

## HOW TO BUY A WETSUIT

### HOW TO BUY A WETSUIT

Wetsuits are designed for specific sports and activities. The right wetsuit will protect you against water and weather conditions to keep you warmer, more comfortable, and safer in the water. Read on to learn how to buy a wetsuit that fits your needs.

### CHOOSING THE PROPER WETSUIT

First, ask yourself: What will I be using my wetsuit for? Body Glove and other top wetsuit brands make different wetsuits for different activities. If you plan to use your wetsuit primarily for scuba diving or snorkeling, you won't buy the same wetsuit as your surfer buddy. Whether you're water skiing, wake boarding, surfing, swimming, or hitting the waves on a personal water craft, there's an ideal wetsuit design for your needs.

It is important to know the water temperature and weather conditions where you will be using the suit. Different wetsuits should be used based upon both geographical locations and the seasons of the year. If you are not sure what conditions to expect, call some local shops that carry wetsuits and ask for what they recommend for the local water temperature and weather.

There are several different kinds of materials and sewing constructions used in making wetsuits. Remember that a wetsuit is not designed to keep you completely dry. A small amount of water will enter through the seams, zipper, neck, arms, and legs. Your body temperature will heat the thin layer of water that is trapped between your body and the material. This may take three to 10 minutes depending on the construction, materials, water temperature, and your body's reaction to the water.

### CONSTRUCTION

Familiarizing yourself with the different types of seam construction is an important part of learning how to buy a wetsuit. The different types are:

1. Overlock Stitch
2. Flatstitch or Flatlock
3. GBS (Glued & Blindstitched)
4. GBS with seam tape

Overlock is recommended for warm water 65 degrees F and up. The seams are stitched on the inside. From the outside, you will not see any stitching. On the inside, you may recognize this construction from clothing. It is commonly used on sweatshirt and T-shirt seams. Some water may seep in through these seams.

Flatstitch or flatlock is recommended for warm water too, 62 degrees F and up. You can recognize this seam from the outside; this stitch looks like railroad tracks. The interior and exterior seams look about the same. The interior seam construction is flat and is more comfortable against the body than the overlock stitch. Some water may seep in through these seams too.

Blindstitch is recommended for colder water. This construction is best for colder water because the seams are glued and then stitched to help prevent seepage. This seam construction looks similar to the flat stitch but is narrower. The seams are glued and bonded together and then stitched in such a way that the thread and needle holes penetrate only the top area of the surface. Some seams are only stitched on one side. Very little water if any will seep through these seams.

Blindstitched with seam taping (Fluid Seal) is recommended for extremely cold water, usually 50 degrees F and below. The seam construction is the same as above except that the inner seams are reinforced or covered with tape. Very little water if any will seep through these seams.

### MATERIALS

Before you concern yourself with what size wetsuits will fit you best, you need to figure out what type of material (and what thickness) you need. There are many different kinds of material available, though nearly all are a variant of neoprene. Most wetsuit manufacturers will use similar materials, though they may have different names for them. The materials have changed drastically over the last several years. Wetsuit materials have become more flexible, warmer, and more durable as technology continues to improve. The best materials are usually found in suits featuring blindstitch construction.

Wetsuit materials come in different thicknesses, measured in millimeters. Thickness is expressed using two numbers, separated by a slash. The first number represents the thickness of the material covering the torso, and the second represents the thickness over the arms, shoulders, and legs. Cold water requires thicker material, up to 7/6 mm. Warmer water requires less thickness, perhaps 3/2 or 2/1 mm.

