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When are you most productive?



SANDRA BETZINA (“Essential Techniques: Armscye finishes,” page 74) schedules one or two days a week to sew, in order to have the time to get into a project. “I like to have at least six to eight hours in a day to pursue my favorite hobby,” she says. “I do not sew at night, since I seem to make mistakes if I am tired. The secret to being undisturbed is to turn off the phone.”

Sandra opened a sewing school in San Francisco in the late 1970s. She wrote a syndicated sewing column for 35 years, hosted *Sew Perfect* for HGTV, and has written books including *More Fabric Savvy* and *Power Sewing*. She designs the Today’s Fit line for Vogue Patterns, and teaches Craftsy.com classes as well as her *Power Sewing* WebTV series at PowerSewing.com.



CATHIE RYAN (co-author, “Three Ways to Match Prints,” page 38), says that when she showed her husband and children this question, they laughed. “They are used to me working late into the night to meet a deadline,” she says. “My answer is I am most productive when I have a deadline, and the closer the deadline gets, the more productive I become. I start right after my morning coffee and continue until dinner time. After dinner, I hand-sew in front of the television to relax.”

Cathie lives in Massachusetts, where she creates custom dance costumes as the owner of Ryan Dancewear. For information, email Ryan Dancewear@comcast.net.



MARLENE HEINZ (“DIY Project: Falling leaves necklace,” page 28) likes to begin sewing early in the morning with fresh and rested thoughts. “I need to have an organized sewing studio with notions and notes at my fingertips,” she says. “Since I usually change my patterns to fit my cutting-edge taste, each garment has been made in my head before I begin.”

In addition to sewing, Marlene, a California resident, creates jewelry in media including fabrics, glass, and, recently, paper. She says accessories lend a vital finishing touch.



GILBERT MUNIZ (“Embellishments: Beaded buttons,” page 16) is most productive when he’s inspired. “I’m like a magpie with shiny gems; I get distracted by ideas and feel the need to get them out, regardless of the time. I carry a sketchbook everywhere I go to capture my mind’s creative flotsam and jetsam.”

Gilbert is a designer, custom clothier, and sewing teacher based in Texas. He says he often finds the design process more interesting than the finished project. MunizCouture.com.

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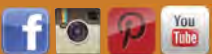
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Moving forward

There are events you never forget because you are so keyed up that everything jumps into a state of hyperrealism. It's usually because you are at a juncture in life, and you realize circumstances might change for you forever.

It was like that the first time I came to *Threads*. I had to wait at the front desk for an interview with then-Senior Technical Editor Judy Neukam. I was anxious when she came around the corner fast, and my nervousness grew when she grilled me about pattern manipulation a few minutes later. It all worked out, but that is a specific time I'll never forget. It was like a swing tack of sorts, a connecting point between the past and an undetermined future.

That interview precipitated a tremendous change in my life, and I thought of it when *Threads* passed a crossroads recently. Our staff is smaller than it was, and we are still processing this difference because *Threads* is like a family. I want to say something about each of our former colleagues: Judy is now editor-at large, a freelance role in which she'll contribute to the magazine and video projects. Those moving on are April Mohr, who was ever-patient and kind to callers and Tips contributors; Gloria Melfi, our talented and tasteful associate art director; and Dana Finkle, our gifted assistant editor. They know how much we miss them, and we get together when we can. Also, designer and teacher Mary Ray is no longer a contributing editor, but she still is authoring articles.

Those of you who monitor our masthead or work with our staff have noticed and asked about the changes. The team may be smaller for now, but I can reassure you that our mission has not changed: to feed your passion and enthusiasm for sewing with the most inspiring and accurate techniques we can discover. It's something that we will keep the same.

—Sarah McFarland
Editor



We'd love to hear from you!

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In our next issue:

Discover Kenneth D. King's fake fur sewing methods, see how Ann Williamson creates shaped cut-outs for embellishment, and learn to sew a simple but precise welt pocket like Mary McCarthy. Plus, Sarah Veblen shares how to draft rolled collars, and we reveal our annual sewing gift guide.

Write an article for *Threads*

Threads is a reader-written magazine, and we welcome your submissions. To learn how to propose an article, go to taunton.com/threads/pages/th_authorguidelines.asp.

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EASY JUMPSUIT

As soon as I turned to the page for “Quick to Make: Strapless jumpsuit” by Louise Cutting in *Threads* no. 180, Aug./Sept. 2015, I knew I had to make one. What a fabulous idea. I’ve always liked jumpsuits but hated having to undo the back zipper in the ladies’ room. This jumpsuit can just be slipped down easily. Also, a little cap sleeve or straps can be added. Besides being such a pretty jumpsuit, this one is very practical. Thank you so much for this.

—Mary Ellen Langlois, via email

FOAM MAT CAUTION

In *Threads* no. 179, June/July 2015, there is a letter in Tips from Skye Willis of West Paterson, New Jersey, that I think could cause a problem. A foam mat on a dining room table could damage the finish. I have had it happen to me.

—Joanne Cybulski, via email

HONG KONG DREAMS

Your timing couldn’t have been better. Due to use-or-lose annual leave and an airfare sale, I had just purchased a ticket to Hong Kong. I am now starting on my list of what to do once I get there, and in today’s mail is *Threads* no. 179, with Linda Turner Griepentrog’s fabric shopping guide to Hong Kong.

Thank you. It’s a good thing I’m taking two suitcases.

—Connie Cloud, Anchorage, Alaska

CASE FOR A CLOSURE

The exquisite guipure dress by Sonia Santos in Reader’s Closet, *Threads* no. 179, has a situation I have seen in the back of other modern dresses: There is no hook-and-eye closure at the top of the center-back zipper. Although a hook-and-eye over a back zipper seems to be a nuisance to many women now, requiring a husband or other person to hook the closure, there are reasons for putting one there.

This zipper is taking the full stress of keeping the top opening together, and only a well-made zipper could endure

the pull at its opening and not eventually break or become crooked. A strong hook-and-eye closure or snap, used to bridge the back opening, can help the architecture of this garment and protect the zipper and the lace the zipper joins. That’s just my opinion. After all, you want such a delicate, beautiful dress to last through many wearings.

—Dorothy Bucher, Eugene, Oregon

PIPING HELP

I had just completed a tunic with piping when my *Threads* no. 179 arrived with Judith Neukam’s “Essential Techniques: Perfect piping.”

As usual, there is a section of my piped tunic that is puckered. Over the years, I have tried to be more careful about making sure that my bias strips were absolutely perfect, tried various ways of stretching the fabric over the filler, and always strived to stack the three passes of stitching as close to one another and the filler as possible. I can’t wait to try Judy’s technique, which makes a lot of sense. I will report back, and I thank you.

—Joyce DeLoca, Norfolk, Massachusetts

Thank you for explaining how to apply piping that lies smoothly in a seam. No more puckers.

—Debra Roush, via email

TAPES FOR BODY MEASUREMENTS

First, as a charter subscriber to *Threads* (I have every issue and use them), I want to commend *Threads* and its staff on their dedication and enthusiasm for promoting sewing. You do an outstanding job.

When I got *Threads* no. 179 with Joi Mahon’s “Custom Bust Fit” article, I had a eureka moment. I had stopped sewing as the patterns never quite fit, and my one attempt at a muslin was a disaster. Joi’s idea of taking concise measurements and using them to adjust the flat pattern made perfect sense. I was so impressed that I ordered her book and signed up for her two classes on Craftsy.com. Now I’ve got

my measurements and am excited to do my sloper.

In researching tape to use for the measurements, I found a couple of good items. I used the Adhesive Tape Measure from Wawak.com to do vertical measurements. It comes in 36-inch lengths and is reusable. I worked with 3M/Scotch 1/8-inch-wide Artist Tape for Curves to indicate the side-seam locations, and define the waist, full hip and biceps, elbow, and wrist. I found these tools made it much easier to take accurate measurements.

—Haldis M. Fearn, via email

INDEX SEARCH

How do I get the latest annual index? My latest printout was for *Threads* nos. 165 to 170. Thank you for any help. I’ve been a subscriber since no. 38.

—Mary Susan Dinkel, via email

Thank you, Mary, for being a long-time subscriber. The 2014 index, covering issues through no. 176, is available online. Here is the URL to a page listing all the annual indices: <http://www.threadsmagazine.com/tag/annual-index>.—SMc

TRIM ATTACHMENT

I enjoyed the article on how to create fluted ribbon trim by Kenneth D. King in *SewStylish* Spring 2015. However, there is no evidence of how the worked ribbon has been attached to the jacket pictured. I’d also like a view of the jacket back to see how the meeting point(s) look. Because the fluted ribbon is directional, and the jacket has mirrored trim on both sides, I assume that the body of the jacket used at least two pieces of the altered ribbon to complete the look. Thanks very much.

—Vera Ussyk, Edmonton, AB, Canada

You ask two great questions, Vera. Kenneth recommends using a fell stitch to attach the fluted ribbon trim. We did use more than one ribbon piece to trim the jacket, and two points meet at the neckline center back.—SMc



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tips

YOUR IDEAS FOR BETTER SEWING

Upcycled “tincushions”

I’ve been sewing for more than 60 years and never found the perfect pincushion. Most were either too shallow or too deep, or caused my needles and pins to rust. Now I make my own.

I save small metal cans, like those from tuna. I clean them thoroughly and soak off the labels. I make the cushion part from wool sweaters—it’s a great way to reuse knitwear that’s been attacked by insects. I cut strips as wide as the can’s depth, and roll them tightly into spirals. I then stuff them into the cans, making sure they fit snugly enough that they won’t come out. You can make one large spiral, or several small ones. You can even use different colors to create an interesting design or to make separate areas for needles and pins.



When you put the rolled knit strips in the can, place the edges more prone to raveling against the bottom of the can. The cans look beautiful trimmed with ribbon, lace, buttons, and bows, and make decorative and practical gifts for sewing friends who like to recycle, too.

—Carole Rothstein, Columbia, South Carolina

EYEGLOSS SEWING KIT

I used a hard-sided eyeglass case to make a small, easily portable sewing kit. I included thread, small scissors, a thimble, a seam gauge, straight pins, and needles for hand sewing. All the notions are neatly, compactly contained, so the kit is ideal for on-the-go sewing tasks or sewing while watching television.

—Linda Henry, Fair Oaks, California

FROM FOOT TO KNEE CONTROL

I have tried a few methods to prevent my sewing machine’s foot control from moving. None of them worked well. Then, I thought of an alternative solution: I transformed the foot control into a knee control. I attached self-stick hook-

and-loop tape, one piece to the control’s bottom and the corresponding piece to the inside wall of my sewing desk. Now the control never moves around and is ultraconvenient to use.

—Allie Pisacrita, Cullman, Alabama

PATTERN PAPER KINDLING

I keep the cardboard rolls from many paper products and stuff them with remnants of pattern tissue paper. The stuffed rolls make excellent fireplace kindling during the cold winter months.

—Linda Baker, Chain Valley Bay, New South Wales, Australia

PATTERN REPACKAGING

Here’s a sure-fire method for getting pat-

tern pieces back into the pattern envelope. I iron used pattern pieces and fold them into envelope size “packs.” I also refold and press unused pattern pieces into a rectangular shape, place the pressed sheets between the instruction sheets, and slip the bundle back into the envelope.

—Carol Shoaf, Richland, Washington

KEEP FRAY CHECK FLOWING

To keep Fray Check from drying out when not in use, put a glass-head pin in the opening when you’re finished with a project. Push the pin all the way down, leaving the glass head accessible, and replace the cap. It will be ready for use on your next project and will flow freely.

—Peggy D. Yackel, Plymouth, Minnesota

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Beaded buttons

Create custom, bejeweled closures

Design your own hand-beaded buttons and you can make even the simplest outfits into attention-grabbing works of art. Because buttons are small, creating your own beaded buttons gives a taste of hand-stitched embellishment without investing lots of time and money in a major project. The techniques used for making beaded buttons are essentially the same as for any other type of beaded embroidery.

Using small beads makes it easier to create patterned designs. Choose any type of small bead you like and unleash your creativity. Use beads in different sizes, colors, or shapes, or keep the design simple by using one bead type or color. You also can work

different beaded edges into the button design, such as a picot edge or a brick-stitched edge.

Finished buttons can be fully functional as well as decorative. Always pair functional beaded buttons with bound buttonholes to avoid shredding the buttonhole openings. If you don't want to risk damaging your creations in the wash, sew them onto a removable button strip as described in Bill Voetberg's article "Button Strip" in *Threads* no. 179.

Gilbert Muniz is a designer, patternmaker, and teacher in Houston, Texas. MunizCouture.Wordpress.com.



Buttons can be beaded in any pattern to create stunning closures.

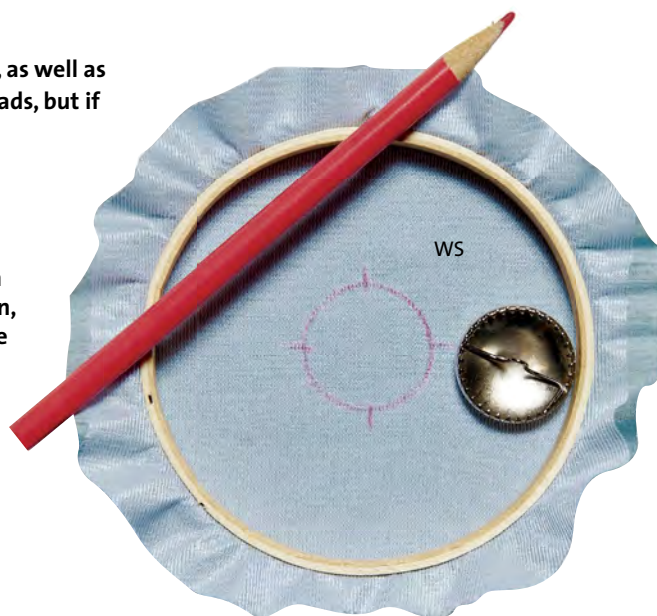
Adorn the button cover

Many beaded designs are possible, depending on the bead shapes and sizes, as well as the button's size. A millinery needle is thin enough to pass through most beads, but if you choose tiny beads, use a beading needle.

PREPARE THE COVER

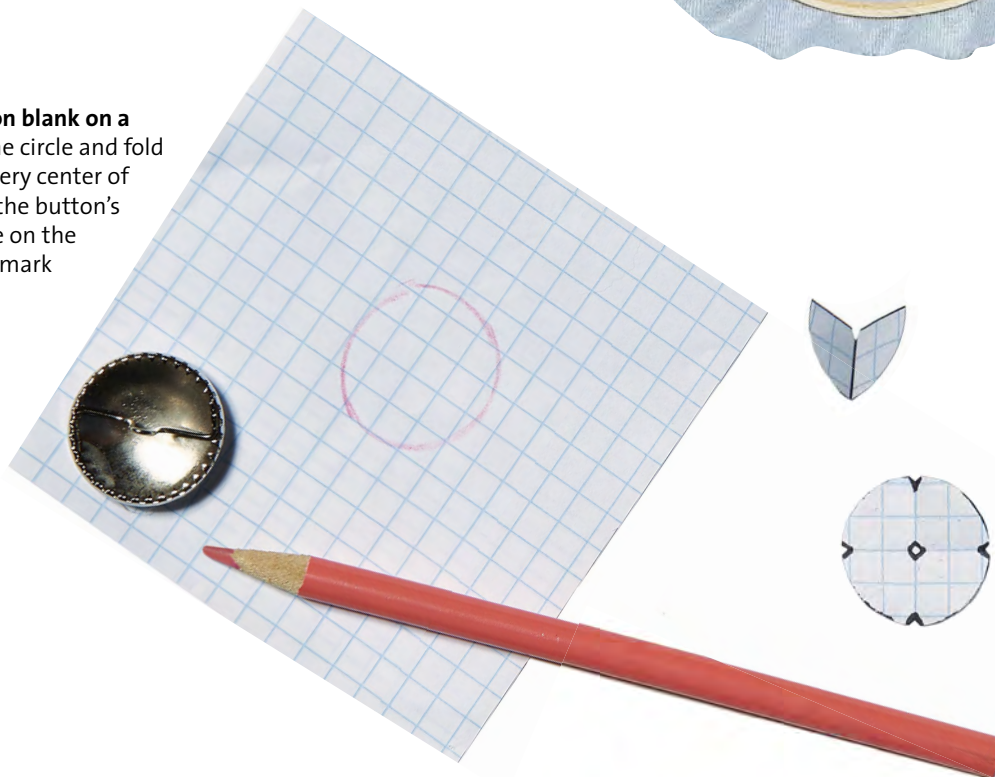
1 Cut the fabric for the button base 5 inches square, then press and starch it. If the fabric is lightweight or loosely woven, fuse lightweight fusible interfacing to the fabric's wrong side to stabilize the beading, following the interfacing manufacturer's instructions. Then, secure the fabric in the embroidery frame. Make sure it is stretched taut but that the grain is not warped. Trim the fabric to ½ inch outside of the frame, to avoid catching the thread on the excess fabric.

2 Center the button blank's top section, wrong side up, on the fabric's wrong side. Trace around the button blank with a pencil.



3 Trace around the button blank on a paper scrap. Cut out the circle and fold it into quarters. Snip the very center of the folded paper to mark the button's center. Place this template on the fabric's marked circle and mark the center with a pencil.

Trace the button back on paper, cut out the circle, and fold into fourths.



SUPPLIES

- 2-mm- to 3-mm-diameter seed beads and 2-mm- to 5-mm-long bugle beads
- 5-inch-square woven fabric scraps, one per button
- 4-inch-diameter, or smaller, hand embroidery frame
- Beading thread, Silamide or Nymo

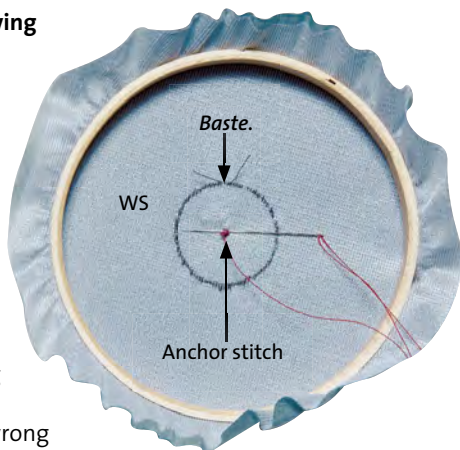
- Contrast-color sewing thread, for basting
- Metal button blanks with teeth (JoAnn.com, CreateForLess.com)
- Needles: no. 10 millinery or beading needle (Wawak.com); no. 9 or 10 sharp hand-sewing needle
- White craft glue



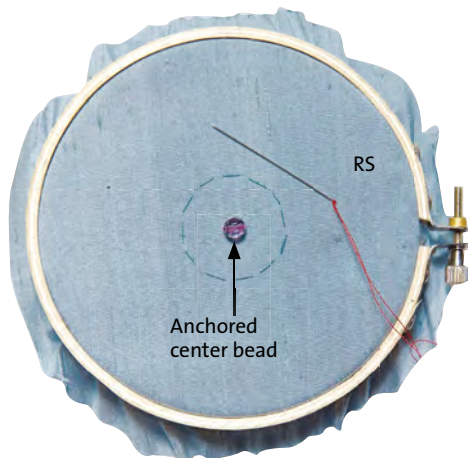
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ATTACH THE BEADS

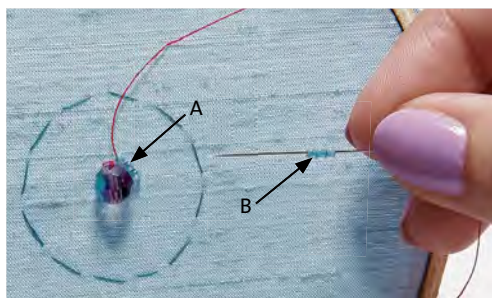
1 Thread a hand-sewing needle; don't knot the thread end. With a short running stitch, baste along the marked button outline. Clip the thread tail to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long. Thread the millinery or beading needle with an 18-inch- to 20-inch-long beading thread and knot the end. On the fabric's wrong side, sew a few tiny stitches at the marked button center to anchor the thread.



2 Choose a bead for the button's center. Bring the needle to the right side, half the bead's width away from the center. Slip the bead onto the needle, then insert the needle into the fabric again, half the bead's width away from the center. On the wrong side, sew a few tiny stitches to anchor the thread under the bead.

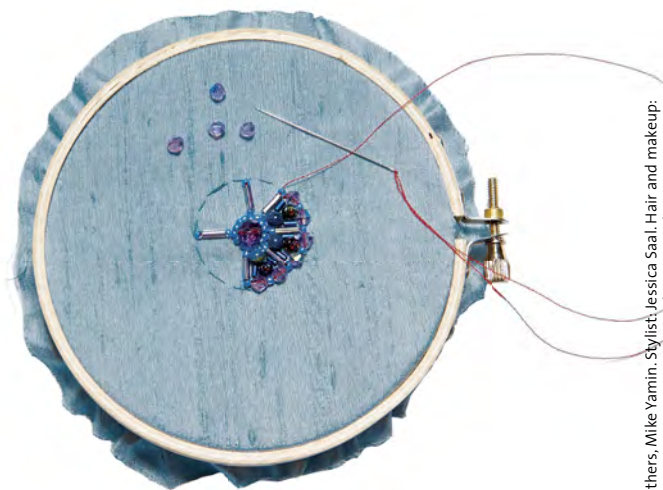


3 Bring the needle to the right side next to the center bead. Pick up three beads on the needle and insert it three bead lengths away, curving the thread to follow the center bead's shape (A). Bring the needle to the right side again at the previous stitch's starting point. Run the needle through all three beads again. Pick up three more beads and repeat (B). Once the center bead is surrounded, insert the needle to the wrong side and anchor the thread with a few tiny stitches.



Combine beads of different shapes and sizes in a design.

4 Decide the beading pattern. An easy approach is to divide the circle into the four compass points, sewing a bead at each point. This creates sections to fill with simple bead patterns. Try to keep the patterns balanced on all sides. Bead all the way to the basting; the beads may cross the basting, but the bead threads should not. If desired, stitch beads along the basting to outline the button's edges, as shown.



Stitch the beaded pattern to fill in the button surface, and, if desired, trace the button's edge with beads.

5 Once beading is complete, take the needle to the wrong side. Secure the thread with a few stitches and a knot. Clip the thread tail to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Remove the basting. Apply a tiny amount of glue on the wrong side and coat the stitches with it. Let it dry completely.

Photos: (p. 20, left) Jack Deutsch; all others, Mike Yamin. Stylist: Jessica Saal. Hair and makeup: AgataHelena.com. Styling credits: earrings—C.A.K.e. by Ali Khan (Macy's.com).

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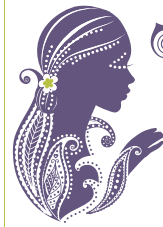
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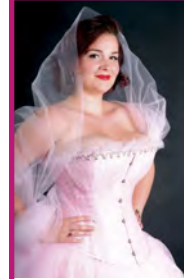


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Sew nonfunctional beaded buttons in place.

