

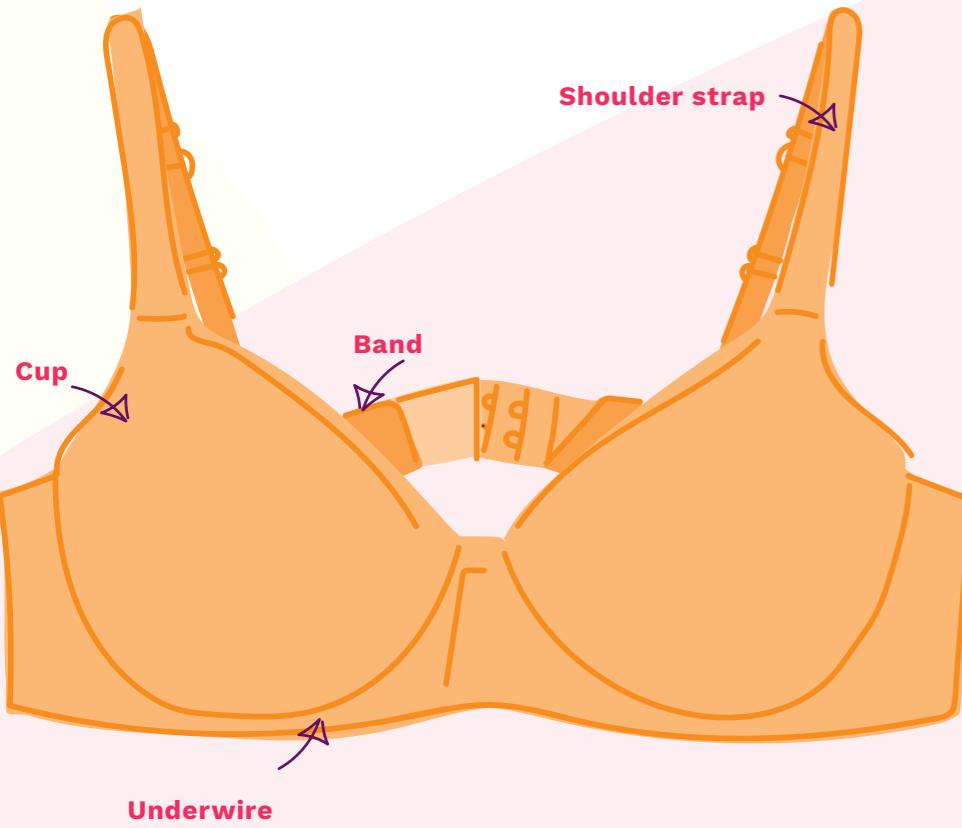
# WELL-FITTING BRA

BREAST CANCER  
NCW The research & support charity

We're here

## The right size

A well-fitting bra can help you feel more comfortable and confident. Studies show most people are wearing the wrong size bra without realising it.



Just as breasts come in all sizes, so do bras. Band sizes range from **28 to 56 inches** and cup sizes range from **AA to L**.

The **band** refers to how the bra fits around your back and the **cups** are the part of the bra that supports your breasts.

### Measuring your bra size: your options

Department stores and bra shops usually have trained fitters who can help you find a bra that fits.

You can also measure yourself at home using a tape measure. Make sure you're not wearing a padded bra as you do this.

## Get in touch

For more information about breast awareness and breast health call our free helpline on **0808 800 6000** or visit [breastcancernow.org](http://breastcancernow.org)

## How to measure yourself

### Step 1

Wrap a soft fabric tape measure around your body just beneath your breasts, pull it tight and record the measurement in inches. Add 4 inches (or 5 if you get an odd number) to this number. This is your band size.

### EXAMPLE

If you measure 30 inches you would then add 4 and your band size would be 34. If you measure 31 inches, you would add 5 and your band size would be 36.

### Step 2

Loosely measure around your body with the tape measure across the fullest part of your breasts.

