



THE GREAT BRITISH
SEWING BEE

BACK *to* BASICS

Create Your Own
Capsule Wardrobe
With 25 Dressmaking
Projects



Foreword by
Patrick Grant
& Esme Young

WRITTEN BY
CAROLINE AKSELSON

INCLUDES
PDF PATTERNS
AND 25
PROJECTS



Based on the programme from **BBC**



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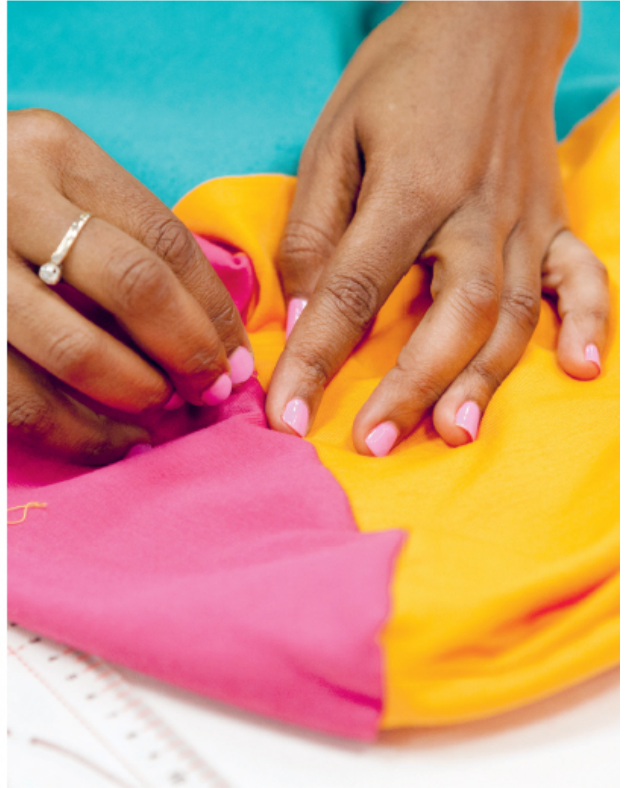
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FOREWORD BY

Patrick Grant

This year on Sewing Bee we celebrate our tenth season, something of a milestone and quite difficult to believe from such humble beginnings. For this, our tenth series, we kicked off with a throwback to the very first episode of our first season, filmed in a chilly, drafty chapel in East London back in late 2012. Season one aired in 2013 beginning with simple basics and our first challenge was a top. Over the course of ten seasons our challenges have got tougher, the techniques trickier, and the need for creative expression greater, so whilst the first challenge of our tenth series was once again a top, there was a twist. Literally. You will find the pattern and instructions for it later in the book.

I have always liked simple things. My own wardrobe is full of basics, and my business, Community Clothing, sells nothing but great-quality everyday clothes, all made here in the UK by some of the best clothing factories you'll find anywhere. The clothes I wear and design might be simple, but they stand out because they're cut and sewn to perfection, in the very best quality fabrics. As Esme often says, the simpler the garment, the better the make needs to be.

People often overcomplicate their wardrobes, and overcomplicate their sewing projects. Learn to do a few things well and you will enjoy the benefits of always having wonderful wearable clothes that will never date. This year I wrote a book on the art of Savile Row tailoring. It contains just four makes – a coat, trousers, a waistcoat and a shirt – because even on the most famous clothes making street on the planet, what we do is just the simple things, but we do

them phenomenally well. People are often surprised to learn that a Savile Row tailor knows how to make just one garment. The secret is, be a master of one thing, not a jack of all.



FOREWORD BY

Esme Young

As the tenth series of *The Great British Sewing Bee* begins and we embark on another exciting journey into the world of fabrics and fabulous creations, I am filled as ever with admiration for the incredible talents and boundless passion of the contestants who continue to grace our screens. Their skills, good humour and genuine love for the craft is a never-ending source of inspiration. My favourite thing about the show is the way that all the contestants help and learn from each other. It reminds us that creativity is a collaborative journey, and that no matter how talented you are, there is always scope to learn new things.

I no longer buy any clothes; for the last three years I have exclusively made my own garments. But whether we are buying clothes or making them ourselves, more and more of us are prioritizing garments that are made to last. We are increasingly conscious of the environmental impacts of our clothes habits, not to mention the financial implications of investing in clothes or fabrics that wear out quickly, or trends that rapidly go out of style. A well-made garment is one that will stand up to wear and tear, and one of the many metrics against which I judge contestants' work is the quality and durability of the construction.

A capsule wardrobe consists of a small number of high-quality staple garments that can be mixed and matched to create myriad different outfits. This book is almost a capsule wardrobe in itself: a selection of key designs and, moreover, a celebration of all things timeless and simple. Comprising patterns from across all ten series, these designs

are all about creating quality basics. After all, as we all try to reduce our consumption, it's doubly important that we get the basics right!

At the heart of the projects in this book are classic silhouettes, from slinky satin shirts to glamorous maxi dresses and an iconic men's trench coat. The joy of these simple shapes is that your choice of fabric shines through, whether through luxurious textures or bold patterns. This book also covers all the technical knowledge you need for pattern alterations and sewing techniques, so you can really let your creativity shine and make the projects your own.

I hope that this book will allow you to rediscover the joy of simplicity, encouraging you to appreciate the importance of the essentials and shed any false notion that 'basic is boring'. Perhaps, after ten whole series of *The Great British Sewing Bee*, what I've learned is this: nothing is ever any good if you can't get the basics right. Happy stitching!



Introduction

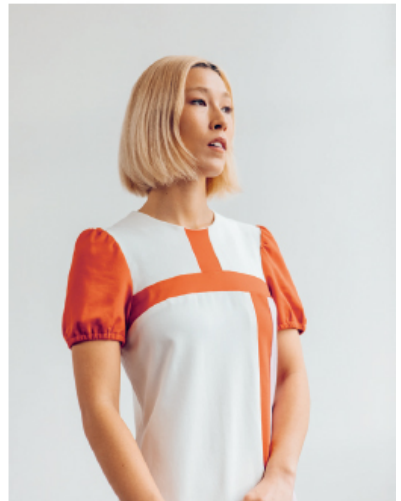
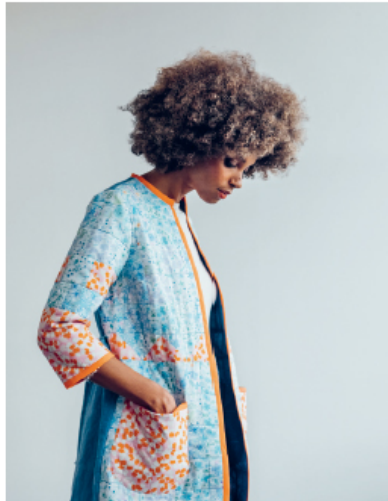
Welcome to the latest book featuring projects from *The Great British Sewing Bee*. This time around, we wanted to produce a book that brought together the best of the best, in a stylish and practical way. Titled *Back to Basics*, the aim is to bring you all your favourites and to take home sewing back to its core: sewing garments you will love and wear year after year.

I have selected garments that bring together key skills for all levels. Some of the garments, such as the Zero Waste Trousers and Fleece Jacket, are unisex in design; we also have some beautiful men's staples, and the rest are designed as women's patterns. The idea is that the garments together form a capsule wardrobe, from tops and dresses to coats and bags.

Think about the items in your wardrobe that you use the most: that's your own little capsule wardrobe right there. You can then build on that by adding items that complement it. There are things that I always reach for, season after season, year after year: culottes, a button-down shirt, a fun coat, a trusty backpack – and I love a silky, strappy top that can be worn under a light cardigan or as a pyjama top in summer. The idea is that these will not go out of fashion and you can sew something that will last. Moreover, you can put your own twist on things by going for beautiful plain fabrics, luxurious silky fabrics, or bold prints. Your fabric choices can turn the pattern into what you need and want in your wardrobe.

To sew something that will last, you'll need good skills, and this is where the Sewing Techniques section comes in. This part of the book features all the skills that are mentioned in the projects, grouped together so that you can easily find them, and my hope is that you will strengthen your skills and maybe learn some new ones.

Basics aren't boring at all; they are the very building blocks of your wardrobe. Let us show you how.





How to use this book and the patterns

PATTERNS



This book comes with full-scale patterns nested in multiple sizes. The women's patterns come in sizes UK 8–22 and the men's patterns in UK 34–44. In addition, you can download the PDF patterns to print at home or at your local copy shop. Simply scan the QR code above to download the PDF patterns in A4 or A0. Follow the accompanying instructions to print and piece them together.

The full-scale pattern pieces are all layered on top of each other ready for tracing. Trace them onto dressmaker's tracing paper, making sure you follow the lines for your size, then cut out the paper pattern pieces. It's very common for your body measurements to fall between two pattern sizes; you can find information about grading in between sizes [here](#).

Several patterns in this book come with variations such as a different hem length or an additional frill detail. Not all of the variations

feature as photographed samples, but you will find full instructions in the text.

Cutting lines

The outside lines on the pattern pieces are the cutting lines. Different sizes have different line types such as solid, dotted or dashed, which are also numbered by size. In some areas the lines merge, so it is advisable to go over your size line with a coloured pencil before tracing.

TIP

In the step-by-step illustrations accompanying the projects, the right side of the fabric is shown as a dark tone and the wrong side as a light tone.

LAY PLANS

The lay plans indicate how each project should be cut out – where the grain line on the pattern should be placed and whether pieces should be cut on the fold or not. Although fabrics comes in widths ranging from 115 to 150 cm (45 to 60 in.), wider widths are generally best for dressmaking.

The majority of the projects in this book are to be cut with the fabric folded in half right side to right side, with the selvages together. This is so that, when you cut out your pattern pieces, you have two perfectly matching pieces. It also ensures that any pattern markings are on the inside of your garment. Occasionally a pattern piece may be too wide to fit on a folded piece of fabric. If this is the case, it will be shown on the lay plan. A grey pattern piece on the lay plan means it only needs to be cut out once.

The lay plans give you an estimate of how much fabric you need, but cutting on the fold isn't always the most economical method: cutting all pieces on a single layer of fabric will almost always save you fabric. If you are [pattern matching](#), you would also cut out on a single layer.

TIP

The lay plans have the pattern pieces positioned in the most economical way. This sometimes means a pattern piece is upside down. If you have a directional print, you must place all pieces in the same orientation!

DIFFICULTY LEVELS

Each project in this book is given a difficulty level – beginners, intermediate or advanced. If you are a beginner, we recommend that you start with a project with the correct difficulty level.

Basic sewing kit

There are many tools for dressmaking. I've put an asterisk next to those that I consider to be essential; the others are nice to have, but you can add to your kit as and when you feel you need to.

CUTTING TOOLS

* **Shears/dressmaking scissors** are typically bigger than paper scissors so that you can achieve nice long cuts when cutting out fabric.

* **Rotary cutter** – use for tricky, slippery fabrics, jerseys and for cutting out multiple fabric layers at the same time. A bigger blade will be great for straight edges, but for curves use a smaller blade or switch to scissors.

* **Snips** are for snipping off threads and snipping into seam allowances and tricky corners.

Pinking shears can be used to finish a seam allowance for a fabric that won't fray or for an internal seam allowance (hidden by lining, for example).

Paper scissors – use for cutting pattern paper. Paper will blunt fabric scissors, so keep a separate pair.

MARKING TOOLS

* **Dressmaker's carbon paper** is designed to be used with a tracing wheel, with the spikes of the wheel transferring the colour of the carbon onto the fabric.

* **Tailor's chalk or chalk pencils** comes in a few different colours. The edges or points need to be sharp to produce long, neat chalk lines.

* **Air-, heat- or water-soluble pens** make marks that disappear after a while or when heat or water is applied.

MEASURING TOOLS

* **Tape measure** – one of the most essential items in your kit. It can stretch and become less accurate over time, so it's a good idea to replace it once in a while.

* **Straight ruler** – use to measure seam allowances, areas of your pattern, and to level hems.

* **French curve and/or Patternmaster** – great for pattern drafting and grading in between sizes.

Flexi ruler – use to measure curves.

Seam allowance gauge – a gadget like a mini ruler that you can use to achieve an even seam allowance, a neat hem, or perfectly positioned buttonholes.

PINS AND WEIGHTS

* **Dressmaking pins** – good-quality ones are a must-have. Replace them when they become blunt or start to snag your fabrics.

* **Safety pins** can be used in fittings and to hold projects or fabrics together while you're not working on them. For dressmaking, opt for medium-sized ones.

Pattern weights are great on delicate fabrics such as silk if you want to avoid pin marks. They work well with stretch fabrics if you are using a rotary cutter, but are not suitable for use with scissors.

Pin magnet – handy to keep next to your sewing machine for picking up dropped pins.

OTHER USEFUL EQUIPMENT

Corner point – used for creating crisp corners when you turn pieces such as collars right side out.

Rouleau loop turner – enables you to turn narrow strips of fabric right side out to make rouleau strips.

Unpicker (seam ripper) – We all need this, regardless of what type of sewing you do and what kind of level you're at. It helps you to easily unpick your stitches.

SEWING MACHINE AND ACCESSORIES

Sewing machines range from simple models that do little more than straight and zigzag stitch and maybe an automatic buttonhole, to elaborate machines with lots of fancy embroidery stitches. The projects in this book can all be made with a relatively simple machine, although there are a few essential accessories.

Sewing machine needles

You will need different types and sizes of sewing machine needles in your sewing kit. This chart will help you choose the right size for your

fabric. Needles for domestic sewing machines are universal, meaning that they will fit any sewing machine brand. In addition to the different sizes of needles in the chart, you might also need to use a ballpoint needle for stretch fabrics, a twin needle for decorative topstitching or finishing hems on knit fabrics, and a topstitching needle. It's very important to change your machine needles regularly: a slightly blunt needle doesn't sew nicely.

American needle size	European needle size	Fabric weight	Fabric types
8	60	Very fine	Fine silk, chiffon, organza, voile, fine lace
9	65		
10	70		
11	75	Lightweight	Cotton voile, silk, muslin, spandex, Lycra
12	80	Standard	Cotton, synthetics, spandex, Lycra
14	90	Mediumweight	Denim, corduroy, multiple layers
16	100	Heavyweight	Heavy denim, heavy corduroy, leather
18	110	Very heavy	Upholstery fabric, leather
20	120	Extra heavy	Heavy upholstery fabric, thick leather, vinyl

Sewing machine feet

Your sewing machine most likely came with all the sewing machine feet you will need. The first three feet listed here are the ones I recommend you start with:

Standard foot A standard presser foot allows you to do all the basic stitches, including zigzag, and is useful as a guide for keeping the

seam allowance consistent, sewing perfectly parallel seams, or simply sewing in a neat, straight line.

Zip foot This foot looks like half a standard presser foot, so it only has one prong instead of two, or one half instead of two halves. This allows it to come much closer to areas where there is some bulk, whether it's a zip or some piping cord or a bone. Some machines let you change the needle position as well.

Invisible zip foot A special invisible zip foot has a groove underneath that holds the zip's teeth in the perfect position for sewing, making invisible zips a breeze.

These three feet are also handy, depending on the types of projects you tend to do:

Gathering foot Gathering fabric features in all kinds of dressmaking projects and a gather foot, which draws up the fabric for you, eliminates the need to sew a line on a big stitch and then draw up the threads by hand.

Automatic buttonhole foot This foot allows you to set the length of the buttonhole using the gauge and slider at the back. Once it has been put in correctly, select the buttonhole function and your machine will automatically stitch the buttonhole without you needing to do anything. Only certain machines have this.

Walking foot If you sew a lot with stretchy fabrics or are keen to make quilts, then a walking foot can be very useful: it allows for better control over several layers of fabric. It can help with sewing over bulky areas of a project and keeping a stretchy fabric in check.

TIP

Maintain your sewing machine by regularly getting rid of any fluff or thread caught up inside the machine and by oiling the

internal parts surrounding the bobbin. Make sure you run some scrap fabric through the machine afterwards to catch any excess oil before you start on a new project.

OVERLOCKER (SERGER)

An overlocker is used to finish and trim the seams of your garment, giving them a neat finish that also prevents the fabric from unravelling. An overlocker set up with three threads is used for neatening seam allowances, whereas jersey fabrics and sportswear should be sewn using four threads for extra strength. An overlocker isn't essential; you can also neaten seams on your sewing machine using a zigzag stitch.

HAND SEWING EQUIPMENT

Hand sewing will come into play when you are finishing a garment: hems and fastenings such as buttons often need some hand sewing.

Hand sewing needles

These are the most useful hand sewing needles for dressmaking:

- Sharps – these are medium-length needles and the most popular for general hand sewing.
- Betweens – these needles are shorter and are useful for quilting.
- Embroidery/crewel needles – these have a longer eye, which makes them very handy for hand sewing with double or quadruple thread, such as fastenings.
- Darning needles – these are generally longer, blunter needles with long eyes, used for darning but also for tacking (basting) fabrics

together.

- Self-threading needle – if you have difficulty threading your hand sewing needle, these are for you.

Thimble

A thimble is essential for hand sewing to protect your fingers. Wear the thimble on your middle finger and use it to push the back of the needle through the fabric to get a supple hand sewing motion. You can get thimbles with closed tops or open tops (tailoring style). Which one you pick is down to personal preference. Other varieties of thimbles are silicone and leather ones.

PRESSING EQUIPMENT

Pressing is different from ironing: ironing is when you are getting rid of creases in your fabric, while pressing is treating sewn areas as you make your garment. Good pressing at every single stage makes for beautiful garments, and it truly makes a difference to the finished product.

Steam iron

A good iron with a steam button is essential for sewing: pressing in between each step, and getting crisp seams and darts, will give your makes a professional finish. Always test a swatch of your fabric with the iron to make sure you have the correct heat setting: some fibres can melt under a very hot iron. If in doubt, use a pressing cloth – a piece of folded cotton in between your iron and your material that protects your fabric from direct contact with the iron. This is particularly good for very lightweight fabrics, laces and silks, as direct contact with the hot iron can distort the delicate fibres.

Pressing ham

A pressing ham is a small, stuffed shape with curved, smooth edges, allowing you to press curved seams. It's great for curved side seams, darts, necklines and bust areas.

Sleeve board

A sleeve board looks like a small, slim ironing board. You place it on your ironing board and thread your sleeve over it, enabling you to press your sleeve properly.

TIP

Steam irons are affected by limescale from tap water in the iron. Make sure you maintain the iron to increase its lifespan and to avoid nasty spluttering onto your projects.

THREAD

Use a good-quality thread while sewing, as poor-quality thread tends to snap when used on a sewing machine. Remember that an overlocker requires finer thread than a sewing machine, and overlocker thread is far too thin to use on a sewing machine.

You can choose from polyester, silk, cotton, organic cotton and recycled thread made from 100% recycled plastic bottles. The most common types are polyester and cotton, so what's the difference? Polyester thread is stronger and thinner. Cotton thread is a natural fibre and can therefore be dyed after it's been used in a garment. You can match the thread type to the fibre used in your fabric, such as cotton thread for a cotton fabric, but as a general rule of thumb you should match the thickness of your thread to the thickness of your fabric's fibres. As an example, lightweight silk is made of very fine fibres and polyester is actually the finest thread. Silk thread

would be too thick on lightweight silk and would interrupt the fibres too much to be able to pass through.



Sizing and how to choose your pattern size

Home sewing should be about making a pattern fit your own unique shape, whatever that may be. Learning how to select the right starting size – and what to pay attention to when you are selecting your size – is a great starting point. After that there are different things that you can check to see what changes you might anticipate.

The size charts in this book are based on a height of 1.65–1.7 m (5 ft 5 in.–5 ft 7 in.) and a B cup for women and a height of 1.73–1.8 m (5 ft 8 in.–5 ft 11 in.) for men.

Women	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Bust (cm)	83	88	93	98	103	108	113	118
Bust (in.)	32½	34½	36½	38½	40½	42½	44½	46½
Waist (cm)	64	69	74	79	84	89	94	99
Waist (in.)	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39
Hip (cm)	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125
Hip (in.)	35½	37½	39½	41½	43½	45½	47½	49½

Men	34	36	38	40	42	44
Chest (cm)	86	91	96	101	106	111
Chest (in.)	33¾	35¾	37¾	39¾	41¾	43¾
Waist (cm)	74	79	84	89	94	99
Waist (in.)	29	31	33	35	37	39
Hip (cm)	91.5	96.5	101.5	106.5	111.5	116.5
Hip (in.)	36	38	40	42	44	46

TAKING YOUR MEASUREMENTS

The three measurements used by pattern companies in their size descriptions are bust/chest, waist and hip. You will find two measurement charts on a commercial sewing pattern: one is the body measurements table (BMT) and the other is the finished garment measurements table (FGMT). The BMT tells you that the garment is designed to fit someone with those measurements. It says something about the overall size and shape of person that the pattern is designed for, but nothing about the pattern itself. A pattern made to your body measurements would produce some kind of form-fitting bodysuit with no room to breathe or move, which is not very useful!

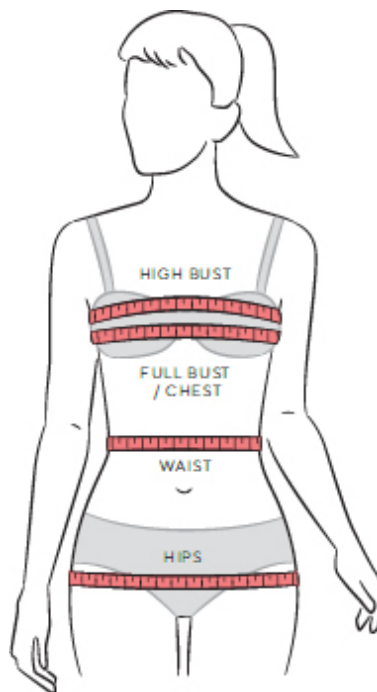
The FGMT, on the other hand, indicates the bust, waist and hip of the completed garment, which can tell you a little bit about the style of it.

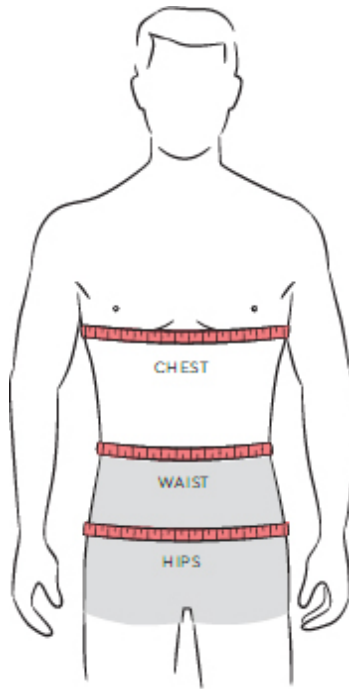
The more form-fitting the design of a garment, the smaller the difference between the BMT and the FGMT. A loose-fitting garment will have a much bigger difference between the two.

Ready to measure?

Start by taking your own bust (high and full), waist and hip measurements (or those of the person you're making the garment for) and make a note of them. Then you can compare them with the BMT of any pattern you're making to work out what size you are closest to.

- Wear your regular underwear and measure over this. The measuring tape should be taut but not tight.
- Stand up straight to get accurate measurements.
- Don't twist the measuring tape!
- Check that the measuring tape is level around your body by looking sideways in a mirror.





TIP

If you do a lot of dressmaking, it's a good idea to measure yourself regularly as you will find that your body size can – and does! – change over time.

TIP

Curvy makers can also take their waist and hip measurements when sitting down, holding the tape measure in the same position as when standing up. This is because when there's more volume to your shape, there's more movement: when you sit down, your waist and hip/thigh area spread out and this increases the measurement a bit. You can use this slightly bigger measurement if you are

working with a fabric that has zero stretch in it, to make sure it will fit correctly when you are sitting down.

COMPARING YOUR MEASUREMENTS AGAINST THE PAPER PATTERN

You can fine-tune things by comparing your measurements against key areas on the paper pattern. If you know in advance that you are a different size than the pattern allows for in certain areas, you can anticipate what adjustments you may need to make.

First, make sure you understand the type of pattern you are making. For a form-fitting garment, you should expect the pattern to be only slightly bigger than your own measurements – up to about 2.5 cm (1 in.) bigger. If there's no difference, or the pattern measurements are smaller than yours, you know you need to make some changes. Depending on the garment you're making, you may find it useful to take some of the following measurements.

① Around the top arm (bicep)

Measure the widest part of your top arm, keeping the tape measure level. Measure how far down from your shoulder point (where your shoulder turns into your arm) you have taken this measurement, then find the same position on the pattern. If you have a two-part sleeve, lay the sleeve patterns next to each other so they are level to each other.

② Around the thigh

Measure the widest part of your thigh, keeping the tape measure level. Measure the thigh area of the pattern in the same spot by measuring the front and back leg pieces and adding the two together.

③ Inner leg (inseam)

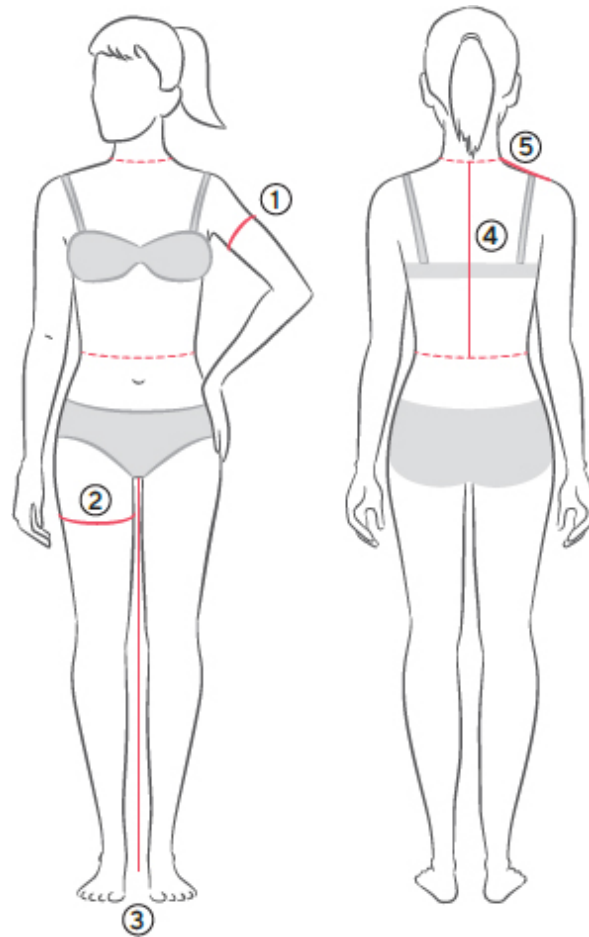
The inner leg determines the inseam on a pair of trousers. It is measured from the crotch point down to the floor. To check your measurement against a pattern, check where the trousers are supposed to finish. Are they designed to be calf length or ankle length? Then measure from your crotch point to that point and check your measurement against the inseam of the trouser pattern.

④ **Nape to back waist**

You may have a short or a long torso, or anything in between. Measuring from the nape to the back waist point is a good way to compare your length to the pattern length. Take the tape measure from the nape of the neck, or your top vertebra, to the back waist level.

⑤ **Shoulder**

Measure from the base of the neck to the shoulder point (where the shoulder turns into your arm – this is where an armhole should start) to check if the shoulder seam length on the pattern is right for your proportions.



TIP

When you measure the pattern, remember not to include the seam allowance – only measure along the stitch line.

TIP

This is easiest to do if you hold the tape measure at your crotch point and someone else checks the tape measure at floor level. That way you can stand up straight and get an accurate measurement.

Grading between sizes

You may be a different size in different areas of your body – for example, a size 16 on the bust and waist, but a size 18 on the hips. If you already know this is the case, you can go ahead and ‘grade’ between sizes before cutting out your pattern. What this means is combining different sizes by drawing a smooth line from one size of cutting line to the next. For example, you might grade the pattern outline from a size 16 on the bust and waist, out to a size 18 by the time the pattern hits the hip line. Grading between sizes can’t be done indefinitely: I wouldn’t recommend grading a difference of three or more sizes. If your measurements have a difference of three sizes or more, make the garment slightly bigger overall and grade in between two sizes, and then adjust the pattern all over during a proper fitting.

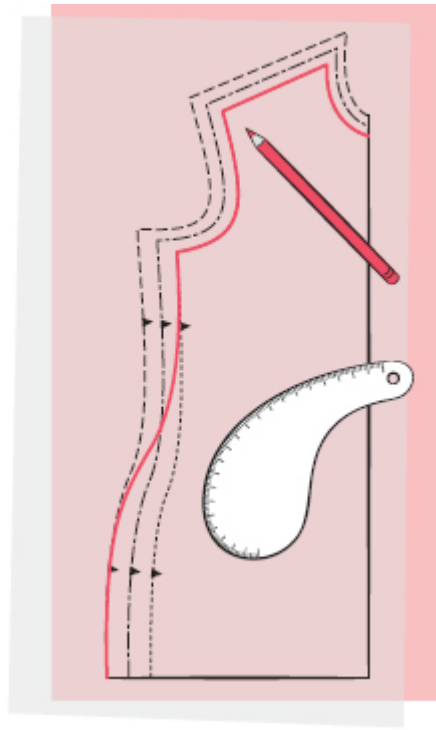
Grading is the most common adjustment you can apply before cutting out your pattern. It’s easy to check whether you will need to do this and it’s also straightforward to do on a ‘nested’ sewing pattern (a sewing pattern that contains all or most of the sizes on the same sheet of paper), as you can see the outlines of all the other sizes and pick a different size line for different areas of your body.

- 1** First, write down your bust, waist and hip measurements.
- 2** Check these three measurements against the **body measurements chart** on the pattern. Circle the measurements

in the chart that are closest to yours.

- 3** If all three measurements fall within the same pattern size, you don't need to grade. If they fall into two or more sizes, or you end up right in the middle of two sizes, first find the size that is closest to your measurements on the **finished garment measurements chart**. If there is a lot of ease in the garment and only one of your three measurements falls in a different size, see if you could get away with making the size you have the most overlap with without grading the third measurement.
- 4** Decide which sizes to go for on the pattern based on the steps above. Using a pen or pencil that you can clearly see, start outlining the parts of the pattern in the first size you need. Then, using a ruler, gradually connect the size lines you need in a gentle curve.

This illustration shows part of the pattern piece for the back of a fitted dress in three sizes – 10, 12 and 14; the black lines are the pattern lines for each size. Let's say your hip measurement is close to size 14, but you're a size 10 at the bust. Trace the fullest size (14) from the hipline down. Using a French curve, draw a new shaped line from the hips to the bust; this is the red line. Your traced pattern is now graded to suit your unique body measurements.



Basic pattern adjustments

ALTERING THE LENGTH

Sometimes you need to alter the length of a pattern – for example, because your upper body is tall or short or because you have long or short legs. You can determine whether you need more or less length in a bodice by taking your nape-to-waist measurement and comparing that to the pattern. Some patterns have a line (or two parallel lines) that indicates where you can shorten and lengthen, which is positioned in such a way that it doesn't interfere with things like darts. If you don't see such a line on your pattern, you can always add or remove length at the bottom of a pattern if it's a question of a longer or shorter hem, or draw a horizontal line across the pattern. If you are lengthening or shortening by more than 2.5 cm (1 in.), it's best to do it in two different places so as not to alter the shape and proportions of the pattern too much.

Lengthening

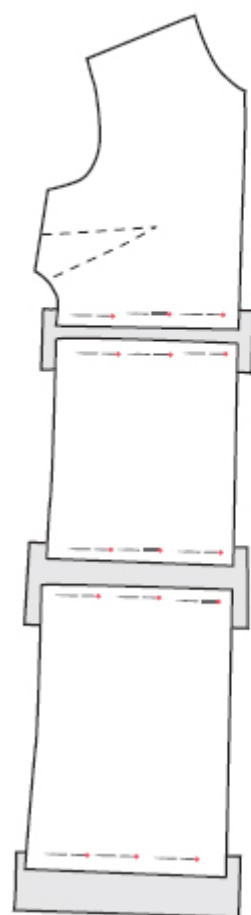
Cut your pattern across the lengthen/shorten line and spread the pattern pieces apart by the amount that you need. If you are adding length in two different places and you want to add 5 cm (2 in.) in total, spread by 2.5 cm (1 in.) in each area. Slide a piece of paper behind and stick your new pattern down with tape. Then use a ruler or a French curve to smooth out the outlines of your new pattern. This process is known as 'trueing'.

Shortening

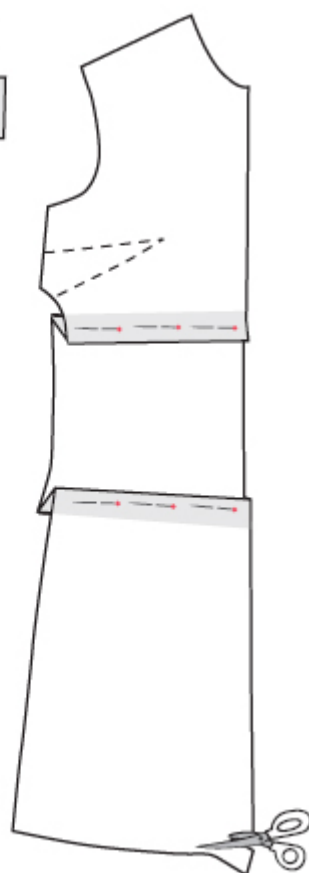
Fold the pattern across the lengthen/shorten line or draw a horizontal line across the pattern. Then make a tuck that's half the

amount you want to shorten by: if you want to shorten by 3 cm (1¼ in.), for example, make a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) tuck. Use tape to stick down the tucks and carefully redraw any outside lines that need to be smoothed out.

LENGTHENING



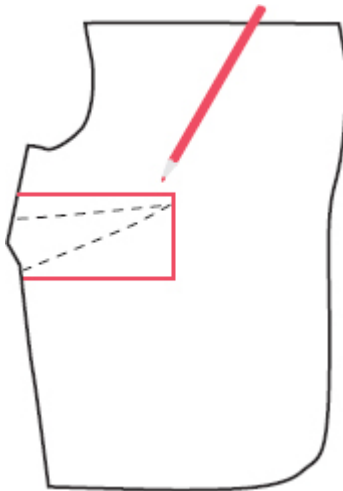
SHORTENING



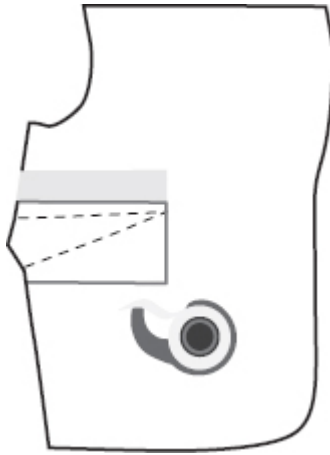
MOVING BUST DARTS UP OR DOWN

Your bust point (the fullest part of the bust) may not be at the same height as the one on your pattern, so you may need to raise or lower the bust darts. You may also need to do this when making a full or small bust adjustment. Measure from your shoulder down to your bust point and compare that measurement with the pattern.

- 1** Use a ruler and a pencil to draw a rectangular box around the dart. Cut around the box. Slide the box up or down by the amount you need to raise or lower. Make sure you keep the cut edges parallel.

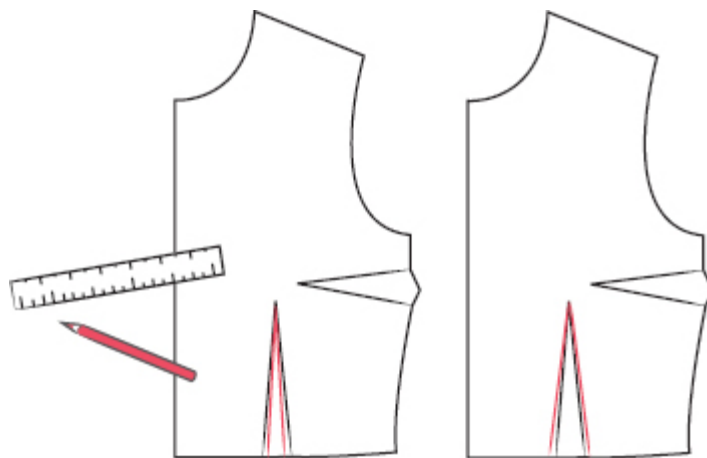


- 2** Stick the box into its new position and fill in the space with some tracing paper. Use a ruler and pencil to match up and re-draw the outside lines.



ALTERING WAIST DARTS

An easy way to adapt patterns that have waist darts is to make in the darts wider or narrower than the pattern. This is suitable for small pattern alterations to the waist. Divide the alteration between the number of darts – so if you want to take in the waist by 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) and you have four darts, make each dart 5 mm ($\frac{3}{16}$ in.) more than the pattern. The same goes for adding space to the waist: reduce the darts slightly to make the waist a bit bigger.



FULL OR SMALL BUST ADJUSTMENTS

Most commercial patterns are cut to fit a B cup, which means some of us will have to adapt our patterns to fit our bust measurements. This sounds more daunting than it actually is and it will make a big difference to how your clothes fit.

If your full bust measurement is bigger than your high bust measurement by more than 6.5 cm (2½ in.), the chances are that your clothes won't fit around your neck, chest and armhole; you'll need to do a full bust adjustment (FBA). If this is the case, use your high bust measurement as your pattern size. If the difference between your high and full bust is much smaller than 6.5 cm (2½ in.), you may have excess fabric around the bust; you'll need to do a small bust adjustment (SBA).

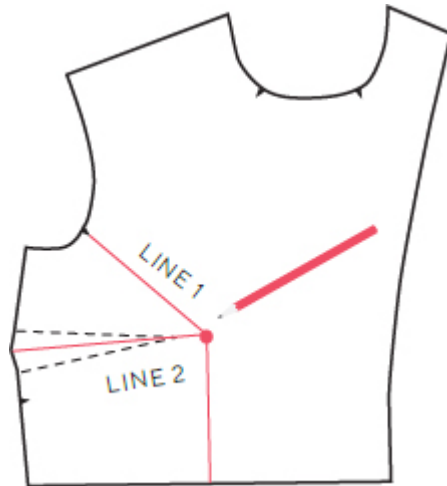
The process for doing a full or a small bust adjustment is the same, except that you are adding space by spreading the pattern for an FBA and reducing space by overlapping the pattern for an SBA.

First, subtract your high bust measurement from your full bust measurement and divide the difference in two. There are two examples, plus space for you to write down your own measurements.

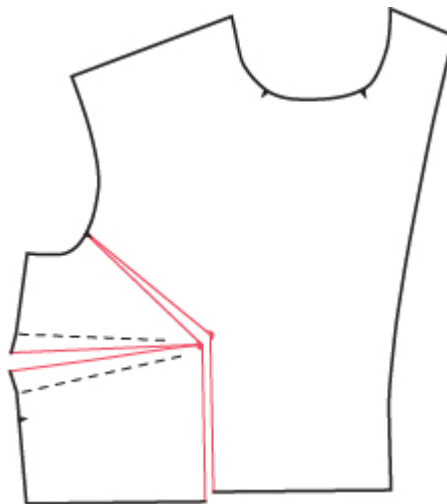
	EXAMPLE 1: FBA	EXAMPLE 1: SBA	MY MEASUREMENTS
Full bust measurement	97 cm (38 in.)	89 cm (35 in.)	
High bust measurement	89 cm (35 in.)	86.5 cm (34 in.)	
Difference	8 cm (3 in.)	2.5 cm (1 in.)	
FBA = half the difference	4 cm (1½ in.)		
SBA = half the difference		1.25 cm (½ in.)	

Full Bust Adjustment

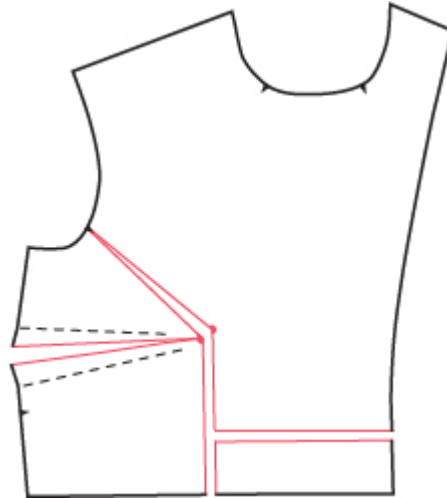
- 1 Hold the pattern paper against yourself, matching the shoulder seamline to the top of your shoulder. Check the bust point; if necessary, [move the dart](#).
- 2 Using a ruler and pencil, draw a straight line from the bust point on the pattern to the hem (make it parallel to the grainline to make sure it's straight). Draw another line from the bust point mark towards the armhole, hitting the lower third of the armhole, or the armhole notch if there is one. This is Line 1. Draw a final line horizontally through the bust dart, meeting Line 1 at the marked bust point. This is Line 2.



- 3** Cut along Line 1 from the hem to the armhole, leaving it attached by a small hinge at the armhole so that you can pivot the pattern. Cut along Line 2 as well, leaving a small hinge at the tip of the dart.

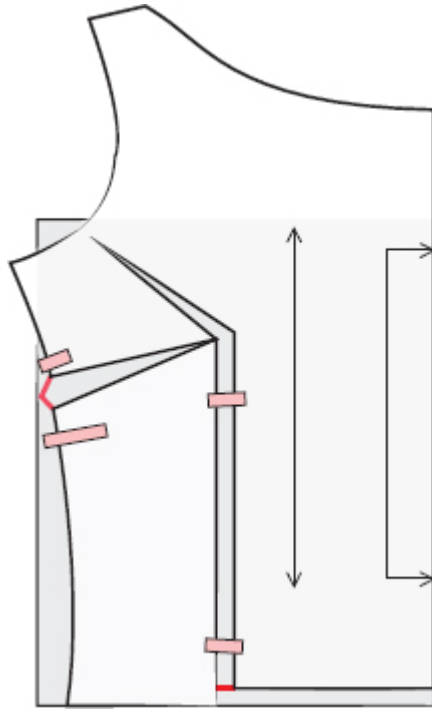


- 4** Line up the cut edges of Line 1 so that they have been spread by the amount you need for your FBA. The vertical edges should be parallel to each other, and you will notice that the dart automatically spreads as you do this. The hem is now no longer a nice straight line, so we need to adjust that. Draw a horizontal line parallel to the hem edge, cut along it and move this small piece down until the hem edges are even. Slide some paper behind your new pattern and stick your pattern down with tape.



Small Bust Adjustment

- 1** This is the same process as an FBA, but in reverse – you overlap the pieces instead of spreading them apart. Draw in Lines 1 and 2, as for an FBA, and cut along them.
- 2** Pivot the darted side of the pattern over the other side by the desired amount. The lower edges of the hem will no longer meet, as the side that is being adjusted is shorter.
- 3** Draw a horizontal line parallel to the hem edge, as for an FBA, cut along it and move this small piece until the hem edges are even.



Adjusting patterns without darts

If your pattern does not have a bust dart, you can create one to make the FBA. Measure 15 cm (6 in.) up from the waist along the side edge and mark with a dot. Draw a straight line from this mark to the bust point on your pattern. Draw a straight line from the lower third of the armhole to the bust point and then straight down to the hemline, as before. Slash and spread the pattern paper by the required amount, add extra pattern paper and tape in place. To close up the side opening that you have just created, draw a dart equal to the width of the side opening, with the top of the dart 2.5 cm (1 in.) from the bust point. Level the hem, as described in step 3.

TIP

Think about the kind of garment you're making before you adjust your pattern. These adjustments are great for garments with fitted bodices, but if you're making a floaty

garment with lots of ease then you may be able to get away without making any bust adjustment.

TIP

If your bodice pattern is sewn onto another pattern piece, such as a skirt, make sure you alter that piece too, to compensate for the fact that your bodice pattern is now slightly wider.

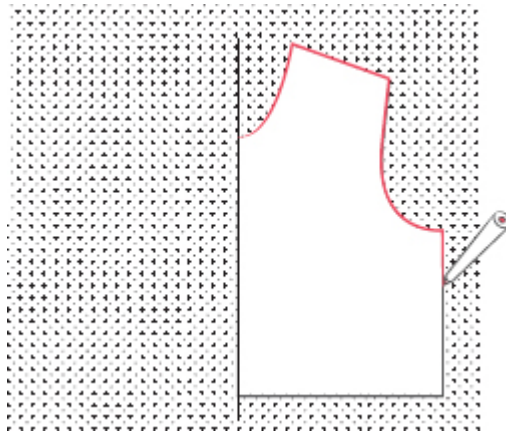
Pattern matching

It's impossible to make a printed fabric match everywhere, as a garment is made of curved seams, but there are lots of ways you can pattern match and choose where to strategically place a motif. Remember that you will probably need a bit more fabric if you have chosen to pattern match.

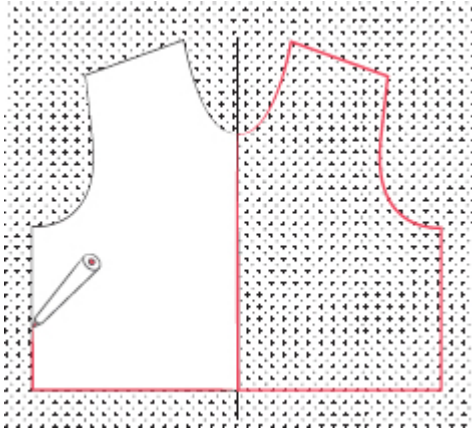
PATTERN PIECES ON THE FOLD

To pattern match correctly, you need to cut the pattern pieces on a single layer of fabric – so when a pattern piece is labelled to be on the fold, you need to create a complete pattern piece. Then you can lay the whole piece out on a single layer of fabric and see exactly how the fabric print will sit.

- 1** Draw a straight vertical line on a large piece of pattern paper.



- 2** Match the centre front or back of your pattern to the line you drew in step 1 and draw around the outline of the pattern piece.



- 3** Flip the pattern piece over, align the centre front or back with your drawn straight line again and draw around the outline. You have now mirrored the pattern piece to create a complete front or back. Cut out your new pattern and transfer the grainline and any other markings to it from your original pattern.
-

TIPS FOR PATTERN PLACEMENT

- **It's usually best to centre any big motifs. On the top half of a garment, for example, you could position large or obvious motifs around the centre front, the centre back, the front shoulders or the top of the sleeves. For a garment that opens at the centre front, such as a jacket, it's visually very beautiful if the print matches across the centre front.**
- **Avoid awkward placement, such as a circular motif on each breast.**

GOOD PATTERN
PLACEMENT



BAD PATTERN
PLACEMENT



CONTINUOUS MOTIF



SYMMETRICAL



MATCHING A PATTERN ACROSS SEAMS AND ACROSS TWO HALVES OF A GARMENT

Across a seam or two halves of a garment such as a jacket front, it will be very obvious if a large motif isn't perfectly matched. Follow these steps to get your match right. (Note that this only works on a straight seam edge, as folding a curved seam in paper would be difficult.)

- 1 Locate the edge of the paper pattern that you want to match across – for example, the centre back if you want to match two halves of a back pattern. Using a ruler, carefully draw in the seam

allowance on the paper pattern on this edge. Fold the paper seam allowance back so you can see where the finished edge will be.



- 2** Place your paper pattern on a single layer of fabric, right side up, keeping the paper seam allowance folded away. Move the pattern piece around until you have decided on a placement.



- 3** Pin the pattern to the fabric, fold the paper seam allowance out, and cut out.
- 4** Remove the paper pattern, then flip the cut-out fabric piece over so that you can see the wrong side. Very accurately, press the seam allowance to the wrong side, at the edge you are matching. Place the fabric you are going to cut your second piece from right side up, in a single layer. Place your first cut-out fabric piece on top, right side up, and move it around until the print you are matching is perfectly aligned across the cut-out piece and the fabric. The seam allowance of the already cut-out piece is still

pressed under, so you can pattern match very precisely. Keep the cutout piece in position with pins or pattern weights.



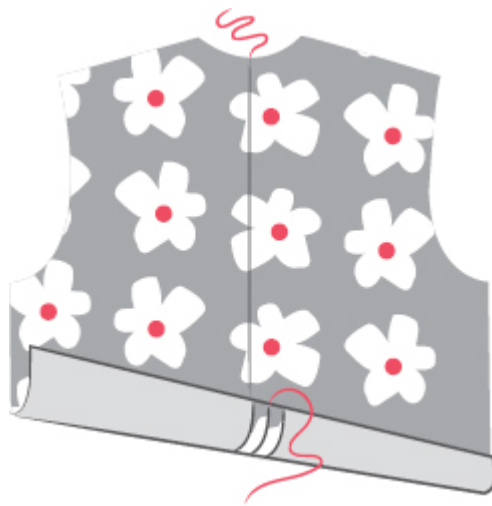
- 5** Fold under the seam allowance on your paper pattern again, flip it over so that it's the mirror of your first piece, then carefully pin it in place, butting it up against the edge of the first cut-out fabric piece.



- 6** Carefully remove the first cut-out fabric piece.
- 7** Unfold the seam allowance on your paper pattern, then pin it to the fabric and cut out your second piece.



- 8** Pin then tack (baste) your seam, so that you can double check the pattern matching before you sew the seam.



TIPS

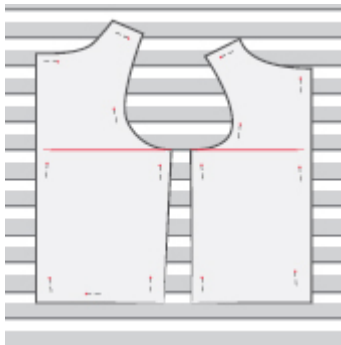
- **Make sure your paper pattern is completely flat and lying on the correct grain.**
- **Pay attention to what motif would be right at the edge that you are trying to match.**

- **If the seam will straddle a very obvious part of the print, it can be a good idea to put the seam across the very centre of that motif.**
-

MATCHING STRIPES AND CHECKS

Stripes

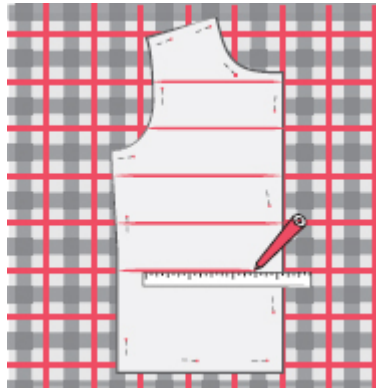
If you're cutting two of a piece, place your first pattern piece on a single layer of striped fabric. Align the stripes in the way you would like them to be. For example, if your fabric has horizontal strips, you might decide to position your pattern with the armhole immediately below a stripe. If you have vertical stripes, pay close attention to the position of the stripe closest to the centre front or centre back edge. Then follow the steps for [Matching a pattern across seams](#).



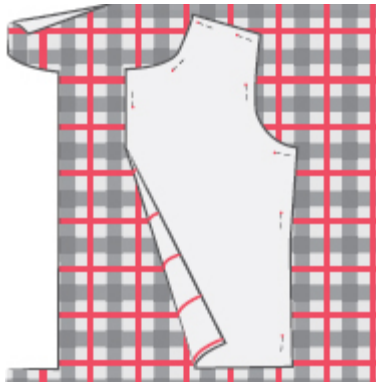
Checks

The more obvious the stripes are on a check fabric, the more important the pattern placement is in making a visually beautiful and balanced garment. It's also important to make a symmetrical left and right, so that the checks are in exactly the same place on the right and left sleeve, for example.

- 1** Lay the paper pattern on top of a single layer of fabric. Decide on the placement, pin in place, then draw guidelines on the paper pattern: you are continuing any or all lines from the fabric to the paper. Cut out your first fabric piece and remove the paper pattern.



- 2** Using the guidelines, match the drawn lines on the paper pattern with the checks on the fabric to cut the second pattern piece.

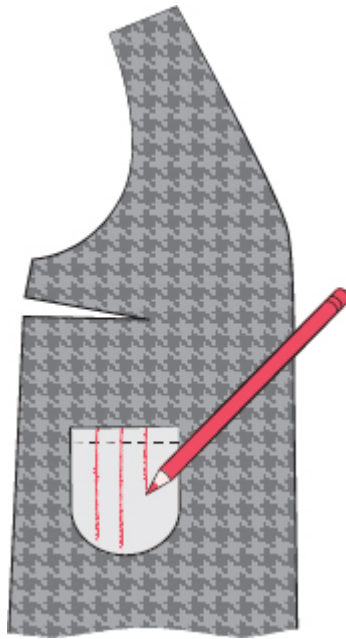


TIP

When you are ready to pin your seam, make sure you use plenty of pins for stripes that are horizontal! Ideally, every stripe should be pinned.

PATTERN MATCHING A SMALL PIECE

The method shown for matching checks is also really useful for pattern matching small pieces, such as patch pockets. Position the paper pocket pattern piece where the pocket will sit and draw a small section of the print on your paper. Remove the paper and pin it onto the fabric that you're cutting the pocket from, matching the print lines so that the print aligns.



Sewing techniques

On the next few pages you will find all the techniques that are referenced in the projects throughout the book. Here you'll find instructions on fly zips, shirring, piping, buttonhole placement, and much more.

FINISHING SEAM ALLOWANCES

Zigzag stitching

This can be used to neaten the raw edges of seam allowances either individually or together. Once the seam is sewn, change to zigzag stitch and sew again along the raw edge of the seam allowance.

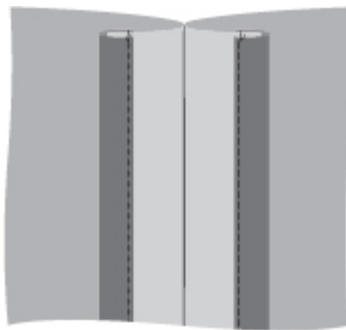
Overlocking (serging)

The overlocking stitch is formed of either three or four threads and neatly encases the raw edges. A four-thread overlocker will sew a straight stitch to the left, with a second straight stitch to the right, anchoring the two looper stitches that form over the edge of the fabrics interlocking them together. As you feed the fabric through the machine, a cutter trims the excess seam allowance before the stitching covers it.



Bound seam allowances

This finish is ideal when the inside of the garment might show – for example, an unlined jacket. You can use bias binding, organza or a seam binding tape. See [bias binding](#) for how to apply this.



MACHINE STITCHING TECHNIQUES

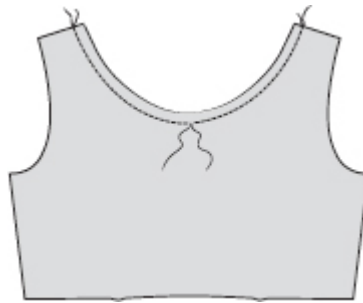
Machine tacking (basting)

Machine tacking is a temporary stitch done in a long stitch length, usually a 4 or 5, to either tack layers together or hold something in place. It's not meant to be visible and should not replace a regular seam.

Stay stitching

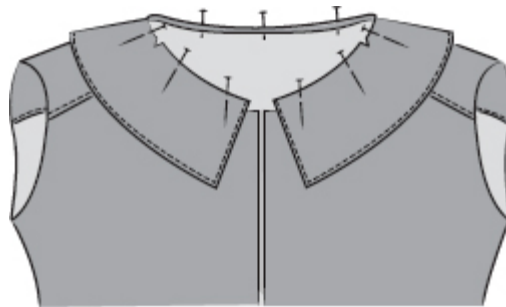
Stay stitching is done just inside the seam allowance, to prevent bias-cut or curved areas from stretching out of shape while you work

on them. Sew with a regular stitch length just inside the seam allowance.



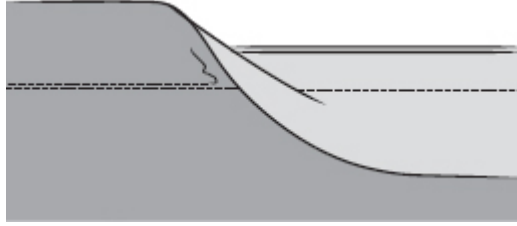
Topstitching

This is stitching that is visible on the right side. Topstitched hems are sewn a foot's width away from the edge and topstitched seams are sewn a few millimetres away from the seam ditch.



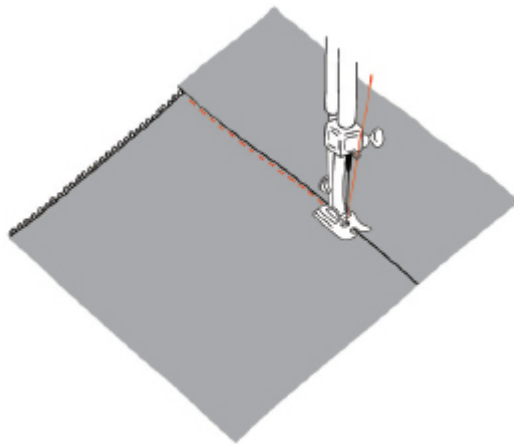
Understitching

This anchors the seam allowance to, for example, a facing, pocket or lining. On a facing, it prevents the facing from rolling out. Sew the facing to the garment, then press both facing and seam allowances away from the garment. With the facing uppermost, sew close to the seam, catching the seam allowances underneath.



Stitching 'in the ditch'

This is done directly on top of a previous seam line, on the right side of the garment. It's a great way to anchor facings or waistbands in place, particularly if they are a heavy fabric that you don't want to turn under. Done well, the stitching disappears inside the crease (or 'ditch') of the seam.



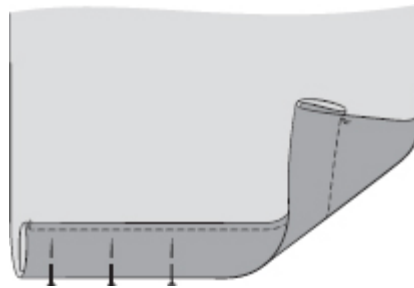
PRESSING

Always press seams before they are sewn over again. Pressing embeds the stitches and helps the seam lie flat. Press from the wrong side and then the right side, protecting the fabric with a press cloth.

DOUBLE-TURNED HEM

A double-turned hem can be achieved in two ways. You can either fold up the hem by half the required amount and then again by the same amount, which encloses the raw edge. Alternatively, you can fold up the entire hem allowance and tuck the raw edge inside.

Press and stitch close to the inner fold of the turned-up hem. Generally you will be working from the wrong side of the garment, so make sure that the bobbin thread matches the fabric. If desired stitch again, working in the same direction close to the hem edge, to provide two parallel lines of stitching.



GATHERING

Gathering threads are used to make a longer piece of fabric fit onto a shorter piece.

- 1** Set your sewing machine to a long stitch length – usually about 4 mm ($\frac{3}{16}$ in.). Working on the right side between the markings, sew a row of stitches inside the seam allowance, a fraction away from the seam line – about 1.2 cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in.) from the edge. Start with a backstitch, but DON'T finish the row of stitches with one. Sew a second parallel row of stitches still inside the seam allowance, a little way from the first, using the presser foot width as a guide.
- 2** Working on the wrong side pull on the bobbin threads, sliding the fabric along until it is the correct length. (To work this out, measure your gathered seam against the edge you're matching

the gathers to.) To finish, draw the threads through to the wrong side and either knot them or wrap them around a pin in a figure-of-eight.

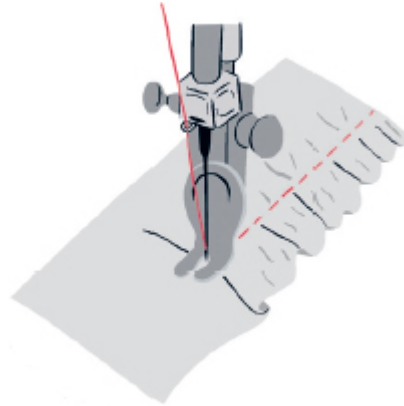


SHIRRING

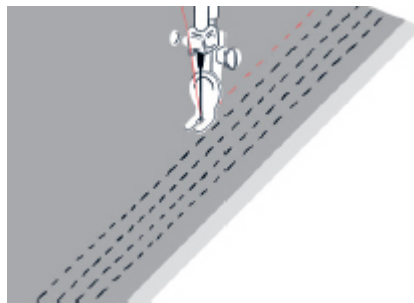
Shirring gives a lovely smocked effect on fabric. Mark your shirring lines really carefully before you start. You need a sewing machine, elastic sewing thread for the bobbin and regular thread for the needle.

- 1** Wind your bobbin with the elastic thread by hand: aim for a little bit of tension when you do this, without fully using the elasticity of the thread. Distribute the thread evenly around the bobbin, and set up the rest of your machine as usual.
- 2** Lower the needle tension on your machine and do a sample stitch: you should see the elastic bobbin thread on the back and only the needle thread on the front.

- 3** Start your first line, and don't backstitch. After a few stitches, tie up the needle and bobbin threads by hand at the start of your line. When you reach the end of your first line, tie the thread ends by hand again instead of backstitching.



- 4** Sew all subsequent rows by pulling the fabric flat, to achieve even lines.



TIPS

- **If your stitches are not gathering and the elastic looks loose on the back: change your bobbin tension.**
 - **If the needle thread looks as if it's only looping around the elastic on the back: change your needle tension.**
-

ROULEAU LOOPS

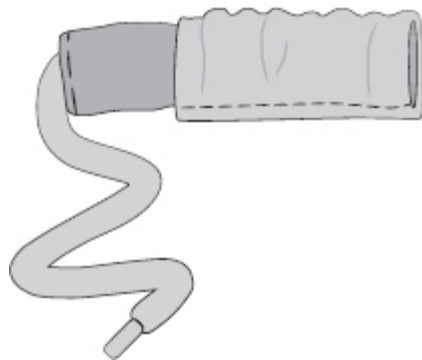
Rouleau loops are very narrow straps, used either as shoulder straps or as button loops.

Method 1 – Cord

- 1** Cut the fabric strip to the width required. Fold it in half, right sides together, then insert a shoelace or a piece of cord into the fold. The cord should be about 5 cm (2 in.) longer than your rouleau strip. At one end, centre the cord so that you can tack (baste) it in place more easily. Tack across the short end to anchor the cord, then stitch the long edge (without catching the cord).



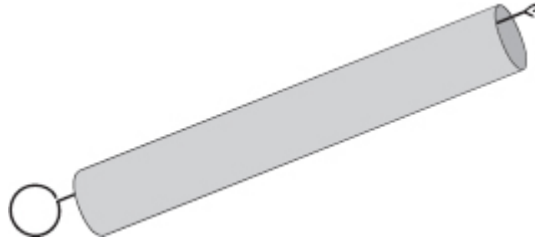
- 2** Trim the seam allowance and pull on the cord to pull the fabric through to the right side.



Method 2 – Rouleau loop turner

A rouleau loop turner is a long metal rod with a loop and tiny hook at one end. When you've stitched the long edges of the rouleau, push the turner right to the end of the fabric tube and hook a little

of the fabric onto the hook. Help start turning it through at that end, and then pull on the turner to bring the fabric through to the right side.

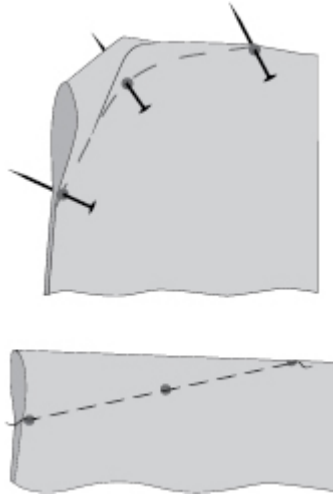


DARTS

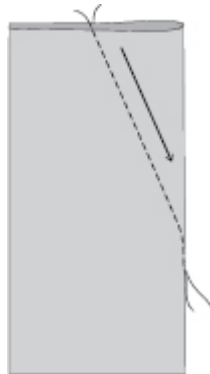
Garments are shaped with darts to fit over body contours at bust, hips, through the midriff and at the shoulders. The majority of darts are V-shaped, with the widest part at the outer edge, tapering to a point. Double darts, which are widest in the middle tapering to a point at either end, are used at the waist, to provide a closer fit.

Single darts

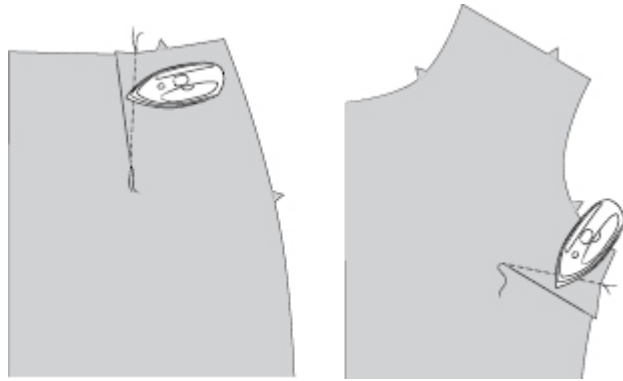
- 1** Having marked the dart position and length, fold the fabric right sides together, so the marks sit one on top of the other (check by pinning through the layers). Either pin along the stitching line or mark the line with a chalk pencil and then pin at right angles to the dart.



- 2** Starting at the garment edge, sew towards the point and don't back stitch. At the point, sew off the edge of the fabric and cut off your machine threads, leaving long thread tails. Knot these off by hand.



- 3** Press waist darts away from the centre front or back of the garment and bust darts downwards. Bust darts give shape to the bodice, so they need to be pressed carefully to keep the shaping. Press over a tailor's ham (or a rolled towel), holding the side seam up as you press into the tip.



- 4** On heavyweight fabrics that would cause a ridge if pressed to one side, cut open the fold of fabric to within 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) of the tip and press open.

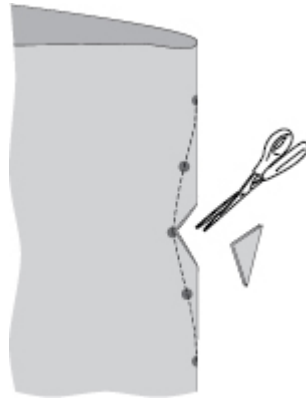
Double-ended darts

A double-ended dart can be used to shape the back of the garment from shoulder to hip, or the front from below bust to hip.

- 1** Fold the dart, with right sides together, and pin or tack (baste). Start stitching at the centre, stitching to one point, then fix/lock stitch or leave thread tails to knot.
- 2** Flip the fabric over to stitch the other side, starting at the centre again and slightly overlapping the stitching at the centre by 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Stitch to the other point, stitching the last two or three stitches on the fold.



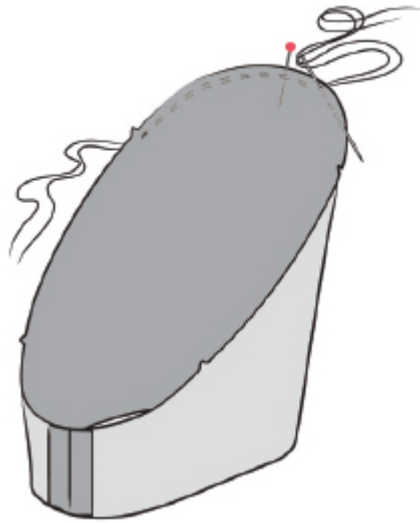
- 3** To help the dart curve into the body and the folded fabric to lie flat, cut a wedge out of the widest part of the dart fold. On fabrics that fray easily, add a tiny dab of fray check. Press the dart towards the centre front or back of the garment.



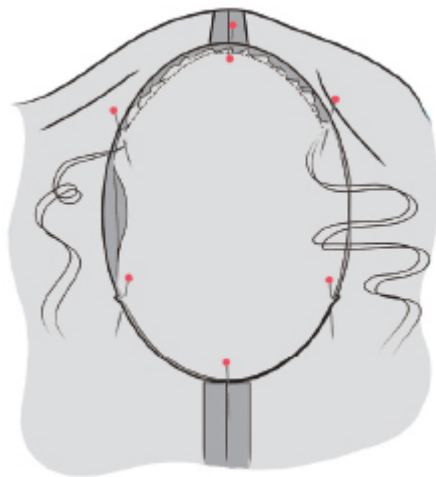
SET-IN SLEEVES

Set-in sleeves are the most common type of sleeve. The sleeve head needs to fit into the armhole and curve over the shoulder. To do this, the sleeve head has to be cut larger than the armhole and then gathered or 'eased' to fit. Before you insert the sleeve, stitch, press and finish any seams that intersect the garment's armholes.

