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## Honest Question – Would You Want to Shop from Racks that Show your Real Size in Inches?

Tuesday, December 01, 2020

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I've thought a lot about that after the responses on one part of my maintenance anniversary blog

Why not? We always buy our bras in inches (except for "squash-m-down" sports bras that are SML +)

Do we really want all our clothes sized like this? I am interested in your opinions.

Question #2: If your answer is YES, why do you think companies don't do it?



In recap, I wrote that:

"I had ignored the pounds added year after year, decade after decade. With forgiving fabrics and the sizing creep of the fashion industry, I even continued to wear the same size while my measurements continually INCHED upwards (pun intended)

And I noted that:

Measurements for Size 10

The 1960s – 32.5, 25, 34.5

Today - 38, 30, 40.5

The fashion industry did me no favors by padding their bottom line while I padded my bottom."

I must clarify that this was about "sizing creep" over the decades, not the "vanity sizing" that has always been with us. There have always been companies that sized their clothes larger to gain customers. Generally, if you spend more money, they call you a smaller size

This is about the coordinated result of the ENTIRE industry adding inches to each size little by little over time. The exception? The pattern industry has held the line – check out the Simplicity sizing chart. Off the rack I wear an 8. If I buy a pattern today, I'm a 12 or even 14.

The reason we have a size zero now is because by the measurements it used to be a size 6-8.

Back to the question.

I along with other women often say that we want our clothes sized in real inches like men's clothing to

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eliminate the shopping guesswork.

Back in the 50s-60s the average woman had a 26" waist and wore a size 12. We all aspired to be like Marilyn Monroe and Sophia Loren with their 24" waists.

The waist may have been possible for me but I couldn't stuff enough into my bra to imitate their chests. The average woman was a 34B and I was even less than that.

The average woman now has a 34 inch WAIST with a 34DD inch bust.  
Do we want to shop on the rack for pants & skirts with the reality of our size in full view?  
Companies are betting that we really don't.

Bras have always been sold using inches and letters. While the inches haven't increased on average the letters certainly have. If you want a size 32A, better check the teen department.  
Along with gastric bypass surgery, breast enhancement surgery has exploded.  
Body image issues affects all body types.

Again, the question  
Do we REALLY want to face the numbers like men do?  
Or are we secretly happy to keep our measurements hidden behind some random size number?

Note that when a celebrity tells us what SIZE they wear, they never include their measurements.

After the success of my 12 years on Spark, I can NOW say SURE, I would shop by the real inches.

However, thinking back honestly, as I gained the weight and my waistline and hips expanded, would I have welcomed moving to the "over 30 inch pants rack" to eliminate the guesswork or were the companies right? Would I have resisted that reality based tough love and stayed with the companies that added the inches to the size 10 instead?

One eye opening visual of sizing creep  
My shorts from 1972, 1987 and 2008 – all size 10



Note that the 2008 pair has an elastic waistband and is made of a stretchy fabric, so I could continue to expand and so would the shorts. No wonder my AHA moment took so long.

The date of this photo is 1973. I'm holding baby #2 and wearing the shorts in the above picture. I remember wearing them again after baby #3 in 1975 so I couldn't blame my eventual weight gain on pregnancy.



One final visual, just for comparison, I dug out a pair of stretchy fabric “hot pants” circa 1970



So honestly ladies, what is your answer?  
Do we want companies to use real inches to size our clothes?

If they had kept the 1960s sizing like Simplicity Patterns, I would have had to admit that my size 10 shorts by 2008 were really size 16. Would my AHA moment have come sooner?  
Or is there another reason I stopped making my own clothes.

MISSES' SKIRTS.							
Metric Conversion Chart given on enclosed direction sheet.							
Extra fabric is needed to match plaids, stripes or one-way designs.							
Not suitable for obvious diagonal fabrics.							
STANDARD BODY MEASUREMENTS	{Waist	24	25	26½	28	30	Ins.
	Hip - 9" below waist	33½	34½	36	38	40	"
Fabric required	Sizes	8	10	12	14	16	

Finally, I have a retort for all those snarky “you’re too skinny” remarks.  
No I’m not! I have become an average 1960s woman.  
(secretly thinking, I have become my MOTHER!)

