

How to Choose and Fit a Bra and Breast Prosthesis



Brought to you by Trans Tool Shed

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The Tool Shed offers several different breast form styles for trans women, cross-dressers, or anyone who is looking to enhance their gender expression. *This brochure describes how to measure for a bra size, as well as tips on choosing the corresponding form/cup size of your preference.*

1. Take your under-bust measurement

Using a soft measuring tape, measure around your rib cage just under the pectoral muscles where the natural breast tissue joins the body. This is your under-bust measurement. Be sure to keep the tape measure level with the floor when placing it around your body. Take a snug measurement. This number will be used to figure your bra band size.

(Please note: some manufacturer's bra sizing guides will have you take a measurement across the topmost part of your chest, just under your armpits, to find your band size. While this measure

can work well for some people, individuals with wider upper back muscles may find the under-armpit measure to be far less accurate than the under-bust.)

2. Use your under-bust measurement to find your bra band size

This part seems like it should be easy, but it is slightly complicated by the bra industry itself! Logic would say that your bra band size should equal your under-bust measurement. So, for example, if your under-bust measure is 36 inches, *you would think* your bra band size would be 36... but it turns out to be not quite so simple!

For many years, the bra industry has used a bra band sizing system that recommends you add 4 inches to your under-bust measurement to find your band size. For example, if a person measures their actual under-bust at 36 inches, their bra band size would be a 40.

Transform (the company that supplies our pocket bras and some of our breast forms) uses the “plus 4” system, so if you are buying a Transform Bra from our store, use your under-bust measurement plus 4 to find your band size for that bra.

If you are buying bras from another manufacturer, then you might want to try them on first, or ask band sizing questions before buying. The “plus 4” rule is pretty common in the industry, but in recent years it has fallen out of favor with some bra companies. Some specialized retailers prefer to rely on your physical under-bust measurement first, and then provide their own sizing advice.

Confused? Don't worry! The world of bra fitting is as much an art as a science. Here are the three important things to remember from all this:

- 1. Always know your actual under-bust measurement.**
- 2. When shopping for a bra, ask how their band sizing relates to your actual under-bust measurement. If it is a decent shop, they should be able to help fit you properly.**
- 3. Whenever you can, try on a bra for fit, and know the return policy if you buy a bra online.**

You might find a 36 band size works great in one brand, but that you wear a 38 in another company's bra. You'll also find that there are other elements aside from band size that make one brand or style fit you well.

One more note on bra bands: they only come in even numbers.

So, if your under-bust measures 35 inches, round up to 36 as your starting point.

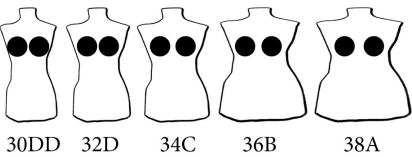
3. Choose a cup size

Now that you have found your band size, it is time to move on to cup size, which is related to the size of the breasts themselves.

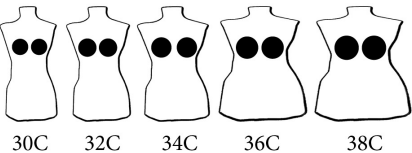
The size of the cups on a bra is indicated by a letter, starting with A and proceeding up the alphabet. Cup size A is smaller than B, B is smaller than C, C is smaller than D, and so on. There

are sometimes double letters in the system, usually multiples of the letter D. DD is larger than D, and DDD is larger than DD. The odd exception to this system is AA, which is *smaller* than A!

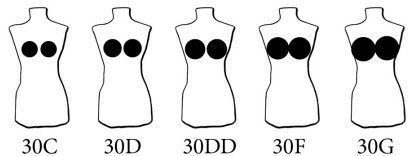
Rather than being a fixed size or volume, cup size is *relative* to your band size. That is, a B cup on a very small person is actually smaller in volume than a B cup on a very large person. The B refers to how far the breast tissue projects away from the body, not how big the actual cup is! (See the illustration below.)



These bras have the same cup volume. As band size increases, cup size decreases.



These are all C cups—as the band size increases, so does the cup volume.



Within the same band size, cup letters increase with cup volume.

With breast forms, you get to choose your own cup size! When deciding on your cup size, consider your height, weight, and figure. Understand that if you choose a cup size that is very large for a small frame, or is small for your frame, it may be harder to buy clothes that fit properly. Women’s clothing tends to be designed around “average” sizes, and when you fall outside those averages, proper fitting for clothing (as well as finding specialty bras) can be difficult.

If you know your dress size, use the chart below to find a suggested cup size. Everyone’s body is different (and clothing sizes vary by brand), but the suggested sizes below are a great place to start for choosing your cup size.

Dress Size	Suggested Cup Size
0	A
2	A
4	A or B
6	B
8	B or C
10	C
12	C
14	C or D
16	D
18	D or DD

4. Choose a form size

Once you have your band measurement and have chosen your desired cup size, you will then want to choose a breast form size that corresponds to those measurements.

Breast form sizing systems will vary by style and manufacturer. Transform, the manufacturer who supplies many of our breast forms, uses a numbering system from 1 to 14, with 1 being the smallest form and 14 being the largest.

To find which form size corresponds to your bra band and chosen cup size, use the sizing table that goes with the brand of

forms you are buying. The table below is for Transform forms. The top row of numbers (32 through 48) indicates bra band size. The vertical column of letters (A through DD) indicates bra cup size. Numbers in the center of the table indicate corresponding breast form size. For example, if your band size is 36 and your chosen cup size is C, you would choose form size 5.

The form sizes on the table should give you shallow-to-average cup fit. If you would like a fuller cup, try the next form size up. (Example: if you are a 36C, you can try form sizes 5 and 6 to see which look you prefer.)

Bra band size →		32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48
Cup size ↓	A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	B	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	C	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	D	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	DD	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	

Numbers in center of the table indicate Transform Breast Form sizes based on band size (top row) and cup size (left column).

For more information about the breast form styles that we carry at the Tool Shed, please stop in our store in person, or visit our web site at toolshedtoys.com.