- 1** Finish the raw edges. With right sides together, pin the underarm seam of the sleeve and stitch. Press the seams open. Fold the sleeve in half lengthways and mark the centre top with a pin. At the sleeve head, run [gathering stitches](#) between the marks that you transferred from the pattern piece.



- 2** Turn the garment inside out and the sleeve right side out. With right sides together, slip the sleeve through the armhole, matching up the notches and matching underarm seam with side seam and the top pin with the shoulder seam. Pin at these points. Gently pull up the gathering stitches to fit the sleeve head in the armhole, arranging the fullness evenly. Tack (baste) the sleeve into the armhole using small stitches, and then stitch in place, beginning and ending at the underarm seam and overlapping the ends of the stitching. Remove the tacking stitches, then trim and neaten the seam allowances. Press the armhole seams towards the sleeve, working the tip of the iron along the curve of the seam.

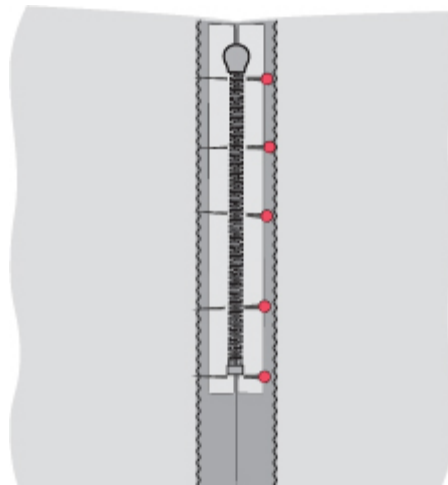


ZIPS

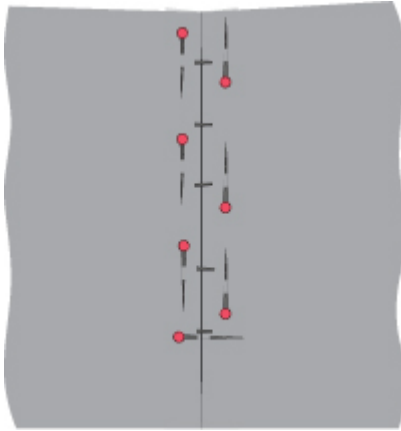
Conventional zip, centred

This is the simplest form of zip insertion. Overlock (serge) or zigzag the seam allowances before you insert the zip.

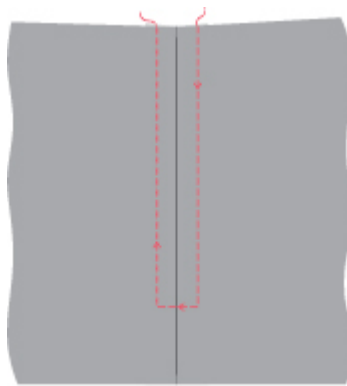
- 1** Machine tack (baste) the seam of the garment. For a garment that has a zip inserted partly into a seam, such as a dress or a skirt, sew up the seam from the hem to the zip notch on a normal stitch length, backstitch, then machine tack the rest of the seam. Press the seam open.
- 2** Place the garment wrong side up, with the zip face down on the seam and the zip teeth in the middle of the seam. Pin in place, inserting the pins horizontally. If you need a fastening such as a hook and bar or if a waistband is going to be attached, make sure that the zip pull lies 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) below the raw edge.



- 3** Fit a zip foot to your machine. Turn the garment over and pin the zip in place from the right side in a U-shape, in the direction you're going to sew. Mark with a pin where you want to cross over the bottom of the zip to sew the other side, just below the zip stopper.



- 4** Remove the pins from the wrong side of the zip and start stitching from the top. Pivot and stitch across the bottom, then pivot again and stitch the other side.



- 5** Unpick the tacking stitches from step 1: your zip should now sit beautifully in the centre of the seam.

Lapped zip

A lapped zip has one edge of fabric lapping the other, so that only one row of stitching is visible. The other edge is stitched very close to the zip teeth. Often used in side seams, it is also used at centre back seams.

- 1** Neaten the raw edges of the seam allowances into which the zip is to be placed. Press to embed the stitching.

- 2** Mark the zip position and machine tack (baste) the zip seam closed, using the longest stitch length available. Reduce the stitch length to a regular 2.5 and machine stitch the rest of the seam, reverse stitching at the start and end of the seam. Press the seam open.



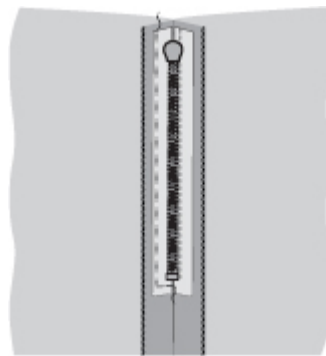
- 3** With the zip open and face down, tack the zip tape to the left-hand seam allowance only, tacking along the outer edge of the zip tape, with the teeth of the zip along the seam.



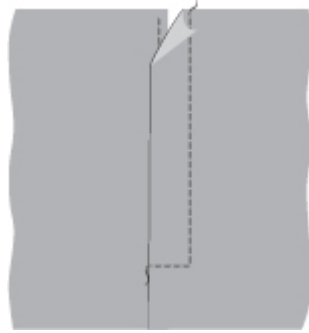
- 4** Close the zip and turn so that the zip is right side up and the left seam allowance is folded along the zip teeth, with just a tiny amount (2–3 mm/1/8 in.) of seam allowance visible. Attach your zip foot and machine as close to the teeth as possible on the tiny bit of seam allowance. If necessary move the needle to the right a little, with the narrow edge of the zip foot running along the folded edge of the fabric closest to the teeth.



- 5** Snip into the seam allowance below the zip end.
- 6** Working on a flat surface and with the garment right side down, check that the zip lies flat. Then pin and tack the right side of the zip tape through all layers, starting at the bottom. Tack across the bottom and up the side, 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) from the centre of the teeth.



- 7** Turn the work over so that the right side is uppermost. Machine stitch across the bottom and up the side as before, 6–10 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{3}{8}$ in.) from the teeth. (The distance depends on the thickness of the fabric: finer fabrics can be stitched closer to the teeth; fleece or woollens should be stitched further from the teeth.) Remove the tacking stitches.



Invisible zip

Many people are nervous about putting in an invisible zip, but there's no need to be. If you follow the steps below, you will always get a perfect result. The beauty of an invisible zip is that all the stitches are underneath, so even if your stitches are wobbly they won't be seen. You will need an invisible zip foot for this. This is a specialist foot that has two grooves on the underside, which hold the zip teeth to one side of the needle, allowing you to stitch closer to the zip than you could with any other type of foot.

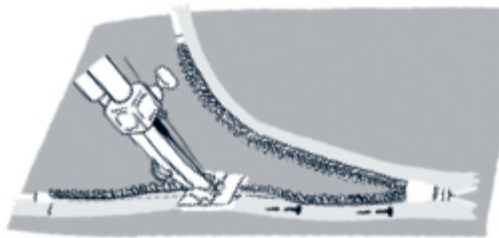
Here are a few rules to follow:

- Always sew the zip into the opening without the seam being stitched below.
- Always sew with the zip open.

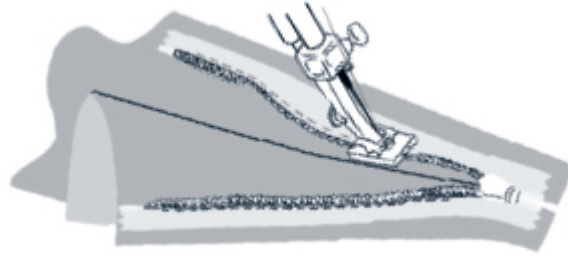
- 1** Following the manufacturer's instructions, attach an invisible zip foot to your machine. Measure the length of the garment's opening on your zip tape, so that you know where to stop stitching your zip. It's a good idea to press the garment's seam allowance to the wrong side on either side of the zip opening, as this gives you a crease that you can follow to line up the zip.
- 2** Lay your zip right side down on the outside of the garment. We will start attaching the right-hand side first. Now open up your zip. (It's essential that the zip is open, or it's near impossible to

sew it in place!) The zip stop needs to be 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) below the top edge of the garment, and the outside of the zip coil/teeth needs to be 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) away from the raw edge of your garment (lined up with the pressed seam line).

- 3** Pin this side of the zip in place – or tack (baste) it in place if this is your first attempt at an invisible zip. With the right-hand groove of the foot nestled over the zip coil, it should be pushing the zip teeth over to the right. Sew slowly forwards, carefully guiding the stopper into the foot and gently rolling the teeth to the left with your fingers. Stitch along the zip tape until you reach the mark for the end of the zip, and backstitch.



- 4** Do up the zip and check that your stitching is really close to the zip. If it's not, you can always stitch it again and try to get the needle a little bit closer. You don't even need to unpick the first row of stitches!
- 5** Open the zip and pin the left-hand side exactly as you did before, with the teeth 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) from the edge along the pressed seam line. Use the left-hand groove of the foot, gently rolling the teeth to the left with your fingers. Stitch along the zip tape until you reach the mark for the end of the zip, and backstitch.



Fly zip

A fly zip is similar in construction to a lapped zip – it just has an additional shield stitched on the inside. In women's trousers (shown here), the fly typically fastens right over left (from the wearer's perspective); in men's trousers, it's left over right.

The key components of a fly zip are:

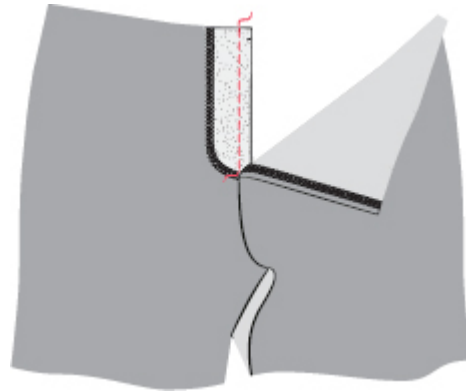
Fly facing

The facing covers the zip from view. In some patterns it is cut as a separate piece, as shown here; in others, the facing is an extension of the centre front and is simply folded back.

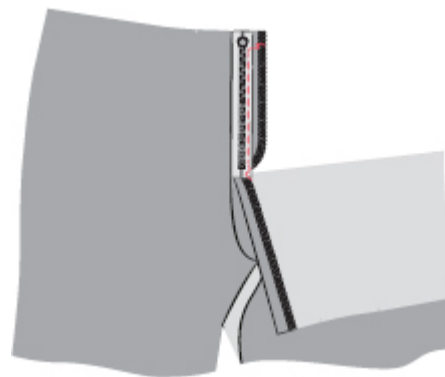
Fly guard

This double layer of fabric sits between you and the zip and is sewn into the left-hand side of the fly, extending underneath the opening. It stops the zip teeth from catching on your skin when you pull the zip up and down.

- 1** Overlock (serge) the curved edge of the fly facing only; try not to take any fabric off with your overlocker. Pin the fly facing on the left-hand side of the trouser front (as you look at it), right sides together. Pin and sew from the waist to the zip notch.

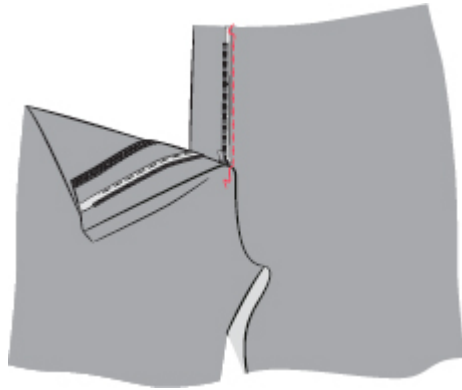


- 2** Press the facing away from the left trouser leg, then trim the seam allowances and press it away from the trouser leg as well. Place the zip face down on the facing, aligning the bottom of the zip with the zip notch. Align the side of the zip with the seam that joins the facing to the trousers. Sew the right side of the zip to the facing, then fold the facing towards the inside of the trousers and press lightly.



- 3** Fold the fly guard in half, right sides together. Sew the short curved edge, trim and clip the seam allowances, then turn right side out. Overlock the longest straight edge.
- 4** Open the zip. Place the trousers right side up, then press 6 mm (¼ in.) to the wrong side on the right-hand side trouser front (as you look at it). Tack (baste) the zip in place behind the fold; you should only see the zip teeth. Position the fly guard behind the trousers, aligning the overlocked edge with the edge of the zip

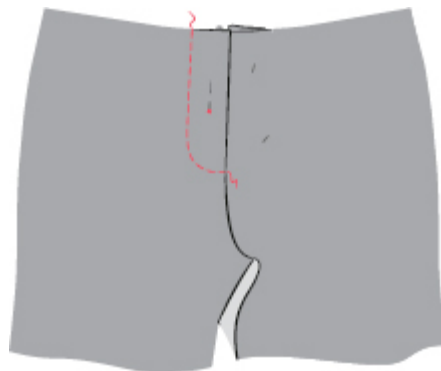
tape and stitch close to the trouser front fold through all three layers (trousers, zip and fly guard).



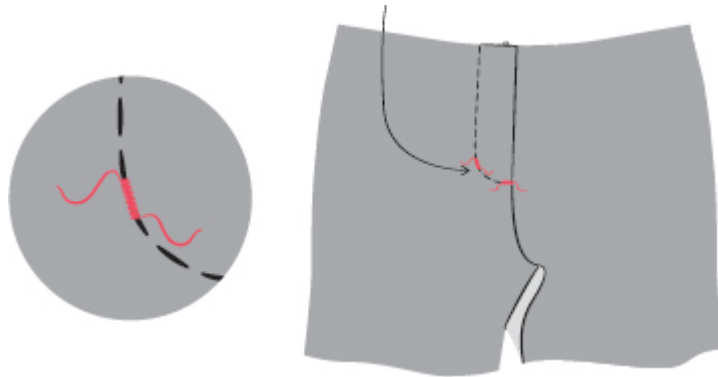
- 5** Turn the trousers over so that you can see the inside. Pin the fly guard out of the way to prepare for topstitching. Close the zip and turn the trousers right side up again.



- 6** Draw a topstitching curve that matches the shape of the fly facing underneath and sew through the trousers and facing.



- 7** Unpin the fly guard so that it sits over the zip. Pin the fly guard in position where it wants to sit. From the front of the trousers, bar tack at the very bottom of the topstitched line and also at the start of the curve. These stitches will go through all layers: trousers, zip, facing and fly guard.



TIP

To ensure a straight line of stitching, draw a chalk line along the stitching line, or place masking tape alongside the stitching line.

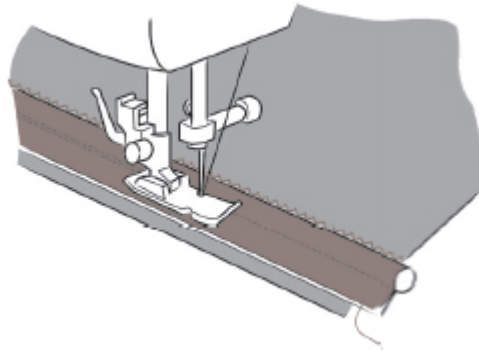
TOP TIP

A bar tack is simply a series of zigzag stitches placed very close together. Set a standard zigzag stitch 2–3mm ($\frac{1}{16}$ – $\frac{1}{8}$ in.) wide and stitch a short row 1–2 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ in.) long. Backstitch once or twice over the entire row to secure.

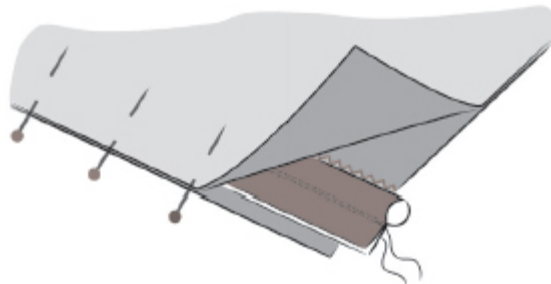
PIPING

Piping can be inserted into a seam around the edge to give a crisp finish, or as a contrast decorative detail between two pieces. To make piping, prepare [bias strips](#), then fold in half wrong sides together. Slot the piping cord into the fold and stitch as close to the cord as you can, using a zip foot.

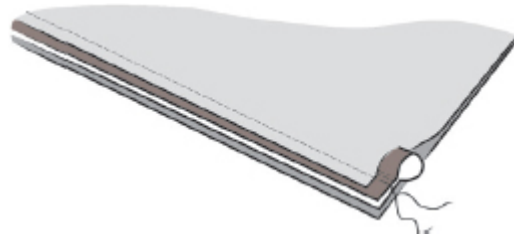
- 1** The piping needs to be stitched right side up onto the right side of the fabric piece along the stitching line. You may find the seam allowance on the piping is narrower than the seam allowance on the garment, in which case, match the stitching line of the piping with the stitching line of the fabric, making sure both stitching lines are perfectly aligned along the entire length of the piping. Tack (baste) just inside the stitching line, checking the alignment as you go. Use a zip foot to stitch it into position.



- 2** Lay the piece with the piping stitched to it right side up on a flat surface. Lay the piece to be stitched to it right sides down on top. Match the raw edges, pin the seam and then stitch.



- 3** The seam will now consist of up to four layers. If it is bulky, 'grade' the seam allowances – cut the top layer close to the stitching, the second layer a little longer, and so on, so that the layers are tapered.



BUTTON PLACEMENT

Button placement can make all the difference between an off-the-peg garment and a bespoke garment. Here's how to get a professional fit at home.

- 1** Lay your finished blouse flat and mark the waist point and bust point along the centre front. There should always be a button on these two points, as these are the areas where the garment pulls the most. Mark your next button at the very top of the centre front.

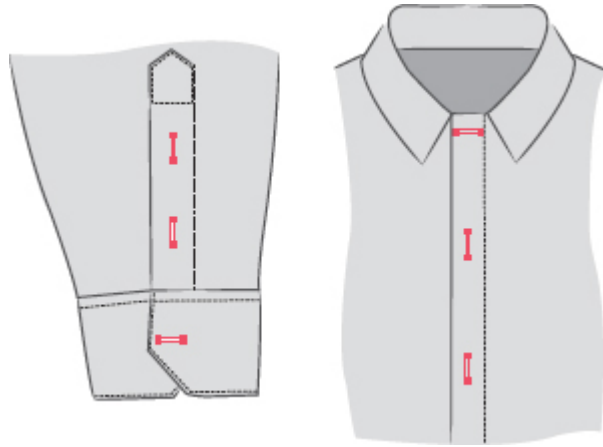


- 2** Then mark the position of the remaining buttons in between the top and bust button, and in between the bust and waist. The buttons don't have to all be equally spaced. Prioritise getting equal distances where you can, but you can position the buttons a bit closer to the two stress points (bust/chest and waist) if necessary, as they will help carry some of the stress. Below the waist, keep going until you're a few centimetres from the hem (buttons never go all the way down to the hem).



HORIZONTAL OR VERTICAL?

It all depends on where the buttonhole sits. A vertical buttonhole will provide zero movement for the button, whereas a horizontal buttonhole will allow the button to move slightly within the buttonhole. Horizontal buttonholes are used in areas like collars and cuffs, where you need a bit more movement. On a button-down shirt, all the buttonholes down the centre front will be vertical except for the very top one, where you'll use a horizontal buttonhole to button by your throat.



BUTTONHOLE SIZE

A buttonhole should be 2–3 mm (a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ in.) more than the diameter of your button. So if you have a round 13-mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ -in.) button, then the corresponding buttonhole should be 15–16 mm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.). Always try one first and see if it works: you shouldn't have to push the button through with force, nor should the button swim around in the buttonhole. If you have a domed button, add a bit more length to the buttonhole to be able to button up.

STITCHING BUTTONHOLES

Modern machines will either sew a buttonhole in one step or, on basic models, in four steps. Many now come with a buttonhole foot with a slot in the back for the button, so that the hole is the perfect size.

Prepare the fabric by interfacing the buttonhole section. On very lightweight fabrics, add an extra layer of tearaway stabilizer below each buttonhole area.

BIAS BINDING

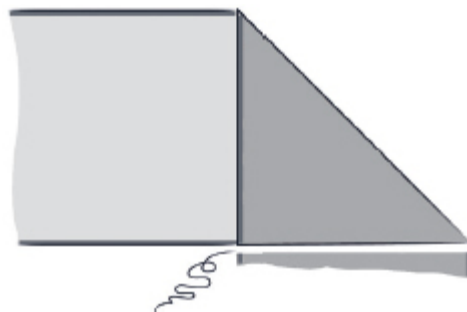
Bias binding not only finishes the edges of a garment beautifully but also neatly encases the raw edges. Bindings are usually made from bias-cut strips of fabric, so that they will bend around curved areas easily. You can buy bias binding ready cut and with the edges pressed in. It comes in a variety of widths and endless colours. Alternatively, you can make your own, either in the same fabric as the garment or as a contrast trim.

Calculating the width of the binding strip

Work out the width of the binding you want to see on the edge of a garment. To achieve a visible width of 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.), which is a nice width in dressmaking, double the visible width required and add 12 mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in.) for seam allowances – so you would need strips 32 mm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ in.) wide. With the long edges turned in by 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.), the tape would be 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) – and thus 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) wide when folded over a seam.

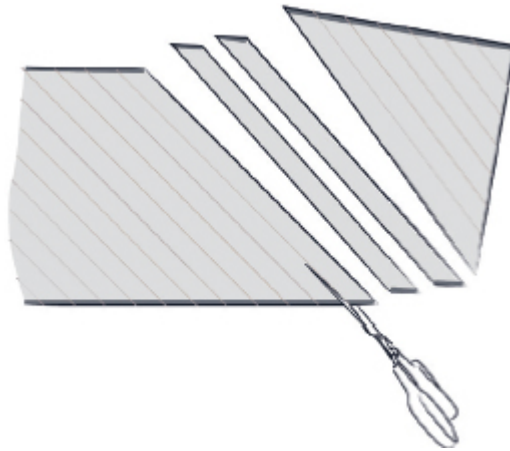
Making your own bias binding

- 1** To find the bias, pull out a crossways (weft) thread (one that runs from selvedge to selvedge) near the raw edge of the fabric. Cut along the line created by the pulled thread. Fold this straight edge diagonally until it matches the selvedge. Press along the fold. This diagonal line is the bias. Cut along the line.

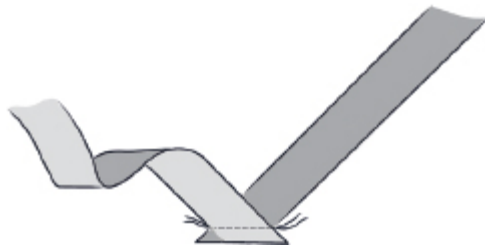


- 2** Using a steel ruler and tailor's chalk, measure out and mark the desired width of the binding at regular intervals along the

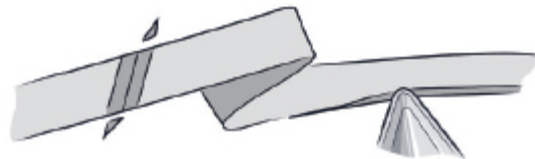
diagonal line. Cut along the lines using dressmaker's scissors or a rotary cutter and a cutting mat.



- 3** Pin the cut lengths end to end with right sides together along the selvedge or crossways grain. This will form a V shape. Stitch and then press the seams open.



- 4** Once you have made up the length you need, trim off the protruding ends of the seams and press in a 6 mm (¼ in) hem to the wrong side along each long edge.

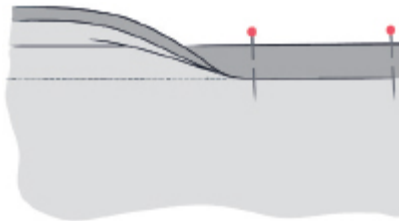


Applying bias binding

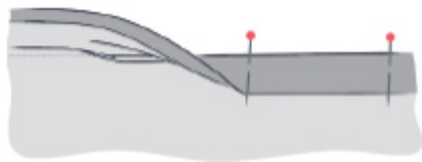
- 1** Unfold one long edge and place it with right sides together along the edge you plan to bind. Pin and then stitch it in place along the crease line. Trim the seam to 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in).



- 2 Revealed method:** To use bias binding as a trim, fold the bias binding over the seam allowance to the wrong side and pin and tack (baste) in place. **Topstitch** from the right side, then remove the tacking stitches.



- 3 Concealed method:** With this method, the binding is visible only on the inside of the bound edge. It is suitable for necklines and armholes and functions as a mini facing. Trim the seam allowance, then fold the whole width of the bias binding to the wrong side. The stitch line joining the bias binding to the main piece will lie exactly on the edge of the garment when it is finished. Topstitch in place.



The
PROJECTS

Casual Shirt

This button-down shirt has a casual shape, without darts, and features tabs to keep your sleeves rolled up. Both practical and comfortable, it's a winner for all occasions. Make it in linen for a summer holiday feeling.

Materials

- 2.5 m (2¾ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 40 cm (16 in.) lightweight iron-on interfacing
- Ten buttons, 1.2–1.5 cm (½–5⁄8 in.) in diameter
- Matching sewing thread
- Contrasting thread for topstitching (optional)
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

Linen, linen blends, cotton, lightweight denim, brushed cotton (flannel).

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

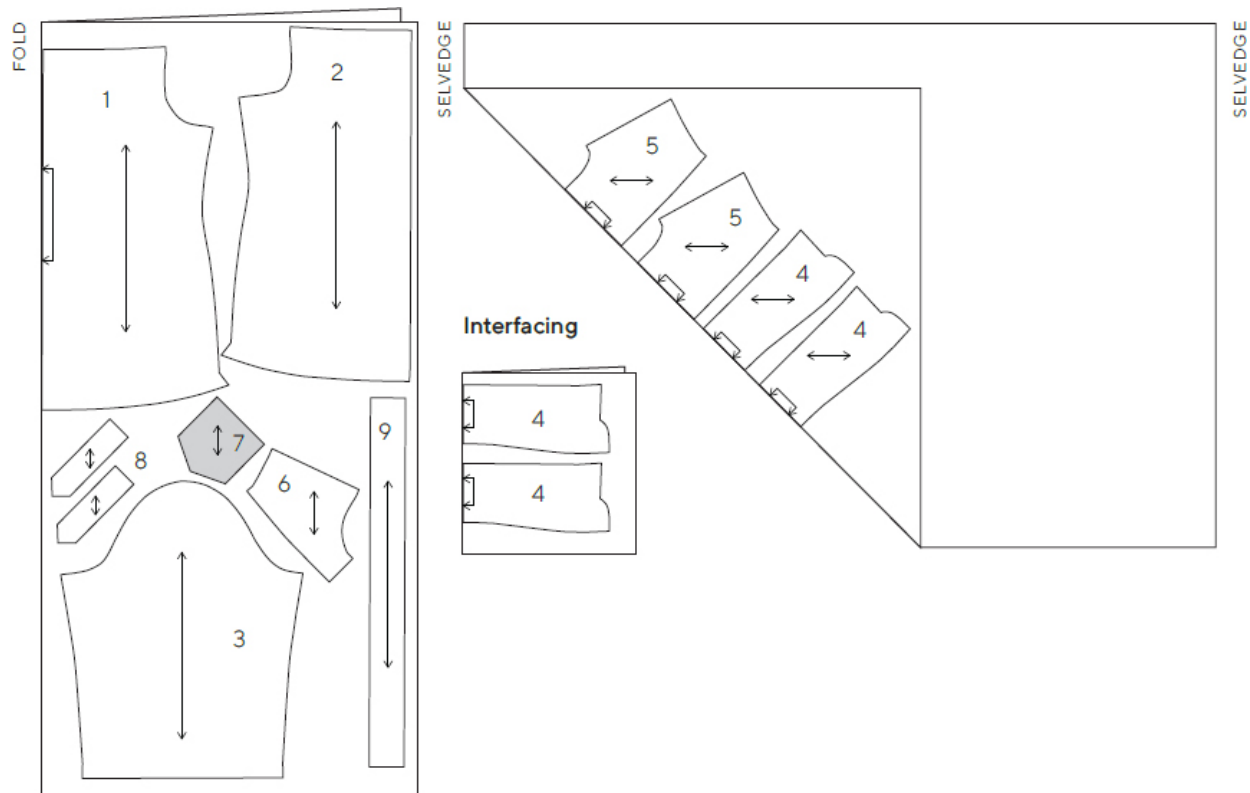
This project has buttonholes, so you will need a sewing machine that can make these.

Instead of buttons and buttonholes you could use denim-style press studs, which don't require any sewing.

Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	74.5	75	75.5	76	77	77.5	78	78.5
Front length (in.)	29 $\frac{1}{4}$	29 $\frac{1}{2}$	29 $\frac{3}{4}$	30	30 $\frac{1}{4}$	30 $\frac{1}{2}$	30 $\frac{3}{4}$	31
Bust (cm)	92	97	102	107	112	117	122	127
Bust (in.)	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50
Waist (cm)	84	89	94	99	104	109	114	119
Waist (in.)	33	35	37	39	41	43	45	47
Sleeve length (cm)	51	51.5	52	52.5	53	53.5	54	54.5
Sleeve length (in.)	20	20 $\frac{1}{4}$	20 $\frac{1}{2}$	20 $\frac{3}{4}$	21	21	21 $\frac{1}{4}$	21 $\frac{1}{2}$

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric

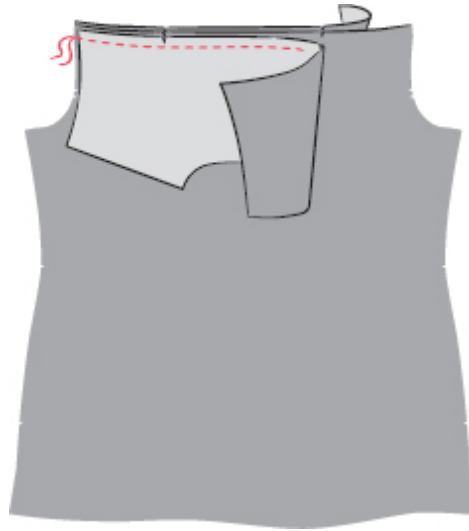


- 1** Back – cut 1 on the fold
- 2** Front – cut 2
- 3** Sleeve – cut 2
- 4** Collar – cut 2 on the fold in fabric and 2 on the fold in interfacing
- 5** Back yoke – cut 2 on the fold
- 6** Front yoke – cut 2
- 7** Pocket – cut 1
- 8** Sleeve tab – cut 4
- 9** Button stand – cut 2

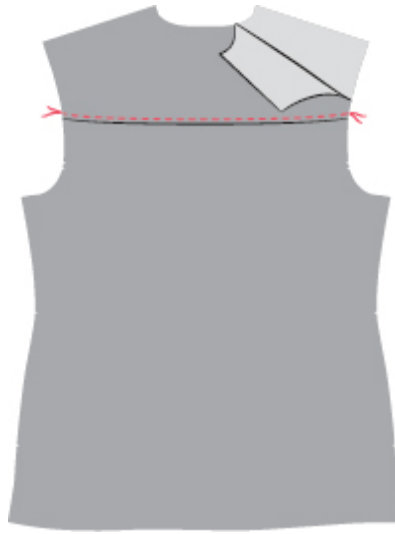
THE SEWING STARTS HERE

SEW THE YOKES TO THE BODICE

- 1** Take the two back yoke pieces. One of them will end up on the right side of your shirt and one on the inside.
- 2** Sandwich the back of the shirt between the two back yokes. The right side of each yoke should face the back shirt. The yokes will be lying upside down as you do this. Pin and sew in place.



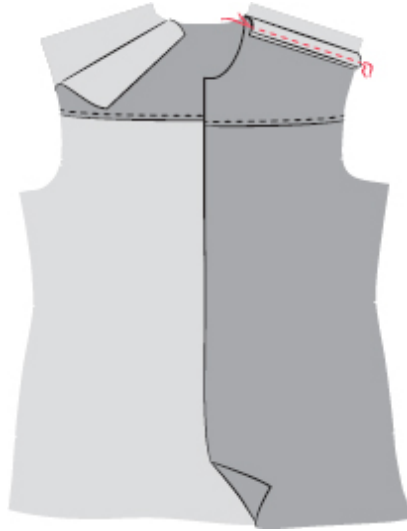
- 3** Press the yokes away from the shirt and trim the three seam allowances to different widths to reduce bulk in the seam. [Topstitch](#) the outside of the yoke, a machine foot's width away from the seam that connects the yoke to the back shirt. The two yokes will now be referred to as the outer yoke (visible on the right side of the shirt) and the lining yoke.



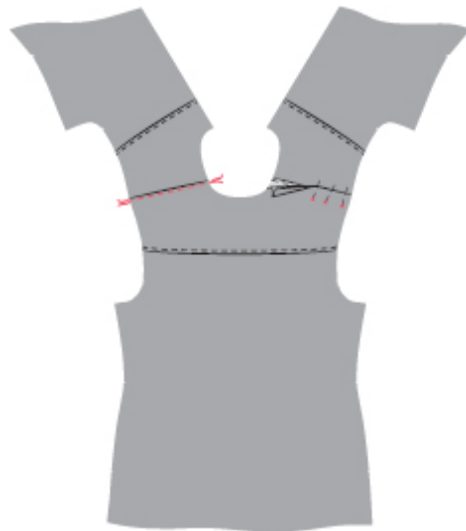
- 4 With right sides together, pin and sew the front yokes to the front shirt pieces. The yokes will be lying upside down when you do this. Overlock (serge) or zigzag the seam allowances and press them up towards the yoke. Topstitch the outside of the yoke a machine foot's width away from the seam that connects the yoke to the front shirt.

SEW THE YOKES AT THE SHOULDERS

- 5 Place the back wrong side up. Lay the front shirt pieces on top, with the right side facing you. Pin the wrong side of the front yoke to the right side of the back lining yoke at the shoulder, pinning through the back lining yoke only and leaving the outer back yoke free. Sew and press the seam allowances towards the back yoke.



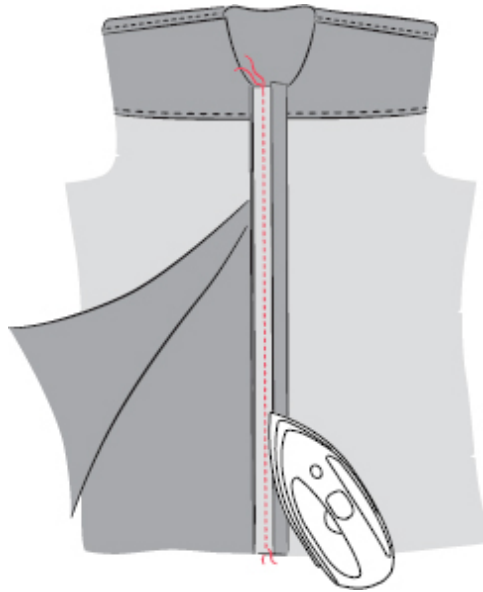
- 6** Looking at your shirt from the outside, press the shoulder edge of the outer back yoke piece under by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) and place the pressed-under edge over the front yoke shoulder to cover all raw edges on the inside. Pin and topstitch in place close to the folded edge. Repeat for the other shoulder. The body of the shirt is now ready.



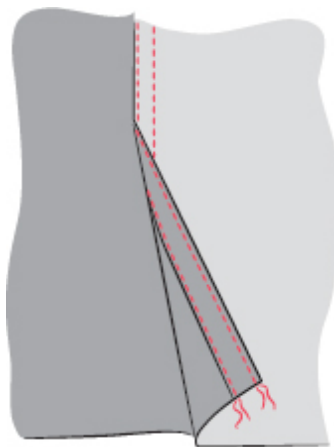
MAKE THE BUTTON STANDS

- 7** Women's garments traditionally fasten right over left (from the wearer's perspective). That means the buttonholes are on the

wearer's right and the buttons are on the wearer's left. Looking at the inside of your shirt, pin the right side of your button stand to the wrong side of the right centre front and stitch in place. Press the long raw edge of the button stand under by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.).



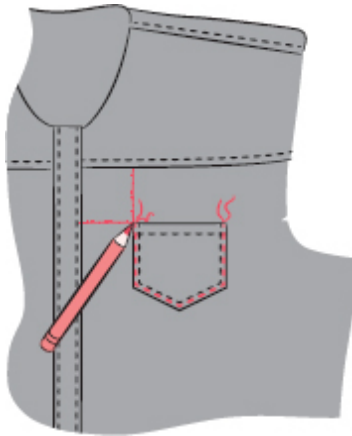
- 8** Fold the button stand over to the front of the shirt and press, so that the seam is on the centre front edge. Topstitch it in place. Your button stand should now measure 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) in width. Topstitch close to the centre front edge as well. This is the side on which the buttonholes will go.



- 9** Repeat steps 7 and 8 on the other front; this is the side on which the buttons will be sewn.

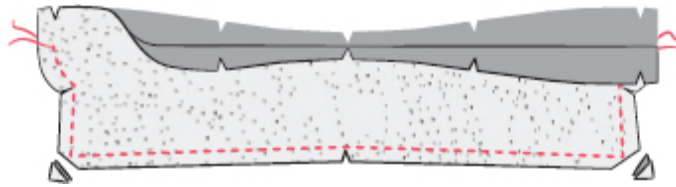
MAKE THE POCKET

- 10** Press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side along all sides except the top edge. Pin and topstitch 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) from the fold. Then press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side twice along the top edge to form a double hem. Topstitch 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) from the top edge of the pocket.
- 11** Position the pocket on the left front 5 cm (2 in.) below the yoke and 4.5 cm ($1\frac{3}{4}$ in.) from the button placket. Using a zip foot, topstitch as close to the edge as you can around the side and bottom edges.

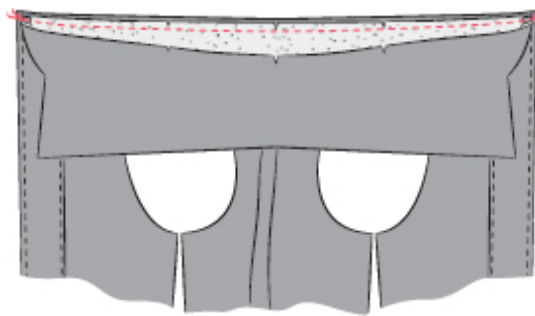


SEW THE COLLAR

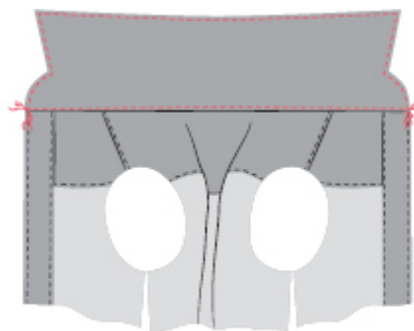
- 12** Apply iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of both collar pieces. One will form the top collar and one the under collar. Pin the collar pieces right sides together and sew around the outside edge, leaving the neck edge open. Clip the corners, trim the seam and press it open. Turn the collar right side out and press, positioning the seamline exactly on the fold.



- 13** With raw edges aligned, pin the collar to the right side of the shirt, matching the ends of the collar with the edge of the button stands. Pin and tack (baste) the inner layer of the collar to the shirt neckline. Then sew, trim the seam allowance to 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) and clip into the curves of the seam allowance. Press the seam allowances away from the shirt.

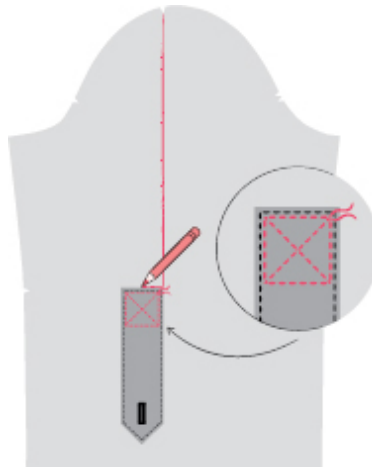


- 14** Now press the seam allowance of the top collar (the side of the collar that is still unattached) to the wrong side by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.). Bring this to the inside of the shirt and pin it over the line of stitches along the inside of the neck. Using a zip foot, topstitch as close to the edge as you can. Press. Lastly, topstitch along the outside edge of the collar, 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) from the edge (on the collar side).



ADDING THE SLEEVE TABS AND GATHERING THE SLEEVE HEADS

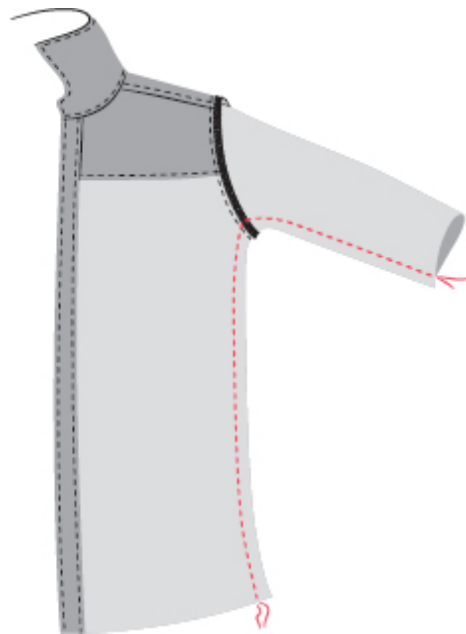
- 15** Place two sleeve tabs right sides together, matching the end points. Sew along the long edges and the pointed end, leaving the straight end open. Clip the corners, trim the seams, press and turn right side out. Press again. Turn in the open end and slipstitch to close. Topstitch all around the tab 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) from the edge. Machine [stitch a buttonhole](#) at the pointed end of the tab. Position the straight end of the tab on the wrong side of the sleeve, roughly 34 cm ($13\frac{1}{2}$ in.) below the top of the sleeve and towards the front. Stitch in place by sewing a square over the end of the tab and then a cross for security. Repeat with the other tab and sleeve.



- 16** Sew a row of [gathering stitches](#) on the pattern line along the sleeve head of both sleeves – this is to help you ease the sleeve into the armhole. With right sides together, pin the sleeve to the armhole, matching the outer notches on the sleeve head to the notches in the armhole, and the central sleeve notch to the shoulder seam. Pull up the gathering threads and even out the gathers. Sew, and repeat with the other sleeve. Trim the seam allowances to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.), press them towards the sleeves, then overlock or zigzag.

SEW THE SIDE SEAMS AND FINISH

- 17** Fold the shirt right sides together, matching the underarm and side edges. Stitch the side seams and sleeve seam in one go. To do this, start at the hem, work up the side of the shirt to the armhole, and then pivot and stitch down the length of the sleeve. Trim the seam allowances to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.), then press them towards the back of the shirt. Overlock or zigzag, then topstitch along the full length of the seam through all layers, stitching 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) from the seamline and catching in the seam allowances on the wrong side.



- 18** Press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side twice along the end of one sleeve to form a double hem. Topstitch close to the first fold. Repeat on the other sleeve and do the same at the hem of the shirt. Press.
- 19** Mark the positions for eight buttonholes on the right front – the first buttonhole is horizontal and is positioned at the end of the collar, the remaining seven buttonholes are **vertical** and are

centred on the right front band. Machine stitch the buttonholes. Stitch buttons in position on the left front band.

- 20** Stitch one button to the right side of each sleeve over the square of stitching joining the tab to the sleeve on the inside. Roll up the sleeve hem and button the end of the tab onto the sleeve button.



The question I am asked most often is how to get into sewing, and my best tip is to start with a simple project that is achievable, so you get the satisfaction of completing it and being able to wear it with pride. If you're just starting out, look for patterns with minimal style lines, ideally no gathering or set-in sleeves, and without zips or buttonholes – easy-fitting silhouettes, or shaping created by elastic channels, drawstrings or ties are ideal. Also check the recommended fabrics – stable woven materials such as cotton lawn, poplin or linen are easy to handle. And have fun!

TILLY WALNES
SERIES 1 (2013)

@TillyButtons

NOTE:

If your fabric is very lightweight, I recommend adding some interfacing to each button stand piece as well.

NOTE

Steps 5 and 6 outline how to use the back yoke to trap all the seam allowances on the inside. For a quicker method, you could treat the two back yokes as one, and simply sew and overlock the back and front yokes together at the shoulders (right sides together) and press the seams towards the back.

NOTE

The sleeves are sewn in with the side seams of the shirt still open.









Classic satin shirt

This is a beautiful, versatile pattern as it can be made both as a classic pyjama shirt and as a luxurious blouse. For a pyjama blouse, you could make matching shorts using the [shorts and cami set](#). A shirt pattern like this is an absolute wardrobe staple.

Materials

- Sizes 8-14: 1.75 m (1 $\frac{7}{8}$ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
Sizes 16-22: 2 m (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 1 m (1 $\frac{1}{8}$ yd) contrast fabric for piping
- 1 m (1 $\frac{1}{8}$ yd) lightweight iron-on interfacing
- Approx. 3 m (3 $\frac{1}{4}$ yd) narrow piping cord the same length as your binding (optional)
- 5 shirt buttons (use flat buttons for pyjamas)
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Advanced

Fabric suggestions

Pyjamas or shirt: satin, silk satin, cotton. For winter pyjamas, use brushed cotton (flannel). Silk is great for temperature regulation and skin and hair, but can easily be replaced with plant-based versions, such as bamboo silk.

Design notes

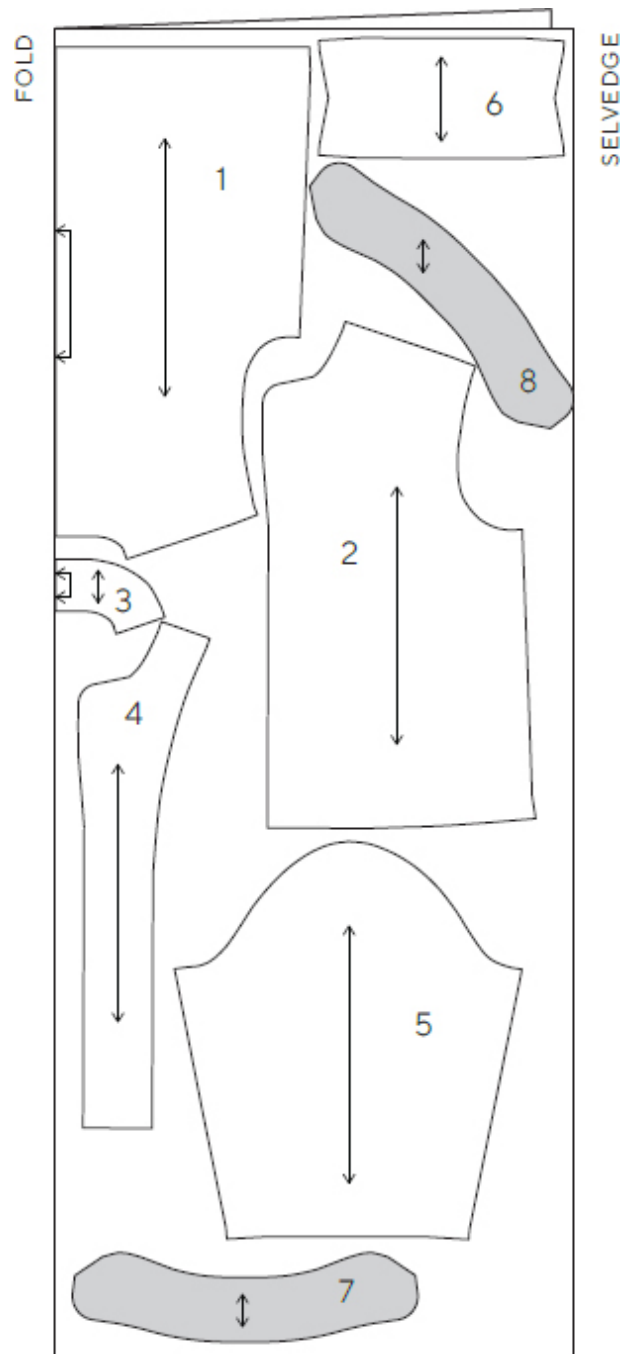
Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

This shirt can be made with either flat piping or piping containing cord. Inserting piping cord with a slippery fabric requires some skill, so (depending on your sewing confidence), you might want to consider using a cotton fabric for your project or flat piping. If you choose corded piping, you will need some narrow piping cord and a [zip foot](#). Our sample was made with corded piping.

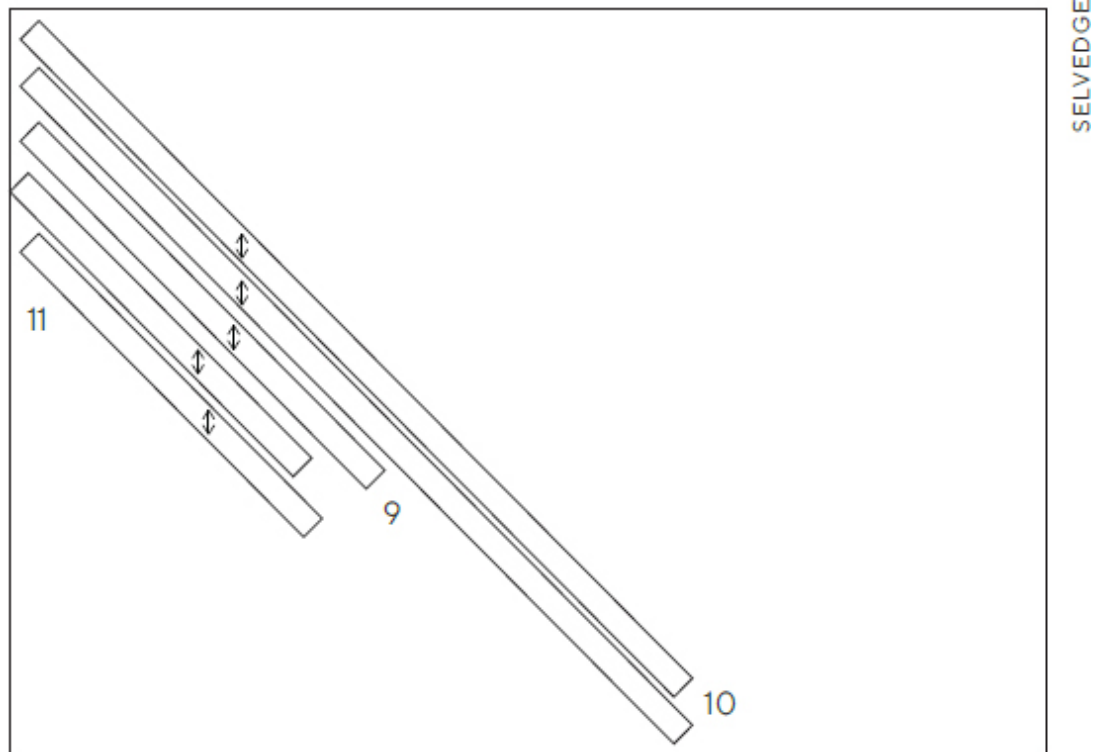
Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	63.5	64	65	65.5	66	66.5	67	67.5
Front length (in.)	25	25 $\frac{1}{4}$	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	25 $\frac{3}{4}$	26	26 $\frac{1}{4}$	26 $\frac{1}{2}$	26 $\frac{3}{4}$
Bust (cm)	94.5	99.5	104.5	109.5	114.5	119.5	124.5	129.5
Bust (in.)	37 $\frac{1}{4}$	39 $\frac{1}{4}$	41 $\frac{1}{4}$	43	45	47	49	51
Waist (cm)	97.5	102.5	107.5	112.5	117.5	122.5	127.5	132.5
Waist (in.)	38 $\frac{1}{2}$	40 $\frac{1}{4}$	42 $\frac{1}{4}$	44 $\frac{1}{4}$	46 $\frac{1}{4}$	48 $\frac{1}{4}$	50 $\frac{1}{4}$	52 $\frac{1}{4}$
Sleeve length (cm)	57.5	58	58.5	59	59.5	60	60.5	61
Sleeve length (in.)	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	22 $\frac{3}{4}$	23	23 $\frac{1}{4}$	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	23 $\frac{3}{4}$	24	24

CUTTING GUIDE

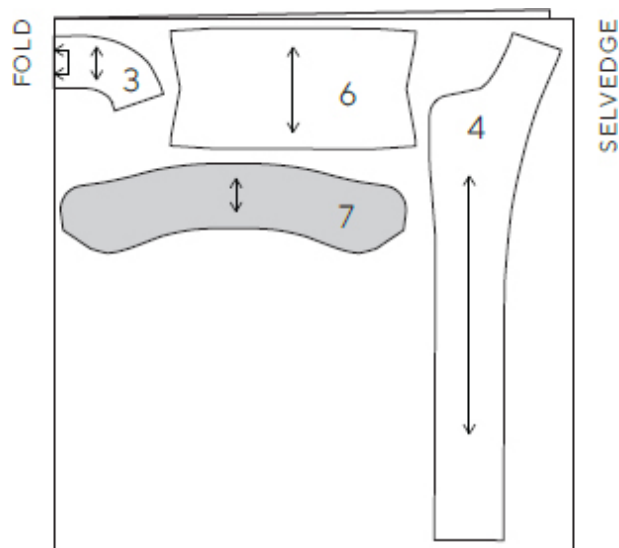
ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Contrast fabric



Interfacing



1 Back – cut 1 on the fold

2 Front – cut 2

- 3** Back facing – cut 1 on the fold in fabric and 1 on the fold in interfacing
- 4** Front facing – cut 2 in fabric and 2 in interfacing
- 5** Sleeve – cut 2
- 6** Cuff – cut 2 in fabric and 2 in interfacing
- 7** Upper collar – cut 1 in fabric and 1 in interfacing
- 8** Under collar – cut 1 on the bias in fabric
- 9** Collar piping – cut 1 on the bias in contrast fabric
- 10** Lapel piping – cut 2 on the bias in contrast fabric
- 11** Cuff piping – cut 2 on the bias in contrast fabric

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE THE PIECES

- 1** Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply lightweight iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of the front and back facings, upper collar and cuff pieces.
- 2** [Staystitch](#) around the neckline within the seam allowance to prevent it from stretching.
- 3** Take the bias-cut piping pieces and fold each one in half lengthways, wrong sides together. Insert the piping cord if you are making corded [piping](#). Press. Set aside for later.

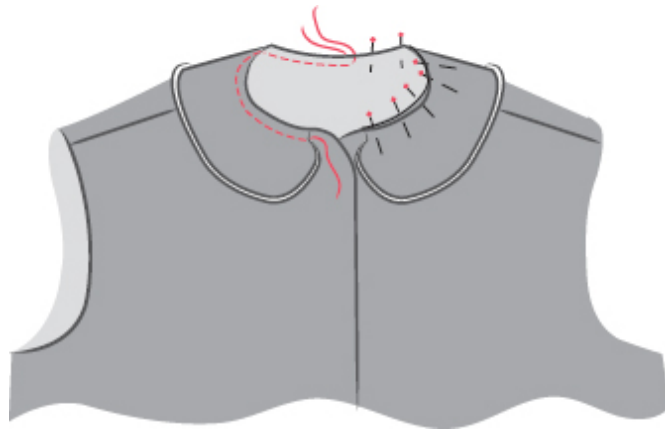
SEW THE MAIN BODY OF THE BLOUSE

- 4** With right sides together, pin the front and back blouses together at the shoulder seams. Stitch together, then zigzag or overlock

(serge) the seam allowances separately. Press the seams open. Repeat with the side seams.

SEW THE COLLAR

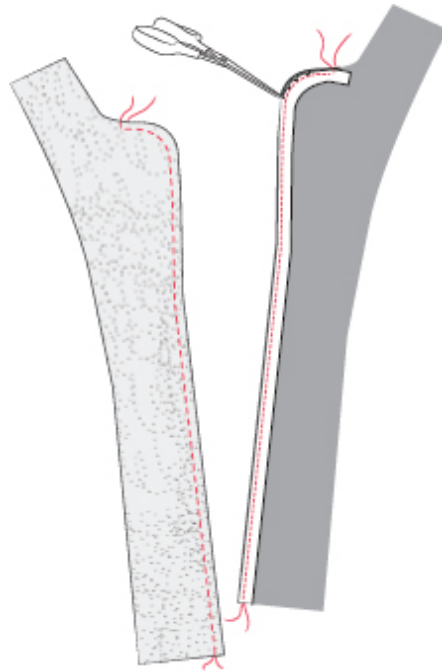
- 5** Pin the collar piping to the right side of the top collar between the 'X' marks, matching the raw edge of the piping to the raw outside edge of the collar. Machine tack (baste) in place. Your stitching should start and stop at the Xs, leaving a short tail of piping at each end.
- 6** Place the under collar right side down on top, sandwiching the piping between the two. Pin and stitch around the outside edge. Trim and clip into the seam allowances around the curves. Turn right side out and press.
- 7** With the under collar against the right side of the blouse, matching the notches, pin the raw edge of the collar to the neckline. Machine tack in place.



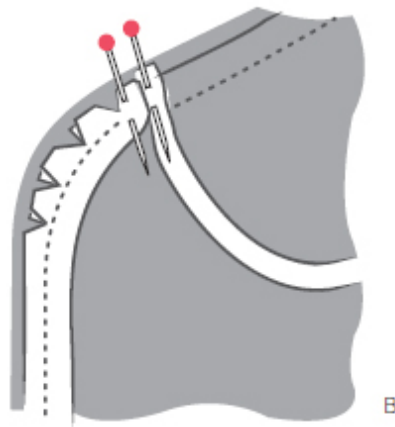
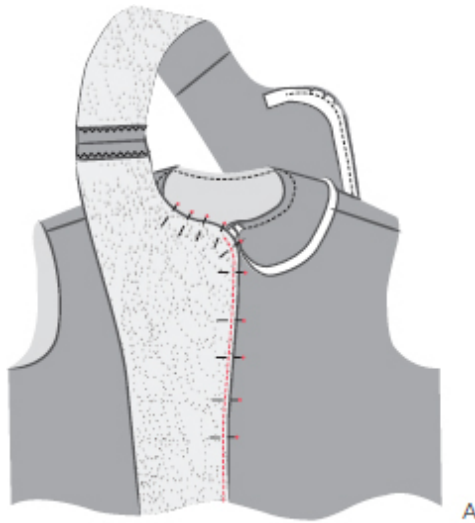
SEW THE FACING

- 8** As you did with the collar in step 5, tack the piping to the right side of the front facing pieces, along the curved front edge, starting at the bottom edge of the facing. Stitch in place, stopping

at the 'X' just past the curved lapel edge and leaving a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) tail of piping free after the end of your stitching. Notch into the piping's seam allowance as it goes around the curve to help it lie flat.



- 9** With right sides together, pin and stitch the front and back facings together at the shoulder seams. Press the seams open.
- 10** With right sides together, matching the notches, pin the facing to the front edge of the blouse and around the neckline (A). The collar and piping will be sandwiched between the two layers. To get a perfectly piped corner where the collar and lapel meet, turn the loose end of the facing piping at a 90-degree angle and pin it so that it butts up against the edge of the collar piping (B). You may want to tack (baste) this in place before you machine stitch it.



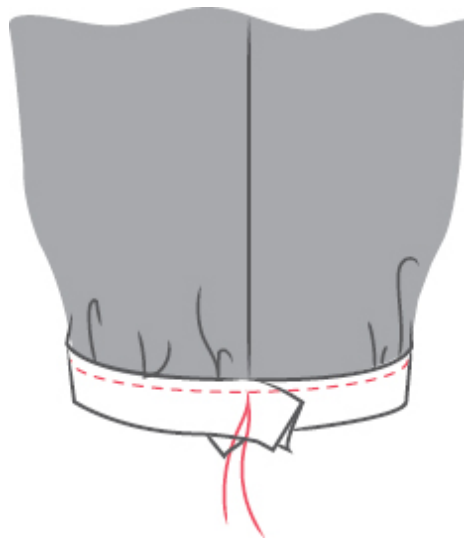
- 11** Sew this seam in two halves by sewing from the centre back, around the neckline and down to the hem on one side, and then starting at the centre back again and sewing down the other side to the hem.
- 12** Trim and clip into the seam allowances around the curves. Press the seam allowance towards the facing. **Understitch** the back neck facing only. Turn right side out and give it a good press so that the piping lies flat and even.
- 13** Secure the shoulder seam of the facing to the shoulder seam of the blouse with a few small hand stitches. You can also do this by

machine by [stitching in the seam ditch](#) from the right side of the blouse.

SEW THE SLEEVES

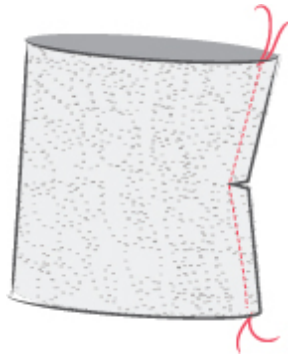
14 With right sides together, aligning the underarm edges, fold the sleeves in half. Pin and stitch the underarm seams, then zigzag or overlock the seam allowances separately. Press the seams open.

15 Aligning the raw edges, pin and tack the cuff piping around the hem of the sleeves, with the ends of the piping meeting at the underarm seams. Where they meet, overlap them slightly and curve the ends down into the seam allowance.

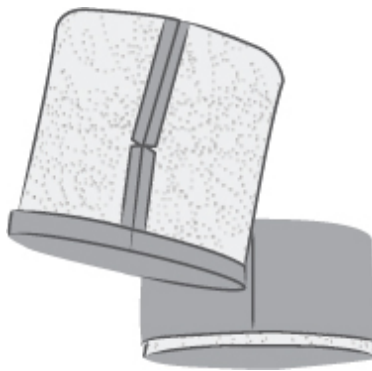


SEW THE CUFFS AND INSERT THE SLEEVES

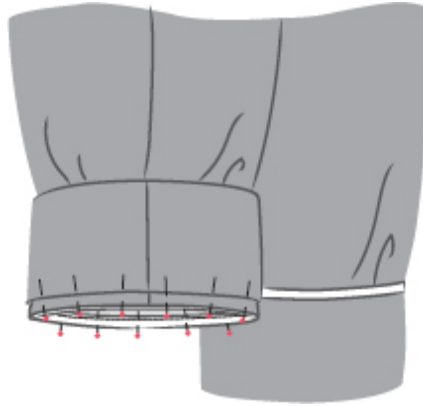
16 Fold one cuff in half lengthways, right sides together, and sew the two short ends together. Press the seam open.



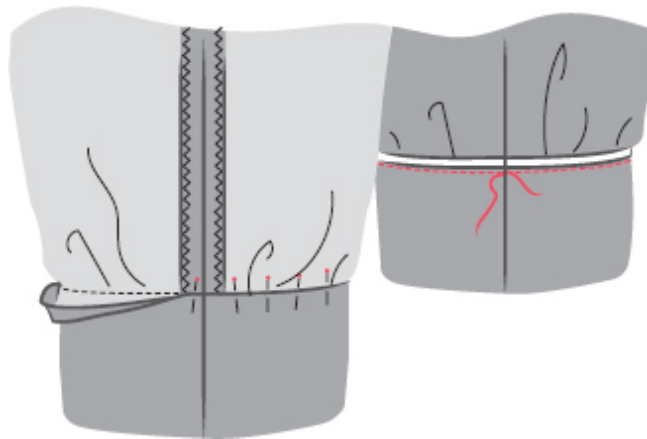
- 17** Along one raw edge of the cuff, press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side. Then fold the cuff along the fold line marked on the pattern, wrong sides together, and press.



- 18** With right sides together, aligning the unpressed raw edge of the cuff with the raw edge of the sleeve, slide the cuff over the sleeve. Align the cuff seam with the underarm seam and pin in place. The piping will be sandwiched between the cuff and the sleeve. Sew the cuff, leaving the pressed-in edge free. Fold the cuff down so that the sleeve looks finished, then press the seam allowances towards the cuff (you can do this by turning the sleeve inside out). The piping should be pointing towards the sleeve.



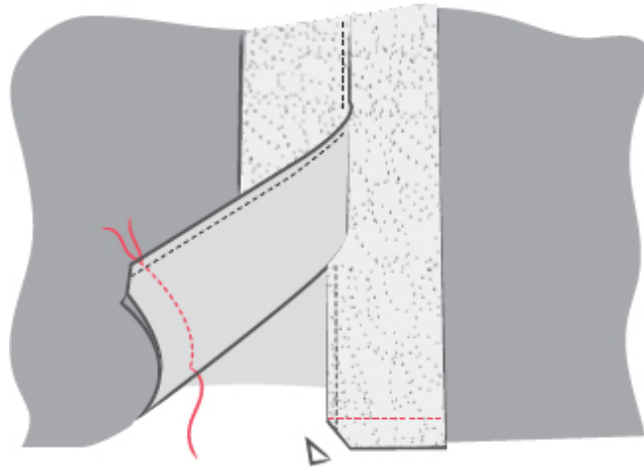
19 With your sleeve inside out, position the already pressed inner edge of the cuff over the seam you have just sewn. Pin and topstitch in place a couple of millimetres (a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ in.) away from the piping. I prefer to topstitch from the right side, so you can either pin or tack the cuff on the inside, then it turn to the right side and topstitch. Repeat steps 16–19 with the second cuff piece and sleeve.



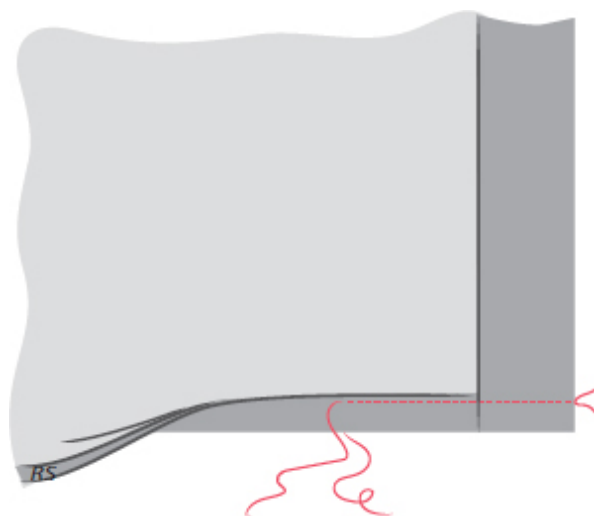
20 [Set in the sleeves](#), easing in any fullness in the sleeve head. Trim the seam allowances to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.), then overlock or zigzag them together. Press the seam towards the sleeve. Repeat for the second sleeve.

HEM THE BLOUSE

- 21** At the centre front hem of the blouse, fold the facing over to the outside of the blouse, so that the right sides are together and the bottom hem edges are aligned. Stitch across the short hem of the facing with a 3-cm (1¼-in.) seam allowance. Trim the centre front corner and turn right side out. Press well and repeat for the other side.



- 22** Press the rest of the hem between the facings to the wrong side by 1 cm (¾ in.) and then again by 2 cm (¾ in.). Topstitch in place, stitching right from the centre front edge, across your facings.



BUTTONS AND BUTTONHOLES

23 Following the markings on the front pattern piece, stitch the buttonholes on the right front edge (as worn). As a rule of thumb, a buttonhole should be 2–3 mm (about 1/8 in.) longer than the diameter of your chosen button. Always test one buttonhole first with your chosen button before sewing the buttonholes on your garment. Sew corresponding buttons to the left front (as worn).

TIP

If you are using corded piping, you will need to use a zip foot to sew the seams that contain piping.

NOTE

The buttonholes on a button-down shirt are typically vertical, for an accurate fit. If you are making this as a pyjama blouse, I would do horizontal buttonholes to allow for more movement. For more information on buttonholes see [here](#).









Jersey twist top

This cropped-length jersey top has a twisted front that looks complicated, but using the illustrations and written steps I'm sure you can achieve it. Try making it in a slightly sparkly fabric, such as a jersey with Lurex, for a real party top!

Materials

- Sizes 8-14: 0.75 m ($\frac{7}{8}$ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
Sizes 16-22: 1.25 m ($1\frac{3}{8}$ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- Matching sewing thread
- Ballpoint needle (optional)
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

Light- to medium-weight jersey (avoid T-shirt weight).

