

TOP TIPS & TECHNIQUES



SEW OUR STUNNING SEWING BEE JACKET!

6 GORGEOUS PATTERNS

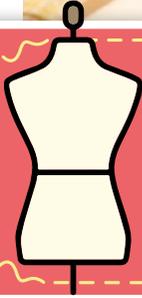


Master your sewing machine



Sizes 6-20

The complete expert guide to **DRESSMAKING**



Learn to love delicate fabric



Stretch your skills!

How to pattern match

Welcome

To our complete guide to
dressmaking!



28



16



If you're new to the world of dressmaking or you fancy a little refresher and some

exciting new ideas, then this book is just what you need!

We're going back to basics to explore your sewing machine, choosing the right garment style, what thread type to use, and what sorts of fabric are best suited to your next project.

We've packed in six projects from leading designers, including Fiona Hesford, Debbie Shore and *The*

Great British Sewing Bee team! You'll find expert guides to drafting your own patterns, working with tricky fabric and much, much more. Delve into your stash to make a patchwork jacket on page 16 or practise your print matching to create a beautiful check dress on page 28.

I hope you find plenty of inspiration inside to get your sewing machines whirring and help you grow your dressmaking skills as well as your me-made wardrobes, of course!

Bethany
Senior Editor

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Abbreviations

- RST – Right sides together
- WST – Wrong sides together
- SA – Seam allowance





Glossary

A quick guide to some of the terms used inside this book



Baste – To loosely hold a garment together with large running stitches before you permanently stitch the fabric. Use a contrasting colour thread and remove these stitches afterwards.

Bias binding – Narrow strips of fabric used along hem edges. Can be bought readymade or made at home.

Hem – The lower edge of a garment. It can be a single or double fabric fold.

Interfacing – Layer added inside garments to increase structure, shape and stability, such as collars, yokes and shoulder seams. Can be ironed on or sewn in.

Overlocker (serger) – These specialist machines cut and finish the edges of fabric and are commonly used on knits.

Seam allowance – The gap between the stitching and the edge of the fabric. Check your pattern as it may throughout within the garment.

Toile – A test garment made from cheap or scrap fabric to check a pattern fit before cutting into more expensive fabric.

Top stitching – Stitching on the right side of the fabric close to the edge to create a professional and sometimes purely decorative finish.

Master your machine

Each machine model offers a range of features and functions, but all have the fundamental elements in common. Use this handy guide and you'll know your way around yours in no time



1 THREAD GUIDES

Two threads make up each stitch – the top thread and the bobbin thread. The top thread from the spool of cotton passes through the thread guide, which regulates the tension of the thread before it's fed through the needle.

2 SPEED CONTROLLER

A slider that sets the speed the machine will work at when the pedal is pressed, allowing control and precision when sewing.

3 REVERSE FUNCTION

Use this to set the machine working in a reverse direction, to move backwards across a stitched line. This function is used when securing the threads at the start and end of a line of stitching.

4 NEEDLE AND NEEDLE CLAMP

The needle is removable to allow you to select from a variety of types and sizes to suit your project. The needle is held in place by the clamp. Most machines include a tool for tightening and loosening the clamp to access the needle.

5 PRESSER FOOT LIFTER

For lifting and lowering to hold the fabric in place while you sew. Release it to remove the fabric from the machine.

6 BOBBIN CASE

Inside the removable cover is the bobbin case, which houses the bobbin. The bobbin is wound with thread and provides the second thread for each stitch.

7 FEED DOGS

These moving parts lie underneath the needle plate. With spiked teeth that protrude from the opening, these help to move the fabric through the machine.

8 NEEDLE PLATE

The metal plate directly below the needle and presser foot. The small opening allows the thread from the bobbin to pass through while the needle enters to make the stitches. On the plate are guide markings to assist straight sewing and measure seam allowances.

9 PRESSER FOOT PRESSURE DIAL

Used for releasing/increasing the weight of the foot on the fabric, for example when working appliqué. You can release the pressure to enable you to turn the fabric smoothly.





10 BOBBIN WINDER

Winds thread from the cotton spool onto the bobbin, ensuring that the thread is fed evenly onto the bobbin and maintains the correct tension.

11 SPOOL HOLDER

This pin runs through the centre of a spool of thread, allowing it to feed smoothly through the machine.

12 SCREEN

Displays the relevant information regarding the stitch style, width and length that has been selected.

13 HAND WHEEL

Manually operates the mechanics of the machine, moving the needle up and down and engaging the feed dogs. Newer, computerised machines also have a needle up/down button which can be programmed to stay in the down position – ideal for pivoting on corners.

14 STITCH SELECTOR

Allows you to select from the different stitches on the machine and includes a menu from which you make your selection. The stitch is selected by pressing the relevant button and the number will appear on the screen.

15 STITCH LENGTH AND STITCH WIDTH SELECTORS

Use to increase or decrease the length or width of your stitch. The shorter the stitch, the more stitches are worked across the line of sewing, making it stronger. The width applies to stitches

where the needle moves from left to right, such as a zigzag stitch. Adjusting the width button will also move the needle position, which is important when sewing in zips and piping etc.

16 FREE ARM

This is a narrower working space created when the accessory box is removed. This is perfect for sewing smaller items or inserting sleeves.

17 ACCESSORY DRAWER

Use to store alternative presser feet, spare bobbins and maintenance tools.

18 START/STOP BUTTON

This allows you to operate the machine without the foot pedal.

19 THREAD CUT BUTTON

This will cut the threads after sewing and is highlighted in the screen with the thread cutter mark.

Trouble with tension?

Check that both the machine and bobbin are correctly threaded. If these aren't exactly right, this can cause incorrect tension. Also check that the thread on the bobbin is wound correctly. If it's too tight or too loose, it won't feed through the machine and make even stitches. Another good tip is to use the same thread in the machine and the bobbin – even slightly different threads can unbalance the tension

Find your perfect fit

What to consider to ensure your me-made wardrobe fits just as you want it to



Shaping

Look at the shape of the body of the garments you love. Are they boxy and square or do they come in at the waist? Do you like a good dipped hem at the back of a top or perhaps a cropped style to accommodate high-waisted jeans? Picking a garment with a fit that you know works for you is key to finding your perfect match.