Pattern: bolero, BurdaStyle 7118. Fabric: silk taffeta, Metro Textiles, New York.

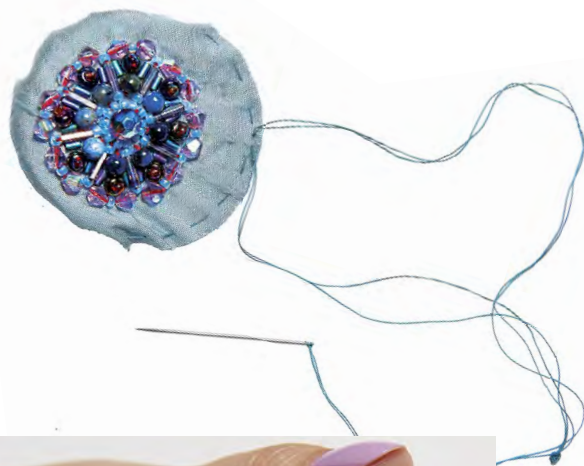
EMBELLISHMENTS continued

Finish the button

When the button's base fabric is beaded and the glue is dry, it's time to assemble the button. Then, you can decide whether to add a beaded picot edge to finish the design.

1 Draw a rough circle $\frac{3}{8}$ inch to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch around the beaded circle.

Cut on the outer circle and baste $\frac{1}{8}$ inch from the cut edge with a doubled thread. Draw up the thread slightly to gather.



2 Center the beaded circle on the button blank. Tighten the gathers.

Carefully work the fabric onto the button blank's teeth using a pencil tip. Smooth out any pleats along the edge by tightening the basting thread.



Use a pencil to help the button teeth grab the fabric. When the edge is smooth and the beaded circle is taut across the button blank, insert the button backing following the manufacturer's instructions.

3 Make an optional picot edge. Thread the beading needle with a 20-inch-long beading thread; don't knot the end. Insert the needle into the fabric and under the beads.

Sew a few tiny stitches in place, then bring the needle to the right side along the edge. Pick up three beads on the needle and insert it into the edge right next to its last exit point. Bring the needle back to the right side two bead lengths away. Tighten the thread; the two end beads force the middle bead up to create a point. Repeat to bead around the button's edge. Anchor the thread with several tiny stitches, and clip the thread tail as close to the beads as possible.



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Gleaming grid

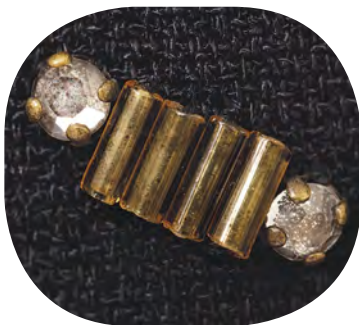
Affix beads and crystals in a geometric array

Make an intriguing and sophisticated embellishment with a simple motif. Each of the beaded motifs shown is made from a short row of parallel bugle beads flanked by crystals. Together, they create the effect of a bejeweled, basketweave textile.

The secret is in placing the motifs on a grid that's graduated in size, from smaller at the neckline to larger at the hem—and in rotating each cluster perpendicular to its neighbor. The idea is easy, and so is the execution: Mark the grid, attach the beads with a few stitches, and affix crystals. It's the perfect project for beading lovers of all levels to do while watching a movie full of old Hollywood glamour. By the end of the film, you can be just as well dressed.

MARK THE FABRIC

Mark the grid on the fabric with chalk, disappearing marker, or low-tack tape. Baste over the marks by hand, or machine-baste with extralong



Create jewel-like elements with bugle beads and crystals.



Try easy hand beading for an elegant effect.

stitches by dropping the feed dogs and free-motion stitching the gridlines. On the original garment, the grid expands as it moves to the hemline.

SELECT THE BEADS AND CRYSTALS

The motifs are made of four parallel bugle beads flanked by crystals. For the stylized look of this motif,

the bugle beads must be exactly the same length. The crystals on the sample are attached with a pronged element pushed from the wrong side. Sew-on crystals are another option, but the crystal attachment process is considerably easier if

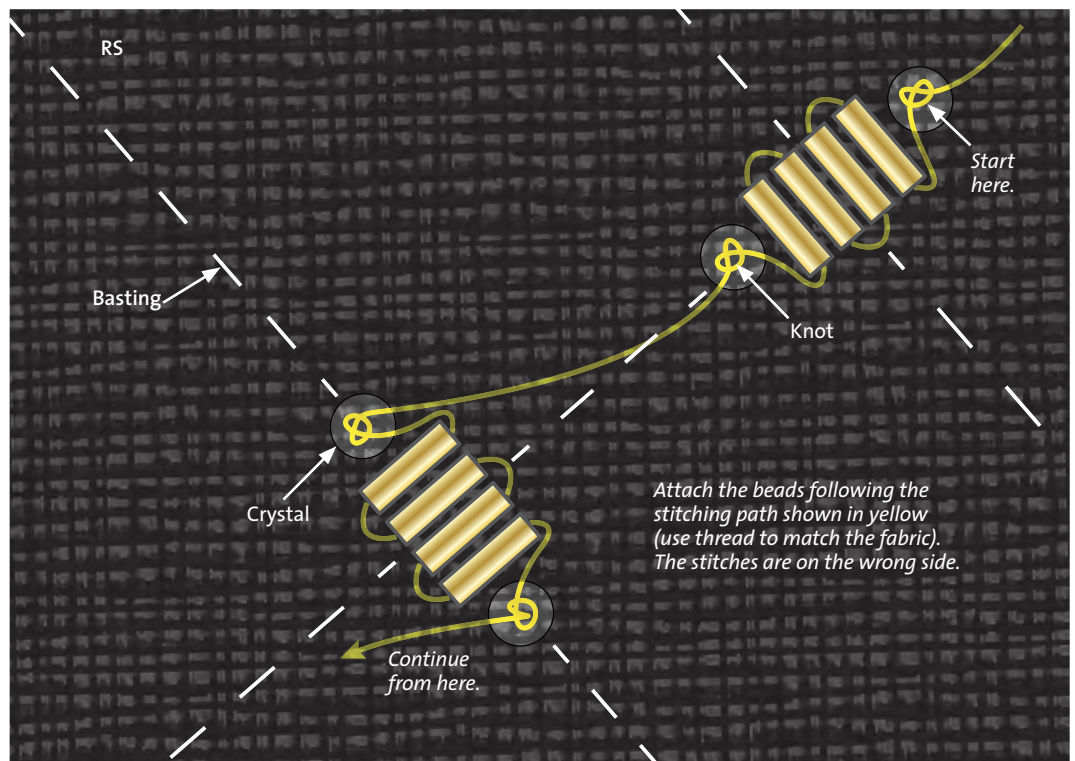
you select heat-applied crystals. You can purchase these supplies and tools at [Fire MountainGems.com](http://FireMountainGems.com).

BEAD AND WEAR

Sew on the beads, then apply the crystals. Make the first knot on the fabric's wrong side, under one crystal placement, before the crystal is applied. Sew the four bugle beads side by side with the ends aligned. Knot the thread on the wrong side of the second crystal location. Don't break the thread, but move on to the next intersection and repeat sewing the beads. Alternate the orientation of the motifs, as shown on the vintage example.

Affix each crystal (with prongs, stitches, or heat-activated glue) over the end knots to secure them.

Judith Neukam is editor-at-large.



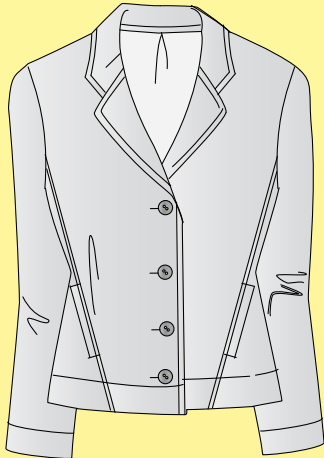
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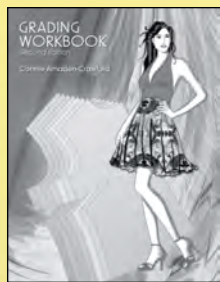
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Essential Techniques and Creative Solutions

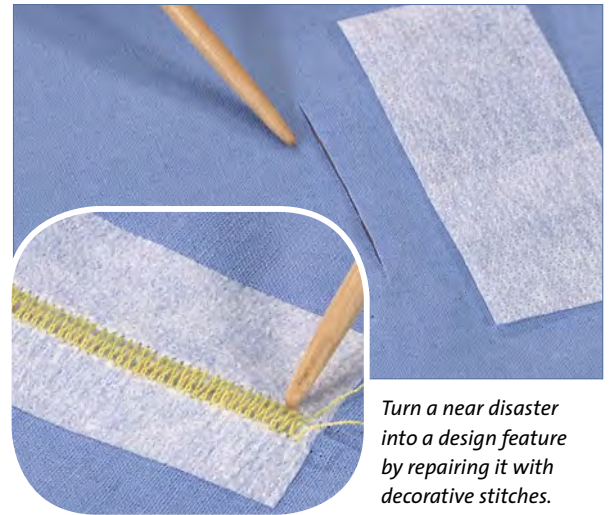
Tulle skirts can be worn for a variety of occasions, and making one isn't difficult. Ruth Ciemnoczolowski helps you conquer this billowy fabric with professional tips on sewing, pressing, and hemming.



Hemming gathered fabric that's sheer and springy is made easy with these techniques.



An accidental fabric cut can happen to even the most experienced sewer. Learn a creative method for repairing stray snips in the latest *Threads Essential Techniques* video tutorial.



Turn a near disaster into a design feature by repairing it with decorative stitches.

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Take an exclusive, close-up look at Kenneth D. King's fascinating Fortuny frock coat, and marvel at the details.



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Create delightful, foliage-inspired necklaces in different styles by cutting the leaves into various shapes.

Falling leaves necklace

Turn fabric scraps into a statement accessory

Every sewer ends up with small remnants, and many of us stash them because they're just too lovely to throw in the trash. This fashion-forward necklace is an excellent way to put your gorgeous fabric scraps to use—and wear them. The necklace is versatile, lightweight, easy to make, and travels well. There's no sewing involved, and once you've learned the basic technique, you can make different leaf or geometric shapes. Select the fabrics to reflect the season.

Marlene Heinz designs jewelry from fabric, glass, and paper.

SUPPLIES

- 3-inch-square cardboard template
- 6³/₄ yards 2-mm black elastic cord
- 24-inch-long wax paper sheet
- 2 sheets 12-inch by 9-inch Pellon EZ-Steam II, or any double-sided, pressure-sensitive fusible web
- Assorted fabric scraps
- E6000 Clear Industrial Strength Adhesive by Eclectic Products (*Michaels.com*)
- Press cloth
- Small, sharp fabric scissors
- Toothpick or coffee stirrer

Fuse and cut the leaves

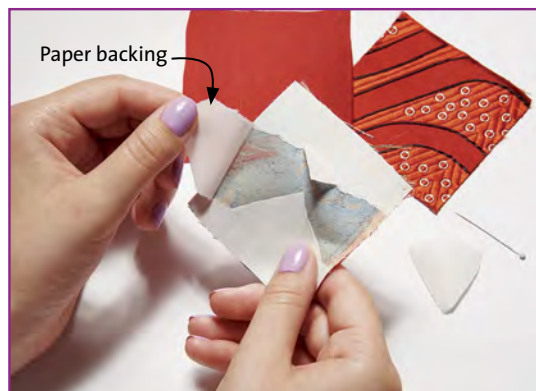
Use any fabric: velvet, silk, cotton, upholstery, knit, and even tulle are good choices. If you choose a lightweight, unstable fabric, use it only as the second side of the leaf (the side that is fused with an iron), as removing a paper backing from unstable fabrics can be tricky.

1 Trim forty-eight 3-inch squares from the chosen fabrics using the template. Cut a 48-inch-long piece of elastic cord, then cut the remaining elastic into forty-eight 4-inch-long pieces.

2 Remove the wax-faced paper from a fusible web sheet to reveal the pressure-sensitive surface. Finger-press the fabric squares, wrong side down, edge to edge on the sheet; arrange them four squares across and three squares down on the sheet.

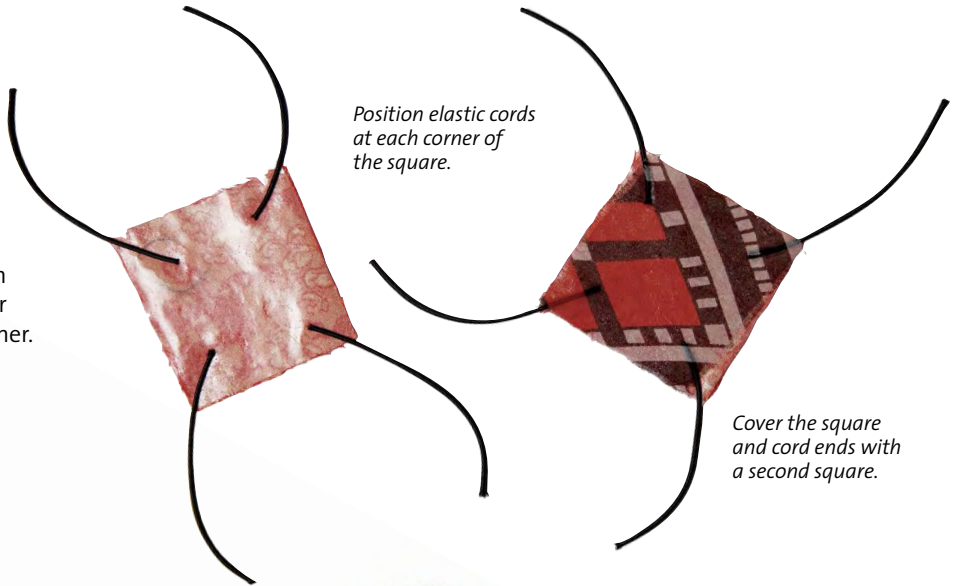


3 Cut the fabric squares apart. Peel the remaining paper backing from the web sheet. It is easier if you lightly score the backing of each square with a pin and crack it to pull away from the center rather than pulling from the sides.



continued >>>

4 Place a web-backed fabric square on an ironing surface, fusible side up. Position a 4-inch-long elastic cord in each corner. Make sure 1 inch of the elastic overlaps the fabric and 3 inches hang off the edge. Place another square of matching or contrasting fabric atop, cover with a press cloth, and press with the iron on a wool or cotton steam setting to fuse the materials together. Press for 10 to 15 seconds.



Position elastic cords at each corner of the square.

Cover the square and cord ends with a second square.

5 Cut leaf shapes from each corner. The elastic cords become the stems.



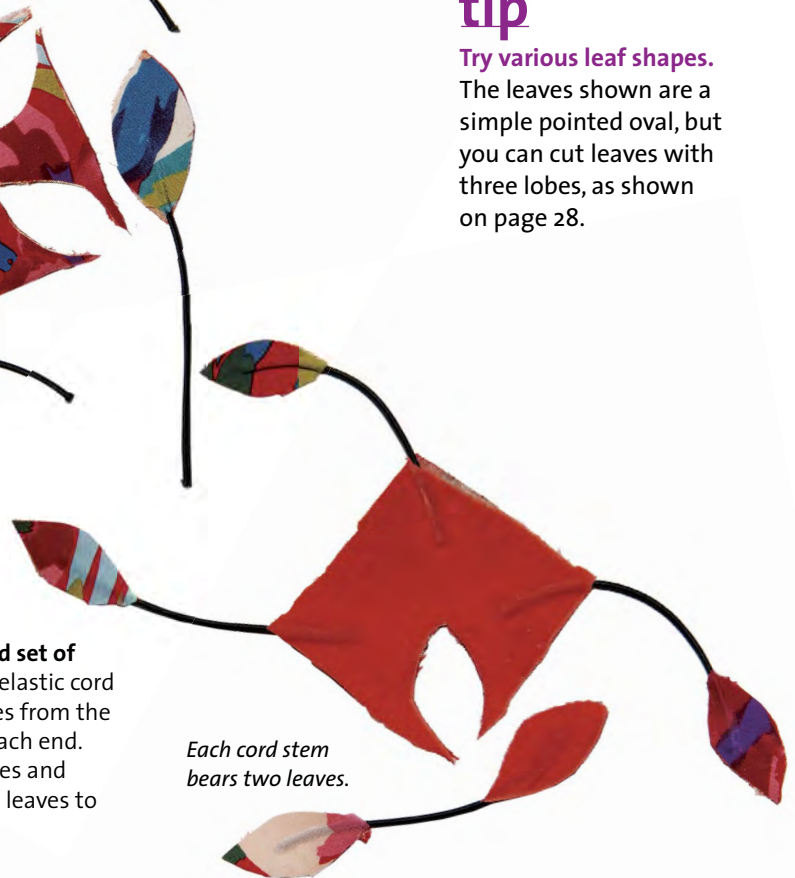
Each fused square yields four leaves.

tip

Try various leaf shapes. The leaves shown are a simple pointed oval, but you can cut leaves with three lobes, as shown on page 28.

6 Repeat the layering and fusing process with a second set of squares. This time, insert the completed leaves' free elastic cord ends between the second square's layers. Cut leaf shapes from the second square. Each elastic cord should have a leaf on each end. Repeat steps 2 through 6 for the remaining fabric squares and elastic cords. Reserve two unfused fabric squares to add leaves to the necklace cord ends.

Each cord stem bears two leaves.



Assemble the necklace

There should be 96 leaves attached to 48 short elastic cord pieces. Each leaf-ended elastic “stem” is tied onto the necklace cord and secured with glue.

1 Tie the two ends of the 48-inch-long elastic cord together with an overhand knot. Leave 2-inch-long tails. Rest the necklace cord on the wax paper sheet.

2 Tie each finished elastic stem to the necklace cord. Space them about 1 inch apart. Using the two reserved squares, apply leaves to the necklace’s free ends.

3 Dispense a dab of glue onto the leftover wax paper. Dip an applicator into the glue and dab the glue onto each knotted stem. Let the necklace dry on the wax paper overnight.



Make several leaf necklaces from your most beautiful scraps and wear them together.



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pattern review

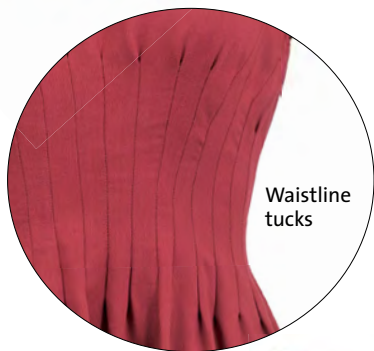
TESTED AND SEWN BY *THREADS*

DRESS, VOGUE 9046

Clutch: Lulu Townsend (DSW.com); Shoes: Dolce & Gabbana (DSW.com)



Made in wool crepe from Banksville Designer Fabrics, Norwalk, Connecticut.



Waistline tucks



Tucked dress

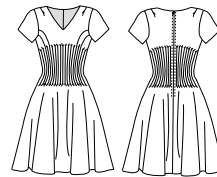
Vogue 9046 (VoguePatterns.com)

This design from Claire Shaeffer's Custom Couture collection for Vogue Patterns has subtle couture touches. The simple silhouette, combined with fine details, make it a stunning choice. It is an above-the-knee, fit-and-flare dress with a V-neckline, shoulder pleats, short sleeves, vertical tucks at the waistline, a waist stay, lingerie guards, and a center-back zipper. The most striking feature is the 37 tucks that shape the waistline. Inside the dress, additional shaping and support are provided by a 4½-inch-wide grosgrain ribbon waist stay, shaped with 10 darts and closed with hooks and eyes. The dress is not difficult to sew, but it requires time and patience. Marking and sewing each tuck precisely is critical for a proper fit. The instructions are well-illustrated, concise, and peppered with helpful hints from Claire. Our tester used a polyester crepe for the muslin, which worked up beautifully. She envisions gorgeous versions of this dress made from wool crepe, soft linen, or silk dupioni, and suggests sticking with light- to medium-toned solid colors, as opposed to prints or dark fabrics, so as not to hide the tucks. This is a perfect design to wear to a wedding or on an evening out.

(Sized Misses' 8–24 for busts 31.5–46 in. and hips 33.5–48 in.) ▲

—Tested by Sandi Barrett, Marlborough, Massachusetts

STYLE TIP: For a formal evening look, extend the skirt to floor length and add touches of hand beading.



Modern coats

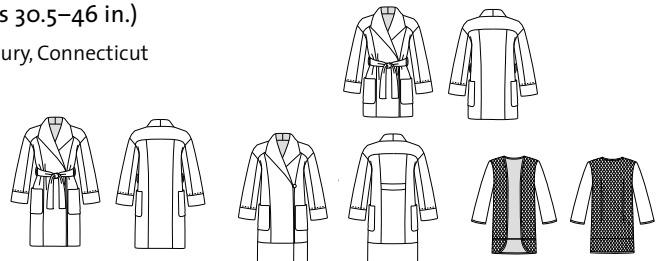
Simplicity Threads 1015 (Simplicity.com)

These coats from the Simplicity *Threads* pattern line have shawl collars, princess seams, double-breasted fronts, front and back yokes extending into drop shoulders, three-piece sleeves with cuff bands, and patch pockets. The angled shawl collars have center-back seams and a subtle point at the level of the front yoke seam. Each of the three views is lined and includes an optional button-in lining for added warmth. View A ends just above the knee and View C ends at midhigh; both include a tie belt. View B finishes just above the knee, has a button-and-loop closure, a back half-belt, and a wide hem band. The design is appropriate for any coating, from heavy wool for a deep-winter version, to microfiber for a chic spring raincoat. Look for smooth, prequilted fabrics for the button-in lining.

(Sized Misses' 6–24 for busts 30.5–46 in.)

—Tested by Norma Bucko, Danbury, Connecticut

STYLE TIP: Plan a luxurious, multifabric version. Measure each pattern piece to calculate fabric requirements.



Every pattern shown has been sewn and evaluated. We keep a close watch on fashion trends and select patterns that reflect the latest looks. Each one is then sent to a talented tester, who sews it in muslin to evaluate the proportions, style, and pattern instructions. —Compiled by Anna Mazur

LOOK FOR THESE ICONS ON THE PATTERN REVIEWS

- ✦ Includes sizes 24 and up
- ✦ Petite options
- Fast and easy
- ★ For knits
- ▲ Challenging techniques
- ▼ Downloadable pattern

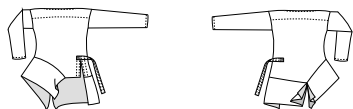
Creative tunic

Kayla Kennington: A-List Tunic 0225 (KaylaKennington.com)

This tunic offers many options for the innovative sewer, in fabric selection and technique application. The asymmetrical design has a self-faced, slashed neckline, narrow long sleeves, a two-piece peplum flounce with a left-side slit, and waistline ties attached on the left side. The tunic is fitted at the bust, then flares gently over the waist and hips, with at least 7 inches of ease at the waistline. The fit can be adjusted with the ties. The front and back necklines are cut straight on the cross-grain, and form continuous horizontal lines with the shoulder seams. The instructions and illustrations are accurate, but note that seam and hem allowances must be added. Imaginative fabric choices and finishing techniques are mentioned on the guide sheet. This tunic can be dressed up or down depending on the fabric selected. It is ideal for knits, such as wool jersey, or for wovens in fibers such as silk, rayon, Tencel, or cotton. The design is striking in soft leather or supple suede. If trying lace, another intriguing option, our tester recommends going up a size.

