



Selecting Children's Clothing (Toddlers and Pre-School)

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SELECTING CHILDREN'S CLOTHING (TODDLERS AND PRE-SCHOOL)

Clothing is a very important part of a child's world just as it is for an adult. Children are individuals with clothing needs that are related to their physical development, their motor coordination, and their emotional progress. Therefore, clothing should be planned or chosen with the specific needs of the child in mind.

CLOTHING COSTS

Clothing costs vary from year to year and tend to increase with the age of the child.

The cost of clothing children up to two years of age is comparatively low for several reasons:

CHILDREN at this early age get along well with only sufficient clothing to provide a clean supply.

THE CUSTOM of giving gifts to the newborn often provides a large part of infants' clothing needs.

BECAUSE they are outgrown before they are worn out, baby clothes are often saved for another child in the family or given to a friend or relative.

As a child's activities increase, the cost of clothing also increases because he wears out his clothing more quickly.

Where and how you shop can make a difference in getting the most for your children's clothing dollar.

Some money savers are:

PLAN your buying.
BUY WITH CASH. This helps keep you from overspending.
SALE PRICES that are truly lower than regular prices can help you buy more with your money.
BUY WHEN PRICES ARE LOWER...at month end, annual, and special inventory clearance sales.
ITEMS BOUGHT IN TWOS AND THREES may cost less than those same ones bought alone.
A SMALL WARDROBE which is worn often may be the best plan.
PUT THE MOST MONEY into clothes that are worn the most.

SELECTING THE RIGHT SIZE

When you go shopping without your child take along his height, weight, and waist and chest measurements. Some large and some small boned children wear a size or so larger or smaller than their age designation.

It is best to let the child try on garments to check size, but this is not always convenient.

The chart below offers a guide to different size ranges and corresponding measurements in young children's clothes. As we convert to the metric system of measures you will find dual listings of sizes on labels. For example, size 7 boys' jeans have a waist measurement of 21-1/2 (55 cm).

Toddlers' 1 to 4						
Size	1	2	3	4		
Height	31"	34"	37"	40"		
Weight	25 lb.	29 lb.	34 lb.	38 lb.		
Chest	20"	21"	22"	23"		
Waist	20"	20-1/2"	21"	21-1/2"		

Children's 2 to 6X						
Size	2	3	4	5	6	6X
Height	34"	37"	40"	43"	46"	48"
Weight	25 lb.	34 lb.	38 lb.	44 lb.	49 lb.	54 lb.
Chest	21"	22"	23"	24"	25"	25-1/2"
Waist	20-1/2"	21"	21-1/2"	22"	22-1/2"	23"

Because of manufacturers' inconsistency in sizing, the brand and style of the garment also need to be considered.

HEALTH AND COMFORT FEATURES

In buying and planning to sew children's clothes always remember to consider health and comfort features as well as appearance and price. Health and comfort are closely related and each is important at all stages of development. Following are some features you need to look for:

LIGHT WEIGHT clothes. Heavy, bulky clothes are awkward to handle. On the other hand, several layers of lighter weight clothing are warmer and can be added or removed as temperatures change.

COMFORTABLE fullness across the shoulders and chest.

SMOOTH necklines and collars with no gapping, binding, or rubbing.

ROOMY armholes, sleeves, and legs to prevent binding.

ADEQUATE hip ease and sufficient length from neck to crotch to permit easy bending and stooping.

EASE through waistline.

AVOID TIGHT CLOTHES which restrict activity and may even interfere with natural circulation. Only part of the distance around the arm, waistline, or leg should have elastic.

SOFT, ABSORBENT FABRICS to prevent skin irritation.

SELF-HELP CLOTHING FOR CHILDREN

Self help features encourage a child to begin dressing himself as soon as he is able. "Let me do it" is an early sign of independence and indicates a need for special features in clothing. As a child learns to dress and undress himself, clothing should be planned and selected to make dressing easier. Three and four year olds particularly benefit from self-help clothing.

Young children like clothing with the following features:

FRONT openings or deep plackets that slip over the head easily.

EASY-to-operate zippers with special pulls.

MEDIUM-SIZE, smooth buttons and sturdy buttonholes--few in number.

LOOSE sleeves without buttons or other fasteners.

pants and skirts.

MARKINGS on front and back to indicate placement of buttons and zippers.

ATTACHED belts and sashes--if any.

A two-year old child begins to show his independence by wanting to dress himself. At three, he wants clothes he can get into and out of by himself. But the age at which he can handle his clothes depends on the child, his training, and the way the clothes are made.

Clothing with these "dress-yourself" features can help a child announce with a beaming smile "I dressed myself."

A LITTLE GROW ROOM

Growth is most rapid during the pre-school years when children need longer-wearing clothes that will maintain both their fit and appearance. Buying garments too large with the idea that the child will grow into them, is false economy. Clothes that are too big will look strange, limit your child's actions, and endanger his safety. And they probably will fade and wear out by the time the child grows into them.

Look for features which adjust themselves to a growing child:

DEEP hems or tucks in hems.

ADJUSTABLE straps.

RAGLAN or kimono sleeves. Or no sleeves at all.

EXPANDING waistlines.

PLEATS or gathers which can be adjusted.

NO definite waistline--loose or straight hanging.

SEPARATES with extra blouse or shirt length.

TWO sets of large snaps on waistline of two piece outfits such as pajamas.

GARMENTS made of knit fabric.

Some mothers think that growth features are desirable. Others feel it is better to have a limited wardrobe and replace clothes often because many times the garment is faded or worn by the time the growth features are used.

CONSTRUCTION FEATURES

The durability and quality of children's clothing depend largely on fabric and workmanship. While children outgrow clothes rapidly, they also give garments hard wear. To withstand hard wear and laundering select clothing with these features:

FABRICS that are colorfast, preshrunk, firmly woven or closely knit, and sturdy without roughness.

SEAMS that are finished to prevent raveling, closely stitched to prevent pulling out, soft and smooth to prevent irritation, and stitched with close even stitches.

REINFORCEMENTS at points of strain--knees on trousers, seams at crotch and underarms, and placket openings.

TRIM that is suited to the garment, firmly attached, and well placed. It should have the same care requirements as the garment.

POCKETS, belts, and other details that are flat and smooth, strategically placed, and firmly attached.

HEMS that are wide, even, and well sewn.

PLAIDS and stripes that match at the seamline.

Price is not always a guide to quality so clothing of all price lines should be thoroughly inspected before purchasing. Look at the label to learn those things about the fabric and construction that you cannot see or feel. Reading labels and inspecting the construction of the garment and the fabric are good ways to know what you are getting for the money you spend.

HINTS TO HELP MAKE CHILDREN HAPPY WITH THEIR CLOTHES:

KNOW what other children are wearing.

INVOLVE your child in planning what to buy and what to wear.

MOTHERS who sew can make matching mother and daughter clothes.

SEWING for children can be a time of sharing.

CHILDREN love color and design.

YOU may be willing to sacrifice comfort and freedom of movement, but your child is not.

CONSIDER your child's likes and dislikes in clothing.

There are many things to consider in the planning and selection of your child's wardrobe. By keeping these pointers in mind, you should be able to purchase garments that are functional, attractive, and worth the money spent for them. Remember that a healthy child is a happy child and suitable, comfortable clothes can help to make him healthy and happy.