Phoebe top by Tammy Handmade from issue 90

Ease

Ease is a way of describing the size of the garment compared to the size of the person wearing it. By carefully measuring yourself and some garments that fit you well you can determine whether you prefer your garments with positive ease (loose fitting) or negative ease (tight fitting).



With a Flourish dress by Julia Claridge from issue 89

Don't forget...

Don't be afraid to make adaptations to a pattern to make it fit your style. The beauty of me-made garments is you are the designer, you're putting in your time and effort and you should feel amazing in whatever you sew!

Length

It may seem obvious but depending on our height, size and style, the garment that looks perfect on the model in pictures can look less so when we make it ourselves. Consider any adaptations to the length of the skirt, trousers or sleeves to suit your body before you begin to make sure you get plenty of wear out of your new garment!

Autumn Daze skirt by Claire Garside from issue 87

In Bloom jacket by My Handmade Wardrobe Patterns from issue 87

Fabric

The right fabric can absolutely transform a garment – and what works for you may not work for everyone. If you tend to feel the cold, choose garments designed for heavier-weight fabric or pick lightweight, breathable fabrics if you get warm easily and prefer clothes you can layer.

Neckline

The right neckline can make a huge difference to the look of a garment. When looking at necklines, consider not only whether they flatter your body but also your face. You should also think about what you wear underneath – if you like blouses with collars then try a V-neck cardigan rather than a high neck.

Afternoon tee by Claire Garside from issue 85

Sleeves

Look at the body of a garment, pay attention to how the sleeves are joined. Set-in sleeves give a more tailored look, while raglans, yokes and drop sleeves can be more casual. You may also have a style you enjoy sewing more than others!

Keen as Mustard sweatshirt by Claire Garside in issue 89

Shop back issues of *Love Sewing* at www.love sewingmag.co.uk and download now at www.pocketmags.com



Wrap it up skirt

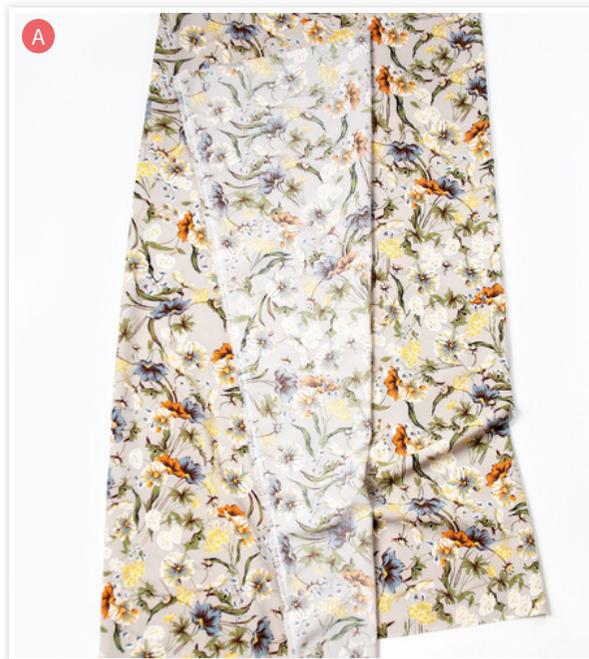
This wrap skirt is simple to make and comfy to wear with its elasticated waist. Choose a floaty fabric such as viscose or polycotton to create a pretty drape from the waistband

Project **DEBBIE SHORE**



MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- ✂ the width of your fabric needs to be 1.5 times your hip measurement, as this will allow the fabric to wrap around your hips and overlap at the front – you may need to join a few pieces together. The skirt can be as long as you like, but remember to add 2.5cm to the length for hemming (see Notes)
- ✂ 5cm-wide elastic, cut to your waist measurement
- ✂ Rolled-hem foot (optional)



NOTES:

Use a 1.5cm seam allowance throughout unless otherwise stated. To take your measurements, place the elastic around your waist and pull slightly – use this as your elastic measurement. Measure from your waist to the desired length of skirt and measure around the fullest part of your hips.

HOW TO MAKE:

- 1 Carefully take your measurements and work out how large your fabric needs to be. You may need to join a few pieces together to achieve the right width. (See Pic A.)
- 2 If you're using the full width of fabric, remember to cut off the selvages. Make a small

hem along both side edges – a rolled-hem foot will help to create a tiny, neat hem. If you don't have a rolled-hem foot, create a double hem instead. (See Pic B.)

- 3 Wrap the fabric to create the 'tube' of the skirt; the circumference of the tube should be your hip measurement plus an extra 2.5cm to allow for comfort. Sew around the top to create the skirt shape. (See Pic C.)
- 4 Overlap the ends of your elastic by 1cm and sew them together with a zigzag stitch to make a loop. Measure and mark quarter points around the loop with an erasable pen.

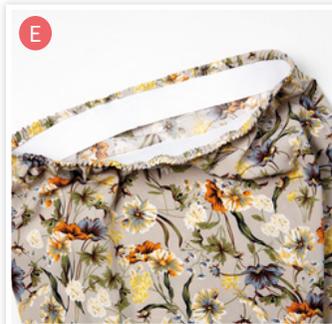
Measure and mark quarter points around the skirt waist. Place the elastic over RS of the skirt and pin around the top, matching up the markings. (See Pic D.)

- 5 Sew the elastic in place with a zigzag stitch, carefully stretching the elastic as you sew. Once it is sewn, fold the elastic to the inside of the skirt. Top-stitch just below the fabric fold to hold the elastic in place, again, stretching as you sew. (See Pic E.)
- 6 Try the skirt on to check the length, then hem around the bottom; either make a rolled hem or a double hem. (See Pic F.)

About the book



Adapted from *Debbie Shore's Sewing Room Secrets: Essential Skills for Dressmakers* by Debbie Shore, £9.99 published by Search Press. Available from www.searchpress.com



How to create a rolled hem

It's possible to create a tiny rolled hem on your overlocker/serger which is barely visible, and a good choice for curved hemlines. Try using with stretch fabrics such as jersey to create a pretty fluted hem on garments like pyjamas and children's clothing.