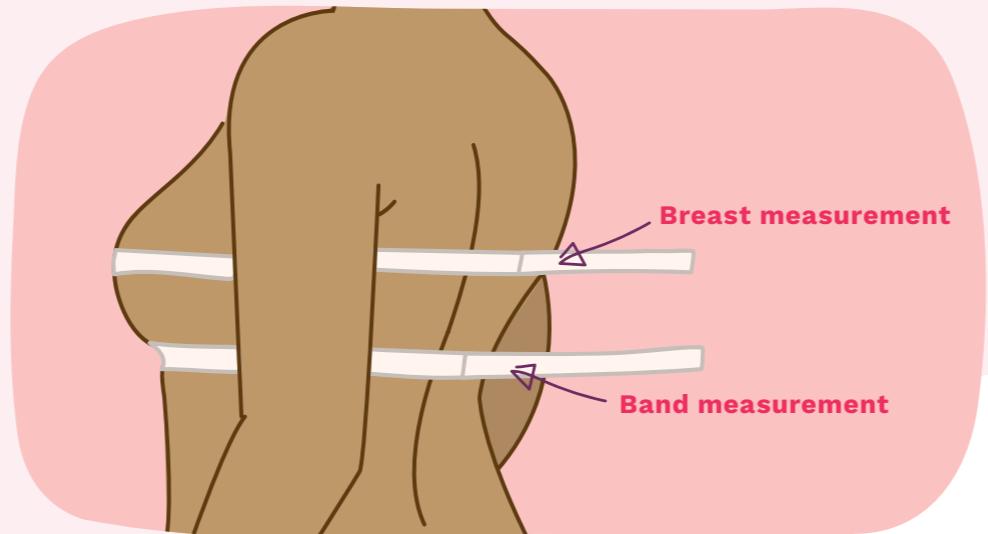
### Step 3

Now subtract the smaller number (band size) from the larger number to work out the difference. The table below shows what your cup size is based on the number you get.

### EXAMPLE

If the smaller number is 34 inches and the larger number is 36 inches, you would subtract 34 from 36 to get 2. Your cup size would be C and your bra size would be 34C.

The size measured should only be used as a guide as bra sizes can vary depending on style and brand. This is because some bra fitters and manufacturers may measure your band size and cup size differently.



NUMBER (IN INCHES)	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
CUP SIZE	AA	A	B	C	D	DD	E	F	FF	G	GG	H	HH	J	JJ	K	KK	L

This table helps you work out your cup size based on your breast and band measurements (see step 3 above)

## Trying on a bra

It's important to try on a bra before you buy it. If you can't, check that you can return it if it doesn't fit.

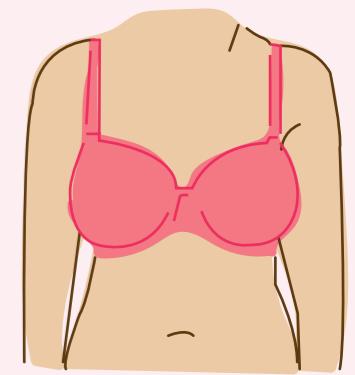
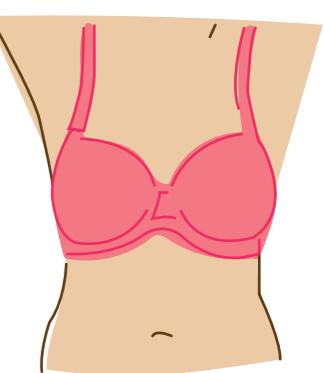
**Put your arms through the shoulder straps** then lean slightly forward so your breasts fall naturally into the cups. If you can't lean forward, you can scoop your breasts into the cups.

**Adjust the band** so it lies flat against your chest underneath your breasts. Fasten the bra on the set of hooks that feels most comfortable for you.

You might find it easier to put the bra on back to front, so the hooks are at the front. You can then fasten it and twist it around so the hooks are at the back, before putting your arms through the shoulder straps.

**Make sure the band is level** all the way around. Adjust the shoulder straps so that they are not digging into your shoulders (too tight) and are not slipping off your shoulders (too loose).

**TOP TIP**  
If your bra feels too tight or the cups are bulging, try a larger bra size.



## When might I need a new bra?

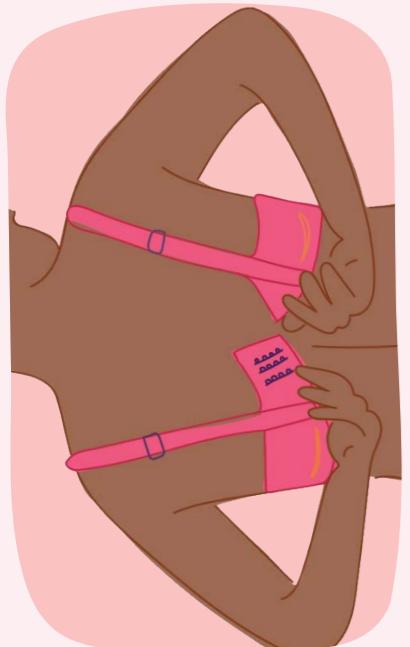
Bras can stretch with time, particularly if you're wearing and washing them regularly. If your bra no longer fits well, it's time to replace it if you can.

Your breasts can also change size and shape many times during your life.

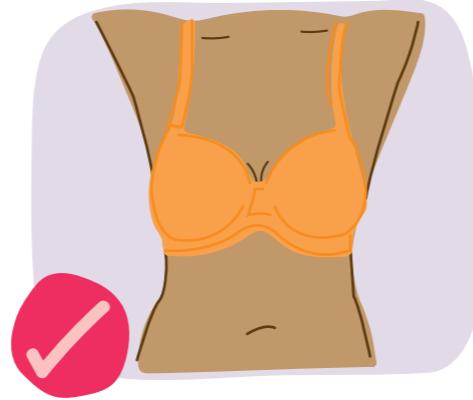
### They can be affected by:

- Puberty
- The menstrual cycle (having periods)
- Pregnancy and breastfeeding
- The menopause (when periods stop)
- Getting older
- Weight changes