Edit: LOL Had to respond here to Kendra's great comment LOL  
It's a result of too much closet space.  
I could outfit the entire cast of Grease, Hair or Saturday Night Fever!  
My granddaughter got a kick out of my "vintage" clothes.

Edit #2:  
I found a lot of those clothes in my mother's basement after she passed.  
I liked seeing my old self and now I had a LOT of closet space. All the kids had moved out.  
SOME of those clothes actually fit since finding Spark and some amazed my granddaughter "Grandma  
your wore mini skirts? short shorts? a bikini?

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## Member Comments About This Blog Post



**NOSEYME**

going down memory lane is fun..  
181 days ago



**MSMOSTIMPROVED**

I was all for it until I saw those tiny hot pink shorts! No thank you. Sometimes ignorance is



bliss. I just got out of my 20s this year. I don't want any more reality checks right now  
182 days ago



**DONNALEE-53**

**AWESOME**

183 days ago



**AQUAGIRL08**

I often buy clothes by my measurements. If the store is also online, I can check the sizing first before I try on the clothes in the store. I think the measurements give a more accurate fit.  
183 days ago



**SLENDERELLA61**

Great blog!  
183 days ago



**KAYDE53**

Sizing is a real pet peeve of mine especially in these days of more and more clothing store closures. It has been very difficult to find clothes online that fit even using your real measurements. I would be glad to go back to the sizing of the 60's where no matter what store I went into, I was a size 13.  
184 days ago



**LYN135**

I would like something more standard. I have anything from a size 8 to 12 in my closet and they all fit me pretty much the same. My husband on our 1st Christmas bought me an outfit I had seen in a store window and really liked. He went to my closet to get my sizes and then bought me the outfit. We were both so disappointed when none of it fit and when I tried to exchange there was none left in store that did actually fit. He has never bought me an outfit again maybe an occasional tee shirt but as rule he says " buying women's clothing is way to difficult to figure out!"  
184 days ago



**1CRAZYDOG**

Standardizing the sizing would suit me for sure.  
184 days ago



**HWNHMMBRD**

I had gastric bypass surgery on June 1. I have been slowly replacing my wardrobe, but in these times (dressing rooms closed by our governor) trying to get the "right" size has been extremely frustrating!! I have one pair of jeans in a size 10 that fit awesome, and another in the same size that I need to use a belt with. I did not know that sewing patterns have remained the same, and I just might start sewing for myself again so that I get the right fit!  
185 days ago



**LIZZIO1**

This question had never occurred to me, but it is profound in its simplicity. Sizing in inches is a terrific idea!  
185 days ago



**GOLDENRODFARM**

I buy most of my clothes in the men's department, their sizes are more uniform and pants fit well and are long enough. Same with tops, arms are long enough, and chest sizes accommodate better then women's clothing which is always too tight up top and too big in the waist. The added plus is that if you buy similar men's or women's clothing, I have found over the years the women's item needs special washing instructions and the men's is toss in the washer, particularly true about jackets. The final clincher is that men's clothing is sturdy, much better for working on the farm or hiking, fishing are most outdoors sports.  
185 days ago





**GRAMPIAN**



We should have uniform sizing (in inches/centimetres) whatever the brand.  
185 days ago

v



**FRITZYS\_MAMA**

good blog! yeah definitely noticed the size difference in different brands. Woman Within makes their clothes super big which is why I would buy clothes from them when I had a lot of inflammation. Venus makes their clothes more normal sized which is why I buy from them now.  
185 days ago

v



**ALICIA363**

THANK YOU!

for this lovely blog.  
I still haven't figured out my answer to the question, but boy it gives me food for thought!  
185 days ago

v



**DEFARGE2**

While we're at it, how about manufacturers also make pretty, stylish clothing for women of "average size" and plus? No more slapping a few sequin appliques on a black or navy sack dress and calling it formal wear.  
186 days ago

v



**MTN\_KITTEN**

I am for making clothes shopping less painful by manufactures to standardize sizing ... period. We don't wear the size label on the outside of the garment ... so whose to know.

