

INTRODUCTION



This pattern takes a “Choose Your Own Adventure” approach to sewing (that was a series of books I was obsessed with as a little girl). This means that you have many, many options. First, you can choose your design elements from the list on p. 7; there are 72 possible dress combinations! (Check out the endpapers for line drawings of every possible dress design.) Next, choose your finishing: neckline facing, for dresses with sleeves; all-in-one-facing, for sleeveless dresses; and a bodice lining or a full lining.

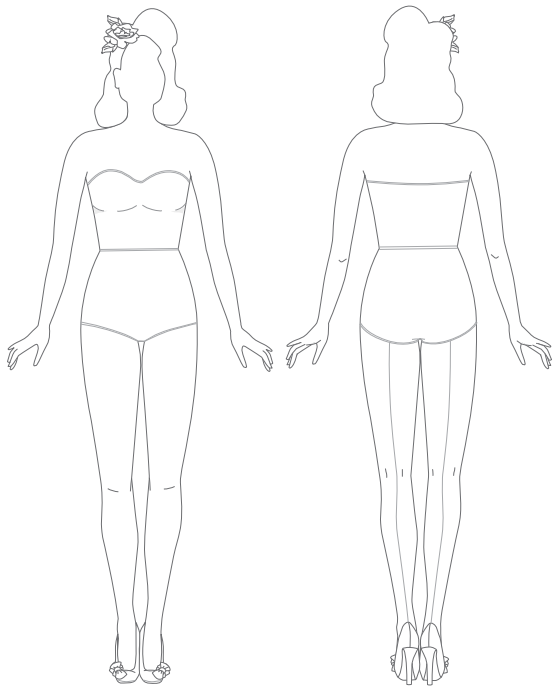
The instructions are divided into units—almost like chapters. At the end of each unit, there is an instruction telling you where to go next, depending on what kind of dress you’re making and what finishing options you’ve selected. For instructions on using different fabrics and trims, see “Take Your Dress to the Next Level,” p. 54.

I hope this process will help you take charge of your sewing so that you feel empowered to make your own choices when it comes to dressmaking, rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all approach. Above all, I hope you enjoy the adventure!

soxo, Gertie

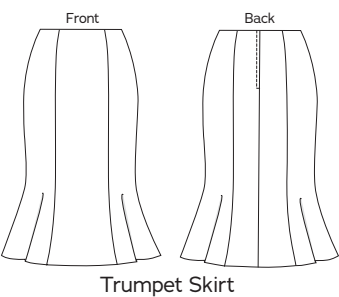
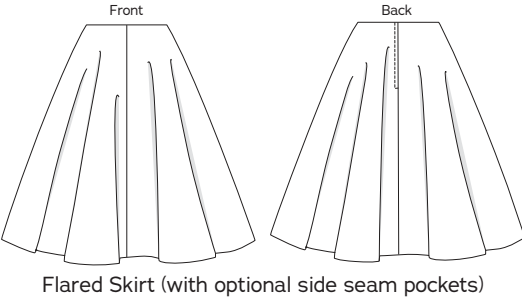
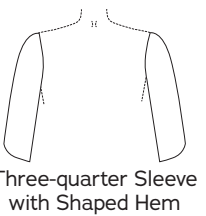
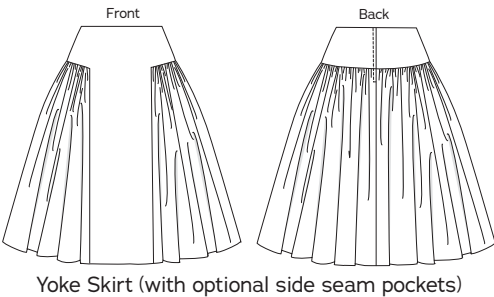
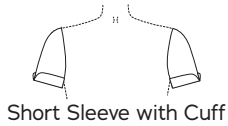
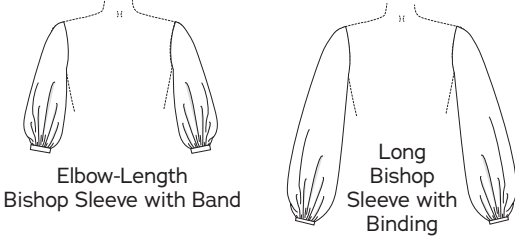
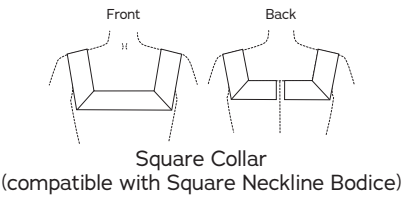
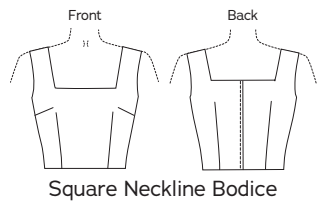
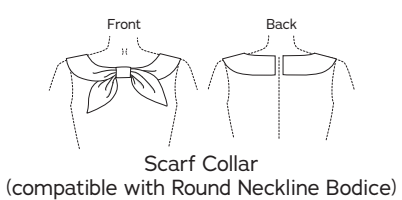
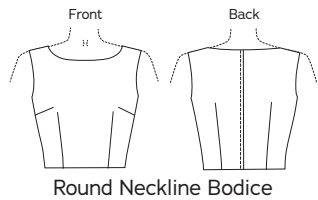
DESIGN YOUR DRESS

