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# How To Get Better Fitting Uniforms That Save Time And Money



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“ The concept of “**vanity sizing**,” also known as size inflation, is used by the apparel industry to refer to the phenomenon of ready-to-wear clothing of the same nominal size becoming larger over time. ”

## A brief history of apparel sizing

Ever wonder why you may wear a size small with one clothing manufacturer and a size medium in another? Recent history gives us some insight into this conundrum.

Believe it or not, until about 100 years ago, everyone either made their own clothes or employed a tailor, and all fashions were custom-designed. That was until the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducted a study of women’s body measurements, from which clothing sizes began to be based upon.

The Home Economics division of the U.S.D.A. hoped to sell more ready-to-wear clothing by developing a reliable, industry-standard sizing system. The survey, which began in 1939, was a tremendous two-year undertaking that involved 15,000 American women and input from mathematicians and technicians taking 59 measurements of each participant.

From these results, a sizing system was created. However, as a result of various cultural pressures, North American clothing sizes have drifted substantially away from this standard over time, and now have very little connection to it.

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## HOW TO GET BETTER FITTING UNIFORMS THAT SAVE TIME AND MONEY



of the same nominal size becoming larger over time. Vanity sizing tends to occur in places where clothing sizes are not standardized, such as the United States. Also, some people prefer a more relaxed fit for their apparel and some prefer a slimmer fit. Personal fit tastes are not gender specific and vary from one person to another.

### The future of a better fit

Because there is currently no true standard for uniform garment sizing, manufacturers use different patterns to make their garments, and fit varies according to the pattern dimensions. For example, one manufacturer's pattern for a size medium shirt may be another manufacturer's pattern for a size small shirt.

The practice of measuring someone for a uniform is obsolete and outdated because the garments are not custom tailored to the measurements taken. In short, **using a person's body measurements will not guarantee that a garment will fit comfortably.**

What all this means for companies is that uniform orders are likely to contain garments that don't fit correctly and must be returned. Or, employees must leave work to travel to and from uniform stores where they are measured or try on garments.

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## FIT SET BENEFITS

Try on actual uniform before purchasing

Quickly and easily order uniforms for new hires

Save time and money by eliminating trips to uniform stores

Spend less time on returning merchandise

Minimize costs from ordering garments that don't fit

Allow employees to adjust sizing as weight or size changes over time

To save time and reducing expenses associated with uniform procurement, many organizations and companies have adopted the use of **fit sets**.

### What is a fit set?

Fit sets are a full range of sizes of the actual uniform pants and shirts a company will use in their uniform program.

For example, if a company purchases a fit set for a polo shirt, the company would receive that shirt in all sizes offered by the manufacturer.

The company keeps the fit set at their location, allowing employees to try on the uniform garments before ordering. Because a fit set belongs to the company, it does not have to be returned and is always ready and available for use. It is not necessary to ever replace a fit set unless the companies changes its uniform choices.

### How does a fit set save time?

Fit sets mirror how people shop for their own personal garments. Rather than getting measured, we select garments off the rack and try them on in a fitting room. If they are too loose or tight we select a different size that fits more comfortably. Uniform garments should be selected with the same process to ensure employees know exactly what size they need and how it will fit before the order is placed.

## COST COMPARISON

### Uniform Store Cost Analysis

	500 employees
x	2.5 hours away from work
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	1,250 total hours
	1,250 total hours
x	\$15 average hourly wage
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	\$18,750 total cost for one year
	\$18,750 total cost for one year
x	3 years
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	<b>\$56,250 total cost</b>

### Fit Set Cost Analysis

	14 sizes of unhemmed pants
x	\$10.95 cost per size*
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	\$153.30 total cost for pants
	15 sizes of long sleeve shirts
x	\$8.69 cost per size*
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	\$130.35 cost for shirts
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	<b>\$283.65 total cost</b>

## TOTAL SAVINGS

**\$55,966.35** total estimated savings

This process virtually eliminates the need for returns. No time is wasted processing returns and re-ordering garments.

Because fit sets are kept at the company, there is no need for employees to leave the workplace for several hours to travel to a uniform store, wait in line, have measurements taken or try on garments, and travel back to work. This also allows new hires to be in uniform much more quickly, and allows existing employees to try on garments and adjust sizing when reordering, in the event their body weight or size changes.

## How does a fit set save money?

The time spent away from work while employees visit a uniform store is a very real but sometimes overlooked expense that is usually not considered or budgeted by agencies. With fit sets, employees never have to leave work, allowing labor expenses to be managed more effectively. The diagram to the left compares the cost of sending 500 employees to a uniform store for three years to the cost of a fit set. **The total estimated savings are \$55,966.35.**

Because fit sets improve order accuracy, you'll eliminate costs from ordering personalized garments that don't fit and cannot be returned.



## How does my company start using a fit set?

ServiceWear Apparel provides agencies with a process for ordering fit sets. For more information, contact ServiceWear at **1-800-578-9023** or [customerservice@servicewearapparel.com](mailto:customerservice@servicewearapparel.com).

Learn more about the benefits of ordering from ServiceWear Apparel on our [website](#).

## About ServiceWear Apparel

ServiceWear Apparel distributes a comprehensive range of high-quality workwear and work apparel from leading brands, designed to fulfill the needs of various organizations as the exclusive supplier partner of uniforms and work apparel to OMNIA member companies.

ServiceWear Apparel is part of the SMS Holdings family of companies. Based in Nashville, TN, SMS Holdings is the parent company for a diverse group of operating companies providing facility and security management services to a wide range of industries and governmental agencies. Today, the company generates over \$300 million in annual revenues, employs over 12,600 people and operates in more than 400 facilities in 43 states and the District of Columbia.