Design notes

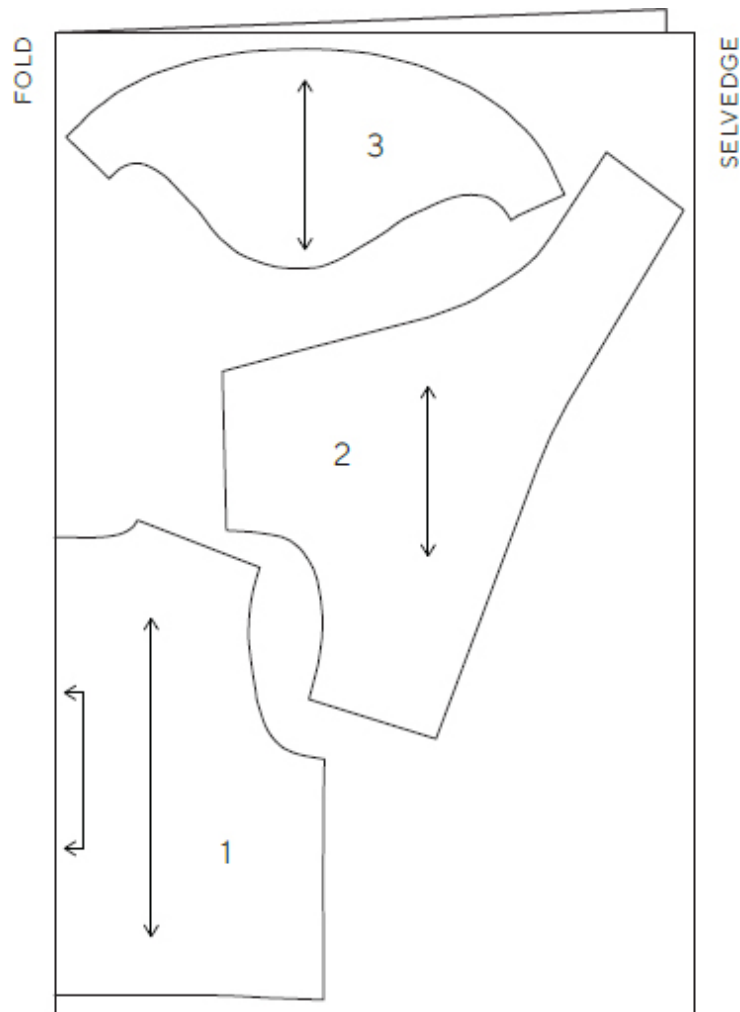
Use a 1-cm (1/2-in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

The top is sewn with French seams throughout, with a total seam allowance of 1 cm (1/2 in.). Each step of the French seam is therefore sewn with a 5-mm (1/4-in.) seam allowance.

Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	52	52.5	53	53.5	54	55	55.5	56
Front length (in.)	20½	20¾	21	21	21¼	21½	21¾	22
Back length (cm)	49	49.5	50	50.5	51	52	52.5	53
Back length (in.)	19¼	19½	19¾	19¾	20	20½	20¾	21

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



- 1** Back bodice – cut 1 on the fold
- 2** Front bodice – cut 2
- 3** Sleeve – cut 2

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

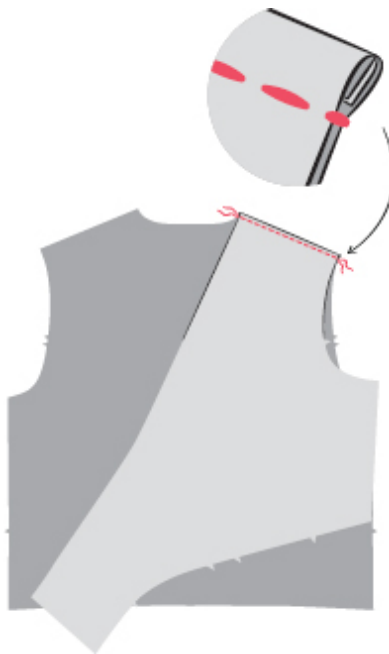
FRENCH SEAM THE SHOULDERS

- 1** With wrong sides together, align the front and back shoulder edges on each shoulder. Pin and sew with a 5-mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ -in.) seam

allowance. Trim each seam allowance to 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) and press the seams towards the back of the garment.

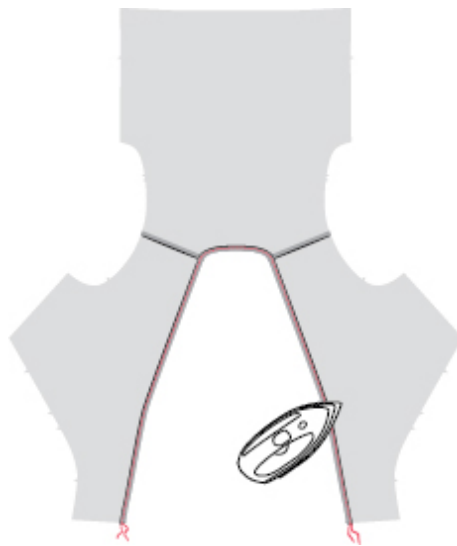


- 2** Re-fold the garment so that the front and back bodices are right sides together and press the seam so that it's neatly on the edge. Stitch both shoulders with a 5-mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ -in.) seam allowance. This encases the raw edges from the previous stitch line. Press the seams towards the back of the garment.

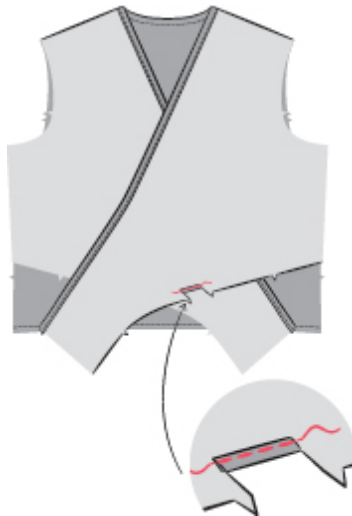


HEM THE NECK AND BACK

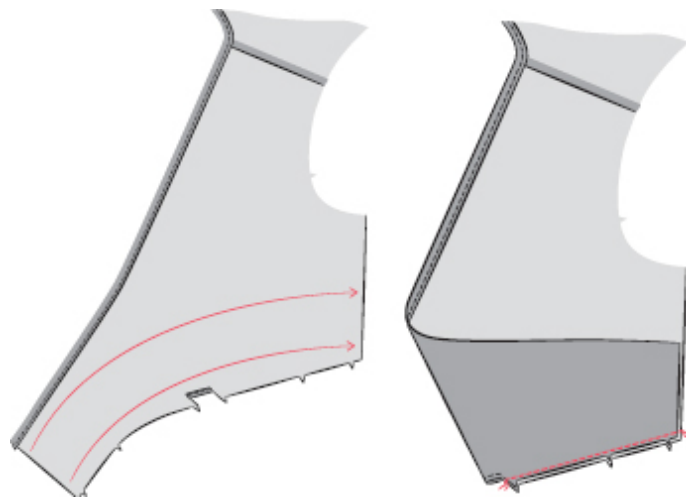
- 3** Around the back neck and front edges, press the raw edge to the wrong side by 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.). Then fold and press another 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) to the wrong side to create a narrow double-turned hem. Starting at the top edge of the short side seam, stitch all the way around to the other top edge of the short side seam. Press the edge.



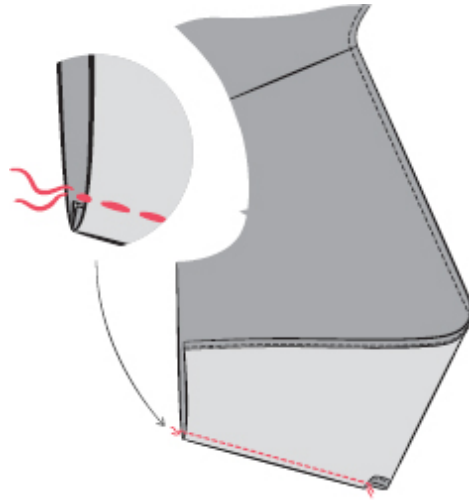
- 4** Along the hem edge of the back panel, press 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) and then another 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) to the wrong side to create a double-turned hem. Stitch in place. Press the edge.
- 5** On the right front panel (as worn), make sure you have marked the opening with notches. At the notches, snip into the fabric by 1 cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in.). Between the notches, press the raw edge to the wrong side by 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) and then by another 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.). Stitch in place.



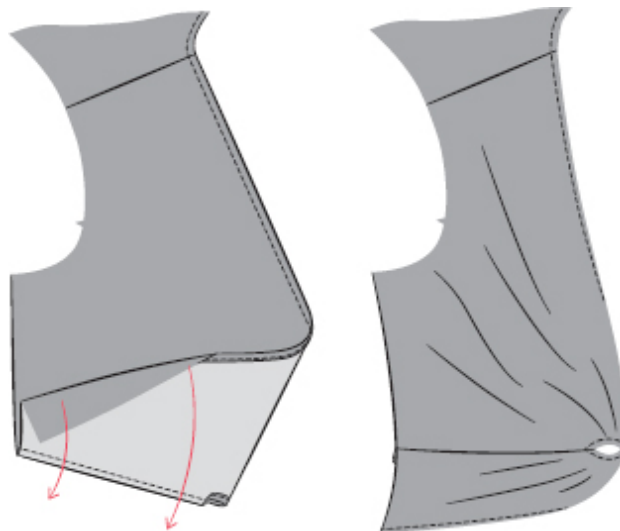
- 6** With wrong sides together, bring the front edge over to the side seam, matching the A and B notches on each side. Pin the bottom edge together from the side seam to the start of the opening. Sew this seam with a 5-mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ -in.) seam allowance, then trim the seam allowances to 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) and press.



- 7** Turn this sewn edge through along the previous stitch line to encase the seam allowance, making the two layers right sides together, then stitch along the same edge again with a 5-mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ -in.) seam allowance.

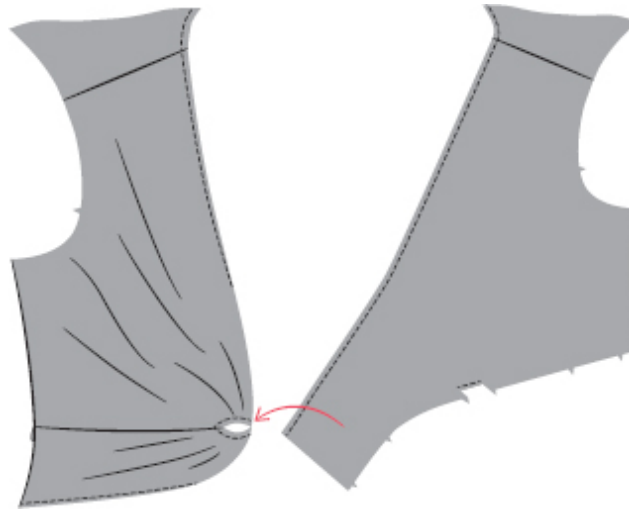


- 8** On the right-hand side you should now have a folded vertical edge and a French seam along the bottom. The folded layer has a top edge that remains loose. Fold this edge down along the French seam to reveal your finished front. The French seam is now on the inside of the garment.



- 9** Make the little opening on the left front panel in the same way as in step 5. From the right side of the garment, bring the short side seam at the centre front edge through the opening of the right front panel, then continue as before by bringing it over to the side seam, wrong sides together. This creates the twist front. Complete

the French seam as in steps 6 and 7. Your front top is now complete.



FRENCH SEAM THE SIDE SEAMS AND SLEEVES

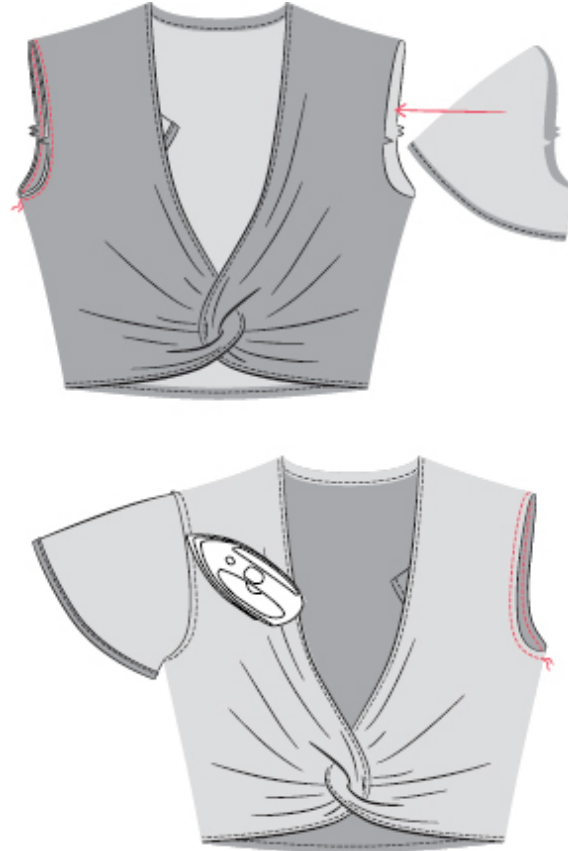
10 French seam the side seams and sleeve underarm seams, using the same seam allowances as in steps 1 and 2. Press the side seams towards the back of the garment and the underarm seams to one side.

11 Along the sleeve hems, fold 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) and then another 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) to the wrong side to create a double hem. Pin and sew.

FRENCH SEAM THE ARMHOLE

12 With the top right side out and the sleeves wrong side out, slot the sleeves into the armholes, matching the raw edges and notches. Pin and sew with a 5-mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ -in.) seam allowance. Trim the seam allowance down to 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.). Turn the top wrong side out, with the sleeve still slotted into the armhole so that the sleeve and top are now right sides together. Fold the armhole seam over the trimmed-down seam allowance to encase it. Your

previous stitch line now looks like a finished edge. Press this really well so that the seam is right on the edge. Sew around the armhole again with a 5-mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ -in.) seam allowance. Press well.



I have many great memories of taking part in the show, but my favourite is of making the origami dress. The inspiration was the famous photos of blossom trees against the white brilliance of Mount Fuji. My origami flowers changed from cerise, pale pink,

pale blue to brilliant blue. This dress made me a finalist, which was incredible! It also showcases my favourite creative element whilst dressmaking: fabric manipulation. I love creating new shapes with fabric and this garment demonstrates it perfectly. I highly recommend using your fabric to create beautiful shapes without the need for haberdashery!

DEBRA DRAKE

SERIES 8 (2022)

@debra_sewingwithstyle







Cowl neck top

This project is an opportunity to try some pattern hacking, turning a plain neckline into a cowl neck. A cowl neckline is an attractive neckline that looks like a series of folds, radiating from the neckline and down. You can create a cowl neckline on either the front or the back; the method is the same.

Materials

- 1 m (1½ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 40cm (16 in.) lightweight iron-on interfacing
- Matching sewing thread
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

Cotton, linen, viscose, viscose blends, crepe, silk satin.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

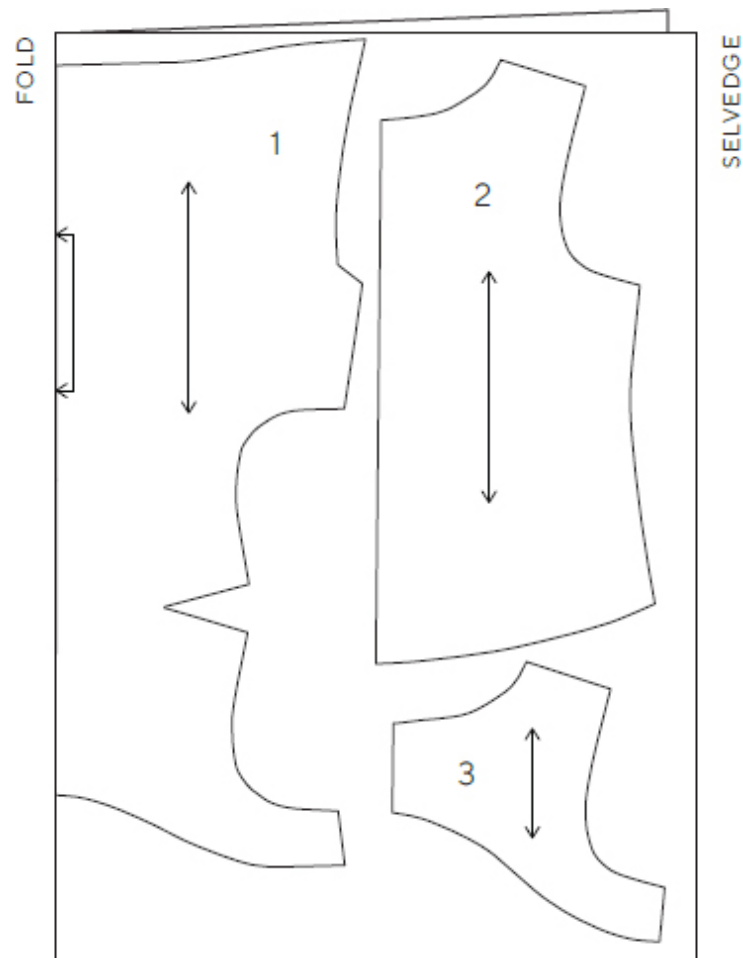
There are two hemlines on the pattern, giving you a choice of shapes.

If you are using a woven fabric, cut the new front pattern piece with the centre front on the bias so that the folds drape smoothly. If you are using a knit fabric, the front can be cut on the straight of grain.

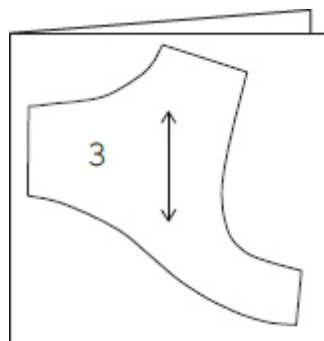
Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	57	57.5	58	59	59.5	60	60.5	61
Front length (in.)	22½	22½	22¾	23¼	23½	23¾	23¾	24
Bust (cm)	85.5	90.5	95.5	100.5	105.5	110.5	115.5	120.5
Bust (in.)	33½	35½	37½	39½	41½	43½	45½	47½
Waist (cm)	82	87	92	97	102	107	112	117
Waist (in.)	32¼	34¼	36¼	38¼	40¼	42¼	44	46

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Interfacing



- 1** Front – cut 1 on the fold
- 2** Back – cut 2
- 3** Back facing – cut 2 in fabric and 2 in interfacing

PATTERN HACKING THE PLAIN NECKLINE INTO A COWL NECKLINE

The sample in this book is worn in a size 8, made in viscose with the front cut on the bias, and the measurements that we used for the cowl hack are:

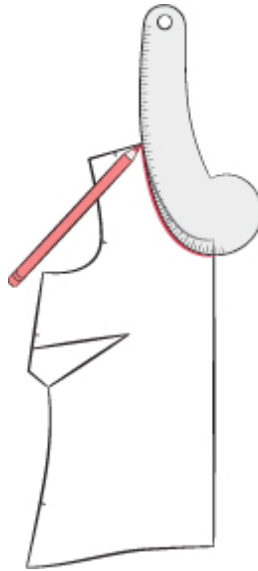
- Neckline lowered by 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.)
- Length added for cowl: 20.5 cm (8 in.)
- Finished cowl neckline, from neck point to centre front: 21 cm ($8\frac{1}{4}$ in.)

After the pattern alteration, the neckline is big enough to go over the head without a fastening.

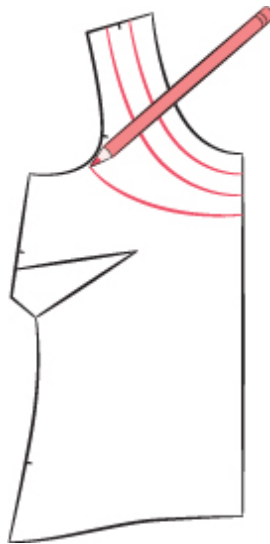
It's easiest to remove all seam allowances from a pattern before making a change like this, to avoid confusion and achieve better accuracy. I really recommend that you make a toile and treat a cowl pattern draft as an experiment, because there are many different factors that will change the result: back cowl, front cowl, deep cowl, high neck cowl, etc. For this pattern hack, you will need the front blouse pattern; you can disregard the front facing pattern on the pattern sheet as you'll be drafting a grown-on front facing, which will finish the neckline and armholes all in one go – a bit of pattern magic!

Important: Before you start, make a note of the shoulder seam length. You will need this information in step 6.

- 1** Along the centre front line of your front bodice pattern, mark a new, lower neckline. Connect this point with the neck point on the shoulder seam using a curved ruler, then cut along this new line.

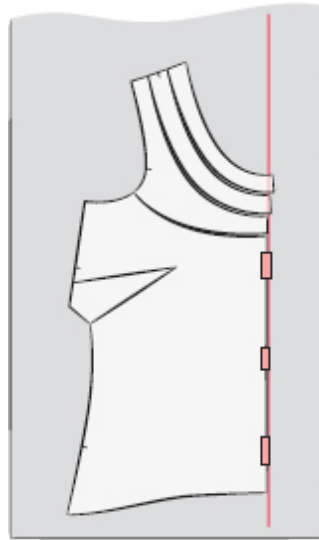


- 2** Draw two more curved lines that start from the centre front line and finish on the shoulder seam. It's best not to come too close to the outside edge of the shoulder line. Also draw a line from the centre front edge into the lower area of the armhole. You're going to slash and spread along these lines, so these are guidelines. You can draw more lines if you want to experiment.

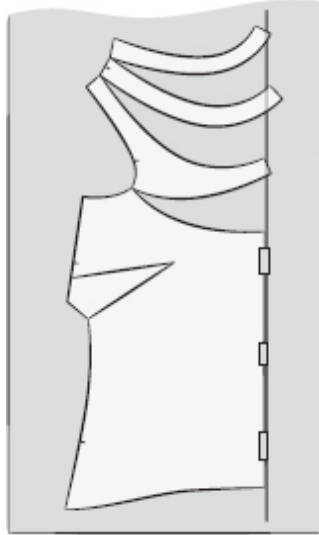


- 3** Starting from the centre front line, cut along the three guidelines, leaving a small hinge at the shoulder and armhole so that you can spread the lines apart.

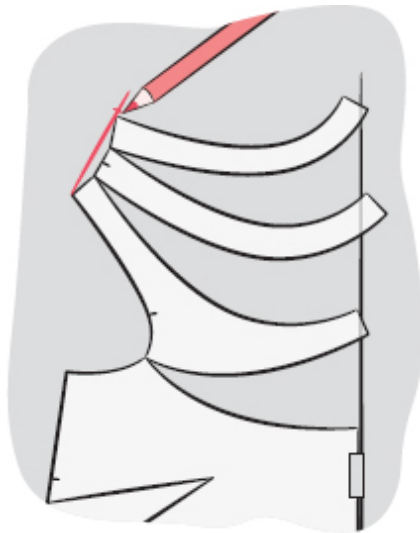
- 4** Draw a long, straight vertical line on a piece of pattern paper. Lay your slashed bodice pattern on top, aligning the untouched centre front edge (the lower area) with the line on your paper. Tape the lower part of the centre front edge into position, leaving the slashed area untaped so that you can spread the pattern apart.



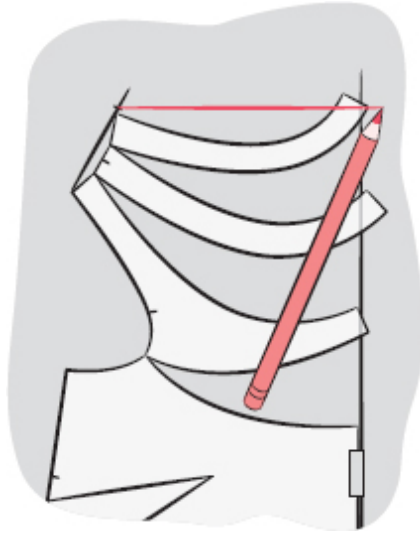
- 5** Spread the cutting lines open evenly. The more space you add, the more volume you'll add to the cowl. For the garment in this book, we added 21 cm (8¼ in.) of length. As a guideline, you can add 20–25 cm (8–10 in.) for a similar look to our sample. It's worth playing around with this, as the result will depend on your torso length, your bust size and what you want it to look like.



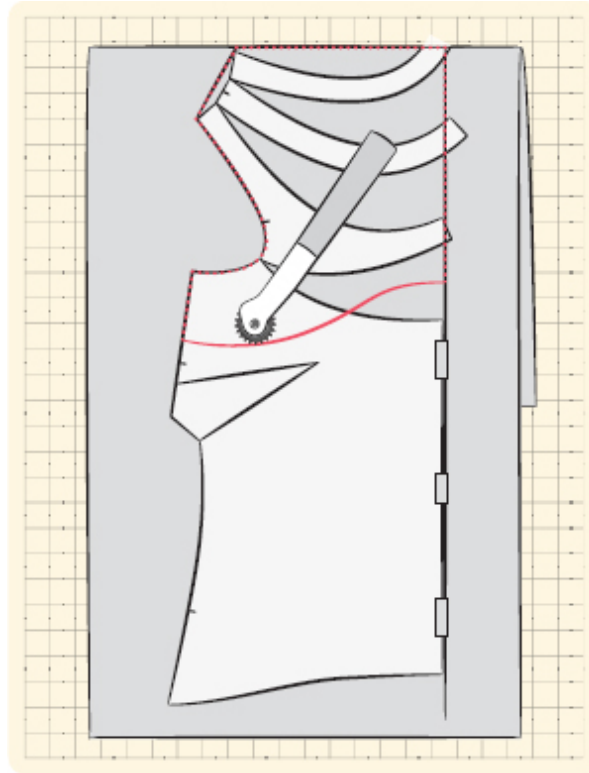
- 6** True the shoulder seam by drawing a straight line from the shoulder point to the neck point, ignoring the slight curve you can see there after slashing and spreading. The new shoulder seam needs to match the back bodice, so measure this length on your back [pattern](#) and then mark it on the new front shoulder (measuring from the shoulder point).



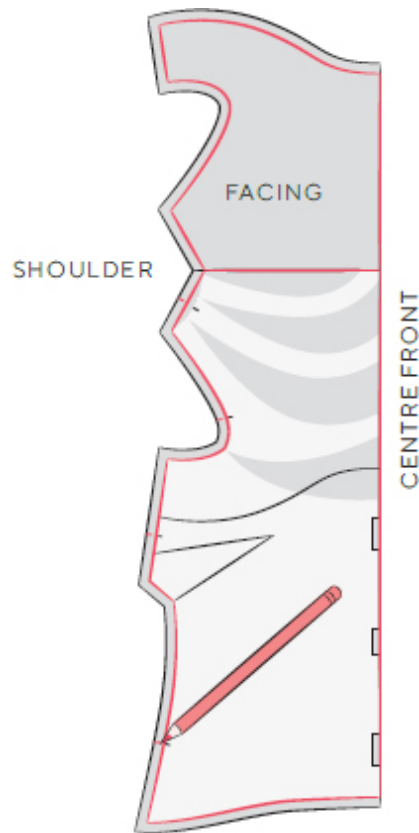
- 7** From the new neckpoint, draw a line at 90° to the centre front line. This is the finished cowl neckline.



- 8** Fold your pattern paper under along the cowl neckline, to the back of your pattern draft. On the front bodice, draw a neckline facing. If you had one on your original pattern, you can use it as a guide. A front facing typically starts about 5–7 cm (2–3 in.) down the side seam and then gently curves upwards towards the centre front edge. Make sure that the facing line hits the centre front at a 90-degree angle. Put a mat under your pattern paper and use a spiky tracing wheel to trace over the facing line, the armhole, the shoulder seam line, and the top half of the side seam.



- 9** Unfold the paper, then use the indentations from the tracing wheel to draw the facing. This completes the front with grown-on facing. To finish, cut along the centre front and then add seam allowances everywhere else. The centre front will be cut on the fold, with the bias of the fabric along this centre front fold. If necessary, true the armhole, side seam and hem of the paper pattern.



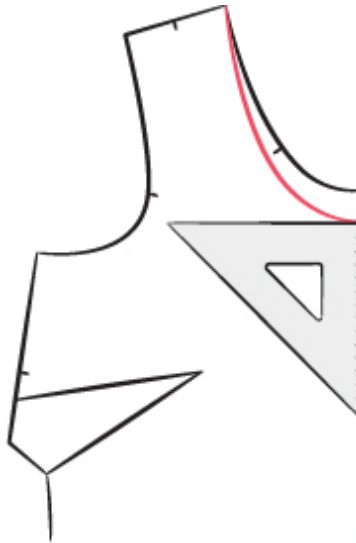
NOTE

You will find four pieces on the pattern sheets – front, back, front neck facing and back neck facing. To make the cowl neck variation, you will not need the front neck facing pattern; you will pattern hack the front blouse and the other pieces will remain unchanged. To make the pattern with a plain, round neckline, use all the pattern pieces without any changes. Turn to the instructions for the [plain neckline](#).

TIP

Make sure that the new neckline hits the centre front edge at a 90° angle: if it hits at a slightly different angle, you will get

a pointy centre on your neckline!



TIP

Use a tape measure and drape it from neckpoint to neckpoint – a bit like a necklace. Adjust it until you're happy with the look: this is to help you determine how low you want the folds of the cowl to hang. Make a note of the measurement and divide the number in half to use in step 7.

NOTE

Measure from the neckpoint to the centre front edge in a straight line to get the cowl depth you want. If you need to add or reduce, push the paper pattern to the left or right until you've achieved the right measurement. The sample in this book measures 21 cm (8¼ in.) along this line.

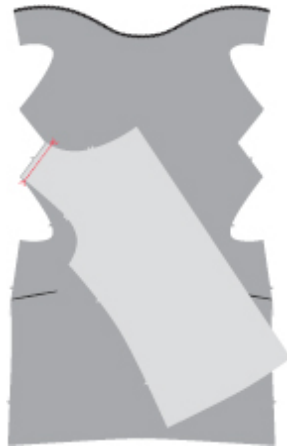
THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE THE PIECES

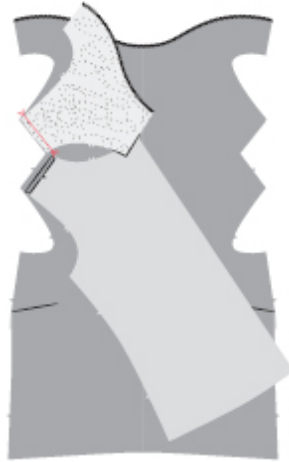
- 1** Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply lightweight, iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of the back neckline facing. Overlock (serge) or zigzag the raw edges. Also zigzag or overlock the raw bottom edge of the grown-on front facing (see [step 8](#) of the pattern hack).
- 2** Pin and sew the front bust [darts](#). Press the darts down towards the hem.

SEW THE SHOULDER SEAMS

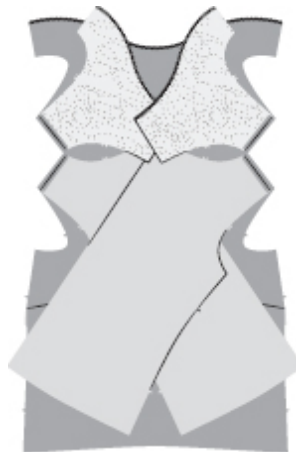
- 3** Place the front and one back blouse piece right sides together at the shoulders. Pin, sew and press the seam open.



- 4** With right sides together, match the shoulder of the back neckline facing to the grown-on front facing. Pin, sew and press the seam open.



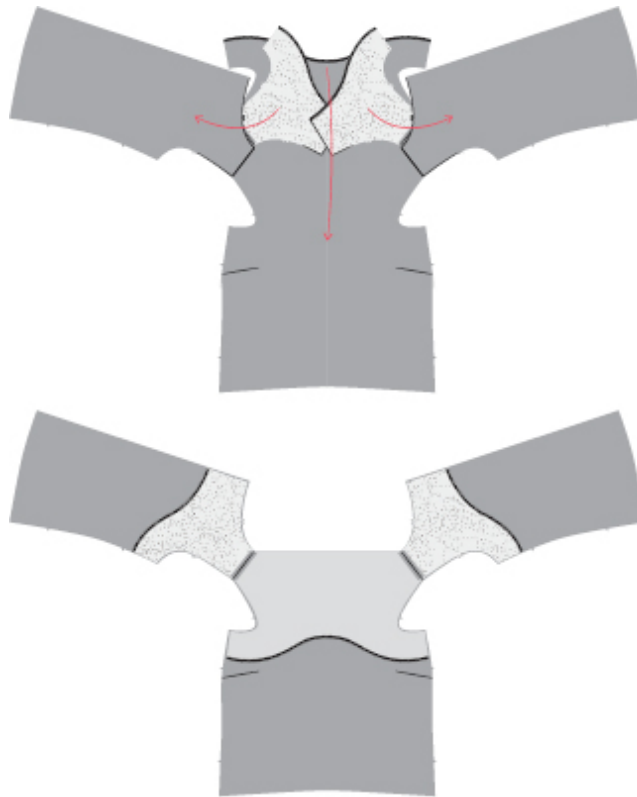
- 5** Repeat steps 3 and 4 for the other back blouse and back facing. Your garment should now look like a flat piece with lots of strange shapes! Trim the seam allowances of all the seams you have sewn so far to 0.5–1 cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ in.), then press the seams open.



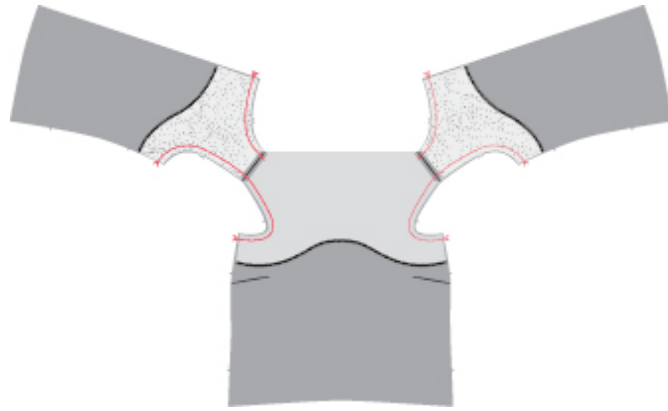
SEW THE ARMHOLES AND BACK NECKLINE

- 6** Lay the back and front bodices open along the shoulder seam, so that you can see the right side of both fronts and backs. Flip the back facing over so that it's right sides together with the back bodice. Finally, flip down the grown-on front facing towards the front blouse, so that they're right sides together. The armhole of the back facing should match the armhole of the back blouse; the armhole of the front facing should match the armhole of the front

blouse; the back facing neckline should match the back blouse neckline; and the short side seam edges of both the front and back facing should match the side seam edge of the front and back blouse.

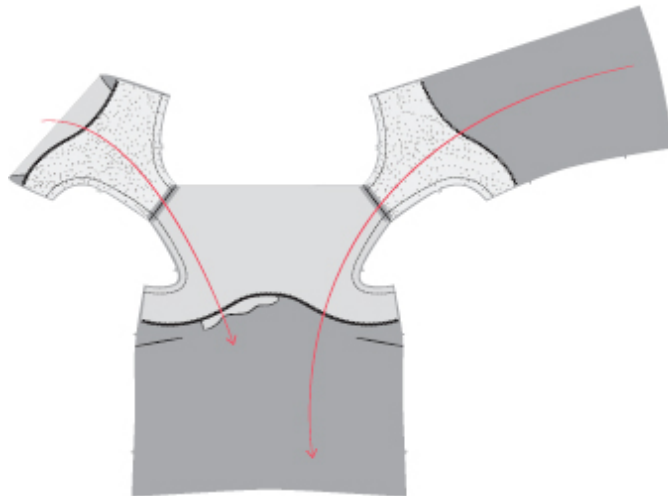


- 7** With a regular 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance, sew the whole armhole. Also sew the back neckline curve. Trim the seam allowance to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) in both areas and clip into the curve. Repeat steps 6 and 7 on the other half of your garment. **Understitch** the armhole and neckline on the side of the facing; this encourages the facing to stay on the inside of the garment.



TURN THE GARMENT RIGHT SIDE OUT

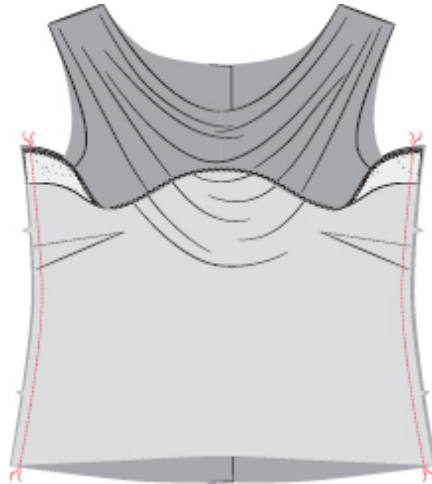
- 8** From the front blouse, reach up under the front facing and grab the back blouse. Pull it through the shoulder area and out to the front blouse, which will turn the whole garment right side out. Your blouse should now have an armhole and a neck area that look finished. Press the armhole and neckline area really well. Do this for both backs.



SEW THE SIDE SEAMS AND BACK SEAM

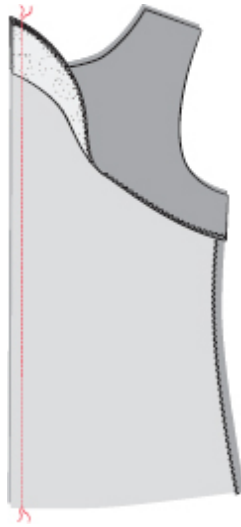
- 9** Your garment is still entirely flat, so the side seams are next. Bring the front and back side seams right sides together. Flip the side seam area of the front and back facing, exposing the wrong

side of the facings. Pin and stitch from the facing all the way down to the hem. Zigzag or overlock the seam allowances and press the seam open.



10 Fold the facing down into the garment again and pin it so that the side seam of the facing lies directly on top of the side seam of the garment. Work a few small hand stitches or machine [stitch in the ditch](#) to encourage the facing to stay in this position. Repeat for the other side seam.

11 The centre back seam is done in the same way as the side seam. Bring the centre back edges right sides together. Flip the facing up, then pin and sew from the edge of the facing to the hem. Zigzag or overlock the seam allowances and press the seam open. Work a few small hand stitches or machine stitch in the ditch to keep the facing inside the neckline, as with the side seam.



12 Around the hem, press 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) followed by a further 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side. Pin and sew close to the inner folded edge.

TIP

Make sure you've picked up the correct side of the back facing! You can check by laying the back facing right sides together on top of the back blouse: the armhole area and neckline curve should match.

TIP

To encourage the folds of the cowl to hang nicely, sew a little weight onto the inside of the garment.







VARIATION

Plain neckline sleeveless blouse

For a versatile wardrobe staple, you can skip the cowl neck and make a plain, round neckline instead. I suggest playing with colour, print and fabric types to make an item you'll really love. If you're likely to wear this under a cardigan, think about making it in a way that complements what you already own. A busy print on a blouse can look fantastic under a plain cardigan.

Materials

- 1 m (1½ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 40 cm (16 in.) interfacing
- 1 button and loop or 1 small hook and bar
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Confident beginner

Fabric suggestions

Viscose, cotton gauze, linen, cotton poplin.

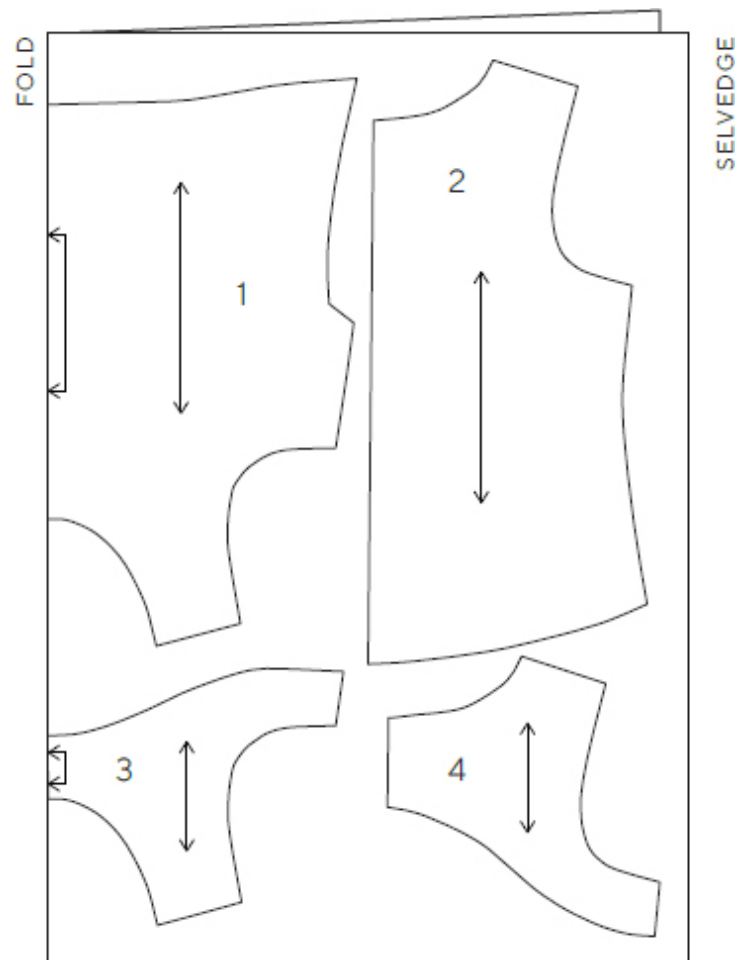
Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm (5⁄8-in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

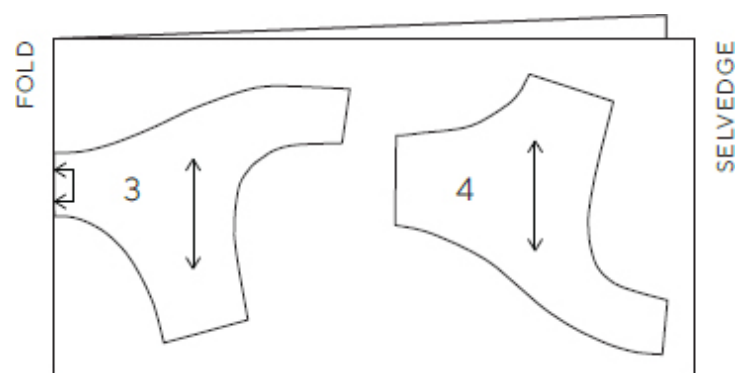
Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Bust (cm)	87.5	92.5	97.5	102.5	107.5	112.5	117.5	122.5
Bust (in.)	34½	36½	38½	40½	42½	44¼	46¼	48¼
Front length (cm)	57	57.5	58	58.5	59	60	60.5	61
Front length (in.)	22½	22¾	22¾	23	23¼	23½	24¾	24
Back length (cm)	53.5	54	54.5	55	55.5	56.5	57	57.5
Back length (in.)	21	21¼	21½	21¾	22	22¼	22½	22¾

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Interfacing



1 Front – cut 1 on the fold

2 Back – cut 2

- 3** Front facing – cut 1 on the fold in fabric and 1 on the fold in interfacing
- 4** Back facing – cut 2 in fabric and 2 in interfacing

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE THE PIECES

- 1** Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply lightweight iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of the front and back facings. Zigzag or overlock (serge) the raw edges of the sides and centre backs, and the bottom edge of the front and back neckline facing.
- 2** Pin and sew the bust [darts](#) and press the darts down towards the hem.

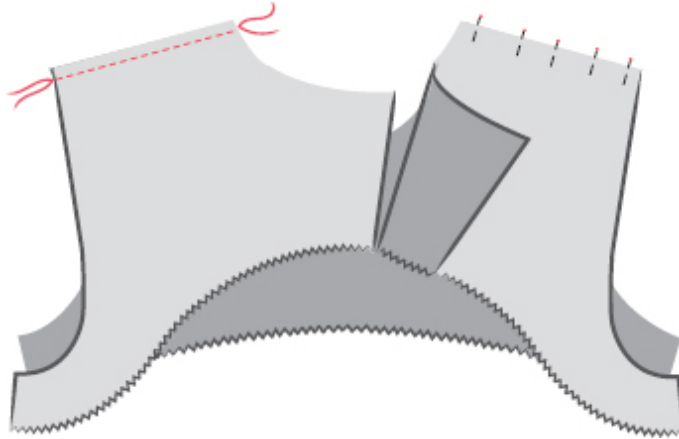
SEW THE SHOULDER

- 3** Pin the front and back pieces right sides together along the shoulders and sew. Press the seams open.

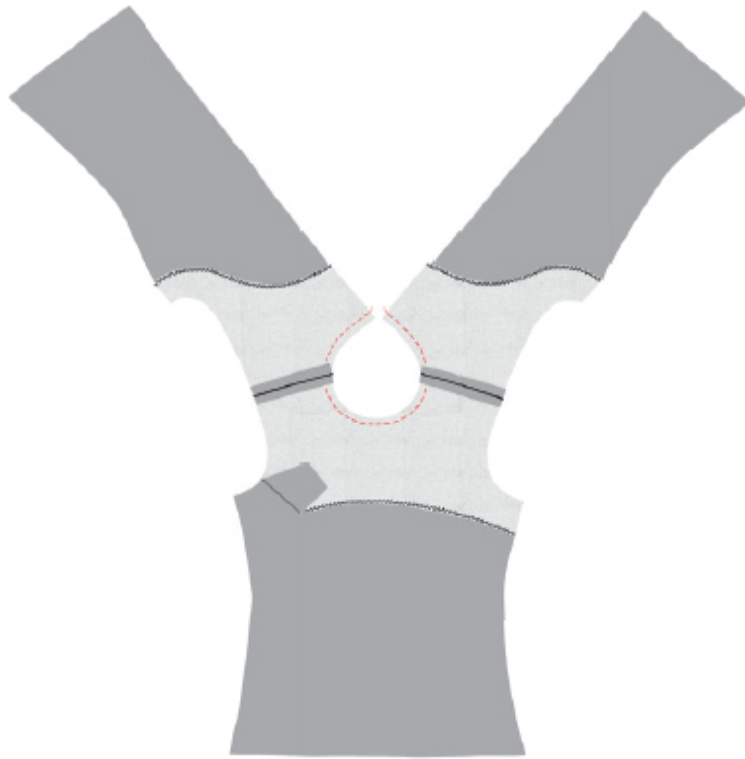


SEW THE FACING

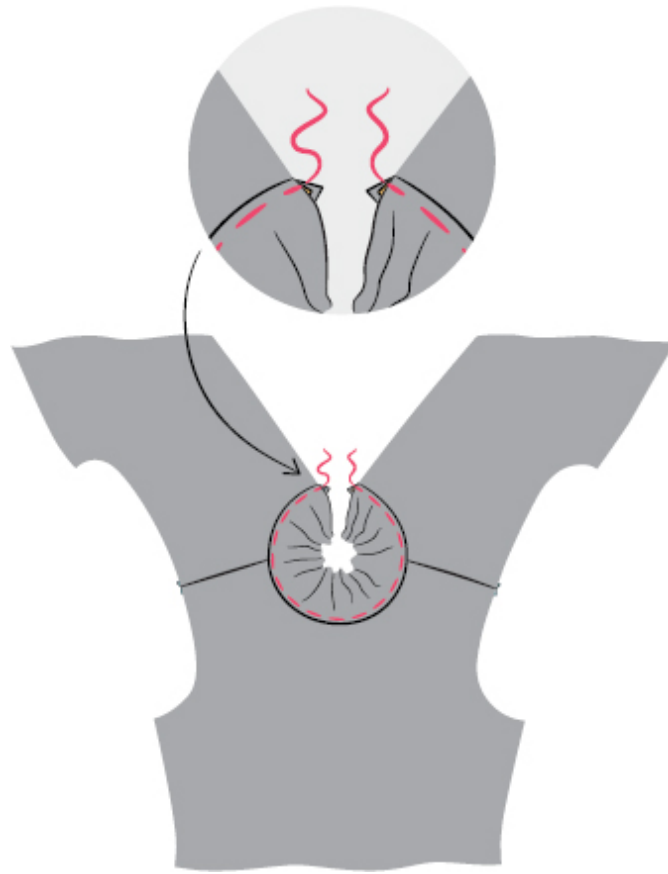
- 4 Pin the front and back neckline facings along the shoulder edges with right sides together. Sew and press the seam allowances open.



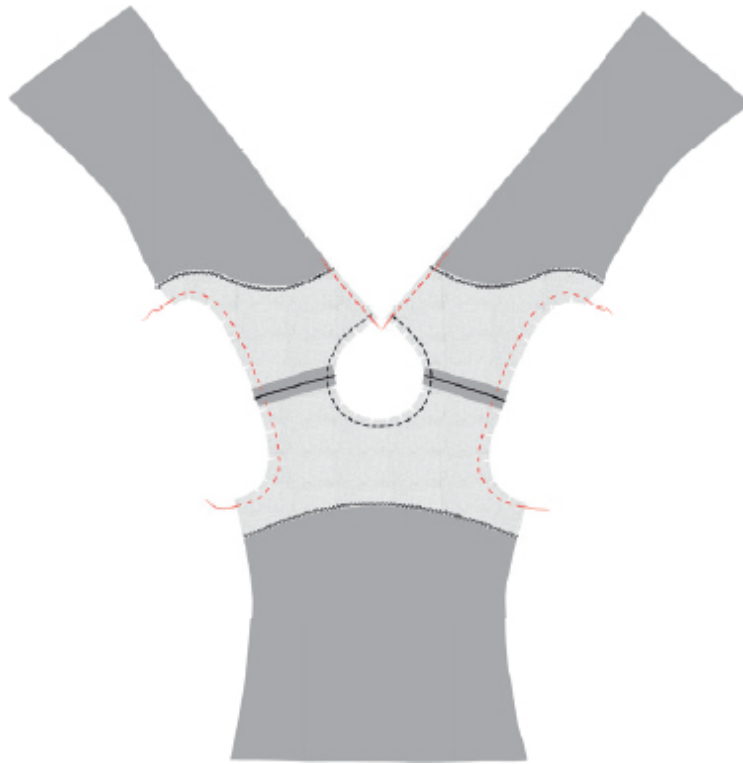
- 5 Lay your blouse flat, right side up. Lay the facing on top with the wrong side up, so that the facing and blouse are right sides together. Match up the raw edges of the neckline and match the shoulder seams of the facing to those of the blouse. Pin and sew around the neckline, then clip into the seam allowance and trim to about 5 mm (1/4 in.).



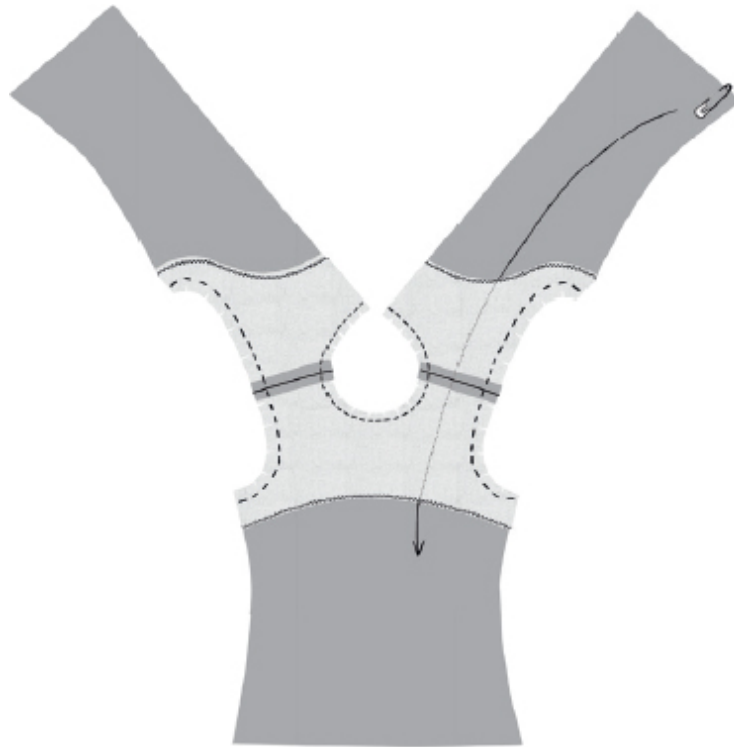
- 6** Press the seam allowance up, towards the facing, then [understitch](#). Be sure to only stitch through the facing and the seam allowance.



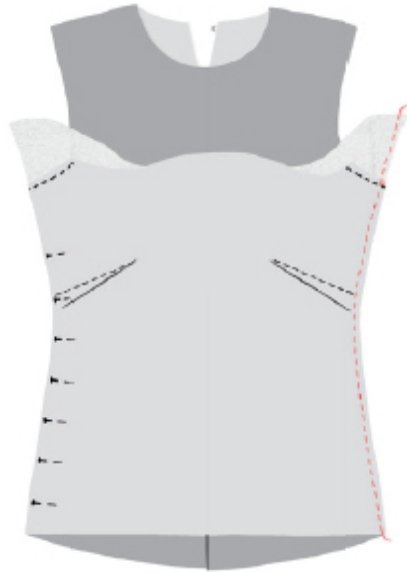
- 7** Lay the facing back in its original position, right sides together with the blouse, and match the armhole curve on each side. Also match the centre back edges of the back facing to the back edges of the blouse. Pin and sew, then clip into the seam allowance and trim to 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.).



- 8** From the front blouse, reach with your hand under the front facing, through the shoulder area, and grab the corresponding back blouse piece. Pull it through the shoulder area to the front. Repeat for the other side. Your armhole, neck area and top centre back area should now look finished! Give both areas a good press. Roll the seam lines in towards the garment where possible.

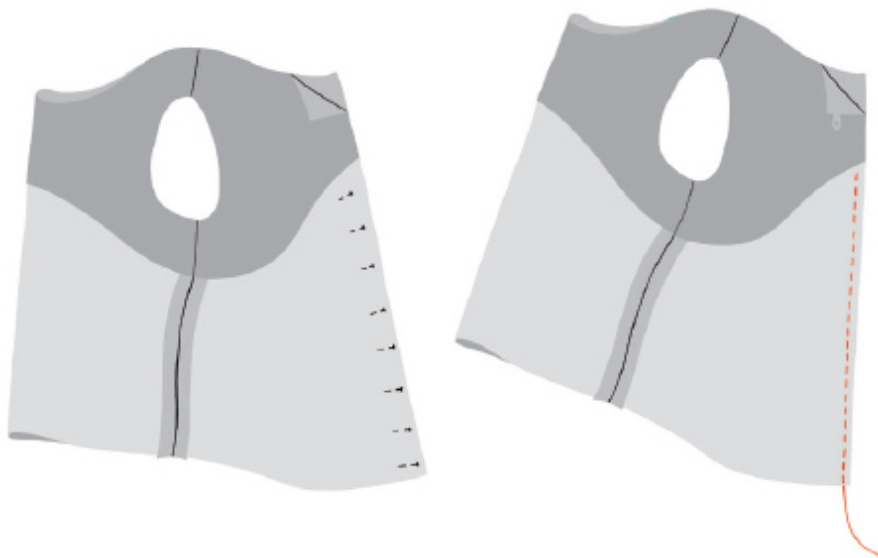


- 9** Bring the front and back side seams right sides together. Flip the side seam area of the front and back facing up as well, exposing the wrong side of the facings. Pin and stitch from the facing all the way down to the hem. Zigzag or overlock the seam allowances and press the seam open. Press the armhole edge. Hand stitch the hem of the facing to the side seam to secure it in place.



SEW THE CENTRE BACK

- 10** Place the centre back edges of the blouse with right sides together. Pin from the hem up to about 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) below where your facing starts. Sew, then press the centre back seam open.



ADD A FASTENING AND HEM THE TOP

- 11** Sew a hook and bar to the inside of the top at the centre back or sew a button and a button loop to the top of the facing.
- 12** Around the hem, press 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) followed by a further 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side. Pin and sew close to the inner folded edge.



If you're just starting out on your sewing journey my biggest tip for beginners is to choose the right fabric! Trust me, I've made this boo-boo countless times choosing a fabric that shows every slip-up because it was cute, and yes, even on the show. It's a rookie mistake, but one that can make a huge difference. A sturdy, easy-to-sew fabric can really give you that boost of confidence in creating a piece for the first time. You'll have better control over your stitches and your accuracy will skyrocket. No more wonky lines because your fabric was too slippery.

My proudest make was... THE ORIGAMI DRESS! It's the piece that challenged me the most. I took me way out of my comfort zone and forced me to think outside the box for the first time. And you know what? I did it! Now, wearing it fills me with so much pride, and I embrace the more challenging projects because maybe your proudest make is just around the corner! Happy sewing!

ANNIE PHILLIPS

SERIES 8 (2022)

@madeby_annie_

Upcycled linen blouse

Upcycle vintage bed linen or a tablecloth into a gorgeous blouse – a stylish way to give no-longer-used materials a new lease of life!

Materials

- Sizes 8-14: 1.2 m (1³/₈ yd) vintage linen,
Sizes 16-22: 1.4 m (1⁵/₈ yd) vintage linen,
- Approx. 1 m (1 yd) of ready-made bias binding if you don't have enough fabric to make your own
- Matching sewing thread
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Beginner

Fabric suggestions

Vintage linen, such as tablecloths, pillowcases or flat embroidered sheets. Vintage linens with a border are great for this project.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm (⁵/₈-in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

If you have some vintage linen that you want to use but it’s too small for the whole garment, such as a small tablecloth or a pillowcase, you could use the vintage linen for the yoke area and/or the sleeves and then pick a fabric of a similar weight for other parts of the garment.

Choose where to place your pattern pieces on your linen to make best use of the embroidered designs. The pattern pieces can be cut on the straight or the cross grain to enable this.

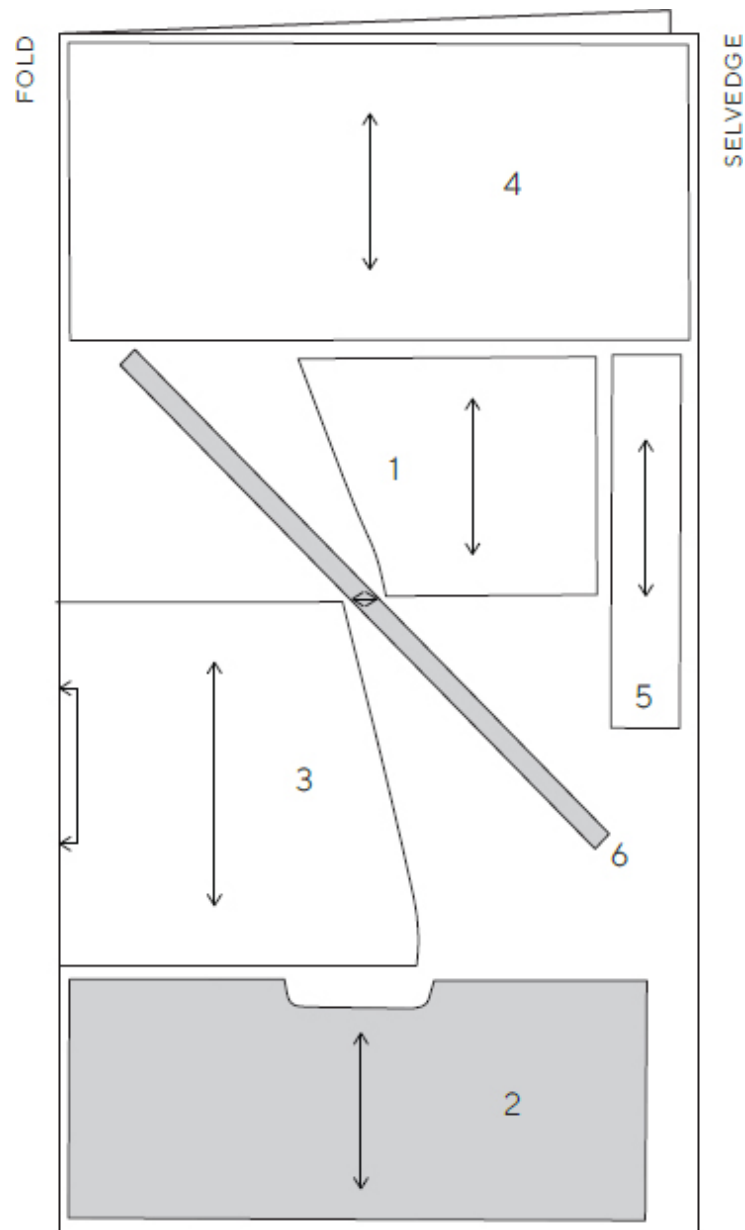
If you’d like to add in extra seams and piece together your chosen tablecloths and scraps, feel free to do so.

The lower bodice pattern pieces include a 3-cm (1¼-in.) hem allowance. If you’d like to use the existing edge of your tablecloth as the hem, you can cut this off the paper pattern pieces and ignore the hemming step.

Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	58.5	59	59.5	60	60.5	61.5	62	62.5
Front length (in.)	23	23¼	23½	23½	23¾	24¼	24½	24½
Bust (cm)	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	129
Bust (in.)	37	39	41	43	45	47	49	51
Waist (cm)	103.5	108.5	113.5	118.5	123.5	128.5	133.5	138.5
Waist (in.)	40¾	42¾	44¾	46¾	48¾	50½	52½	54½

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric

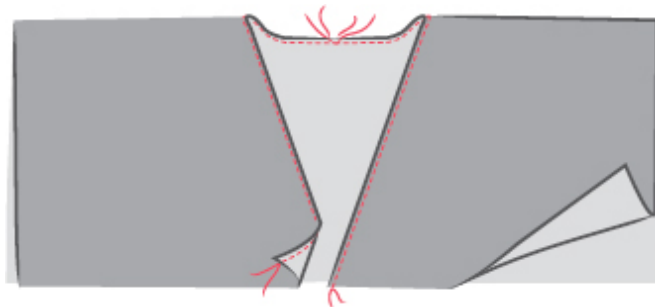


- 1** Front yoke – cut 2
- 2** Back yoke – cut 1
- 3** Lower bodice – cut 1 on the fold
- 4** Sleeve – cut 2
- 5** Sleeve cuff – cut 2
- 6** Neck binding - cut 1 on the bias

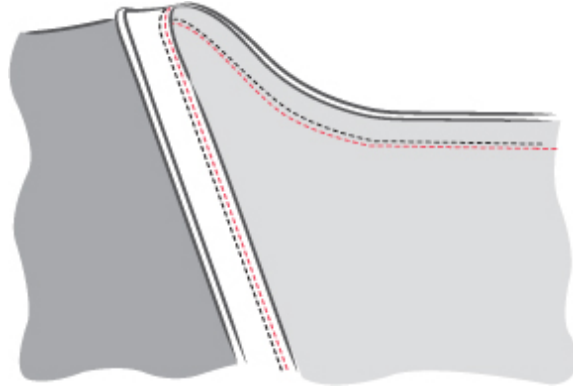
THE SEWING STARTS HERE

SEW THE YOKE AND NECKLINE

- 1** Place the front and back yoke pieces right sides together at the shoulders, aligning the raw edges and pin. Sew and zigzag or overlock (serge) the seam allowances together. Press the seams towards the back.
- 2** **Staystitch** around the neckline 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) from the raw edge. To prevent stretching, start at the centre back and stitch down to the bottom front edge on each side, rather than stitching the whole neckline in one go.



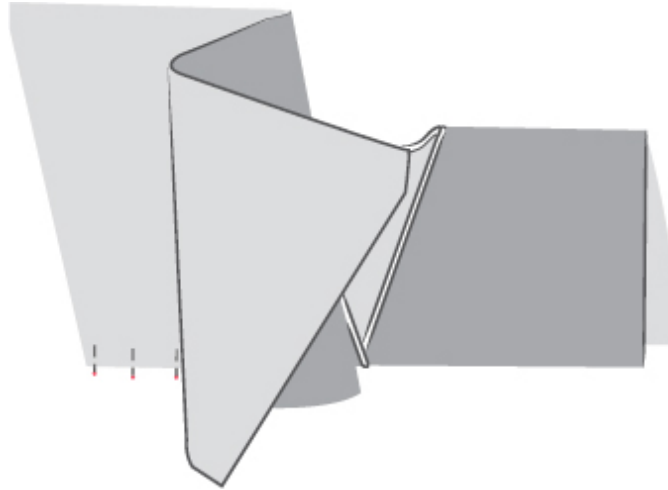
- 3** To bind the neckline, either use the pattern piece provided to make some **bias binding** or use ready-made. If you've made your own, press 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) to the wrong side along each long edge to start.
- 4** With right sides together, apply **bias binding** all around the neckline, using a 5-mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ -in.) seam allowance.
- 5** Press the binding and seam allowances away from the yoke and **understitch** all around the neckline.



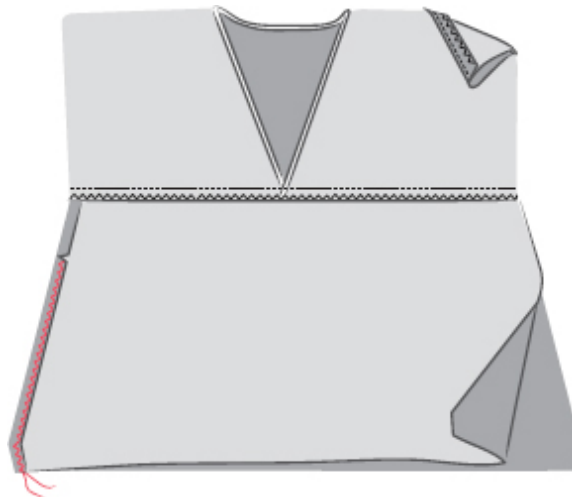
- 6** Fold the binding to the wrong side of the neckline and press. Stitch in place, close to the folded edge of the binding. This stitch line will be visible from the right side of the garment, so you might choose to sew it by hand. Trim the ends of the binding to match the lower edge of the yoke.

SEW THE BODICE

- 7** Align the top edge of one of the lower bodice pieces with the bottom edge of the front yoke pieces, right sides together. The angled edges of the front neckline should meet exactly on the stitching line at the centre front notch. The front yoke pieces will overlap slightly within the seam allowance. Stitch all the way across the front yoke seam. Zigzag or overlock the seam allowances together and press them down towards the lower bodice.

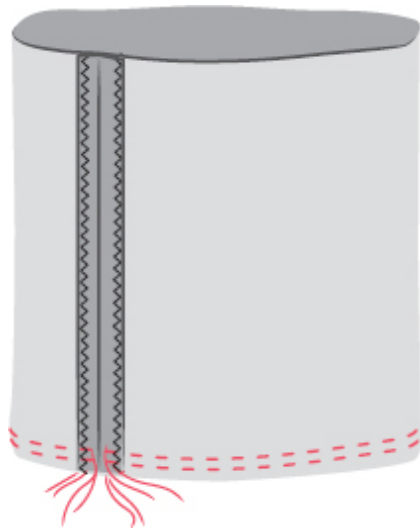


- 8** Repeat step 7 with the second lower bodice piece and the back yoke.
- 9** With right sides together, fold the top along the shoulder seam to bring the side seams together. Pin and stitch up to the underarm notch. At the underarm notch, snip into the seam allowance, right up to but not into your stitching. Press the seam allowances of the side seam open and zigzag or overlock the raw edges. Repeat for the other side seam.

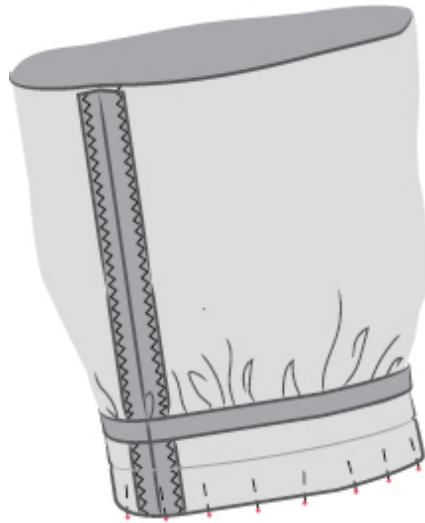


SEW THE SLEEVES AND CUFFS

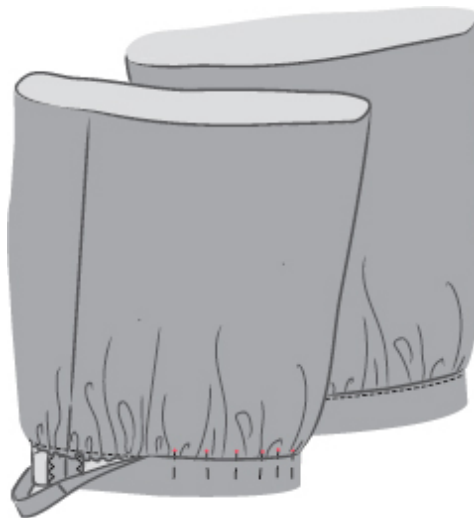
- 10** Bring the short sides of one of the sleeve pieces right sides together. Pin and stitch this seam. Press the underarm seam open and zigzag or overlock the raw edges. Repeat for the other sleeve.
- 11** Lengthen your stitch length to 5 and sew two lines of [gathering](#) stitches around the hem of each sleeve, one on top of the pattern line and one within the seam allowance.