Use this worksheet to sketch, plan, and estimate yardage for your dress!



OPTION	PIECE #s	YARDAGE	FABRIC
Bodice			
Collar			
Sleeve			
Skirt			
NOTES:			

DESIGN OPTIONS



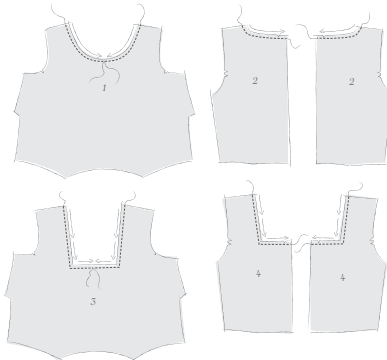
BODICES

For all dress designs, start by constructing the bodice of your choice.

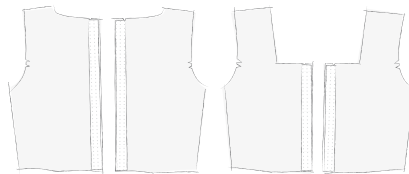
Note: 5/8 in (1.5 cm) seam allowances are included on all pattern pieces.

BOTH BODICES

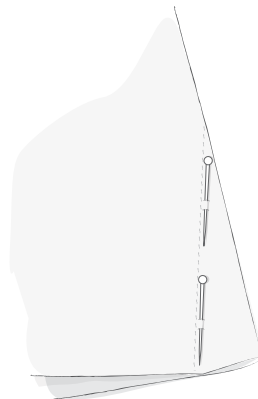
1. Staystitch Bodice Front and Bodice Back neckline (pieces 1 and 2 for the round neckline or 3 and 4 for the square neckline): Using a 1/2 in (1.3 cm) seam allowance, stitch directionally from shoulder to center front/back, backstitching at both ends to stabilize neckline. For square neckline, pivot at corners.



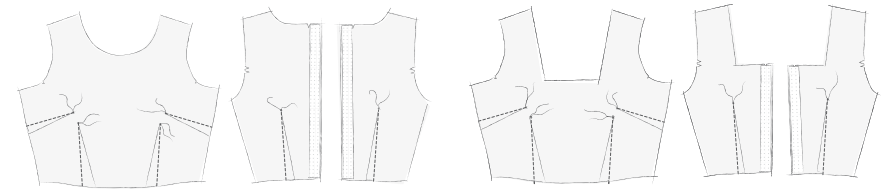
2. Stabilize Bodice Back center-back seam allowances: Apply 1 1/4-in-wide (3 cm) strips of fusible interfacing to back opening's WS from top to bottom.