Masterclass SEWING ON ELASTIC



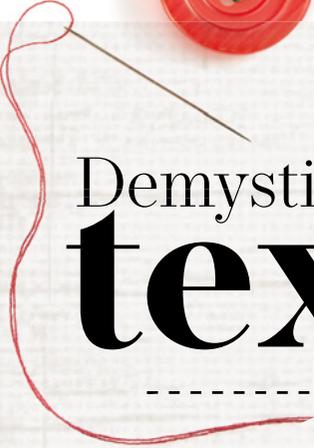
Elastic can be sewn to a cuff on a sleeve, around the hem of a floaty blouse or around the waist of a dress to give it shape. It's available in many sizes and colours but generally isn't seen as it's sewn to the wrong side of the fabric.

If you're sewing around a hem or cuff, sew the hem first, as you'll find it quite difficult to hem fabric after it's been gathered.

Mark the line along which your elastic will be sewn – this will help to keep it in a straight line as you sew. Choose a wide zigzag stitch on your sewing machine. Sew a

few stitches at the end of the elastic to secure, then gently pull the elastic as you sew over it. It will help to ease the fabric from the back of the machine at the same time, but try not to pull against the needle or the stitches could become distorted. It pays to practise first!

To help you pass a piece of elastic all the way through a waistband channel – which can be a fiddly job – attach a safety pin to one end: you'll be able to feel it through the fabric and it will give you something to grip on to.



Demystifying textiles

There are so many different types of fabric, but what are they and what are their properties? Use our handy fabric guide to plan your next dressmaking project



Lightweight woven fabric

A popular choice for any level of sewist as it's wearable and available in a wide range of fabric types, colours and patterns. It is most often used for dressmaking, although it can be used in a wide variety of home and decorative makes.

Fabric type	How to recognise it...
COTTON	Smooth and crisp to touch. Strong and stretches on the bias
POLYCOTTON	Not as smooth as cotton. Strong and doesn't crease as easily as cotton
LAWN	Very fine crisp cotton, can be slightly transparent. Silky to touch
POPLIN	Durable tightly woven fabric. Doesn't crease easily
CHAMBRAY	Similar look to denim but lighter weight and more breathable
SEERSUCKER	Looks purposely crinkled, fine and breathable
MUSLIN	Fine and soft with a visible weave, most common in white and cream
LINEN	Very absorbent and strong with a visible weave. Creases
CALICO	Feels coarser than cotton and mostly has a creamy, unbleached look

Medium-weight woven fabric

Medium-weight fabric is most suited to projects that need a little more durability and is often seen in home furnishings such as cushions and curtains, as well as outerwear such as jackets and coats.

Fabric type	How to recognise it...
MEDIUM-WEIGHT COTTON	Slightly stiffer feel than lightweight cotton and more durable
FLANNEL	Fluffy and soft to touch. Has a nap, meaning the fabric must cut with the nap going in the right direction
VELVET	Rich, luxurious feel, with a raised pile and nap
FLEECE	Soft, breathable and synthetic. Both sides look the same
VINYL/ LAMINATED/ OILCLOTH	Synthetic or plastic feel. Waterproof and durable with a strong backing fabric
CORDUROY	Vertically ridged with 'wales'. Soft and flattering with a nap

Heavyweight fabric

This type of fabric is made to last and more commonly used in projects that have lots of use and therefore experience wear and tear. It can be found in everything from bags to upholstery to winter clothing – think of jeans and jackets!

Fabric type	How to recognise it...
DENIM	Hardwearing, durable and doesn't crease easily
CANVAS	Tightly woven, strong and hardwearing
LEATHER	Durable, flexible and natural. Can be coarse or soft to touch
FAUX LEATHER	Looks like leather but is made from synthetic fibres
SUEDE	Soft and natural with a nap. Strong and durable
WOOL	Natural, dense and doesn't crease. Absorbs water well
TWEED	Rough, unfinished feel from natural wool fibre

Knit fabric

Knit fabric has a two-way stretch on the crossgrain or a four-way stretch in all directions. Always check your patterns for notes on what percentage stretch you need in your fabric.

Fabric type	How to recognise it...
JERSEY KNIT	Light- to medium-weight single knit fabric. Good drape and can be blended as a wool or silk jersey. Both sides are different, one has knit and the other has purl stitches
COTTON JERSEY	Medium-weight four-way stretch fabric, ideal for T-shirts and casual garments. Will roll at the cut edges
SCUBA KNIT	Knit fabric with a slick surface, great stretch and recovery. Good for activewear, swimwear and dresses
SWEATSHIRT KNIT	Strong and stable with a firm stretch and comfortable to wear
SPANDEX	Lightweight, smooth with high stretch capabilities. Use for activewear or undergarments
WOOL	Natural, dense and doesn't crease. Absorbs water well
TWEED	Rough, unfinished feel from natural wool fibres

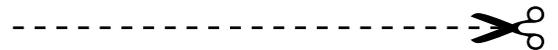
Discover a wide range of fabric types for all occasions at www.fabricguys.co.uk



Scrap happy jacket

Use offcuts and self-drafting techniques to create this square-cut open jacket. Try delicate fabric for a summer staple or sturdier choices like denim for a heavier choice of patchwork

Project **CAROLINE AKSELSON**
& **ALEXANDRA BRUCE**



MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- ✂️ **co-ordinating fabric scraps of a similar weight**
- ✂️ **bias binding for the sleeve hems, neck, centre front & hem**
- ✂️ **plain fabric, such as light cotton, to line the garment (optional)**
- ✂️ **pattern paper to create your own pattern pieces**

NOTES:

Choose from an open jacket or add tie fastenings along the centre front opening

PREPARATION

1 This garment is made of three rectangles: one that forms the body and two that form sleeves. It has

no shoulder seam, but the shoulder line would lie halfway through the big rectangle, where the head opening is. For the body, measure from your nape to the desired length of the garment, and multiply that by two. This will form the length of the large rectangle. The width of the rectangle is roughly 60cm. Add hem allowances.

2 Draw a slightly oval shape in the centre for the head opening. To add tie fastenings along the centre front opening, make sure the centre front edges touch. For an open jacket, separate and shape the centre front lines.

3 For the sleeves, measure from your shoulder to the desired length for the length. For the width, loosely measure your armhole and use that. If you want a more shaped sleeve, bring the lines in slightly towards the wrist. Add seam allowances.

4 Cut out your paper pattern pieces.

HOW TO MAKE

5 Lay out your fabric scraps to get a good distribution of colours and patterns – remember to allow for seam allowances! When you're happy with the arrangement,

stitch them together, and press the seams open. Lay the patterns on top of the patchwork and cut out the pieces.