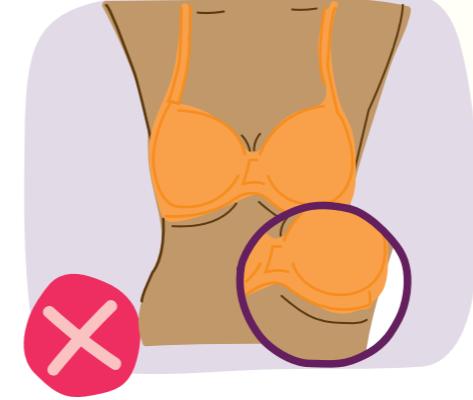
Because your breast size can change, it's recommended that you go for a fitting or measure your bra size regularly. If you know you've experienced weight changes or changes to the size of your breasts, you may want to book a fitting earlier.



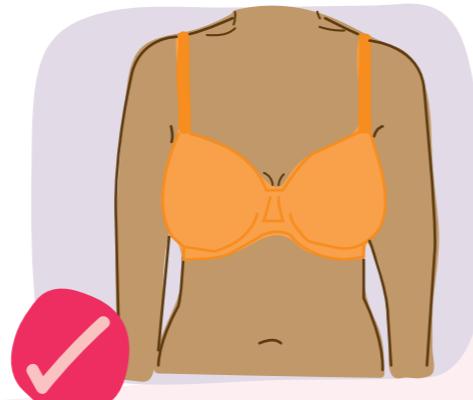
# How should a bra fit?



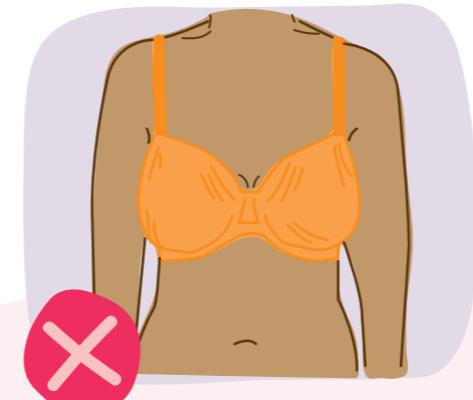
Your bra should stay in place when you lift your arms above your head.



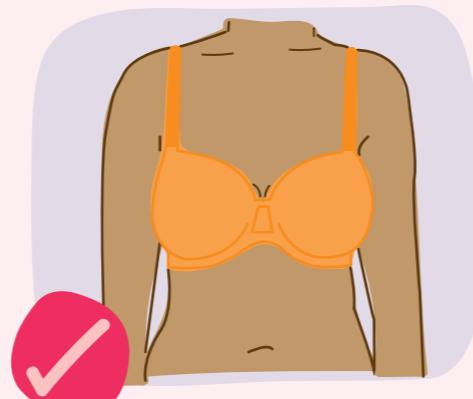
The underwires should lie flat without digging in.



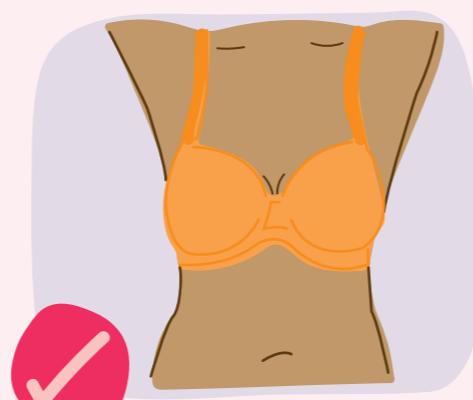
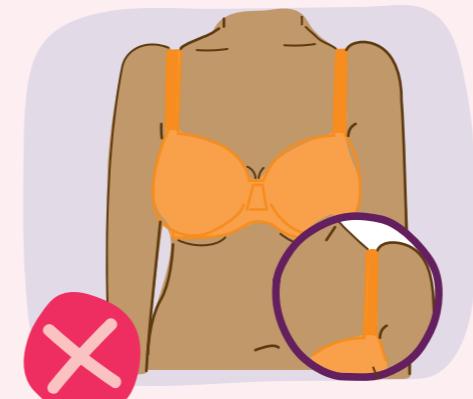
Your breasts should fill the cups leaving no loose fabric.



The band should be level all the way around.



The shoulder straps shouldn't dig in.



The underwires shouldn't dig into any breast tissue, particularly under your arm.

### TOP TIPS

- Adjustable shoulder straps help you get the best fit
- Most people have 1 breast bigger than the other so make sure the cup fits your larger breast
- If the band feels too loose or the cups are gaping, you should try a smaller bra size

### Bras after breast cancer

If you've had surgery for breast cancer you may want more specialised help with finding suitable bras. See our information about bras after breast cancer surgery to find out more. Our booklet **Breast prostheses, bras and clothes after surgery** also has lots of information and helpful tips.

While an ill-fitting bra can cause discomfort, there is no link between an ill-fitting bra and breast cancer.