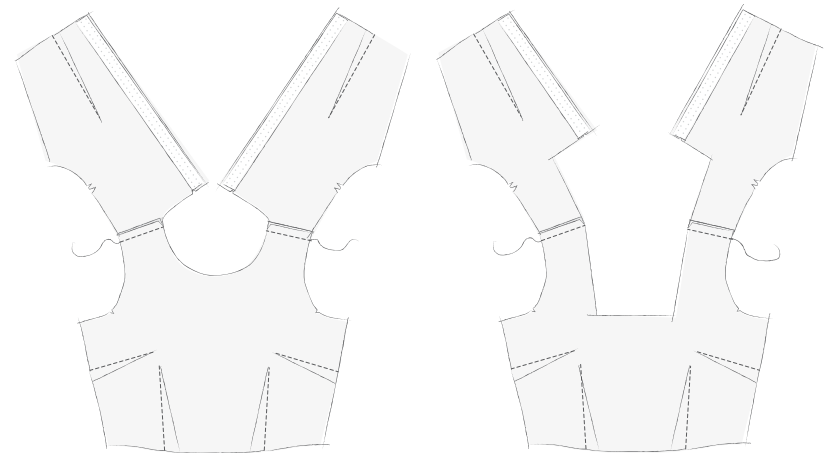
3. Sew darts in front and back: Bring dart legs together, pinning along marked lines. Stitch along marked lines from edge of fabric to dart point. Backstitch at the beginning but not at the end, leaving a few inches of thread.



Tie thread tails in a knot. Press horizontal darts toward waistline, and press vertical darts toward center front (on Bodice Front) or center back (on Bodice Back).



4. Sew shoulder seams: Stitch Bodice Front to Bodice Back, right sides (RS) together, matching notches. Press seam allowances open.



➡ *If making a dress with sleeves, proceed to the next step.*

➡ *If making a sleeveless dress without a collar, go to Sleeveless Bodice Finishing, p. 28, then proceed to step 5 below.*

➡ *If making a sleeveless dress with a collar, proceed to Collars, p. 23.*

JOINING BODICE TO SKIRT

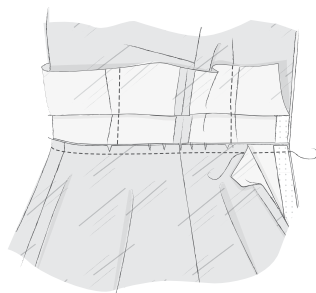
Follow the set of instructions below that corresponds to the finishing method you've chosen.

FULLY LINED DRESS

1. Baste skirt to skirt lining: Stitch them at waistline, WS together, leaving 2 in (5 cm) unbasted on both sides of zipper opening.



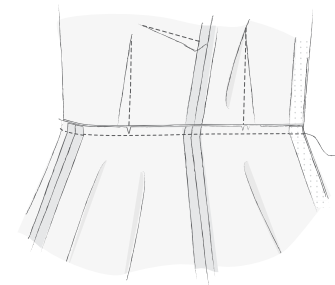
2. Attach skirt to bodice: Pin skirt to bodice, RS together, leaving bodice lining free at waistline and matching side seams and notches. (Note: For Trumpet Skirt, make sure to match bodice darts to skirt seams.) With skirt lining's unbasted section folded out of the way, begin stitching, securing outer skirt to outer bodice. Stop at skirt basting and backstitch; trim the threads. Smooth skirt lining flat under presser foot, and continue stitching through all layers. Where skirt basting ends, backstitch and trim the threads. Fold skirt lining's unbasted section out of the way, and finish stitching skirt to bodice. Grade seam allowances so bodice's is the widest. Clip into waistline seam allowance about every 1/2 in (1.3 cm) at the curviest part of waist (on each side of side seams). Press seam allowances toward bodice.



 Proceed to *Inserting Zipper*, p. 50.

UNLINED DRESS

1. Pin bodice to skirt, RS together, matching seams. (Note: For Trumpet Skirt, make sure to match bodice darts to skirt seams.) Stitch.

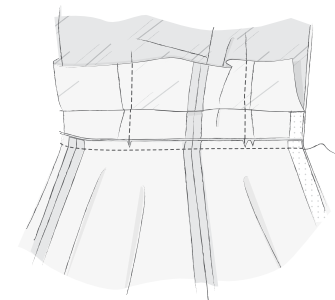


2. Finish seam allowances: Trim waistline seam allowances as one to about 3/8 in, then finish as desired; if serging, trim and finish simultaneously. Press waistline seam allowances toward bodice.