6 With RST, pin and sew the sleeves to the centre of the body rectangle. Overlock the seam allowances, then press towards the body.

7 With RST, aligning the underarm and side edges, fold your garment in half. Pin and sew the underarm and side seam on each side in one go. Overlock the seam allowances and press towards the back of the garment.

8 Bind the sleeve hems, the neckline, the centre front and the hem (see Masterclass).

9 For the optional lining, using the same pattern pieces, cut out the lining pieces. Assemble the lining in the same way as the jacket. After Step 6, slot the lining into the jacket, with WST. Machine-tack within the seam allowance around the sleeve hems, neck, centre front and hem. Bind these edges to finish.

Masterclass

ATTACHING BIAS BINDING

Bias binding is a great way to finish off exposed seam allowances, to invisibly finish armholes and necklines without having to use a facing, or to decoratively finish curved edges. We recommend that you staystitch any curves before you apply bias binding.

Sewn on with one seam

As the binding is visible on both sides of the bound edge, this technique is suitable for decorative binding and for finishing seam allowances that are visible.

1 If you are making binding yourself, fold the long raw edges of your bias strip in to the centre (this is how it arrives if it's readymade). Then fold the bias binding in half lengthwise, WST, with a step: one side should be about 3mm wider than the other. Press well.

2 Slot the binding around the raw edge that you are binding. The wider half should lie underneath. Top-stitch from RS; you will automatically catch the other side of the bias as it's a little bit wider.

www.lovesewingmag.co.uk 17

About the book

Adapted from *The Great British Sewing Bee: Sustainable Style* by Caroline Akselson and Alexandra Bruce (Quadrille, £27) Photography ©Brooke Harwood and Charlotte Medicott

Top 10 tools

Get started in dressmaking with our pick of must-have tools from Prym



1 SEAM RIPPERS

Unpick tacking stitches or any seams gone awry with minimal effort with this useful tool.

2 STORAGE

Keep your sewing supplies organised and close by with a storage box or basket.

3 PINS

Heat-resistant pins with glass heads allow you to iron over them and spy them easily in your seams to slide out as you sew.

4 NEEDLES

Different fabric requires different needles. A ballpoint needle is great for knits whereas you will need a heavyweight or specialist needle for leather and denim. Universal needles can sew through most fabric but double check your project first and your machine to see what it's compatible with.

5 CUTTING

Every dressmaker needs a good pair of fabric scissors that will glide through with ease. Some sewists like having a rotary cutter to hand or large pieces of fabric and a little pair of snips is handy for loose threads.

6 MEASURING

Measuring accurately is essential in sewing and you can never have too many tape measures at hand! A dressmaker's ruler or 'dressmaker's curve' is the next step up, assisting with seam allowances, marking buttonholes and measuring curves.

2. Thimbles sewing basket, from £45



1. Large seam ripper, £4.40

3. £2.90 per pack of 30



4. Needle packs from £2.90

Remember to change your needle approximately every eight hours of sewing

5. Gold tailor's scissors, £44.40

Never cut paper with your fabric scissors as it will blunt the blades

6. Dressmaker's ruler, £32.40



7. Tracing wheel, £9.99



10. Prymadonna multi dressform, from £280



7. Trick marker, £4.20



6. Tape measure, £2.90



7 MARKING

To mark your fabric you can use anything from tailor's chalk to a water- or air-erasing marker pen. Always check on a scrap of your fabric that it removes easily before you start. You can also use a tracing wheel which will leave a light indent when transferring patterns.

8 PRESSING/IRONING

An iron is an invaluable tool in the sewing room, allowing you to prep your fabric, press seams and adhere fusible interfacing in place. A mini iron is particularly great for precision pressing!

9 DRAFTING

Create and trace your own patterns with semi-transparent tissue paper featuring a printed scale, ideal for enlarging patterns and creating motifs.

10 DRESSFORMS

Audition your pattern pieces and find your perfect fit with a dressform. Adjustable varieties can be changed to suit a range of sizes and shapes, check your measurements beforehand to ensure your dressform is just what you need.

8. Steam mini iron, £36



9. Dressmaking pattern paper, £10.80 per 10m roll



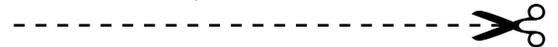
Shop these must-have tools and more at www.prym.com or find your local supplier at www.prym.com/en/find-a-dealer



What a frill

Learn how to make delicate bias-cut ruffles that are perfect for adding to a simple top or skirt

Project **AMY SCARR**





Top tip!



Before you start, check your chalk is easily removable!

Shopping list

Coral chiffon, £4.99 per metre
 Coral peachskin polyester, £7.99 per metre
 Both from www.minervacrafts.com

A



B



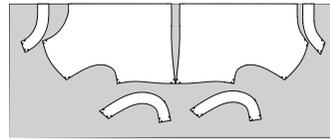
MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- ✂ 1.5m chiffon
- ✂ 1.5m co-ordinating lining
- ✂ 50cm fusible interfacing
- ✂ tailor's chalk or air-erasable marker
- ✂ co-ordinating thread
- ✂ templates downloaded from www.love sewingmag.co.uk

SIZING:

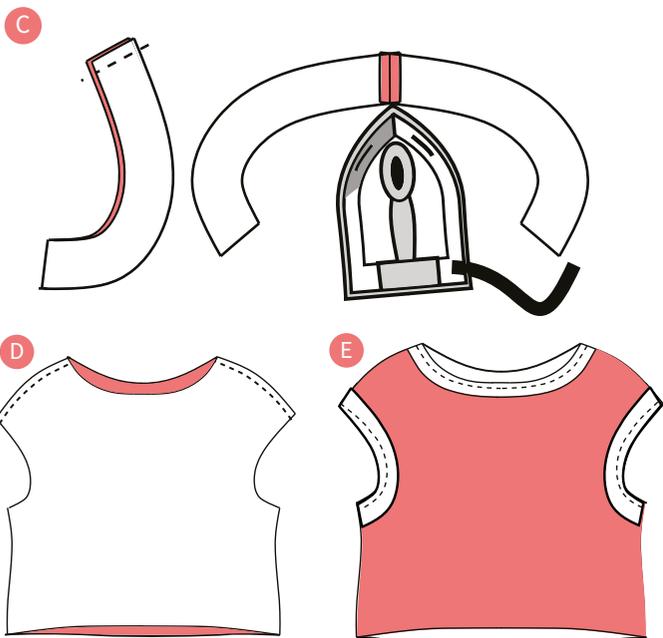
Size	Bust	Waist	Hips
8	33"	26"	36"
10	35"	28"	38"
12	37"	30"	40"
14	39"	32"	42"
16	41"	34"	44"
18	43"	36"	46"
20	45"	38"	48"