(Sized XS-XXL for finished busts 30–46 in.) ▼ (at SewingPatterns.com)

—Tested by Toby Barton, Winsted, Connecticut



SEWING TIP: Experiment with curving the neckline and cutting a new corresponding facing or a binding.

Full-legged pant

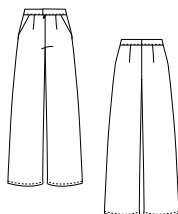
Marfy 3681 (www.Marfy.it)

This sweeping pant style has a wide, straight waistband that sits at the natural waist, side-front slant pockets, front and back waist darts, and a zipper closure, which can be placed at center front or center back. The fashion illustration shows belt loops, but no pattern pieces were included for them. Our tester sewed on the waistband using a menswear construction technique, adding it before the center-back seam was completed. Marfy patterns are hand-cut in a specific size, arrive without yardage requirements, instructions, illustrations, or hem and seam allowances. The pattern tissue has minimal, but essential, markings including clearly labeled grainlines and important match points in the form of corresponding letters. Although minimal information is included, with only two major pattern pieces, this design is simple enough that even a beginner can tackle it. The Marfy description recommends jersey, but our tester suggests wovens with drape. For daytime use, make these pants in cotton sateen, crepe, or lightweight linen. For a more dressed-up look, select fabrics such as silk jacquard, crepe de Chine, or rayon.

(Sized European 42–54 for hips 34.6–45.5 in. and hips 32.5–48 in.) ▲

—Tested by Colleen Hubbard, Duluth, Minnesota

SEWING TIP: Make a muslin with 1-inch-wide side seam allowances, and confirm the fit before cutting the fashion fabric.



See a bridal version of the A-List Tunic in 360 degrees.

Pants made in textured knit, EmmaOneSock.com; tunic, made in Tencel, provided by Kayla Kennington.

BLOUSE, A-LIST TUNIC 0225 PANT, SIMPLICITY 1070

Necklace: Stylist's own; Handbag: Onna Ehrlich (Nordstrom Rack); Shoes: Cole Haan (LordAndTaylor.com)



BLOUSE, BUTTERICK 6134
SKIRT, BURDASTYLE 6768

Handbag: Ivanka Trump (DSW.com); Shoes: Gucci (DSW.com)



Top sewn in rayon challis from JoAnn Fabric and Craft Stores; skirt sewn in woolen suiting from Elliott Berman Fabrics, New York.



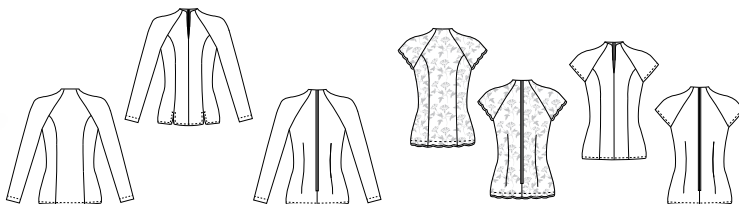
Sleek tops

Butterick 6134 (Butterick.com)

This flattering, form-fitting blouse is designed with a funnel neck, three-seamed raglan sleeves, and a center-back zipper closure finished with a hook and eye. The angled seams add visual texture and facilitate a custom fit. There are center-front and back seams, front princess seams, side seams, and back fish-eye darts. Variation details include short or long sleeves, a front neckline slit, and side-front hemline slits. One view has no center-front seam, is underlined, and made from bordered lace. The view places the decorative lace edges at the sleeve and bottom hems. The instructions are accurate and detailed. If using a woven fabric, our tester recommends checking and adjusting the sleeve ease and circumference if necessary. This top can be worn for many occasions, depending on the fabric selected. The style is ideal for stable knits or lightweight wovens, such as challis, crepe, and poplin. Lace options include chantilly and alençon. When using lace, select a lightweight underlining, such as a tissue-weight knit or tricot. For a creative touch, use a contrasting color for the underlining.

(Sized Misses' 6–22 for busts 30.5–44 in.)

—Tested by Nancy Muro, Wallingford, Connecticut



STYLE TIP: Be inventive and combine coordinating prints in the top's sections.

Mock-wrap skirt

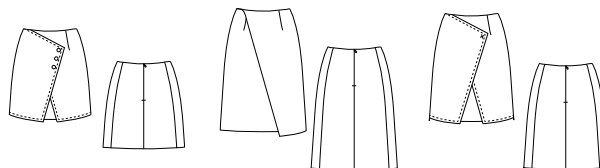
BurdaStyle 6768 (Simplicity.com)

This semifitted, unlined straight skirt is finished in three lengths: below the knee, at the knee, or above the knee. Each view has a decorative overlay, creating the illusion of a wrap skirt. The longest view has an angled overlay that wraps to the right on the body, over an underlay front. The shorter views have angled overlays that wrap to the left on the body, lapping at center front over a contrast underlay. The knee-length view has a snap sewn under the uppermost overlay's free corner. The above-the-knee view has three buttons securing the uppermost overlay. For all variations, the side seams are positioned slightly toward the skirt back. The skirt has front-waist darts, a faced waistline, and an invisible zipper closure in the center-back seam. The longest view is a good choice to showcase a fabric with an interesting reverse on the overlay, such as crepe-backed satin, or a double-sided fabric. Double-sided fabrics also work for the views with a contrast underlay, or combine interesting fabrics. Suggested textiles include midweight cottons, linen, denim, or jacquard.

(Sized 10–20 for hips 35.5–43.5 in.)

—Tested by Michele Kwiatkowski, Danbury, Connecticut

STYLE TIP: Use the overlay style to showcase lace, embroidery, or a fabric collage.



Modern ensemble

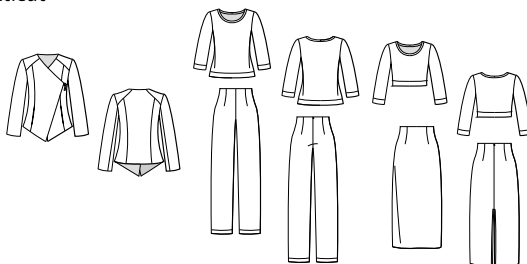
Simplicity SewStylish 1070 (Simplicity.com)

This four-garment pattern from the Simplicity SewStylish line includes a long-sleeve jacket, a close-fitting knit top in two lengths with scooped, banded necklines and long sleeves, and straight-leg pants or midcalf-length straight skirt with high, faced waistlines and center-back invisible zipper closures. The jacket can be worn open, with the angled fronts forming single-peaked lapels with low points, or closed, as a double-breasted style with the right front secured by a D-ring and a tie closure set close to the left armscye. The jacket also has front and back princess seams with in-seam pockets at front, two-piece set-in sleeves, and a yoke-like inset at front and back shoulders. The pattern is sized for knits with a 25-percent stretch factor, except for the jacket, which can be made in a woven. Midweight, stable knits are good choices for the pants and skirt, including ponte, double knits, Raschel, and sweatshirt fleece. The top may be made in jersey, tricot, or any lightweight knit. See the jacket and pants in “Fall Sewing Inspiration,” page 65.

(Sized Misses' 4–20 for busts 29.5–42 in. and hips 31.5–44 in.) ★ (except the jacket) ▼

— Tested by Norma Bucko, Danbury, Connecticut

SEWING TIP: Use a narrow zigzag stitch to sew seams with some elasticity.



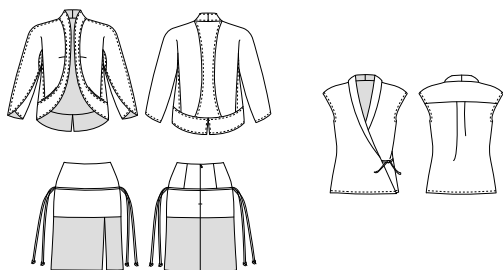
Intricate outfit

Vogue 1437 (VoguePatterns.com)

Exceptional details abound on this three-piece designer ensemble by Ralph Rucci. The jacket has nontraditional seam placement (including horizontal bust darts originating at center front); hand topstitching; three-quarter-length, kimono-style sleeves with petal-shaped hemlines; in-seam pockets; and underarm gussets. The jacket and skirt are self-lined. The cap-sleeve wrap top has a cut-on neckline facing that folds into a shawl-like collar, bound seams and edges, and a tie surplice closure. The partially lined, knee-length skirt has an invisible zipper closure at center back, a waist yoke, a high-hip level insert that extends into long ties, and a contrast bottom section with a left-front slit. The slit edges and skirt hem are finished with very narrow hems. Our tester recommends reinforcing the slit top, as it is a point of stress. This is a time-consuming ensemble, but worth it in our tester's opinion because of the design's versatility. The jacket and skirt are appropriate for wool crepe, heavy knits, four-ply silk, tropical wool, and linen. Use silk charmeuse, silk crepe, tissue linen, voile, or chantilly lace for the blouse.

(Sized Misses' 6–22 for busts 30.5–44 in. and hips 32.5–46 in.) ▲

— Tested by Karen Konicki, New York, New York



SEWING TIP: With double-faced cloth and finished seam allowances, you could skip the self-lining aspect and reduce the yardage requirements.

ENSEMBLE, SIMPLICITY 1070

Necklace: Nordstrom Rack; Handbag: Cole Haan (DSW.com); Booties: BCBGeneration (Nordstrom Rack)



Top made in rayon/spandex jersey and skirt made in rayon blend stretch ponte knit, both from EmmaOneSock.com.



Three Ways *to* Match Prints

Align fabric across seams with one of these expert methods

BY LOUISE CUTTING, SUSAN CRANE, AND CATHIE RYAN

We've compiled three methods for easily and accurately matching fabric prints that are disrupted by intersecting seams. First, contributing editor Louise Cutting describes how she uses a fusible strip instead of pins to align prints for accurate seaming. Next, Susan Crane demonstrates a couture hand-sewing technique that prevents garment sections from shifting while sewing. The

last method, from Cathie Ryan, requires a blind-hem foot and enables you to see the fabric design as you sew, in order to adjust the motif placement.

Begin by accurately cutting the garment sections so the fabric print aligns perfectly at the seamlines, not the cutting lines. Then, choose a stitching technique. Whichever method you prefer, don't be afraid to experiment.



There's no need to break up a bold, painterly print, even when seams shape your garment. This print was matched using the slip-basting method (see page 42).

*Pattern: McCall's 6758, view A.
Fabric: cotton print, Chintz-N-Prints (Newtown, Connecticut).*

Cut the pieces

To make prints match across seams, first cut the fabric accurately. While there are many ways to do this, below you'll find contributing editor Louise Cutting's technique. It requires you to fold one pattern piece along the seamline and trace the fabric's design onto the pattern tissue. Regardless of the cutting method you choose, buy more fabric than the pattern calls for.

1 Consider making a pattern copy. If the pattern paper you are working with isn't transparent, trace the original pattern onto tissue paper through which you can see the print clearly. Transfer all pattern markings to the pattern copy.

2 Place the pattern. Decide where you want to position the print on the garment, and pin the pattern piece in the desired location.

3 Match the edges. Fold back the adjoining pattern piece's seam allowance along the seamline and precisely align the fold with the pinned seamline, as if they were sewn. Outline print motifs onto the unpinned tissue paper as a guide for placing the pattern over an identical print motif later. Once enough of the motif is drawn, remove the pattern piece.

4 Cut the pieces. Cut the pinned pattern piece as usual. Use the tissue paper outlines as a guide to place the unpinned pattern on an identical print repeat. Pin the pattern in place, and cut. Repeat steps 1 through 4 as many times as necessary to complete cutting out the garment.

5 Be creative in matching. Sometimes it is impossible to get a perfect match. On these occasions, experiment with the print. You can use appliqué or insertions to import a part of the print to create exciting effects around the parts that match perfectly.

Use a fusible strip

BY LOUISE CUTTING, OWNER OF CUTTING LINE DESIGNS; CUTTINGLINEDESIGNS.COM

Instead of using pins to match prints, this technique calls for a single fusible web strip (such as Lite Steam-A-Seam 2). This process also can be viewed in the author's Industry Insider Techniques DVD, Volume 7 (TauntonStore.com).

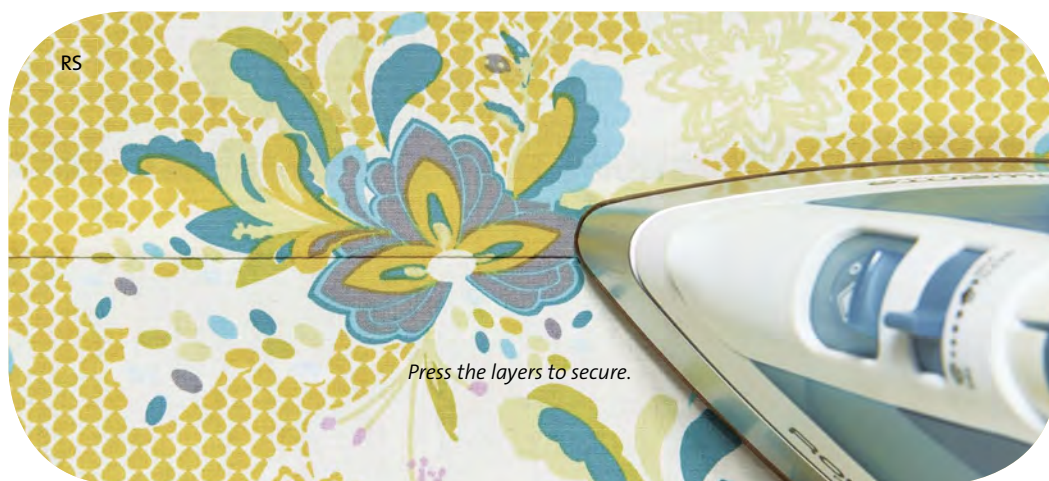
1 Stitch and fold. Sew along the seamline of one garment section edge where you plan to match the print. With the wrong side up, press the seam allowance to the wrong side, rolling the basting stitches slightly to the wrong side.



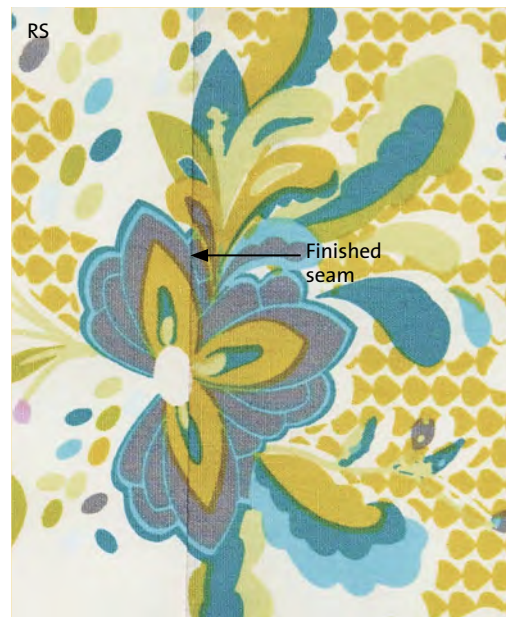
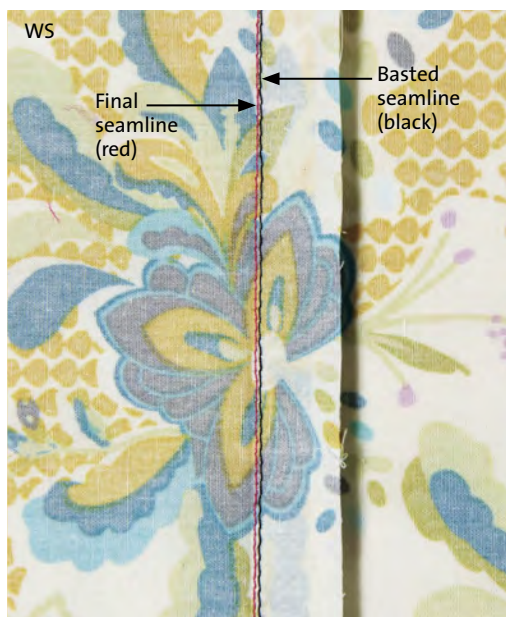
2 Apply a fusible strip. With the fabric's wrong side up, place a thin strip (narrower than the seam-allowance width) of fusible web tape close to the fold. Lightly press it in place. Remove the strip's paper backing.



3 Align the motifs. With both sections right side up, align the fold with the connecting section's print. Fine-tune the alignment until the motif matches perfectly. Gently press the top layer to fuse it in place. The print is now matched on the right side.



4 Sew the seam. Turn the basted piece wrong side up. Use the initial stitching line as a guide to sew the pieces together. Remove the basting if desired. The seam allowances are fused together with low-bulk adhesive. Serge the raw edges together, if desired.



Apply slip basting

BY SUSAN CRANE, A CUSTOM CLOTHIER AND COUTURE SEWING EXPERT

Control the print alignment with a hand-basting stitch sewn from the fabric's right side. You'll need a hand-sewing needle and thread that matches the fabric's predominant color to get started.

1 Mark and press. On the fabric's right side, mark the seamline on the connecting garment sections with tailor's chalk or a water-soluble fabric pen. Press one section's seam allowance to the wrong side along the seamline.

2 Align the design. With both sections right side up, align the folded edge with the adjoining section's marked seamline. Fine-tune the alignment until the print matches perfectly. Pin the sections together from the right side over the seam allowances.



Photos: (p. 39; p. 45, right) Jack Deutsch; all others, Mike Yamin. Stylist: Jessica Saal. Hair and makeup: AgataHelena.com. Styling credits: (p. 39) earrings—One Wink (DSW.com), belt—stylist's own, skirt—Jcrew.com; (p. 45) pants—DKNYC (Macy's.com), earrings—Kenneth Cole (Nordstrom Rack), bracelet—Madison Parker (Nordstrom Rack), necklace—Simon Sebbag (Nordstrom.com).

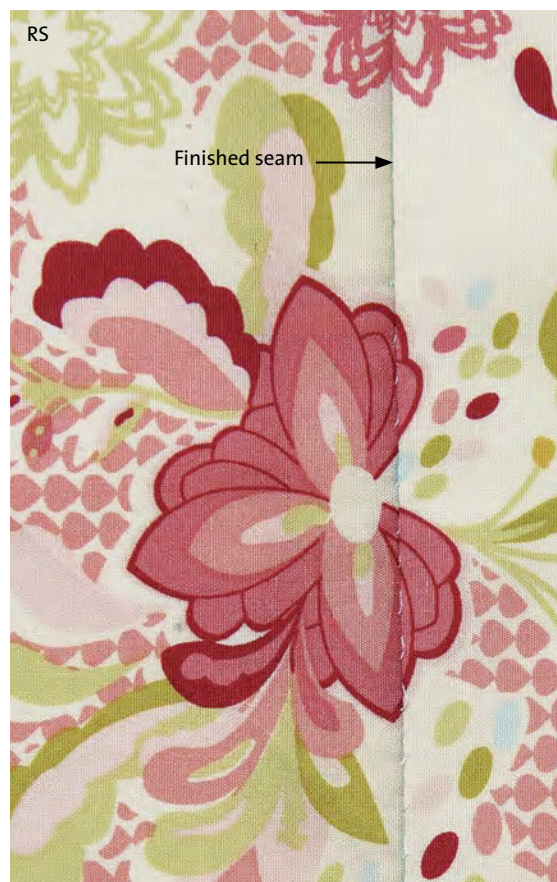
3 Thread a hand-sewing needle with a single thread strand and knot the end. Anchor the thread on the bottom layer's wrong side, and bring the needle through the bottom layer to the top at the seamline. Pick up one or two threads from the top layer's fold.



4 Continue stitching. Draw the thread back down through the bottom layer at the seamline, then bring the needle up $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the first stitch, catching the fold again. Repeat to finish slip-basting the seam.



5 Sew the seam. Turn the top fabric layer so the wrong side is face up. Press the seam flat to machine-sew it at this point, following the slip-basting thread, which clearly marks the seamline. Remove the slip basting if desired.



Machine-baste with a blind-hem stitch

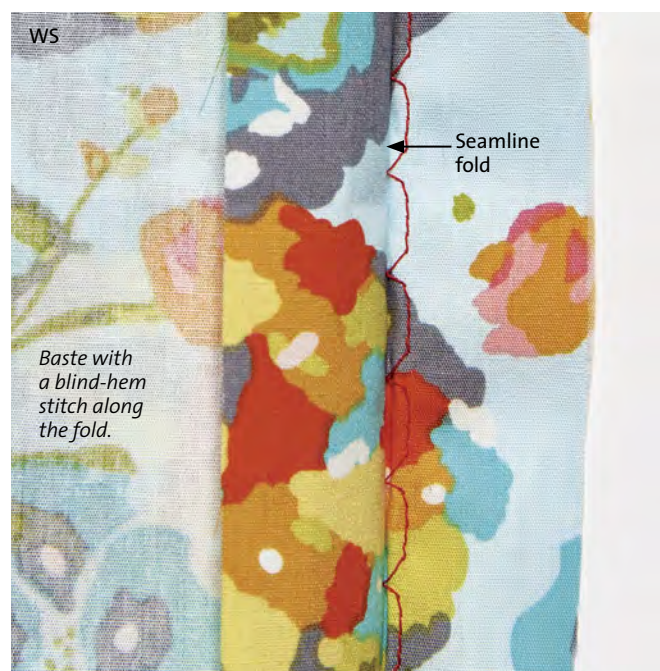
BY CATHIE RYAN, DESIGNER AND OWNER OF RYAN DANCEWEAR

This print-matching method enables you to see how the fabric is aligned as you baste the seam together by machine. Make adjustments on the spot while using a blind-hem foot and a blind-hem stitch. Then, sew the seam with a straight stitch.

1 Align the print. Orient the connecting garment sections with right sides together along the seamline. Fold back the top fabric layer's seam allowance so the right side is showing. Finger-press the edge. Next, fine-tune the alignment until the print matches perfectly. Pin the top layer in place carefully; make sure to set the pins parallel to the foldline without puckering the fabric.



2 Tack the fabric in place. Set the machine for a blind-hem stitch and sew with a blind-hem foot. As you sew, make sure the zigzag just bites the fold. This means the zigzag's tip is just a thread or two inside the finger-pressed edge.



3 Press the seam from the right side. Reposition the fabric so it is right side up. Press along the seam. If necessary, finesse any mismatched print areas. The blind-hem stitch offers wiggle room.



tip

Guarantee an even feed. Hold the fabric firmly while sewing to ensure the top and bottom fabrics feed evenly.