I can wear a ... Medium, Large, XLarge ... 16-18-20 ... all with the same body. What's a girl to do when ordering on line ... with NO trying on available these days???



186 days ago

v



**MANGO1960**

Well Done!

186 days ago

v



**CORRIEC2**

Elastic did me no favors I started wearing leggings after having my first born for some reason the cesarian scar was painful and elastic bands are the only thing to wear that don't hurt even now. With the comparison with the clothing size over time I would prefer to buy my clothes by the inches.  
186 days ago

v



**GETULLY**

I want the inches. It is just too fricken hard to jump around the sizes with different manufacturers. I have gone back to sewing because once I altered a pattern to fit or drafted a pattern to fit, it fit. I used to sew for others (mostly aunties) but I was always amazed at the patterns they brought me and the amount of alterations I had to do. Just go up a size or down a size ladies. But each of them got it into their head that they were X size in McCalls or Simplicity and nothing could change that.  
186 days ago

v



**NANCYPAULINE**

Yes please! Standard measures, inches and/or centimeters. But what I'd really like to see is quality construction and quality fabrics for us "ordinary folk." There's so much cheap junk. Remember the TV ads for the ILGW union, "So look for the union label..." I still have some



wearable classics with those labels. But I digress...  
186 days ago

v



**DEFARGE2**

Honestly, the inches/ centimeters would be easier to work with, but painful to the ego.  
186 days ago

v



**AZMOMXTWO**

I+would+like+to+see+all+sizes++standardized  
186 days ago

v

v



**MAMADEE016**

While I could reiterate many of the thoughts I've already read in these comments, I'll spare future readers the length a bit.

What I will say emphatically is: YES!!! IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL IF ALL SIZES WOULD JUST BE IN INCHES (or centimeters)!!! So much easier to know if it would fit that way!



186 days ago

v



**THOMS1**

I WOULDN'T MIND THAT AT ALL. I THINK IT WOULD BE MUCH EASIER TO SHOP BY MEASUREMENTS THAN TO DRAG ALL OF THOSE CLOTHES INTO THE DRESSING ROOM



AND DRAG THEM BACK OUT AGAIN. BRING IT ON.

187 days ago

v



**MERMAIDLIFE**

Inches, letters, numbers, I don't care. I hate all the variance. A "size" should be the same, regardless of which store you're in or what line you're shopping. And vanity sizing has crossed over into the men's department, too. There aren't very many brands where "34" means "34" anymore.

187 days ago

v



**MEMEQ2**

I would love to be able to buy a pair of pants based on inches, waist as well as length. I wear petite because I'm 5' 1" but sometimes they are still too long and sometimes too short.

187 days ago

v



**QUEENFROG**

Interesting. I do remember there being a size 0 even back in the 70's. However, they were a rare find (not that I needed it).

187 days ago

v



**HARRIETT14**

I don't think it would matter much if the clothing were sized by inches. I enjoy wearing jeans however, I have found altho I have bought sizes 10's and 8's there are some that I don't even have to unbuckle, I just pull them down or up. Then there are the ones that I can not button at the waist but everywhere else fits perfectly. They are made with the same material as usually. I honestly do not remember the last time that I bought any new clothing.

187 days ago

v



**SHAKERATTLEROLL**



Keep those "vintage" clothes and even wear them now and then for you know fashion comes and goes.

187 days ago

v



**RACHNACH**



187 days ago

v



**UPTOIT59**



There is a reason they call it "vanity sizing."

187 days ago

v



**PATTYSPENCER**

Nope don't think so - we would be buying clothes sometimes on a weekly bases depending on whether we've lost weight or gain or moved our weight from one leg to the other or our top weight down to our bottom lol

All would seem like a lot of work and too much money lol

187 days ago

v



**JUNGLEGIRL8**

I would definitely prefer standardized sizing by inches at this point. I'm not sure if I would have earlier in my life.

It would make online ordering easier, although some sites offer a sizing guide in actual inches. It would also be helpful when/if we get back to trying on clothes in stores. Wouldn't have to bring an armload of multiple sizes to try on.

It's an interesting question.