- 12** To sew the cuffs, bring the short ends of a cuff piece right sides together. Pin, stitch the seam and overlock or zigzag the raw edges. Press the seam allowances open.
- 13** Press the cuff in half lengthways, wrong sides together. Then press the 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance to the wrong side along one long edge of the cuff. Repeat for the other cuff.
- 14** Take the unpressed edge of the cuff and, with the right side facing the wrong side of the sleeve, align the underarm seam with the cuff seam and the notches. Gather the edge of the sleeve to match the circumference of the cuff and pin in place. Stitch and press the seam allowances towards the cuff.



- 15** Fold the cuff over to the right side of the sleeve to conceal all the seam allowances inside the cuff. Make sure the folded edge of the cuff is covering the stitch line from step 14. Pin in place and topstitch a few millimetres away from the folded edge. Repeat for the other cuff.



INSERT THE SLEEVES

- 16** Matching the underarm seam to the side seam and the centre notch of the sleeve to the shoulder seam, [insert the sleeve into the armhole](#). Trim the armhole seam allowance to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.),

then zigzag or overlock the armhole seam allowances together. Press the seam allowances towards the sleeve.

FINISH THE HEM

- 17** If you have a raw edge at the hem, press 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and then a further 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) to the wrong side of the garment. Topstitch in place. If you have cut out your garment so that the hem is already a finished edge (for example the border of a tablecloth), you don't need to do anything.



For me, sewing is an amazing journey of self-discovery and expression.

Every time I create something, I'm learning something new or building on existing skills, gaining more confidence not only in my sewing ability but also in myself as a person.

From making my wedding dress to appearing on the Sewing Bee, I now share my passion for sewing with others as a sewing author, tutor and designer. I love to see the same magic happen with my students.

Sewing is so much more than a needle and thread!

Enjoy your sewing journey... Wherever it may take you.

JENNIFFER TAYLOR

SERIES 2 (2014)

@Tailor_taylor_sewing

TIP

The snip in the seam allowance of the side seam (step 9) will allow you to sew the sleeve in without catching the side seam allowance into this seam.







Shorts & cami set

This cute set consists of a cami top with narrow shoulder straps and a pair of shorts with an elasticated waist and leg cuffs. The top has a lined bust area, which makes for a really beautiful construction and an interesting seam detail under the bust.

Materials

- Sizes 8–14: 2 m (2¼ yd) fabric, 150 (60 in.) wide,
Sizes 16–22: 2.3 m (2½ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- Stay tape or ribbon, if using a stretch fabric
- 1 m (1⅛ yd) elastic, 3 cm (1¼ in.) wide
- 1 m (1⅛ yd) of ready-made bias binding in a matching colour, if not making your own
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

Cotton, linen, silk, bamboo silk. You could also use a lightweight knit fabric.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

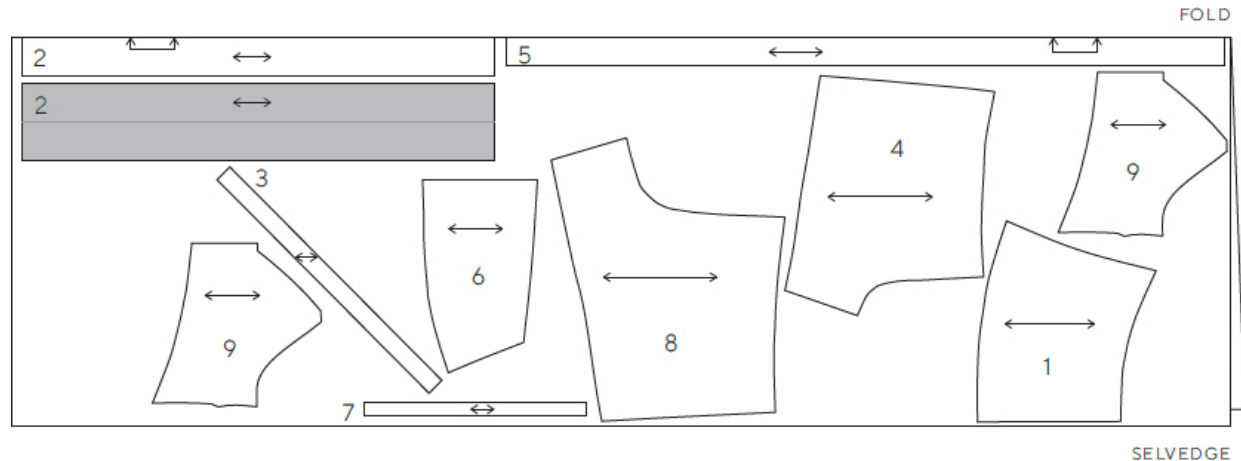
This pattern consists of a camisole top and a pair of shorts. Use your creativity to turn it into anything you like: make a matching cami and shorts in silk with straps and cuffs in a contrast colour, use a cotton for a casual summer set, or use the longer cutting line on the camisole pattern to make a nightdress or a slip.

You could make the main parts of the set in the same colour and then use a different colour for the leg cuff and the straps. Some possible colour combinations are navy and cream, pink and red, or brown and cream.

Finished measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Shorts – side seam (cm)	27.5	28	29	29.5	30	30.5	31	32
Shorts – side seam (in.)	10 $\frac{3}{4}$	11	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	12	12 $\frac{1}{4}$	12 $\frac{1}{2}$
Shorts – hip (cm)	60.5	63	65.5	68	70.5	73	75.5	78
Shorts – hip (in.)	23 $\frac{3}{4}$	24 $\frac{3}{4}$	25 $\frac{3}{4}$	26 $\frac{3}{4}$	27 $\frac{3}{4}$	28 $\frac{3}{4}$	29 $\frac{3}{4}$	30 $\frac{3}{4}$
Cami – bust (cm)	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110
Cami – bust (in.)	29 $\frac{1}{2}$	31 $\frac{1}{2}$	33 $\frac{1}{2}$	35 $\frac{1}{2}$	37 $\frac{1}{2}$	39 $\frac{1}{2}$	41 $\frac{1}{2}$	43 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cami – waist (cm)	83	88	93	98	103	108	113	118
Cami – waist (in.)	32 $\frac{1}{2}$	34 $\frac{1}{2}$	36 $\frac{1}{2}$	38 $\frac{1}{2}$	40 $\frac{1}{2}$	42 $\frac{1}{2}$	44 $\frac{1}{2}$	46 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cami – hip (cm)	113.5	118.5	123.5	128.5	133.5	138.5	143.5	148.5
Cami – hip (in.)	44 $\frac{1}{2}$	46 $\frac{1}{2}$	48 $\frac{1}{2}$	50 $\frac{1}{2}$	52 $\frac{1}{2}$	54 $\frac{1}{2}$	56 $\frac{1}{2}$	58 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cami – length (cm)	48	48.5	49	49.5	50	51	51.5	52
Cami – length (in.)	19	19	19 $\frac{1}{4}$	19 $\frac{1}{2}$	19 $\frac{3}{4}$	20	20 $\frac{1}{4}$	22 $\frac{1}{2}$

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



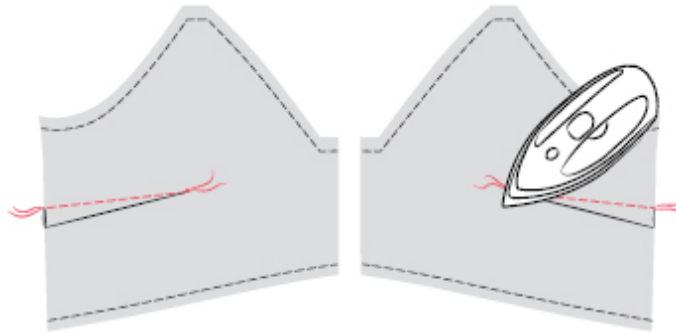
- 1** Back cami – cut 2
- 2** Leg cuff – cut 2 on the fold*
- 3** Binding – cut 2 on the bias
- 4** Front leg – cut 2
- 5** Waistband – cut 1 on the fold
- 6** Front cami – cut 2
- 7** Rouleau strap – cut 2
- 8** Back leg – cut 2
- 9** Front bust – cut 4 (2 are used as lining pieces)

*Double one of your cuff pieces in size so it's not on the fold as this will waste less fabric.

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

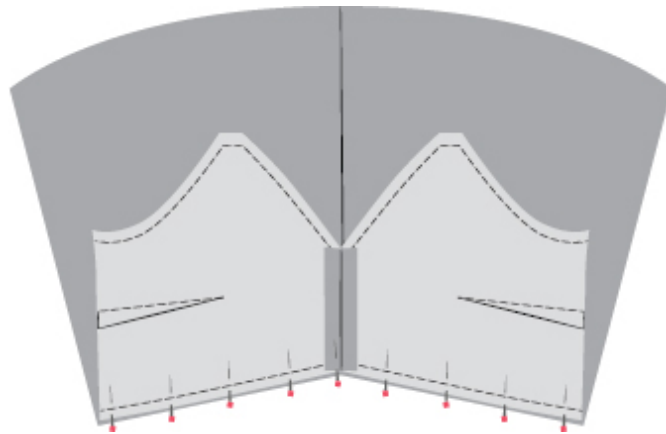
SEW THE TOP

- 1** **Staystitch** the top and bottom of the front bust panels and the front bust lining pieces 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) from the raw edge. If you are sewing in a stretch fabric such as jersey, use stay tape rather than staystitching. This means you zigzag over a piece of non-stretchy tape within your seam allowance so that the edge won't stretch once you start assembling your garment.
- 2** Pin the bust **darts** on the front bust panels and front bust lining pieces and sew from the side edge to the point. Don't backstitch at the point of the dart: run off exactly where the dart finishes, leave a tail with your thread and tie it off by hand. This way you get a perfect point. Press the darts downwards.



- 3** With right sides together, pin the front bust pieces together along the centre front. Sew, then press the seam open. Repeat with the front bust lining pieces.
- 4** With right sides together, pin the front pieces together along the centre front. Sew, then press the seam open. Overlock (serge) the seam allowances together and press the seam to either left or right. Repeat with the back pieces. If you're using a woven fabric, you could sew a French seam.
- 5** Matching the notches and matching the centre front seams to each other, pin the top of the front cami to the bottom of the main fabric front bust. Sew together, pivoting at the centre front

seam. Press the seam open, then press the seam up towards the bust.

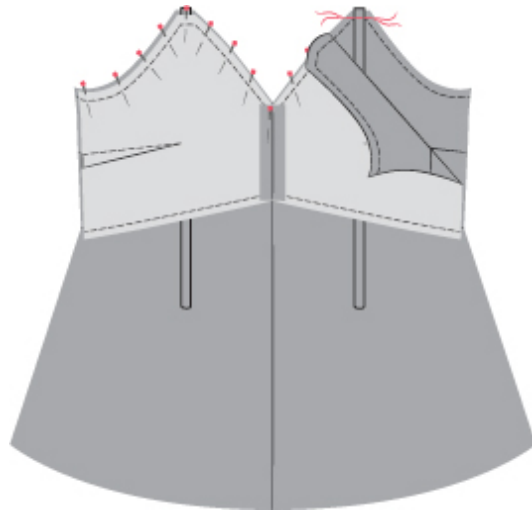


SEW THE STRAPS

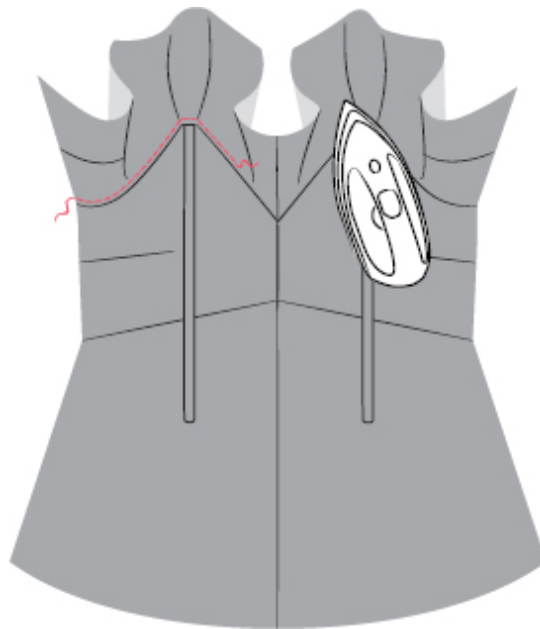
- 6 Make the [rouleau straps](#). Pin one end of each strap to the front of the top, pointing downwards. Tack (baste) in place 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) from the raw edge.

ATTACH THE LINING

- 7 With right sides together, matching the centre front seams, place the front bust lining onto the top. Pin along the neckline, making sure you don't catch the straps elsewhere in the seam. Stitch together, pivoting at the centre front seam. Clip into the V at the centre front, taking care not to cut into the line of stitching; this allows the V to sit flat.

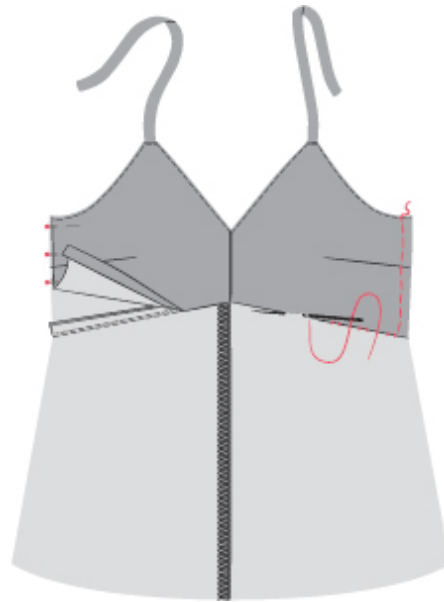


- 8** Trim the seam allowances down to 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.), press the seam allowances towards the facing, and understitch the seam allowance to the bust lining. Using a corner point, push the area around the strap out to create a neat finish. If you are using a jersey or thicker fabric, clip into any corners to reduce bulk.

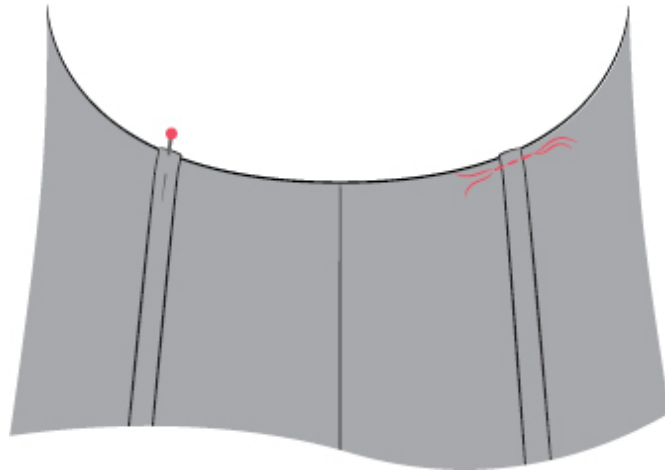


- 9** Press the unattached edge of the bust lining towards the wrong side by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.).

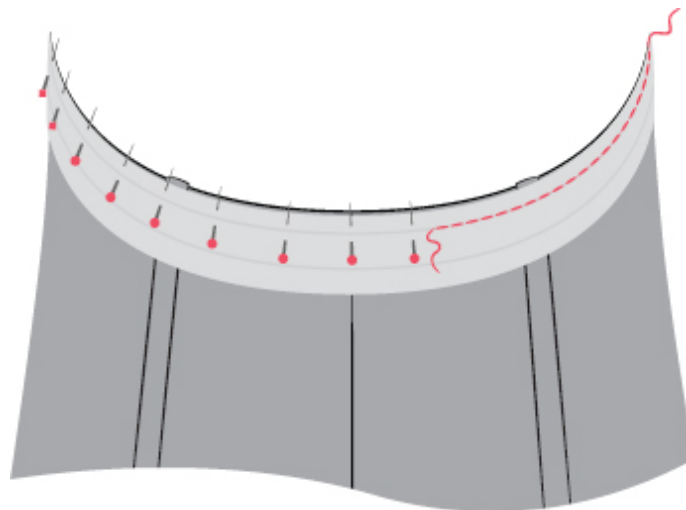
- 10** Turn the bust lining to the inside of the top. Roll and press the understitched V-neck seam slightly towards the inside. Pin the sides of the bust lining to the sides of the top. Tack or stitch in place using a 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance, so that you can treat the top and the lining as one piece. Slipstitch the pressed-under bottom edge of the bust lining to the top by hand or [stitch in the ditch](#).



- 11** Pin the loose ends of the straps to the notches on the back of the bodice, with raw edges and right sides together (the straps should be upside down, as in step 7). Try on the top to see if you are happy with the strap length, then stitch in place with a 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance.



- 12** Make your [bias binding](#) with the pattern piece provided; alternatively you can use ready-made bias binding. Pin and sew the binding along the raw edges of the outside top edge of the back top, finishing at the side seams, sandwiching the straps in between. Finish it so the binding is entirely on the inside of your top.



ATTACH FRONT AND BACK

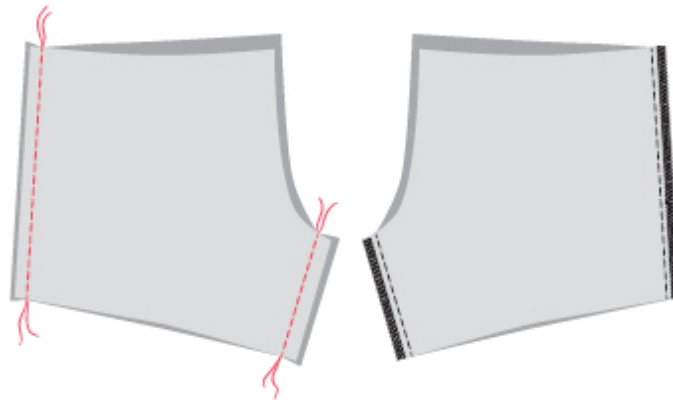
- 13** With right sides together, lay the front on top of the back. The notches on the back match the dart and underbust seam. Pin the sides together, stitch and press the seams open. Overlock or

zigzag the seam allowances together at a foot's width. If you're using a woven fabric, you could sew a French seam.

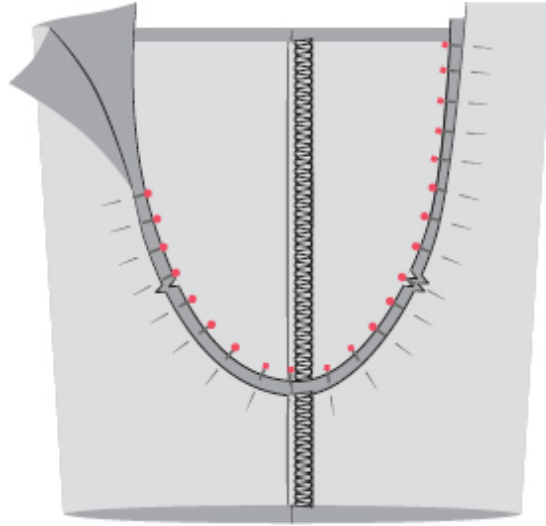
- 14** Hem the bottom of your top by pressing 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.), then 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side and stitching in place.

SEW THE SHORTS

- 15** Place one pair of front and back leg pieces right sides together. Pin and sew the side seam and inside leg seam. Overlock the seam allowances together at a foot's width and press them towards the back. Repeat with the remaining pair of leg pieces.

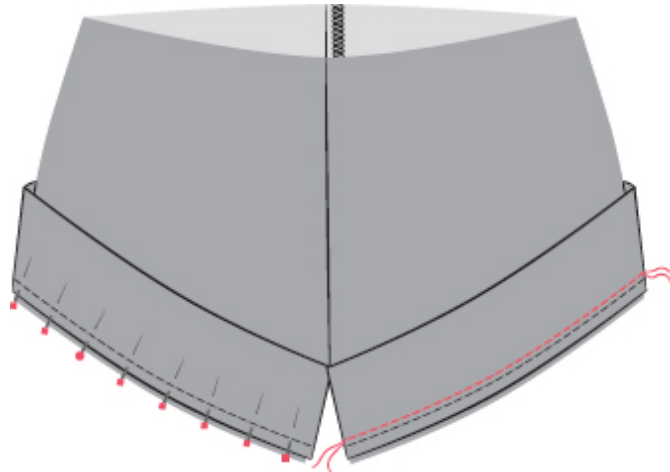


- 16** Turn one leg right side out and leave the other one wrong side out. Matching the inner leg seams and the notches along the curve, slide one leg inside the other, right sides together. Pin and sew the crotch seam all along the curve. Overlock the seam allowances together at a foot's width. Turn the shorts right side out.



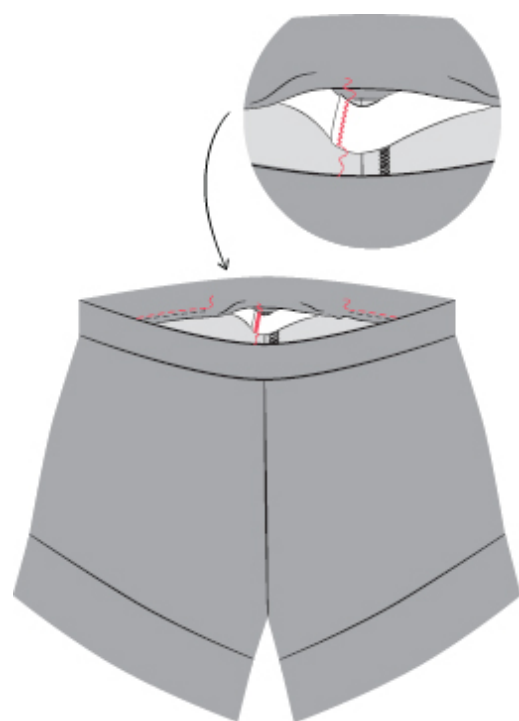
ATTACH THE LEG CUFFS

- 17** Fold the leg cuff in half, with right sides together, and sew together at the short ends. Press the seam open without finishing off the seam allowances. Repeat on the other cuff. Fold the cuffs in half lengthways, with wrong sides together, and press. Machine tack the open edge within the seam allowance.
- 18** With right sides together, matching the side seam of the cuffs with the inside leg seams, pin the tacked edge of the cuffs to the raw edge of the shorts legs. Sew all around. Overlock the seam allowances together. Fold the cuffs down and press the seams up towards the legs.



ASSEMBLE THE WAISTBAND

- 19** With right sides together, pin the narrow sides of the waistband together and stitch. Press the seam open without finishing the seam allowances. Fold the waistband in half lengthways, with wrong sides together, and press. Machine tack the remaining open edge of the waistband within the seam allowance, leaving a 3-cm (1¼-in.) gap in the seam.
- 20** Matching the waistband seam with one of the shorts side seams, pin the tacked edge of the waistband to the shorts, right sides together, all the way around the raw edge of the shorts waist. Sew in place, leaving the same 3-cm (1¼-in.) gap to be able to insert your elastic.
- 21** Hold the elastic around your waist to where it's comfortable – not too tight and not too loose. Add 2 cm (¾ in.), then cut to the length required. Attach a safety pin to the elastic and feed it through the channel on the shorts. Overlap the ends of the elastic by 1 cm (⅜ in.), zigzag them together and sew the gap in your waistband shut. Overlock the seam allowances together at a foot's width and press down towards the shorts.











VARIATION

Slip dress

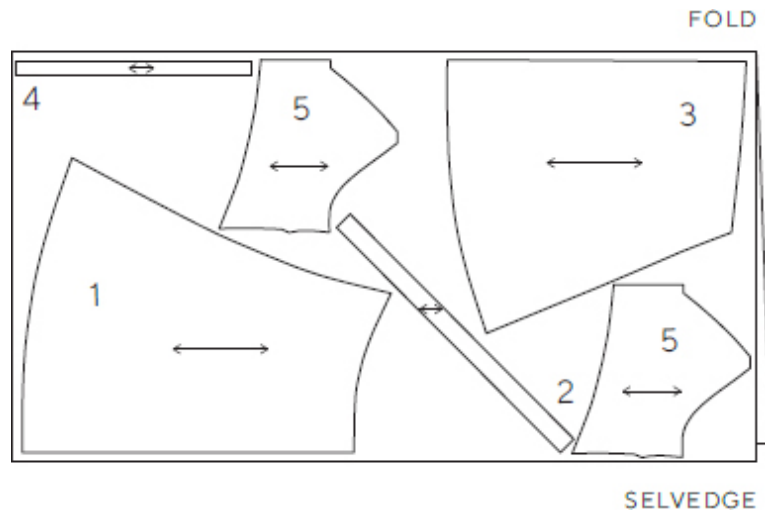
Use the longer cut line for the top pattern to make a slip dress or nightdress. Our sample has been made in a bamboo silk. Follow steps 1–14 to make up your dress.

Materials

- All sizes: 1.5 m (1⅝ yd) fabric, 150 (60 in.) wide
- Stay tape or ribbon, if using a stretch fabric
- 1 m (1⅛ yd) of ready-made bias binding in a matching colour, if not making your own
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14
Length (cm)	71.5	72	72	72.5
Long length (in.)	28	28¼	28¼	28½
	16	18	20	22
Length (cm)	73	73	73.5	74
Long length (in.)	28¾	28¾	29	29¼

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



- 1** Back cami – cut 2
- 2** Binding – cut 2 on the bias
- 3** Front cami – cut 2
- 4** Rouleau strap – cut 2
- 5** Front bust – cut 4 (2 are used as lining pieces)







Shirred dress

A shirred dress consists of mainly straightforward shapes that are shirred to make them stretchy. You can buy special shirring elastic to add shirring to garments and it's like a modern version of smocking. It's a way of keeping the width of a fabric but adding shaping in certain areas, such as the bust and waist. If you choose a print fabric for this project, just remember that you won't really see the print in areas where you have added the shirring.

Materials

- 3.5 m (3⁷/₈ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide + 0.5 m (5⁸/₈ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide, for optional hem frill
- 3 spools shirring elastic
- 3 m (3¹/₄ yd) elastic, 1 cm (3⁸/₈ in.) wide
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Beginner

Fabric suggestions

Cotton, linen, linen blends, viscose.

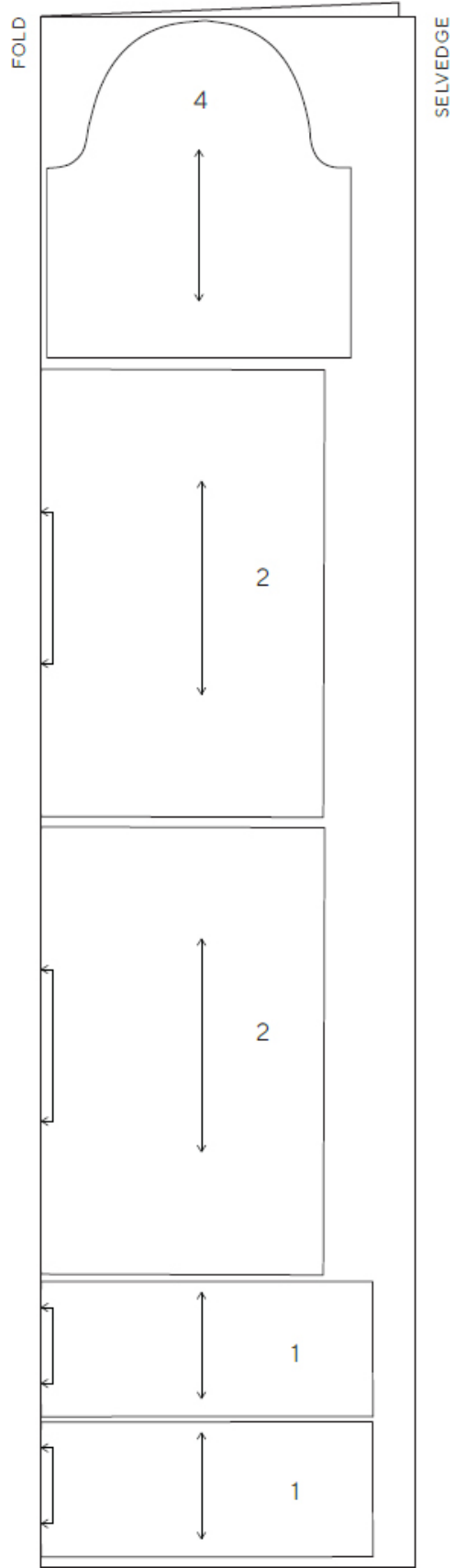
Design notes

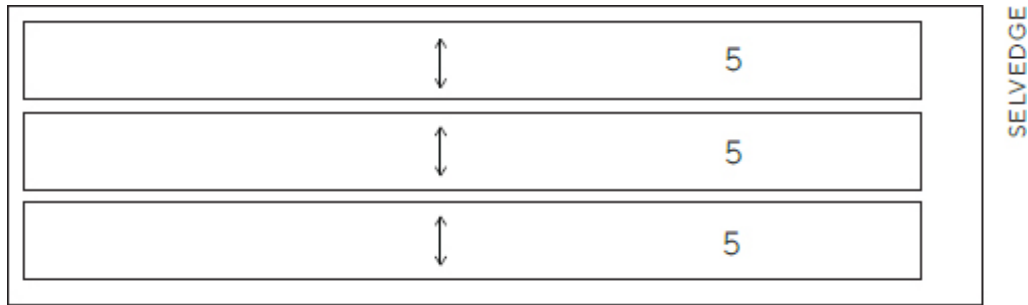
Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

Finished measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	109.5	109.5	109.5	109.5	109.5	109.5	109.5	109.5
Front length (in.)	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43
Hip (cm)	185	190	195	200	205	210	215	220
Hip (in.)	72 $\frac{3}{4}$	74 $\frac{3}{4}$	76 $\frac{3}{4}$	78 $\frac{3}{4}$	80 $\frac{3}{4}$	82 $\frac{3}{4}$	84 $\frac{3}{4}$	86 $\frac{1}{2}$
Sleeve length (cm)	56.5	57	57.5	58	58.5	59	59.5	60
Sleeve length (in.)	22 $\frac{1}{4}$	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	22 $\frac{3}{4}$	22 $\frac{3}{4}$	23	23 $\frac{1}{4}$	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	23 $\frac{3}{4}$

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric





- 1** Shirring panel – cut 2 on the fold
- 2** Skirt – cut 2 on the fold
- 3** Bodice – cut 2 on the fold in shirred fabric
- 4** Sleeve – cut 2
- 5** Hem frill – cut 3

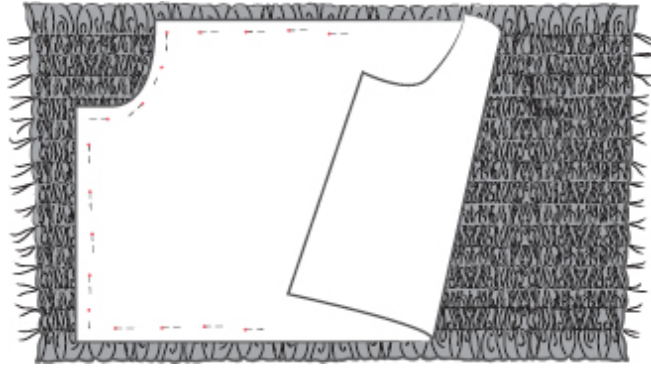
THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE THE PIECES

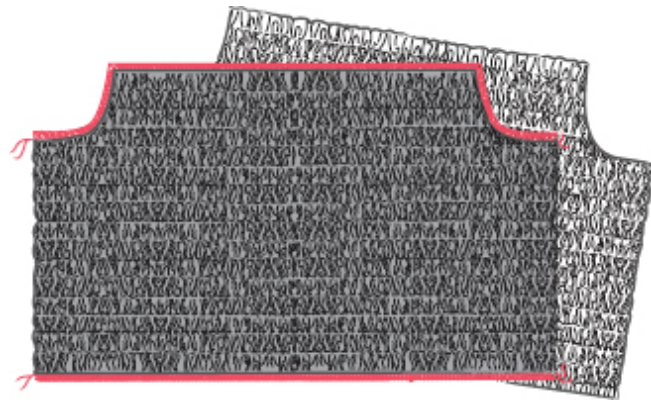
- 1** Lay out the pattern pieces as shown in the cutting guide. Note that the front and back bodice pieces will be cut once the shirring has been done, so do not cut these just yet.
- 2** Sew the shirring lines on the [shirring panels](#). There are 15 lines of shirring on each one and the bodice pieces will be cut from these.

SEW THE BODICE

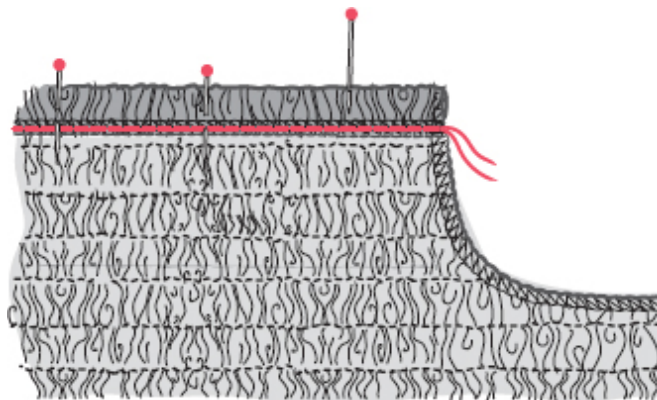
- 3** Place the front and back bodice pattern pieces on the shirred panels, pin in place and carefully cut them out.



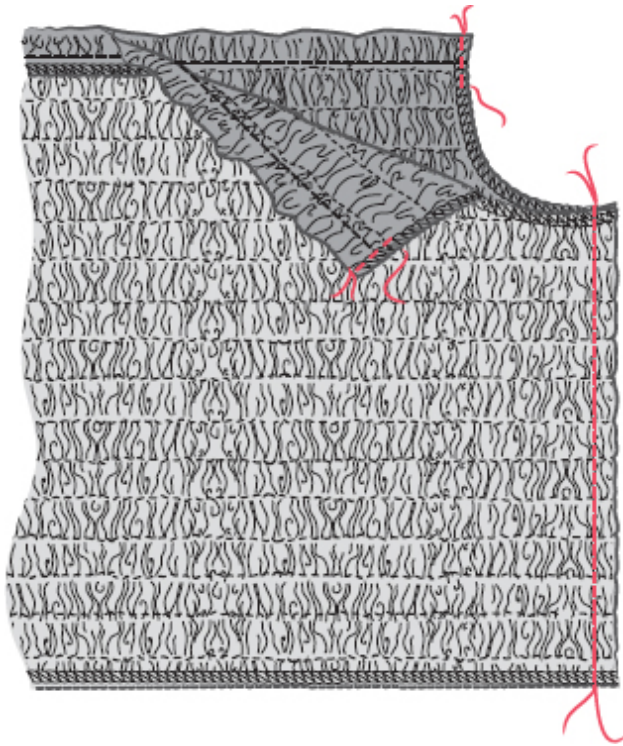
- 4** Thread up your sewing machine with regular thread again. Zigzag or overlock (serge) the seam allowance of the front and back bodices along the top, bottom and armhole edges.



- 5** Fold 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side along the top edge of the front and back bodices. Pin then stitch 12 mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in.) away from the fold to create a channel for the elastic.



- 6** Thread a 27-cm (10¾-in.) length of 1-cm (¾-in.) wide elastic through each channel. Use a small safety pin to help you with this. Machine across each end to hold the elastic in place securely inside the channel.
- 7** With right sides together, pin and stitch the shirred bodice pieces together along the side seams. [Finish the seam allowances.](#)



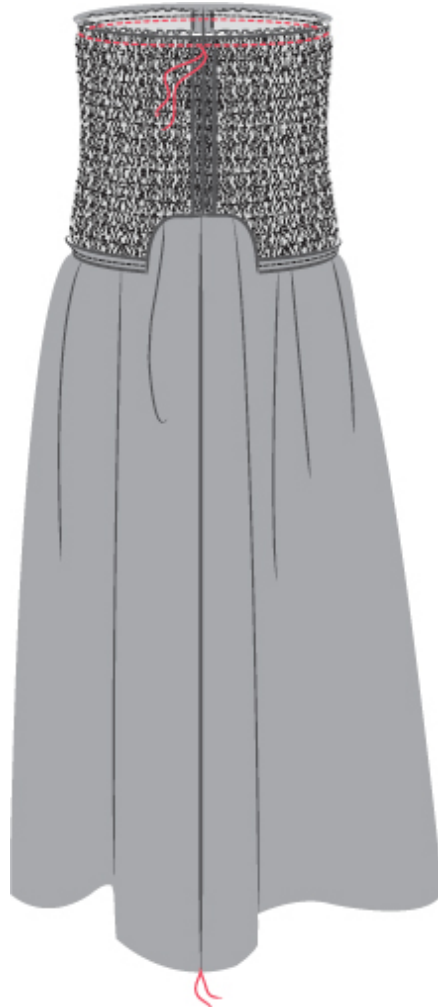
SEW THE SKIRT

- 8** Finish the seam allowances along the top and side edges of the front and back skirt panels.
- 9** With right sides together, pin and stitch the front and back skirts together at the side seams. Press the seam allowances open.
- 10** Sew two lines of [gathering stitches](#) along the top edge of the skirt – one on top of the pattern line and one a foot's width into

the seam allowance.

ATTACH THE BODICE TO THE SKIRT

- 11** With right sides together, matching the side seams of the bodice to those of the skirt, pin the bottom edge of the bodice to the waist of the skirt in a few places (side seams, centre back, centre front). Start pulling up the gathers until the skirt waist matches the bodice waist. Pin in place using lots of pins, then sew. Press the seam allowances down towards the skirt.



- 12** Measure a piece of 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) wide elastic around your waist so that it feels comfortable for you. Add 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) to this

measurement. On the inside of your dress, fold the waist seam allowance under to create a channel. Topstitch along the folded edge, leaving a 4-cm (1½-in.) gap to be able to insert the elastic.

- 13** Pin a safety pin to the end of the waist elastic and thread it through the channel. Take care not to twist the elastic! Overlap the ends by 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and zigzag well. Topstitch the gap in the waist channel closed.

ADD A HEM FRILL

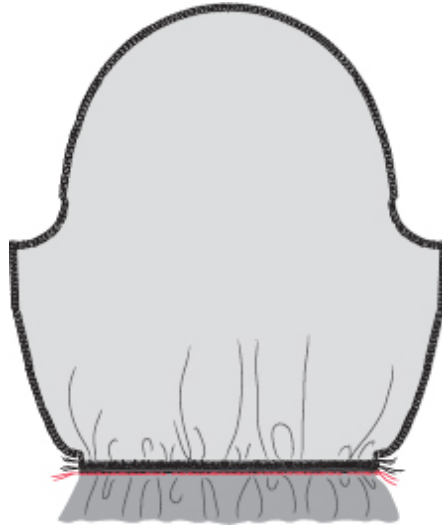
- 14** With right sides together, pin and stitch the short edges of the three hem frill pieces together so that you have one big loop. Finish the seam allowances.
- 15** Overlock or zigzag one long edge of the frill, then press 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side. Pin and stitch.
- 16** Overlock or zigzag the top edge of the hem frill. Sew two lines of gathering stitches along this edge – one on top of the pattern line and one a foot's width inside the seam allowance. Mark the hem frill up into quarters.
- 17** With right sides together, match the raw edge of the frill to the hem of the dress. Your frill will be lying upside down at this point. Then match the four marks on the frill to the skirt's side seams, centre front and centre back. Pull up the gathers until the frill fits the skirt hem.



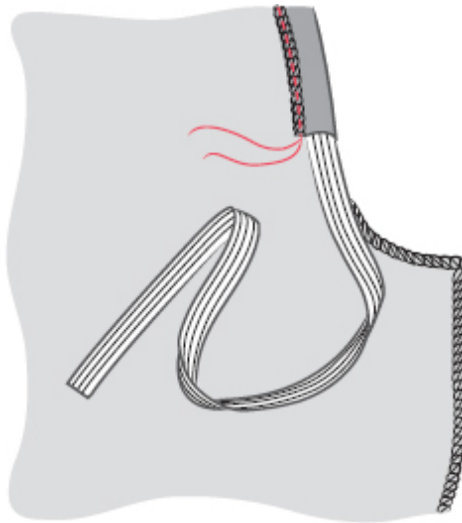
- 18** Pin the frill gathers really well, then stitch with a 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance. Press carefully, with the seam allowances towards the dress, so as not to flatten the gathers.

SEW THE SLEEVES

- 19** Overlock or zigzag all edges of the sleeves. At the hem edge of the sleeves, press 6 cm ($2\frac{1}{2}$ in.) to the wrong side. Machine tack (baste) to hold in place.
- 20** Following the pattern markings, sew three lines of shirring on each sleeve, catching the hem edge of the sleeve in the first row.



- 21** Press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side around the sleeve heads, pin in place, then stitch between the notches to create a channel. Cut two 27-cm ($10\frac{1}{2}$ -in.) lengths of 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) wide elastic. Thread one through each channel, so that the elastic extends 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) beyond the notch. Stitch across both ends of the elastic to secure it.



- 22** Fold the sleeves in half lengthwise, right sides together. Pin then stitch the underarm seam. Press the seams open.

23 Right sides together, match the underarm seam to the bodice side seam. Pin the sleeves around the bottom of the armhole only, from one bottom edge of the elastic to the other end of the elastic. Sew, then press the seams towards the sleeves.



'Press & Press on!' It is really important to press your seams as you go! Having a pressing station or iron set up should be just as important as having your sewing machine ready to go. Pressing your seams as you go will give a much nicer, professional finish.

'Avoid a Glitch with an Understitch'. Understitching helps to keep a lining or facing towards the inside of a garment. It is also used in places such as in-seam pockets. Sewing the lining or facing to the seam allowance will prevent it from making an unwanted appearance on the right side of the garment and will elevate your dressmaking to the next level!

And finally, always invest in a good pair of sharp shears! If they snip right to the ends of the blades, then they're good! And a bonus tip from me: if you're right handed, always cut to left of your pattern piece, and the opposite if you're left handed! Try it – you get a much cleaner cut!

ADAM BROOKS
SERIES 7 (2021)

TIP

If you don't fancy a hem frill, skip steps 14–18 and simply do a double-turned hem on your dress by pressing 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and then another 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side and sewing it in place.







Denim midi skirt

This A-line denim skirt has a panelled design, meaning there is lots of opportunity for topstitching in a contrast colour! Choose a classic blue denim or go for something funky like a red or black. The skirt has no-sew denim studs down the front to fasten.

Materials

- 2 m (2½ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 1 m (1½ yd) medium-weight iron-on interfacing
- 8 no-sew jeans buttons
- Topstitching thread in a matching or contrasting colour
- Size 90 sewing machine needle if using denim
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

Medium-weight denim, corduroy, cotton velvet.

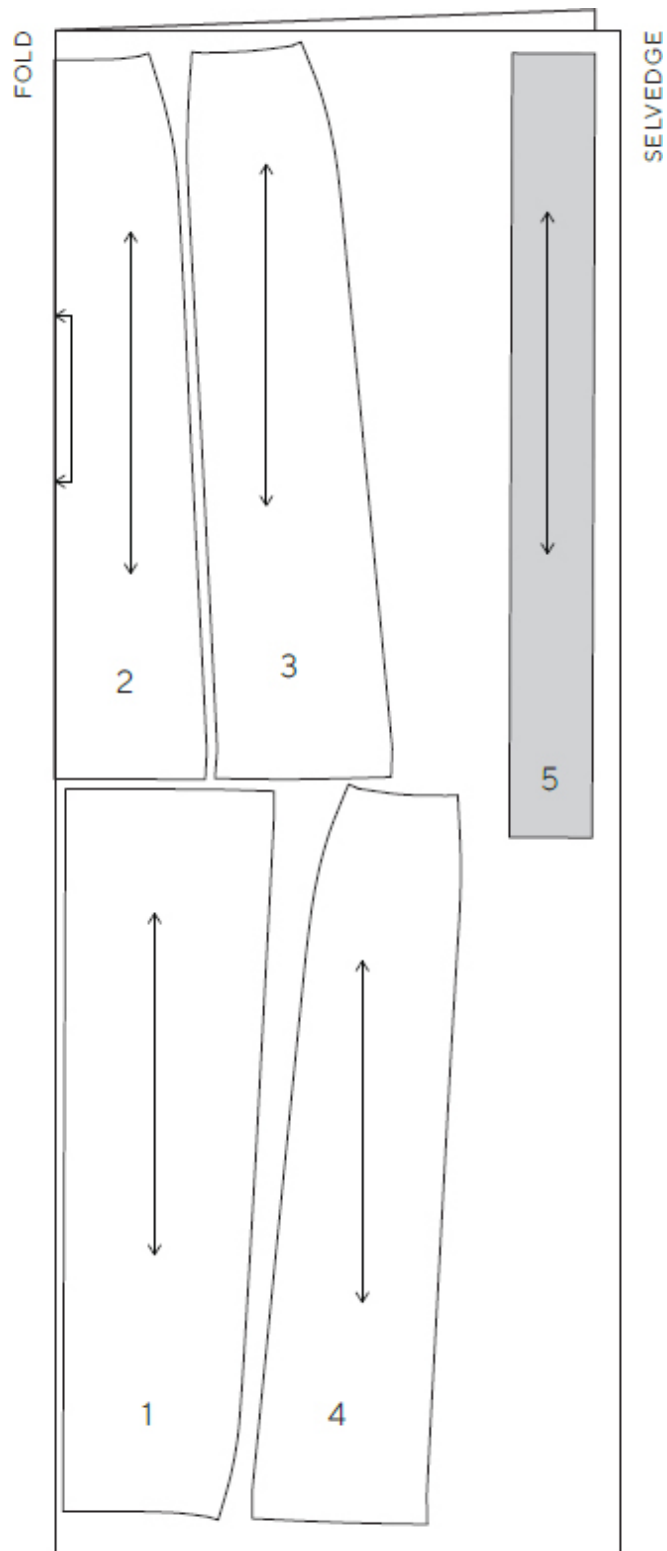
Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

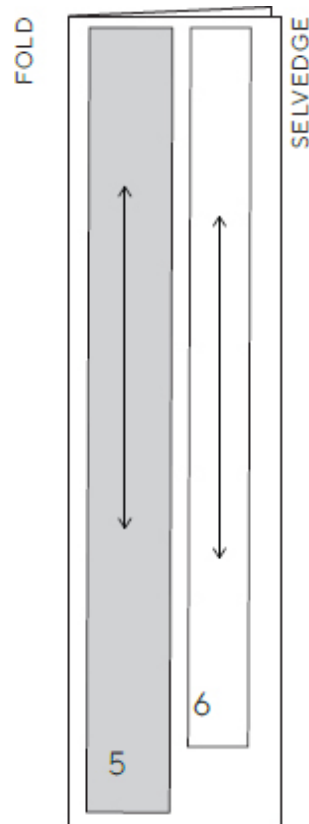
Finished measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
Front length (in.)	35½	35½	35½	35½	35½	35½	35½	35½
Waist (cm)	65.5	70.5	75.5	80.5	85.5	90.5	95.5	100.5
Waist (in.)	25¾	27¾	29¾	31¾	33¾	35¾	37½	39½
Hip (cm)	97.5	102.5	107.5	112.5	117.5	122.5	127.5	132.5
Hip (in.)	38¾	40¾	42¾	44¾	46¾	48¾	50¾	52¾

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Interfacing



- 1** Front – cut 2
- 2** Centre back – cut 1 on fold
- 3** Side back – cut 2
- 4** Side front – cut 2
- 5** Waistband – cut 1 in fabric and 1 in interfacing
- 6** Placket – cut 2 in interfacing

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

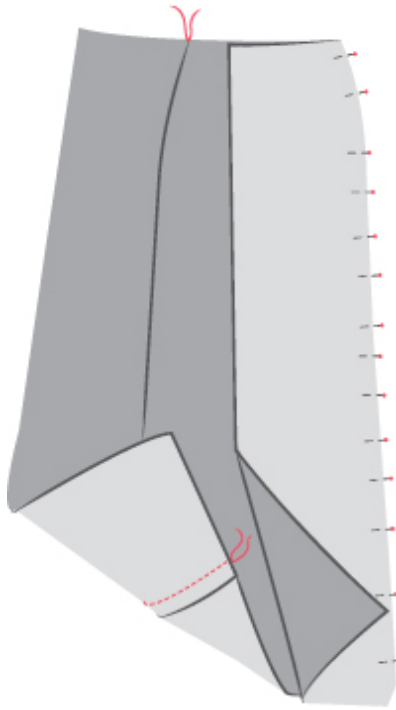
PREPARE THE PIECES

- 1** Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of the waistband and along the centre front edges of the front skirt panels. Note that on the

centre front edges, the interfacing stops at the fold line on your skirt pattern.

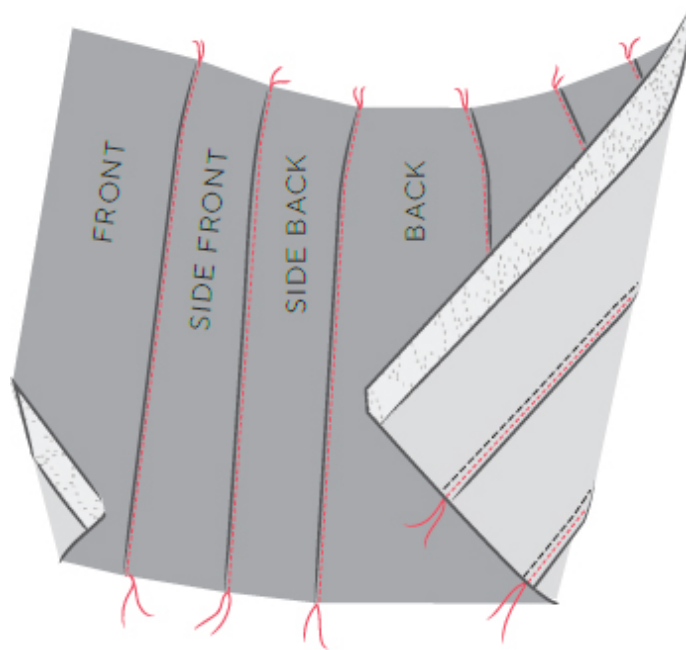
ASSEMBLE THE SKIRT PANELS

- 2** Place one side back panel on top of the centre back panel, right sides together and aligning the notches. Pin and stitch. Press the seam allowances towards the centre back. Attach the second side back panel to the other side of the centre back panel in the same way.



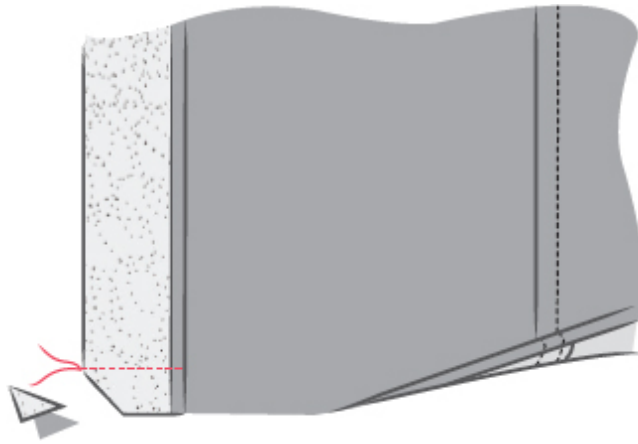
- 3** Lay the side front panels on top of the side back panels, right sides together. Align the notches, pin and stitch. Press the seam allowances towards the back.
- 4** Finally, lay the front panels on top of the side front panels, right sides together. Align the notches, pin and stitch. Press the seam allowances towards the back.

- 5** Thread the machine with a contrasting colour of denim thread and **topstitch** 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) away from the seam ditch on all the seams you have sewn. As you have pressed your seam allowance towards the back of the garment, each line of topstitching will sit on the side of the seam that faces towards the back. If you have your skirt lying flat in front of you, right side up, the topstitching will sit on the right-hand side of each seam on the left half of the skirt and on the left-hand side of each seam on the right half.



SEW THE CENTRE FRONT PLACKETS

- 6** Press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side along each centre front edge. Press the entire hem of the skirt to the wrong side by 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.).
- 7** Fold the centre front edge along the line indicated on your paper pattern, right side to right side. Working from the right side of the skirt, you should see the placket interfacing along the centre front edge. With a 3-cm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ -in.) seam allowance, sew along the hem of this folded-back part only. Trim the bottom corner.

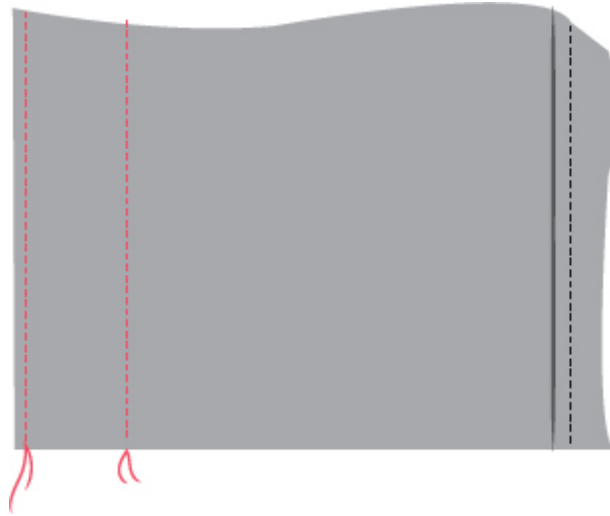


- 8 Turn the folded front edge through to the right side. The folded front edge is now on the inside of your skirt. Use a pointer to get the bottom corner nice and sharp.
-

NOTE

You're only stitching through one layer of the waistband here.

- 9 Press the placket in place along the front edge. Pin in place and topstitch just under 3.5 cm (1³/₈ in.) away from the folded edge to secure. Sew another line of topstitching 5 mm (1/4 in.) from the folded front edge. Repeat steps 7–9 for the other centre front edge.

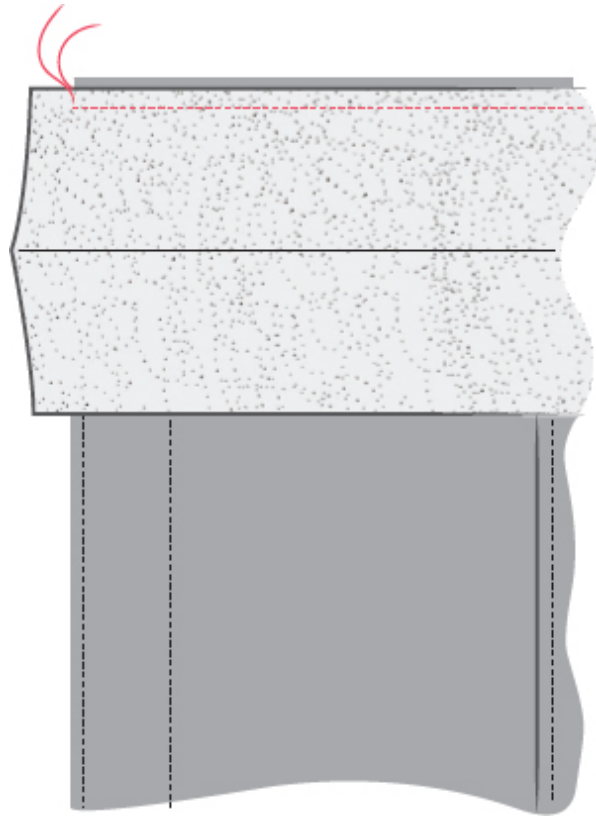


HEM THE SKIRT

- 10** Press the remaining hem, between the plackets, to the wrong side by 3 cm (1¼ in.). Topstitch in place all the way to the front edges.

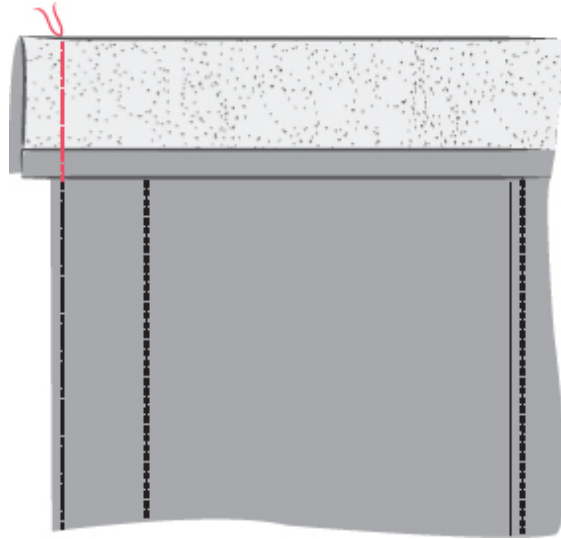
SEW THE WAISTBAND

- 11** Press the waistband in half lengthways, wrong sides together.
- 12** Unfold the waistband again. With right sides together, aligning the notches, pin and stitch one long edge to the raw edge of the skirt waist. The waistband should extend beyond the centre front edge by 1.5 cm (⅝ in.) at each end. Press the seam allowances up into the waistband.



13 Along the remaining long edge of the waistband, press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side.

14 Now fold the waistband in half lengthways, right sides together. Pin the short edges, taking care to line this up neatly with the centre front edge of the skirt. Stitch in place, keeping the seam allowances of the waistband folded up towards the waistband itself.

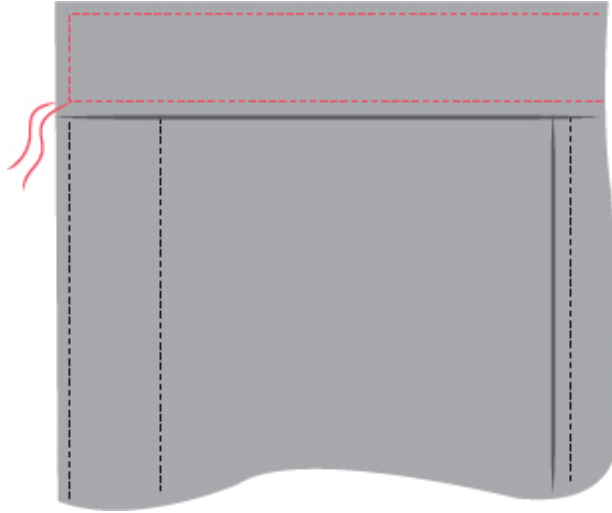


- 15** Trim the seam allowance down to half the width and clip the top corner. Repeat for the other short end of the waistband.
-

NOTE

You may find it helpful to tack (baste) this area of the waistband after you have pinned it in step 15, ready for topstitching from the right side.

- 16** Turn the waistband right side out, making sure the centre front corners are nice and sharp. Carefully pin the bottom edge of the waistband in place inside the skirt, concealing the seam allowances.
- 17** Topstitch along all four sides of the waistband, 5 mm (¼ in.) away from the edge, making sure the stitches catch the entire bottom edge of the waistband down inside the skirt.



BUTTONS AND BUTTONHOLES

- 18** Mark out seven [horizontal buttonholes](#) on the right-hand button placket (as worn), using the markings on your pattern as a guide. The buttonhole length should be the diameter of your button plus 2–3 mm (about $\frac{1}{8}$ in.).
- 19** Sew a regular buttonhole or a keyhole buttonhole where you have made your mark.
- 20** Following your paper pattern, mark the button placement on the left-hand button placket. The buttons should be positioned 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) from the centre front edge. Insert a no-sew jeans button at each mark, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- 21** Finish the waistband with a buttonhole, following the markings on your paper pattern.



Taking part in the Sewing Bee was such a transformative experience, I went from sewing in my bedroom to sewing in front of judges, other sewers and the public. It pushed me out of my comfort zone further than ever before - I gained a confidence in my ability and I'll be forever grateful for the opportunity to make exciting garments and create such a lovely community of sewers. My fondest memory was the first time we walked into the sewing room, and the nervous excitement we all felt knowing the crazy journey we were about to embark on.

MIA BLEACH

SERIES 9 (2023)

@miasartyfarty

NOTE

Sew a test buttonhole first and make sure you have the correct machine settings. Also try the buttonhole for size and adjust if needed: the button should go through smoothly – it shouldn't be a struggle and equally it shouldn't have zero resistance.







Jersey dress

This is a wardrobe staple and a great garment to layer over. The full length is a midi, and there are two alternative hem lengths on the pattern – one for a shorter dress and one for a top. Use a plain black jersey to make a versatile dress or a striped fabric for a Breton-style look; you could change the orientation of the stripe down the sleeve for an interesting design detail.

Materials

- 2.8 m (3 yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 25 cm (10 in.) cotton stay tape, 6 mm (¼ in.) wide
- Matching sewing thread
- Ballpoint needle
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Beginner

Fabric suggestions

Rib knit jersey, medium-weight jersey.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

There is a cutting line on the pattern to make a top variation. You will also find a cutting line to make a three-quarter-length sleeve instead of full length.

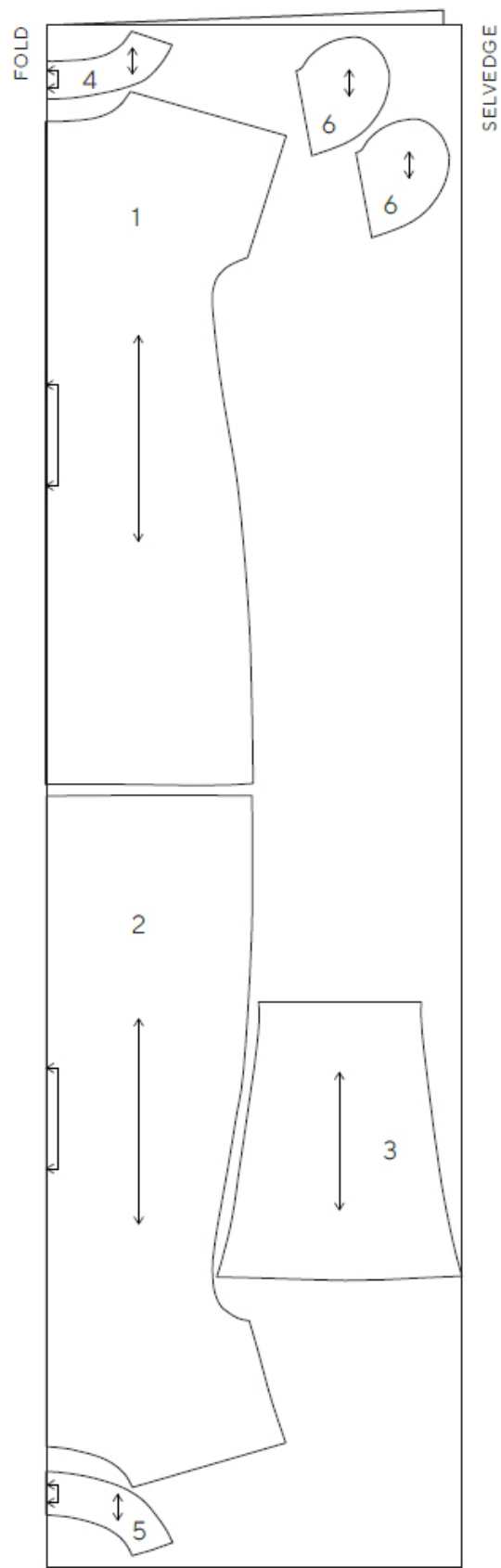
Use the line in the skirt area to do any lengthening or shortening.

Stretch fabrics are best sewn using a narrow zigzag stitch.

Finished measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	117	118	118.5	119	119.5	120	121	121.5
Front length (in.)	46	46½	46½	46¾	47	47¼	47½	47¾
Bust (cm)	107	112	117	122	127	132	137	142
Bust (in.)	42	44	46	48	50	52	54	56
Waist (cm)	79	84	89	94	99	104	109	114
Waist (in.)	31	33	35	37	39	41	43	45
Hip (cm)	91	96	101	106	111	116	121	126
Hip (in.)	35¾	37¾	39¾	41¾	43¾	45¾	47¾	49¾

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



- 1** Back – cut 1 on the fold
- 2** Front – cut 1 on the fold
- 3** Sleeve – cut 2
- 4** Back facing – cut 1 on the fold
- 5** Front facing – cut 1 on the fold
- 6** Pocket – cut 4

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

SEW THE SHOULDERS

- 1** To prevent the shoulder seams from stretching, reinforce the edges using cotton stay tape. Cut the tape in half. On the wrong side of the back piece, lay the tape along the raw edge of each shoulder, stopping, 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) from the shoulder and the neck. This way the tape will lie within the seam allowance. Sew in place with a zigzag stitch along the centre of the tape.

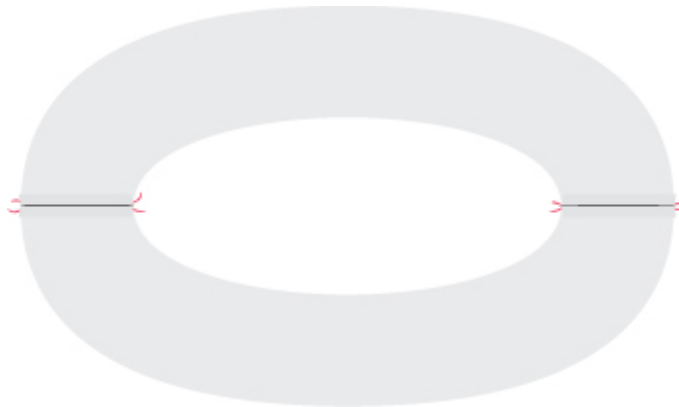


- 2** With right sides together, stitch the front to the back at the shoulders. Press the seams towards the back.

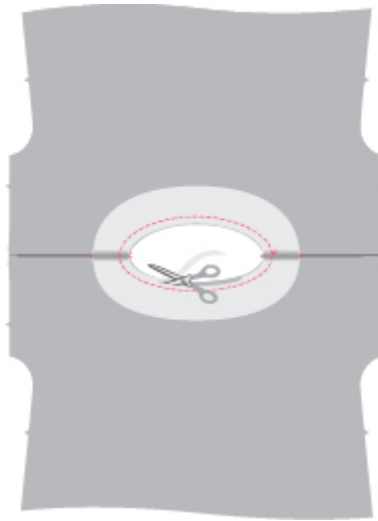


SEW THE NECKLINE FACING

- 3** With right sides together, stitch the front and back facings together at the shoulder seams. Press the seams open.



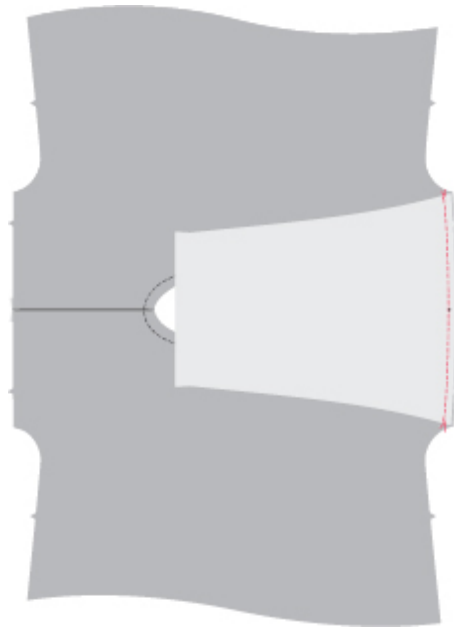
- 4** With right sides together, matching the shoulder seams, pin the facing to the neck edge and stitch. Grade the seam allowance by cutting the garment side to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and the facing seam allowance to 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.).



- 5** Press the seam allowance towards the facing and **understitch** close to the previous seam, catching the seam allowances underneath as you go.
- 6** Press the facing to the inside and tack it in place 3 cm (1¼ in.) from the neck edge. **Topstitch** from the right side, close to the tacking. On the inside, trim the facing close to the topstitching.

