

## Practical Guide to Grading

This is a basic supplement to use with any grading book. It contains first step information that many authors have neglected to mention. Their omissions shouldn't be interpreted as oversights or carelessness; it's hard to remember what people don't know when you've been doing it so long.

In addition, this basic guide will stress the most important concepts. That's necessary because books can lead you to believe that everything is equally important and you may be confused over the priorities. Fortunately for you, subtlety is not my strong suit, so nothing's been left to chance. You'll know exactly which parts are most important to your business.

This supplement is not intended to teach you *how* to grade, but it will fill in the blanks, solve problems or answer questions you may have had. You will still need a good grading book to use in addition to this guide.

### Grading Theory 101

Grading is a methodical and mathematical process that's used to 'grow' and 'shrink' a style to fit a range of customer sizes. The most important principles to understand well, are *what*, *where*, *how* and *why* sizes grow.

#### What is growing

There's a lot of confusion about what "growing" really means and I must admit that professionals are mostly to blame for the confusion. When we use the term "growing", we mean making a pattern bigger or smaller to fit a range of sizes for a very specific market segment.

Because professionals have misused the word growing, others think it means growing like people do, in other words, developing. On behalf of professionals everywhere, I apologize.

As people mature, they are "morphing" or altering their body shapes. Grading is not "morphing"; it cannot change shape, but only makes an existing shape larger or smaller.

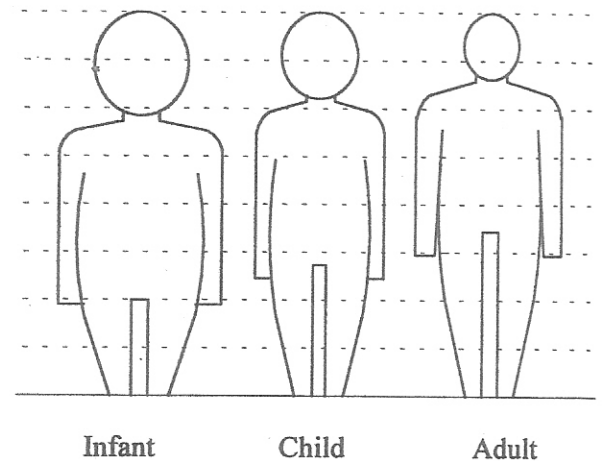


Fig. 5.60

Fig 5.60. Look at these bodies carefully. All of the bodies are the same height, but shaped very differently. The figure on the far left is an infant 'grown' up to adult size. The adult is on the far right; now compare the proportions of the two. Notice the size of the head in relation to the adult on the far right? This is based on the ancient principle of "8" first documented by the ancient Egyptians.

This shows proportions according to age and explains why children's sized patterns cannot be graded to fit adults. This sketch shows all figures the same height because that's what they'd look like were they adult sized and vice versa. Grading cannot change shape.

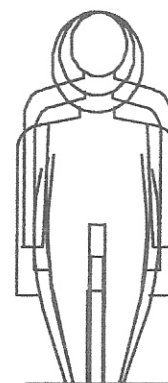


Fig. 5.61

If the infant, child and adult were nested together, you'd see something similar to the depiction at the left (Fig 5.61). People's bodies 'morph' as they mature, but grading cannot morph. It can only make an existing size larger or smaller.