4 Place a regular presser foot on the machine. Set the machine for a straight stitch. Fold the top fabric layer back so right sides are together and the blind-hem seam is exposed. Sew a straight stitch along the pressed line. Remove the blind-hem stitch if desired.



With clever matching, even wavy stripes fall into line. This print was matched using the blind-hemstitch method.

Pattern: McCall's 6758, view B (collar omitted). Fabric: cotton print, Chintz-N-Prints (Newtown, Connecticut)



The View Within

An exhibition turns historic garments
inside out to reveal construction details

BY CAROL J. FRESIA

In every age, designers and sewers have taken on the challenge of making two-dimensional fabric conform to a three-dimensional body, in a way that looks good and wears well. Changes in fashion have always posed new construction problems, but ingenious sewers have succeeded in crafting garments to satisfy their basic needs or fulfill their wildest dreams. They've created articles of clothing that visually reshape the body, persuaded textiles to behave in unexpected ways, and fabricated wearable works of art that have, in some cases, survived for centuries.

Kent State University Museum's exhibition, *Inside Out: Revealing Clothing's Hidden Secrets*, shows curious sewers how these feats were achieved. We're given the unprecedented chance to peer inside a selection of wonderful garments from three centuries, and learn how they were made.

Exhibition curator Sarah Hume was inspired to develop the show when readers of her blog on historic clothing asked for information on how the garments were made. From the museum's extensive costume collection, she selected 13 garments, ranging from the late 18th through the mid-20th centuries, which reveal a gamut of fascinating construction techniques. Some are familiar to today's sewers, but many show a level of technical mastery, aesthetic refinement, and ingenuity from which we can learn.

At the exhibition, on view through February 14, 2016, the garments are displayed so you can see their interiors. If you can't make the trip to Kent, Ohio, enjoy the highlights shown, and glean some new ideas from these old techniques.

Carol J. Fresia is technical editor.



An early 19th-century dress uses fabric bands edged with piping to control the gathering and reinforce the seams that join the shoulder yokes to the bodice.



Diaphanous gauze gown

English, ca. 1815–1820

Extreme care was required in the handling of this dress's delicate, sheer cotton fabric. Every seam shows in the finished garment, plus the fabric tends to ravel, and thus demands thoughtful construction and finishing techniques.

A narrow piped band trims and reinforces the neckline; a rolled hem finishes the center-back opening; and a skinny drawstring in a casing fits and closes the dress at the back waist. Woven tape is applied along the wrong side of the front-waistline seam to provide support for the gathers and to conceal the seam allowances. Aside from the decorative edging at the hem, the dress's embellishment comes entirely from the lovely effects of the gathered fabric.

Delicate fabric demands thoughtful construction and finishing techniques.

A simple silhouette delineated in transparent white gauze calls to mind white-gowned ladies portrayed in novels by Jane Austen. There, a white gown was seen as a sign of virtue, simplicity, and luxury.



Photos: courtesy of Kent State University Museum, Kent, Ohio.



Man's satin suit

English, 1780s

This ensemble consists of a jacket, a waistcoat, and breeches, which appear to be made entirely of silk satin. However, the garments include sturdier, less costly fabrics in hidden areas. The linings and the back of the waistcoat are made of linen, sparing the expense of satin where it wouldn't be seen.

Although the garments include finely embroidered details, they also were made to last: All raw edges are enclosed, either in facings or in felled seams. To ensure that the suit was practical, each piece has pockets, with six in the breeches alone.

The tailor who crafted this suit reminds us that opulence needn't preclude thrift or utility.

Although the waistcoat lining is linen, satin facings give the illusion of a full satin lining. The covered buttons were embroidered and stretched over a form.



Multiple flaps and overlapping panels, plus buttons and lacing, form closures and a total of six pockets on the breeches.



Gold and ivory satin conceal sturdy linen linings.

Two-piece taffeta dress

Probably American, ca. 1864

Stunning beaded velvet bow appliqués adorn this silk gown. The silhouette, with its narrow, close-fitting bodice and full skirt, is typical of its time. In the bodice, underlining and fine seam finishes are functional and attractive. The very wide skirt retains its shape with a steel-cage crinoline, which, in turn, calls for careful interior construction, including extra layers of fabric as a buffer between the taffeta and the hoops.

*Fine seam finishes
are attractive and functional.*



Cartridge pleats create fullness at the skirt back. Polished cotton strengthens and supports the tightly pleated fabric at the waistline.



A stately gown is built as much as it is sewn. The style may be antiquated, but the techniques used to make it can be adapted for contemporary garments.



Piping along the edges and neatly fell-stitched seam allowances are pretty and durable.

Balmain evening gown

French, 1958

This gown's glistening satin fabric and artfully draped bodice testify to Pierre Balmain's upbringing as the son of a fabric wholesaler and a fashion boutique owner. Simplicity and elegance are hallmarks of his work, and vintage Balmain dresses remain in high demand among fashion-savvy women. Understated in shape and color, this classic gown of satin and taffeta contains significant internal engineering—no less than what is found in the heavier and more voluminous dresses of the 19th century.



Balmain's signature elegance depends on carefully structured underlayers that enhance the silhouette without adding bulk.

An inner corselet and extrawide grosgrain waist stay provide the structure for the strapless bodice. The bust is shaped by padded underwire cups. The gown's skirt is underlined in organza, and adjustable elastic suspenders replace a separate garter belt.





Hem a Pleated Skirt

Release the creases for a crisp finish

BY SUSAN KHALJE

If a pleated skirt's hem allowance is simply turned up and stitched in place, it won't lie flat. Since the hem allowance's folds must be oriented in the opposite direction from the rest of the skirt's folds, hemming a pleated skirt requires preparation. Whether you're hemming a pleated skirt for the first time or shortening a pleated skirt that has already been hemmed, the same general rules apply. The key is to first press the lower pleated section completely flat to eliminate the pleat folds. Then, hem the skirt and reset the pleats in the appropriate direction. Follow along to learn exactly how to apply this practical technique.

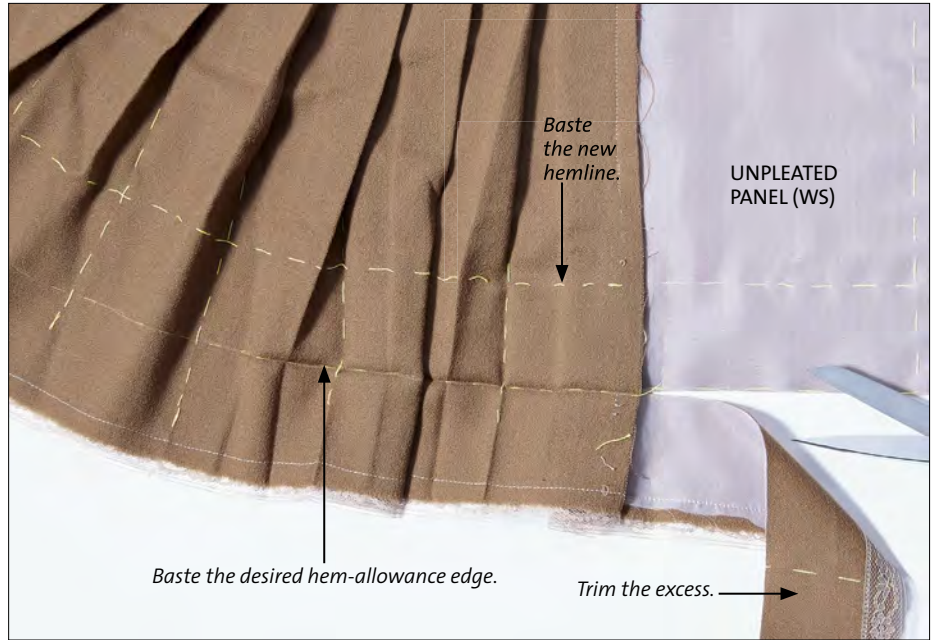
Susan Khalje is a couture expert and Threads contributing editor. SusanKhalje.com.

Open seams and flatten folds

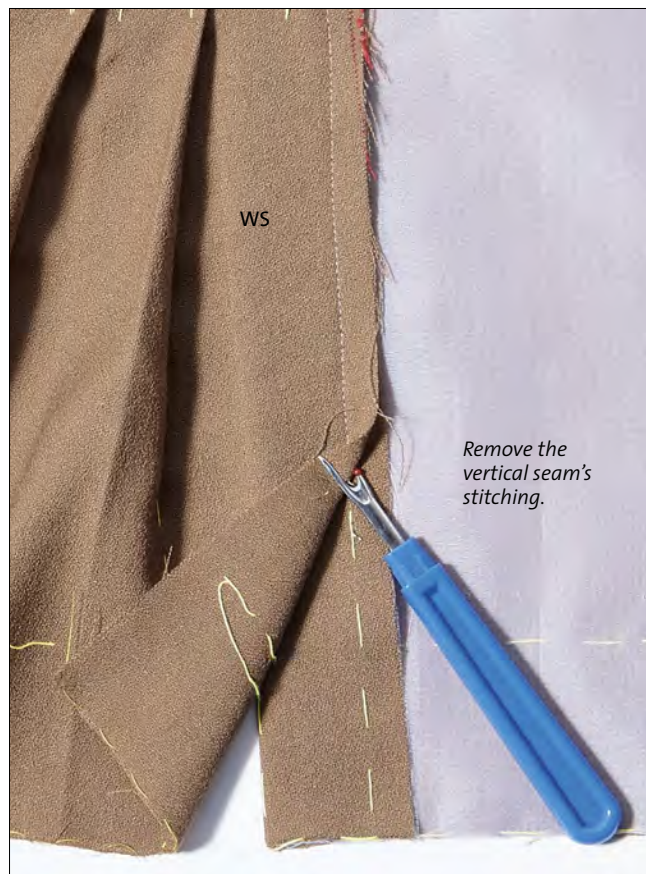
Determine the hemline location and the hem-allowance depth, then press out the hemline pleats and finish the raw edge. If you wish, thread-trace the pleat foldlines as a guide for resetting them later.

1 Remove the stitching that holds the original hem allowance in place. Mark the new hemline and baste its position on the skirt. Chalk will rub off and disappear as the new hem is manipulated, pressed, and re-sewn and as the pleats are reset; basting provides the most durable guideline.

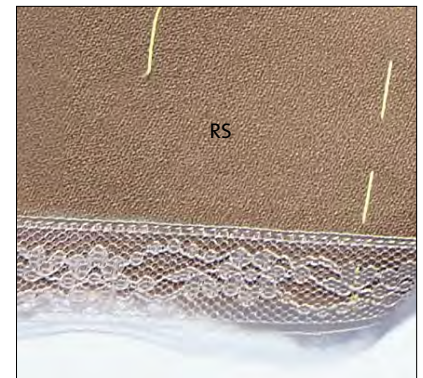
2 Determine the hem allowance depth. The depth can vary, but between 2 inches and 2½ inches deep helps keep the raw hem-allowance edge out of sight as the wearer moves. Once this measurement is determined, baste along the hem-allowance edge. Use this stitching as a guide to trim the excess hem allowance evenly.



3 Press the hem allowance flat, a few inches past the marked hemline. Removing the original pleat folds makes it easier to work with the hem allowance and the new hemline pleats later. Carefully remove the stitches from any vertical seams, from the hem allowance edge to at least 3 inches to 4 inches above the new hemline.



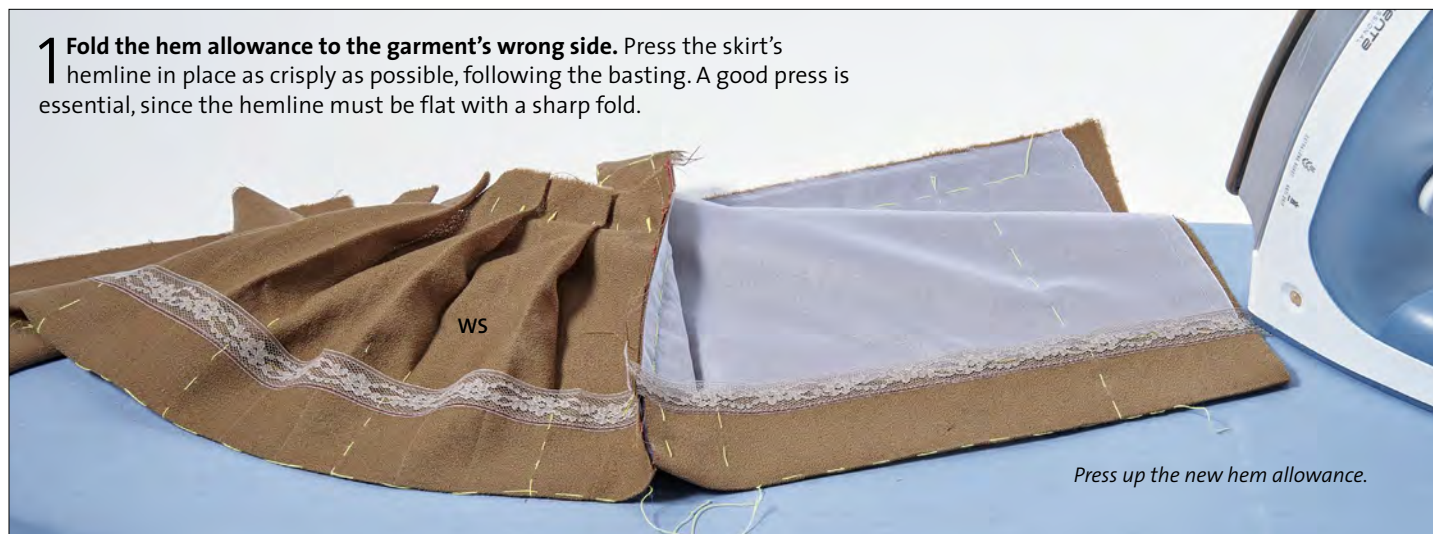
4 Finish the hem allowance's raw edge. Either serge the raw edge, apply a machine zigzag stitch, or hand-sew an overcast stitch. Another option is to attach hem lace to the edge by machine. Some hem laces have a bit of give, which causes them to stretch as you sew. In this case, be sure to apply the hem lace flat.



Hem and re-press the pleats

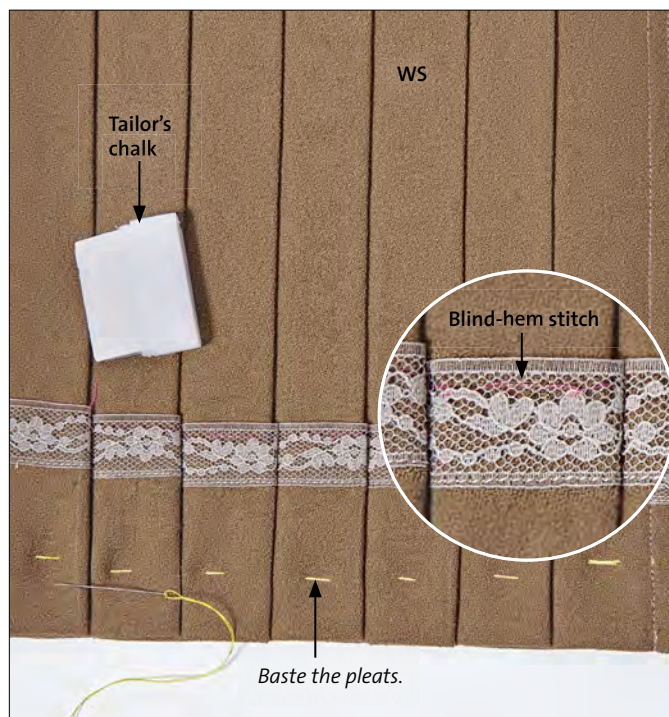
Re-hemming a pleated skirt requires a significant amount of pressing—first, for the hemline fold, and then for the pleats. In addition to an iron, it helps to have a tailor's clapper on hand to thoroughly set the pleats.

1 Fold the hem allowance to the garment's wrong side. Press the skirt's hemline in place as crisply as possible, following the basting. A good press is essential, since the hemline must be flat with a sharp fold.

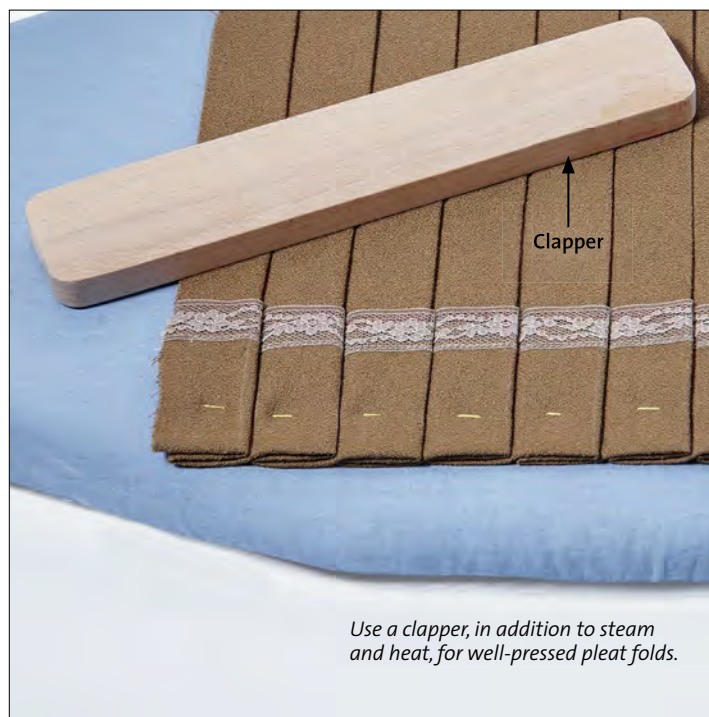


2 Hand-sew the hem allowance in place with a blind-hem stitch. The goal is to keep the thread out of sight. If the stitches are visible, they may catch on something accidentally.

3 Fold the pleats. Measure the hem pleats carefully so they match the skirt's existing pleats. To keep the pleats straight, even, and on-grain, mark the foldlines with tailor's chalk. Then, fold the pleats. If the fabric is difficult to control, hand-baste along each pleat's leading edge to make sure the fold is accurately placed. Baste the pleats along the hem.



4 Press the pleat folds with an iron on a steam setting. To reset the new foldlines as the fabric cools and dries, press firmly with a clapper. Using a clapper sets pleats without the risk of scorching fabric. Spray the pleats with a 50/50 mixture of white vinegar and water to set a lasting crisp edge. The vinegar odor dissipates quickly.

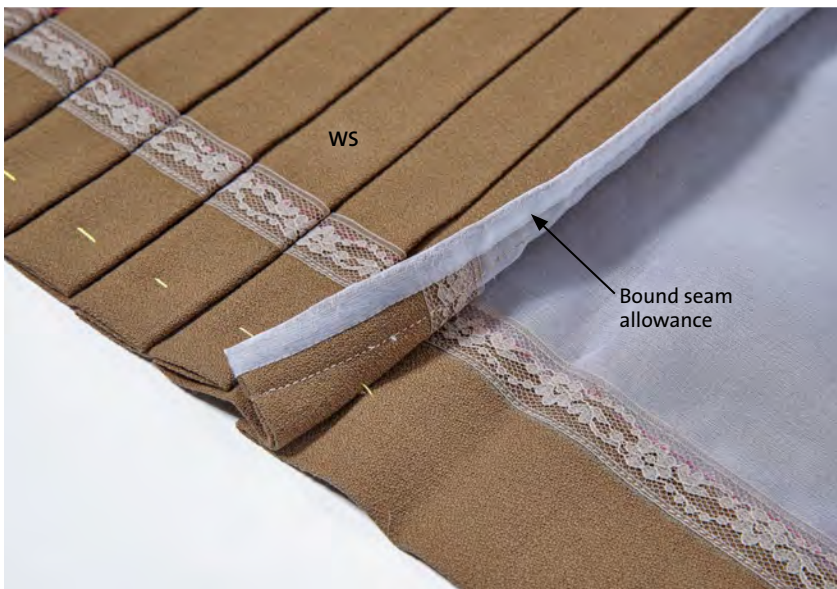


Photos: (p. 52; p. 55; right) Jack Deutsch; all others, Mike Yamin. Stylist: Jessica Saal. Hair and makeup: AgataHelena.com. Styling credits: top—LordAndTaylor.com, earrings—Nine West (Macy's.com), shoes—Bandolino (DSW.com), clutch—Urban Express (DSW.com).

Add the finishing touches

To complete the process, simply stitch the skirt's vertical seams back together and finish the raw edges as desired. If you are hemming a garment for the first time, omit step 2.

1 Finish the seam allowances that were released. Often, seams are placed along the pleats' back edges. While the seams don't need to be pressed open, the raw edges should be finished. Serge the raw edges, apply a machine zigzag stitch, or hand-overcast the edges. Another option is to use strips of lining to bind the edges.



2 Apply an edgestitch. If any edgestitching was interrupted to work on the hem, such as along the pleats' leading edges, now is the time to reapply it. To mimic the original stitches, carefully match the stitch size, thread tension, and placement. Rather than back tacking, begin where the previous stitching left off, and pull any thread tails to the garment's wrong side.