187 days ago

v



**GRANDMA524DAR**



187 days ago

v



**MSLZZY**

Not sure whether I would like it or not. Hard enough to make myself go shopping in a store much less find something that fits the way I like.

187 days ago

v



**HAYBURNER1969**

Maybe with the pandemic, they will have to start using inches. You can't try anything on in the stores around here. I haven't bought any new clothes since dressing rooms are closed, and I don't want the inconvenience of having to return something - even by mail.

187 days ago

v



**PLCHAPPELL**

I know the size 10 of today is not the one of yesterday. New sizing is more like average women today.

187 days ago

v



**LIS193**

Clothing sizes are all over the place... add to that different countries use different sizing - argh so confusing!

Yes! Sorting in racks with inches would be helpful - for the last 15 years I have had a measuring tape in my purse, very helpful.



187 days ago

v



**KITTYHAWK1949**

Maybe a good thing. I would like all companies to size alike and not keep changing and going by inches might be the only way.



187 days ago

v



**MARYJEANSL**

I don't think I would care one way or the other. I am already in a large size using the SML system, so I would be a large size in the 'inches' system. There is too much more important in life to get upset about sizes.

187 days ago

v



**PATRICIAANN46**

We all know that the clothing industry will never go along with REAL sizing because their bottom line is to flatter us into buying what makes us feel good about ourselves.

Having real sizing would certainly make it easier to shop different brands because they would all be the correct size for YOU.

This is a great question, but I don't know if I am ready for correct sizing yet because I haven't reached my final goal. But, if I ordered everything on-line, it wouldn't matter.

I have to think on this one.....

187 days ago

v



**DOVESEYES**

Can't find a bra to fit properly any more ... or much else really .... the sizes are too small or too big :(

187 days ago

v



**NANABFITZ**

At this weight I don't think I would want my size in inches. Interest to read what everyone is saying.

187 days ago

v



**ALEXSGIRL1**

I have bought two pairs of sweats same company and size ? one loose one tight one must be mens . I like your sizing idea Hugs

187 days ago

v



**ALIHAKES**

Very interesting blog. I am not sure what I prefer. I don't think I would like to recognize my real size. But I have lost a lot of pounds over the past year and half, and it is frustrating to try and purchase new pants (last year's winter pants are too loose and fall down. I guess I could try to rock the look where my underwear shows ... but it's not a good look at my age, or really at any age).



Locally the stores are not allowing us to try on clothing because of the pandemic. So I guess what size I am, and I have to return a lot of purchases.  
187 days ago



**PAULALALALA**

I've also saved clothes from the 70's on - An 8 now would have been at least a 12 back then (with my pants examples I have here anyway.) Now it wouldn't bother me to shop from a rack with size in inches -- back then it probably would have. I would love if there was a standard measure when shopping online. Even when you click the "sizing guide" link it's usually not informative. I've read comments in the reviews for certain clothing items and note that if it is from China that it can tend to be very tiny for the same size you might buy here in the US. On the other hand, I've made the mistake of buying clothing that is too large because I was overcompensating for what I thought might be small sizing. Inches in these instances would be so helpful and money-saving. I hate to return items purchased online.

187 days ago

V



**CD4114015**

Very interesting!!!

187 days ago



V



**DARLENEK04**

Interesting thoughts in your blog.....I used to make all my clothes, dresses, slacks, Pant suits.....I think my fave patterns were Simplicity.....

I don't really shop by size.....I hold it up and I "know" if I can wear it or if it will be snug, this is why my daughter always takes me shopping when she needs clothes...I can look at something, know if it will look good on her and if it will fit.

I felt the best in my life at a 114 lbs,.....

187 days ago

V



**LINDA!**

When I married, in my 20s, I wore a size 7. I do remember having the 24" waist. After children, it all shifted. I worked out all the time and did not gain as much as some do. However, my shape changed. Certainly, it has never gotten back to what it was. I have a super problem with my waist. So finding sizes can be difficult. What fits around my waist is often too big in my legs. I wish I were rich enough to have clothes made specifically for me.

187 days ago

V



**CD4114015**

WOW you made an interesting suggestion!!!! I really can't decide my answer!

187 days ago



V

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