CUTTING:



HOW TO MAKE:

- 1 Mark the centre front onto the WS of the bodice front lining piece in chalk.
- 1 Layer the WS of the chiffon bodice front on top of the RS of the lining. Baste around the outer edges within the seam allowance to hold the two layers together.
- 2 Using a long clear dressmaker's ruler, position your ruler at a 45° angle to the centre front line. On the WS of the lining mark a line that runs across the piece, taking care not to drag the fabric as you go. I used a rotary chalk wheel to get a crisp smooth line in one motion. You may prefer to use an air-erasable fabric pen.
- 3 Choose how wide you'd like your frills to be – I chose 1.5cm frills so marked 3cm parallel lines. Continue to mark parallel lines until the bodice front is covered. Work carefully so you don't smudge the chalk with your arm or the ruler.



4 Sew along the marked lines in a co-ordinating thread (or contrasting if you prefer), working in the same direction for each line. (See Pic A.)

5 Using your scissors cut the chiffon layer only down the centre of two sewn lines. Cut in long strokes so you don't get a ragged edge. Repeat until the front is fully ruffled. (See Pic B.) Run a hot iron back and forth over the frills to make them stand away from the lining. Because you cut the ruffles at a 45° angle they will not fray as they are on the bias.

6 Repeat steps 1-5 for the back bodice.

7 Fuse interfacing to the WS of the neckline and armhole facings and finish the lower edges with a zigzag stitch or on an overlocker. Then, with RST, sew the armhole facings together at the shoulder seams and press open. (See Pic C.)

8 With RST, sew front and back bodice together at shoulder seams and press open. (See Pic D.) Repeat for front and back neck facings.

9 Place the bodice and neckline facing RST and pin in place. Repeat for the armhole facings. Sew in place using a 1cm seam allowance. (See Pic E.) Notch the seam allowances

Masterclass FINE FABRIC

This project is perfect for trying in trickier fabric, such as silk or silk blends, polyester or a viscose-mix fabric. Here are some top tips for working with these types of fabric.

It is important to use sharp dressmaking shears that are only used on fabric!

Scissors with finely serrated blades are perfect for slippery fabric as they grip the cloth as you cut. Take long slices, using the whole length of the blades as you cut.

If you prefer using a rotary cutter, ensure you have a large enough mat so you won't have to reposition your fabric multiple times to cut it out. Each time you

move the material you risk cutting it off the grain.

If you plan to regularly sew with slippery or lightweight fabric, invest in a straight stitch needle plate. This can be easily swapped with your regular plate with a screwdriver and has a smaller eye for the needle to pass through, meaning fabric is less likely to be dragged into the mechanism as you sew.

Stay sharp by using extra-fine pins such as special lace or silk pins, and a fresh thin needle in your machine. Failure to do so will risk snags and visible holes in your fabric, which will ruin the final finish.

at the curved edges to help them sit flat and under-stitch the facings to the seam allowance to prevent them from rolling forward. Press the facings to the inside.

10 Turn the top RST and flip

armhole facings up. Pin, then sew side and facing seams in one motion and press open. Finish raw edges with a zigzag stitch or on an overlocker.

11 Turn up a small hem and sew in place to finish.



30-minute mini skirt

Follow this handy step-by-step tutorial to make a stylish skirt to measure for a perfectly flattering fit unique to you

Project **ELENA ROSA**
RANDOMLY HAPPY



MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- ✂ 1m stretch fabric (jersey or ponte work best)
- ✂ tape measure
- ✂ ruler
- ✂ chalk or fabric pen
- ✂ fabric scissors
- ✂ pins
- ✂ 1m 1"-wide elastic tape
- ✂ matching thread
- ✂ ballpoint or stretch needles

HOW TO MAKE:

- 1 Measure the circumference of your waist. Write this down

For a wide range of jersey fabric, visit www.craftysewandso.co.uk

DETERMINING STRETCH GAUGE

STRETCH

10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

To determine how stretchy your fabric is, use our handy stretch gauge from Coralie Grillet of www.wearologie.com



and divide it by four. This is your waist measurement. Measure the circumference of your hips (or widest part of your lower body). Write this down and divide by four. This is your hip measurement. Finally, measure the length you'd like your skirt to be from waist to hem, and then measure from the hem to the point where you took your hip measurement (or the widest part of your lower body). Write these down.

2 Fold your fabric in half with the stretch running perpendicular to the fold. Mark out the length of your skirt along the fold, including the length where you took your hip measurement. Starting at the left point, draw a line as long as your waist measurement (your waist circumference divided by 4). On the far side draw a line as long as your hip measurement (your hip circumference divided by 4).

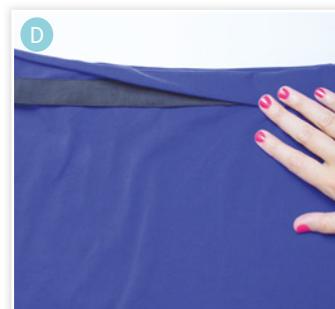
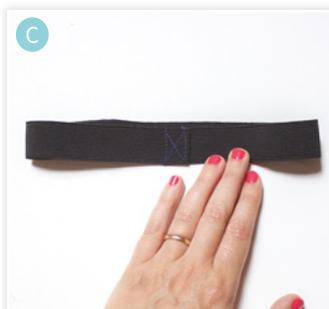
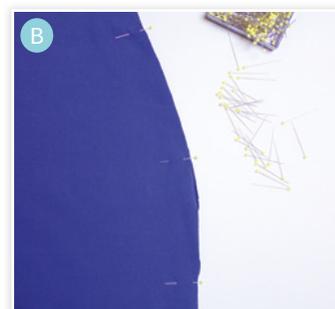
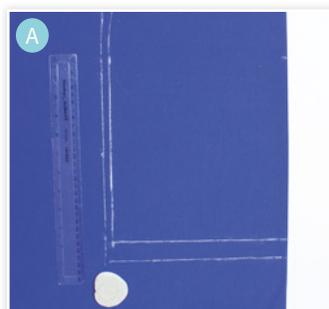
Draw a line running from the bottom of your hip measure (the bottom of the skirt) to the point where you marked your hip measurement. This line runs parallel to the fold in the fabric.

