

Push up bras and bra sizing ^[1]

Hi,

I recently purchased some push up bras. However, when I wear one, it starts to feel kind of weird. I'm not sure how to explain the feeling but it almost feels tight on my bust. I can really feel the wire. Are push-up bras supposed to feel that way? Am I wearing the wrong size? I don't think I'm wearing the wrong size; if I wore a regular bra in that size, it's okay.

Answer

Dear Reader,

You're certainly not alone in your quandary! A lot of people with breasts around the world wear a bra size that's not best suited to their breast size and shape. When it comes to bra size, the same size across different brands and styles can change. Research on bra sizes shows that the same size measured across different bra brands best fits different breast measurements, which can create a challenge when shopping for bras. For example, a bra sized 34B in one brand may fit someone perfectly, but a 34B in another brand may not fit as well. Working with staff at your local lingerie store to get properly fitted for the brand you prefer may be your best bet. They can ensure that the particular bra you're trying (be it push-up or otherwise) fits properly.

As you go bra shopping, here are a few tips to consider:

- Bras tend to stretch in back, so when you buy a new one, make sure it fits snugly when hooked on the loosest rung.
- The center of your bra (the part between the cups) is meant lie flat on your chest.
- If your breasts overflow out of the cups, or if any part of your bra leaves marks or lines on your skin after a day's wear, it's likely too tight.
- Make sure the underwire on your bra lies flat on your chest.
- The bra band is intended to be at the same level around your whole torso. If the band is riding up, you may not be wearing the correct size.

List adapted from [Cleveland Clinic](#) ^[2].

In addition to looking better on your body and under your clothes, a properly fitting bra can

reduce posture- and exercise-related breast pain. It's best if your bra, whether push-up or otherwise, provides adequate support for your bust and back and be comfortable enough that you can mostly forget about it. In order to eliminate the too-tight, wire-pressing feeling, it might be a good idea to double-check your bra size, either at home or at a store. Trying on several bras before buying can be helpful, especially if you can't get somewhere to be fitted. There are many different styles out there; you may want to consider additional styles that may or may not include underwire if that suits your needs. Through that process, you may be able to find a bra that provides the support you're looking for without the squeeze!

Alice!

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