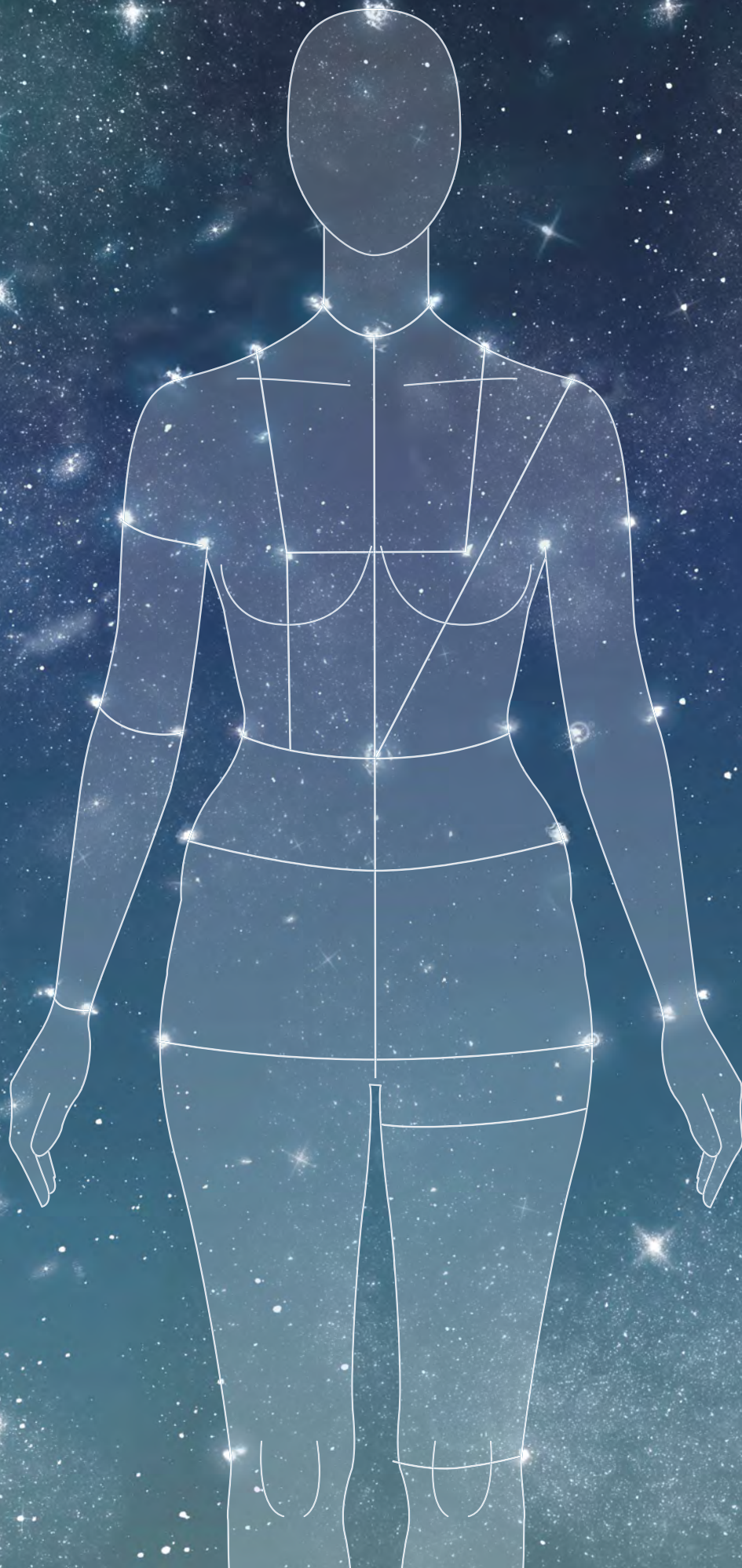
tip

Lengthen a pleated skirt. Lengthening a pleated skirt is similar to shortening one. The biggest challenge is pressing out the previous hemline, which can be aided by spritzing with a 50/50 vinegar-water solution. If only a small hem allowance is left, use hem lace to simultaneously face and finish the edge.



Proper hem preparation ensures a sharp finish on a pleated skirt.

*Pattern: Vogue 7937.
Fabric: wool crepe,
EmmaOneSock.com.*



Essential Measuring Points

To prepare for a good fit, compare your body to the pattern

BY CAROL J. FRESIA AND JUDITH NEUKAM

Altering a pattern to fit isn't, in theory, all that difficult: Simply make the pattern's dimensions match yours, plus some ease for movement and style. If you've struggled with getting the flat tissue to replicate your figure, it may help to learn how body parts relate to each other, and how the pattern represents the body.

The process requires accurate measurements. To get them, it's important to establish reference points and lines on the body, so measurements are taken from stable locations that correlate to places on the pattern. We'll show you where these key places are on the body, and how to find their corresponding points on the pattern.

START WITH A FITTING PATTERN

The pattern shown is for a basic sloper, often called a "block" or fitting pattern. It has few design features and minimal design ease, but it's a useful tool to begin with when you're figuring out how a pattern's lines, curves, and areas are meant to represent the human form. You'll discover where your shape matches—or doesn't match—the pattern company's standard size.

Because a pattern company's fitting pattern is the basis for its fashion patterns, the information you gain from

comparing your measurements to it gives you a head-start when fitting a pattern that includes design ease, style lines, and other silhouette-defining features. Once you locate the body's important guideposts and know the distances between them, mapping your shape onto a pattern is much easier.

MEASURE THE BODY AND PATTERN

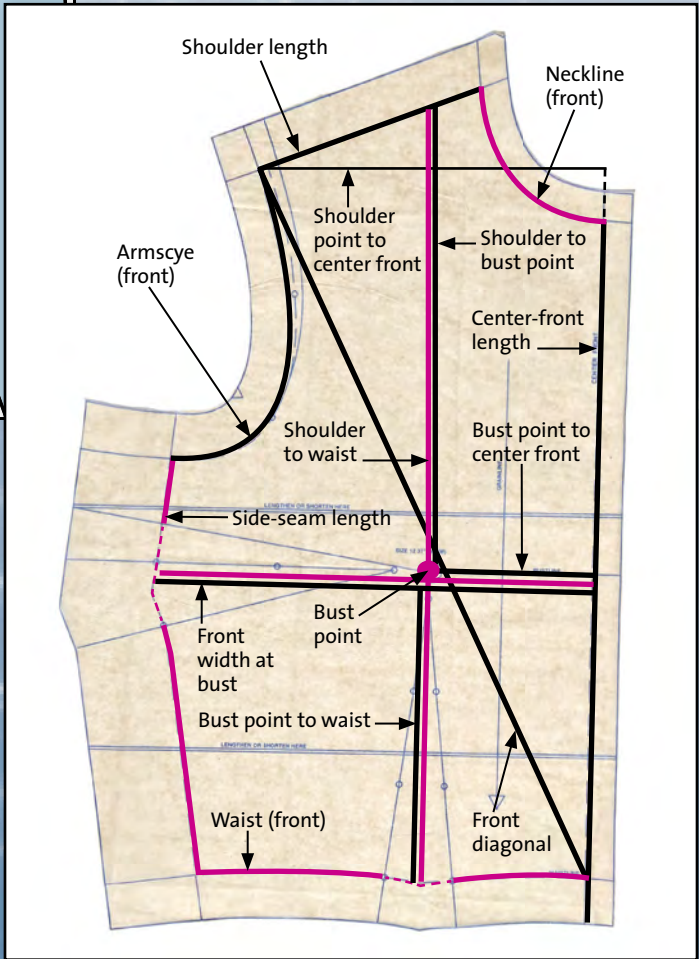
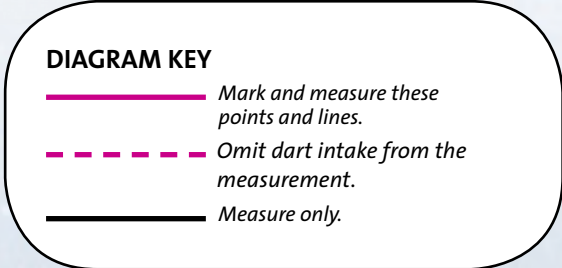
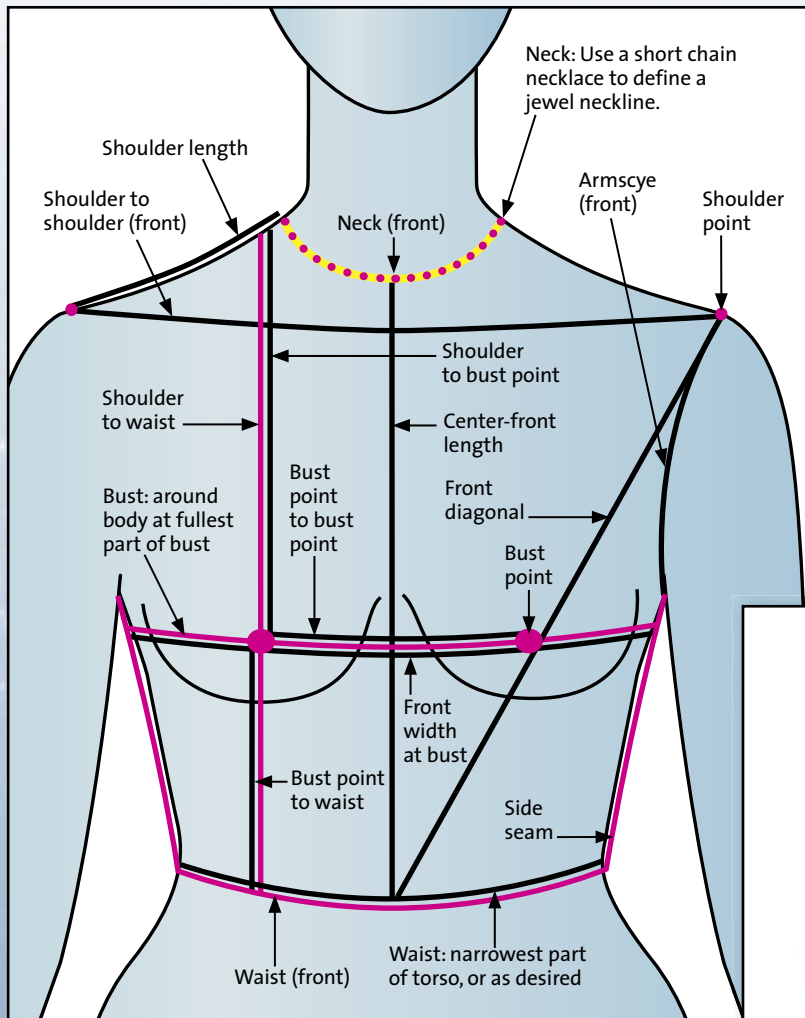
Mark, then measure, the body and the pattern. In each case, clear reference points and lines are essential. Some key body areas are nonnegotiable: the bust point and the fullest bust or hip circumference, for example. However, you can decide where you want your "waist" to be, how far forward or backward you like your garments' side seams to fall, or the most comfortable location for armholes.

Once you've defined and marked those points or lines, work from them consistently for all your measuring work. Mark and measure the pattern in corresponding areas, as shown on the following pages. Be sure to check the included tips to help you get the best results.

Carol J. Fresia is technical editor and Judith Neukam is editor-at-large.

Front upper body and bodice

The bust is the primary source of bodice-fitting issues for most women. Note that most patterns are drafted for a B cup. If your cup size is larger, your measurements are likely to show insufficient width across the pattern front, and possibly insufficient length from shoulder to waist. You may need to make a full-bust adjustment.



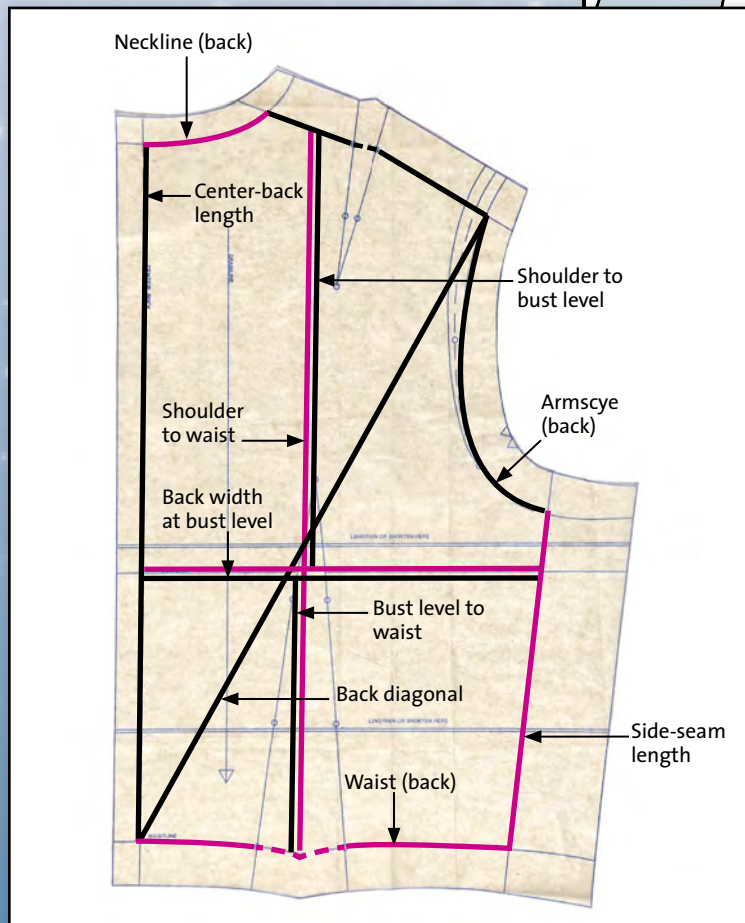
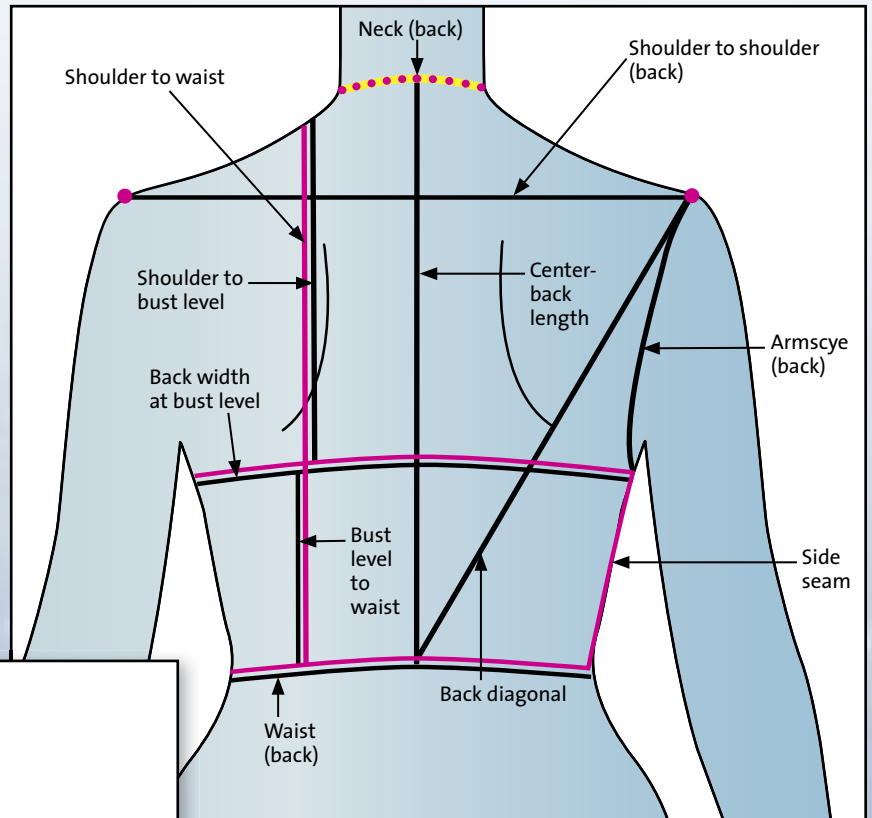
tip 1
Measure the body. Establish reference points and lines on the body by applying 1/4-inch adhesive dots (good for marking the bust and shoulder points), elastic bands (helpful for finding the waistline), narrow adhesive tape (draping tape or automotive masking tape), and even small ink dots on the skin. When taping horizontal lines, make sure they're parallel to the floor. Vertical lines should be perpendicular to the floor.

Back upper body and bodice

Posture, musculature, and bone structure affect how garments fit the back. Many patterns are designed without much shaping in back, particularly in the shoulder and upper back. If you have forward or uneven shoulders, a rounded upper back, a swayback, or another idiosyncrasy, you may need to add darts or shaping to seams. These fit changes are best done on a muslin.

tip 2

Mark patterns. You'll need a ruler, tape measure, and pencil or marker to mark and measure the pattern tissue. Begin by drawing the seamlines on all the pattern pieces. Measure the seamlines between intersecting stitching lines, omitting the seam allowances and subtracting the dart intakes. Horizontal measurements should be perpendicular to the grainlines.



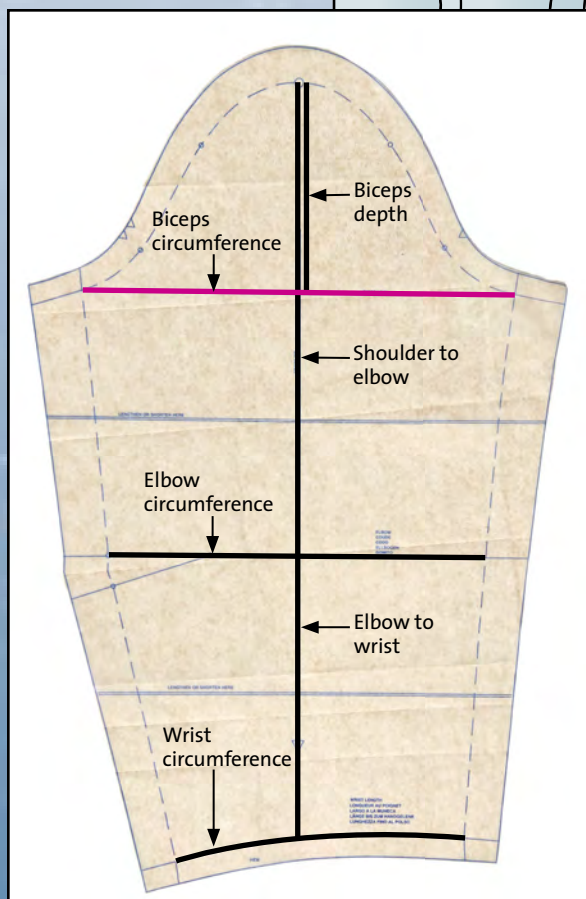
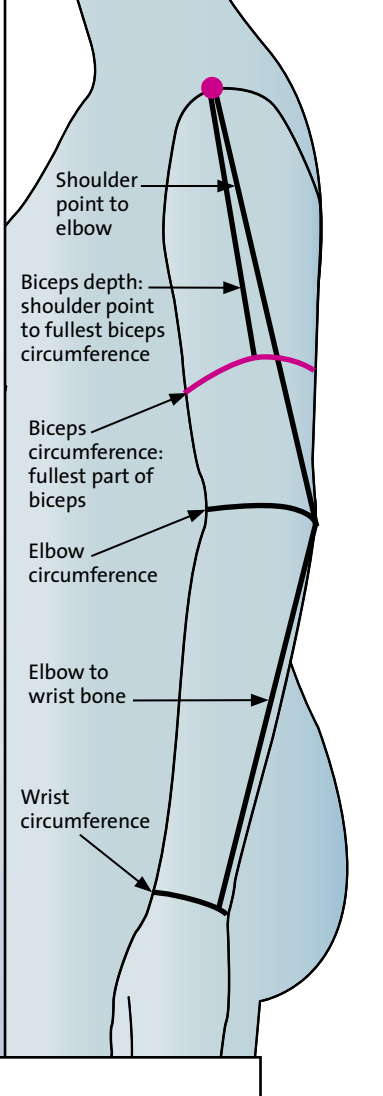
tip 3

Compare dimensions. Remember that many pattern pieces represent one side of the body. Therefore, horizontal measurements across the torso must be divided by 2 when you're comparing them to the pattern tissue. To compare leg circumferences with a pant pattern, add the pant front and back measurements at the thigh and the knee.

Arm and sleeve

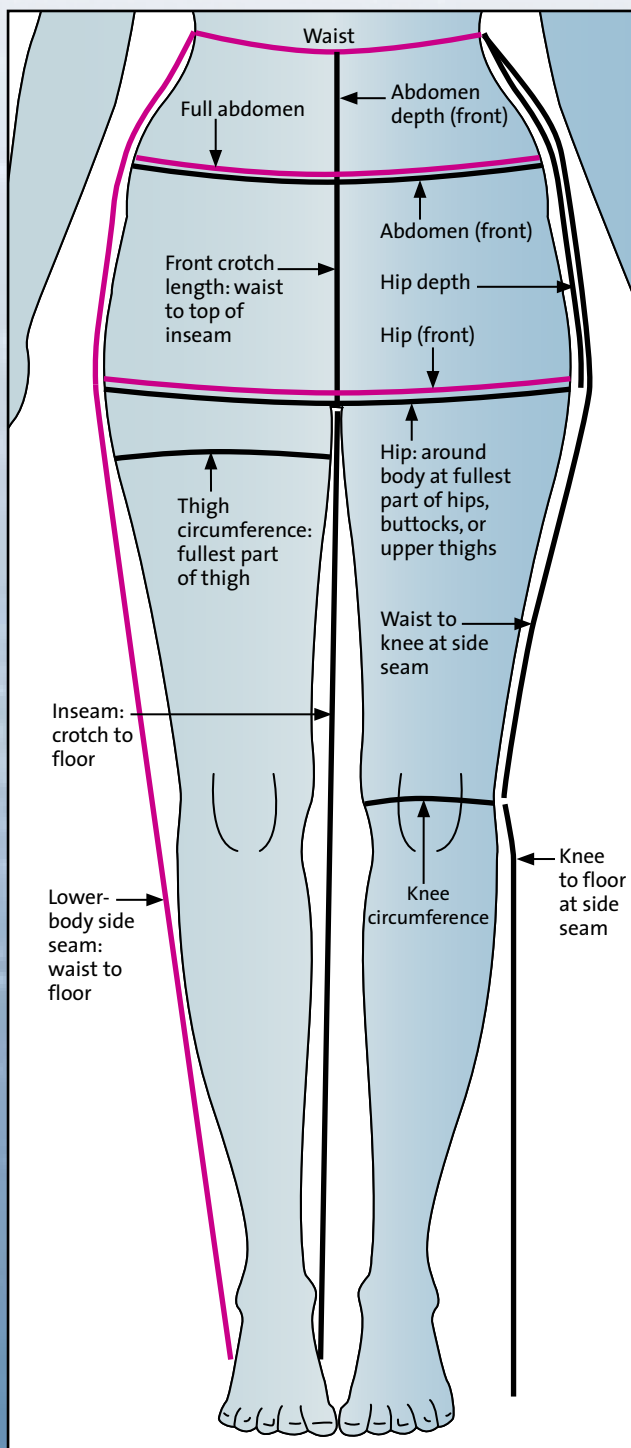
It's common for sleeves to fit poorly around the biceps. Tightness here is uncomfortable and can throw off the fit of the sleeve cap over the shoulder, as well.