3 Draw a slightly curved line to connect the two lines you drew in Step 2.

Add a hem allowance by drawing a line 2cm from the bottom edge. Add 2" to the top of the skirt for a waistband; add 1cm seam allowance to the side. (See Pic A.)

4 Cut out your skirt piece. Cut another skirt piece by following steps 2-4 again. Place the two skirt pieces together with RST. Match the raw edges and pin in place. Sew the side seams using a 1cm seam allowance and zigzag stitch. (See Pic B.)

5 Place the elastic tape around your waist until it feels snug. Add 1cm to this measurement and cut. Sew the elastic together so that it



forms a circle – sewing in an X shape helps ensure the elastic is secure. (See Pic C.)

6 With the wrong side of the skirt facing out, place the circle of elastic around the skirt. Place the elastic 1" below the top edge of the skirt. Fold the fabric over so the fabric is completely covering the

elastic. Sew the folded fabric in place by sewing close to the raw edge using a zigzag stitch. (See Pic D.)

7 Hem your skirt by folding the bottom edge of the skirt over by 1cm and again by 1cm. Sew along the top of the fold using a wide straight stitch.

Ready, thready, **SEW!**

Duncan Yarnall, head of Madeira Consumer Products, offers an expert guide to the different thread types you will need



color your life

MADEIRA



A CENTURY OF THREAD EXCELLENCE

Madeira has been producing thread for over a century now, from its worldwide headquarters in Freiburg, Germany. Perhaps best known for embroidery threads, Madeira caters for sewists around the world, offering high-quality sewing, overlocking, patchwork and quilting thread too!



COTONA 50

Cotona 50 is Madeira's 100% Cotton of choice. A fine machine thread, it is made of the best Egyptian cotton to give the best quality seams and stitches. With an extensive colour palette of 120 options, Cotona is also produced in 80 and 30 weight ranges for all sewing and quilting machines. It's recommended for an embroidery needle NM 75-80.



AEROFIL

Aerofil is an all-purpose, high-quality sewing thread made of 100% strong polyester. Equally at home for garment construction, home furnishing and all manner of seam sewing. It gives an unrivalled stitch and finish and creates long lasting projects, with durability, elasticity and strength in 180 colours. Suitable for machines and hand sewing it's recommended for a sewing needle NM 75-80.



AEROLOCK

Aerolock is Madeira's all-purpose overlock thread, available in 33 colours and made from 100% strong polyester. Designed for all manner of overlock applications, its strength and quality are second to none for long-lasting seams. The colours match those of Aerofil, for perfect co-ordination of overlocking, seams and construction. It is colourfast, and performs well on all sewing and overlock machines. Aerolock is recommended for sewing needles NM 75-80.



AEROFLOCK

Aeroflock is a Oeko-Tex® certified texturised polyester thread designed for specific overlock applications. It gives all the quality of its sister thread Aerolock, but with an element of stretch and elongation that is perfect for fabric with a larger degree of movement. It's perfect for jersey, Lycra and other stretch fabrics and is available in 24 colours.

MONOFIL

Madeira Monofil is monofilament fine, transparent thread, perfect for fine to medium-weight fabric. Tough, strong and durable, it gives you the ability to stitch where a stitch does not want to be seen. It's available in two gauges and colours: Clear for bright fabrics and Smoke for dark fabrics. It's recommended for sewing needles 75-80.

Duncan's EXPERT TIPS

⌘ All thread contains lubrication in the finishing process, to aid in the stitching process on the machine. This lubrication can dry out over the life of the thread. This is why very old thread will be difficult to stitch with. To get the best results from any thread, avoid drying out the thread with storage in direct sunlight or very hot conditions,
 ⌘ For the same reason, avoid open thread storage in areas of large temperature fluctation or humidity. A natural thread such as 100% cotton can

take on air moisture in damp conditions, resulting in difficult stitching.
 ⌘ Needles. Most cases of stitching issues can relate to needles. This is a key component and the only method your machine uses to carry the thread through the fabric. The suggested life span of a standard seam construction sewing needle is approximately 6-7 hours of continuous use. By switching your needle regularly, the best sewing results can be achieved with only an investment of pennies.

About Duncan Yarnall

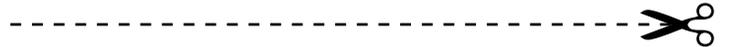
With over 25 years of textiles industry experience in thread sales, Duncan has experienced all aspects of the sewing landscape and has an in-depth knowledge of threads. Discover more about Madeira products at www.garne.madeira.de



Check please!

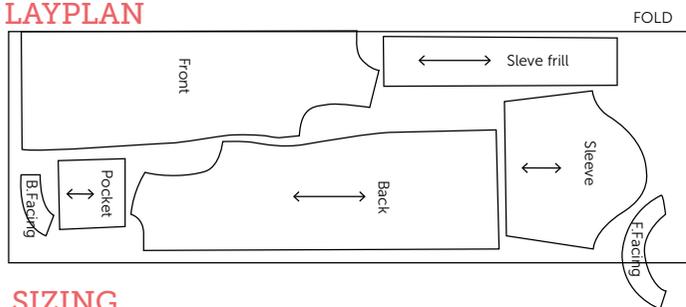
The Gloria dress is a breath of fresh air in cool cotton gingham. With frill detail at the cuffs and patch pockets, she's got easy appeal

Project **FIONA HESFORD** Sewgirl



For a wide range of check cotton fabric, visit www.jessali.com

LAYPLAN



SIZING

	Finished bust	Finished waist	Finished hip	Finished length
Small (8-10)	94cm	87cm	98cm	94cm
Medium (12-14)	104cm	97cm	108cm	95.5cm
Large (16-18)	114cm	107cm	118cm	97cm



MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- ✂ 1.9m 124cm-wide gingham cotton or similar medium-weight fabric
- ✂ 20cm fusible lightweight interfacing
- ✂ 56cm concealed zip
- ✂ co-ordinating thread
- ✂ templates downloaded from www.lovesewingmag.co.uk

NOTES

Finish the raw edges with a machine zigzag stitch or overlocker
1cm seam allowance is included

HOW TO MAKE

- 1 Fuse interfacing to the WS of the neck facing pieces.
- 2 Create the darts at the front and back.
- 3 Finish the raw edges of the CB seams. We'll insert the

zip into the CB seam now for ease later! Use an invisible zipper foot for a neat finish and sew the zip on the RS of the garment. Finish the CB seam by continuing to sew below the zipper stop.

