

A Line Skirt – Pattern & Skirt Making Instructions

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Kit for class–

- card skirt blocks & facings sizes 10-20
- handouts with course outline and how to sew facing
- paper handouts with measure chart & diagram of adjusting pattern
- tape measures
- calculator
- pencil & sharpener
- plain tissue pattern paper
- grader ruler
- bit of narrow elastic to tie round to find natural waist
- chalk pencil or tailors carbon paper and blunt tracing wheel
- pins, sewing machine with normal and zip foot, scissors, hand sewing needles, bright thread, unpicker
- iron and ironing board
- Non stretch fabric suitable for a skirt e.g. printed cotton, medium weight denim, linen, cotton drill/twill: 160cm - width must be at least 44". PLEASE WASH AND IRON YOUR FABRIC BEFORE THE WORKSHOP UNLESS YOU ARE PLANNING TO DRY CLEAN THE SKIRT ONCE MADE (TEST IRON TEMPERATURE ON A CORNER FIRST AND IRON ON THE REVERSE SIDE)
- 25cm medium weight fusible interfacing
- A 7" closed end zip (match zip colour to fabric)
- 1 reel of good quality polyester sewing thread e.g. Coats, Moon, Guterman (match thread colour to fabric)
- Wear leggings or non bulky skirt or trousers (no jeans!) so it's easy to take your measurements accurately
- Glasses if you need them for close up work

STEP 1

Class welcome & Introductions

STEP 2 – MEASURING UP

1. Measure the following on the body (in cm) in pairs, and write on handout given. Tie elastic round natural waist and bend from side to side so it pings to your narrowest point. You'll keep this on to use as ref for all measurements:
 - 1" below natural waist,
 - top hip (4"/10cm below natural waist),
 - hip (widest point, find the widest point, put pin through clothing at that height and write distance from natural waist on your chart),
 - length from 1" below SKIRT waist (put sample up against you, 1" below your natural waist – see chart for instructions)
 - see chart for instruct on making skirt more hipster
2. Then you need to add the following 'ease' (teacher will explain ease) to find your ideal 'finished garment size' – write on the chart
 - 1" below waist or hipster skirt top edge circumference = 1cm ease
 - Top hip = 2cm ease
 - Hip = 3cm
3. Circle the measurements on the chart that are nearest to your own **finished garment size (FGS)**. If you are bigger than size 20 choose 20 & if you're smaller than size 10, choose 10!
4. To choose which final pattern size to trace out: If your hip and top hip are closer to one size and the waist is another, go with the pattern size that's closer to the hip and top hip size and adjust the waist.
5. Once you have chosen your pattern you need to check your hip to waist distance is the same as the chart – it it's lower or higher than the 21.5cm from waist marked on the pattern for the hip location, measure the pattern with your teachers help at the height of YOUR hip
6. If you need more or less on the hip, top hip or waist, work out how much more/less it is and write in box D.
7. Then divide it by 4, as the pattern is made up of 4 quarters (2 front and 2 backs, therefore with 4 side seams available to adjust). Write in the final box E (to nearest millimetre) with ADD or SUBTRACT next to it – this is the amount you will reduce or increase the pattern by in each area

Next your tutor will demo how to add or reduce the waist and hip once you have traced your size card block onto paper (you keep the paper version to use in class & take home). There is also a diagram attached to the handout explaining this adjustment technique

STEP 3 – MAKING THE PATTERN

1. Trace round your nearest size card pattern front and back (we'll do the facings later once waist is fitted/checked adjusted) onto tissue paper. Mark darts, SG, CF/CB and notches on the paper plus write which is front and back and how many to cut.
2. Add an extra 1cm to the side seam all the way down, and mark that it's now a 2.5cm SA on the sides so you don't forget later!
3. If you need to increase or decrease the side seam at waist/top hip or hip do so on the paper version now by adding the amount in the last box (on your measurements handout) to each side seam at the waist, top hip* and hip levels (see sketch attached at the back of your class

handout), with your teacher's help.

*if the top hip needs to be smaller than the waist and hips don't reduce it yet, you can adjust the fit in the tissue fitting stage next. It's likely that you won't actually need what you added to the waist as you will simply not use the darts – add to waist anyway and trim off when tissue fitting if needed.

4. Is the length ok? Make shorter or longer if desired
5. Cut out the paper pattern

STEP 4 – TISSUE FITTING THE PATTERN TO YOU (need to wear leggings or just pants!)

1. Draw in the side seam and CB sewing line on the back skirt pattern, plus the waist sewing line on the back and front pattern
2. Pin the darts sticking outwards (so can be adjusted when on)
3. Pin the front to back at the side seam with SA's sticking outwards (so can be adjusted when on)
4. Put elastic on your waist and bend from side to side so it pings to the narrowest point
5. Place the pattern onto you so the waist sewing line sits 2.5cm/1" below your elastic
 - a. Does the CB sewing line reach your CB at the hip area? Pin it to your pants or leggings there (it may be slightly big by 0.5-1.5cm for wearing ease). Does the CB hang straight down? If it swings outwards you may need a sway back adjustment at the waist
 - b. How does the side seam look – straight?
 - c. Does the CB sit right on your CF. Pin it there
 - d. Darts – do you need them at all? If not take pins out and push any excess off to the Side Seam. Or they might need to be smaller, larger, shorter or longer
 - e. Do the hips need reshaping?
6. Once you have pinned all your adjustments (allow for wearing ease, but paper does come up snuggier than the fabric will and if you over fit you can let out some of the side seam in fabric, so don't worry too much), take it off and mark all adjustments in pencil back to the pattern for reference. Adjust seam allowances on the pattern back to 2.5cm on the sides and 1.5cm everywhere else. Mark any dart changes clearly.