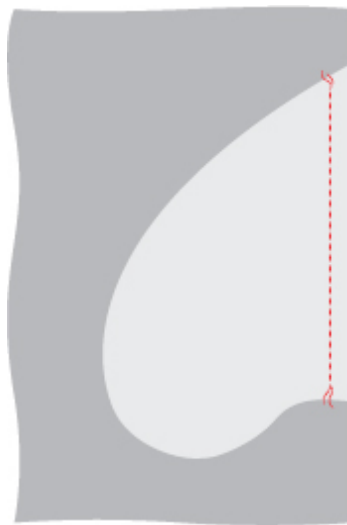


- 7** Open the garment out and lay it flat. With right sides together, matching the small dot on the sleeve to the shoulder seam and matching the notches on the front and back of the top, pin the sleeve to the armhole edge. Stitch, then press the seam towards the sleeve. Repeat for the other sleeve.



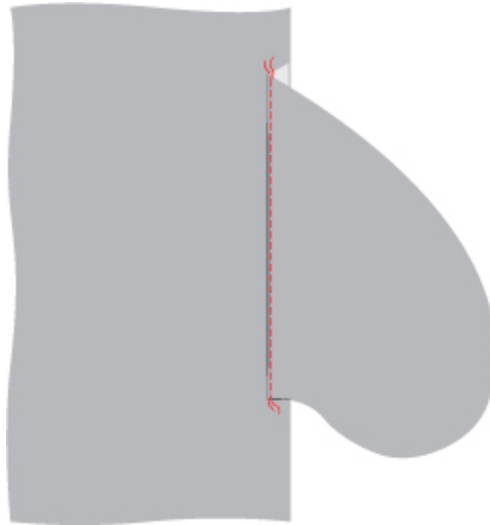
OPTIONAL: SEW THE POCKETS

- 8** With right sides together, matching the dots, pin and sew the pockets onto the front dress sides, sewing between the marked points only. Repeat to sew pocket pieces to the back of the dress.



- 9** Working from the right side, press the pockets and seam allowances away from the front and back dress pieces and then

understitch between the dots on the pocket side of the seam line, not on the front dress.



- 10** With right sides together, making sure the raw edges and pockets align, lay the back dress over the front dress. Pin along the sleeve seams, side seams and around the pockets. Machine stitch from the sleeve down to the hem in one continuous line of stitching, pivoting at the previously stitched points around the pockets.

HEM YOUR DRESS

- 11** Press under a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) hem around the sleeve hem. Working from the right side, pin and machine the hem in place.
- 12** Hem the bottom of the dress in the same way as the sleeves, pressing under a 2.5-cm (1-in.) hem.

VARIATION: JERSEY TOP

Make another wardrobe staple using the Jersey Dress pattern as the basis for a top. The cutting line for the top is indicated on the pattern. Use a thicker, stable jersey to make this less like a T-shirt.

Follow steps 1–7 of the Jersey Dress, then use the steps overleaf to create a classic jersey hem.

Materials

- All sizes: 1.5 m (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ yd) fabric, 150 (60 in.) wide
- 25 cm (10 in.) cotton stay tape, 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) wide
- Matching sewing thread
- Ballpoint needle
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

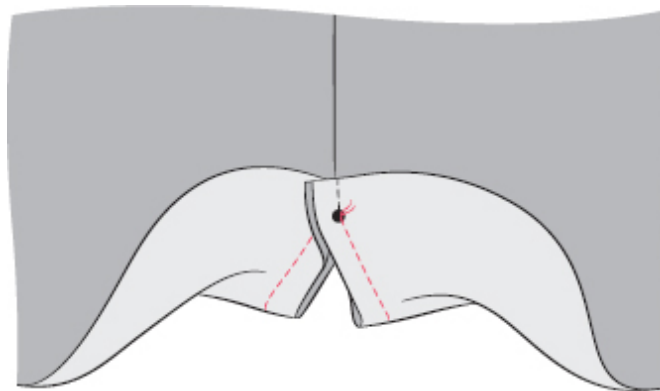
Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14
Length (cm)	66	66	66	66
Long length (in.)	26	26	26	26
	16	18	20	22
Length (cm)	66	66	66	66
Long length (in.)	26	26	xx	26

SEW THE TOP

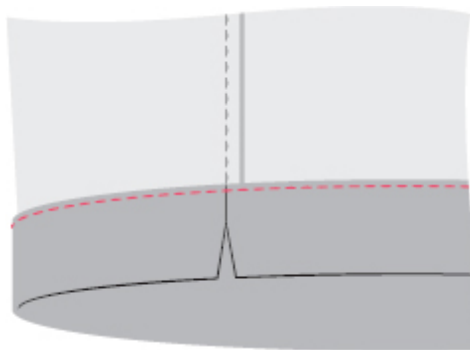
- 1 With right sides together, pin the front and back together at the sleeves and sides. Stitch from the outer edge of the sleeve and down the sides, leaving a gap between the circles on the lower edges of the seam, as shown. Clip the seam allowance 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) above the upper circle. Press the seams towards the back.



- 2** Turn the lower edge of the garment to the right side, matching the circles, and pin in place. Stitch below the circles on either side, as shown.



- 3** Turn the hem allowance to the inside, making a 7-cm (2¾-in.) hem, and stitch in place close to the raw edge.



- 4 Hem your sleeves, following the instructions in step 11 of the Jersey Dress.



The most wonderful thing for me about the Sewing Bee experience was the sense of community in the sewing room. It felt like a precious bubble containing all of us - the competitors, the producers and crew, as well as the sewing 'fairies'. Of course, this feeling was even stronger among the sewers, especially because sewing in a group was so unusual for most of us. The opportunity to learn from each other was incredible. Put a group of ten self-taught sewers in a room together and there will be at least 11 ways of doing each technique. I learned so much, and still use so many skills I picked up during the Bee. It was truly an amazing time.

CHARLOTTE NEWLAND
SERIES 4 (2016)

@charlottesews









Maxi dress

You can play with the hem length on this if you don't fancy a maxi length. Just below the biggest part of the calf is a really beautiful length and eliminates hems on floors. I like to wear a midi dress with a sneaker, for example. The cuff ties on this dress are such a beautiful detail and the garment has really gorgeous seam lines with a separate waist panel.

Materials

- 3.25 m (3⁵/₈ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 60 cm (24 in.) lightweight iron-on interfacing
- 55-cm (22-in.) invisible zip
- Matching sewing thread
- Invisible zip foot
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

Cotton, viscose, crepe, linen.

Design notes

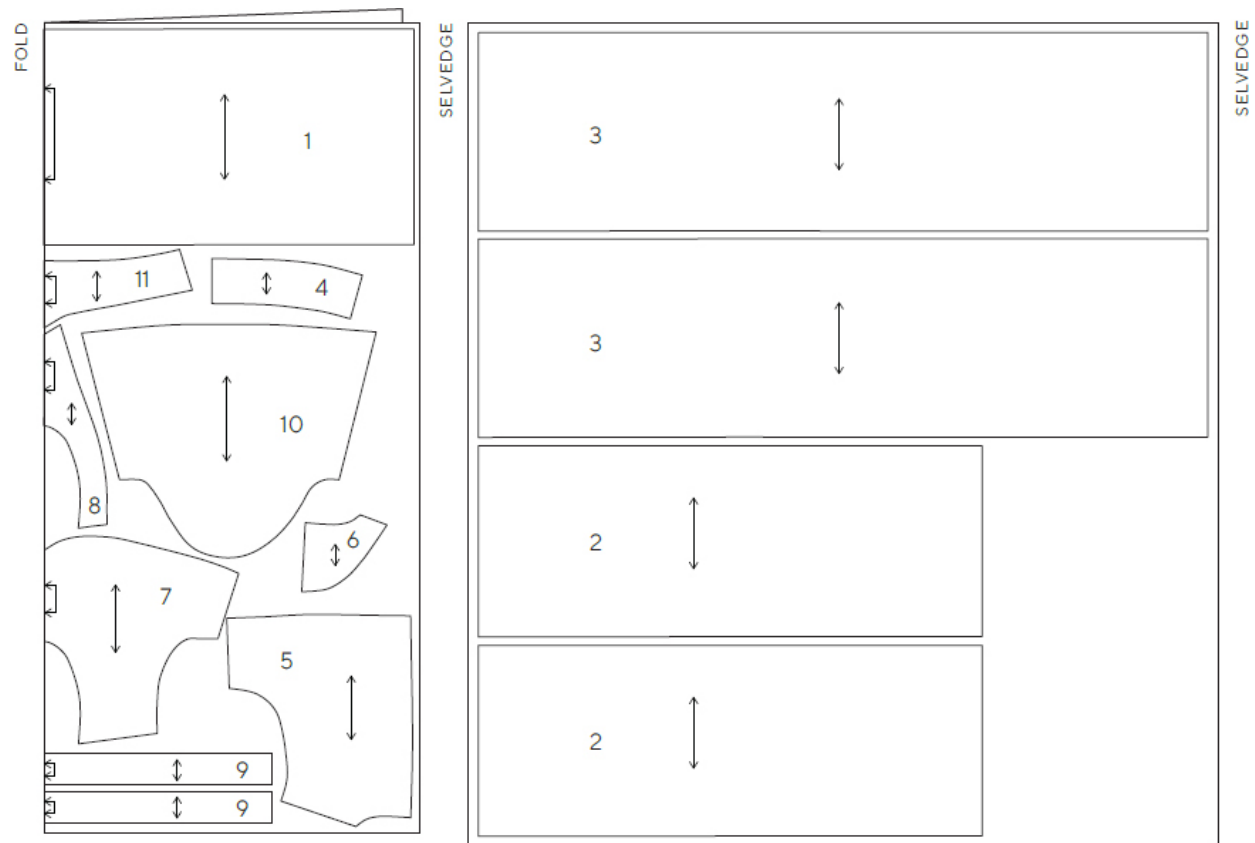
Use a 1.5-cm (5⁄8-in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

You could add a few small buttons down the centre front of the bodice as a decorative element.

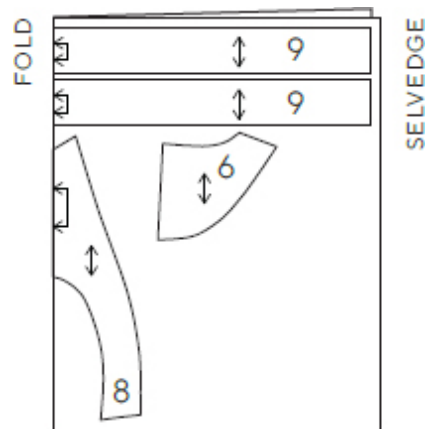
Finished measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	152.5	153	153.5	154	154.5	155	156	156.5
Front length (in.)	60	60¼	60½	60½	60¾	61	61½	61¾
Bust (cm)	99.5	104.5	109.5	114.5	119.5	124.5	129.5	134.5
Bust (in.)	39	41	43	45	47	49	51	53
Waist (cm)	68.5	73.5	78.5	83.5	88.5	93.5	98.5	103.5
Waist (in.)	27	29	31	33	35	37	39	41
Sleeve length (cm)	40	40.5	41	41.5	42	42.5	43	43.5
Sleeve length (in.)	15¾	16	16¼	16¼	16½	16¾	17	17¼

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Interfacing



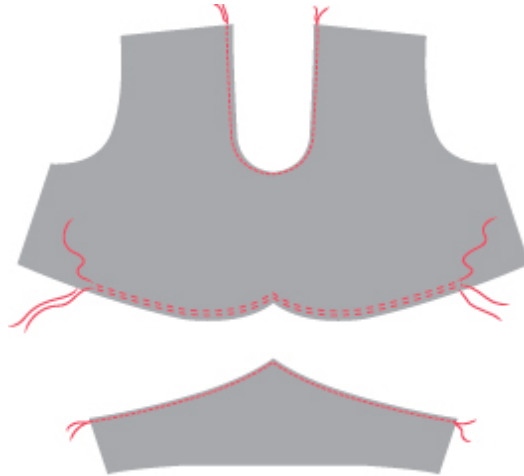
- 1** Tier 1 – cut 1 on the fold
- 2** Tier 2 – cut 2
- 3** Tier 3 – cut 2

- 4** Back waistband – cut 2
- 5** Back bodice – cut 2
- 6** Back facing – cut 2 in fabric and 2 in interfacing
- 7** Front bodice – cut 1 on the fold
- 8** Front facing – cut 1 on the fold in fabric and 1 on the fold in interfacing
- 9** Sleeve ties – cut 2 on the fold in fabric and 2 on the fold in interfacing
- 10** Sleeve – cut 2
- 11** Front waistband – cut 1 on the fold

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE THE PIECES

- 1** Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply interfacing to the wrong side of the sleeve ties and the front and back facings.
- 2** [Staystitch](#) the neckline on the front bodice and the top curved edge of the front waistband, 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) away from the raw edge. Run two lines of [gathering stitches](#) along each side of the bottom edge of the front bodice, in between the notches (under the bust). Stitch one line on the pattern line and one a foot's width inside the seam allowance.



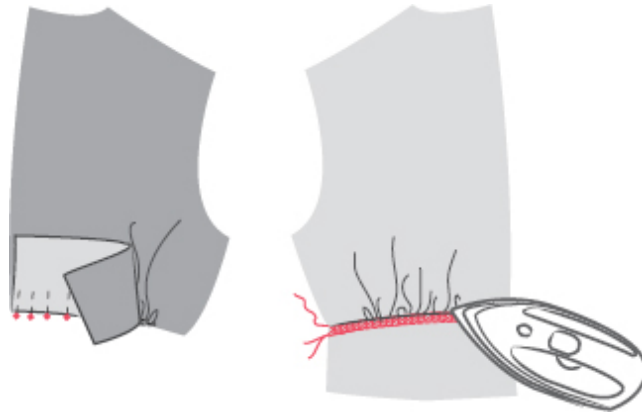
SEW THE BODICE

- 3** With right sides together, matching the notches, lay the front waistband on top of the front bodice. Snip into the V-shaped point of the bodice to be able to sew the pieces together neatly. Distribute the under-bust gathers evenly. Put in plenty of pins in to keep the curve under control and sew, pivoting at the centre point of the waistband. Overlock (serge) the seam allowances together at a foot's width, then press the seam down towards the waistband.

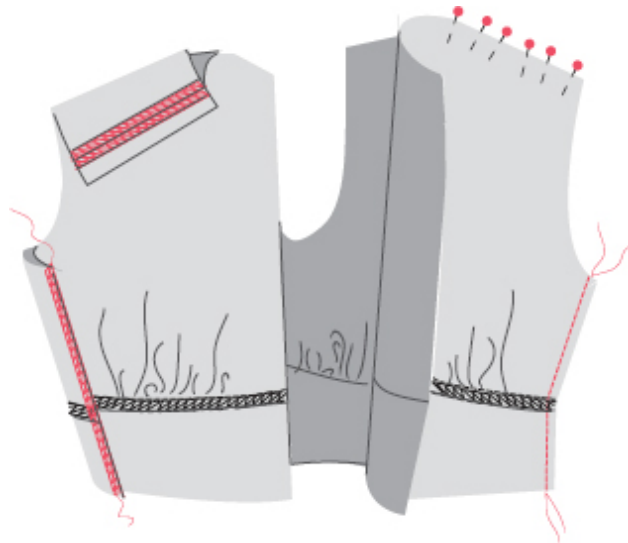


- 4** Sew two lines of gathering stitches on each of the back bodice pieces, in between the notches, as in step 2. With right sides together, matching the top edge of the waistband with the bottom edge of the bodice, lay the waistband back pieces on the bodice

back pieces. Draw up the gathers evenly, so that the notches on the waistband and bodice match. Pin in place, then sew. Overlock the seam allowances together at a foot's width, then press the seam down towards the waistband.

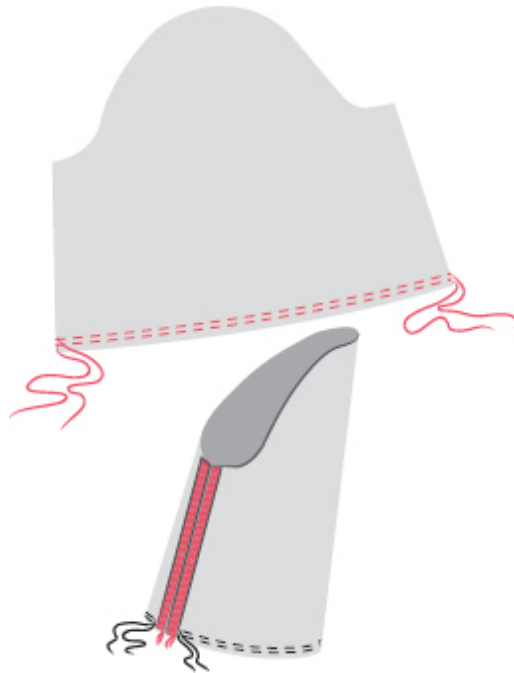


- 5** With right sides together, pin and sew the front and back bodices together along the shoulder and side seams. Press the shoulder seams open and overlock the seam allowances separately. Overlock the side seams together at a foot's width and press the seams towards the back bodice pieces.

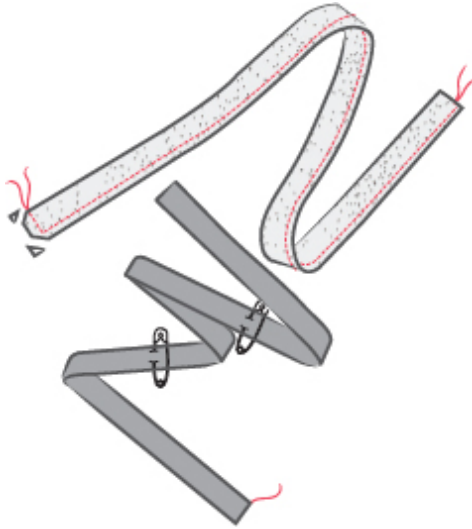


SEW THE SLEEVES

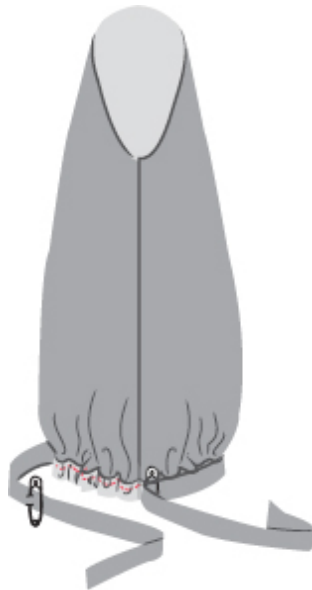
- 6** Sew two lines of gathering stitches along the hem edge of the sleeve, starting and finishing 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) from each end. With right sides together, pin and sew the underarm seam. Press the seam open and overlock or zigzag the seam allowances separately. Repeat for the other sleeve. Press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the right side of the sleeve all around the hem.



- 7** Fold the sleeve tie in half lengthways, right sides together. Sew along one short edge and the entire long edge, leaving one short edge open. Trim the seam allowance away from the corners and turn the tie right side out. Press. Press the seam allowances in at the remaining open side edge, then hand stitch to close. Refer to the paper pattern and mark the notches on the finished tie with two safety pins.

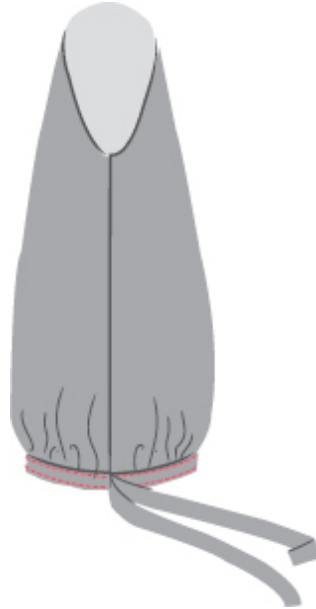


- 8** Gather up the sleeve hem so that it fits into the space between the notches on the sleeve tie. The two notches on the sleeve tie meet up at the underarm seam of the sleeve.



- 9** Pin the tie onto the sleeve hem, starting at one of the notches matching the underarm seam on the sleeve. You are pinning the finished tie onto the outside of the sleeve hem so that it covers the pressed-up hem allowance. Align the tie with the top of the hem allowance so that it covers it neatly. Pin the tie all around the sleeve hem so that the other notch on the tie matches up with the

underarm seam as well. You should have two free tails on your tie when you have done this. You can tack (baste) beforehand to make sure it's neat. [Topstitch](#), starting from the underarm seam and stitching as close to the edge of the tie as you can. Do a second line of topstitching 12 mm (½ in.) below this.

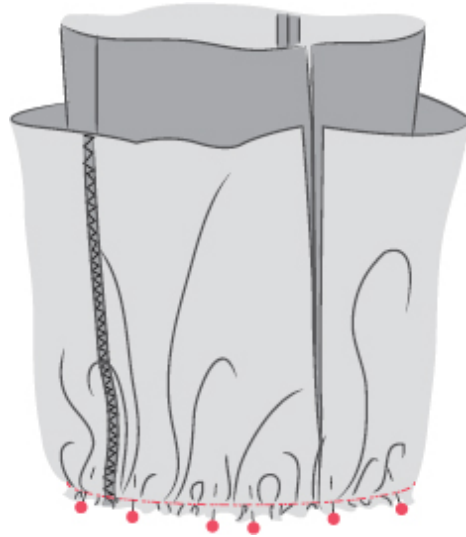


- 10** With right sides together, matching the notches, pin then [sew the sleeve](#) into the armhole. Overlock the seam allowances together at a foot's width and press the seam towards the bodice. Repeat with the second sleeve.

SEW THE SKIRT

- 11** With right sides together, pin and then sew the centre back seam of the first skirt tier from the zip notch to the bottom edge. Overlock or zigzag the edges, then press the seam allowances open. With right sides together, pin and sew the side seams of tier 2 together. Repeat for tier 3. Overlock or zigzag the seam allowances together, then press the seams towards the back. When each tier is a big circle, sew two lines of gathering stitches along the top of each tier – one on top of the pattern line and one within the seam allowance.

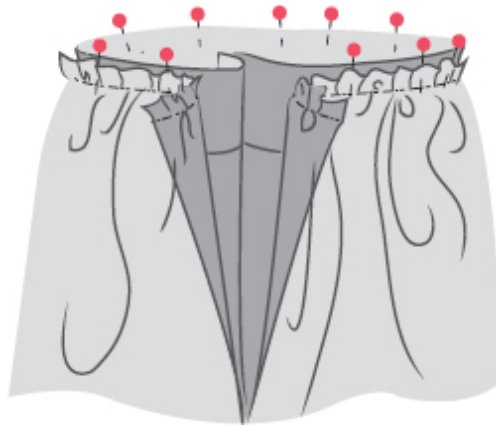
- 12** Pull the gathers on the top of the second tier skirt, making sure they are even all the way around. With right sides together, aligning the side seams and notches, pin the top of tier 2 to the bottom of tier 1. (Tier 2 will be lying upside down.) Sew, overlock or zigzag the seam allowances together at a foot's width and press the seam down towards the skirt.



- 13** Repeat step 12 to attach tier 2 to tier 3, then hem the skirt with a double 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) hem.

SEW THE SKIRT TO THE BODICE

- 14** Pull the gathers on the 1st tier, making sure the gathering is even all the way around. With right sides together, matching the notches, pin the top of the 1st tier to the bodice. Sew in place and overlock the seam allowances together at a foot's width. Press the seam down towards the skirt, making sure you don't flatten the gathers.



SEW THE ZIP

- 15** Overlock or zigzag the centre back edges of your bodice. You now have an open bodice back and the top part of the first skirt tier is also open. This is where your zip is going.
- 16** Insert an [invisible zip](#) in the centre back, making sure that the top of the zip (where the teeth begin) is 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) below the raw edge of the neckline.

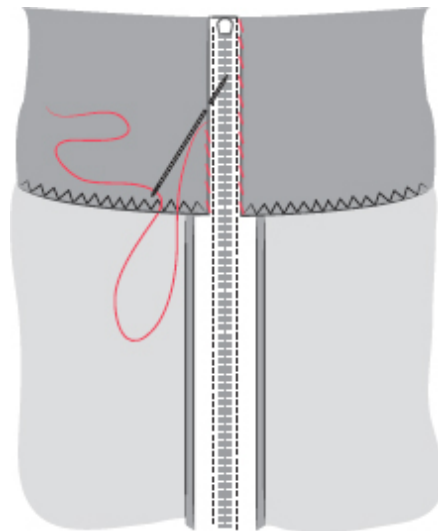
SEW THE FACING

- 17** With right sides together, pin and sew the front facing to the back facings along the shoulder seams. Press the seams open and overlock or zigzag the seam allowances separately. Overlock or zigzag the entire outer edge of the facing.
- 18** With right sides together, aligning the shoulder seams, pin and sew the facing to the neckline of the dress. Lower your stitch length to 2.5 so you can go neatly around the curve. Clip into the neck curve and trim the seam allowance to 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) to reduce bulk.



19 Turn the facing to the inside of the dress. [Understitch](#) the facing so that it stays neatly inside the dress.

20 Fold in the centre back edges of the facing along the zip and sew in place by hand.



21 Slipstitch the bottom of the front facing to the inside of the dress at the waistband, so that it stays in place. Also hand stitch the

facing to the garment's shoulder seam to keep it neatly inside the dress.









Wrap Dress

A wrap dress is one of my favourite wardrobe staples – suitable for all occasions, comfortable and flattering all at once. This is a good introduction to sewing with a knit fabric and a fun opportunity to play with colour or try a print. You could make the binding in a contrasting or matching colour to the main dress. It's great if you have an overlocker (serger) for this project, but you could do without.

Materials

- Sizes 8-14: 2.2 m (2½ yd) moderate stretch knit, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
Sizes 16-22: 2.8 m (3 yd) moderate stretch knit, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 4 m (4⅜ yd) ready-made stretch bias binding
- Matching sewing thread
- Ballpoint needle (optional)
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Beginner

Fabric suggestions

Light- to medium-weight jersey (avoid T-shirt weight).

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

If you have a 4-thread overlocker, you could overlock the main seams on the pattern line, instead of sewing first and then overlocking separately. If not, you can finish the seams by double stitching (using a straight stitch on the pattern line and then a small zigzag just inside the seam allowance) or stitch a narrow zigzag on the seam line and use the blade on the overlocker to cut the seam allowance short.

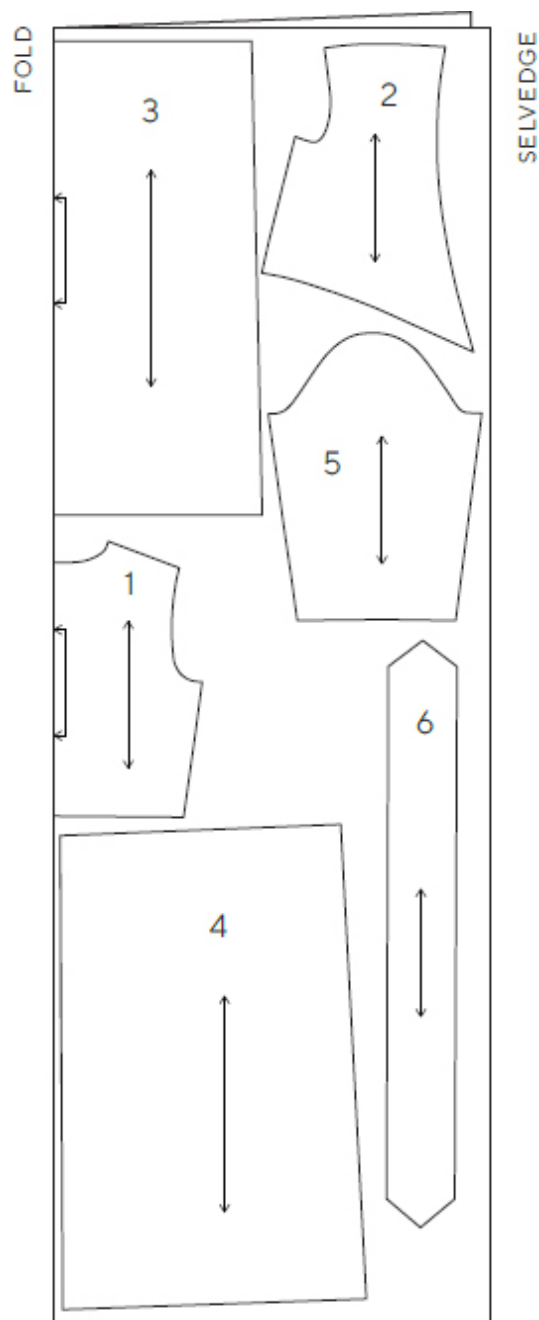
We made our sample two-tone by giving the back skirt pattern a centre seam.

The model is wearing the shorter hem length.

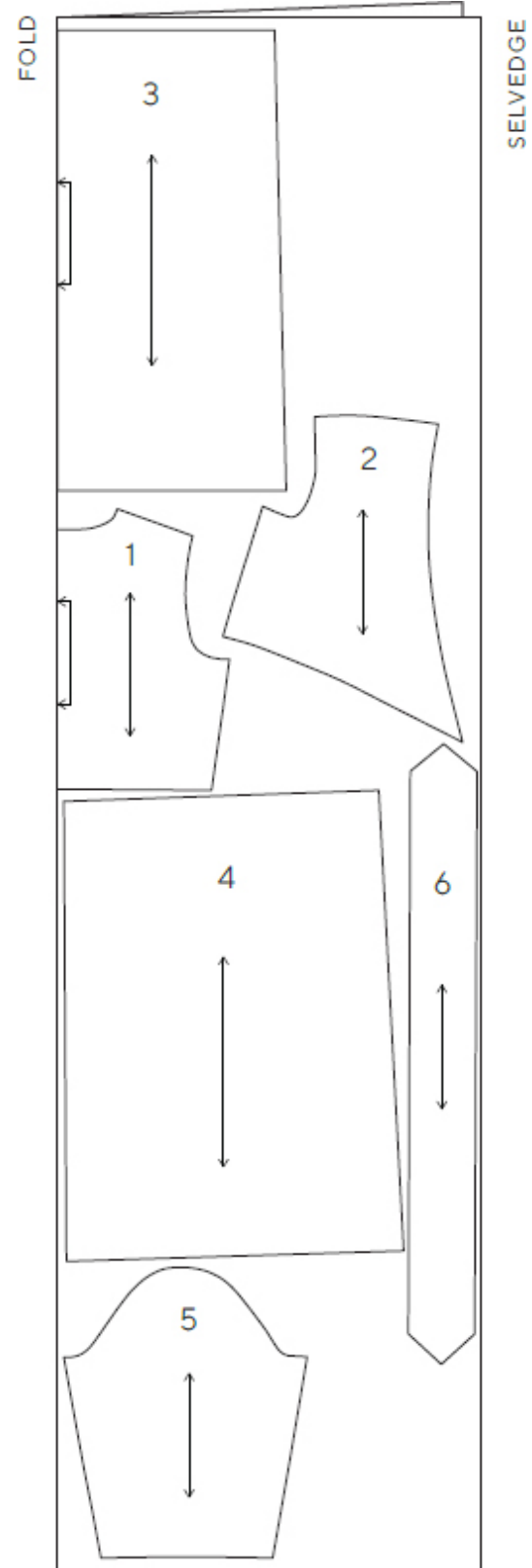
Finished measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	119	119.5	120	121	121.5	122	122.5	123
Front length (in.)	46 $\frac{3}{4}$	47	47 $\frac{1}{4}$	47 $\frac{1}{2}$	47 $\frac{3}{4}$	48	48 $\frac{1}{4}$	48 $\frac{1}{2}$
Bust (cm)	84.5	87	89.5	92	94.5	97	99.5	102
Bust (in.)	33 $\frac{3}{4}$	34 $\frac{1}{4}$	35 $\frac{1}{4}$	36 $\frac{1}{4}$	37 $\frac{1}{4}$	38	39	40
Waist (cm)	73.5	76	78.5	81	83.5	86	88.5	91
Waist (in.)	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Sleeve length (cm)	44.5	45	45.5	46	46.5	47	47.5	48
Sleeve length (in.)	17 $\frac{1}{2}$	17 $\frac{3}{4}$	18	18	18 $\frac{1}{4}$	18 $\frac{1}{2}$	18 $\frac{3}{4}$	19

CUTTING GUIDE

SIZES 8-14: 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



SIZES 16-22: 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric

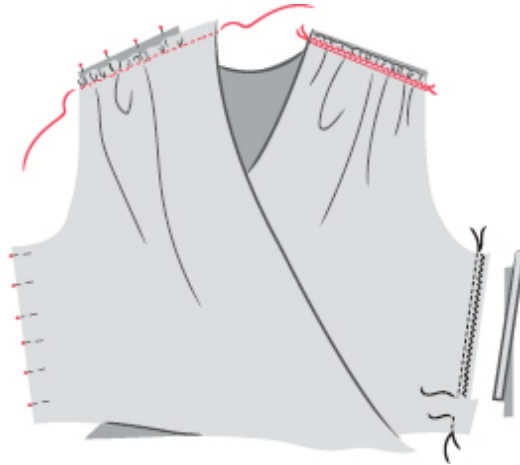


- 1** Back bodice – cut 1 on the fold
- 2** Front bodice– cut 2
- 3** Back skirt – cut 1 on the fold
- 4** Front skirt – cut 2
- 5** Sleeve – cut 2
- 6** Tie – cut 2

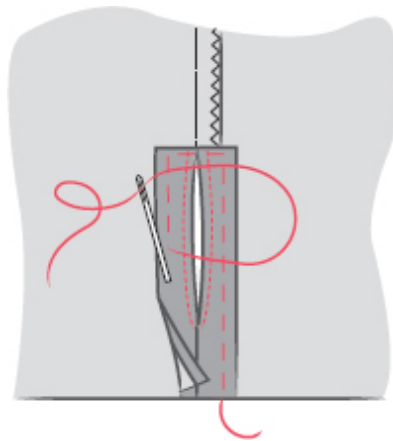
THE SEWING STARTS HERE

SEW THE BODICE

- 1** Machine two lines of [gathering stitches](#) on the front shoulders – one on top of the pattern line and the other just inside the seam allowance.
- 2** With right sides together, match and pin the front bodice pieces to the back bodice at the shoulder and side seams. Draw up the gathering stitches on the front shoulders to match the back. Double stitch the shoulder seams and the left side seam (see [Design Notes](#)) or stitch a narrow zigzag on the seam line and use the blade on the overlocker to cut the seam allowance short. On the right side seam, leave a gap in the seam between the large and small circles. Trim the right side seam above the large circle and all the other seams to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Press the seam allowances towards the back.



- 3** At the opening in the right side seam, press the unstitched section open, then turn the raw edges under and tack (baste) them in place. Machine stitch close to the edges of the gap and again close to the folded edge of the seam allowances. Remove the tacking.

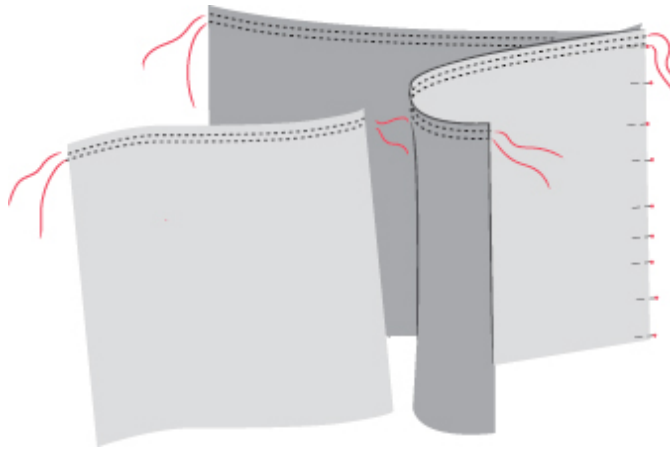


SEW THE SLEEVES

- 4** First, [staystitch](#) the raw edges of the armholes. With right sides together, sew up the sleeve underarm seams and finish the seam allowances. [Insert the sleeves](#) and stitch in place using double-stitched seams. Finish the lower edge of each sleeve with a narrow [double hem](#).

SEW THE SKIRT

- 5** Just as you did with the front bodice, sew two lines of gathering stitches on the front and back skirts – one on top of the pattern line and one inside the seam allowance.
- 6** With right sides together, match the skirt front pieces to the skirt back piece and pin the side seams. Double stitch or overlock (serge). If you have double stitched, trim the seam allowances to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and press them towards the back.



SEW THE BODICE TO THE SKIRT

- 7** With right sides together, pin the bodice to the skirt, drawing up the gathers from step 5 to match the notches. Adjust the ease and pin in place with plenty of pins. Double stitch or overlock the seam. If you have double stitched, trim the seam allowance to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and press it towards the bodice.



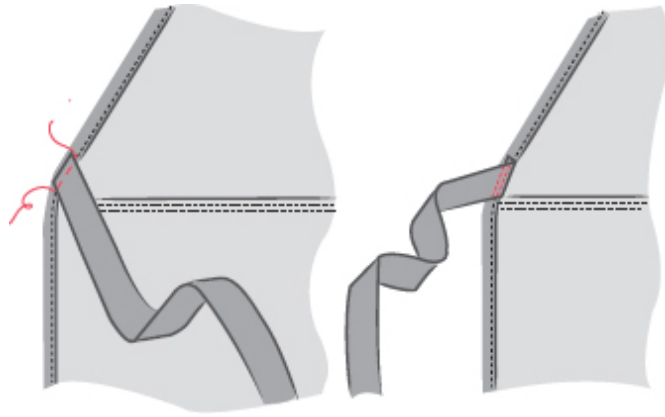
FINISHING TOUCHES

- 8** Apply **bias binding** to the raw edges of the dress front, starting at the centre back and working around the neckline and down one side of the centre front opening to the hemline, and then returning to the centre back and working down the other side in the same way. Be careful not to overstretch the fabric as you bind the edges and don't pull it as it passes through the feed dogs.
- 9** With right sides together, fold the ties in half lengthways. Stitch along the long side and one short side. Trim the seams, turn the ties right side out and press. Tack (baste) across the other short end of each tie.



- 10** Pin the tacked ends of the ties to the front bodice on the wrong side of the dress, one on each side, matching the circles and

aligning the end of the tie with the inner edge of the bias binding. Tack and then stitch in place. Fold each tie back on itself to conceal the stitch line and topstitch close to the outer edge of the bias binding.



- 11** Make a narrow double hem along the lower edge of the dress. Tack, then stitch, taking care not to overstretch the fabric as you go.

NOTE

You can also make your own binding from the dress fabric (see [here](#)). You'll need about 0.5 m (20 in.) more fabric.





Colour block dress

This dress is for those special moments! The colour-block design is inspired by artists and designers from the past, and the length is a 1960s-style mini length. There's an invisible zip in the back and delicate puff sleeves to finish off your party look.

Materials

In total, the dress needs approx. 2 m (2 $\frac{1}{8}$ yd) of fabric.

- 1.4 m (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ yd) white fabric (panels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)
- 0.7 m ($\frac{3}{4}$ yd) red fabric (panels 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12)
- 0.5 m ($\frac{5}{8}$ yd) pink fabric (panels 10 and 11)
- 30 cm (12 in.) interfacing, if using a woven fabric
- 55-cm (22-in.) invisible zip
- 1 m (1 yd) elastic, 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) wide
- Matching sewing thread
- Invisible zip foot
- Ballpoint needle, if using a knit fabric
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

This pattern works best in a fabric with a bit of weight, such as ponte de roma, crepe, lightweight wool.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

Cut all the front pieces except panel 3 (the second front yoke panel) with both the fabric and the pattern piece right side up. Number each piece with a chalk pencil on the back so that you can easily identify them when you put them together.

Press all seams before sewing over them again.

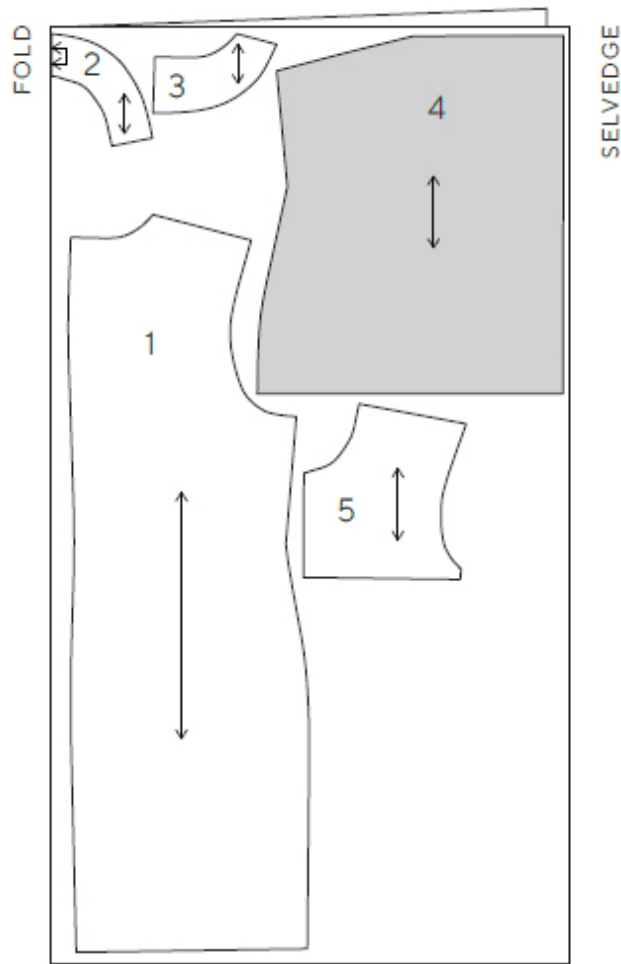
If you are using a woven fabric for this pattern, apply a lightweight, iron-on interfacing to the neckline facing.

You can choose as many different colours as you like for the smaller blocks. We picked a background colour and two bright colours for our sample (made in Ponte di Roma).

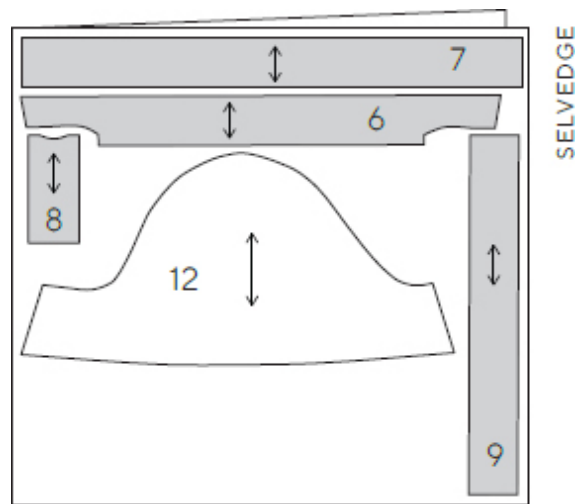
Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	102	102.5	103.5	104	104.5	105	105.5	106.5
Front length (in.)	40	40¼	40¾	41	41¼	41½	41¾	42
Bust (cm)	92.5	97.5	102.5	107.5	112.5	117.5	122.5	127.5
Bust (in.)	36½	38½	40½	42½	44¼	46¼	48¼	50¼
Waist (cm)	83.5	88.5	93.5	98.5	103.5	108.5	113.5	118.5
Waist (in.)	33	35	37	38¾	40¾	42¾	44¾	46¾
Hip (cm)	102	107	112	117	122	127	132	137
Hip (in.)	40	42	44	46	48	50	52	54

CUTTING GUIDE

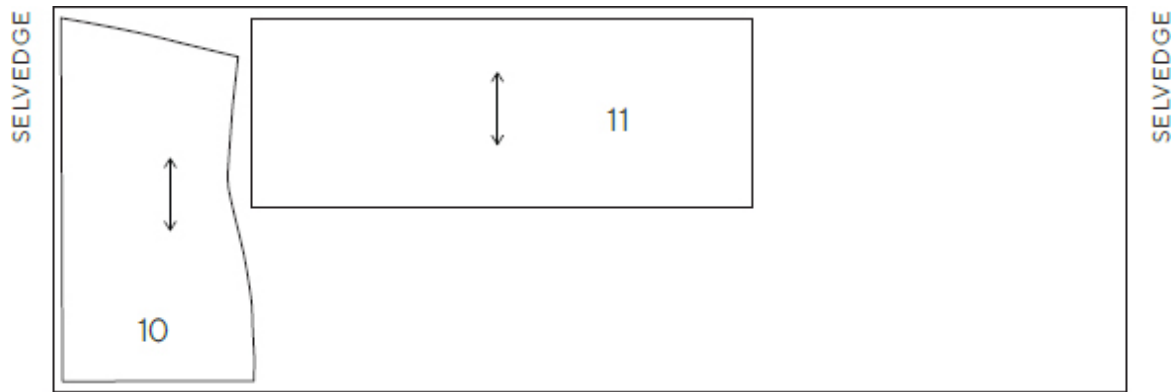
ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide white fabric



ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide red fabric



ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide pink fabric



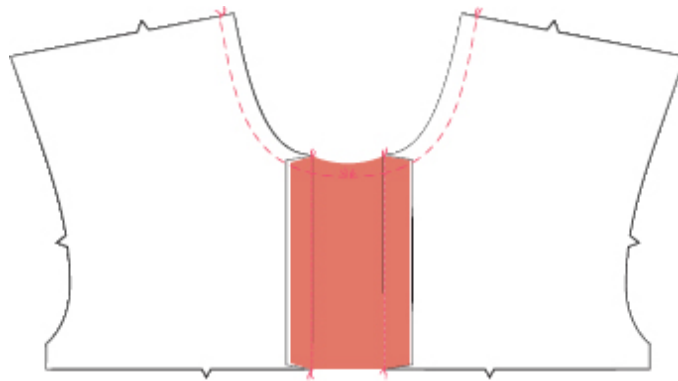
- 1** Back – cut 2
- 2** Front facing – cut 1 on the fold
- 3** Back facing – cut 2
- 4** Right front (panel 5) – cut 1
- 5** Front yoke (panels 1 and 3) – cut 2
- 6** Top band (panel 4) – cut 1
- 7** Lower front band (panel 8) – cut 1
- 8** Centre front (panel 2) – cut 1
- 9** Front band (panel 6) – cut 1
- 10** Left front (panel 7) – cut 1
- 11** Lower front (panel 9) – cut 1
- 12** Sleeve – cut 2

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

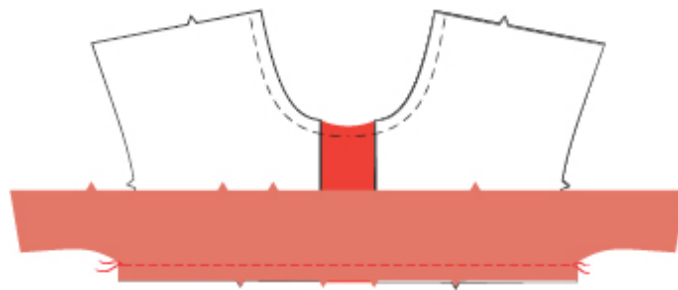
MAKE UP THE DRESS FRONT

- 1** With right sides together, matching all notches, pin and stitch panels 1, 2 and 3 together. Press the seams towards the sides.

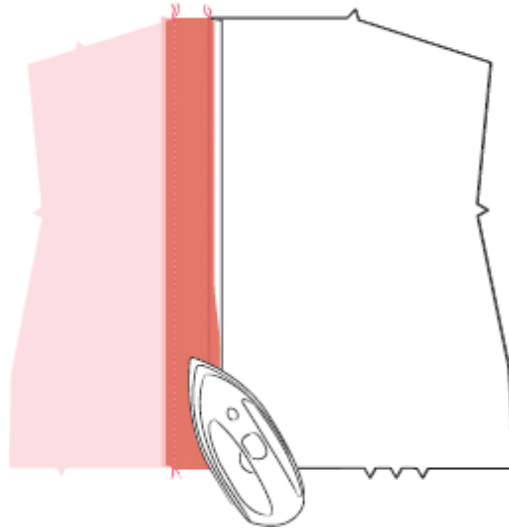
Staystitch the neckline with a 2.5 stitch length, sewing from the side edges to the centre. This completes the yoke section.



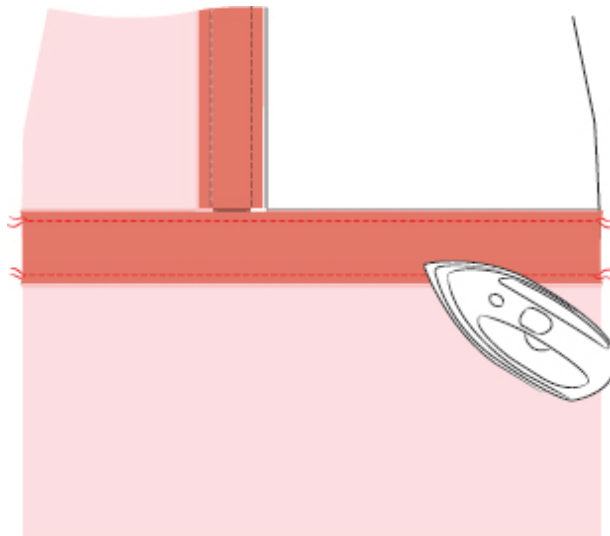
- 2** With right sides together, matching all notches, pin and stitch front panel 4 to the bottom of the yoke section. Press the seam down towards the hem.



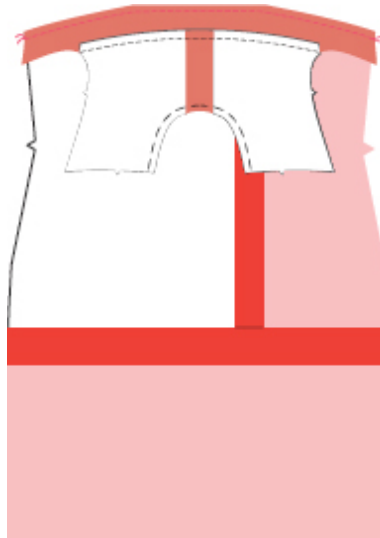
- 3** With right sides together, matching all notches, pin and stitch front panels 5, 6 and 7 together. Press the seams towards the sides. This completes the mid section of the dress.



- 4** With right sides together, matching all notches, pin and stitch front panel 8 to the bottom edge of the mid section, then pin and stitch front panel 9 to the bottom edge of front panel 8. Press the top seam up and the bottom seam down, towards the hem. This completes the lower front section of the dress.



- 5** With right sides together, pin and stitch the yoke section to the lower front section. Press the seam towards the hem.



SEW THE BACK DARTS

- 6 Following your pattern, fold, pin and sew the double-ended (or fish-eye) **darts** in the back. Press the darts towards the side seams.

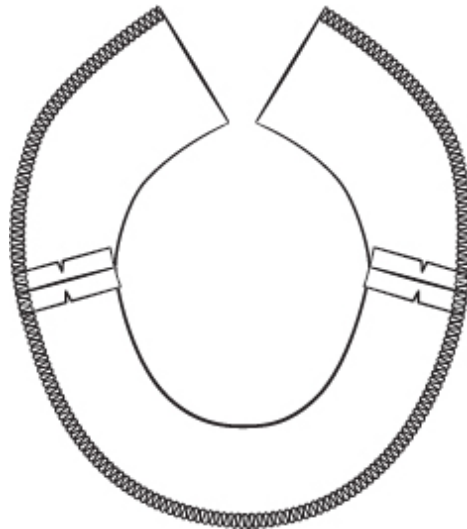


SEW THE FRONT TO THE BACK

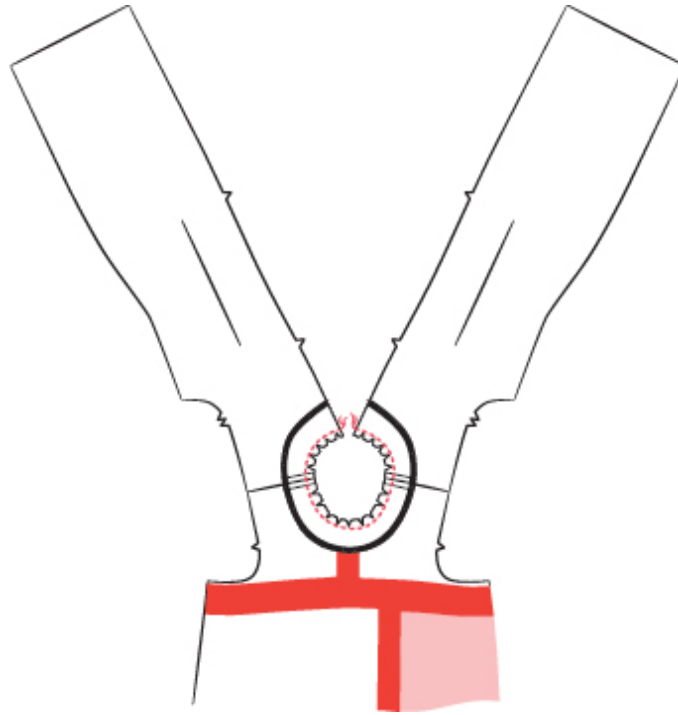
- 7 With right sides together, pin and stitch the front to the back at the shoulders. Press the seams open.

SEW THE NECKLINE FACING

- 8** With right sides together, pin the front and back neckline facings together at the shoulders. Press the seam allowances open. Hem the facing by overlocking (serging) or zigzagging all around the outside edge.



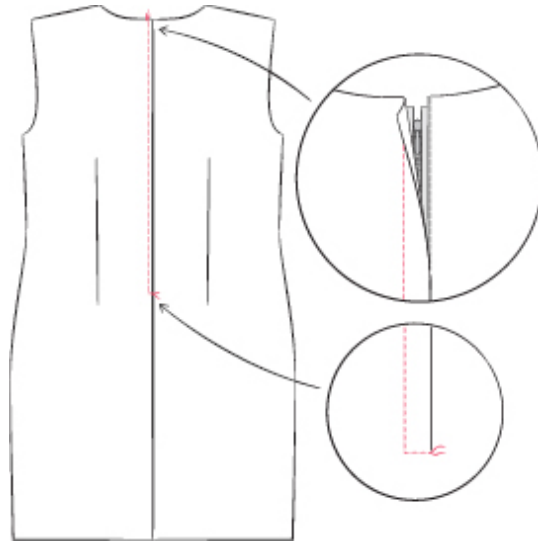
- 9** Lay the dress flat, with the right side facing up. Lay the facing right side down on top, matching up the raw edges of the neckline and the shoulder seams. Pin, then sew around the neckline on a 2.5 stitch length. Clip the seam allowances to allow the curves to sit flat when turned right side out.



10 Press the seam allowances towards the facing and [understitch](#) around the neckline. Then turn the facing to the inside of the dress and carefully press all around the neckline. Secure the facing by hand stitching the shoulder of the facing to the shoulder of the dress (or [machine stitch in the ditch](#) – from the right side of the dress).

SEW THE BACK ZIP

11 Neaten the raw edges of the centre back pieces and press. Lay the zip on the dress, with the top of the teeth 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) from the raw edge, then mark the zip stop position – where the zip stops – in the seam allowance. Remove the zip. With right sides together, pin and stitch the two back pieces, stitching with a long tacking (basting) stitch from the neck down to the zip stop mark, then change the stitch length to normal and sew the rest of the seam to the hem. Press the back seam open. Insert a [lapped zip](#).

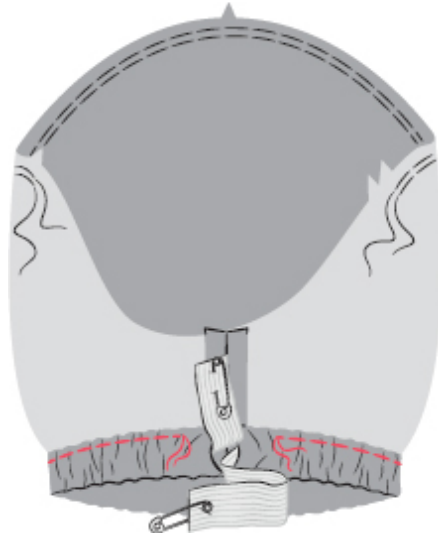


SEW THE SIDE SEAMS

- 12** With the dress inside out, pin and stitch the side seams. Press the seams open. If you have a fabric that frays, neaten the seam allowances.

SEW THE SLEEVES

- 13** Work two rows of [gathering stitches](#) around the sleeve head of each sleeve – one stitch line on the pattern line and one a foot's width inside the seam allowance. Stitch from notch to notch. You will use these to gather up the puff sleeve into the armhole.
- 14** With right sides together, pin and sew the underarm seams. Press the seam, then neaten the seam allowances if needed.
- 15** Make a double hem by pressing up 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and then 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side. Sew all around each sleeve hem close to the inner folded edge, leaving a gap of about 3 cm (just over 1 in.) for the elastic. Pin a safety pin to the end of the elastic, then feed it all the way through the channel.



16 Try the sleeve on to determine the length of the elastic. When you're happy with the fit of it, overlap the ends of elastic and zigzag to secure. Poke the elastic all the way into the channel and sew the gap closed.

17 Matching the underarm seam to the side seam of the dress, insert your [sleeves](#), pulling up the gathering threads in the sleeve head so that it fits the armhole. Finish all the seam allowances of the armhole together, then press the seam allowances towards the sleeve.

HEM THE DRESS

18 Make a double-turned hem by pressing 6 mm (1/4 in.) and then 2.5 cm (1 in.) to the wrong side. Machine in place close to the inner folded edge.

TIP

If you have used a fabric that will fray, neaten all the seam allowances at the end of steps 1–5 and step 7.

TIP

For a sleeveless dress, ignore sleeve steps 13–17 and instead finish the armhole with [bias binding](#). Go to step 18 to finish your dress.

TIP

Pin both ends of the elastic to the sleeve to stop it pinging back into the channel while you try on the sleeve.









Culottes

These high-waisted culottes are an everyday staple. You can make this pattern in the mid-calf length or as a pair of shorts. They both have a little waistband that fastens on the side seam with a zip and a hook-and-bar fastener. Depending on your fabric choice, culottes can be worn to the office, on holiday, and everywhere in between. Vary the look for either length by adding a [hem frill](#).

Materials

- For the mid-calf length: Sizes 8-14: 1.7 m (1 $\frac{7}{8}$ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
Sizes 16-22: 2 m (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- For the shorts: All sizes: 1.5 m (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 1 m (1 $\frac{1}{8}$ yd) lightweight iron-on interfacing
- 18-cm (7-in.) invisible zip
- Hook-and-bar fastener
- Matching sewing thread
- Invisible zip foot

- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Beginner

Fabric suggestions

Cotton, lightweight denim, viscose, linen.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

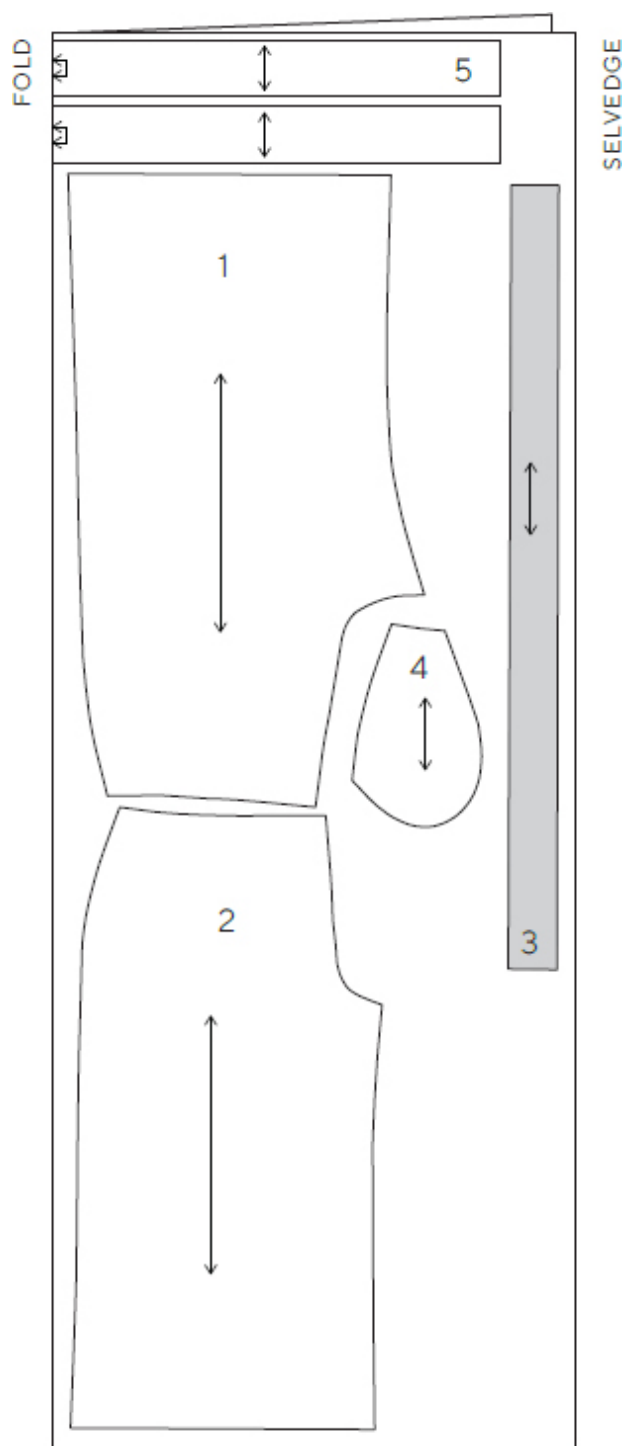
Make the pocket bag in a lightweight fabric for a smoother finish. If you make it in the top fabric it might be a bit bulky and show on the outside of the garment.

There is a pattern piece for an optional hem frill to add a playful detail to your hem. You can add this to both length options.

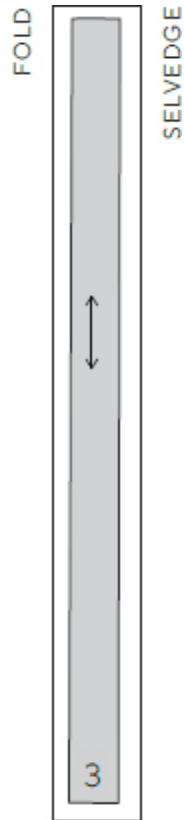
Finished measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Inseam - long (cm)	58	58	58	58	58	58	58	58
Inseam - long (in.)	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
Inseam - short (cm)	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
Inseam - short (in.)	11½	11½	11½	11½	11½	11½	11½	11½
Waist (cm)	72	77	82	87	92	97	102	107
Waist (in.)	28½	30½	32¼	34¼	36¼	38	40	42
Hip (cm)	101	106	111	116	121	126	131	136
Hip (in.)	39¾	41¾	43¾	45¾	47¾	49½	51½	53½

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Interfacing

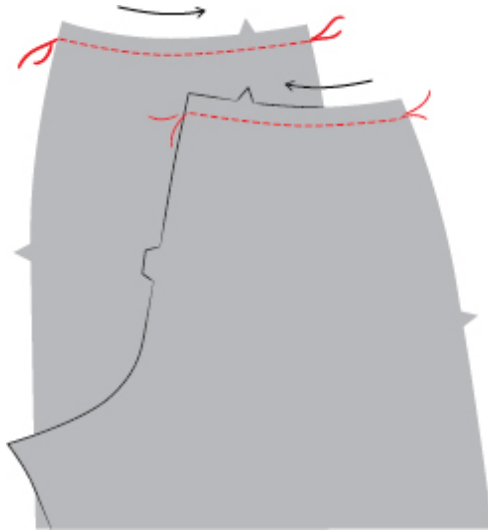


- 1** Back – cut 2
- 2** Front – cut 2
- 3** Waistband – cut 1 in fabric and 1 in interfacing
- 4** Pocket (optional) – cut 2
- 5** Hem frill (optional) – cut 2 on the fold

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

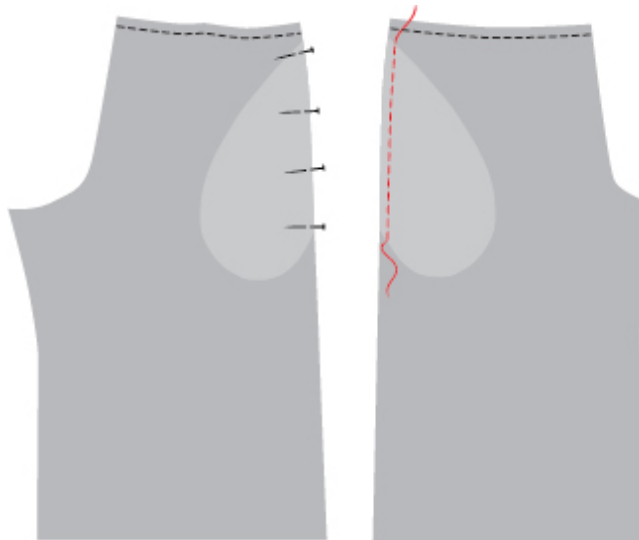
STAYSTITCH

- 1** [Staystitch](#) the upper edge of the front and back pieces 13 mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in.) from the edge, stitching with a regular 2.5 stitch length just inside the seam allowance and stitching from the outer edge to the centre each time.

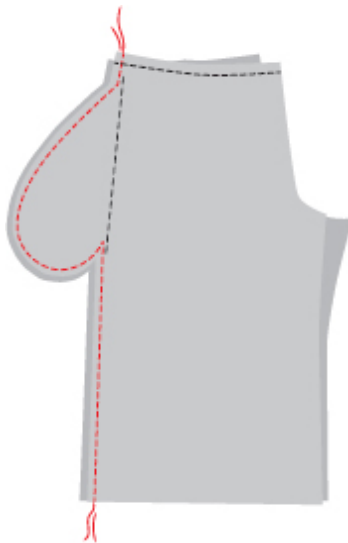


OPTIONAL: SEW THE POCKET

- 2** On the right leg side seam, mark the position of the top of the pocket 3 cm (1¼ in.) below the top edge.
- 3** With right sides together and the straight edge of the pocket along the raw edge of the garment, pin one pocket piece in place. Sew in place along the seam line. Repeat on the back garment section.



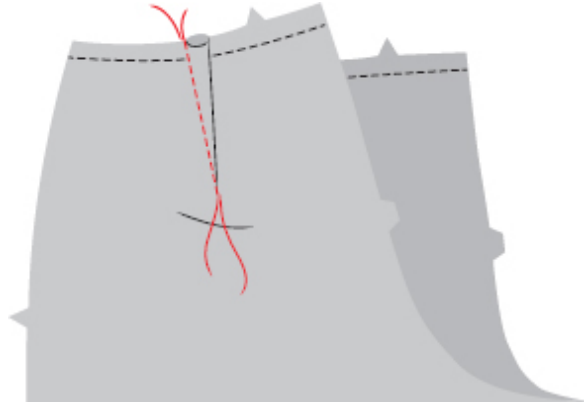
- 4** Press the pocket pieces away from the garment along the stitching. Then place the back and front of the garment right sides together, matching up the pockets. Pin the side seams and the pocket (which extends beyond the garment). Stitch the garment seam, pivoting at the top of the pocket to continue around the pocket bag, and pivoting again to continue down the garment seam.



- 5** Neaten the raw edges of the pocket with a zigzag stitch or overlocker (serger). Snip into the seam allowance at the top and bottom pivot points and press the pocket towards the front of the garment.

SEW THE DARTS AND ZIP

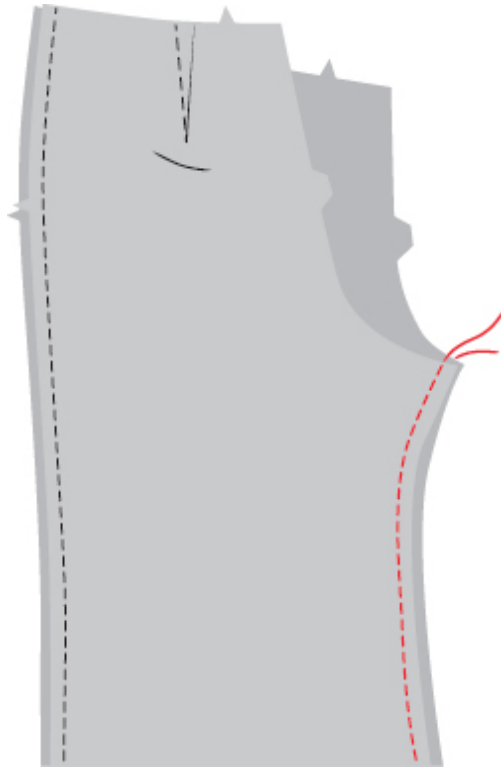
- 6** Fold the waist darts on the back trouser legs by folding the fabric right sides together, matching the dart markings. Tack (baste) then stitch from the top edge, tapering to the fold of the fabric at the tip and taking the last two or three stitches right on the fold. Do not backstitch; instead, leave thread tails and tie off the ends. Press the darts towards the centre back.