4 Join the front to back at shoulder seams and press open. Sew the neckband facing together at shoulder seams and press seams open, then finish the raw outer edge all around.

5 With RST pin the facing to the neckline edge and down the CB along the side of the zip. Tack-stitch in place then sew with a 1.5cm seam allowance at the neckline. Swap to a zipper foot and sew down the zipper.

6 Notch the curves of the





seam allowance and clip the corners. (See Pic A.) Turn to the RS and push out the corners, then the seams.

7 Top-stitch the neckline on the RS to secure the facing in position, approximately 3cm from the edge. (See Pic B for a guide.)

8 With RST, sew the front to back at the side seams. With RST sew the sleeve side seams and sew the cuff pieces at the short sides.

9 Working on each cuff piece, sew a 2cm hem on one cuff edge and finish the other raw edge.

Gather cuff piece along the unhemmed side.

10 With RST, pin then tack the gathered cuff piece to the sleeve. Ease the gathers all around to fit and sew them in place. (See Pic C.)

11 Pin, tack, then sew the sleeve into the armhole, matching the notches. Finish the raw edge and press the seam allowance towards the body.

12 Hem the dress at the lower edge as required.

13 Fold a 2cm hem at top edge of each pocket piece. Finish the other three raw



edges then fold over each edge by 1cm. Pin in position to the front of the dress, following the markings on the

template. Tack-stitch in place, then top-stitch approximately 3mm from the edge along the three folded sides.

Masterclass CHECK IT OUT

Follow our top tips for stitch success when working with plaid, striped or checked fabric

BEFORE YOU START

When buying plaid, checked or striped fabric, buy more than the pattern envelope suggests, as you will need extra fabric to be able to match the pattern. As a general rule, 1.5 metres extra should be enough, but a very large or uneven plaid may need more.

ASSESS YOUR PRINT

Press your fabric and take note of the design – are there dominant stripes within the plaid? Where will they fall best on the body? Dominant stripes need further consideration – a hem may fall on a dominant stripe if you desire, but a curved hem cannot, so position curved hems accordingly.

CHECK YOUR PATTERN

Familiarise yourself with the pattern pieces and consider where to place them on the fabric. Firstly, think about the centring of pieces. A centre front pattern piece for example will need to

be placed precisely, so fold the fabric carefully to accommodate this.

POSITIONING

Place the pattern pieces on the fabric, considering all of the points above, and place matching notches on each pattern piece on matching parts of the plaid or stripe, taking care of straight grain lines etc. If you're matching a print across a sleeve, line up the underarm point of both the bodice pieces and sleeve at the same part of the print for the best match.

CUT SINGLE LAYER

We recommend cutting out the pattern pieces on a single layer of fabric, which can be easier in some ways regarding pattern matching, just remember to flip each pattern piece and cut it twice. (Alternatively, once you have folded your fabric carefully and evenly, pin it into position along all the edges, ensuring the plaid or stripe design cannot shift during cutting.)

Learn something **new**

Online or face-to-face, workshops are a fantastic way to pick up new sewing skills. Here are some of our favourite classes!



All Stitched Up

At All Stitched Up we've been working hard planning new workshops and tweaking our regular ones, making sure that even if we can't meet face to face, we can offer some fun online. Whether you want to learn a new skill in crochet, sewing or knitting, develop your skills or just want to have a bit of crafting fun, we have something to suit, we even have workshops for non-sewists!

Our new workshops

are designed to offer the opportunity to learn specific skills, including sashiko, quilting and machine paper piecing and to use existing skills to make baby shoes and a beach bag, amongst others. We will also be offering our new workshop subscription service. Email Sarah at **allstitchedupcraftingltd@outlook.com** to hear about the latest workshops – we look forward to welcoming you into our new world!

Sew Jessalli

Here at Sew Jessalli, we strive to teach everyone, young and old, how to sew. We love it when our students learn a new skill and progress with their creative journey, whilst having fun in the process. During this difficult year we had to close our Sewing School, which pushed us to create some online workshops for our amazing customers.

We've launched two of our most popular classes as virtual

workshops which you can have lifetime access to. The first is our Beginner's Sewing Skills, it's a great way for total novices to get into or back into sewing. It covers all the basics and how to get a great finish on your projects. The second is our popular Free Motion Embroidery Class. If you fancy having some creative fun with textiles, this workshop is definitely for you!

Book now: www.jessalli.com/online-workshops
Facebook: SewJessalli Instagram: sew__jessalli



Book now: www.asufaversham.co.uk
Facebook: ASUFaversham



Material Moves

I'm Carol Eves, a former professional dressmaker and a qualified teacher. I developed dressmaking courses suitable for beginners in 2012. I provide a peaceful and welcoming environment to small groups of people of all ages and genders. I'm here to help people learn how to make clothes with attention to body shape, to make clothes that fit, with guidance in fabric choices, cutting and sewing techniques and lots of tips and tricks for a professional finish.

Live classes take place in a light, fully equipped studio

space above my fabric shop in Scarborough. I have a range of sewing machines to learn on, both digital and manual, large cutting tables, and all the small tools and gadgets needed to complete sewing projects.

Upcoming workshops include appliqué on 24th April, three-day workshops for beginners on 1st–3rd May and advanced sewing techniques over the second Bank Holiday, 29th–31st May. I now offer online weekly technique classes and workshops, and hope you can join me for a Kimono-style robe class on 15th May.



Book now: www.materialmoves.co.uk Facebook: MaterialMoves Instagram: materialmoves Call: 01723 377289



Crafty Sew&So

Crafty Sew&So runs online sewing workshop for all abilities. Our Start as You Mean To Sew On Class is a must for all new sewists, covering everything you need to know to get started. You'll make two fun starter projects and pick up tips and confidence to start sewing many more! Our live online workshops allow you to ask questions and check in with your tutor and fellow learners at every step. You can join in from anywhere and

re-watch the playback as many times as you need to build your sewing confidence.