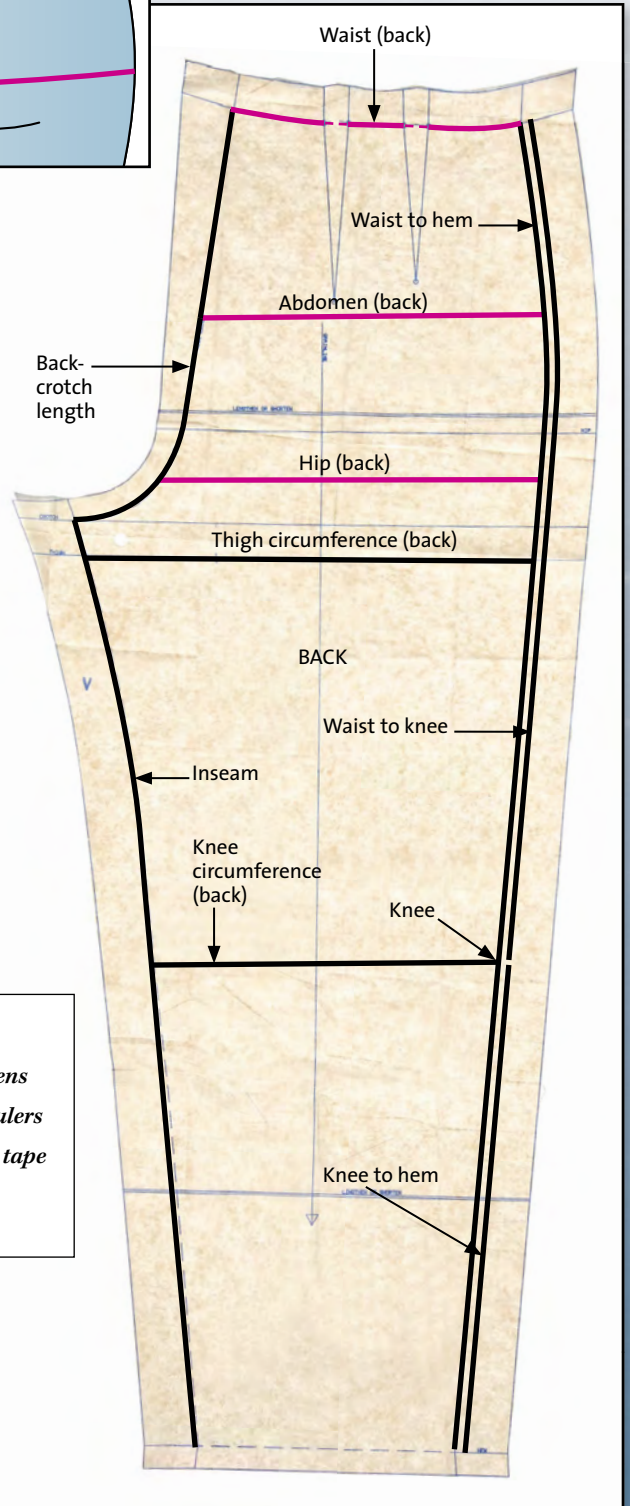
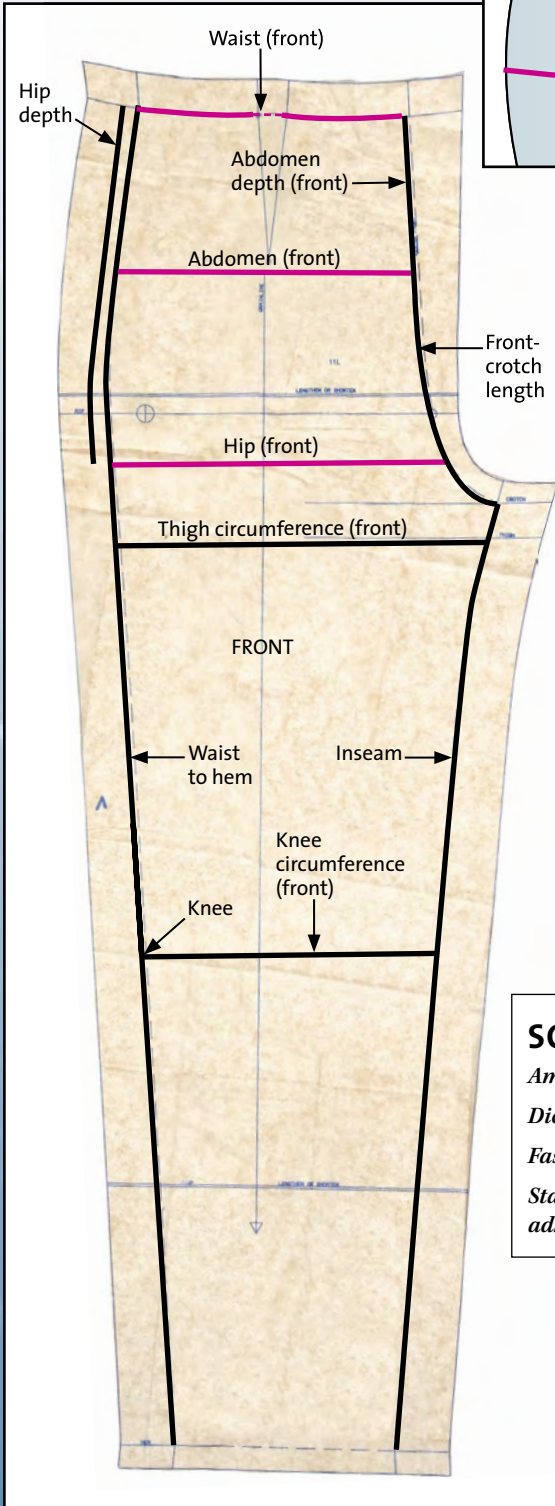
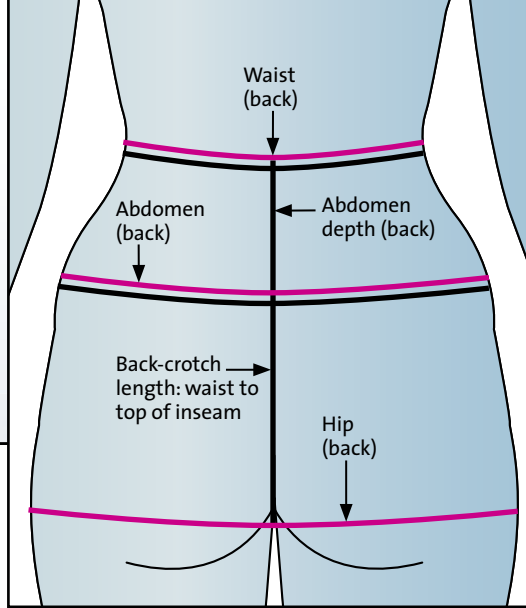
To find the biceps depth, mark the biceps at the fullest point, and measure from the shoulder point to the marked line. Determine the arm lengths with the arm slightly bent. Measure from the shoulder point to the elbow, and from the elbow to the wrist.



Lower body and trouser

Women carry lower-body fullness in different places, from the tummy to the high hip to much lower, at the top of the thighs. The measurements you take in this area help you place width and length where you need them most.





SOURCES

- Amazon.com: Paper Mate Flair pens*
- DickBlick.com: Westcott C-Thru rulers*
- FashionSuppliesInc.com: draping tape*
- Staples.com: 1/4-inch-diameter adhesive dot stickers*



Fall Sewing *Inspiration*

Key designs feature rich colors, high texture, and sleek silhouettes

BY STEPHANI L. MILLER

Say goodbye to the 1950s and '60s trends of recent years, and say hello to the rebellious, glamorous 1970s. The ladylike look has been swept away by a modern interpretation of the free and easy, Boho-disco-rocker fabulousness of the 1970s. The revival began simmering on the fashion fringes a few years ago, and has hit its stride for fall/winter 2015-2016.

The new rendition gleans the best of the era and updates it for a refined take on the '70s. Long and lean silhouettes are the key to an aesthetic that ranges from glam rocker to disco diva to global folkloric.

Pants and skirts sit near the waist, or above it; A-lines replace pegged silhouettes; skirts and dresses are longer; and full, formal culottes transition from summer to fall to winter. Peasant blouses are be-flowered or embroidered; necklines are high; and bows grace blouse necklines. Evening looks focus on form, fluid fabrics, and alluring cutouts.

If modern '70s doesn't appeal to you, there are plenty of alternatives. In fact, many fashion analysts propose that individualism is replacing the idea of seasonal trends. Wearing what suits you—in a fresh way—is always in style.

Share your fall and winter sewing with us on Facebook or in the Reader's Closet galleries at ThreadsMagazine.com.

Elegance and mobility combine in fall's culottes, which are easily dressed up or down.

*Pattern: Hot Patterns 1187
Camera-Ready Culottes.
Fabric: Italian metallic jacquard, MoodFabrics.com.*

Stephani L. Miller is special projects editor.

A balanced, unisex palette

The modern '70s color palette depends on a base of rich earth tones like camel, oxblood, and olive, updated with bright, modern color pops and ethereal floral shades. The broader color palette draws on softened, earthy hues from opposite sides of the spectrum for a balanced and sophisticated range of colors that are easy for men and women to wear, according to the Pantone Color Institute's Fashion Color Report Fall 2015. The colors play off each other and can be combined in various ways. Juxtapose cool against warm, cool against cool, warm against warm, or pair any with the palette's anchoring neutral, Desert Sage.



Amethyst Orchid

Biscay Bay

Cadmium Orange

Cashmere Rose

Desert Sage

Dried Herb

Marsala

Oak Buff

Reflecting Pond

Stormy Weather



Luxurious lounge pants

Must-have garments

No single "it" garment stands out this season. The modernized '70s aesthetic spans every garment category, driving at least one style in each. But for those who prefer to eschew the decade the second time around, we have included other trending styles.

PANTS: TRIM AND FLARED, OR FULL AND FLOWING

The long, lean, flared trouser epitomizes the '70s silhouette. Sitting near the natural waistline, this season's versions are cut slim through the hip and thigh and flare from the knee to the hem. The degree of flare is wider than a modern boot cut but not as extreme as a bell bottom.

The most widespread pant trend designers played with in various styles and fabrications is another '70s throwback: the culotte. High-waisted, wide-legged, and falling anywhere between the upper and lower calf, the new culotte (shown on page 62) features a structured cut and trouser details, such as pleats or cuffs. Make it in a range of fabrics such as soft-draping gabardine, firm suiting, cotton twill, weightier wool felt, or stiff brocade.

This season's most elegant and relaxed pant trend is the luxurious lounge pant. Wide, flowing legs and a trim waist, made in liquid silk charmeuse, recall glamorous 1930s beach pajamas. A straighter leg and less drapery fabric suit the track-inspired or retro pajama-inspired styles best, with trim and cuff details to match.

Patterns to try

Flared

BurdaStyle magazine
03/2015–113A
Sewaholic 1203
Thurlow Trousers
Marfy 3681

Culotte

BurdaStyle magazine
03/2015–126B
Hot Patterns 1187
Style Arc Erin Culottes
Vogue 9091

Lounge

Simplicity 1464
New Look 6873
Butterick 5893
BurdaStyle magazine
02/2015–116B

continued >>>

BLouses: BOW-NECK, BOHO, AND BOXY

Blouses inspired by the 1970s saturated the runway shows. One standout was the bow-neck, accenting either a high- or V-neck button-front or pullover blouse. Choose a full, fluffy bow or a slim tie style.

The peasant blouse holds its own in a slimmed-down version. Gathers are controlled with a drawstring, smocking, band, or a yoke. Small floral prints in soft shades skew it toward the prairie aesthetic, geometric or abstract prints angle it toward the rock look, and embroidery gives it an Eastern European folk feel.

For those who prefer a minimalist aesthetic, try the boxy cocoon top. Cropped at the hip or above, it gives a streamlined look. Some versions are pieced, with decorative seaming. Some are cut straight up and down, while others taper slightly to the hem. In soft, fuzzy knits or hairy wovens, the look is cozy and comfortable. For an ultramodern look, make the boxy cocoon top in a smooth-faced, thick fabric with body, such as double-faced wool or neoprene.

Boxy cocoon top

DRESSES: BUSINESS-WORTHY TO PLAYFUL

The cocoon hourglass dress combines a ladylike silhouette with a sculpted effect that pumps up one or both halves of the hourglass to stand away from the body. Toned-down from the runway versions, it can give a futuristic edge to your workwear. Try it in double-faced wool, neoprene, brocade, or matelassé.

Sleek wool sheaths and shifts were given a clean, sharp, professional look on runways. The cuts are body conscious, but necklines are modest. The silhouette is a straight pencil or an A-line, and there may be seaming details for interest. Hemlines range from the knee to the lower calf. Keep the color subdued and neutral in black, charcoal, deep navy, camel, or chocolate brown.

The '70s revival is reflected in the season's new instep-brushing maxi dresses in floral, geometric, or abstract prints. Try it as a button-front shirtdress, a wrap, or with cut-on kimono sleeves. Fabrics such as charmeuse, georgette, chiffon, or jersey in floral or abstract prints skew the look Boho-centric or disco-fabulous.

The little black dress is reinvented with cut-out details at the neck, back, or midriff, and no other embellishment. Use plain, low-luster fabrics, and choose any length from the knee to the floor.

Cocoon hourglass dress

Patterns to try

Bow-neck

Simplicity 1779
Sewaholic 1502 Oakridge Blouse
Colette 1018 Jasmine Blouse
Vogue 9029

Peasant blouse

Simplicity 1162
McCall's 6437
Style Arc Anita
Butterick 5357

Boxy cocoon

Hot Patterns 1186
Named Patterns Inari Crop Tee
Style Arc Ethel
BurdaStyle magazine 11/2014–105

Patterns to try

Chic wool dress

Simplicity 1314/1156/1458/1277
McCall's 7085
Vogue 9025
Marfy 2704
BurdaStyle magazine 03/2014–120

Cocoon hourglass

By Hand London Elisalex
Hot Patterns 1165
Vogue 9021
BurdaStyle Plus magazine Spring/
Summer 2015–404

Modern '70s maxi

Simplicity 1804
BurdaStyle magazine 03/2010–110
McCall's 7084 (lengthen)
BurdaStyle magazine 08/2013–111
Style Arc Nikki Dress (lengthen)

Cut-out LBD

Simplicity 1607
Vogue 1423
Marfy 3604
BurdaStyle magazine 08/2014–117



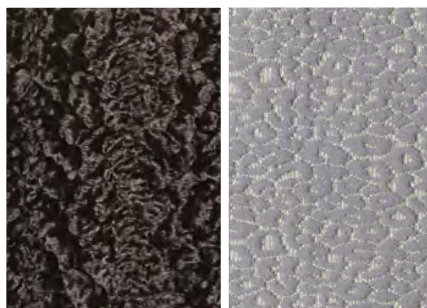
The sleek wool dress is all business, with a body-conscious, but modest, cut.

*Pattern: McCall's 7085.
Fabric: wool flannel,
MoodFabrics.com.*

COATS: MOTO LUXE OR RELAXED

Give your inner rebel a cause with a relaxed moto coat in a polished fabrication. Runway examples were made from luxurious materials, including short or curly faux fur, dense wool felt, leather or shearling suede, graphic prints, velvet, or woody plaid. Opt for deep, turned-back lapels and collars; numerous zippered pockets; asymmetrical cuts; and a mid-hip length.

For the colder months, try the lounging-robe coat in a three-quarter or longer length. On the runway, it was slouchy, softly structured, and fabricated from plush, heavy woolens. A classic shawl collar and self-fabric tie belt keep the look casual and comfy.



The moto jacket looks luxe in faux fur or graphic jacquard.

Patterns to try

Moto

McCall's 6656
Butterick 6169
Simplicity SewStylish 1070
BurdaStyle magazine
03/2013–135 and 10/2012–101

Lounging robe

BurdaStyle magazine
11/2014–104
Butterick 5960
McCall's 7057
Style Arc Stella Coat



Rich color and graphic jacquard fabric create a polished moto-inspired coat.

*Pattern: Simplicity SewStylish 1070 (jacket and pants).
Fabric: stretch jacquard (jacket) and basket weave, stretch knit (pants), both EmmaOneSock.com.*

web extra

Learn about fall/winter 2015-2016's midi-skirt trend at ThreadsMagazine.com.

continued >>>

JACKETS: CROPPED OR MASCULINE

Suit jackets and blazers get a makeover in two key silhouettes: menswear fit and cropped boxy fit.

Menswear-tailored jackets are oversized and slouchy-cut with longer lengths and simple, but sharp, details. It's an evolution of the boyfriend blazer but in firmer, weightier fabrics and with more traditional tailoring details. The look includes the shawl-collar tuxedo jacket, often with the collar in a contrasting fabric.

The cropped boxy jacket provides a contrast for formal wear. It hits at the natural waist or the top of the hip, and while its cut is rather square, its fit is trim and crisp, and details are minimal. Round collarless necklines keep the look clean; a notch, funnel, or rounded collar frames the face; and a shawl lapel elongates. Closures are optional.



Cropped boxy jacket

Patterns to try

Cropped boxy

Marfy 3314

Named Patterns Lourdes Cropped Jacket

BurdaStyle magazine 09/2014–126

Style Arc Audrey Jacket

New Look 6194 or 6080

Menswear-tailored

BurdaStyle magazine 02/2015–112B

Butterick 6110

Vogue 8958

Kwik Sew 3715

Print and texture trends

This season's fabric trends span a range of texture from slick silks to rough, chunky knits. Many of the season's looks depend on fluid, drapery fabrics, while others demand high texture or firm body. Generally, texture is more important this season than print or pattern, but there are definite print trends to play with.

FELTED WOOLS

Smooth, thick, firm, soft, and matte felted wool is ideal for this season's jackets and coats, sculpted dresses, or a modern culotte. Its natural texture and full-bodied drape have a minimalist, modern appeal.



SHINY SILKS

Slick, shiny silk charmeuse is key to any of the flowing, luxurious day or evening looks discussed on the previous pages. Any charmeuse will do the trick: solid or printed, satin-surfaced, metallic, or hammered.



PLUSH FURS

Short-pile faux furs, including curly lamb, make stunning outerwear exteriors or luxurious linings and trims. Wool-woven and knit surfaces feature rough-spun yarns with tiny protruding hairs for a fuzzy effect.



CHUNKY KNITS AND WOVENS

Plush and wide-cabled, or made from loopy yarns for a bouclé effect, chunky knits and wovens are staples this season. They're perfect for the cocoon-silhouette boxy tops or for long, cozy cardigans and relaxed jackets.



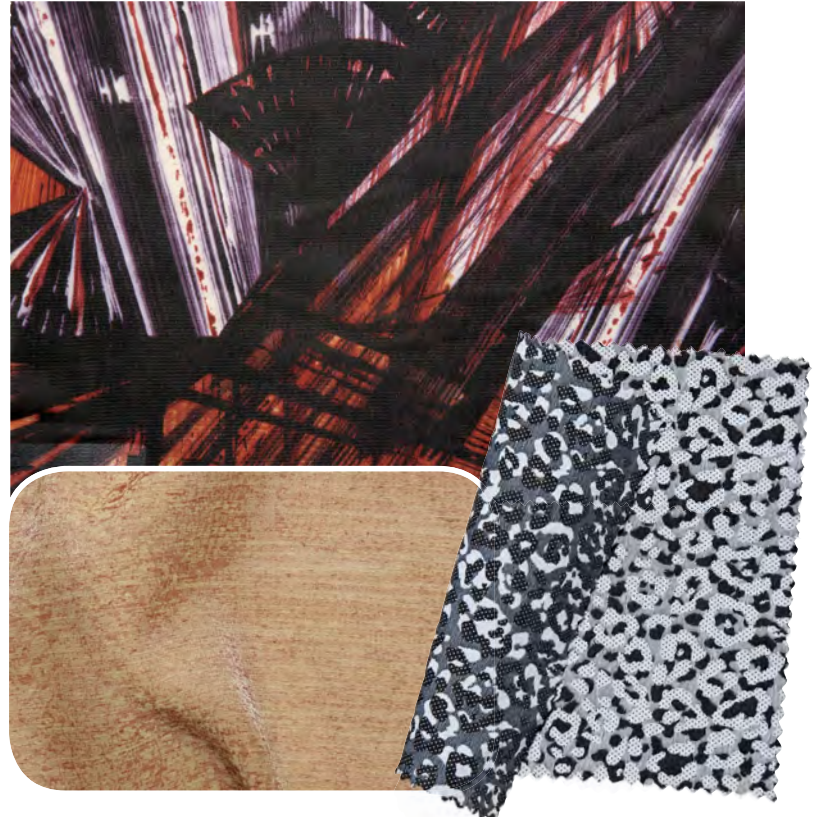
DARK FLORALS

Whether large or tiny, packed close together or spread far apart, the season's floral prints exude a dark mood sometimes lightened by a whimsical style or splash of metallic.



ABSTRACTED PATTERNS

Camouflage, animal, and landscape prints are abstracted and impressionistic, suggesting their themes and motifs rather than drawing realistic images or patterns. This removes their natural, organic appeal, but it gives them a somewhat digital effect that is thoroughly modern.



Photos: (p. 62; p. 65, left and right) Jack Deutsch; (p. 63, color chips) courtesy of Pantone Color Institute; all others, Mike Yamin. Illustrations: Steven Fleck. Swatches: (p. 67 top left) EmmaOneSock.com; all others, ElliottBermanTextiles.com. Styling credits: (p. 62) top—Top Shop (Nordstrom.com), earrings—One Wink (DSW.com), bracelet—Bar III (Macys.com), boots—Vince Camuto (Nordstrom Rack); (p. 65, left) earrings—Kenneth Cole (Macys.com), necklace—One Wink (DSW.com), belt—J Crew (stylist's own), boots—Vince Camuto (Nordstrom Rack); (p. 65, right) earrings—Erickson Beamon (LordAndTaylor.com), necklace—Louise et Cie (LordAndTaylor.com), top—Top Shop (Nordstrom.com), sandals—Moda Spina (DSW.com).

Japanese Patterns

Discover their charming designs and intuitive instructions

BY VÉRONIK AVERY

In Japan, books containing sewing pattern collections are released every year. Unlike commercial pattern catalogs in the United States, Japanese pattern books generally are split into two parts: One section features atmospheric photographs of all the garments, and the other provides detailed, illustrated sewing instructions. A paper pattern is included for each garment.

These books have become popular because of their unique sewing approach and exquisite garment designs, which range from elegant, simple shapes to more avant-garde styles. They are so sought-after that publishing houses have started to translate the Japanese books into other languages, including English.

Still, some of the Japanese-language originals are worth

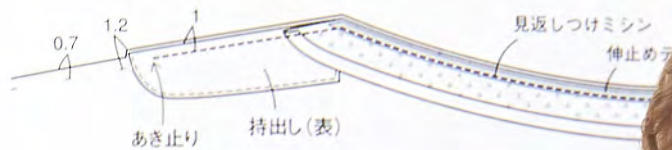
acquiring and are preferred by some sewers. Even if you don't read or speak Japanese, you can learn to work with the Japanese pattern books. It's all a matter of interpreting the symbols, identifying the necessary fabric and notion requirements, and understanding the clear and simple instructional diagrams.

This article describes how Japanese book patterns differ from other commercial patterns, offers tips on using them, and tells you where to acquire the books yourself. Soon, you'll wonder how you ever lived without them.

Véronik Avery is an author, sewer, and knitwear designer. StDenisYarns.com.



Left to right: *Unique Clothes Any Way You Want* by Natsuno Hiraiwa (Bunka Shuppan Kyoku, 2007); *Casual Sweet Clothes* by Noriko Sasahara (Laurence King Publishing, 2014); *Sew Sweet Handmade Clothes For Girls* by Yuki Araki (Tuttle Publishing, 2014); *Stitch, Wear, Play* by Mariko Nakamura (Interweave, 2015); *Drape Drape 2* by Hisako Sato (Laurence King Publishing, 2012).



*持出しとスカートの端はそろえて1cmの縫い代で縫う。
そうすると持出しが0.2cm控えられ、表から見えない

スカート(表)

1
見返しと持出しを縫う

2
ウエストに見返しと持出しをつける

6
ボタンホール



5
裾を

Japanese pattern designs often feature asymmetrical elements like this skirt, shown with a ready-to-wear top, from *Unique Clothes Any Way You Want* by Natsuno Hiraiwa. This title is available in English as *Shape Shape* (Interweave, 2012).

Pattern: skirt, *Unique Clothes Any Way You Want* by Natsuno Hiraiwa. Fabric: wool woven, author's stash.

