

[Click here to print](#)

# MailOnline

## Plastic surgeon finds the ideal breast shape... by examining Page 3 girls

By [Sadie Nicholas](#)

Last updated at 10:41 PM on 15th October 2011



**Real deal: Page 3 legend Linda Lusardi modelling in 1982**

In a plastic surgeon's quest to find the ideal female proportions, he turned to 100 glamour models..

It sounds almost like parody – a top consultant plastic surgeon spends three months studying models appearing on Page 3 of a bestselling British red-top newspaper. Later this month he reveals his findings: the mathematical proportions of the perfect breast.

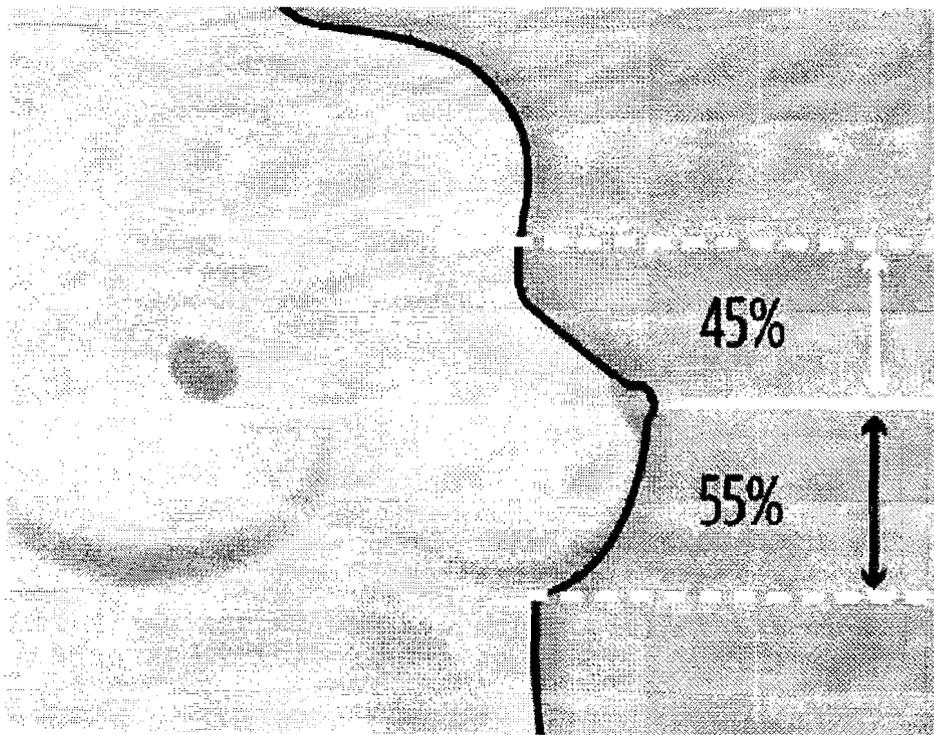
Of course, the subjectivity of such a statement can't be ignored – not to mention the somewhat dubious nature of the source material. But astonishingly, when shown computer mock-ups of the female form based on these equations, most women agree that they are indeed the ideal vital statistics.

Incredibly, although breast augmentation – or the boob job, as it is commonly known – has long been the most popular cosmetic surgery procedure, nobody within the industry has ever quantified the measurements and proportions that make a breast appealing to the eye.

This despite the fact that last year alone, 9,418 breast-enlargement operations were carried out by members of the British Association of Plastic Surgeons, a rise of ten per cent on 2009. This year that number looks set to top the 10,000 mark.

There's no way of estimating how many 'botched' boob jobs there are each year. Unless a woman takes legal action, there's no central record of complaints or of those who seek corrective surgery. But Patrick Mallucci, Consultant Plastic Surgeon at University College London and the Royal Free Hospitals, who led the study, says he sees about five women a month who are unhappy with the results of implants they have had.

He says: 'I spend a lot of time each month redoing breast augmentations that have been done poorly by other surgeons, leaving a woman with uneven, misshapen or droopy breasts, or a gaping cleavage.'



The figures behind the figure

Part of the problem, says Mallucci, is that it is often hard for women to communicate what they want from surgery. 'Patients often talk about the cup size they'd like to go up to, or that they want volume in a particular area or a fuller cleavage, but this is usually very vague.'

'What we need are objective measurements. The division into thirds and fifths by artist Leonardo da Vinci acts as a guide for surgeons performing facelifts – these dimension are simply pleasing to the eye. We also use precise nasal proportions that provide a template for the ideal nose shape and size, which acts as a map for rhinoplasty.'

This year Mallucci conducted a three-month study to pinpoint the exact factors that make a woman's breasts attractive. Titled Concepts In Aesthetic Breast Dimensions: Analysis Of The Ideal Breast, Mallucci's study analysed the breasts of 100 topless models.

'For 30 years The Sun has been putting a picture of a topless girl on Page 3 every day, making it one of the paper's most enduringly popular features,' explains Mallucci. 'The fundamental rule is that for a girl to make it on to Page 3, she must have entirely natural breasts.'

'The fact that Page 3 remains as popular now as ever shows that the woman who selects these topless models – and interestingly it is a woman – is doing something right.'

'It made me question what it is that makes readers find these breasts appealing to the eye, and whether there is a common theme between them that might define that.'

Though it would be easy for cynics to assume otherwise, this was a serious study based on a series of scientific measurements and not on the opinions of Mallucci.

'We used computer measuring tools to examine the dimensions and proportions of each pair of breasts, identifying four features common to all of them,' he explains.

The features analysed were the dimensions of the upper and lower pole, medical terms that describe the areas above and below the nipple; plus the angle at which the nipple points and the slope of the upper pole.

'The study revealed that in all cases the nipple "meridian" – the horizontal line drawn at the level of the nipple – lay at a point where, on average, the proportion of the breast above it represented 45 per cent of overall volume of the breast and below it 55 per cent.'

'In the majority of cases the upper pole was either straight or concave, and the nipple was pointing skywards at an average angle of 20 degrees. In all cases the breasts demonstrated a tight convex lower pole – a neat but voluminous curve.'

'For the second part of the study I analysed images of the breasts of ordinary women pre- and post-implant surgery to establish whether, if a breast deviates from these measurements, it becomes less attractive. And the answer is that it does, regardless of size.'

For the first time plastic surgeons now have a powerful visual imagery of the proportions that make a breast attractive. 'Now we can show women images to highlight shape and form that will actually give them what they want,' says Mallucci.

Software has been developed using three-dimensional, predictive photography to enable surgeons to show patients on a screen how their own breasts would look with implants of different shapes and sizes.

'Many women seek breast surgery after pregnancy has left them with deflated breasts and comment that they'd like fullness added to the top.'

'But when shown an image of a woman's breasts that fit the 45:55 ratio versus breasts that have more fullness on the upper pole, very few women ever then select the latter.'

As Mallucci concludes, it's not that most surgeons don't know what makes a breast attractive, it's just that nobody's studied and defined it before. In theory it could lead to a reduction in the number of poor boob jobs.

## Comments (103)

- [Newest](#)
- [Oldest](#)
- [Best rated](#)
- [Worst rated](#)

[View all](#)