We run a range of Learn to Sew classes, ideal for beginners and a range of skills classes including learning to use an overlocker, sewing with jersey fabric and learning to use dressmaking patterns. These are complemented by our Swatch List monthly fabric subscription, helping you to choose and sew the right fabric for the right project for you!

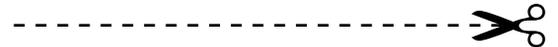
Book now: www.craftysewandso.com
Facebook: [craftysewandso](https://www.facebook.com/craftysewandso) Instagram: [craftysewandso](https://www.instagram.com/craftysewandso)



Top marks

This floaty top is great for throwing on with jeans while out and about or wearing with a pencil skirt for a dressy occasion

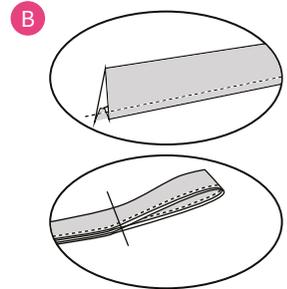
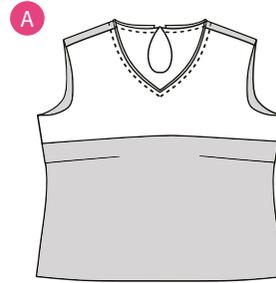
Project **CLAIRE GARSIDE**
SIMPLE SEW





Shopping list

For a wide range of viscose fabric, visit www.minerva.com



MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- ✂ 2.4m lightweight woven fabric
- ✂ 40cm medium-weight interfacing
- ✂ button
- ✂ co-ordinating thread
- ✂ templates downloaded from www.love sewingmag.co.uk

NOTES:

Seam allowance is 1.5cm unless otherwise instructed

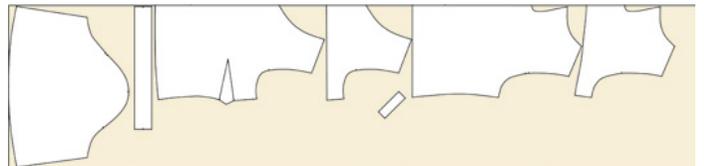
HOW TO MAKE:

- 1 Create the bust darts and press downwards.
- 2 Join front and back blouse pieces at shoulders RST. Press seam open.
- 3 Apply interfacing to the WS of the facings and join at shoulder seams. Press seam open.
- 4 With RST, attach the facing to the blouse at neckline RST

CUTTING:

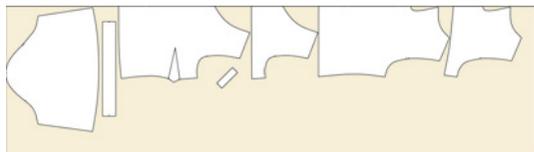
45"-wide fabric

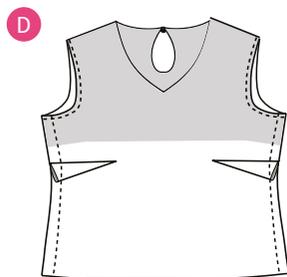
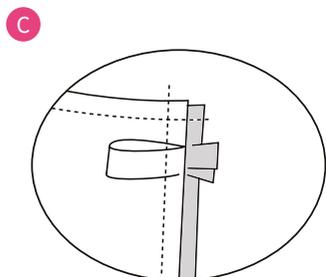
FOLD



60"-wide fabric

FOLD





9 Join the front and back blouse bodice at side seams RST. (See Pic D.)

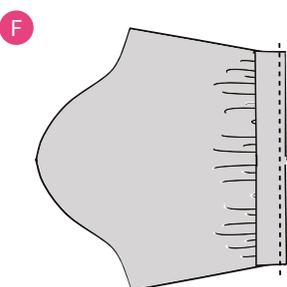
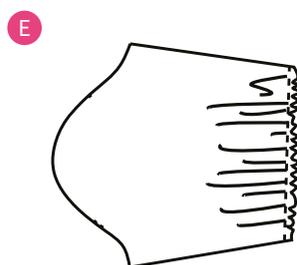
10 Gather the hem of each sleeve using a basting stitch and spread the gathers evenly along the width of the sleeve. (See Pic E.)

11 Press the cuff bands WST to mark the fold.

12 Open up one band and place one long edge RST with the cuff. Stitch in place using a small 5mm seam allowance. (See Pic F.) Turn the cuff band to the WS, fold under and hand-stitch in place.

13 Pin in the sleeve RST inside the bodice, matching the seams and evenly distributing the sleeve around the armhole. Stitch the sleeve in position, removing pins as you go.

14 Double-turn the hem of the blouse and secure with a stitch to finish.



using a 1cm seam allowance. (See Pic A.) Ease the neckline by snipping into the curves of the seam allowance where necessary.

5 Create a button loop to the length you require for your button (if different to bias pattern piece provided) by folding the edges of the bias inside to make them neat, then press and top-stitch the edges in place. Sew the shortest edges together and trim off any excess. (See Pic B.)

6 Attach the button loop by

inserting it between the facing and the main bodice. Pin in place. Keep a little away from the neckline seam (half the diameter of the button). (See Pic C.)

7 Stitch around keyhole loop (button loop will be sandwiched inside). When stitched, notch the curved seam. Turn facing through to inside of blouse and press flat.

8 Sew the facing to the bodice around the armholes, within the seam allowance. Do not trim seams.

Saving FACE

Choosing the right interfacing for your fabric can be quite hard some times – here are our top tips:

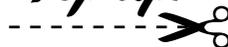
1 Fuse a piece of your fabric together with a piece of interfacing to see how they hang together. If your fabric is very sheer, consider using organza for the facing and skip interfacing the piece.

2 Try to buy branded fusibles even if these cost a little more – they are designed for use at home, have better quality glue and are designed to last!

3 If glue dots appear on the RS of the fabric then your fusible is too heavy, so choose a lighter one.

4 If bubbling has occurred this is due to the cloth being too wet, or the fabric underneath shrinking.

Top tip!



Use a drapery fabric like viscose, double gauze, cotton lawn, silk or satin to create the right effect for this floaty blouse

SIZING:

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
BUST	34½"	36½"	38½"	40½"	42½"	44½"	46½"	48½"
HEM WIDTH	33"	35"	37"	39"	41"	43"	45"	47"

Essential stitch SETTINGS



with *Claire-Louise Hardie*