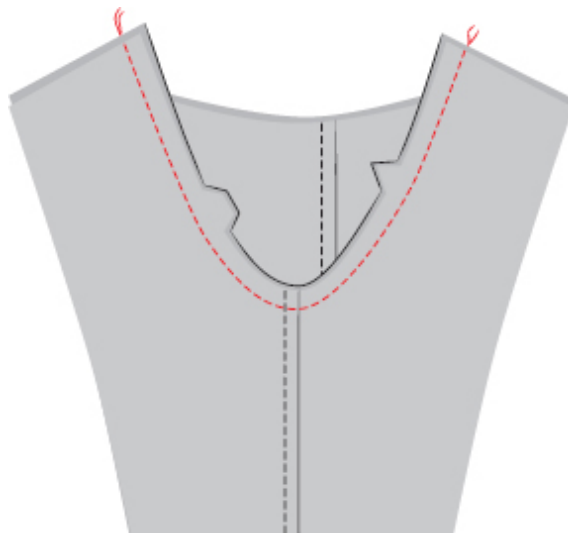
- 7** Pin the left front and back trouser legs right sides together, matching the notches. Insert the **invisible zip** into the side seam, with the top of the zip teeth 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) from the top of the waist.

SEW THE TROUSER LEGS

- 8** Pin the remaining side seam below the zip. Position the regular zip foot to the left of the foot holder, so that the needle will go down through the outer notch of the foot, and start stitching 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) above the zip stitching and very slightly to the left. Stitch down to the hem, then press the seam open.
- 9** Matching the notches, pin and stitch the front to the back at the inside leg seam, easing the back leg into the front leg. Press the seam open. Repeat for the other leg.

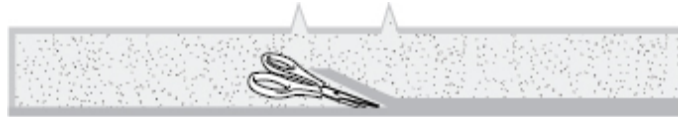


- 10** Turn one leg right side out and slip it inside the other, so the right sides are together, matching the inner leg seams, notches and raw edges. Pin, then stitch the crotch seam, then stitch over the first stitching again to reinforce the seam. Trim the seam allowance and neaten the raw edges. Press the seam open and turn the culottes right side out.

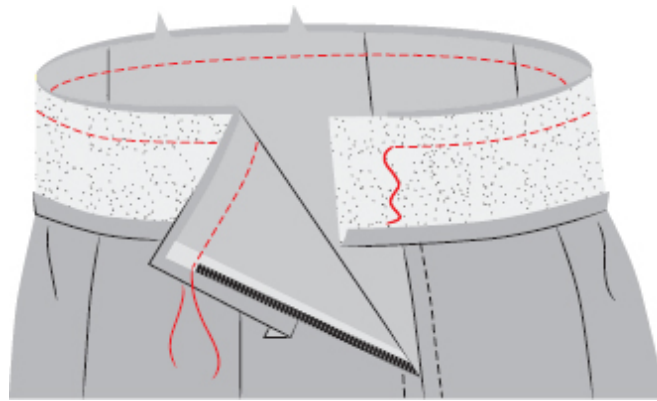


ATTACH THE WAISTBAND

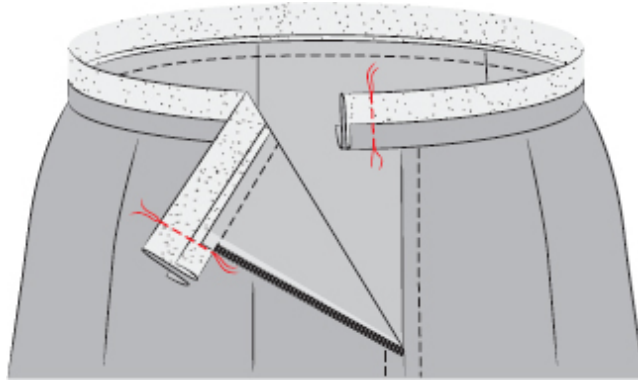
- 11** Trim the interfacing all the way around by 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and then centre it on the wrong side of the waistband and fuse it in place. Once cool, turn under the seam allowance on the long, un-notched edge of the waistband. Press and trim the seam allowance to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.).



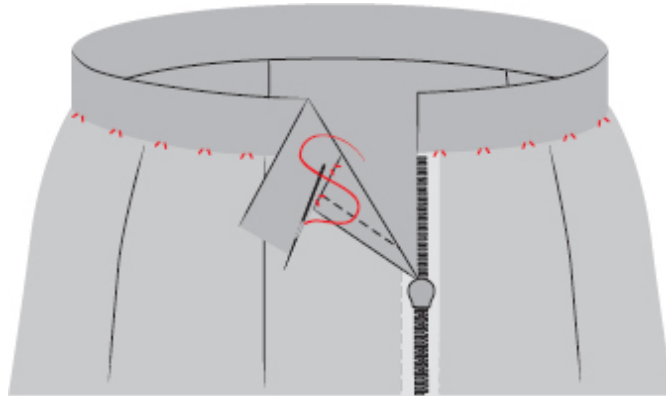
- 12** With right sides together, matching the notches to the seams and the large dots to the waistband opening edges, pin the waistband to the upper edge of the garment. (Note that the front will be longer than the back.) Stitch, trim the seam allowance and press the waistband and seam allowance up.



- 13** With right sides together, fold the waistband in half widthways. Stitch across the short ends and trim the seam allowance.

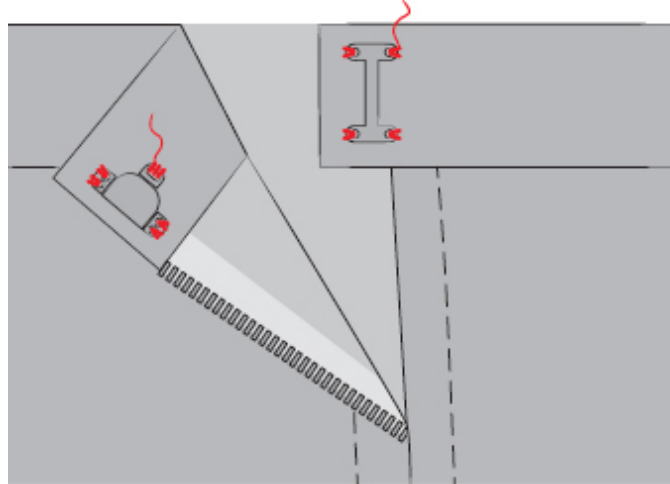


- 14** Turn the waistband right side out and press, pushing the corners out with a point turner to get a crisp end. Slipstitch the pressed edge over the seam and slipstitch the extension edges together.



FINISHING TOUCHES

- 15** Sew a trouser hook and bar on the waistband.



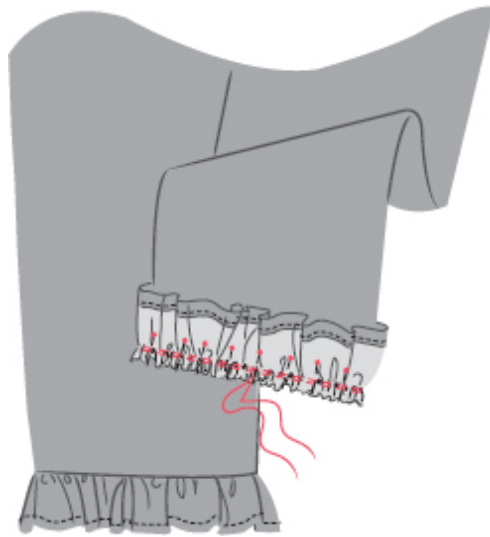
- 16** Overlock or zigzag the culotte hem (if you don't have a frill) and turn it up the correct length. Slipstitch the hem in place, or blind hem by hand or by machine.

VARIATION: CULOTTES WITH HEM FRILL

For a fun and versatile variation, why not add a simple hem frill? As with the main project, you can use either the longer or the shorter cutting line on the pattern; here, we've shown a frill on the longer version. Just follow the instructions for the main pattern and add the hem frill after step 15, following the steps below.

- 1** Fold the frill in half widthways, right sides together, and sew the short ends together. Neaten the seam allowances and press to one side. Your frill is now a big circle.
- 2** Pick a side to form the hem of your frill. Neaten the seam allowance on this side, then press up 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side. Pin and sew in place.
- 3** Sew two rows of [gathering stitches](#) on the unhemmed side of the frill – one on the pattern line and the other just inside the seam allowance.

- 4** Matching the raw edges, lay the hem frill on the raw edge of the culottes, right sides together. (The frill will be lying upside down.) Match the seam in your frill to the inside leg seam. Draw up the gathering stitches until the frill matches the culotte hem. Stitch in place and overlock the seam allowances short. Press the seam allowances up inside the leg of the culottes. Repeat these steps with the second hem frill and culotte leg.











Men's cargo shorts

These classic men's shorts feature pleated cargo pockets, side-seam pockets and a fly front zip, so there are lots of trouser elements that are suitable for a more skilled maker. The shorts are suitable for a range of fabrics – just bear in mind that you want the fabric to be completely opaque, so check carefully if you are using a linen or linen blend.

Materials

- 1.4 m (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 50 cm (20 in.) lightweight cotton lining for the pocket bags
- 50 cm (20 in.) light- to medium-weight iron-on interfacing
- 18-cm (7-in.) trouser zip
- Five buttons, 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) in diameter
- Co-ordinating sewing thread
- Zip foot
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Advanced

Fabric suggestions

Cotton, linen blend, denim, cotton twill.

Design notes

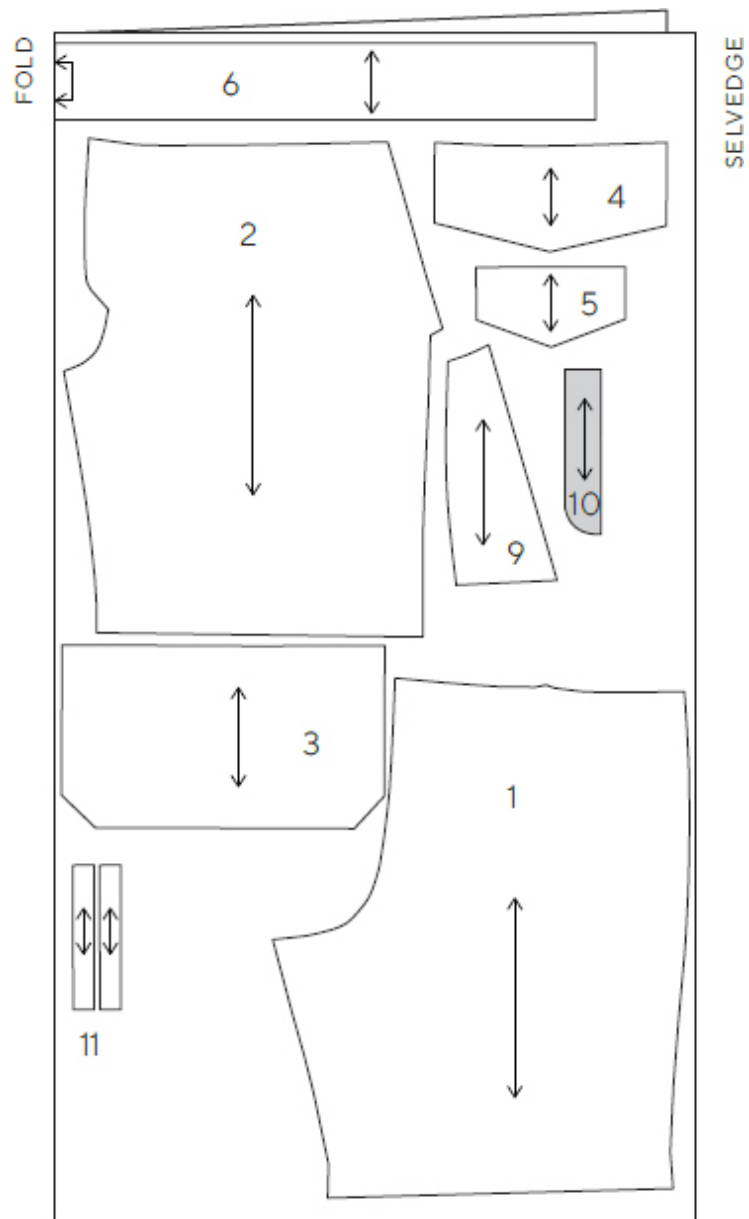
Use a 1.5-cm (5⁄8-in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

This project has buttonholes, so you will need a sewing machine that can make these.

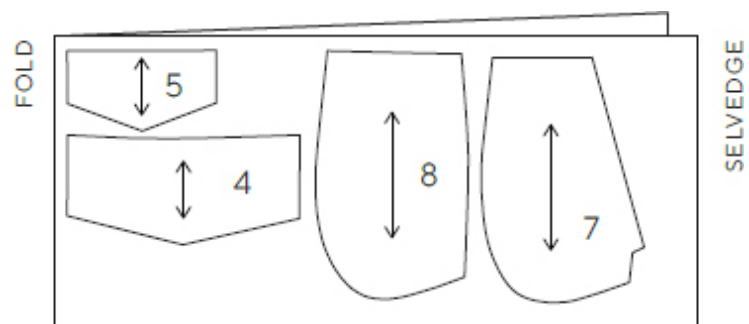
Finished garment measurements	34	36	38	40	42	44
Inseam (cm)	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5
Inseam (in.)	10	10	10	10	10	10
Waist (cm)	49.5	52	54.5	57	59.5	62
Waist (in.)	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½
Hip (cm)	56.5	59	61.5	64	66.5	69
Hip (in.)	22¼	23¼	24¼	25¼	26¼	27¼

CUTTING GUIDE

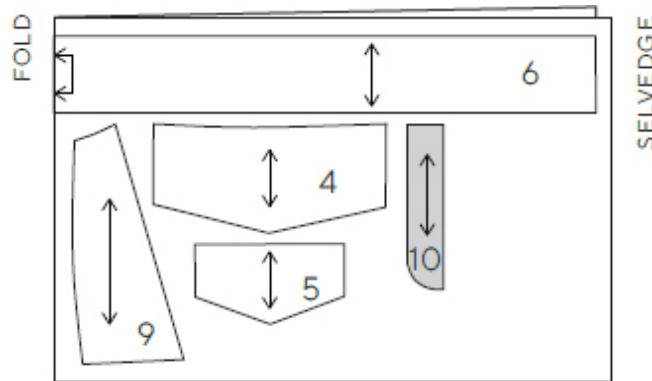
ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Cotton lining



Interfacing



- 1** Back – cut 2
- 2** Front – cut 2
- 3** Patch pocket – cut 2
- 4** Patch pocket flap (large) – cut 2 in fabric, 2 in interfacing and 2 in cotton lining
- 5** Patch pocket flap (small) – cut 2 in fabric, 2 in interfacing and 2 in cotton lining
- 6** Waistband – cut 1 on the fold in fabric, 1 on the fold in interfacing
- 7** Upper pocket bag – cut 2 in cotton lining
- 8** Lower pocket bag – cut 2 in cotton lining
- 9** Lower pocket facing – cut 2 in fabric, 2 in interfacing
- 10** Fly shield – cut 1 in fabric, 1 in interfacing
- 11** Belt loops – cut 4

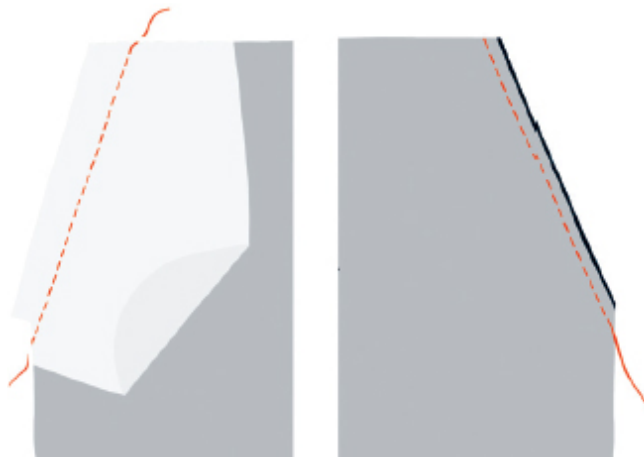
THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE AND INSERT THE ZIP

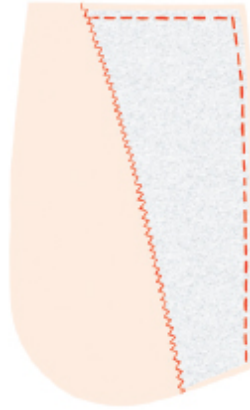
- 1** Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply light- to medium-weight fusible interfacing to the wrong side of the fly shield, waistband, the lower pocket facing and the four pocket flaps. Apply a 2.5-cm (1-in.) strip of interfacing to the slanted front pocket openings. Overlock (serge) the raw edges of the four main leg pieces.

SEW THE POCKETS

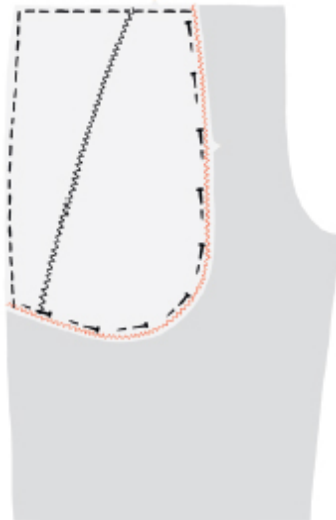
- 2** With right sides together, matching the notches, stitch the upper pocket bag to the front of the shorts along the slanted side seam. Press the seam open, then turn the pocket bag over to the wrong side of the shorts along the seam line and press. **Topstitch** in place 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) from the slanted edge.



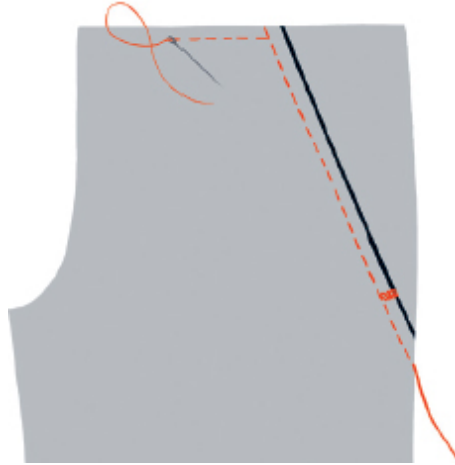
- 3** Working with right sides facing up, matching the notches, lay the lower pocket facing on the lower pocket bag. Zigzag along the slanted edge, then tack (baste) the sides. You'll now use this as one piece.



- 4** Lay the front of the shorts right side down. Lay the lower pocket bag over the upper pocket bag, also right side down. Line up the notches at the side seam and waist. Pin the upper and lower pocket bags together from the waistline around the curved edge of the pocket bag to the side seam. Stitch in place and neaten the raw edges.



- 5** Working from the right side, tack the slanted pocket opening to the lower pocket bag. This stops the opening from stretching as the shorts are made. Pin all the layers together at the side seam. Tack the shorts to the pocket bag at the side seam and the waist. Add a bar tack to the bottom of the pocket opening to strengthen.

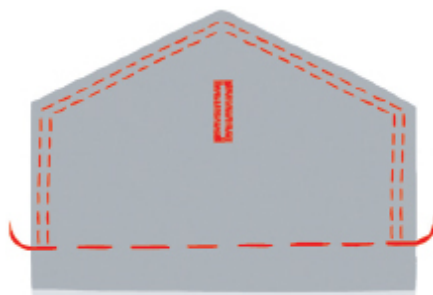


SEW THE DARTS

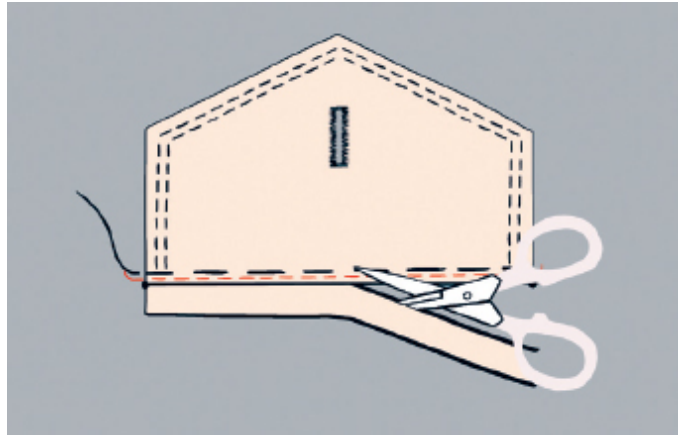
- 6** Sew the [darts](#) in the back pieces. Press the darts towards the side seams. [Topstitch](#) the darts in place from the right side.

SEW THE POCKET FLAPS

- 7** These shorts have two faux pockets at the back and two pleated side cargo patch pockets with pocket flaps. The process for making all four flaps is the same. With right sides together, pin the pocket flaps to the lining pieces and machine around the two short sides and the shaped edge. Trim the seam allowances. Turn the flaps right side out and press well. Work two rows of topstitching around the same three sides. Machine tack the top edge of the flaps. Add a [buttonhole](#) to the peak of each pocket flap.



- 8** With right sides together, line up the straight edge of the two smaller flaps on the back trouser pieces along the marked position line. The pocket flap will be pointing upwards. Machine in place. Trim the seam allowances, then press the flaps downwards and topstitch along the fold to hold in place.



- 9** Insert the [zip fly](#).

SEW THE SIDE SEAMS

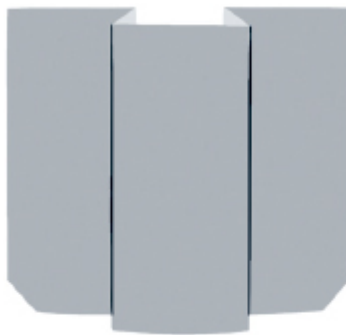
- 10** With right sides together, pin the front to the back at the side seams and machine stitch. Overlock or zigzag the seam allowances together and press towards the back.



11 Working from the right side, topstitch the side seams.

MAKE THE PLEATED CARGO PATCH POCKET

12 With the right side of the pocket facing upwards, make a box pleat in the middle: fold along one of the inner pleat lines and then fold towards the outer pleat line, then repeat this on the other half of the pocket, making a mirrored pleat. Tack, then press the pleat in place.



13 Press the seam allowance around the sides and lower edges of the pocket to the wrong side. Press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) and then a further 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side at the top edge, then machine in place.

14 Position the cargo patch pocket right side up on the placement marks over the side seam. Pin and tack in place. Stitch in place around the sides and bottom edges with a double row of topstitching. Repeat steps 12–14 to make and attach the second cargo pocket to the opposite side.

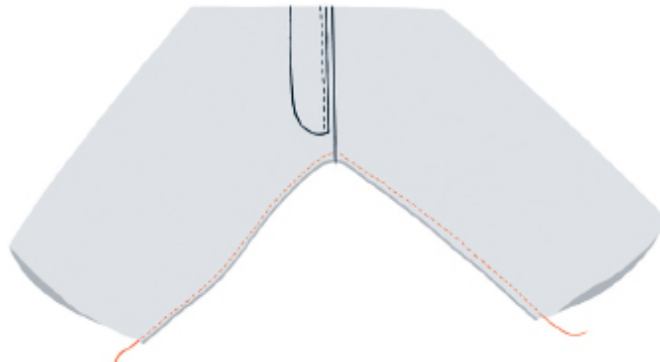
15 Line up the large pocket flaps with the tops of the pockets and attach them in the same way as the two faux back pocket flaps.

SEW THE BACK CROTCH SEAM AND INSIDE LEG

- 16** With right sides together, pin and sew the backs together along the centre back crotch seam. Overlock or zigzag the seam allowances together, press the seam to one side, then topstitch the seam from the right side of the shorts.

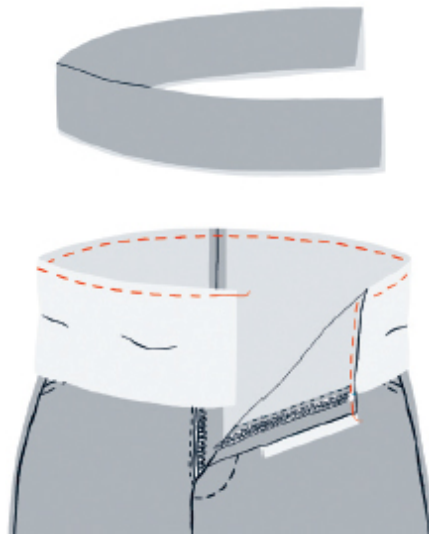


- 17** With right sides together, lining up the two crotch seams along the inside leg seam, pin the front of the shorts to the back. Sew the inside leg in one continuous seam, from the hem of one leg around the crotch to the hem of the other leg. Overlock or zigzag the seam allowances together. Press the seams towards the back.

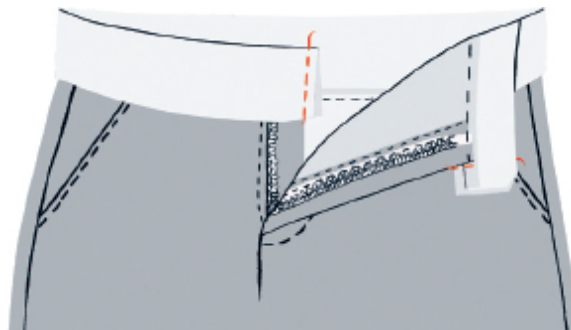


ATTACH THE WAISTBAND

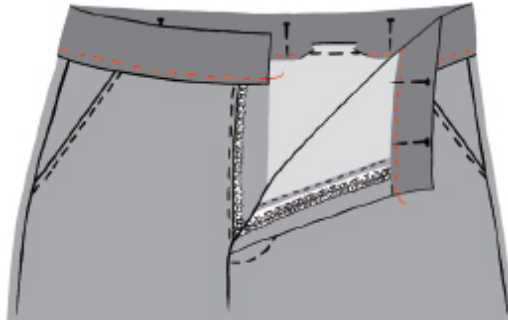
- 18** Fold the waistband in half along its length with wrong sides together and press. Open it out again. With right sides together, aligning the raw edges, pin the waistband around the waistline of the shorts. Machine in place, ending your stitching in line with the edge of the fly shield and the fly facing. The waistband should extend by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) on each centre front edge. Press the waistband and seam up.



- 19** Fold the waistband along the pressed centre crease, with right sides together. On the left side of the shorts, stitch across the short end of the waistband in line with the front of the fly opening; on the right side of the shorts, stitch across the short end in line with the edge of the fly shield.

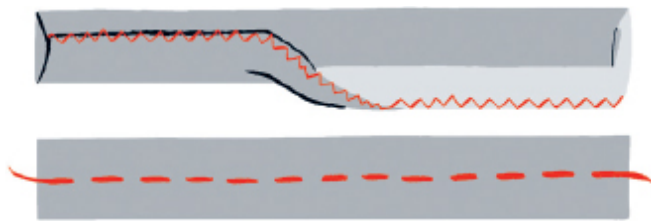


- 20** Trim the ends of the waistband and turn the waistband right side out. Press. Fold under the unstitched edge of the waistband so that it covers the waist seam on the inside. Pin in place, then topstitch close to the waist seam. If you wish, topstitch the top edge of the waistband, too. Press well.

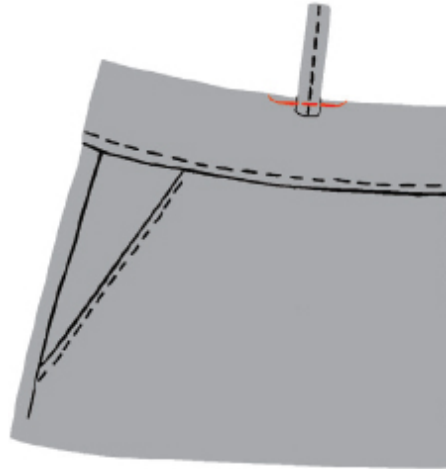


MAKE THE BELT LOOPS

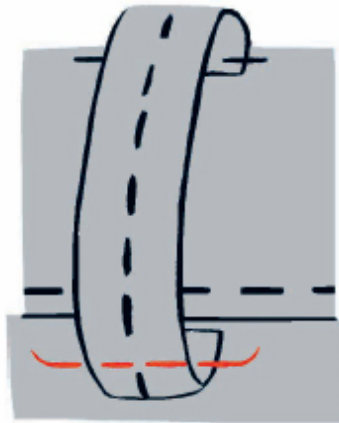
- 21** Zigzag or overlock one long edge of each belt loop piece. Press 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side on the other long edge, then press the zigzagged edge over the fold. Topstitch a row of straight stitches through the centre of each belt loop. Each prepared strip makes two belt loops, so cut each one in half; you need seven, so discard one.



- 22** Pin and tack the belt loops to the right side of the waistband 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) below the top edge, spacing them evenly around the waistband. Machine in place.

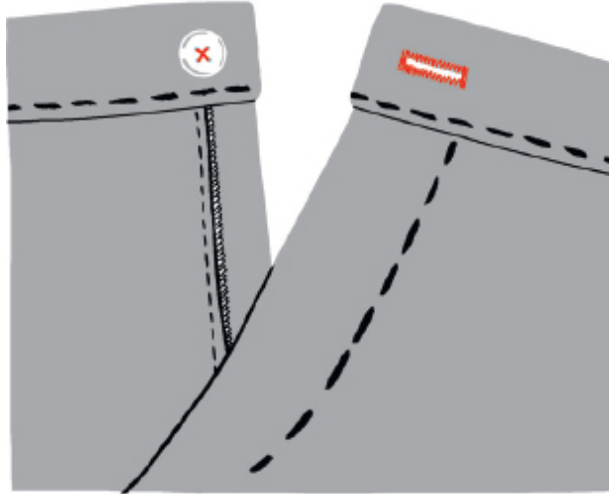


- 23** Press under 1.5 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) on the unstitched end of each belt loop. Pin the pressed end in place, just below the waistband seam, and machine across the loop.



ATTACH THE BUTTONS

- 24** In the middle of the left front waistband, make a horizontal buttonhole. Sew a button onto the opposite side of the waistband to match.



- 25** Sew buttons onto the back, lined up underneath the faux flaps. Sew buttons onto the side cargo pockets, matching up with the pocket flaps.

HEM THE SHORTS

- 26** Press the hem to the wrong side by 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) and then 3 cm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ in.). Topstitch the hem from the right side.



Before going on the Sewing Bee, I had only made men's clothes for myself. Pretty much everything I made on the show I had never made before. Every time a new pattern or brief was put in front of me, it was an opportunity to grow as a sewist and learn and explore new techniques. I really didn't know what I couldn't make. I used these newly learnt skills on subsequent challenges,

and I have no doubt that this approach is what took me into the final. Since being on the Bee I've continued to seek out new sewing challenges.

TONY REA

SERIES 9 (2023)

@tonyr.maker

TIP

Remember that for men's trousers the zip fly fastens left side over right side, from the wearer's perspective. For women it's the opposite.







jumpsuit

Tied in bows on the shoulder, this jumpsuit is suitable for both casual and occasion wear, depending on your fabric choices. A jumpsuit in a stunning fabric such as crepe can be a great alternative to a party dress.

Materials

- Sizes 8-14: 2.2 m (2½ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
Sizes 16-22: 2.7 m (3 yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 40 cm (16 in.) lightweight iron-on interfacing for facings (optional)
- 1.5 m (1⅝ yd) ready-made bias binding, 2.5 cm (1 in.) wide
- 2 cm (¾ in.) wide elastic, length of your waist circumference
- Co-ordinating sewing thread
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

Viscose, chambray, cotton, linen blends, crepe.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

The pattern has a cutting line to make a playsuit (shorts length).

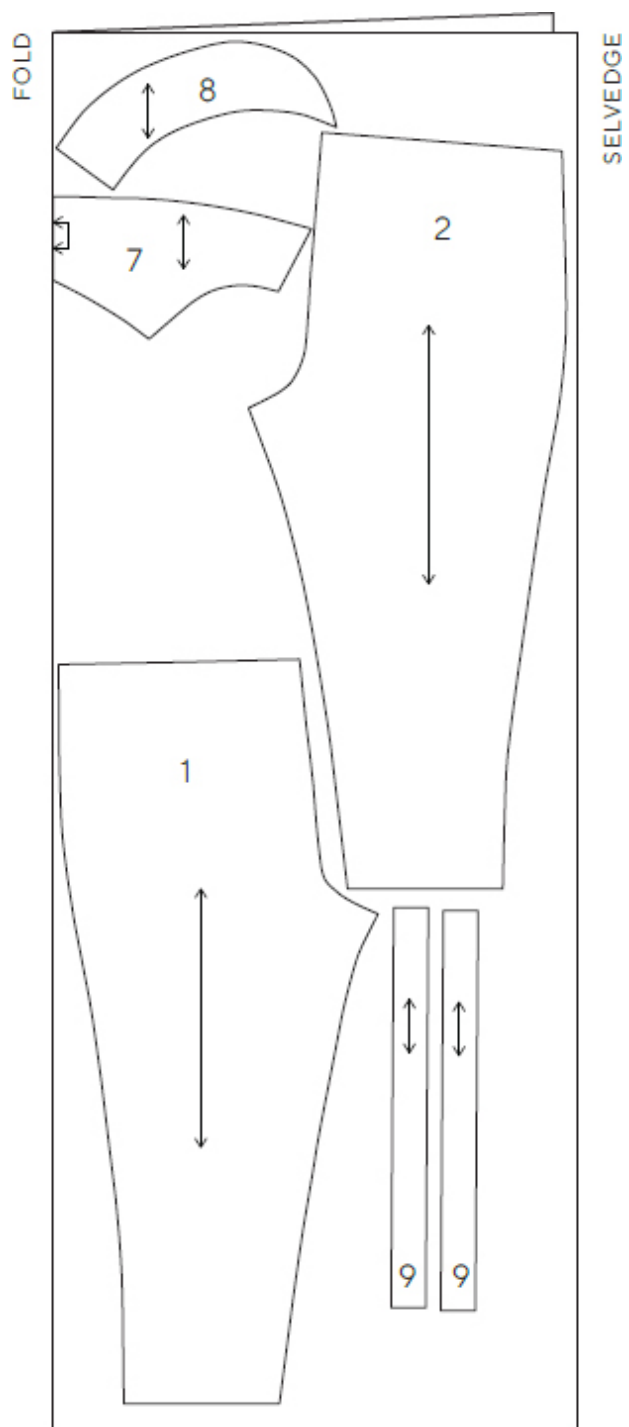
The bust frill pattern is an optional design element.

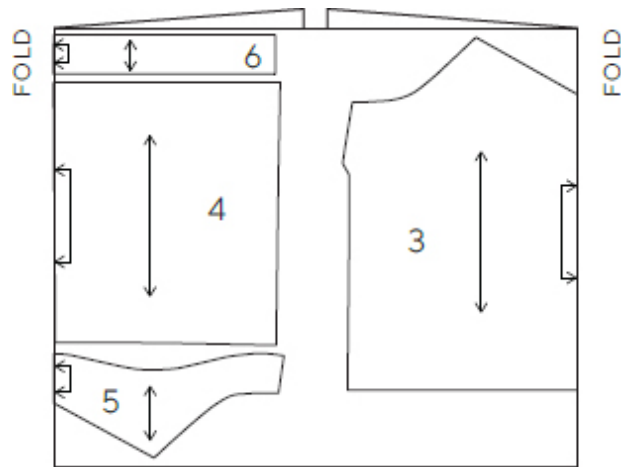
The trouser legs are a narrow fit. If you are unsure if this would fit you, measure the circumference of your calf and then measure the front and back calf area on the trouser leg pattern. Remember to take off the 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance on each pattern seam.

Finished measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Bust (cm)	87	92	97	102	107	112	117	122
Bust (in.)	34 $\frac{1}{4}$	36 $\frac{1}{4}$	38	40	42	44	46	48
Hip (cm)	99	104	109	114	119	124	129	134
Hip (in.)	39	41	43	45	47	49	51	53
Inseam – long (cm)	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
Inseam – long (in.)	27 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 $\frac{1}{2}$
Inseam – short (cm)	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Inseam – short (in.)	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



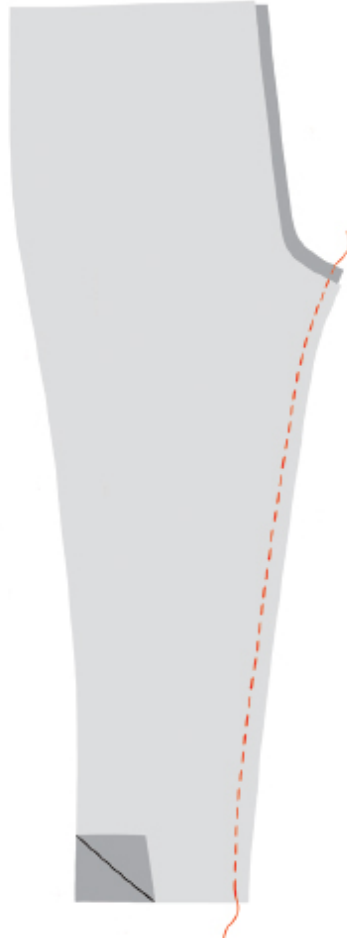


- 1** Trouser front – cut 2
- 2** Trouser back – cut 2
- 3** Front bodice – cut 1 on the fold
- 4** Back bodice – cut 1 on the fold
- 5** Front neck facing – cut 1 on the fold
- 6** Back neck facing – cut 1 on the fold
- 7** Front frill (optional) – cut 1 on the fold
- 8** Back frill (optional) – cut 2
- 9** Straps – cut 4

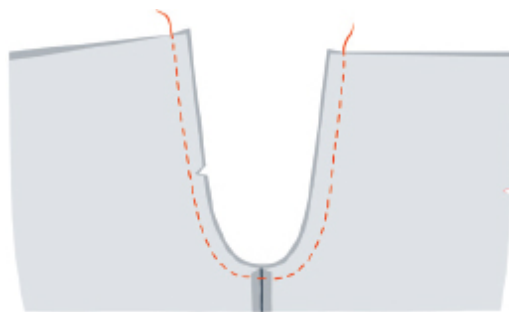
THE SEWING STARTS HERE

MAKE UP THE TROUSERS

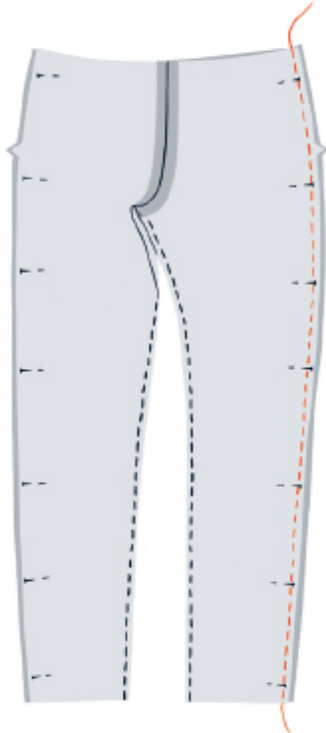
- 1** With right sides together, pin the front leg pieces to the back leg pieces and sew the inside leg seams. Neaten the seam allowances separately and press the seams open.



- 2** Lay one leg on top of the other, right sides together. Pin around the curved crotch seam and sew. Neaten the seam allowances together and press to one side.

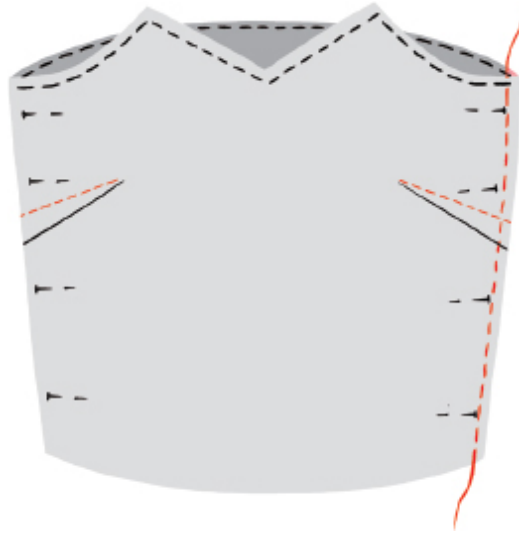


- 3** With right sides together, pin and sew the outside leg seams. Neaten the seam allowances separately and press the seams open.



MAKE UP THE BODICE

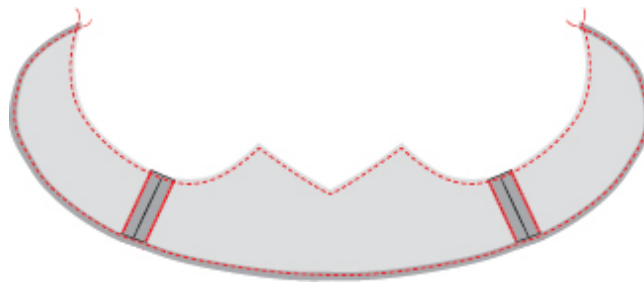
- 4** **Staystitch** the top edges of the bodice front and back, stitching 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) from the edge. As there is a slight curve at the front of the bodice and a V-neck, sew slowly, making sure you don't stretch the fabric.
- 5** Pin and sew the two **darts** on the front of the bodice. Press the darts down towards the hem. With right sides together, pin then stitch the front bodice to the back bodice along the side seams. Press the seams open and neaten the raw edges.



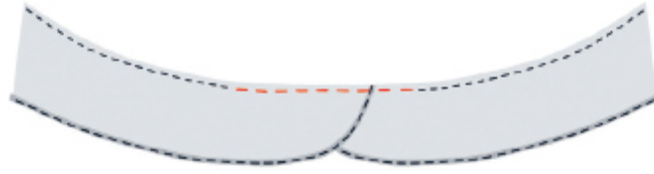
OPTIONAL: BODICE FRILL

Decide at this point whether you'd like to add a frill to your jumpsuit top. Staystitch the top edge of all frill pieces. If you're not making one, you can skip to step 9.

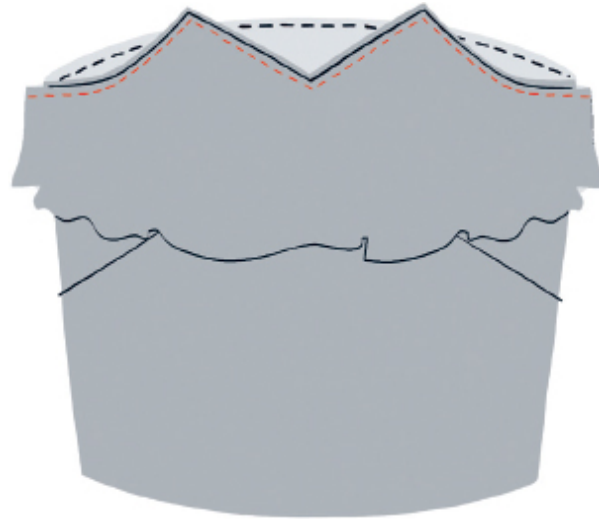
- 6** With right sides together, pin then stitch the front frill to one of the back frill pieces along their short edges. Join the remaining back frill piece to the other side of the front frill in the same way. Neaten the seam allowances separately and press the seams open. Hem the frill with a narrow double hem.



- 7** Line up the centre back notches so that one back frill is on top of the other. Machine tack in place, taking a 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance.

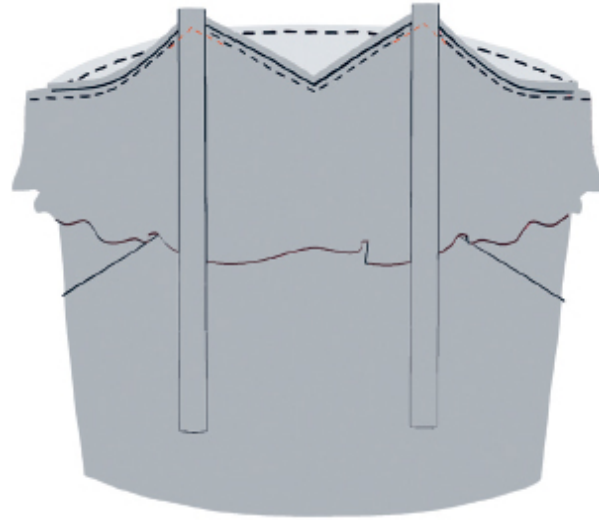


- 8** Pin the frill around the top of the bodice, with the right sides of both the jumpsuit and the frill facing up. Machine tack around the top edge 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) from the edge.



MAKE AND ATTACH THE STRAPS

- 9** Make the [rouleau straps](#). Pin two straps in position on the front bodice over the frill (if you have one), on the right side of the bodice, in the middle of the points. Machine in place, taking a 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance.

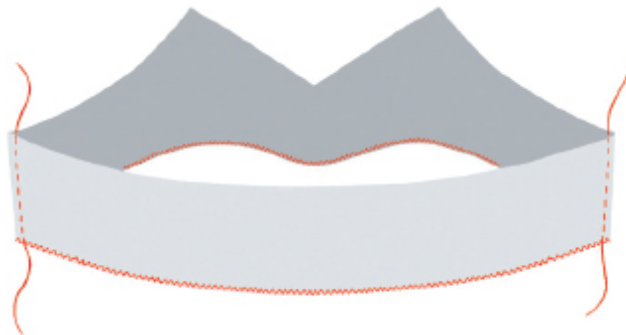


10 Repeat for the remaining two straps on the back bodice.

SEW THE FACING

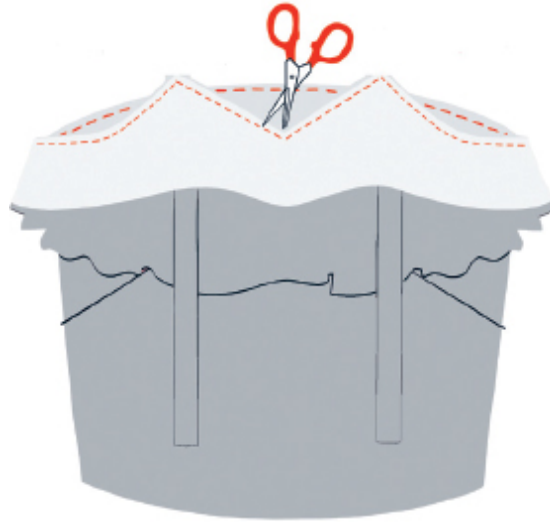
11 If your top fabric is lightweight or a bit slippery, apply lightweight iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of your facing pieces.

12 With right sides together, pin and machine stitch the front and back facings together at the side seams. Press the seams open and neaten the raw edges. Zigzag over the lower edge of the facing to neaten.



13 With right sides together, slide the facing over the top of the bodice, matching up the side seams and all the notches along the upper edge. Pin and sew the facing and bodice together around

the upper edge only, taking care to pivot precisely at the peak of the bodice points and in the centre of the V-neck. Snip into the V at the centre front, making sure you don't snip too close to the stitches. Trim off the tops of the points. Clip into the curved areas around the top of the bodice.



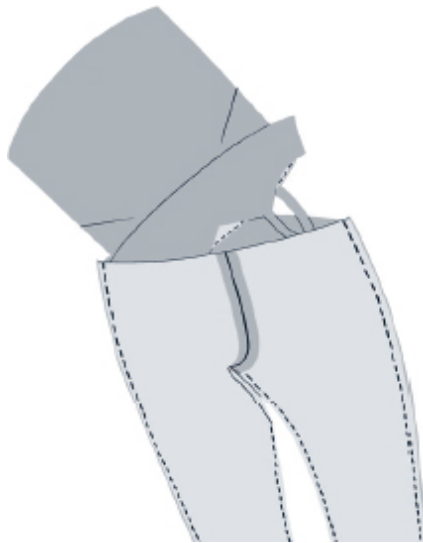
- 14** Press the facing and the seam allowance away from the bodice and [understitch](#) the facing where you can. Because of the points, you won't be able to go all the way around. Turn the facing to the inside of the bodice and press the top edge, making sure the seamline is sitting towards the inside of the bodice, and can't be seen from the right side.



15 Secure the facing to the seam allowance at the side seams with a few hand stitches.

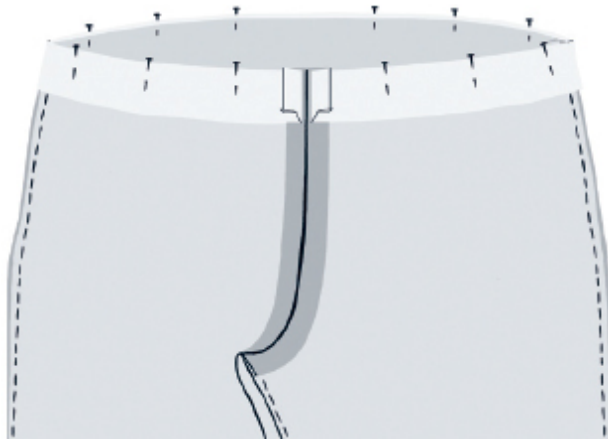
ATTACH THE BODICE TO THE TROUSERS

16 With right sides together, matching the side seams and notches, slip the bodice inside the waist of the trousers. Pin and sew in place around the waistline.

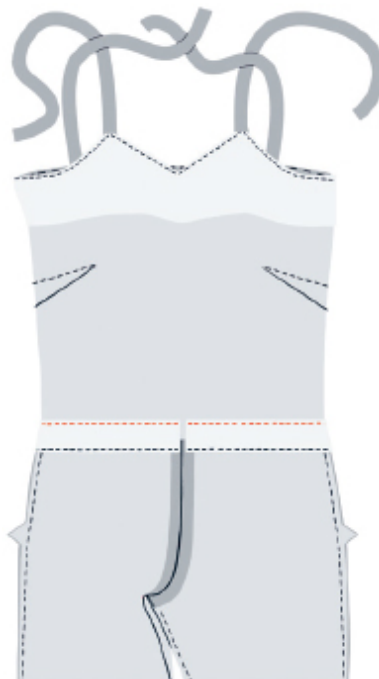


ELASTICATE THE WAIST

17 Cut a length of ready-made bias binding that is a little longer than the waist of the jumpsuit and open it out. With the right side of the bias binding against the wrong side of the trousers and the bodice still inside the trousers, fold under one end of bias binding and line it up with the centre of the back seam. Pin and machine the bias around the waistline along the first crease line of the binding, just inside the original seam allowance. Fold under the other end of the binding when you reach your starting point, so that they sit next to each other but don't overlap.



- 18** Trim the seam allowance of the trousers and bodice at the waistline, so that it doesn't poke above the bias binding. Pull the bodice up from inside the trousers, and press the waist seam up along the stitching line. Pin the top folded edge of the bias binding onto the bodice and edge stitch it in place.



- 19** Measure a piece of elastic around your waistline to a length that feels comfortable and mark the length. Add a 2.5-cm (1-in.) overlap, then cut the elastic to the size required. Attach a safety pin to one end of the elastic and thread it through the channel of

bias binding at the waist. Overlap the ends and sew two parallel lines of straight stitching to hold the elastic together. Tuck the join into the waist channel and then hand sew the opening closed.

20 Around the bottom of the legs, press up 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and then another 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and stitch in place.

NOTE:

If your fabric is very lightweight, you should apply some lightweight interfacing to the front and back facings.









Women's cargo pants

A nod to '90s and '00s shapes and pop culture, these amazing trousers will make a stylish and playful addition to your wardrobe! This pattern has cargo-style pleated pockets, a fly zip front and an elasticated waist. The project is more advanced because the pockets and waistband require precision and fly front zips are quite involved. The trousers need a material with some structure, but avoid a fabric that's too heavyweight.

Materials

- 2.2 m (2½ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide,
- 70 cm (27½ in.) medium-weight iron-on interfacing
- 18cm (7-in.) trouser zip
- Elastic, 3 cm (1¼ in.) wide – approx. 10 cm (4 in.) less than your waist measurement
- 2 buttons for the pockets
- 1 trouser hook and bar
- Zip foot

- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Advanced

Fabric suggestions

Cotton twill, light- to medium-weight denim, light- to medium-weight corduroy. You could try something with some drape, too, such as a cotton viscose, or something with a tiny bit of stretch.

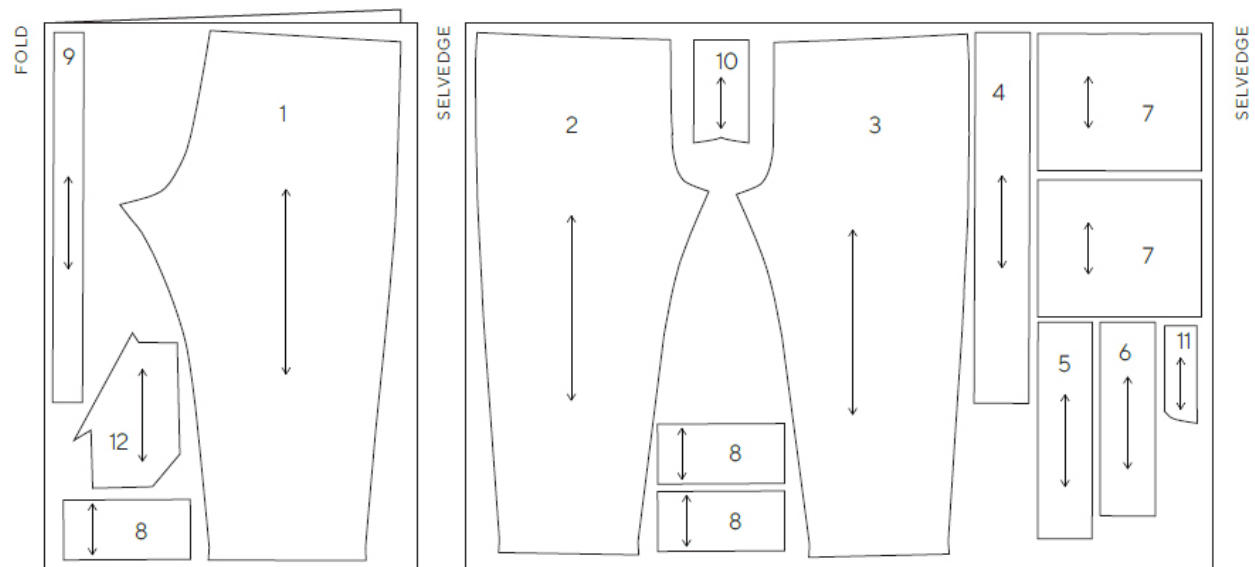
Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

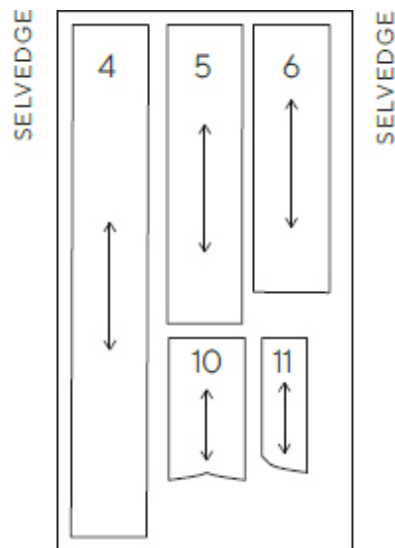
Finished measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Waist (cm)	54	56.5	59	61.5	64	66.5	69	71.5
Waist (in.)	21 $\frac{1}{4}$	22 $\frac{1}{4}$	23 $\frac{1}{4}$	24 $\frac{1}{4}$	25 $\frac{1}{4}$	26 $\frac{1}{4}$	27 $\frac{1}{4}$	28 $\frac{1}{4}$
Hip (cm)	58.5	61	63.5	66	68.5	71	73.5	76
Hip (in.)	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Inseam (cm)	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	71
Inseam (in.)	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Interfacing



- 1** Back – cut 2
- 2** Right front – cut 1
- 3** Left front – cut 1
- 4** Back waistband – cut 1 in fabric, 1 in interfacing
- 5** Right front waistband – cut 1 in fabric, 1 in interfacing
- 6** Left front waistband – cut 1 in fabric, 1 in interfacing

- 7** Patch pocket – cut 2
- 8** Pocket flap – cut 4
- 9** Pocket side panel – cut 2
- 10** Zip guard – cut 1 in fabric, 1 in interfacing
- 11** Fly facing – cut 1 in fabric, 1 in interfacing
- 12** Top pocket – cut 2

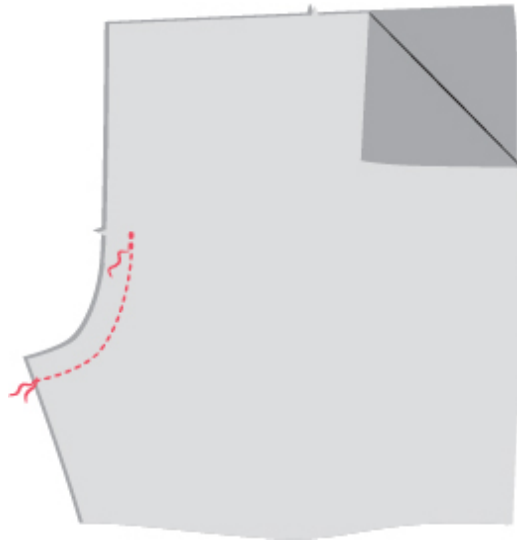
THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE THE PIECES

- 1** Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of the zip guard, the fly facing and all three waistband pieces.
- 2** Zigzag or overlock (serge) the side, inner leg and crotch seams of all four trouser leg pieces, as well as all edges of the top pocket, patch pocket and pocket side panels.

SEW THE FLY ZIP

- 3** Place your front leg pieces right sides together, at the centre front seam. Stitch from the crotch point up to the notch and backstitch.



- 4 Insert a **fly zip** into the centre front crotch seam.
-

NOTE

These are women's trousers, so the fly should fasten right over left as worn.

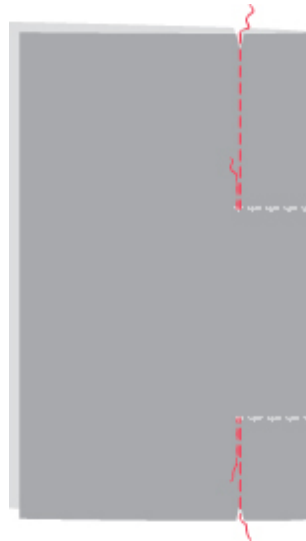
SEW THE SIDE SEAMS

- 5 Take one front leg piece and place it on top of the front, right sides together. Pin and stitch the side seam, then press the seam allowances towards the back leg. Repeat for the other leg. From the right side of the trousers, **topstitch** 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) from the seam ditch, on the back trouser leg piece.

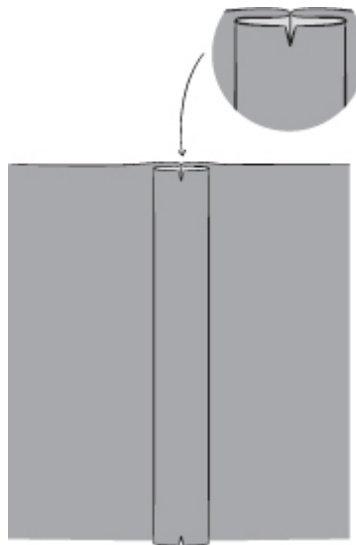
SEW THE PLEATED PATCH POCKETS

- 6 Take one of your patch pocket pieces and fold it along the centre line with wrong sides together, matching the notches. From the top notch, stitch down to the marked line and backstitch to secure. From the bottom notch stitch up to the marked line, again

backstitching to secure. The area of the pocket between this stitch line and the right-hand side edge will form a pleat.

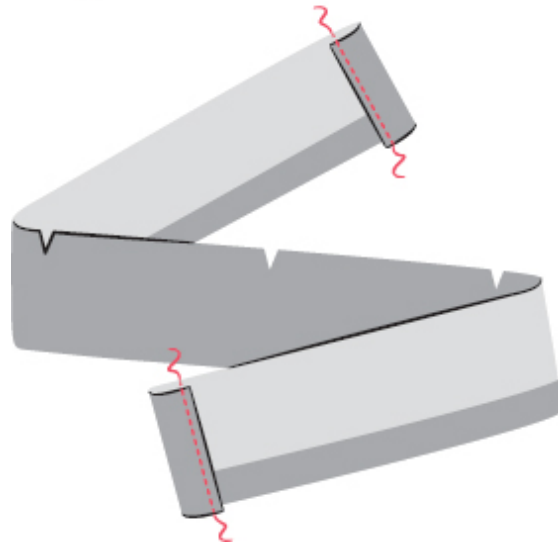


- 7** Lay the pocket piece as flat as you can with the right side facing up, then match the centre notch of the patch pocket to the stitch line to form a pleat. Press.

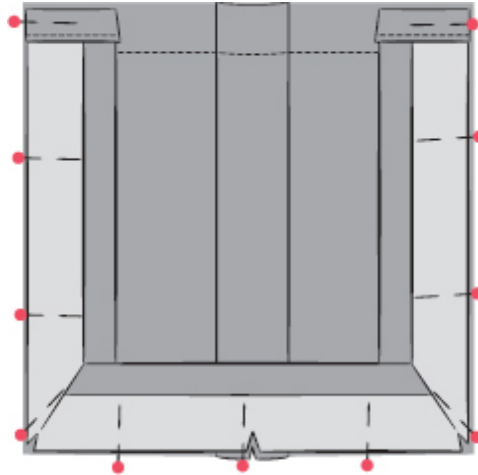


- 8** Zigzag or overlock the top edge of your patch pocket, then press this edge to the wrong side by 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.). Press and topstitch close to the zigzagged or overlocked edge. Repeat steps 6–8 for the second patch pocket.

- 9** Take one of your pocket side panel pieces and press the un-notched long edge to the wrong side by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.). This will be the edge that attaches to the leg of your garment. Press the short ends to the wrong side by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.), pin and stitch close to the raw edge, on both short ends. Repeat for the second pocket side panel piece.



- 10** With right sides together, pin one pocket side panel to one of the patch pockets, making sure you match the top edge of the pocket to the short ends of the side panel. You're pinning the unpressed long edge of the pocket side panel. You may need to clip further into the notches at the bottom corners to allow you to position the side panel correctly. Sew in place, pivoting at the bottom corners.

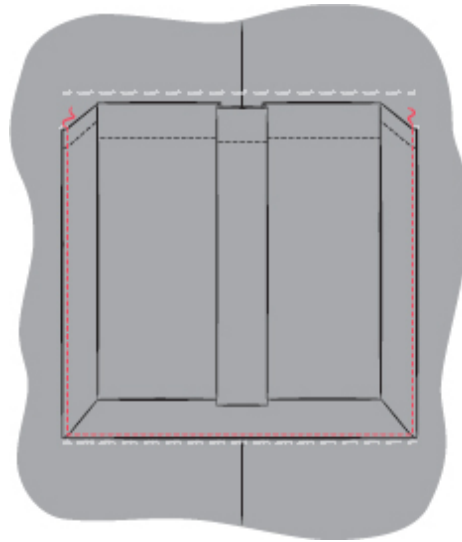


TIP

To pivot at the bottom corners, leave the needle down in the fabric at the corner, lift the presser foot and turn the garment around in the machine. Then lower the presser foot again and continue sewing.

11 Trim the seam allowance at the bottom corners and press the seam allowance towards the patch pocket piece. Edge stitch along all three sides, sewing through both the patch pocket piece and the side panel. You will need to stop and backstitch as you reach each corner and start again along the next edge.

12 Place the patch pocket over the side seam of one of your trouser legs, following the pattern markings. It's the already-pressed edge of the side panel that you are pinning and sewing into position. Topstitch in place along both sides and the bottom edge, pivoting at the corners and sewing as close to the edge as you can. Your pocket should now look 3-dimensional!

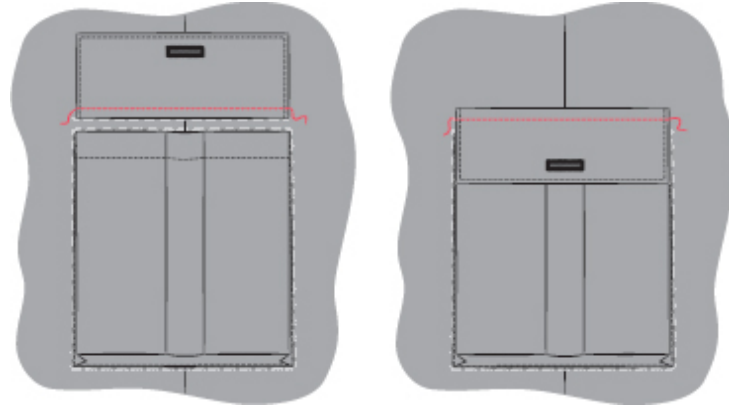


- 13** Now press the pocket, folding the side panel in behind the pocket piece. Repeat steps 6–13 for the second patch pocket on the other side seam.

SEW THE POCKET FLAPS

- 14** You have two pairs of pocket flaps. Take one pair and place them right sides together. Pin and stitch around all four sides, leaving a gap of about 8 cm (3 in.) along the top edge. Trim the seam allowance at the corners.
- 15** Turn the pocket flap through to the right side through the gap you left, and press, turning in the fabric along the gap in stitching, making sure the corners are nice and crisp. Topstitch 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in,) from the edge along both short sides and the bottom edge.
- 16** Sew a [horizontal buttonhole](#), as indicated on your paper pattern.
- 17** Align the top edge of the pocket flap with the marked line on the leg above the patch pocket. The buttonhole should be closest to the top in this position (the flap is lying as if you've opened the pocket and flipped the flap up, so the right side of the flap is against the right side of the trouser). Stitch along the fold line on

the pocket flap with a 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance, then flip the pocket flap back down. Sew another line of topstitching 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) from the top edge, being careful not to catch your patch pocket in the stitching. Repeat steps 14–17 for the other pocket flap.



SEW THE TOP POCKETS

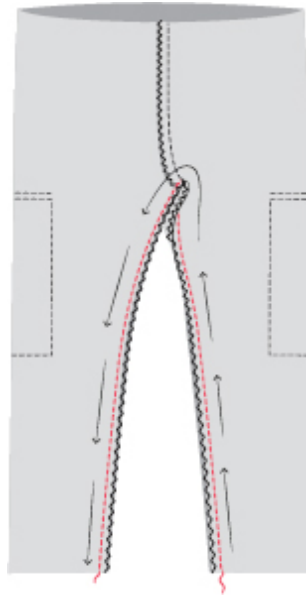
- 18** Press the slanted edge to the wrong side by 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) so that the seam allowances slot neatly behind the pocket along the corners. Topstitch 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) away from the folded edge and also a few millimetres ($\frac{1}{8}$ in. or so) away from the folded edge. Press all the remaining edges of the pocket to the wrong side by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.): first the two vertical sides, then the top edge, then the bottom edge, and finally the slanted side edge. Pin in position on the trousers, following the marks on your paper pattern. Topstitch around all sides except the pocket mouth. Repeat for the second top pocket.

SEW THE CENTRE BACK CROTCH SEAM

- 19** Pin and sew the centre back crotch seam, then press the seam towards the left leg (as worn).
- 20** Turn the trousers over to the right side and topstitch close to the seam ditch, on the side of the seam that the seam allowances are

pressed towards.

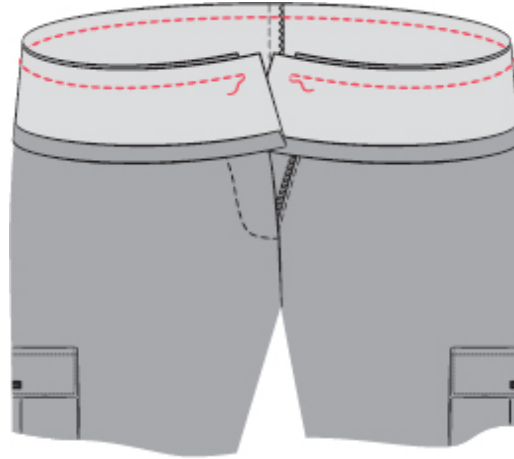
- 21** With right sides together, pin and sew the inside leg seams, making sure you align the crotch point: the front crotch seam and back crotch seam should match perfectly. Sew the seam in one go, from the hem of one leg, to the crotch, and down the other leg to the hem. Press the seam.