STEP 5 – CUTTING OUT THE FRONT AND BACK IN FABRIC

N.B. Cut the facing patterns later once you have made up and tried on the skirt, as side seam, CB or dart changes will affect the shape of the facing.

1. Your teacher will demo how to lay up your fabric/pattern economically: Fold your fabric in half lengthwise right sides together and place the FRONT skirt pattern along on the fold and the BACK pattern next to it if you can. If the fabric is not wide enough, fold over just what

you need for the FRONT pattern on the fold (measure to check you've folded it straight) and place the BACK pattern below it, not on the fold (teacher to explain). Pin close to the edge, cut out carefully, leave pins in for now.

2. Teacher will then demo how to cut notches and how to mark dart with tailors carbon paper.
3. Cut notches and mark dots and darts then remove pins.

(Teacher timings for course/workshop: may take up to 3 hours to get to this stage)

STEP 6 – PIN FABRIC PIECES TOGETHER & TRY ON

1. Pin your entire skirt together, wrong sides together, on the side seams, CB & darts with all SA's & darts sticking outwards so they can be easily adjusted. Leave zip area open
2. Try it on the right way out, pin the zip area closed with a 1.5cm SA
3. Re-fit
4. Take off and mark all new pins with chalk clearly
5. Remove pins and mark your new sewing line clearly
6. Mark adjustments back to pattern making it clear which marks are the latest adjustments
7. Un pin, follow the sewing instructions below, making sure to sew on any new sewing lines you have drawn in that aren't exactly 1.5cm or 2.5cm away from the cut edge

STEP 7 – SEWING (sew 2.5cm SA on sides and 1.5cm SA everywhere else. Hem is 2cm)

1. **SET UP MACHINE** Set up a sewing machine, wind bobbin (these can be given back to Sew In Brighton or bought for 50p at the end), set with a size 3 straight stitch, checking your needle is in central position (5 on top dial on Janome 525S). Test the machine stitch on a doubled up scrap.
2. **STICK MASKING TAPE** down to mark 1.5cm SA away from the needle on the base.
3. **PIN DARTS** Pin the darts closed with pins lengthways the way the stitches will be, with pin heads up towards your waist (sew them later after fitting)
4. **STAY STITCH TOP EDGE (WAIST)** of front and back skirt pieces, 1.3mm from raw edge, ie just inside what will be your final sewing line – this will stop the edge stretching as you work with the pieces
5. **ZIG ZAG** Teacher will demo zig zag/overlocking - Zig zag or overlock skirt sides, hem, CB
6. **SEW BACK TO PREP ZIP** Sew back skirt pieces together on the centre back seam from hem to bottom of zip (see zip notch) , matching all notches. Press seams open
7. Fold back 1.5 on remaining zip opening (clever technique: chalk 3cm in from edge on wrong side of fabric and press raw edge to line with iron)

8. **PUT ZIP IN** Teacher will demo how to pin zip in for the overlap zip technique - Pin and baste in zip (see our zip purse handout for a step by step zip guide). Baste in a bright colour you'll see easily to take out later, then put masking tape 1.1cm away from fold on lap side to use as a guide
9. Put zip foot on machine and stitch round zip, sewing just inside the masking tape on the lap side.
10. Remove masking tape and basting. Press zip lightly from inside
11. **SEW SIDES** Sew front skirt to back skirt at side seams, matching notches. Press seams open lightly.
12. **FITTING** Try it on the right side out. Get someone to help pin: adjust if needed by pinning in the sides to reduce or marking where it needs letting out a little. You could also take bigger darts if needed – ask teacher for help with this
13. **IF YOU MADE ADJUSTMENTS** Mark precise lines where the pins are with a sharp chalk pencil. Then change pins to horizontal position across these marks and stitch. Unpick old stitching if any. Mark the changes on your pattern so the next skirt is right first time (provided you stay the same size!)
14. **SEW DARTS** Teacher will demo darts - sew darts (dart tutorial available on our Zip Dated Purse handout)
15. **FACINGS** You will need to adjust the facing patterns if you changed the skirt waist at all at pattern or fitting stage). Ask your teacher for help. Cut your correct facings in fabric and fusible interfacing
16. **INTERFACING** Teacher will demo how to apply interfacing - Interface the facings and zig zag/overlock lower edges of the facings (if there's a queue do this later)
17. **SEW FACINGS** together at the side seams matching notches. Press seams open. Follow photographic sheet 'How to Sew a Facing on a skirt' handout for full instructions for this bit.
18. **HEM IT** To hem: on the inside, chalk a line 4cm from the bottom edge, press to the line. Stitch close to the raw edge so the seam allowance won't flap down when worn. Press from the inside.
19. **CORRECTING THE PATTERN** Once you are happy with the fit you can finalise your pattern by making all seams back to 1.5cm so it's ready to use for your next skirt

Congratulations!!! Enjoy wearing your skirt and making more from your perfected pattern

If you'd like to make dresses or other garments from patterns you've bought or made, come along to our 'Weekly Stitch Classes' and we'll help you get the pattern perfect before you cut out and sew. You can also make copies of your favourite clothes in Stitch Classes or our Replicate Your Clothes workshop