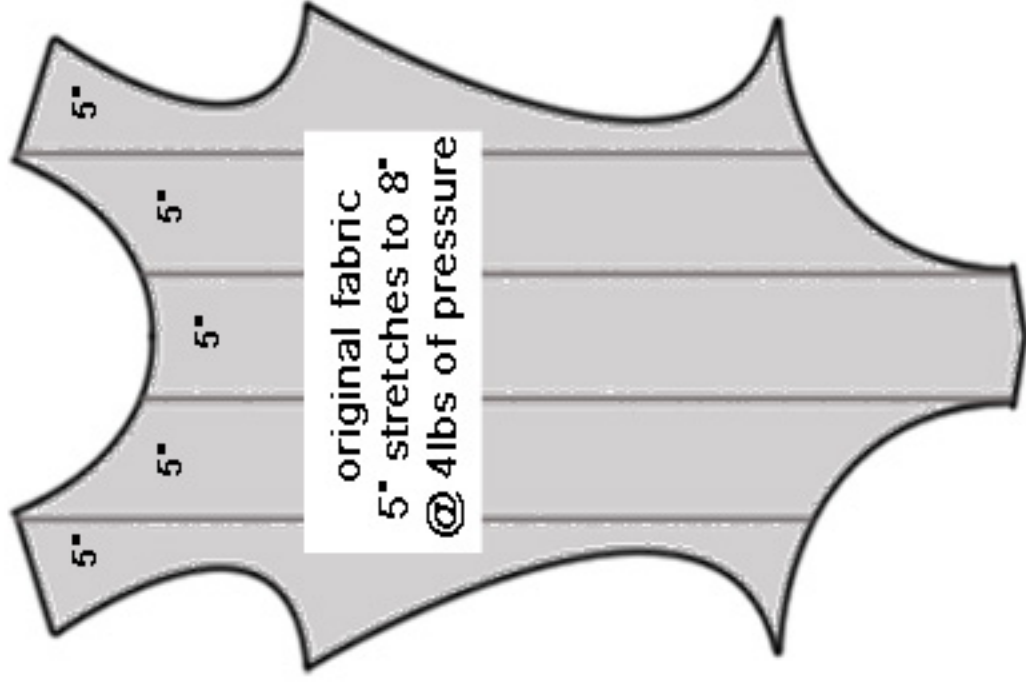
On your new fabric, start with your original measurement and see what it stretches to under the same amount of pressure. My original 5" on the new fabric only stretches to 6" under 4 lbs of pressure. So we need a greater amount of fabric to reach 8" under 4lbs of pressure. By trial, I've determined that in my new fabric it takes 6.5" under 4lbs of pressure to stretch to 8".

Be sure to test both the cross and straight of your fabric before making any pattern adjustments.

For this sample my straight of grain is the same for my original and my new fabric. It is only the cross grain that needs to be adjusted and we've determined that every 5" now needs to become 6.5" for the pattern to fit in the new fabric.

Remember that in the first step I used 5" and 4lbs of pressure. These numbers are both variable. You could select 7" and apply 8lbs of pressure. What's important is that you apply the same amount of pressure on both your original and new fabrics to determine what to add or subtract to your pattern.





For this stretch adjustment I'm using a leotard front to demonstrate slashing and spreading a pattern. I've marked 5" symmetrically across the pattern and have added 1.5" to each 5" section. Next I redraw my pattern edge. Notice that the crotch is now really wide. Use your judgment when redrawing any edges such as the crotch in this example. To keep the pattern even more accurate I could divide my 5" sections into 2.5" sections and my 1.5" addition into 3/4". Then I would add 3/4" to every 2.5" across the pattern.

Another handy tool is a proportional scale. With this tool you would see that to make 5" increase to 6.5" your pattern needs to be 120.5% larger across. Most copy centers have the ability to enlarge or reduce length and width separately by percent. If you decide to go this route be very clear with your printer as to what you need. Double check your pattern before you cut.

Remember that with any sewn garment, adjustments should be made in a fitting. This method is not a divine solution but it will definitely help when using the same pattern with different stretches, or combining different stretches on the same pattern.