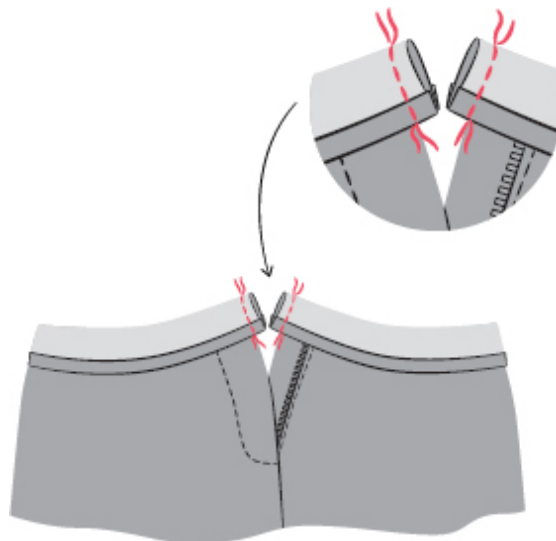
SEW THE WAISTBAND

- 22** Take your waistband pieces and, with right sides together, join the side seams. Make sure you connect the left and the right front waistbands to the correct sides of the back waistband, as they are different lengths! Press the seams open.
- 23** With right sides together, matching the raw edges and starting at the centre front, pin the raw edge of the waistband to the trousers. Remember that one side front of the waistband is longer to match the overlap at the fly front. Leave 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) of the waistband extending beyond the fly edge and pin all the way around the waist – you should also have 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) extending beyond the front edge when you get to the other side. Sew in

place, then press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side along the other long edge of the waistband. Press the waistband and seam allowances up, away from the trousers.

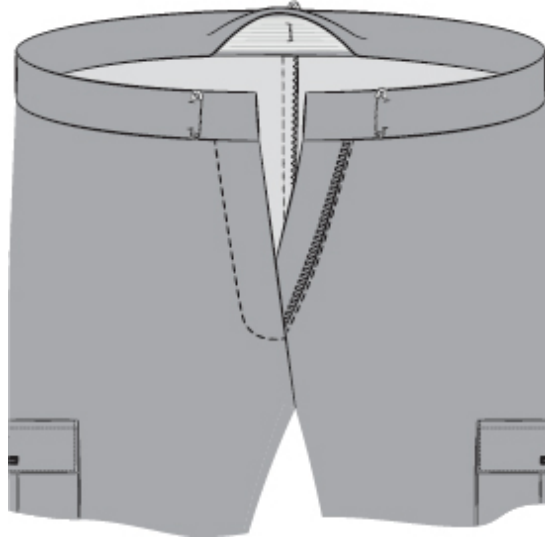


- 24** Fold the waistband in half lengthways, with right sides together, just at the centre front edges, and stitch the short edges. This seam line should line up with the front edge of the trousers, as the waistband extends beyond the centre front by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) on each side. Clip the corners of the seam allowance along this front edge and turn the waistband through to the right side.

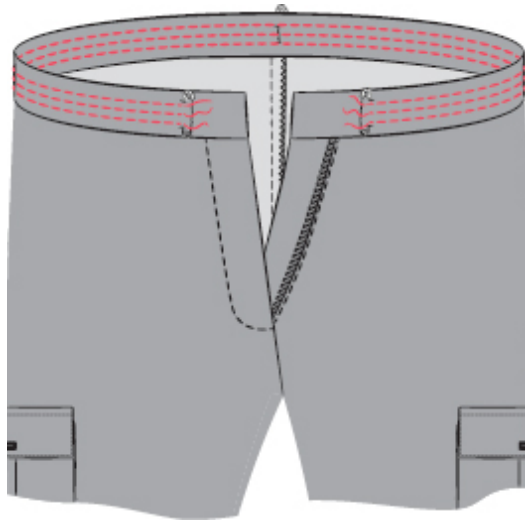


- 25** Cut a piece of elastic to the length required for your size (see [Materials](#)). Insert it into the waistband, positioning it centrally.

Safety pin the short ends of the elastic to the pattern markings on the right and left front waistbands, pinning from the outside. Pull the waistband fabric taut, stretching the elastic, and insert a safety pin at the centre back, again pinning from the outside. Fold the unattached part of the waistband over the elastic to the inside of the trousers and match the pressed edge to the waist seam. Pin or tack (baste) this waist edge in place.



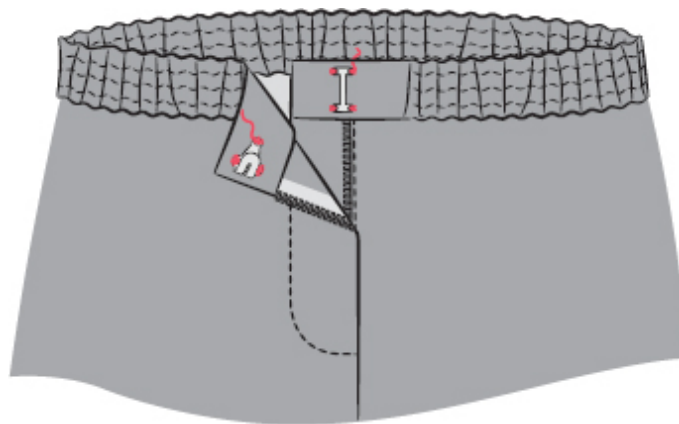
- 26** From the right side of the waistband, sew three horizontal rows of topstitching through both layers of the waistband and the elastic, pulling the waistband taut and stretching the elastic each time. These stitch lines should start and end at the safety pins holding the elastic in place. Start by sewing a line of stitching right in the middle of your waistband, then use the edge of your presser foot to neatly sew another line either side of this.



27 Sew the inside waistband edge that you tacked in step 25.

FINISH THE FASTENINGS

28 Attach a trouser hook and bar to the waistband front edges, with the hook on the side that overlaps. There are marks for this on your paper pattern. Position the hook right on the edge of the inside waistband edge, then position the bar to match this.



29 Sew a button onto the patch pockets to match the buttonhole on the pocket flap.

HEM THE TROUSERS

30 Press the trouser hem to the wrong side by 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.), then again by 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in). Press well, then sew close to the inner folded edge.







Unisex zero waste trousers

In this project we will take you through the steps of drafting a zero waste (ZW) pattern straight onto a piece of fabric. This means the pattern pieces use 100% of the fabric. You will see that the pattern pieces are rectangles and squares, maximizing the fabric. Use the pocket template on the pattern sheet for the curved pocket piece. The trousers have a unisex design and the fit will depend on your size and the width of the fabric you've chosen. They have a drawstring waistband, a side-seam pocket and patch pockets.

Materials

- Fabric: use a fabric that's 150–155 cm (59–61 in.) wide and add 14 cm (5½ in.) to the width measurement to work out the length of fabric you need (for example, 150 cm wide x 164 cm long/59 in. wide x 64½ in. long).
- Drawstring: measure with a tape measure around where you would wear your trousers (waist or high hip) and then add approximately 30 cm/12 in.
- Matching sewing thread
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Beginner

Fabric suggestions

Cotton, brushed cotton (flannel). For the [drafting instructions](#), you will need a fabric that's 150–155 cm (59–61 in.) wide.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

Approximate finished measurements

By definition, zero waste patterns use up the entirety of a fabric. How the pattern then fits is determined by the width of the fabric you have used and your own size. To make the pattern smaller, you'll need to use a narrower fabric. There aren't many fabrics wider than 155 cm (61 in.) so the pattern in the instructions is the biggest it can be in terms of waist size and length.

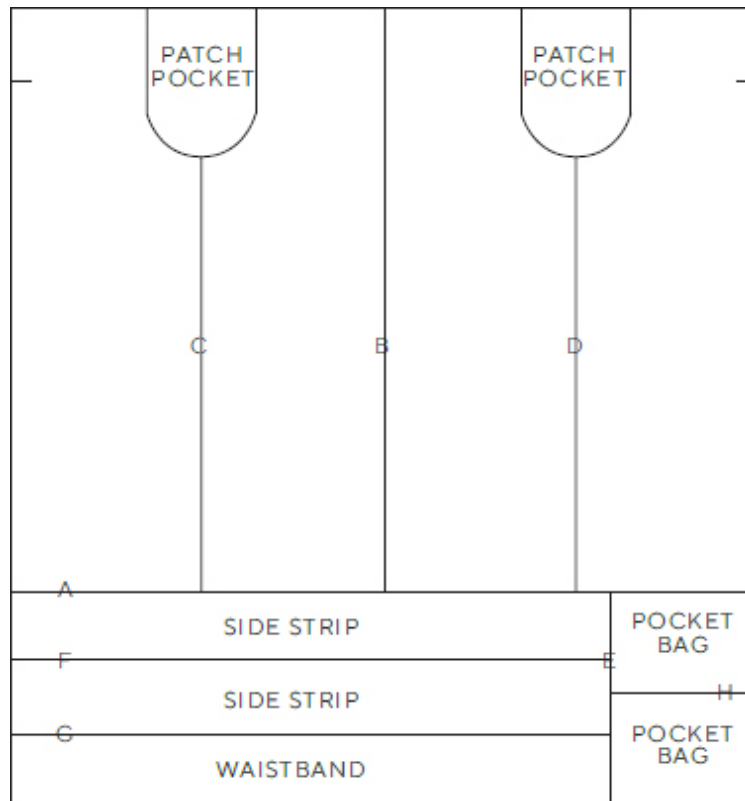
Waist (cm)	120 cm
Waist (in.)	47 in.
Max. length (cm)	120 cm
Max. length (in.)	47 in.

DRAFT YOUR ZERO WASTE LAYOUT

With the fabric lying wrong side up in a single layer, and the selvages along the left and right sides, follow these steps to create

your pattern directly on the fabric. It's best to mark in a way that isn't permanent or using a marker that will wash out.

- 1** Measure the width of your fabric and subtract 29 cm (11½ in.). Mark this distance down your selvedge and draw a line across the width of your fabric (line A).
- 2** Mark the centre of the fabric across the top edge and draw a line down to line A (line B).
- 3** Find the centre point between line B and each selvedge and again draw a line down to line A (lines C and D).
- 4** Centre your patch pocket template over lines C and D, aligning the straight edge of the pocket with the top edge of your fabric, and draw around it. The straight line inside the pocket area will now be disregarded.
- 5** Along line A, measure a point 29 cm (11½ in.) from the right-hand selvedge edge and draw a line down to the bottom of the fabric (line E).
- 6** Along the left-hand selvedge edge measure 14 cm (5½ in.) down from line A and draw a line across to line E (line F).
- 7** Measure down 14 cm (5½ in.) from this line and again draw a line across to line E (line G).
- 8** Measure the halfway point down line E and draw a line across to the right-hand selvedge edge (line H).
- 9** On all your front and back leg pieces and the rectangular pocket bag pieces, measure 17 cm (6⅝ in.) down from the top edge and mark a notch.
- 10** Cut out along these lines, keeping the curved patch pocket pieces intact and ignoring the central line that runs through them.



THE SEWING STARTS HERE

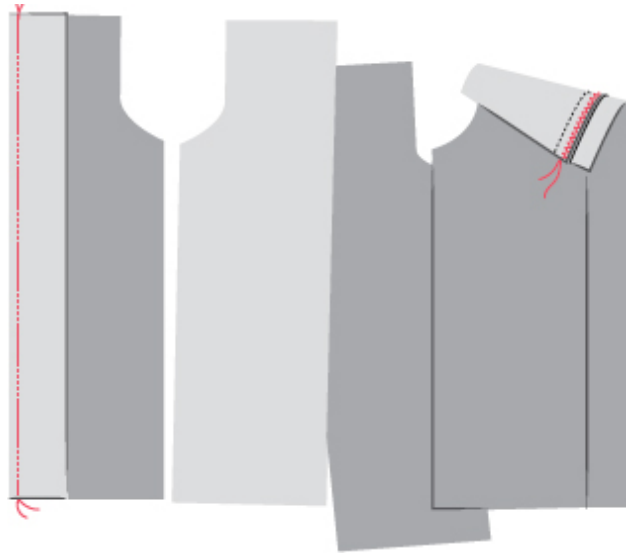
MAKE THE BACK PATCH POCKETS

- 1** Take your patch pocket and press 2.5 cm (1 in.) to the wrong side along the straight top edge. Then press 10 cm (4 in.) to the wrong side. Edge stitch along the inside folded edge. Fold the curved edges of the pocket to the wrong side by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) and press.

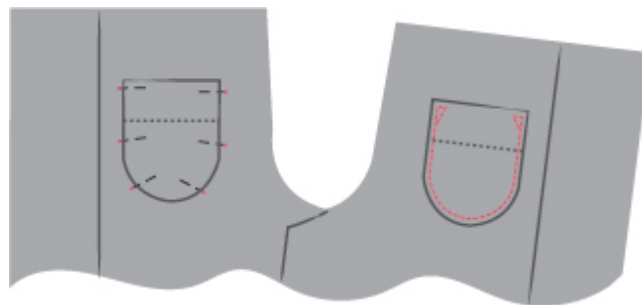
SEW THE BACK LEGS AND PATCH POCKETS

- 2** All four trouser legs are the same. Dedicate two of them to be the back trouser legs. Lay the legs out right side up as a pair to make sure you are making a left and a right – you should see a U-shaped negative space in between them when you do this. With

right sides together, pin and sew a side seam strip to the straight side of each back leg. Zigzag or overlock the seam allowances together and press them towards the side seam strip.

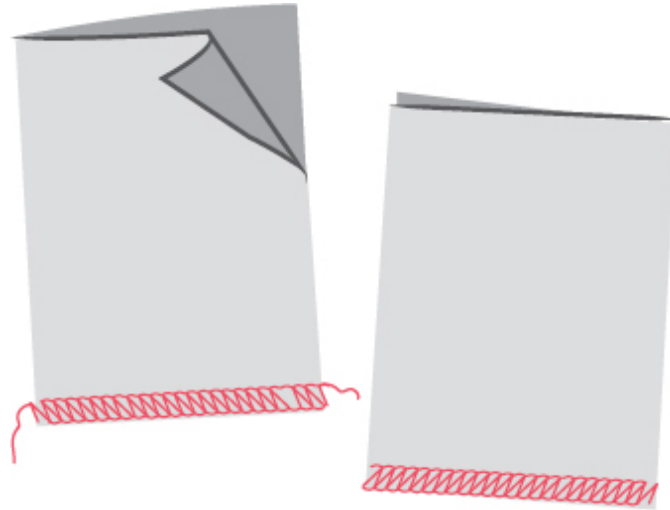


- 3** Position the patch pockets on the back trouser legs 9 cm (3 ½ in.) down from the waist and 7 cm (2¾ in.) away from the back crotch curve. If your fabric width is 150 cm (59 in.) wide, then your pocket will sit slightly over the side seam; if it is 155 cm (61 in.) wide, it will sit entirely within the back trouser leg. Pin the pocket on really well. Topstitch down the sides and around the bottom curve of the pocket, sewing a reinforcing triangle at each top corner. Repeat for the other patch pocket.

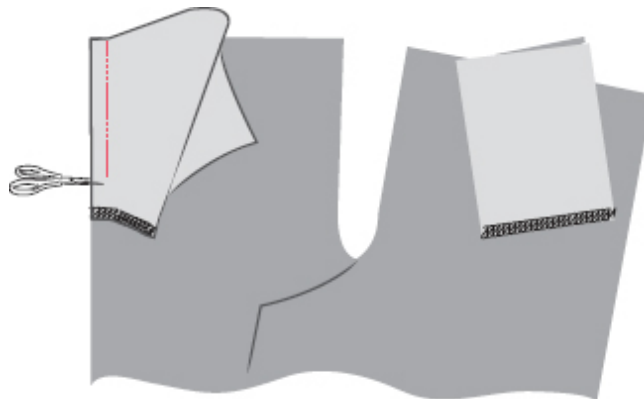


SEW THE FRONT LEGS AND POCKET BAGS

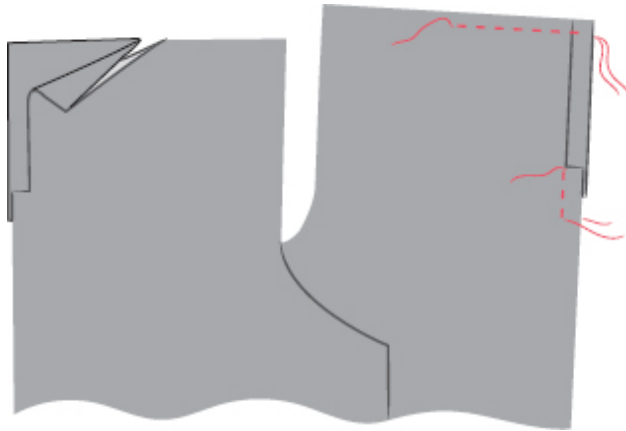
- 4** Fold your pocket bags in half, right sides together, so that the folded edge is on a vertical edge and the three remaining edges are open. Sew the bottom edge, then overlock (serge) or zigzag.



- 5** The remaining two trouser legs will be your front legs. Make sure, again, that you are making a pair by laying the legs out right side up so that they mirror each other. Take a pocket bag and match the edge opposite the folded edge to the trouser side seam. With right sides together, align the top of the pocket bag with the top of the side seam and pin and sew from the waist to the notch through the trouser leg and one layer of the pocket bag only. Snip horizontally into the seam allowance where the notch is, close to but not through your stitch line.

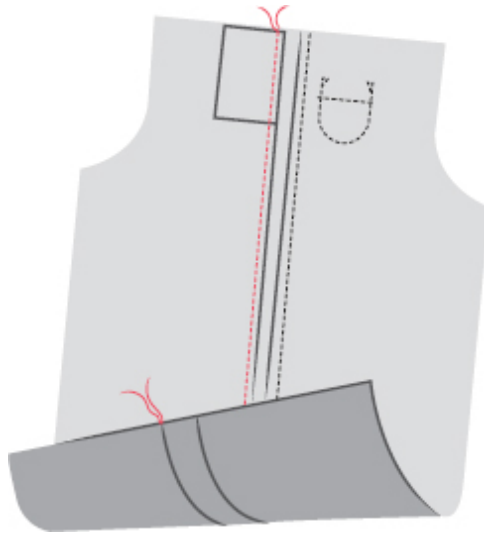


- 6** Fold the pocket bag and seam allowances away from the trouser and press the sewn edge, then **understitch** close to the seam ditch, on the side of the pocket bag.
- 7** Now fold the whole pocket bag to the inside of the trouser and press well. You should see the seam allowance of the unsewn edge of the pocket bag from the right side of the trousers. Tack (baste) the pocket bag and trousers together along the waist and below the pocket opening. Repeat steps 5–7 for the other front leg and pocket bag.



SEW THE SIDE SEAMS AND INSEAMS

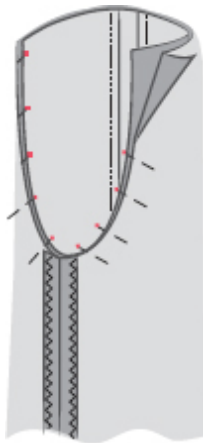
- 8** Pin and sew the front legs to the side seam strips from waist to hem, being careful not to catch your pocket opening in the seam. Overlock or zigzag the seam allowances together and press the seam towards the back. Machine tack across the top of the side strip to the front trouser leg within the waist seam allowance to make sure everything stays together.



- 9** With right sides together, pin and sew each inside leg seam. Zigzag or overlock the seam allowances separately and press the seam open. You now have two separate trouser legs.

SEW THE CROTCH SEAM

- 10** Leave one leg wrong side out and turn the other one right side out. Slide the leg that's right side out inside the other leg, so that they're right sides together, and align the raw edges of the crotch curve and the crotch point (the inside leg seam). Pin and sew the crotch seam. Trim the seam allowance to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and zigzag or overlock the seam allowances together. Press to one side.



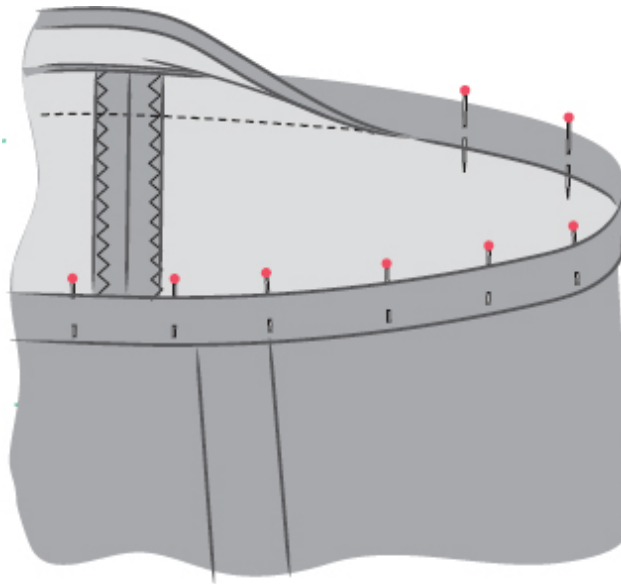
SEW THE WAISTBAND

- 11** Mark the centre of your waistband and mark a **vertical buttonhole** each side of this, 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) from the centre point. Your buttonholes should start 4 cm ($1\frac{1}{2}$ in.) below the top raw edge and be 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) long. Sew and cut open the buttonholes.
- 12** With right sides together, sew the two short ends of the waistband together to form a loop. Press the seam open. This seam is your centre back.
- 13** Along the long edge of the waistband, on the side opposite the buttonholes, press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side.
- 14** Lay the unpressed raw edge of the waistband on the waist of the trousers, right sides together, matching the raw edges. Match the seam on the waistband to the centre back seam of the trousers, and the front centre point of your waistband to the centre front seam of the trousers. Pin and sew. Press the waistband and the seam allowances up.



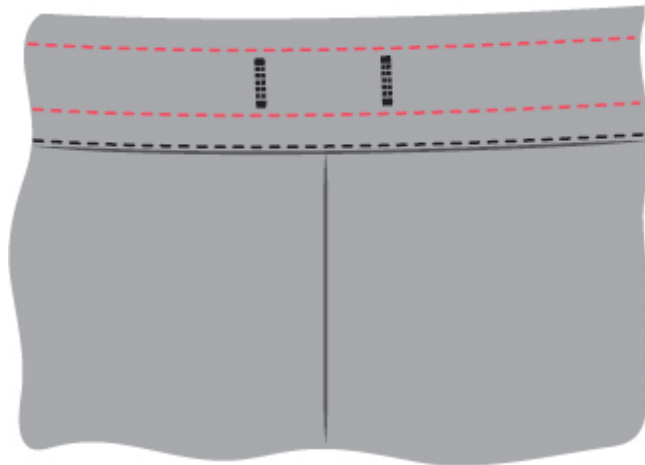
- 15** Press the waistband in half with wrong sides together, matching the folded waistband edge to the waist seam. Pin in place on the

inside of the trousers and topstitch from the outside, close to the seam ditch.



INSERT THE DRAWSTRING

- 16** Sew a line of stitching around the waistband 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) from the top edge and a second one 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) from the bottom edge to create a channel for your drawstring.



- 17** Thread your drawstring through the buttonholes and pull it through evenly so that you have even lengths at each buttonhole.

[Stitch in the ditch](#) of the centre back seam to secure the drawstring in place.

18 Hem the trousers to your preferred length. The hem may be very deep, in keeping with not wasting any fabric.

TIP

Pin a safety pin to one end of the drawstring to feed it through the channel. Guide the safety pin through and out the other buttonhole.









Classic men's trench coat

This trench coat has iconic features such as epaulettes on the shoulders, a storm flap and a belt. Suitable for the more skilled maker, the insides will have to be neat as it is unlined. Style it over workwear or jeans and a hoodie.

Materials

- 3.8 m (4 $\frac{1}{8}$ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide,
- 1.5 m (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ yd) lightweight iron-on interfacing
- 8 m (8 $\frac{3}{4}$ yd) bias binding to finish seam allowances on all visible internal seams (optional)
- 11 centre front buttons, 2.5-3.5 cm (1–1 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.) in diameter
- 2 epaulette buttons
- Belt buckle to fit a 4-cm (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -in.) wide belt
- 2 sleeve tab buttons (optional)
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Advanced

Fabric suggestions

Cotton twill, gabardine.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

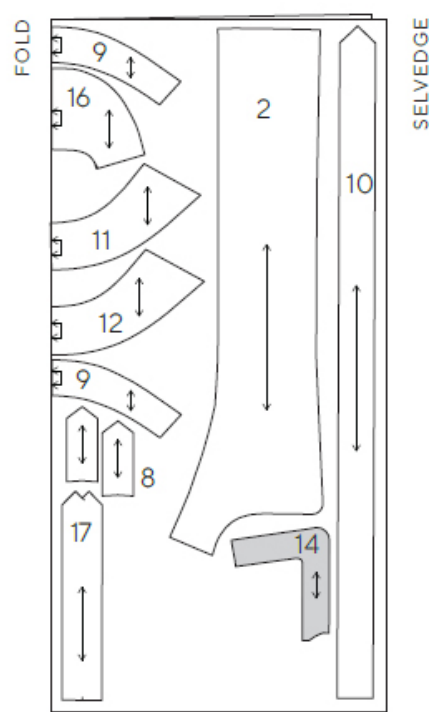
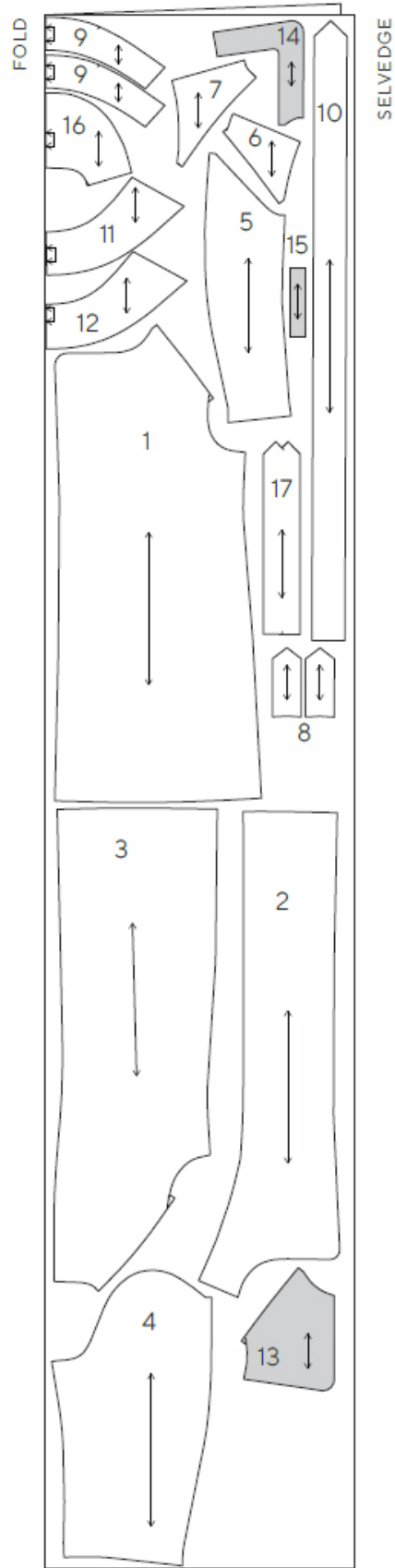
As this garment is unlined, you can finish the seam allowances on the inside of the garment either by overlocking (serging) or by applying bias binding over the raw edges of the [seam allowances](#). If you choose binding, you have to do this as and when you're finishing the seam allowances; you can't apply the binding once the garment is finished.

If you want to make the sleeve tab detail, interface this pattern piece before sewing.

Finished measurements	34	36	38	40	42	44
Front length (cm)	107.5	108	108.5	109	110	110.5
Front length (in.)	42 $\frac{1}{4}$	42 $\frac{1}{2}$	42 $\frac{3}{4}$	43	43 $\frac{1}{4}$	43 $\frac{1}{2}$
Chest (cm)	108.5	113.5	118.5	123.5	128.5	133.5
Chest (in.)	42 $\frac{1}{2}$	44 $\frac{1}{2}$	46 $\frac{1}{2}$	48 $\frac{1}{2}$	50 $\frac{1}{2}$	52 $\frac{1}{2}$
Waist (cm)	105.5	110.5	115.5	120.5	125.5	130.5
Waist (in.)	41 $\frac{1}{2}$	43 $\frac{1}{2}$	45 $\frac{1}{2}$	47 $\frac{1}{2}$	49 $\frac{1}{2}$	51 $\frac{1}{2}$
Sleeve length (cm)	63	63.5	64	64.5	65	66.5
Sleeve length (in.)	24 $\frac{3}{4}$	25	25 $\frac{1}{4}$	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	26 $\frac{1}{4}$

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric Interfacing



Fabric

- 1** Front – cut 2
- 2** Front facing – cut 2 in fabric and 2 in interfacing
- 3** Back – cut 2
- 4** Top sleeve – cut 2
- 5** Under sleeve – cut 2
- 6** Front shoulder – cut 2
- 7** Back shoulder – cut 2
- 8** Epaulette – cut 4 in fabric and 4 in interfacing
- 9** Collar stand – cut 2 on the fold in fabric and 2 on the fold in interfacing
- 10** Belt – cut 2 in fabric and 2 in interfacing
- 11** Under collar – cut 1 on the fold in fabric and 1 on the fold in interfacing
- 12** Top collar – cut 1 on the fold in fabric and 1 on the fold in interfacing
- 13** Front storm flap – cut 1
- 14** Storm flap hem facing – cut 1 in fabric, 1 in interfacing
- 15** Belt loops – cut 1
- 16** Back facing – cut 1 on the fold in fabric and 1 on the fold in interfacing
- 17** Sleeve tab (optional) – cut 2 in fabric, 2 in interfacing

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

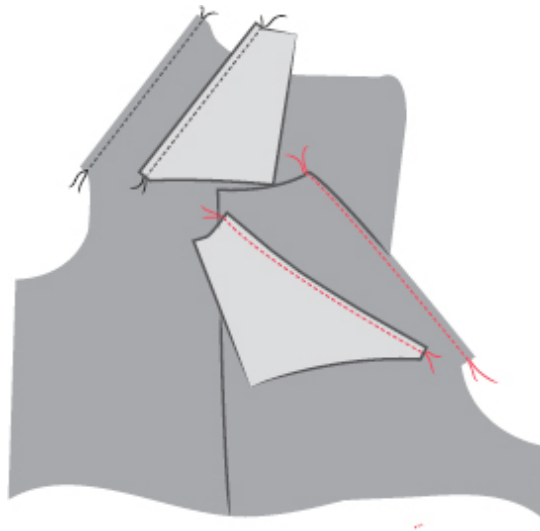
PREPARE THE PIECES

- 1 Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of the collar stand, top and under collar, front facings, back facing, epaulettes, belt, storm flap facing and optional sleeve tab and set them aside.
-

TIP

You can lay out the pattern pieces that need to be interfaced to judge the size of interfacing you will need. Then you can fuse this whole piece of interfacing to the fabric in one go, before cutting out the pieces. This saves cutting and interfacing each piece individually and is known as 'block fusing'.

- 2 [Staystitch](#) within the seam allowance of the raglan seam on the front shoulder piece, back shoulder piece, back panel and front panel. This is to avoid stretching.

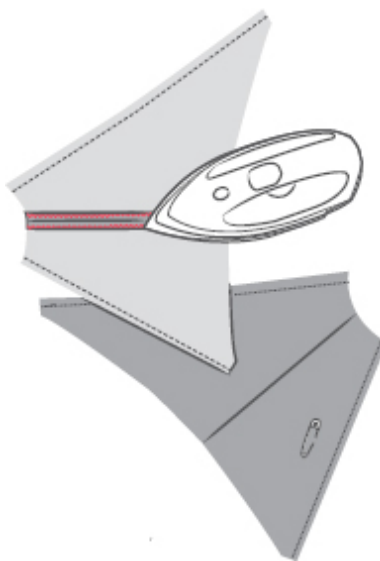


TIP

The front and back shoulder pieces are slightly different in shape. To avoid getting them mixed up, mark both fronts with a safety pin or a piece of masking tape – whatever method works for you!

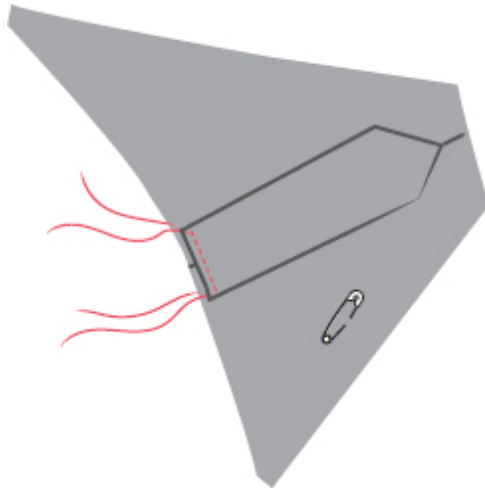
SEW THE SHOULDERS AND EPAULETTE

- 3** Take one front shoulder piece and one back shoulder piece. Pin and sew the shoulder seam, making sure you ease the back to the front in between the notches. Finish the seam allowances by overlocking (serging) or binding, then press the seam open. Repeat for the other front and back shoulder.



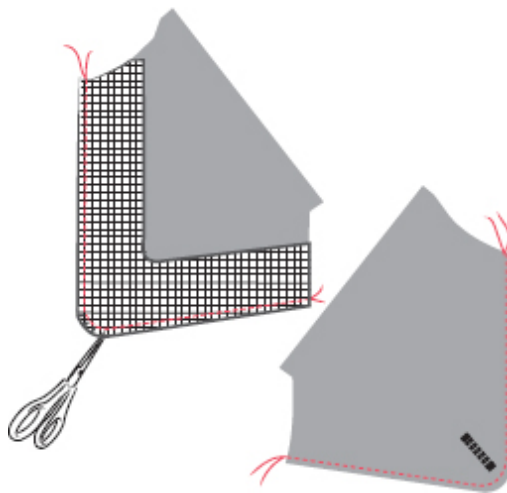
- 4** Place two epaulette pieces right sides together. Pin and stitch along both long edges and the point, leaving the short straight end open. Trim the corners of the seam allowances away to reduce bulk and turn right side out. Make the point nice and crisp, then press really well. Topstitch all around the edges. Repeat to make a second epaulette.
- 5** Position one epaulette on the right side of each shoulder, aligning the raw short edge of the epaulette with the armhole and centring

the epaulette over the shoulder seam. Machine tack in place within the armhole seam allowance.

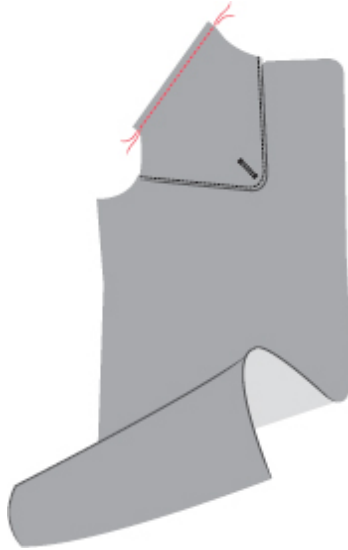


SEW THE STORM FLAP

- 6 Overlock or zigzag the inner edge of the facing (the smallest L-shape). With right sides together, pin and sew the storm flap facing to the storm flap along the curved edges only. Clip into the curved seam allowance. Turn right side out, then press really well and **topstitch** 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) away from the edge. Sew a **buttonhole**, using the marking from your paper pattern.

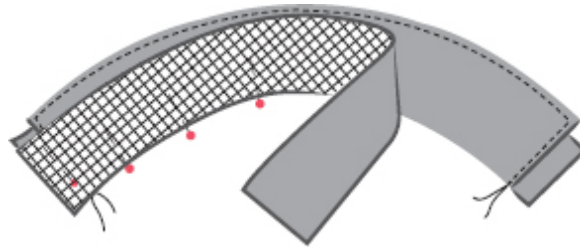


- 7** Machine tack the storm flap to the right side of the right front (as worn), with the wrong side of the flap against the right side of the front, aligning the shoulder and armhole area.

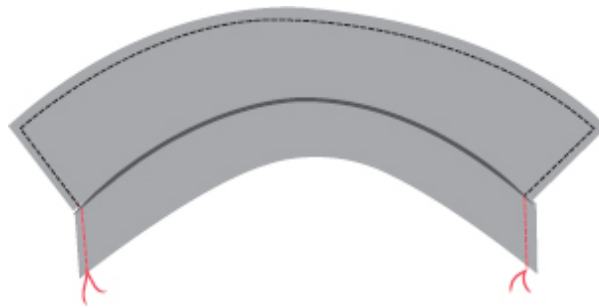


SEW THE COLLAR

- 8** Place the top collar and under collar pieces right sides together. Pin and stitch together along the short ends and the long outer curve. Trim the seam allowances at the points to avoid bulk, clip into the seam allowance of the curve and turn through to the right side. Press well and topstitch 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) away from the edges that you've just seamed.
- 9** Sandwich the collar between the two collar stand pieces, right sides together. Align the top edge of the stand with the raw inner curved edge of the collar. Pin along this edge and pin the collar stand pieces together at the short ends. When you sew, be careful not to catch the collar in the short ends of the stand. Trim away the seam allowance in the corners of the collar stand to avoid bulk.

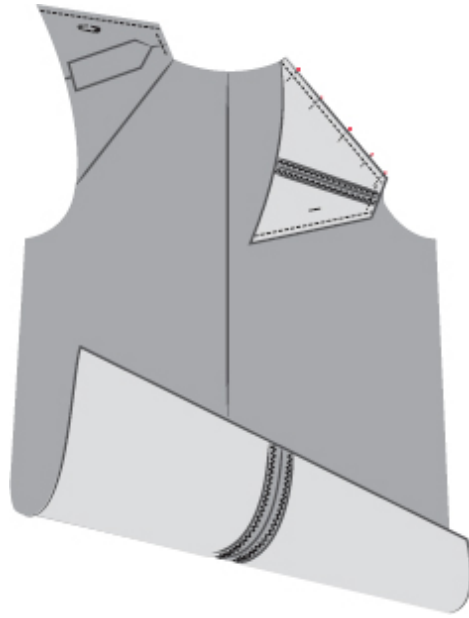


- 10** Turn the collar stand right side out and press really well, making sure any corners are crisp. Topstitch 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) away from the edge along the short ends only.



ASSEMBLE THE BACK AND FRONT

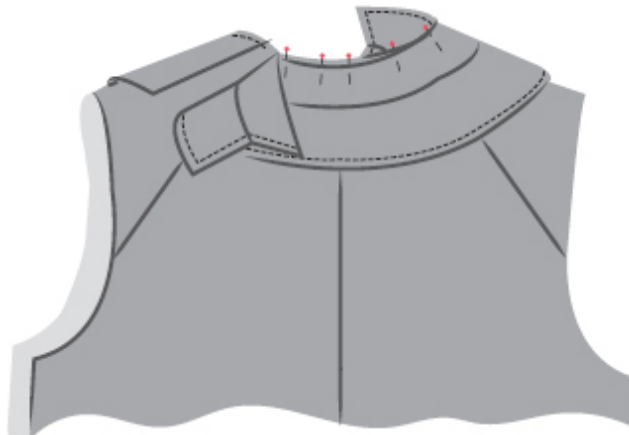
- 11** Pin and sew the two back pieces right sides together along the centre back seam. Overlock the seam allowances together, or bind.
- 12** With right sides together, pin and sew a back shoulder piece to the corresponding back panel along the raglan seam. Due to the angle of a raglan seam this involves a slight bias, but your staystitching should prevent any stretching. Overlock the seam allowances together, or bind. Press the seam up towards the shoulder piece. Repeat for the other shoulder.



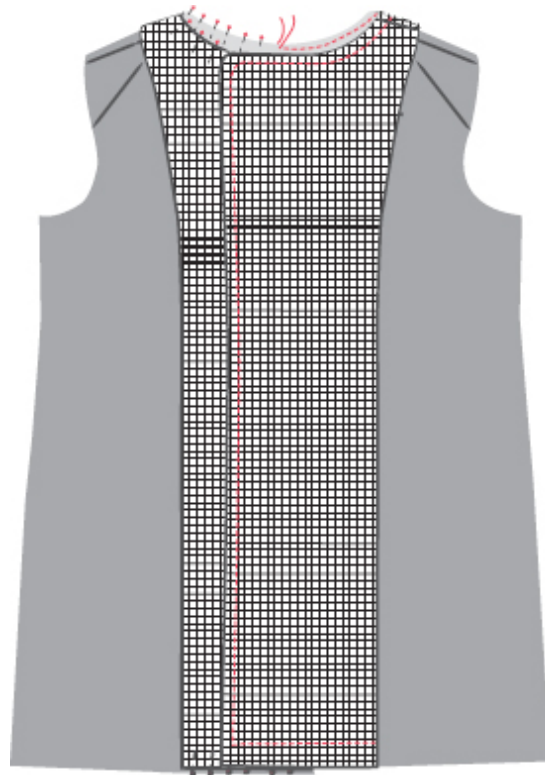
- 13** Sew the front pieces to the other side of the shoulder pieces in the same way. Your coat should now be a long, flat piece with fronts, shoulders and backs all attached.

ATTACH THE COLLAR AND FACINGS

- 14** On the right side of your coat neckline, match the raw edge of the collar stand to the raw edge of the neckline. The top collar should be the one visible on the outside when you do this. Match the notches and ease in between where necessary. Machine tack in place.



- 15** With right sides together, pin and stitch the front facings to the back facing at the shoulder seams. Press the seams open without finishing the seam allowances. Finish the back facing curved hem and the outside edge of the front facing in one go by overlocking or bias binding (this is indicated on your paper pattern as well).
- 16** With right sides together, matching the shoulder seams of the facing to the shoulder seams of the coat, pin the facing to the coat. The facing should be lying on the outside of the coat as you do this, with the interfaced side of the facing showing. Pin around the neckline, then down the front edge and along the short horizontal facing hem. The collar stand will be sandwiched between the facing and the body of the coat along the neckline. Sew from the centre back of the neckline and all the way down one side, and then from the centre back again and down the other side. Use a regular 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance everywhere except at the facing hem, where you should change to a 2.5-cm (1-in.) seam allowance.



17 Clip into the curved neckline and trim the seam allowance to 0.5–1 cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ in.). Trim off the corner at the neck and at the bottom of the centre front edge, to avoid bulk when you're turning it through. Turn the facing to the inside of the garment and press well. You can topstitch the front edge.

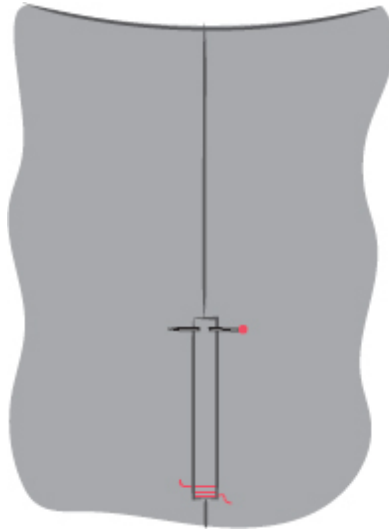
SEW THE SIDE SEAMS

18 With right sides together, pin and sew the side seams of the coat. Overlock or bind the seam allowances separately, then press the seams open.

SEW THE BELT LOOPS

19 Fold the belt loop pieces in half lengthways, wrong sides together, and press. Press the edges in to meet at the centre line. Fold in half again so that the raw edges are enclosed and press well. Topstitch 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) from the edge along the open side.

20 Fold the short ends of your belt loops under by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) and press. Pin the belt loops in place on the side seams of the coat, using the marks on the paper pattern to help you. Sew across the top and bottom edge of each loop, close to the edge. Go back and forth a few times with a small zigzag or a straight stitch with a short stitch length.



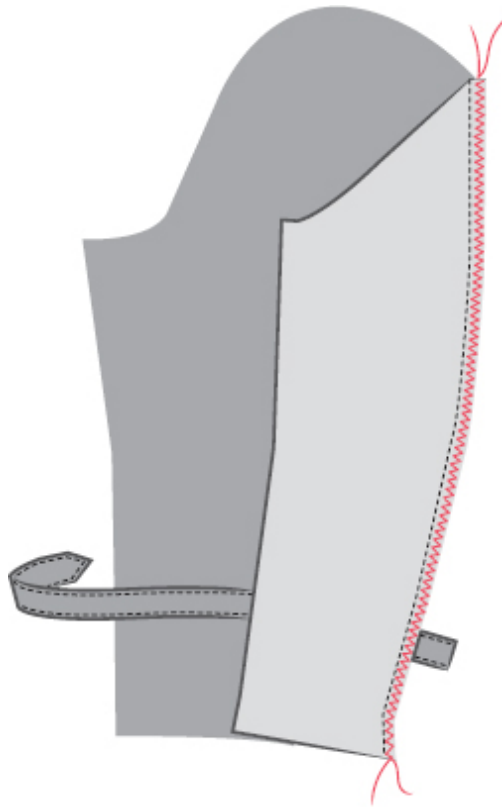
SEW THE SLEEVE TABS (OPTIONAL) AND SLEEVES

It's best to lay the sleeves out as a pair before you start sewing them together, to make sure you are making a left and a right.

21 If you are making the sleeve tabs, fold each one in half, right sides together, and sew the point and the bottom edge, leaving the short straight edge open. Trim the seam allowances as short as possible, then turn the tabs right side out. Create a crisp point and press well, then topstitch around all edges except the short, open edge.

22 Place the tabs on top of the right side of each top sleeve, following the markings on the paper pattern. Tack the short open edge in place within the seam allowance.

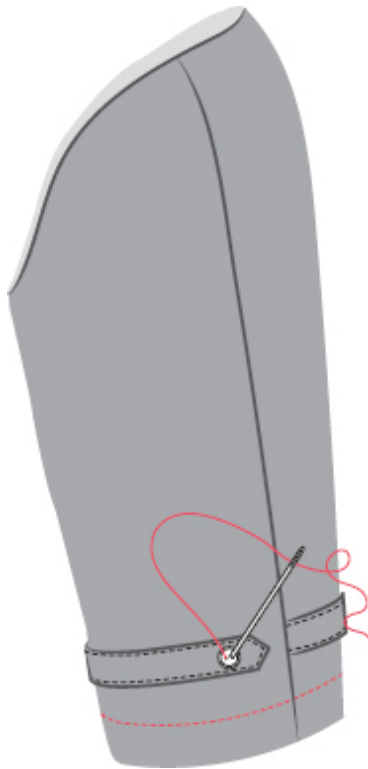
23 With right sides together, pin and stitch the top sleeve to the under sleeve along the long seam separately. The left front (as worn) - the overlapping side - has five buttonholes closest to the front edge and five non-functional buttons. The right front (as worn) - the underneath - has a row of five buttons and a buttonhole.



24 Pin the top sleeve to the under sleeve along the remaining seam, right sides together, gently easing the under sleeve to match the upper sleeve between the notches. Stitch, then overlock or bind the seam allowances separately. Press the seam open. Repeat for the second sleeve.



- 25** At the point of each tab, sew a button through both the tab and the sleeve.



- 26** Zigzag or overlock the sleeve hem, then press 2.5 cm (1 in.) to the wrong side. Topstitch 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) from the hem edge and press really well.

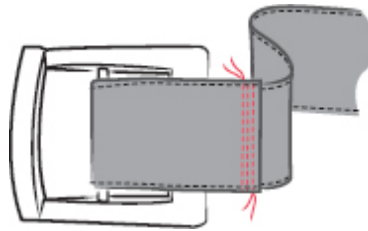
- 27** Insert the [sleeves](#) into the armholes, easing the sleeve head in. If you are struggling with this, use a line of gathering stitches to gently draw up the sleeve head. Sew, then trim the seam allowances in the armhole to 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Overlock or bind the seam allowances together (treat them all as one) and press towards the sleeve.

MAKE THE BELT

- 28** Place the two belt pieces right sides together. Pin and stitch along both long edges and the point, leaving the short straight

end open. Trim the corners to reduce bulk and turn right side out. Make sure you get a crisp and neat point. Press really well and topstitch 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in.) from the edge around the three edges you've just sewn.

- 29** Holding the buckle in the way you will see it from the front, slide the unsewn end of your belt under one side, then over the centre bar of the buckle, then loop it back by 7 cm (about 3 in.) in the direction you started from. On the back of the belt, turn the raw edge of the belt under by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) and topstitch really securely by going back and forth a few times.



- 30** Put the belt through the belt loops.

HEM THE COAT

- 31** Turn the remainder of the hem (between the facings) to the wrong side by 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) and then 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) and topstitch 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) from the hem edge.

SEW ALL BUTTONS

- 32** Using the markings from the paper pattern piece, sew your [buttonholes](#) and [buttons](#). Make sure you have tried a buttonhole with your chosen button before sewing them into the garment! This coat is double breasted and, being a man's coat, it fastens left over right. The left front (as worn) - the overlapping side - has five buttonholes closest to the front edge and five non-functional buttons. The inside of the left front has one button. The right

front (as worn) - the underneath - has a row of five buttons and a buttonhole.

33 To hold the overlap in place, the inside of the left front (as worn) should hold a button. Use the button marking (remove) on the facing pattern piece to position this. This button sits directly behind a front button.

34 To finish the epaulettes, sew a button on the pointed end through both the epaulette and the shoulder of the coat.



Pressing is the key to a professional finish on any garment. Before you press, test the temperature of the iron on a scrap piece of the fabric you're using, as there is nothing worse than singeing your garment after it's been beautifully sewn and having to start again! Begin with the wrong side of the fabric, placing a pressing cloth if needed to protect delicate fabrics. Press, rather than slide, the iron to avoid distortion. Pay attention to seams and darts, using a tailor's ham or sleeve board for curved areas. For crisp edges, press seams open or to one side, depending on the pattern instructions. Finally, hang the garment to let the fabric cool and set.

MATT GAGE
SERIES 6 (2020)

@mattgagesewing

NOTE

A buttonhole is typically 2–3 mm (about 1/8 in.) longer than the diameter of the button. Make sure you try a buttonhole first with your chosen button, before committing to sewing the buttonholes onto the garment. This way you can adjust the buttonhole if needed.









Patchwork coat

This is a fun project with a lot of scope for creativity and personal touches. Allow plenty of time to make your patchwork! The instructions are for a coat with a patchwork front and sleeves and a plain back. Size up if you are in between sizes or at the top of a size.

Materials

- Approx. 160–180 10-cm (4-in.) co-ordinating squares of fabric for the patchwork
- Sizes 8–14: 2.8 m (3 yd) backing fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
Sizes 16–22: 3.4 m (3¾ yd) backing fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 2.5 m (1¾ yd) fusible wadding (batting)
- Approx. 7 m (7⅝ yd) bias binding, 25 mm (1 in.) wide
- ¼-in. machine foot (optional)
- Walking foot (optional)
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Beginner

Fabric suggestions

Cotton.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

You can choose which pattern pieces to make up in patchwork. You could go for the front and sleeves, as in the sample, but you could also patchwork the back to amazing effect. You will need more fabric for the patchwork if you also want to patchwork the back.

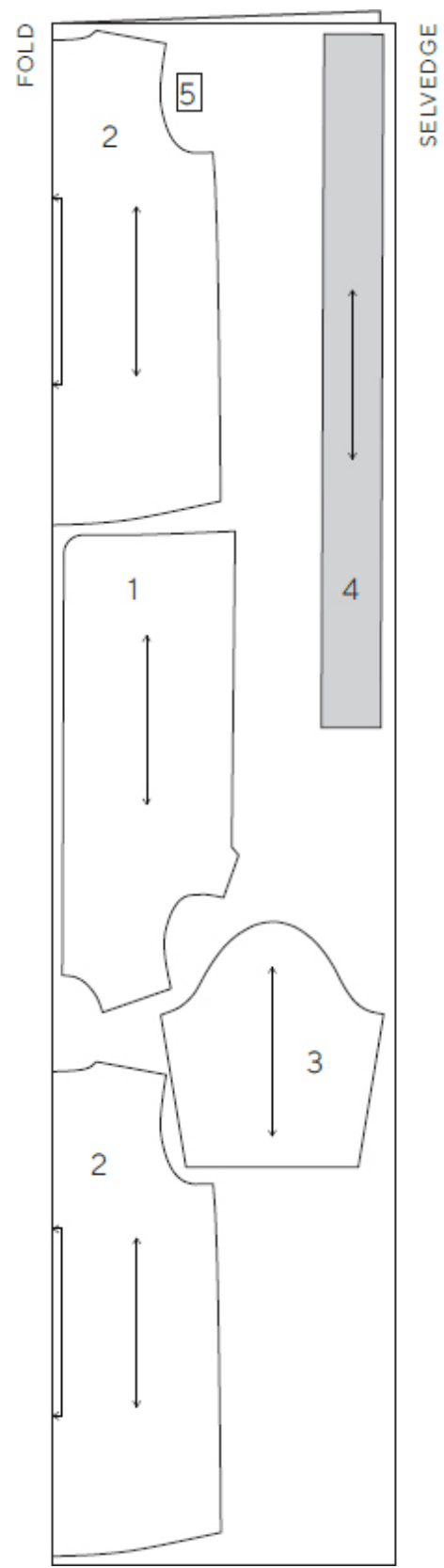
You may wish to bind the seam allowances of the internal seams on this project, as they will be seen on the inside of the coat. For this you will need a few more metres of bias binding.

Our sample also features patch pockets, made using the Zero Waste Trousers template.

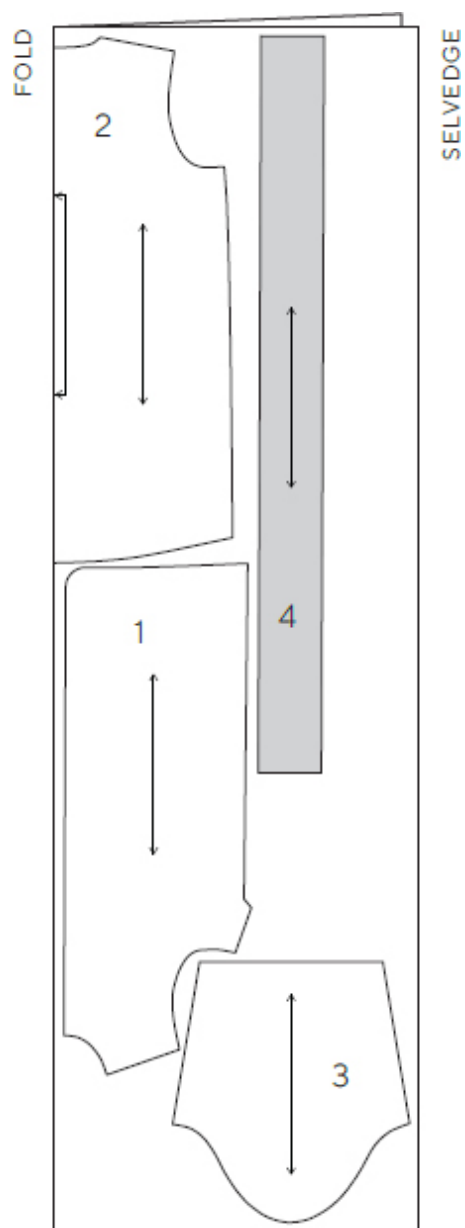
Finished garment measurements	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Front length (cm)	98.5	99	99.5	100	101	101.5	102	102.5
Front length (in.)	38 $\frac{3}{4}$	39	39 $\frac{1}{4}$	39 $\frac{1}{2}$	39 $\frac{3}{4}$	40	40 $\frac{1}{4}$	40 $\frac{1}{2}$
Bust (cm)	100.5	105.5	110.5	115.5	120.5	125.5	130.5	135.5
Bust (in.)	39 $\frac{1}{2}$	41 $\frac{1}{2}$	43 $\frac{1}{2}$	45 $\frac{1}{2}$	47 $\frac{1}{2}$	49 $\frac{1}{2}$	51 $\frac{1}{2}$	53 $\frac{1}{2}$
Waist (cm)	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140
Waist (in.)	41 $\frac{1}{4}$	43 $\frac{3}{4}$	45 $\frac{1}{4}$	47 $\frac{3}{4}$	49 $\frac{1}{4}$	51 $\frac{1}{4}$	53 $\frac{3}{4}$	55 $\frac{1}{4}$
Hip (cm)	106	111	116	121	126	131	136	141
Hip (in.)	41 $\frac{3}{4}$	43 $\frac{3}{4}$	45 $\frac{3}{4}$	47 $\frac{3}{4}$	49 $\frac{3}{4}$	51 $\frac{1}{2}$	53 $\frac{1}{2}$	55 $\frac{1}{2}$
Sleeve length (cm)	48.5	49	49.5	50	50.5	51	51.5	52
Sleeve length (in.)	19	19 $\frac{1}{4}$	19 $\frac{1}{2}$	19 $\frac{3}{4}$	20	20	20 $\frac{1}{4}$	20 $\frac{1}{2}$

CUTTING GUIDE

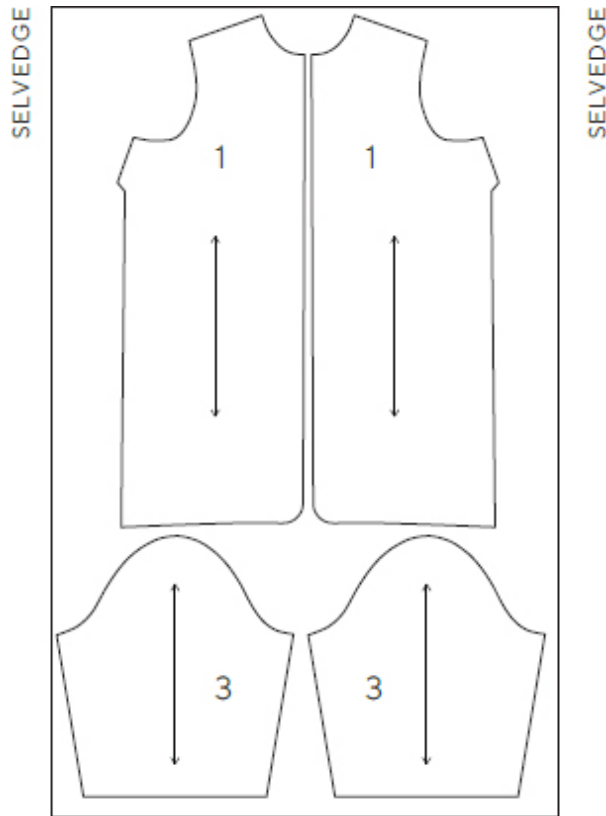
ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide backing/lining



ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide wadding



Patchwork fabric



- 1** Front – cut 2 in patchwork, 2 in wadding (batting) and 2 in backing fabric
 - 2** Back – cut 2 on the fold in backing fabric, 2 on the fold in wadding
 - 3** Sleeve – cut 2 in patchwork, 2 in wadding and 2 in backing fabric
 - 4** Tie – cut 1 in backing fabric and 1 in wadding
 - 5** Tie loop – cut 2 in backing fabric
-

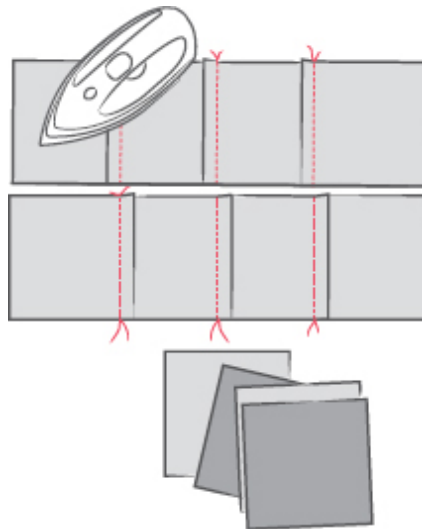
TIP

Cut the wadding and backing fabric pieces for the fronts and sleeves about 2.5 cm (1 in.) bigger all round than the patchwork pieces, as the quilting process ‘pulls in’ the fabric.

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE THE PATCHWORK

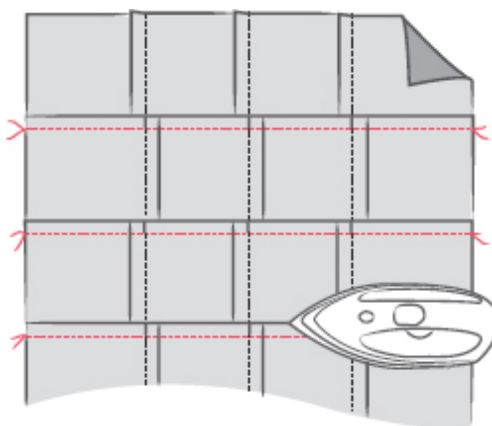
- 1** Lay out your patchwork squares in your chosen pattern. Think about the colour, pattern and texture placement and how you will position your pattern pieces on the patchwork. For each sleeve, you will need a rectangle 6 squares across and 8 squares down – 48 squares for each piece. For each front, you will need a rectangle 5 squares across and 15 squares down – 75 squares for each piece. (You may need more if you decide to place your squares on the diagonal.)
- 2** Using a 6-mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ -in.) seam allowance, stitch the patchwork squares for each rectangle together. Press all the seam allowances to one side (if you are using a darker fabric anywhere, press towards that one). Press the seam allowances in opposite directions on alternate rows – this removes some bulk in the seam when you come to stitch the rows together.



TIP

You may find it easier and faster to chain piece the squares – that is, sew them together in pairs without cutting the thread after each pair. Just keep sewing, then feed the next pair of squares under the machine foot. The seam allowances in patchwork are generally 6 mm (1/4 in.) – so if you intend to do a lot of patchwork, it's worth investing in a 1/4-in. machine foot to keep the seam allowances consistent.

- 3** Next, stitch the rows together, nestling the seam allowances together as shown in the illustration. When you have stitched all the rows for each piece together, press all the seams between the rows to one side, all in the same direction.



- 4** Lay out the four patchwork fabrics right side up. Select the area of patchwork you want to feature in your garment and place the pattern pieces on top. Pin and cut out two fronts and two sleeves. Mark the notches and the darts on the front pieces.

TIP

Remember to flip the paper pattern before you cut the second one of each piece, so that you cut a left and a right.

When you cut the fronts, make sure that the patchwork seams align across the two pieces.

PREPARE THE WADDING (BATTING) & BACKING

- 5** Lay out the wadding and place the front patchwork pieces on top. Mark the dart positions, then cut the darts out of the wadding, cutting just inside the marked stitching line, to reduce bulk.

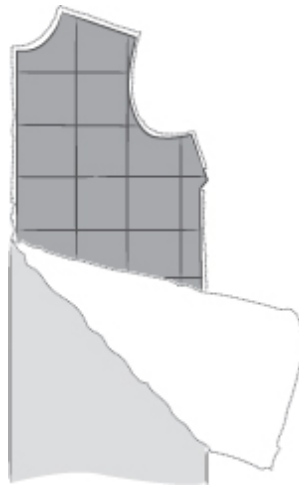


TIP

After I'd sewn the coat, I added patch pockets using the Zero Waste Trousers pocket template (see [step 1](#)). Pin the pockets in place and try the coat on before stitching them. I used top fabric, wadding and backing fabric, finished with bias binding.

- 6** Cut the fabric backing pieces for the fronts, again making them 2.5 cm (1 in.) larger than the patchwork pieces. You now have a patchwork piece and a slightly larger wadding and fabric backing piece for each coat front. Mark the position of the darts on the backing fabric but do not cut them out.

- 7** Cut a wadding and a fabric backing piece for each sleeve, and cut a wadding and two backing pieces (one to use as backing, one to use as the outer layer) for the coat back.
- 8** Place the backing for the front pieces right side down on your work surface, with the wadding on top. Then centre the patchwork fronts right side up on top, so that the wadding is sandwiched in the middle. Make sure all the pieces are flat and that the darts line up. Using a hot, dry iron, press the fronts to adhere the wadding. Then turn the pieces over and press the backing side. Repeat with the coat back and sleeves.



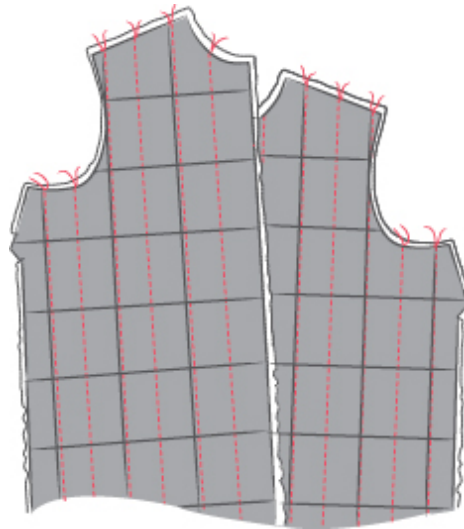
TIP

If you feel the layers will shift too much when you take it to the iron, hand tack (baste) around the pieces with big stitches to keep them together.

TIME TO QUILT

- 9** Set up a walking foot, or the dual feed on your machine, if you have one, and set the stitch length slightly longer than normal

(3.5 – 4). Starting from the centre of the front, **topstitch** a vertical line all the way from the shoulder to the hem through all three layers. Add another vertical line to the right of the first, then another line to the left, spacing the lines evenly. Repeat until you have quilted the entire front. Do not turn the work – only quilt the front pieces, not the sleeves or back piece.



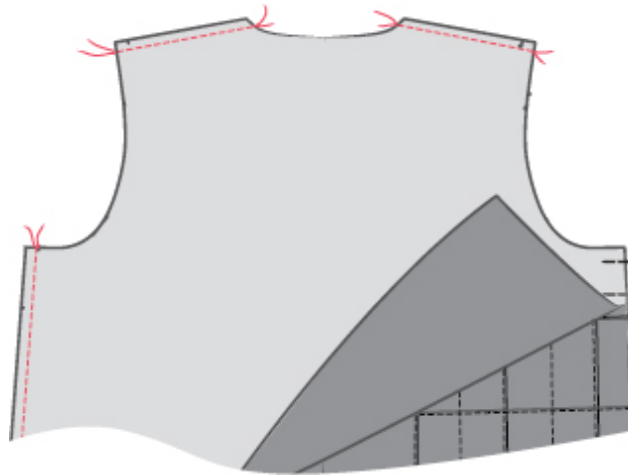
TIP

Space the lines evenly and keep the distance in proportion with the patchwork squares. For example, you might choose to stitch down the middle of each square and 'in the ditch' of the seams between the squares.

10 Once you have quilted the front, trim off the excess backing and wadding so that all layers are even. Finish the raw edges at the sides, shoulders and armholes.

SEW THE COAT

- 11** Pin and sew the bust [darts](#) on the coat fronts, making sure you catch the edge of the cut-out wadding dart in your stitching. Press the darts down, towards the hem.
- 12** With right sides together, lining up the darts and corresponding notches, pin the fronts to the back at the shoulder and side seams. Stitch in place.



- 13** With right sides together, stitch the underarm seams. To finish the sleeve hems, use [bias binding](#) that matches the binding you will use for other parts of the garment, overlapping the ends in an unseen area, such as the back or the part of the sleeve that faces your waist when worn.
- 14** With right sides together, lining up the underarm and side seam and matching the notches, pin the [sleeves](#) into the armholes. Stitch in place. Where the underarm and side seams meet, push the seam allowances in opposite directions so that they sit neatly next to each other to reduce bulk.

BIND THE EDGES

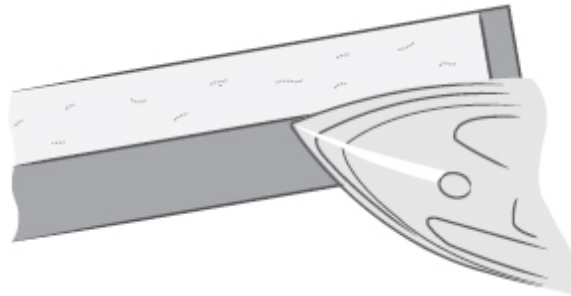
- 15** Open out your bias binding. With the coat right side out, lining up the raw edge of the binding with the outer edge of the coat,

lay the end of the binding at the bottom of the centre back, overlapping the centre point by 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.). Pin the binding in place along bottom, centre front edges and neckline of the coat. Starting 5 cm (2 in.) from the centre back point, sew the binding in place, mitring the corners and overlapping the ends.