### THICKNESS

2/1 MM | Made for cool water: 62 - 68° F / 17 - 20° C

2/2 MM | Made for cool water: 62 - 68° F / 17 - 20° C

3/2 MM | Made for cool water: 56 - 65° F / 13 - 18° C

4/3 MM | Made for cold water: 51 - 58° F / 11 - 14° C

5/4/3 MM | Made for cold water: 46 - 53° F / 8 - 12° C

6/5/3 MM | Made for cold water: 46 - 53° F / 8 - 12° C

6/5/4 MM | Made for cold water: 46 - 53° F / 8 - 12° C

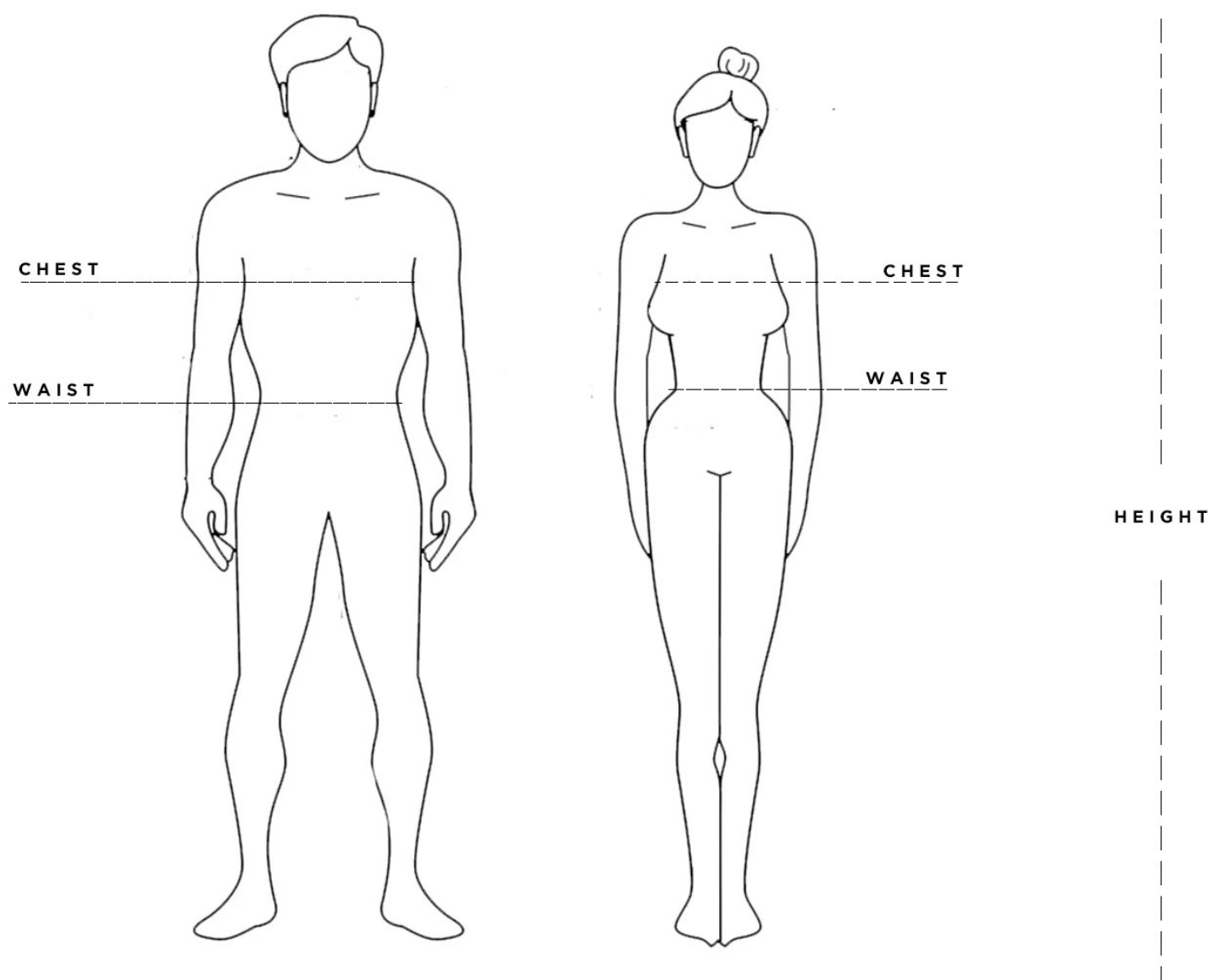
### WETSUIT SIZING

Once you have determined what types of construction techniques and materials/thicknesses you want, you can try to find the perfect fit. By now you'll have narrowed down your choices to just a few options, so you can try them on and see how they feel. If you don't know what size wetsuits to try, knowing your measurements (waist, torso, etc.) can help when using our size chart. The best method for ensuring a good fit is to find a local surf or dive shop and try on all of your top choices. The staff at your local shop can also help you figure out wetsuit sizing, which may vary from one brand to the next.

#### HOW TO MEASURE YOUR SIZES

##### MEASUREMENTS INSTRUCTION & SIZE CHART

1. Take a soft measuring tape
2. Follow body figure example for measurement positioning of chest, waist & height.



#### MEN'S WETSUITS

SIZE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	CHEST	WAIST
XS	5'4" - 5'6"	110 - 130	34 - 36	28 - 30
S	5'6" - 5'8"	130 - 150	36 - 38	29 - 31
MS*	5'7" - 5'9"	145 - 165	38 - 40	30 - 32
M	5'8" - 5'10"	150 - 170	38 - 40	30 - 32
MT*	5'10" - 6'1"	155 - 175	38 - 40	30 - 32
ML	5'9" - 5'11"	170 - 190	39 - 41	31 - 33
LS*	5'9" - 5'11"	175 - 195	40 - 42	32 - 34
L	5'10" - 6'0"	180 - 200	40 - 42	32 - 34
LT*	6'0" - 6'3"	185 - 205	40 - 42	32 - 34
XLS*	5'11" - 6'1"	195 - 215	42 - 44	34 - 36
XL	6'0" - 6'2"	200 - 220	42 - 44	34 - 36
XLT*	6'2" - 6'4"	205 - 225	42 - 44	34 - 36
XXL*	6'1" - 6'4"	220 - 235	44 - 46	36 - 38
XXXL	6'1" - 6'4"	230 - 250	46 - 48	36 - 40

#### WOMEN'S WETSUITS

SIZE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	CHEST	WAIST
3/4	5'0" - 5'2"	100 - 110	30 - 32	23 - 25
5/6	5'2" - 5'4"	110 - 120	31 - 33	24 - 26
7/8	5'4" - 5'7"	120 - 130	32 - 34	25 - 27
7/8T	5'6" - 5'9"	120 - 130	32 - 34	25 - 27
9/10	5'6" - 5'9"	130 - 140	34 - 36	26 - 28
9/10T	5'7" - 5'10"	130 - 140	34 - 36	26 - 28
11/12	5'7" - 5'10"	140 - 150	36 - 38	27 - 29
13/14	5'8" - 5'11"	150 - 160	38 - 40	29 - 31

#### YOUTH WETSUITS

SIZE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	CHEST	WAIST
8	4'8" - 4'10"	60 - 70	26 - 27	22 - 23
10	4'10" - 5'11"	70 - 80	27 - 28	23 - 24
12	5'0" - 5'3"	80 - 90	28 - 30	24 - 26
14	5'1" - 5'4"	90 - 105	29 - 31	25 - 27
16	5'0" - 5'4"	105 - 120	31 - 33	27 - 29