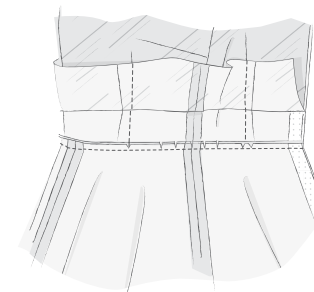
 Proceed to *Inserting Zipper*, next page.


BODICE LINING ONLY

1. Pin bodice to skirt, RS together, matching seams and keeping bodice lining free. (Note: For Trumpet Skirt, make sure to match bodice darts to skirt seams.) Stitch.

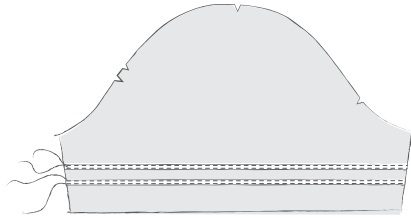


2. Grade seam allowances so bodice's is the widest. Clip into waistline seam allowance about every 1/2 in (1.3 cm) at the curviest part of waist (at side seams). Press seam allowances toward bodice.



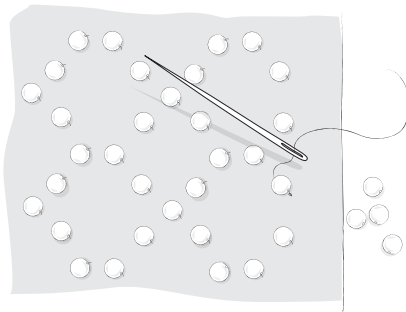
 Proceed to *Inserting Zipper*, next page.

You may wish to echo this ribbon detail on the short sleeves. Place and stitch the ribbon trim before sewing the sleeves; it's easier to stitch the trim when the sleeve is flat. Place one row of ribbon 1/2 in from the sleeve's hemline and stitch in place, edgestitching on either side of the ribbon. Place and stitch a second row of ribbon 1/2 in above the first row. Sew and hem the sleeve as usual.



SEWING WITH BEADED FABRICS

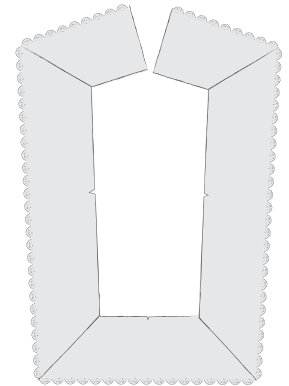
Bishop sleeves look especially beautiful made from embellished or beaded fabrics. Though these fabrics can be painstaking to sew, the dramatic results are worth it. First, cut the sleeve as usual, using inexpensive shears because the beads will quickly dull your blades or cause nicks (I use paper scissors). Remove all beading in the seam allowances and save the beads for later, in case you need to fill in any bare spots. Then hand-stitch through the edges of the beading near the seam allowances to reinforce. To do this, thread a hand-sewing needle, anchor the thread in the fabric, and stitch through the beads around the seam allowances, following the beading pattern with your needle. Periodically anchor the thread in the fabric. Next, sew the sleeves as usual, using a zipper foot on your machine to stitch close to the beading, but not on top of it. Fill in any bare spots in the fabric's beading by hand-sewing on the preserved beads.



SEWING WITH SCALLOP-EDGE FABRICS

Eyelet and other embroidered fabrics often come with a finished scallop edge that you can place along the straight edge of a pattern piece. A lovely embroidered edge would work well on the Yoke Skirt and Short Sleeves, for example. Place the fabric's embroidered edge along the hemline (rather than the cutting line at the bottom of the pattern piece) and cut. Sew the pieces together as usual. No hemming is required.

A scallop edge could also work along the bottom edge of the Square Collar. Place the scallop edge along the foldline in the center of the Square Collar pieces (front, sides, and back). Sew the collar as one layer only, matching notches at the mitered corners. When cutting the collar piece, plan your cutting layouts so that the scallops look even at the mitered corners.



SEWING WITH BORDER PRINTS

A border print has a design that runs along the fabric's selvage. Like scallop-edge fabrics, border prints are generally only placed along the straight edge of a pattern piece. A border would look gorgeous placed along the bottom of the Yoke Skirt, for instance. Make sure that you leave enough room for a hem allowance below the border's print.