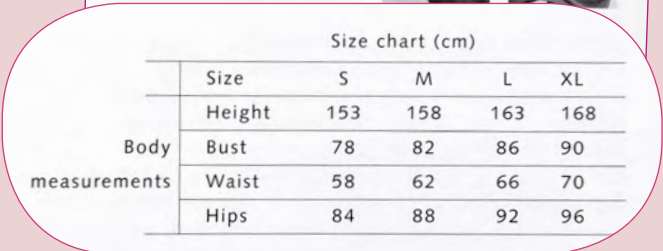
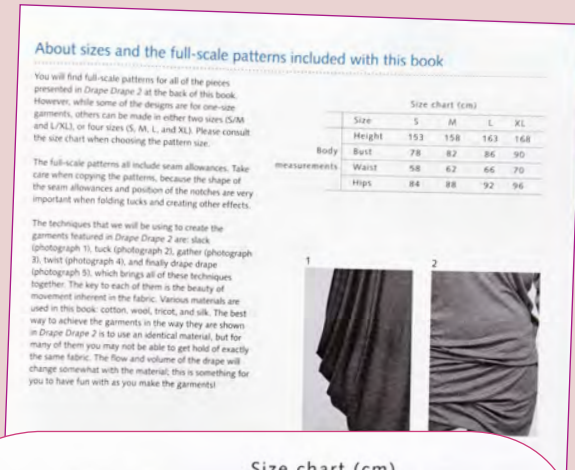


Make sense of the measurements

Japanese sewing books use the metric system exclusively, while translated versions may use metric and imperial measurements. When imperial measurements are listed in a translated version, the books usually use fractions, which aren't as precise as decimal measurements. For precision, it's worthwhile to use the original metric measurements rather than the imperial conversions.

Pattern sizing information generally is found in a table at the beginning of the book's instruction section. It also may be on the pattern paper. Sizes can be listed by a specific number like 5, 7, or 9, or they are given as a descriptive range including small, medium, and large.

Japanese pattern books are widely available for children and for young or adult women. Sizes for women usually range from Misses' 6 to 16 or, occasionally, Misses' 8 to 18. A few titles intended for larger sizes have been released, as well. These may include patterns for women with a 43-inch bust or larger. In addition, some translated books offer a wider size range than the original-language edition.

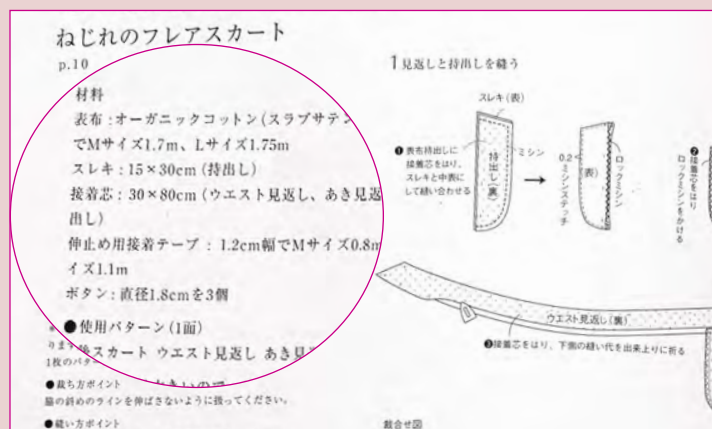


Determine fabric amounts

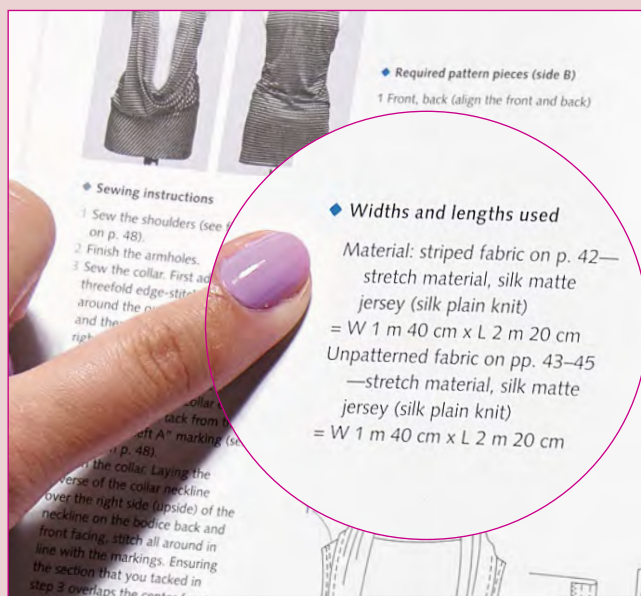
Each garment has its own instruction page, which includes the materials needed. In Japanese-language books, the yardage width is usually given in centimeters, followed by the yardage length in meters. Translated versions may include both measurement systems. If different yardages are required for different sizes, each size appears sequentially. These amounts may be followed by lining and interfacing requirements, also listed in centimeters for the width and in meters for the length. A separate cutting layout signifies that lining is called for, and the layout specifies what adjustments are needed for the pattern pieces. The standard

interfacing width cited is 90 centimeters, so be sure to adjust for interfacing products that measure less than that.

Determining other necessary notions in a Japanese-language pattern book may involve studying the photograph and diagrams. A zipper, for instance, may be indicated only by its length in centimeters in the materials list, while lace or bias tape would include dimensions for a narrow width and a length. Buttons are listed with a small diameter measurement, the number of buttons required, and are accompanied by a number in the full garment illustration (see "Understand the Instructions," page 72).



Japanese-language books list yardage width and length requirements in centimeters and meters, respectively. English translations list necessary materials and amounts in metric, too, but some translations include imperial measurements.



tip

Seam allowances aren't included on Japanese patterns. When tracing a pattern, allow room to add a seam allowance at least 1 cm (or 3/8 inch) wide. If a different seam allowance is required, its measurement will be specified on the cutting layout.

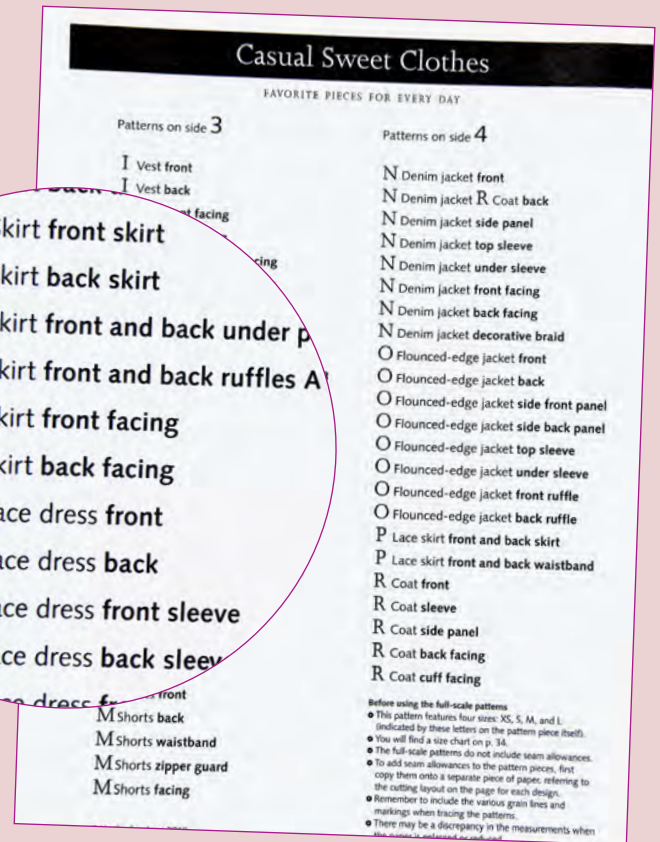
Trace the pattern

Each garment featured in the books' first section is identified by a code (a letter or a number) and by the page number for that pattern's instructions. The garment code also can be found in the pattern paper's margins with a line connecting it to the corresponding pattern piece. The pattern paper includes a key with a list of the patterns printed on each sheet.

Unlike cutting lines in European pattern magazines, most cutting lines are solid and not color-coded, but there are exceptions. It helps to highlight each piece in a different color before tracing.

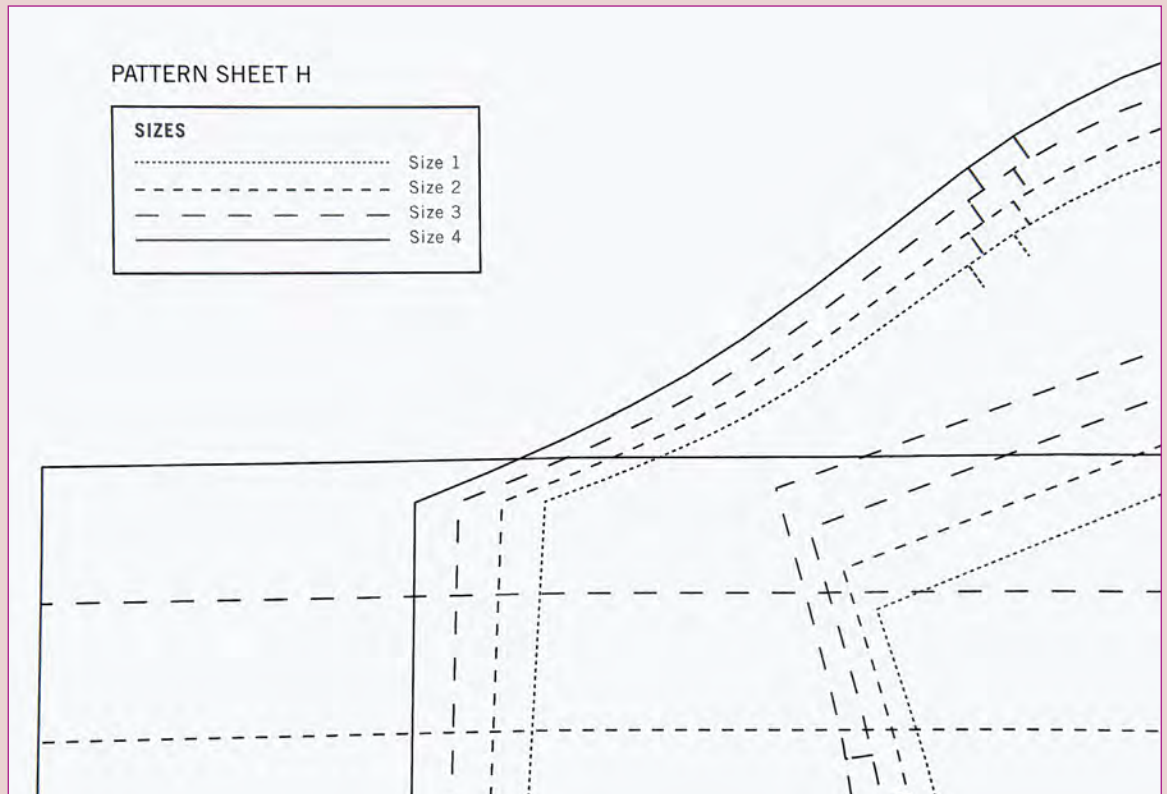
Not all pieces are given on the pattern sheet. Facings, for example, are usually traced from the main pattern pieces based on provided directions. Likewise, simple rectangular shapes must be drafted according to stated dimensions.

A pattern piece may be larger than the pattern sheet it is printed on and may require splicing. This is noted in the cutting layout with a line bisecting the piece with matching symbols to indicate where they should join. Unlike most pattern symbols, which are standardized across publishing houses, matching symbols vary. If a pattern piece is longer than a sheet, arrows and dimensions indicate where the piece is lengthened. Unusually large pattern pieces may extend to the pattern sheet's other side. This is indicated by a thinner line on the piece, which shows where to flip the paper when tracing.



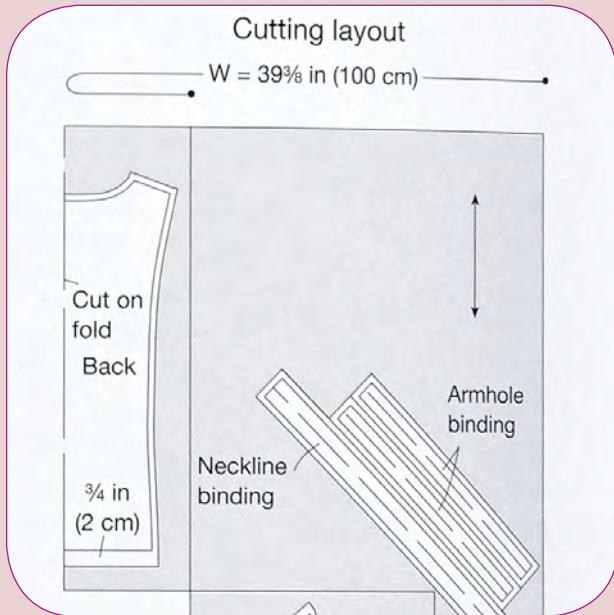
Books include pattern keys that list the pattern pieces needed for each garment design.

While many pattern books use solid cutting lines for all sizes, some translated versions use different line styles to denote different sizes.

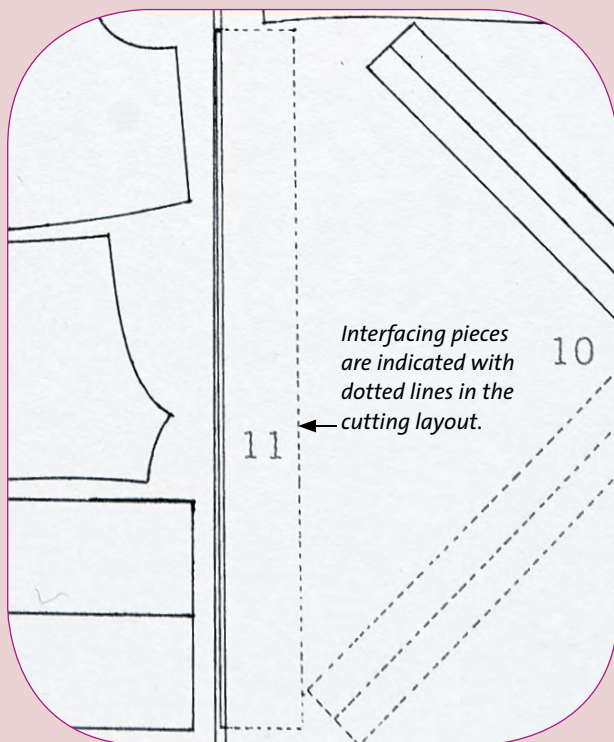


Understand the instructions

Detailed diagrams accompany each pattern, so it may not be necessary to read the sewing instructions. The cutting layout usually indicates the fabric width along the base and the fabric length along one vertical edge. An open-ended line at the base shows how the fabric is folded, and a broken vertical line represents a fold. The cutting layouts specify seam- and hem-allowance



A typical pattern cutting layout indicates the fabric fold, as well as necessary lengths and widths.

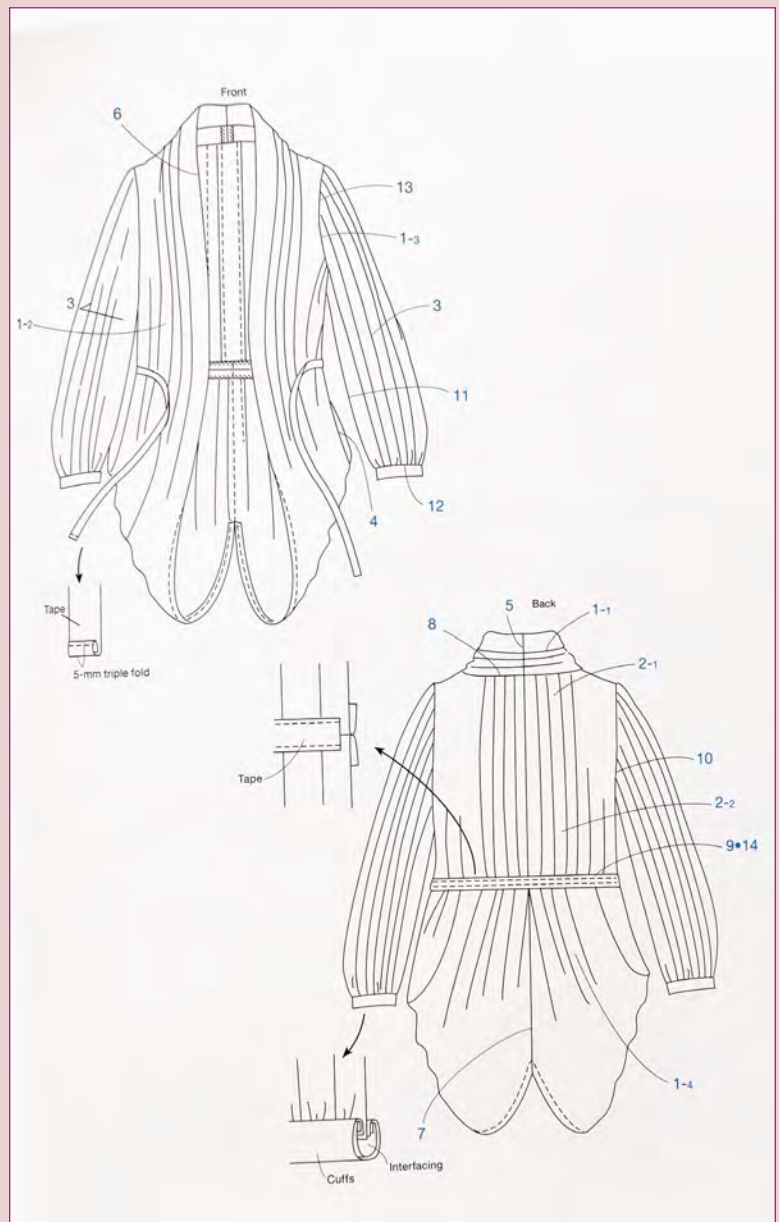


Interfacing pieces are indicated with dotted lines in the cutting layout.

widths that must be added to each pattern piece's edge, as well as how to draft any rectangular pieces not included on the pattern paper. A dashed line outlining a facing pattern means the piece must be traced from another pattern piece, since it does not exist in the paper pattern. In addition, interfacing is represented in the cutting layout with dotted-line pattern pieces.

All instructions are accompanied by an illustration of the full garment with numbers pointing to each part. Each number corresponds with sewing directions that show and explain how to construct that section.

Sometimes, these books also reference a page number where a technique can be found in more detail.



Each number in the full garment illustration corresponds to a sewing step in its construction.

Decode the symbols

Symbols are represented logically so they can be identified by sewers. Grainlines, for instance, are shown with arrows at either end or with a single arrow. Notches are frequently marked with a short straight line at pattern piece edges. Darts are illustrated as usual, but may have an arrow indicating the pressing direction. Pleats and tucks are drawn with solid lines, which may or may not be parallel, and are connected with a diagonal line. Note that the downward angle of the diagonal line indicates the pressing direction.

	Grainline
	Bias
	Seamline
	Cutting line
	Stitching line
	Facing line
	Foldline
	Notch
	Interfacing

Japanese pattern books often offer cutting-edge garment designs, such as this top, in which the side ruching is created by an asymmetrical cut.

Pattern: one-piece scoop neck asymmetrical top from *Drape Drape 2*. Fabric: jersey, the author's stash.



SOURCES

Books

- *Etsy.com* (e.g., seller *Pomadour24*)
- *Junku.fr* (Search “loisirs créatifs” [creative hobbies] on this French site to find related books. Women’s garments are listed under “couture,” then “vêtements.”)
- *Kinokuniya.com/us*
- *LaurenceKing.com*
- *TuttlePublishing.com*

Additional help

- *Rin Gomura-Elkan’s e-book How to Sew Japanese Sewing Patterns (JapaneseSewingPatterns.com); her blog at SewInLove.com.au*
- *Blogger Yi Farn’s book reviews on JapaneseSewingBooks.com*
- *Translation apps such as NewOCR.com to detect and translate Japanese text*

Book illustrations: (p. 69, background; p. 70, bottom left) *Unique Clothes Any Way You Want* by Natsuno Hiraawa; (p. 71, top; p. 72, top left, jersey top with cap sleeves) *Casual Sweet Clothes* by Noriko Sasahara; (p. 70, top and bottom right; p. 72, right, four-piece tuck drape belted blouse; p. 73, background) *Drape Drape 2* by Hisako Sato; (p. 71, bottom; p. 72, bottom left, sun top and shorts) *Stitch, Wear, Play* by Mariko Nakamura.

Armscye finishes

Smart ways to conceal raw edges

Choosing the best seam finish for armscyees takes some special consideration, especially when there's a sleeve involved. The curved seam allowances must be protected, but the finish must not add bulk to the armscye. To create an attractive, durable armscye-seam finish on shirts and jackets that is also comfortable to wear, choose one of these four techniques: Hong Kong seam, French seam, a reversible seam finish for double-faced fabrics, or a flat-fell finish. The garment's fabric and sleeve style dictate the finish to use. I'll show you how to sew them all in this article.

*Sandra Betzina has authored many books on sewing, including *More Fabric Savvy* (The Taunton Press, 2004). She teaches workshops in San Francisco and offers video lessons online at PowerSewing.com.*

Sew seam finishes for armscyees, such as the Hong Kong finish shown, that are as attractive as they are durable.

Hong Kong finish

A Hong Kong finish binds seam allowances with bias-cut fabric strips. Both armhole seam allowances are enclosed in the same bias strip to reduce bulk. This is an ideal seam finish for heavy or thick fabrics that will remain unlined. Choose lightweight cotton or silk for bindings. The process assumes a $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch-wide seam allowance; if the pattern's seam allowances are different, adjust measurements accordingly.

1 Prepare the garment front, back, and sleeve cap as the pattern directs. Sew the sleeve into the armhole, right sides together. Trim the seam allowances below the notches to $\frac{3}{8}$ inch.

2 Cut the binding fabric into $\frac{1\frac{3}{4}}$ -inch-wide bias strips. Place a bias strip along the bodice armhole seam allowance, both wrong side up. Pin through the strip and seam allowances. Sew through all layers using a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-wide seam allowance.

Sew the bias strip to the seam allowances.

WS



3 Wrap the strip around the seam allowances. Pin the strip along the previous stitching line. Do not turn under the strip's raw edge. Sew through all layers along the previous stitching line. Trim the strip's excess fabric to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch from the stitching line. Press the armhole seam away from the bodice.

Wrap the strip around the seam allowances, stitch in place, and trim the excess.