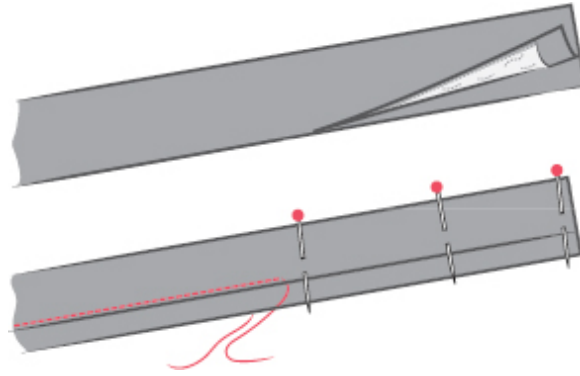
MAKE THE TIE

If your fusible wadding (batting) is chunky, then you may have to leave it out. You could replace it with something else that adds a bit of volume, such as flannel. If you still want to use wadding but are worried that it might be too bulky, you can widen the tie a bit so that it will be easier to turn through to the right side once sewn.

- 16** Lay the waist tie on your ironing board, with the wrong side facing up. Lay the wadding (batting) on top. At each short end of the tie, cut the wadding 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) shorter than the fabric. Press the short ends of the fabric to the wrong side by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.). Now treat the fabric and wadding as one layer and fold up the bottom long edge by 4 cm ($1\frac{1}{2}$ in.). Press slowly on top of this area to fuse the wadding and tie together.

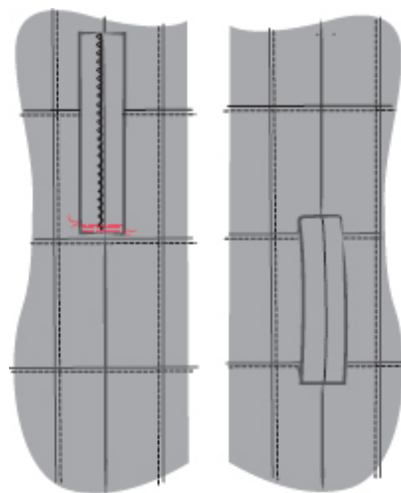


- 17** Fold over the top long edge of the tie so that the top raw edge meets the bottom folded edge. Fold under the raw edge by 1–1.5 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ – $\frac{5}{8}$ in.) and pin in place. Topstitch along this folded edge. Sew a line of topstitching on the other long edge of the tie and the short edges.



18 On each tie loop piece, overlock or zigzag one of the long sides. Press the other long side to the wrong side by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.), then press the finished edge over that by 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.). Topstitch (with a straight stitch or a zigzag) through the middle of the belt loop to secure the folds.

19 The position of each loop is indicated on your paper pattern. Lay the loop wrong side up with one short edge 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) below the upper marking on your pattern. Stitch into position by going back and forth a few times on a small zigzag. Fold the loop down so you can see the right side, then fold the remaining short edge under by 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Secure into position by topstitching with a straight stitch or a small zigzag.





One of my favourite challenges on the show was the patchwork jacket we had to make in Reduce, Reuse, Recycle week. It was the first time I had ever had a go at patchwork or quilting and it was so fun to make. I can remember that challenge feeling like I was taking part in a fun sewing class rather than competing in a competition! Since the show, I've sewn lots more garments to use up fabric scraps, with one of my favourites being a quilted gilet made up of lots of hexagonal fabric pieces in a rainbow of colours. It's one of my most-worn handmade pieces and always reminds me of the Bee when I wear it.

BROGAN ALLARD

SERIES 8 (2022)

@the_crafty_pie









Unisex fleece jacket

This unisex style is a classic during colder months or for outdoor activities. We made our sample in a colourblock style to add a bit more interest. The fleece has a zip-up collar and a zipped pocket. Size up in this jacket for a more comfortable fit. There is also a pattern piece to make a classic sweatshirt-style front pocket with room for both hands.

Materials

- 2 m (2½ yd) fabric, 150 cm (60 in.) wide
- 50 cm (20 in.) lightweight iron-on interfacing
- 30 cm (12 in.) nylon fabric for the pocket, if your top fabric is heavy (optional)
- 1 exposed front zip, 41 cm (16 in.) long
- 1 exposed pocket zip, 15 cm (6 in.) long
- Zip foot
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

Fleece-backed sweatshirting, lightweight fleece.

Design notes

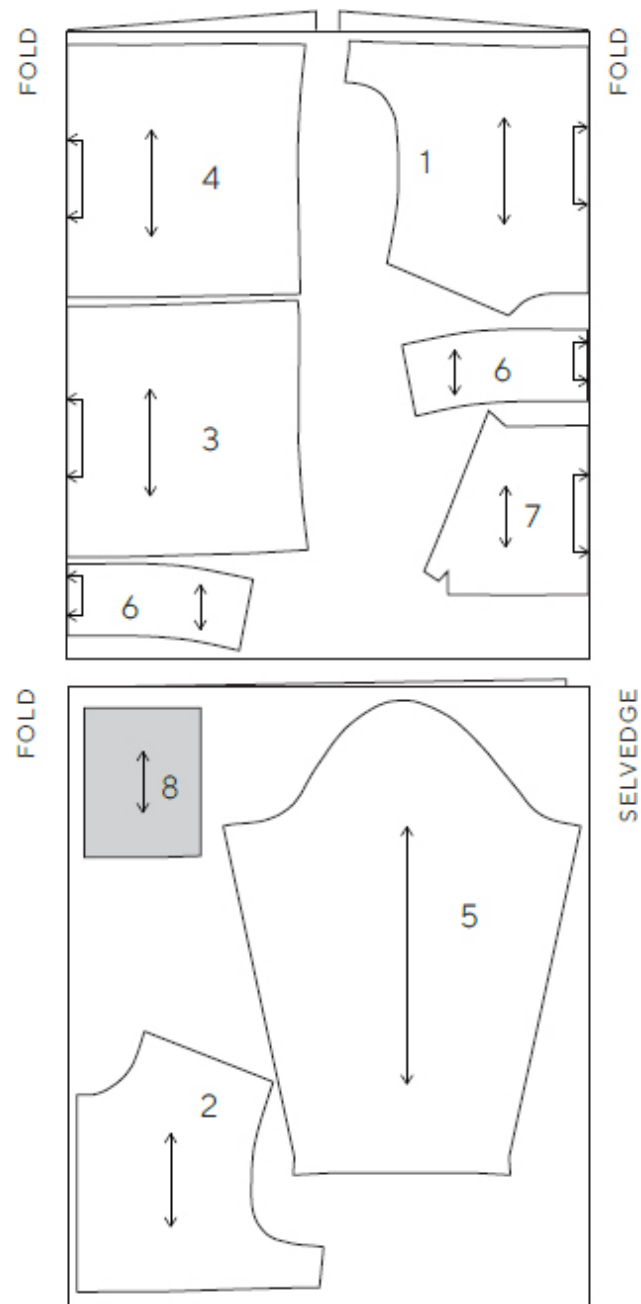
Use a 1.5-cm (⁵/₈-in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

The patch pocket can be cut from the same fabric as the main garment, if it’s not too thick. Otherwise an interfaced nylon works well.

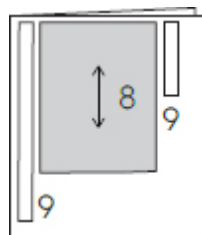
Finished measurements	34	36	38	40	42	44
Front length (cm)	63.5	64	64.5	65	66	66.5
Front length (in.)	25	25¼	25½	25½	26	26¼
Chest (cm)	103	108	113	118	123	128
Chest (in.)	40½	42½	44½	46½	48½	50½
Waist (cm)	99	104	109	114	119	124
Waist (in.)	39	41	43	45	47	49
Sleeve length (cm)	61.5	62	62.5	63	63.5	64
Sleeve length (in.)	24¼	24½	24½	24¾	25	25¼

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Interfacing



- 1** Back yoke – cut 1 on the fold
- 2** Front yoke – cut 2
- 3** Back body – cut 1 on the fold
- 4** Front body – cut 1 on the fold
- 5** Sleeve – cut 2
- 6** Collar – cut 2 on the fold
- 7** Front pocket – cut 1 on the fold
- 8** Patch pocket – cut 1 in fabric or 1 in fabric and 1 in interfacing
- 9** Interfacing strips – cut 2 short and 2 long in interfacing

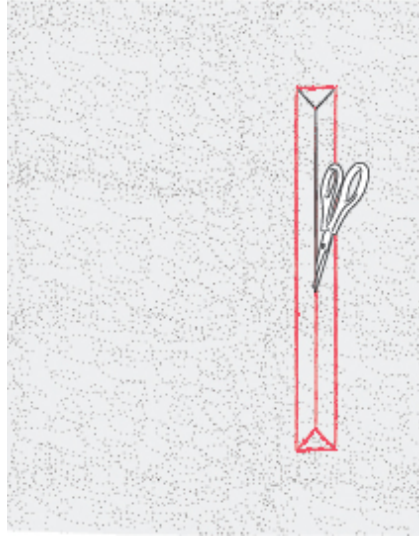
THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE THE PIECES

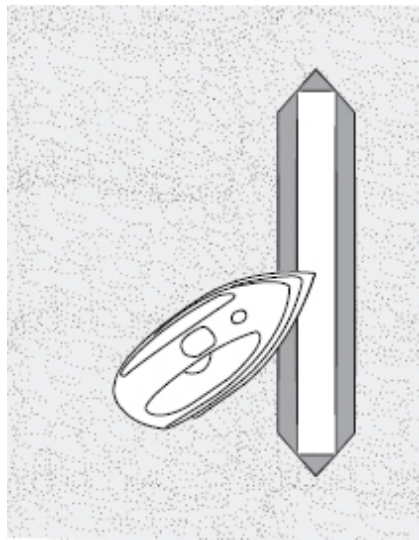
- 1** Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply iron-on interfacing to the wrong side of the patch pocket piece. Also apply the strips of interfacing to the centre front edges of the front yoke pieces and the centre front edges of one of the collar pieces.

SEW THE POCKET ZIP

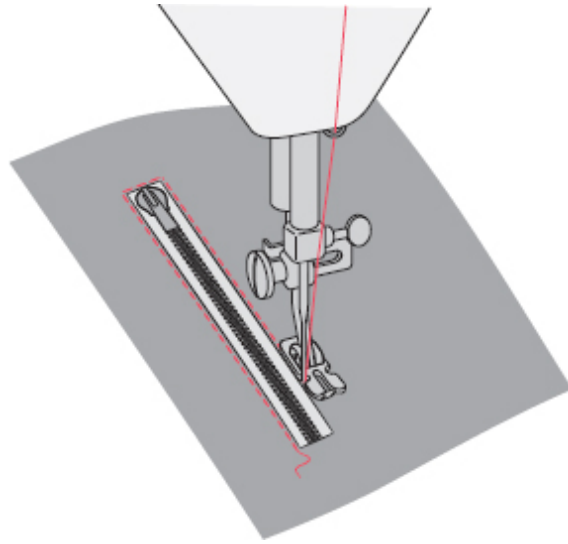
- 2** Make sure you have transferred the zip markings very clearly from your paper pattern onto the patch pocket piece. This is best done on the wrong side after you have interfaced. Cut along the centre line until you meet the start of the triangle at each short end. Then cut from this point right up to, but not through, the corners of the rectangle.



- 3** Push the fabric inside the rectangle through the opening to the wrong side of the fabric. Carefully press along the edges of the rectangle, using a pressing cloth if necessary.

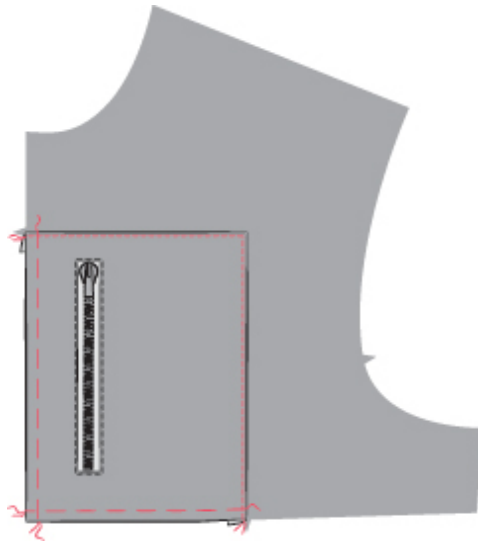


- 4** Place the pocket piece right side down on the table. Take your short zip and centre the teeth inside the rectangular opening, with the zip right side down. Pin in place. You may find it useful to tack (baste) the zip in place, as well. Turn the pocket piece over. With the right side facing up, stitch around the rectangular opening, close to the edge of the fabric, pivoting at the corners.



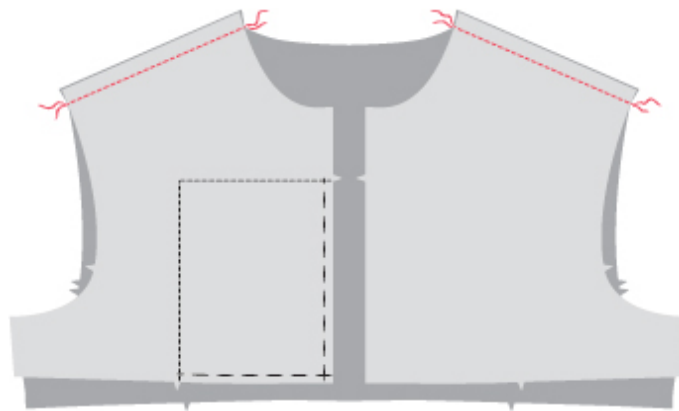
SEW THE POCKET TO THE YOKE

- 5** Press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side along the top edge of the pocket and the side that's opposite the zip.
- 6** Take your left (as worn) front yoke piece and align the raw edges of the pocket with the centre front and bottom edges of the yoke, with the wrong side of the pocket against the right side of the yoke. The pressed edges should match the notches. Pin in place. Machine tack the pocket to the yoke within the seam allowance along the left and bottom edges. Topstitch the pocket along the top and right-hand edges, close to the folded edge.



SEW THE SHOULDER SEAMS

- 7** With right sides together align the shoulder seams of the front and back yoke pieces. Pin and stitch. Press the seam allowances open.



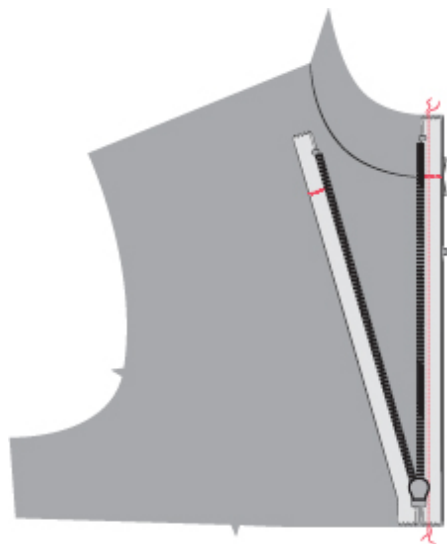
SEW THE FRONT ZIP AND COLLAR

- 8** Take the interfaced collar piece (this will form the outer collar) and, with right sides together, align the bottom edge with the neck opening of the yoke pieces. Match the notches with the shoulder seams and align the centre front edges. Pin, stitch and

press the seam allowances open. Press the collar piece up, away from the yoke.

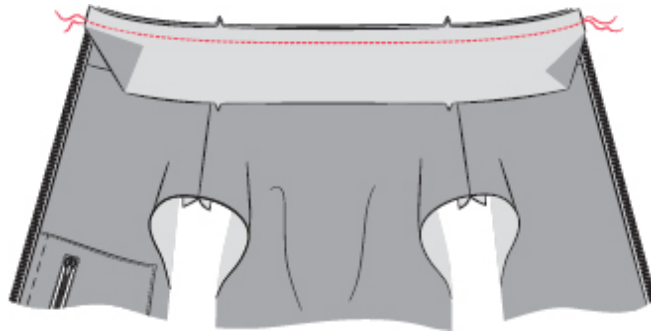


- 9** Take your long zip. With the yoke and collar right side up and the zip facing down, align the zip with the centre front edge of the yoke and the collar. The top of the zip tape (not the top of the zip itself) should align with the raw top edge of the collar. On the back of the zip tape, mark the seam that connects the yoke to the collar. Take the zip off and make sure you have this mark on both edges of the zip tape. Now unzip the zip and lay one side down again in the same way – right side down, with the yoke right side up. Match your mark to the collar seam. The zip pull should sit 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) below the raw top edge of the collar and the zip stop should sit 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) above the raw edge at the bottom of the centre front. Pin in place and sew from the top to the bottom of the zip using a zip foot.

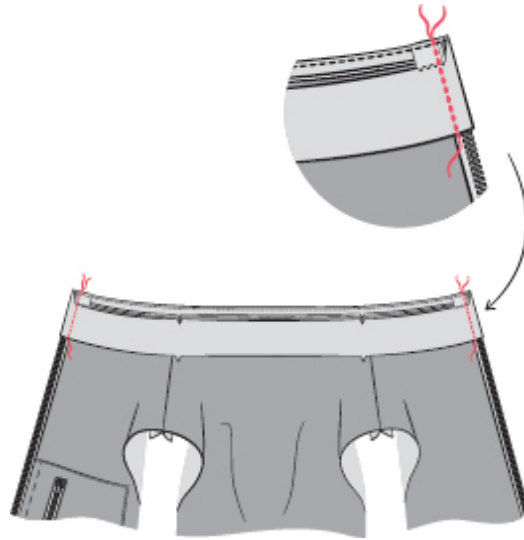


10 Repeat for the other side of the zip, carefully lining up the mark on the zip tape with the collar seam so that everything will line up when you zip up the zip.

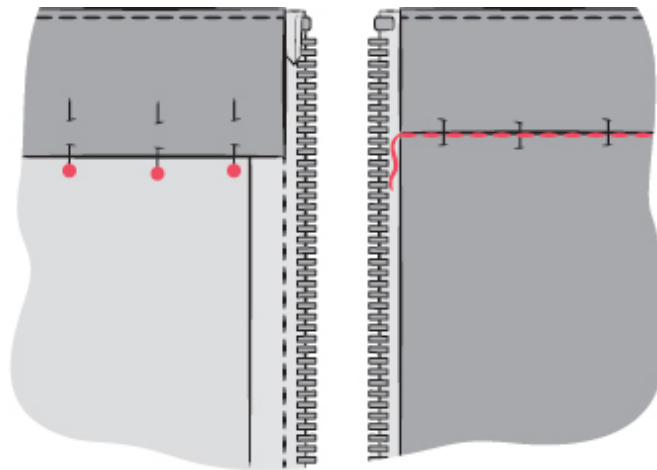
11 Take your second collar piece (the inner collar) and lay it on top of the one attached to your garment, right sides together. Match up the top raw edges. Pin and stitch, then lift the inner collar up to reveal the right side and press the seam allowances towards the inner collar. **Understitch** along the top edge, on the side of the inner collar.



12 Fold the inner collar piece down again, right sides together with the other collar piece. Align the centre front edges of both collar pieces, sandwiching the zip between the two layers of the collar. Pin and stitch close to the zip teeth using a zip foot. Trim the seam allowances at the corners, turn the collar right side out and give everything a good press, using a pressing cloth if necessary.



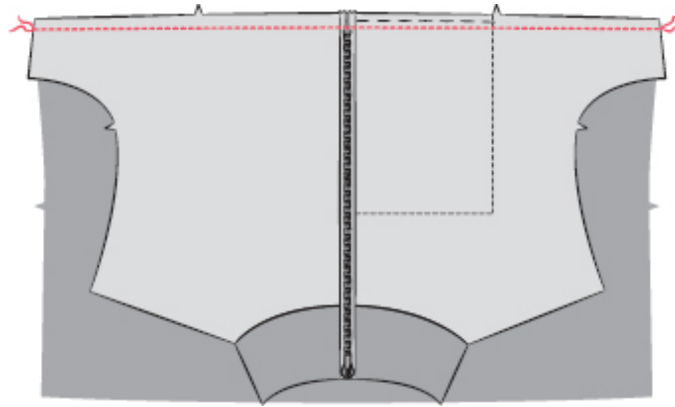
- 13** On the inside of the garment, pin the unattached edge of the inner collar in place around the neckline. The raw edge doesn't need to be turned under; it should line up with the original neckline of the yokes. Turn the garment to the right side and [stitch in the ditch](#) along the neckline seam to finish the collar, making sure you catch the bottom edge of the inner collar all the way around.



SEW THE BODY OF THE GARMENT

- 14** Place your front body piece and front yoke piece right sides together. Align the top edge of the body with the lower edge of

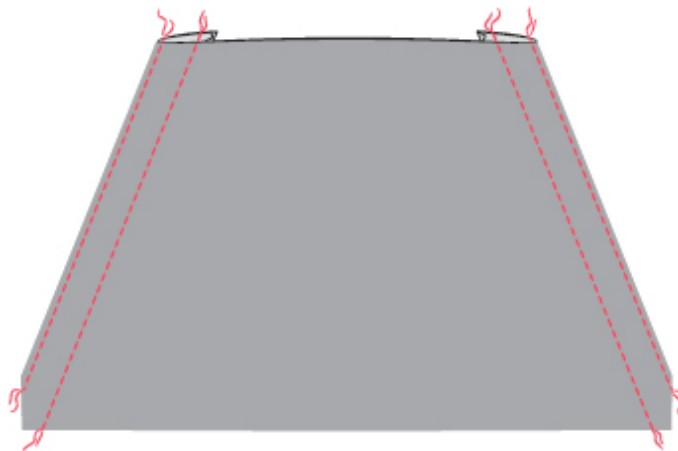
the yoke, matching the notches. Pin, stitch and press the seam allowances down towards the body. The lower edge of the patch pocket and the end of the centre front zip will be caught in this seam.



15 Repeat step 14 with the back body piece and back yoke.

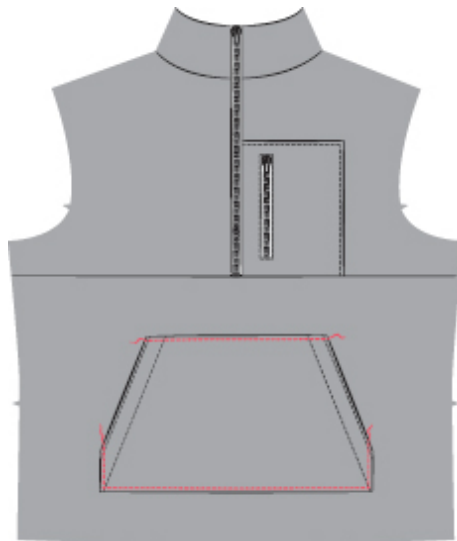
ATTACH THE FRONT 'KANGAROO' POCKET (OPTIONAL)

16 Fold the slanted edges to the wrong side along the pattern line and press. Stitch two lines of topstitching parallel to each other, one very close to the folded edge and the other about 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) away.



17 Now fold and press 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side along the top, bottom and short side edges.

18 Lay the pocket on the jacket front, with the straight bottom edge about 7 cm ($2\frac{3}{4}$ in.) away from the raw edge and parallel to the hem. Topstitch close to the folded edges of the pocket, leaving the slanted pocket mouths open.



19 With right sides together, align the side seams of the front and back body, matching the notches. Pin, stitch and press the seam allowances open.

SEW THE SLEEVES

20 Fold a sleeve right sides together to align the underarm seam. Pin, stitch and press the seam open. Repeat for the second sleeve.

21 [Set in the sleeves](#), easing the sleeve into the armhole slightly as you go. Stitch and press the seam allowance towards the sleeve. Repeat for the second sleeve.

HEM THE GARMENT

22 Press the garment hem towards the wrong side by 2.5 cm (1 in.).

You can either use a [twin needle](#) to finish this hem or zigzag over the hem edge to secure it to the garment.

23 Finish the sleeve hem in the same way, also using a 2.5-cm (1-in.) hem allowance.



A fond memory of my time on the show was during the technical challenge, I became frustrated due to a poor fabric choice, and nothing seemed to be working out. I thought my time at the Sewing Bee was up. Luckily the encouragement from the other contestants kept me going and I ended up being saved that episode. Jen kindly gave me some of her fabric so I could finish my garment – a tracksuit that looked like a Hungarian Olympics uniform from the 1980s! The show never felt like a real competition because, even in the worst moments, everyone was always there for each other.

My top sewing tip is overlocking inner corners. Overlock until you reach the corner then pull the fabric, so it makes a straight line on the side of the blade and a triangular fold like a dart on the left side opposite the corner. Overlock on a straight line and voilà! You'd be surprised!

RICCARDO GUIDO

SERIES 5 (2019)

@rifallo

TIP

Take care when pressing heat-sensitive fabrics such as nylon or fleece. They will need a pressing cloth and/or low heat.

TIP

To work out what is the back of the armhole once your sleeve is assembled, look for the double notch. This will help you figure out which one is left and which one is right, too!

TIP

If you are struggling to ease the sleeve head in neatly, you can run a line of [gathering stitches](#) across the top of the sleeve and use this to draw the sleeve head up to match the armhole.











Backpack

Try your hand at making a backpack from scratch with this pattern. The backpack has a lining and features a zipped compartment at the front, a roll-top closure and adjustable straps. You will need some bag making hardware for this, which is easiest found from an online retailer.

Materials

- 1 m (1⅛ yd) top fabric
- 1 m (1⅛ yd) lining fabric
- 5 m (5½ yd) webbing
- 20-cm (8-in.) zip for pocket
- 1 D-ring
- 3 sliders
- 2 rectangular loops
- 1 snap hook fastener
- Zip foot
- Matching sewing thread

- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Intermediate

Fabric suggestions

Cotton twill, canvas, denim.

Design notes

Use a 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout, unless otherwise stated.

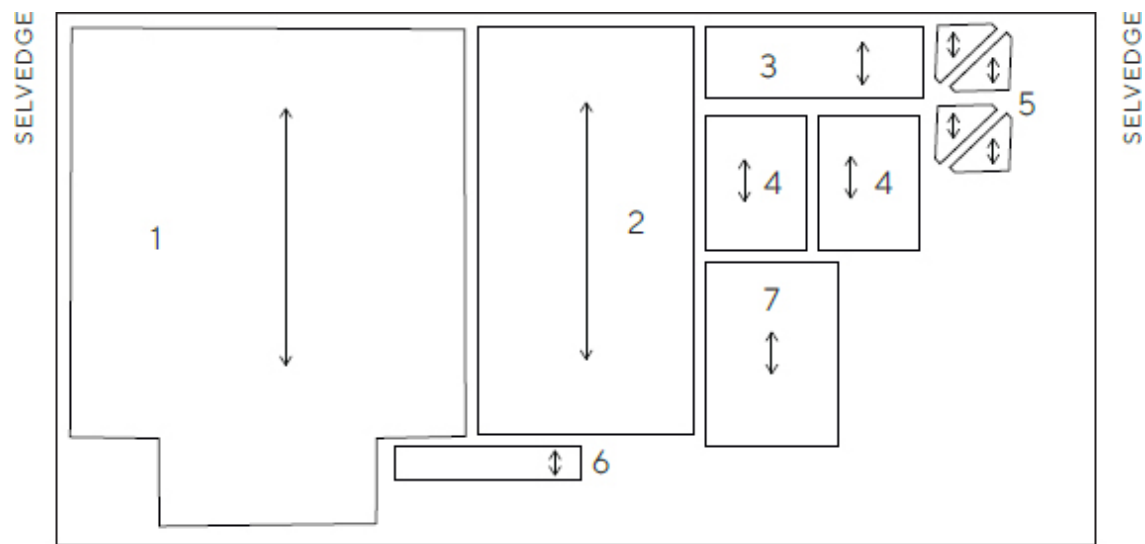
For a personal touch, sew a label to the lining before securing it inside the bag.

Finished measurements

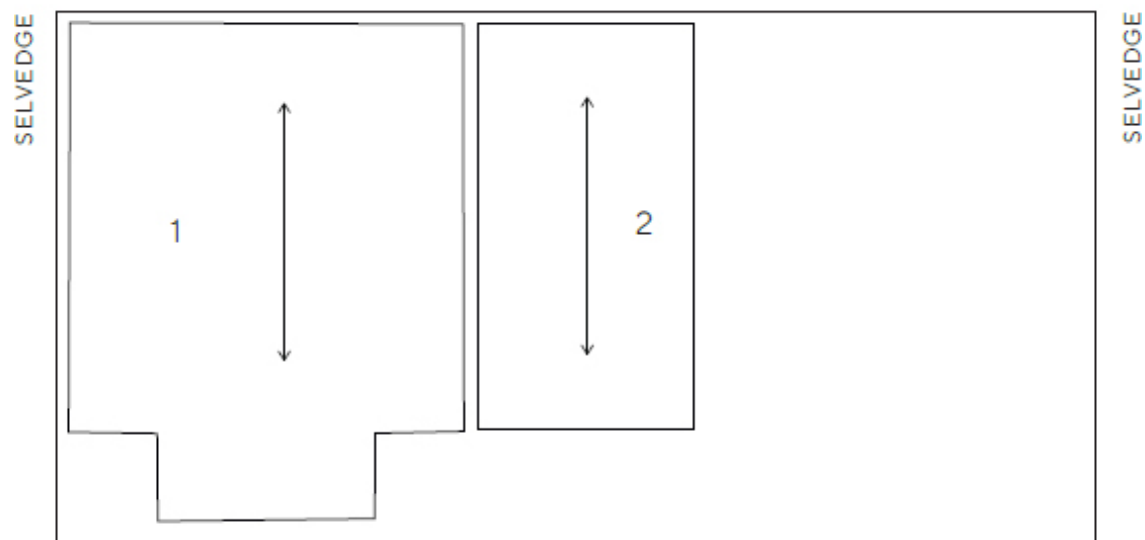
Height (cm)	60
Height (in.)	23½
Width (cm)	43
Width (in.)	17
Depth (cm)	13
Depth (in.)	5

CUTTING GUIDE

ALL SIZES: 150 cm (60 in.) wide fabric



Lining



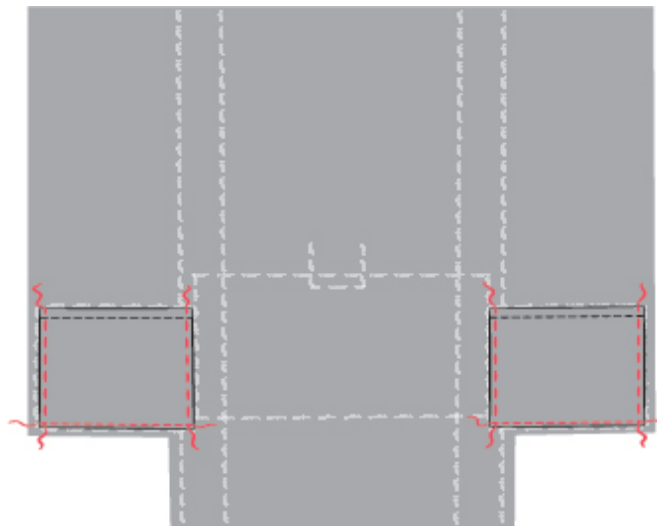
- 1** Front and sides – cut 1 in fabric and 1 in lining
- 2** Back – cut 1 in fabric and 1 in lining
- 3** Strap backing piece – cut 1
- 4** Side pocket – cut 2
- 5** Lower strap triangle – cut 4

- 6** Top front pocket – cut 1
- 7** Lower front pocket – cut 1

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

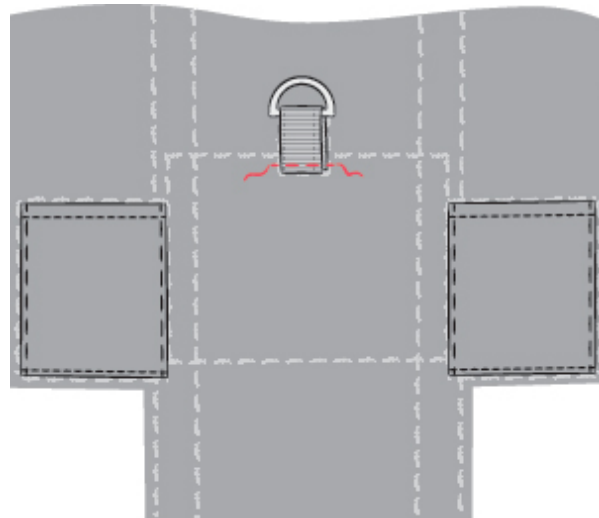
SEW THE SIDE POCKETS

- 1** Take both side pocket pieces. Along the top edge, fold over 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side and press. Fold over another 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.), press and topstitch neatly along the inner folded edge. Along the bottom edge, fold over 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side and press.
- 2** Place your bag front right side up with the side pocket pieces right side up on top, following the pattern markings. Machine tack the sides of the pockets in place, 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) from the edge. [Topstitch](#) along the bottom edge.



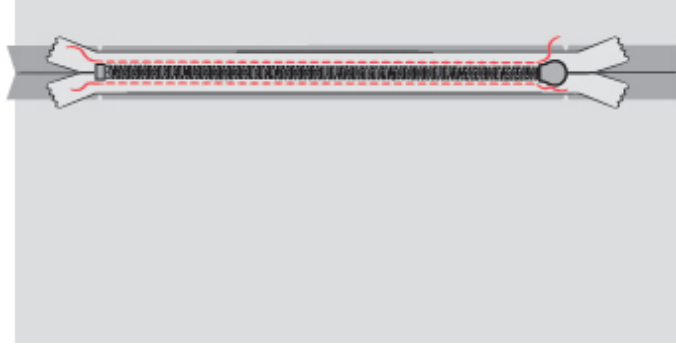
- 3** Cut a 10-cm (4-in.) length of webbing. Fold it in half over a D-ring. Place the two raw ends of the webbing on the right side of the front bag piece, following the markings on your pattern. Tack

(baste) in place 5 mm (1/4 in.) away from the raw ends of the webbing.



SEW THE FRONT POCKET

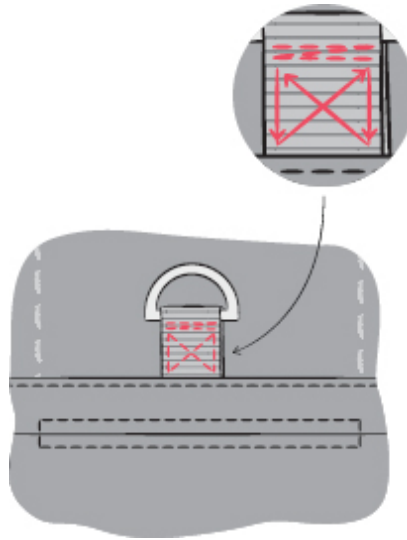
- 4** The front pocket has two pattern pieces. With right sides together, pin the top front and lower front pocket pieces together. Using a normal stitch length, sew from the edge of the fabric to the first notch. Backstitch at the notch, then change your stitch length to a 4 or 5 and sew to the next notch. Change back to a normal stitch length, backstitch at the notch, then continue the seam. Finish the seam allowances, then press the seam open.
- 5** Place the zip right side down on the wrong side of the pocket seam, aligning the zip ends with the notches. Pin the zip in place through the pocket fabric. Stitch each long side close to the zip teeth, using a zipper foot.



- 6** Turn the pocket right side up. Sew across each short end of the zip so that, from the front, you have a long rectangle of stitch lines. Be careful when you go over the zip teeth! Take out the tacking stitches from the seam you sewed in step 4.
- 7** Along the top and the bottom edges of the pocket, press 1 cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in.) to the wrong side. Place the pocket piece right side up on the right side of the front bag, following the placement lines on the pattern. Pin and topstitch along the top and bottom edges. Tack the two sides 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) away from the raw edge.

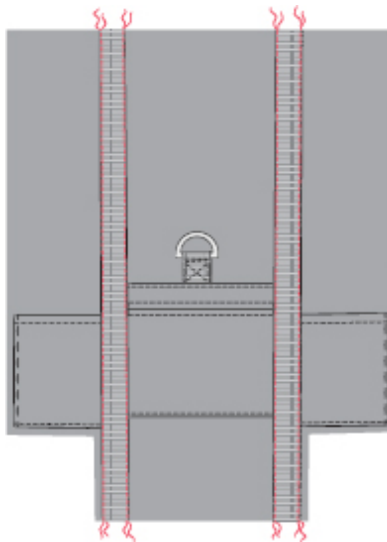
FINISH THE D-RING

- 8** Switch to a zipper foot so that you can get close to the D-ring with your machine. Push the D-ring neatly to the fold of the webbing, then sew across the webbing a few times immediately below the D-ring to secure it in place. Make sure you finish on a backstitch. Stitch an X-shape in the remaining length of the webbing to finish, leaving the needle down in each corner and pivoting to change direction.



SEW THE WEBBING ONTO THE BAG

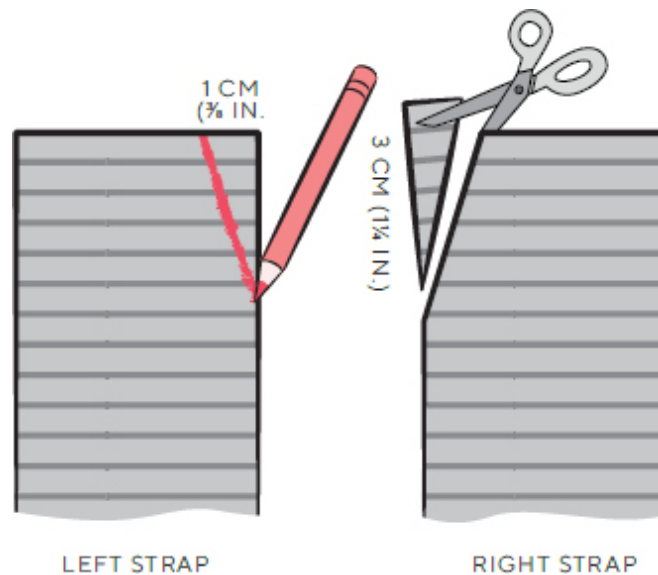
- 9 Cut two 72-cm (28½-in.) lengths of webbing. Pin them along the placement lines on the right side of the bag front. The webbing should cover the sides of the front pocket and side pockets. Stitch along the very edge of both sides of the webbing.



MAKE THE SHOULDER STRAPS

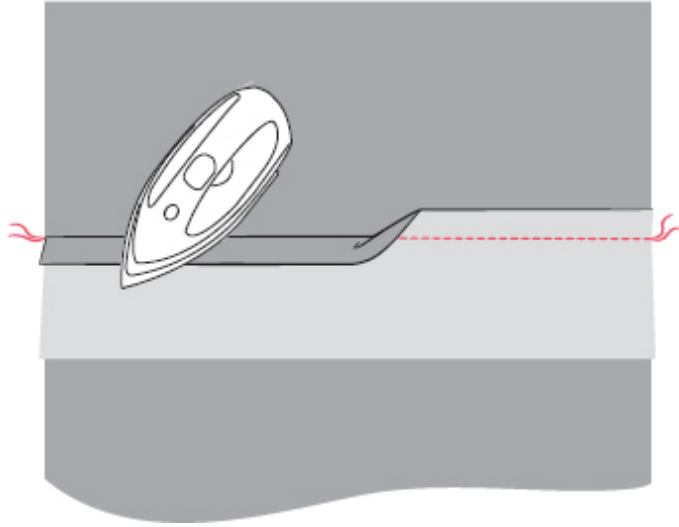
10 Cut two 55-cm (21½-in.) lengths of webbing. These will be your top shoulder straps. Thread one end of each strap through a rectangular loop. Fold the edge of the strap back on itself by 5 cm (2 in.). Stitch the loops in place, using the same method as in step 8.

11 Lay each shoulder strap right side up. Measure down 3 cm (1¼ in.) from the top of the strap (the end without the rectangular loop) on the inside edge, and 1 cm (¾ in.) across from the inside corner. Draw a line between these two points and cut along the line.

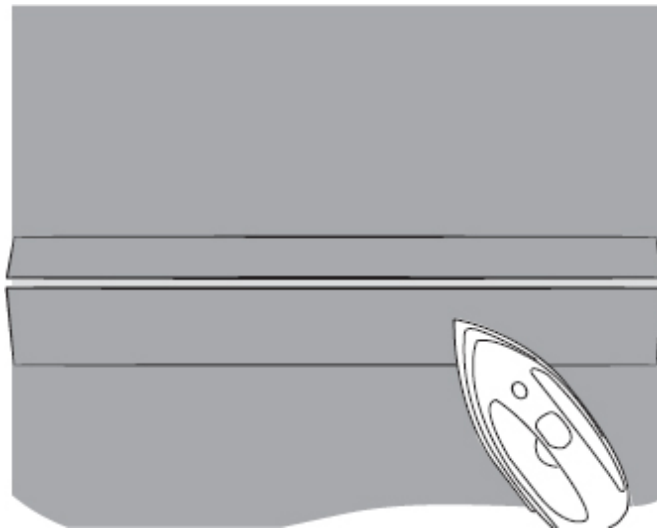


SEW THE TOP OF THE BAG

12 With right sides together, align the top edge of the strap backing piece with the placement line on the back bag piece. Pin and stitch. Press the seam allowance down towards the strap backing.

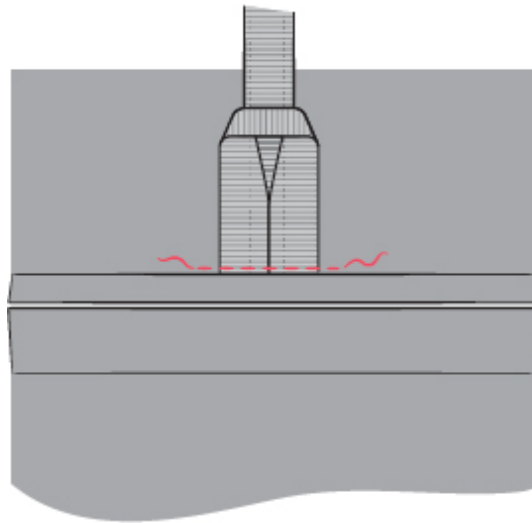


- 13** Fold the unstitched edge of the strap backing piece up so that both long raw edges of the strap backing are touching. Press.

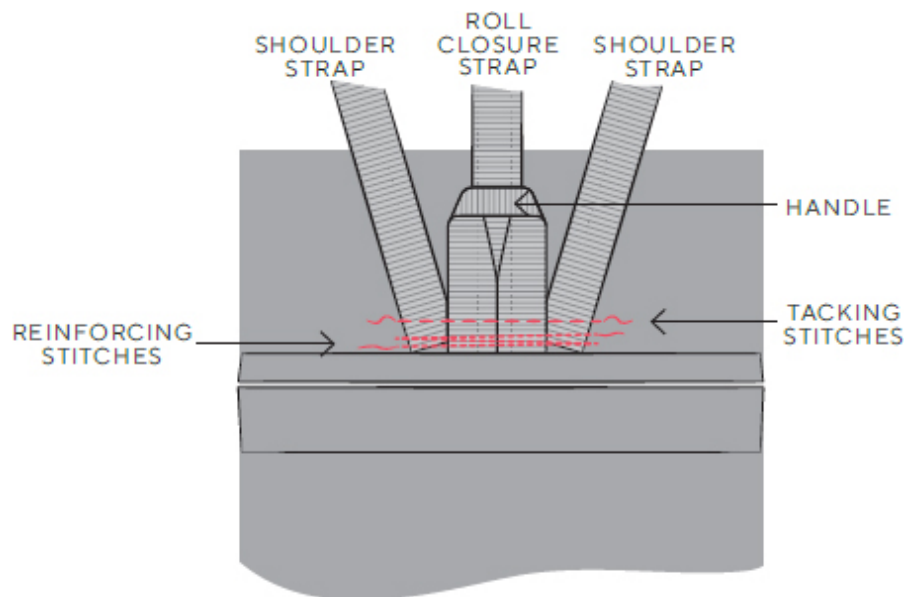


- 14** Cut a 50-cm (20-in.) length of webbing for the roll closure strap. Align this piece of webbing centrally on your back bag piece, with the bottom end of the webbing against the top of the strap backing piece. Tack in place.
- 15** Cut a 30-cm (12-in.) length of webbing for the bag handle. Form it into a loop, making sure the edges of the handle meet and that

the webbing isn't twisted. Centre the handle on top of the roll closure strap and machine tack in place.



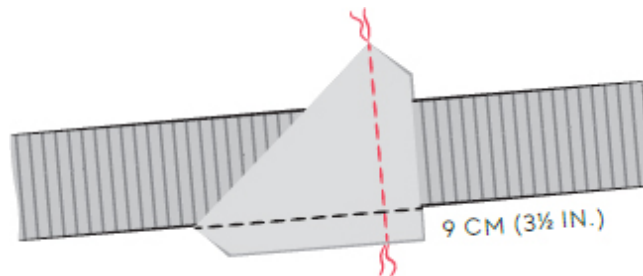
- 16** Place the shoulder straps right sides down, on either side of the handle. Position the cut angle (step 11) so that it aligns with the sides of the handle. Machine tack in place 3 cm (1¼ in.) above the strap backing piece. Stitch over all the webbing pieces three times, staying inside the tacking line you just made, to reinforce.



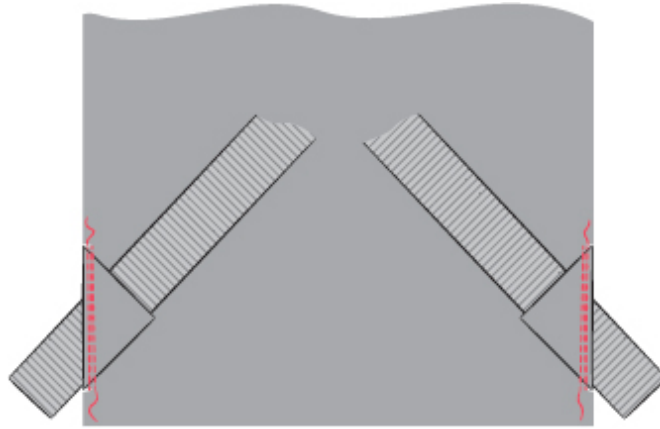
- 17** Fold the strap backing piece up to cover the raw edges of the webbing and the tacking stitches. Press flat and topstitch along the top and bottom edges to secure.

SECURE THE LOWER SHOULDER STRAPS

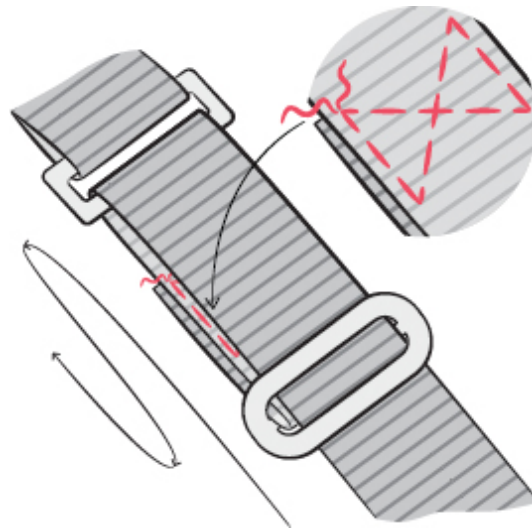
- 18** Place two lower strap triangles right sides together. Sew along one short edge of the triangle with a 1-cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance. Repeat for the other pair of triangles.
- 19** Cut two 50-cm (20-in.) lengths of webbing. Sandwich each length between a set of triangles, with its long side flush against the seam you made in the previous step and the webbing extending 9 cm ($3\frac{1}{2}$ in.) beyond the triangle on one side. Pin in place and sew across the other short side of the triangle. Repeat for the second strap. These are your lower shoulder straps.



- 20** Trim the seam allowance of the triangles at the corner, then flip the triangles right sides out. Press.
- 21** Place each triangle between the notches on the right side of the bag back. The long edge of the triangle lines up with the side of the bag. Sew over this area three times to reinforce.



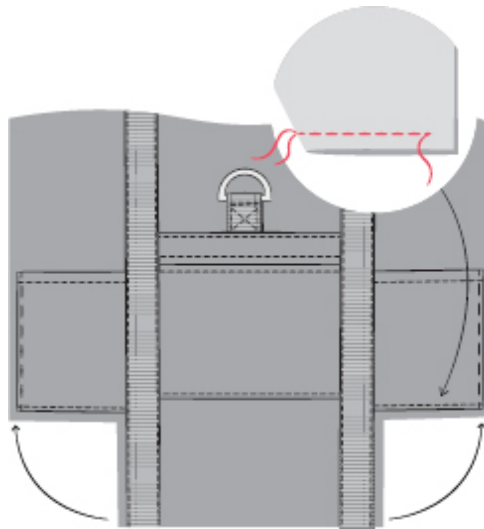
- 22** Put the end of each lower shoulder strap through a slider, and then through the rectangular loop at the end of a top strap. Loop the lower strap back down and through the slider again. Fold the lower strap back on itself by 5 cm (2 in.), then stitch in place using the same X pattern as for the D-ring. Repeat on the other strap.



ASSEMBLE THE BAG AND THE LINING

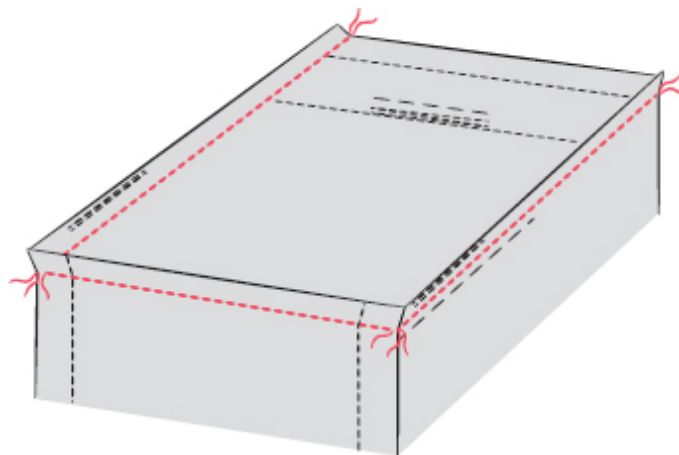
- 23** Bring the edges of the cut-out corners at the bottom of the front bag right sides together so that they line up with each other. Pin and sew, stopping 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) from the outside edge of the

corner (on the side of the bag). You are creating the bottom box of the bag.



24 Repeat step 23 on the front lining piece.

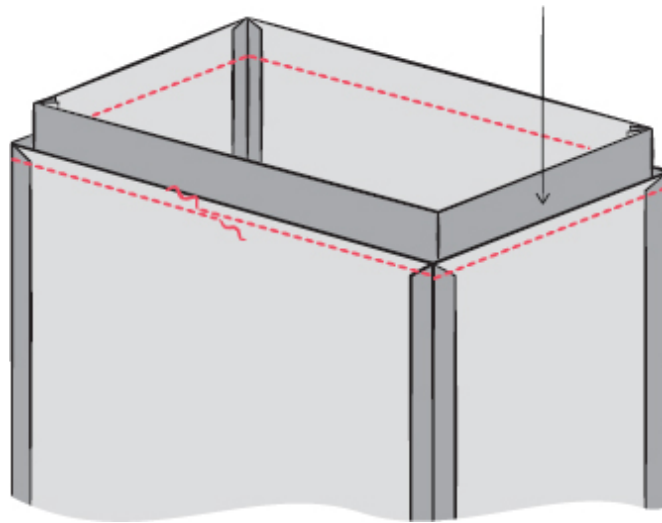
25 With right sides together – keeping the shoulder straps out of the way – pin the bag front to the bag back along the bottom edge. Sew this seam, stopping and starting 1.5 cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in.) from each edge. Then pin the bag front to the bag back along the sides, creating the box shape of your bag. Sew all the way to the edge of the fabric for these side seams. Press the seams open where possible.



- 26** Repeat step 25 on the lining, leaving a 15-cm (6-in.) gap in the bottom seam so that you can turn the bag right sides out later on. Press the seams open where possible.

LINE THE BAG

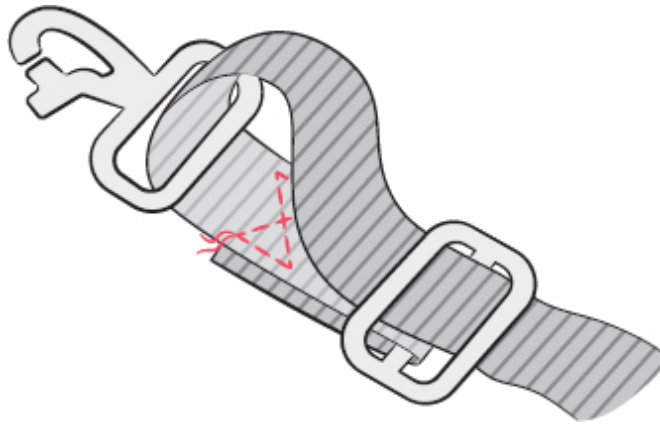
- 27** Turn the outer bag right side out and place it inside the lining bag, right sides together. Align the top raw edges of both bags and stitch all the way around the edge.



- 28** Use the gap in the bottom of the lining to turn the bag through so that the bag is right side out, with the lining pushed to the inside.
- 29** Press the top edge of the bag, rolling the lining inwards slightly. Topstitch 2–3 mm (a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ in.) from the top edge, then again 5 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in.) away from the first stitchline.
- 30** Pull the lining out of the bag and stitch the gap in the seam closed.

FINISH THE ROLL CLOSURE STRAP

31 Now you need to connect the strap coming from the top of the bag to the D-ring above the pocket. You need a slider and the snap hook fastener. Thread the roll closure strap through a slider and then through the loop of the snap hook fastener. Loop the webbing back up, back under the slider, and fold it back on itself by 5 cm (2 in.). Stitch in place using an X-pattern, as for the D-ring (step 8).

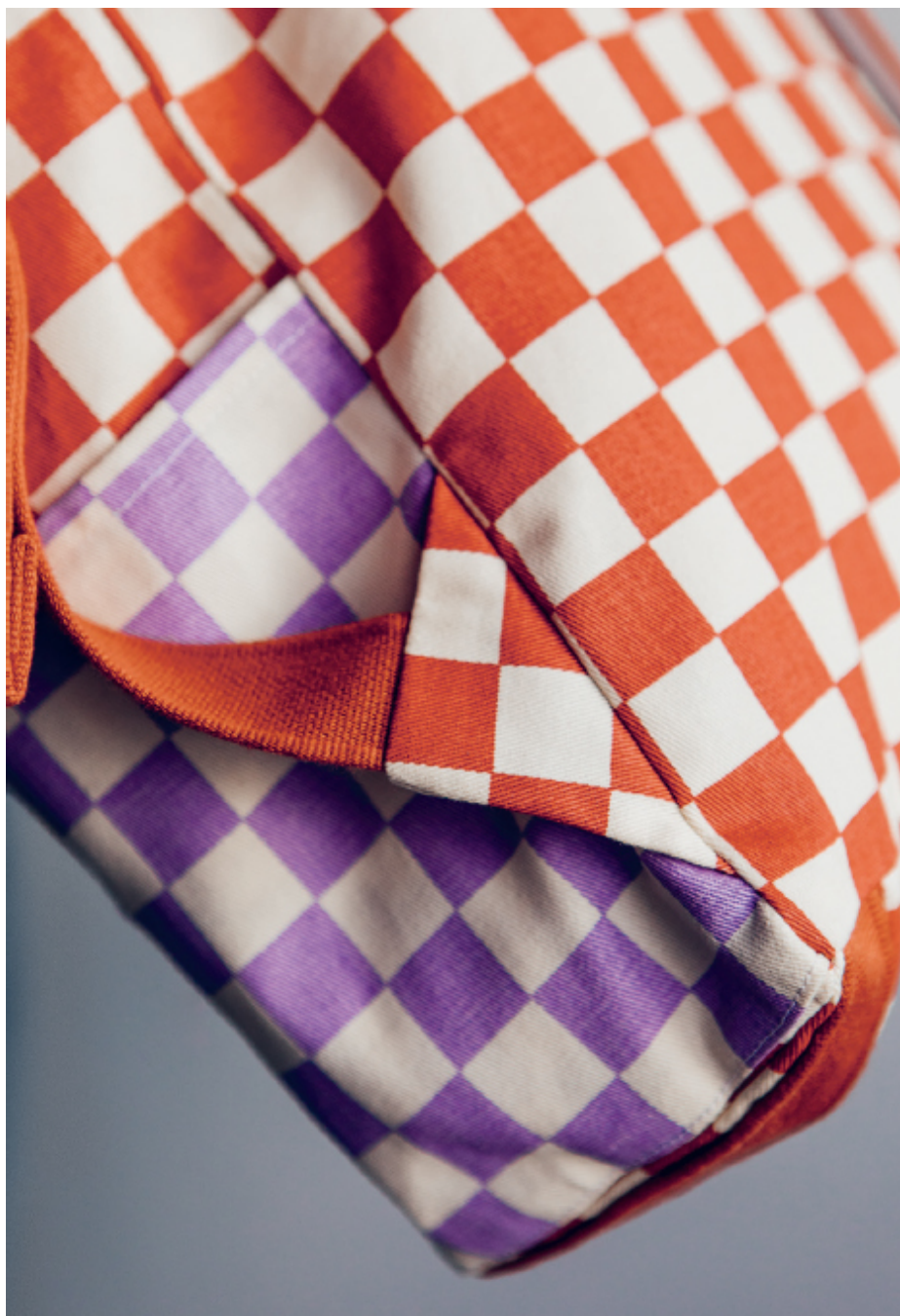


NOTE

If your zip is a bit too long, line up the top of the zip (where the pull is) with one notch and then mark on the zip where the end should finish (the other notch) with a pen. You'll have to cut your zip about 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) below this mark.



RECTANGULAR
LOOP AND SLIDER





SLIDER

SNAP HOOK
FASTENER

D RING





Confetti-quilted bag

This project is a fun and creative way to use up scraps. Your scraps will be visible under a layer of quilted organza, so arrange them in a way that's visually appealing! We made a versatile tote, but you could make a small toiletry bag or purse using the same technique.

Materials

- 40 x 90 cm (16 x 36 in.) organza
- 40 x 90 cm (16 x 36 in.) backing fabric
- Lots of fabric scraps
- Two 60 x 4-cm (24 x 1½-in.) straps – you can either use webbing or make your own
- Matching sewing thread
- Walking foot (optional)
- [Basic sewing kit](#)

Difficulty level

Beginner

Fabric suggestions

The backing fabric should be non-stretchy and quite sturdy; you could use medium-weight cotton, cotton twill, light- to medium-weight denim. The fabric scraps will be sandwiched between this layer and the organza.

Design notes

Use a 1.5-cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ -in.) seam allowance throughout unless stated otherwise.

Our straps were made by covering ribbon with organza, using the same steps as the [tie](#) for the Patchwork Coat.

Finished measurements

Width (cm)	35
Height (in.)	15
Length (cm)	40
Length (in.)	16

THE SEWING STARTS HERE

PREPARE THE FABRIC SCRAPS AND BAG PIECES

- 1 Take your chosen fabric scraps and use a rotary cutter and cutting mat to randomly shred them into a confetti of uneven pieces approximately 2–5 cm (1–2 in.) long and 2 cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in.) wide. You will need more than you think!
- 2 Put your organza and backing fabric rectangles on top of each other, then pin and sew the long sides, leaving each short side of

the rectangle open. This long rectangle will form the body of your bag – it will be folded in half to create the front and back. Stitch horizontally across the middle of the rectangle. I also stitched vertically down the centre of the rectangle, to be able to control the fabric scraps a bit better.

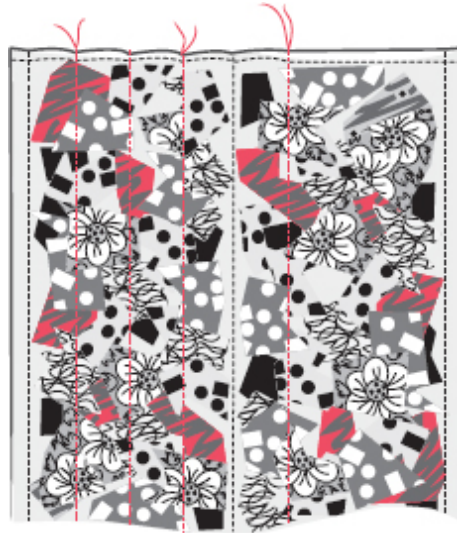
QUILT THE BAG

- 3 Stuff the rectangle by inserting scraps of fabric via the open edges. Distribute them as evenly as you can and try to make a flat shape. Be careful not to make it too thick and bumpy! When you've finished, pin and sew the open edges closed. It's also helpful to put plenty of pins across your rectangle, or do some big tacking (basting) stitches by hand, to keep the scraps from moving around as you start sewing.



- 4 Use a walking foot for the next step if you have one. Mark and sew a vertical line down the centre of the bag piece, if you haven't already got one. The next line of stitching should be parallel to the first, 5 cm (2 in.) away. Sew this line in the opposite direction to your first. Continue to alternate the direction of stitching as you work your way across the piece to the edge,

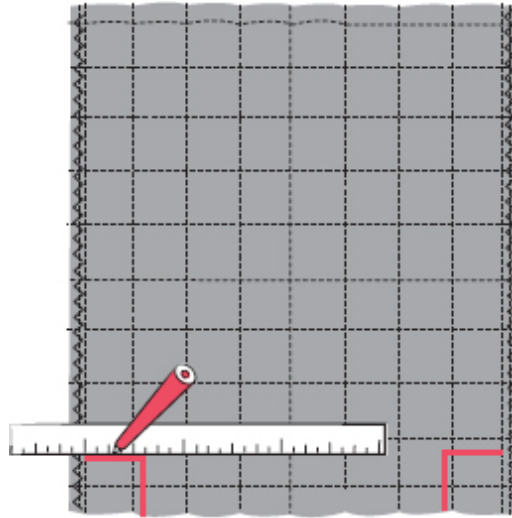
leaving 5 cm (2 in.) between each line of stitching. When you reach the edge, go back to the centre and work your way to the other side.



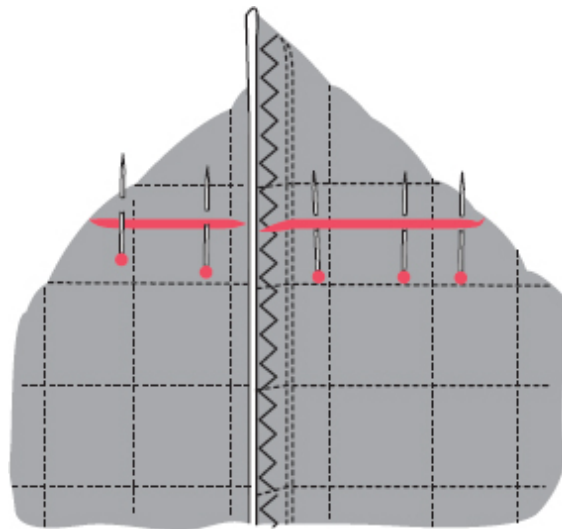
- 5** Once you have sewn all the vertical lines, sew horizontal lines in the same way to create a grid.

SEW THE BAG

- 6** Fold the rectangle in half so the wrong sides are facing outwards. Pin and sew the two side seams. Overlock (serge) or zigzag each side seam and then overlock or zigzag all around the top edge.
- 7** With your bag still inside out, make one mark 5 cm (2 in.) from the bottom corner on the side seam, and another mark 5 cm (2 in.) from the bottom corner on the bottom edge. Connect them with a pen and ruler at a right angle so that you have a little square in each corner. Do the same on the other corner.



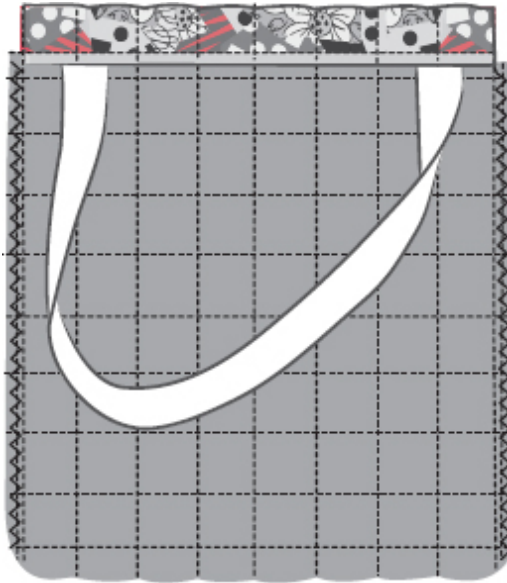
- 8** Then pinch the corner of your bag so that the side seam is lying on top of the bottom edge. The lines from step 7 should match up and this is your sewing line. Pin and sew.



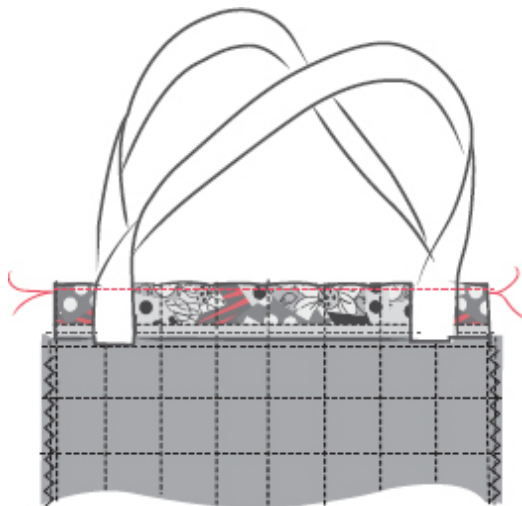
ADD THE STRAPS

- 9** Cut your webbing to the desired length (I suggest you try the bag on so you that can see whether you like the length of the straps) or make straps from scratch if you prefer. For the sample I covered a ribbon in organza.

- 10** Fold the top edge of the bag to the wrong side by 5 cm (2 in.) and pin in place. Lay the short edge of one strap under the fold 4 cm (1½ in.) from the side seam, so that it's flush with the folded-over edge of the bag. Then position the other short edge of the same strap 4 cm (1½ in.) from the opposite side seam. Do the same for the second strap on the other side of the bag.



- 11** Sew all the way around the folded-over edge of the bag, trapping the straps in the seam. Then fold the strap upwards and stitch all around the very top edge, holding the strap in position. Turn your bag right side out.





Sewing my own clothes never gets old as there are always new techniques to learn, but it's not just about the technical skills of sewing. It's how you view it and your mindset when tackling a new project. During my time on the show, I was pushed to make garments I would have never tried on my own as I was too scared things would go wrong. It turned out they weren't as hard as I imagined after all!

So my best piece of advice for learning how to sew, develop technical skills and most importantly your confidence, is to push yourself to try new fabrics, patterns and techniques, fully embrace mistakes as a learning experience and just go for it! You really can create clothes you love and are proud of with a bit of time and patience!

LAUREN GUTHRIE
SERIES 1 (2013)

@guthrieghani

TIPS

- ° **Fabric scraps with a print are fine, as long as the print is on both sides of the fabric.**

- **Cut off any selvages from your scraps, as they will create bulk and be difficult to quilt through.**
 - **Think about the colours of your scraps. You could stick to one colour in different fabrics, which will create subtle tonal differences, or choose complementary colours, or go for contrasts.**
-









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CAROLINE AKSELSON

Another *Sewing Bee* book hits the shelves! I am so happy to be involved on the book side of this incredibly popular TV show, as it truly combines so many of my favourite things: sewing, writing, organizing, and working with a great team.

This is my fourth book with the dream team that, at its core, consists of my commissioning editor Harriet Butt, designer Emily Lapworth, and editor Sarah Hoggett. Thanks to Harriet for having so much trust in me with these books; to Emily for sharing my love of organizing anything that can possibly be organized; and to Sarah, who truly takes home gold in the all-round Manager of Words category. The team is completed by illustrators Kate Simunek and Suzie London, who seem to be able to make sense of my scribbles and drawings. Further thanks to photographer Helena Dolby, stylist Lucie Clifford, and make-up and hair team Danni Hooker and Viorela Coman.

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Last but not least, thank you to my friends and family for supporting me through 2023, which was a hefty concoction of book writing, house move and renovation. Thank you for listening to me moan about wishing for an early retirement. All my love to my boys, who are magical and maddening all at the same time. (Not thank you for breaking my laptop at a crucial point, though. Un-thank you.) Until next time!

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