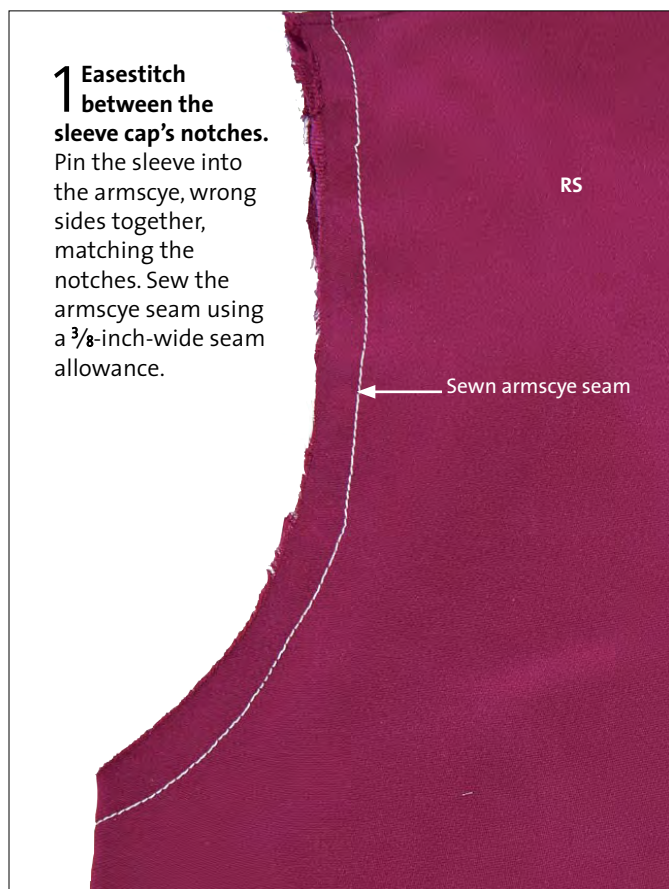
Bodice turned inside the sleeve for visibility

WS

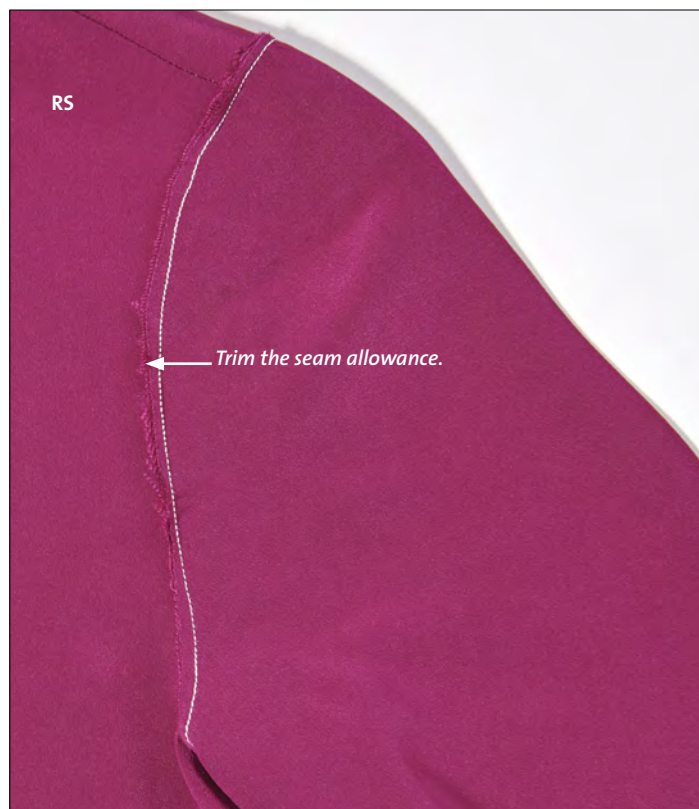


French seam

Fine, lightweight fabrics, such as chiffon, crepe de Chine, voile, and lawn, are perfect candidates for a French seam. This finish encloses the seam allowances to protect them and is light and flexible. It can be made narrow for a nearly invisible effect. First, sew the garment's side and the sleeve's underarm seams (with French seams), then attach the sleeve in the round. A $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-wide seam allowance is assumed.



2 Trim $\frac{1}{4}$ inch off the seam allowance. Turn the garment wrong side out. Press the seam allowances toward the bodice.



3 Pin the seam, right sides together. Hand-baste the seam if necessary. Sew with a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-wide seam allowance; none of the enclosed raw edges should escape from the seam. Press the seam allowance toward the bodice.



Right-side seam finish

Show off double-faced or reversible fabrics by sewing the armscye's seam allowances to the garment's right side. The fabric's reverse shows on the right side, and there are no seam allowances on the interior. Cut the seam allowances $\frac{3}{8}$ inch wider than given on the pattern to make working with them easier, especially on thick fabric. It's also easiest to install the sleeves flat, before sewing the side seams.

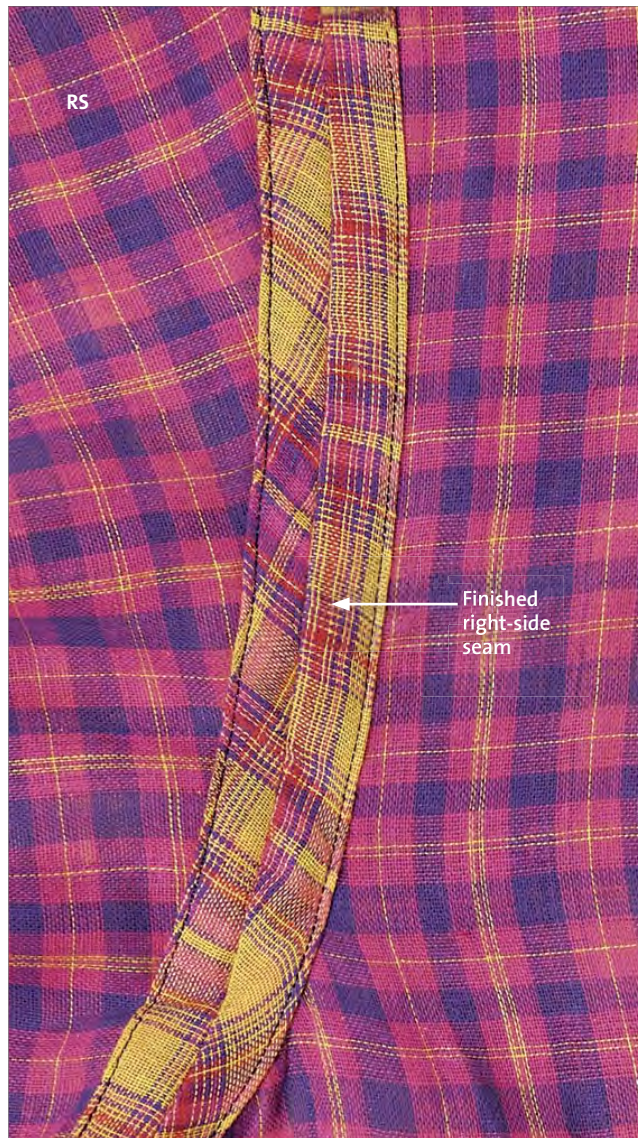
1 With wrong sides together, sew the sleeve to the bodice. Use a 1-inch-wide seam allowance. Press the seam allowances open on the garment's right side.



2 Turn under each seam allowance's raw edge to meet the stitching line. Pin the fold on the garment's right side, and hand-baste the seam allowances through all layers. On the right side, stitch close to the seam allowance folds; a topstitching foot eases this process.



3 Flatten the fabric's bulk along the seams. Press through a press cloth, and pound the seams flat with a clapper.



tip

Camouflage intersecting seams. With a right-side finish, it's best to first sew the shoulder seam with a French seam, so that when it is exposed within the armscye seam, the fabric's reverse—not the right side—is exposed at the intersection.

Flat-fell seam

A flat-fell seam encloses the seam allowance raw edges. It is an ideal finish for a garment that will be machine-washed and dried because it is very durable and presses flat effortlessly. Reserve this finish for light- to medium-weight fabrics. The flat-fell seam is easier to sew with the garment flat; attach the sleeve before sewing the side and underarm seams. This process assumes a $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch-wide seam allowance. If your pattern's seam allowances are a different width, adjust the measurements below accordingly.

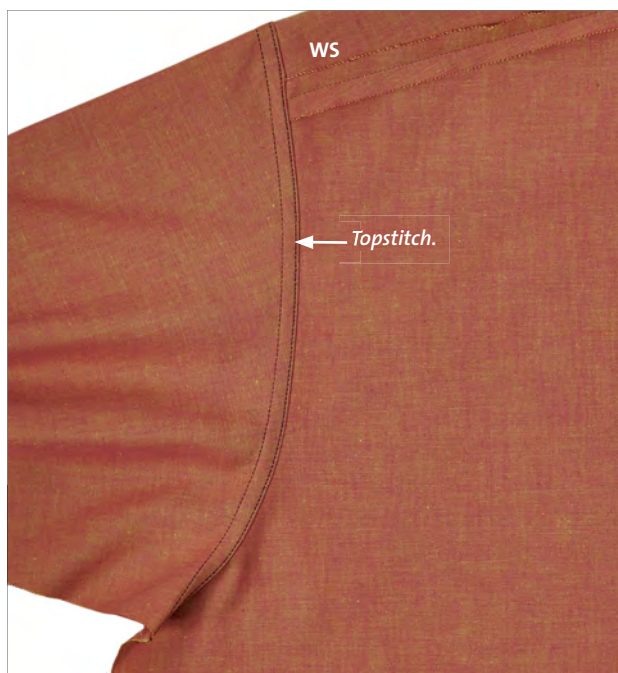
1 Prepare the sleeve cap and the bodice pieces. With right sides together and notches matching, sew the sleeve into the armhole. Press the seam allowances open and trim the bodice seam allowance to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.



2 Press the untrimmed sleeve seam allowance over the bodice seam allowance. Turn the sleeve seam allowance under a little more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Fold the turned-under seam allowance over the trimmed bodice seam allowance, enclosing all raw edges. Press and pin securely.



3 Finish the flat-fell seam. Press the seam allowances against the garment body and pin securely. On the garment's wrong side, topstitch the seam allowance through all layers close to the fold. Press.



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Repair a stray snip

A creative solution for accidental fabric cuts

It has happened to many sewers: You happily cut garment sections from fabric only to find that you somehow managed to cut a slit in the fabric in a prominent spot, or the fabulous remnant you got at a great discount harbored some slices here and there. Stray cuts happen, often in the least desirable or convenient locations on fabric.

Sometimes, they're discovered only after the garment sections are cut from the fabric.

What do you do when there's no extra fabric to cut a new piece? You can turn this near disaster into a design feature by camouflaging it with stitches, the way *Threads* editor Sarah McFarland did to save one of her projects.

Stephani L. Miller is special projects editor.

Accidents happen, but they don't have to ruin a garment. You can repair stray cuts and holes in fabric and rescue your work.

continued >>>

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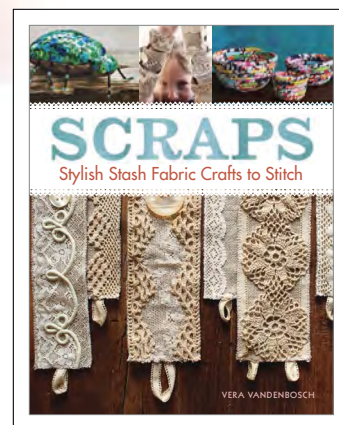
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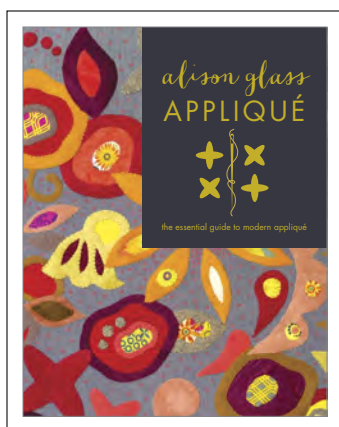
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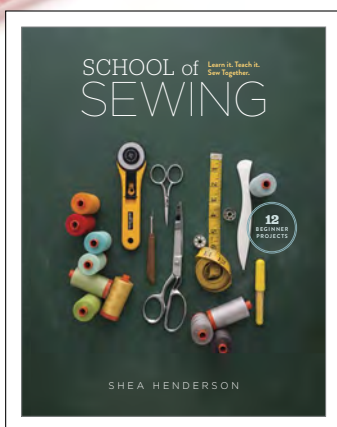
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1 Interface behind the slit. Cut a piece of fusible interfacing, appropriate to the fabric's weight and drape, ½ inch longer and ½ inch wider than the slit in the fabric. Fuse the interfacing to the fabric's wrong side, covering the slit. Make sure the cut fabric edges meet so the fabric is not distorted.

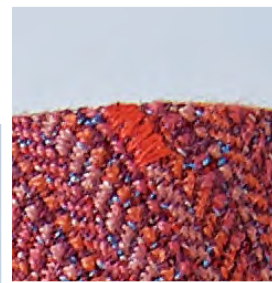


Fuse a piece of interfacing to the fabric's wrong side over the slit.

2 Stitch over the slit. Choose a satin-stitch setting or a decorative stitch; test it first to ensure its width covers the slit's cut edges. On the fabric's right side, stitch over the interfaced slit all along its length. Pull the threads to the wrong side and tie them securely.



Satin-stitch, or use a decorative stitch, on the right side to cover the reinforced slit. Remember to test the stitch width first.



Once the slit is repaired, fake the repair on the garment's opposite side for an intentional appearance.



3 Fake the fix on the opposite side. Note the slit's location and mark the same spot on the garment's opposite side. Interface and stitch in the new location, just as you did over the slit. Creating this symmetry makes the stitching look like an intentional design touch, rather than a repair.

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Embroidered Red Silk Dress

by Emily Robertson Hood

Emily Robertson Hood of Kirkland, Washington, has been sewing since she was 4 years old. She began a career in the apparel industry as a patternmaker and is currently a senior technical fit expert for a global apparel consulting group. Emily found this gorgeous embroidered silk on a business trip to Chennai, India. Using her own basic dress block, Emily planned a lined sheath dress with a back hem vent and three-quarter-length sleeves with a keyhole detail. Architectural elements she admired in India inspired the neckline shape. Because Emily could not find an exact-match red thread, she downplayed the construction stitching. There is little topstitching, and she understitched wherever possible to secure facings. The fabric's machine embroidery was thick at some points, so Emily placed the pattern pieces thoughtfully to avoid sewing through thread bulk at visible areas, such as the neckline and the keyhole openings.



Faced keyhole with bias-cord tie

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closet

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN SEWING?



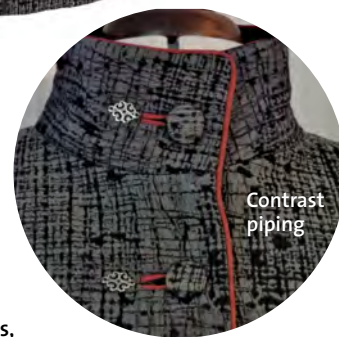
Sequined Zigzag Dress by Terry Sue Tyrrell

Terry Sue Tyrrell of Pfafftown, North Carolina, sews for herself, her children and grandchildren, and clients. For this lively minidress, Terry Sue cut and oriented sequined stretch polyester to play with the zigzag motif. The garment includes various linings for comfort and support: a power-mesh bodice lining, a stretch polyester skirt lining, and a lightweight stretch mesh sleeve lining. The muslin was drafted using her client's measurements. The final pattern was traced onto starched organdy, through which she could see the sequins' pattern in order to match the fashion fabric. Terry Sue hand-basted, then hand-sewed the garment with a backstitch in doubled thread. The lining was constructed with a machine-sewn stretch stitch, then handsewn to the dress along the neckline, and turned to the inside.



Tailored Coat by Susan Morley

Susan Morley of Cheshire, England, learned to sew at a young age from her dressmaker mother. She enjoys the design process, fabric selection, and garment construction, and, she says, the more difficult the challenge, the more she loves it. She teaches dressmaking workshops and classes in her sewing studio and runs a weekly sewing club. Susan created this coat with a self-drafted pattern and chose a textured, lightweight gray and black woven fabric. The coat is underlined with silk organza and strategically supported with horsehair interfacing. Susan used raspberry-colored piping to highlight the front and back princess seams, the collar, side welt pockets, sleeve back seams, the upper armhole seams, and the bound buttonholes. The coat is lined with raspberry-colored silk organza for the body and gray silk for the sleeves. She inserted gray piping in the seams joining the lining and facings.



Q & A

READERS' QUESTIONS—EXPERTS' ANSWERS

Where to place bust-dart points

Q How far from the bust point should a bust dart end?
—Jackie Perreault, via email

A *Fitting expert and teacher Sarah Veblen explains:* Think of a dart as a teepee, which creates three-dimensionality for the mound of the bust. You never want the dart to extend beyond the fullest part of the mound (the bust apex), because then the peak of the teepee (the dart point) will be empty. We can generalize that the dart point should be just shy of the fullest part of the bust.

The general rule is that the larger the bust, the farther the dart point should be from the apex. A common suggestion is 1 inch for a smaller bust, up to 2½ inches or more for a larger cup size. Essential variables to be considered are the bust size and shape.

Some women have conical breasts, and others have rounded breasts. Some women have curvature along the side of the bust, while others have a flatter side bust.

First assess the fullness or flatness along the side of the bust. Try visualizing the bust from above, as though you were looking down at your body. The dart point should be placed

near where the flatness changes into a curved shape. For a round-sided bust, you have more leeway with the dart-point placement.

You'll have the most success by making a muslin and assessing the fit on your body. You'll be able to tell if the dart point is too close to the apex (empty space at the tip of the dart) or too far away (straining over the apex). Adjust the dart length in the muslin and reassess.

One of the most difficult shapes to fit, in my experience, is a larger, round-sided bust that becomes more conical at the apex. When the dart point is placed logically—where the roundness breaks away toward the bust apex—there often is excess fabric between the dart point and the apex. It may help to move the dart point slightly closer to the apex.

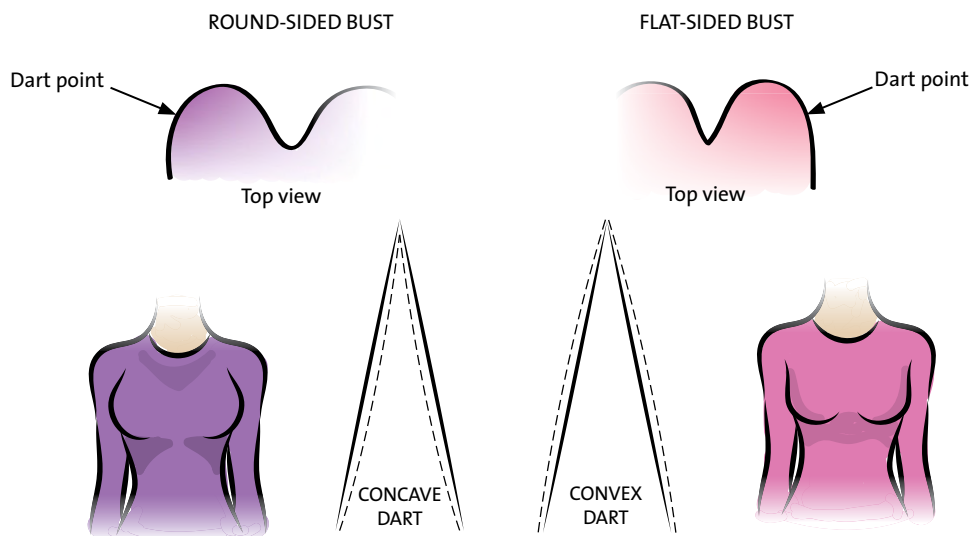
Sewing carefully shaped darts also can improve the fit. In general, a concave dart helps to fit a round-sided bust, and a convex dart helps to fit a flat-sided bust.

Pressing can work like magic. Press your dart with the point on a curved part of a ham that is similar to the shape of the breast. Move the iron in a circular motion over the dart point, and you can mold the shape of the garment to fit the bust smoothly.

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The gifted stitcher

“What kind of toy sewing machine should we get for Sophie?” my daughter-in-law April asked. “Oh, no toys, April,” I replied. “If she’s ready, she needs a real machine. Please, may her grandfather and I give her one for Christmas?”

Buying Sophie’s machine brought back memories. Although I had taken seventh-grade home economics, I didn’t touch a sewing machine again until I was about to marry an impoverished graduate student. My mother surprised me with a fancy Singer.

Smiling, she said, “You’re going to need this. I know how much you love clothes, and you won’t be buying any for a while.”

“But how do I use it?” my voice quavered. My mother, a non-sewer, replied, “I don’t know, but you’ll figure it out.” So I did.

In 46 years, I’ve come a long way, graduating to a Pfaff and showing my wearable art annually in a runway show. Now it would be 8-year-old Sophie’s turn.

For her first machine, I bought a basic Brother model with 34 decorative stitches and a drop-in bobbin. Then I bought her stash: blue-and-white cloud-print fleece that doesn’t ravel, needles, thread, and a pair of Gingher shears. I even wrapped up a



Within an hour, she had conquered the basic functions and was already working her way through the decorative stitches.

beautiful, but cracked, wooden button box that had belonged to my husband’s grandmother. My husband took it apart lovingly, regluing and clamping it back to perfection. Lining this heirloom would be our first lesson, giving Sophie a sewing box with history and me guaranteed time with her.

The days crawled until Christmas Eve, when we open presents together. Finally Sophie unpacked the big box. She squealed: “This is the best present I’ve ever gotten! Can I go and try it now?”

Within minutes, she had filled the bobbin with thread. Within an hour, she had conquered the basic functions and was already working her way through the decorative stitches. Creating one bookmark after another, each with a different color thread and stitch, she gifted everyone else before turning to me.

“Grandma, does this machine do letters for monograms?”

“No, sweetheart, but you can probably make letters freehand by moving the fabric around.”

Sophie disappeared upstairs with her machine for a while. Then she bounded back down, hugged me tight, and placed another blue and white fleece bookmark in my hands. The clouds made a

perfect background for her red stitching: “I ♥ GRANDMA!”

Later, on a family trip to New York City, we visited Mood Designer Fabrics. Sophie pulled out one bolt of fabric after another, stroking each for texture, admiring color and pattern, unable to choose.

“C’mon, Sophie,” her mother said. “You can do this. If you don’t pick something, you’ll regret going home empty-handed.” Then I spotted a white woven with a teal ombré snakeskin print running through it. To Sophie, it was the perfect choice.

Before leaving, she approached a Mood employee: “How do I get a job here when I graduate? I want to work here when I grow up!”

In the elevator, she exclaimed, “This has been the best day of my whole entire life!” Our fellow passengers smiled as I replied, “Oh, sweetie, I hope not. The best is, no doubt, yet to come.”

Sophie is now 14 and a veteran of programs at Sew Crafty Studio in Chicago and the Art Institute of Chicago. She really can sew. My mom would be pleased. Her gift of sewing has kept on giving.

Ellen Jo Ljung sews with her granddaughter in Geneva, Illinois.

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Up Close



This midcentury top makes a striking impression. Its designer achieved elegant balance by combining an intriguing silhouette, understated fabric, and a stunning embellishment. The beaded design flows in a graduated grid from the front over the shoulders and sleeves to the upper back, where it forms a yoke-like effect. To replicate this embellishment, follow the instructions on page 22.

From the Collection at Western Costume Company
Photographer: Jack Deutsch
Text: Judith Neukam