



**+INSIDE: TOY
TEMPLATES**

**UK'S NUMBER 1
SEWING MAG!**

Simply Sewing

**EASY-SEW
GIRL'S DRESS**

ISSUE SIXTY SIX

FRESH IDEAS + FABRIC



EXCLUSIVE SET!

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**BLOUSE + SKIRT
IN SIZES 6-20**

5 GARMENTS
WEARABLE LOOKS FOR YOUR
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**+EXPERT GUIDE:
TRICKY FABRICS**

**+MADE TO MEASURE
TUNIC DRESS!**



GOOD VIBES

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FRESH IDEAS WITH FABRIC

We're settling into 2020 now and this issue is packed with both short-and-satisfying and skill-boosting projects for those who may have fallen off the wagon with their new year's sewing resolutions. This month's cover project brings two wardrobe must-haves that can be dressed up or down for any occasion. We've gone full beach-mode with our wonderfully summery travel accessories – and speaking of beach, have you tried sewing with scuba fabric? We're talking about the double-knit kind rather than the wetsuit you may be envisioning, but the fabric is so versatile there's plenty of scope for seaside attire. Share your makes using #simplysewingmag – we love seeing what you're making.

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FRESH IDEAS WITH FABRIC

ISSUE SIXTY SIX CONTENTS

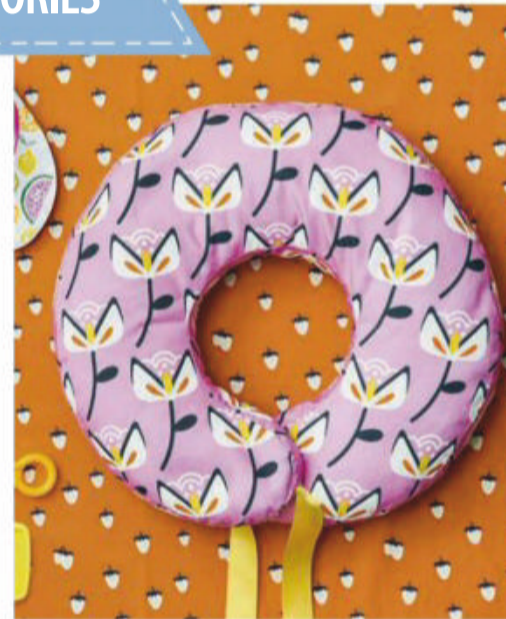
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ACCESSORIES



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WIN £800 WORTH OF SEWING PRIZES!
 Enter to win patterns and organic jersey fabric from Tilly and the Buttons, plus Janome sewing machine!
Enter on p14-15

GOOD VIBES ONLY

It's all starting to look more positive now the sunshine is making a welcomed appearance. I can't wait for summer and the chance to use this amazing travel accessories set (p22) – those fresh fabric prints are just the best! Talking of playful prints, I wish *The Joy Dress* (p46), designed by Wild Things Dresses, came in my size – this rainbow-adorned A-line frock is happiness personified! And for your everyday wardrobes I'm thrilled to bring you *The Annie Blouse* and *Ivy Skirt* (p36), an exclusive set from Sew Over It. I'm planning to make a blouse in lemon yellow. Well, it *is* my favourite colour after all...



Charlie

Charlie Moorby, Editor

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GREAT SUBS OFFERS! P16
 SAVE TIME, MONEY AND HASSLE WITH AN ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION



* GIFTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. TOOL AND PAPER GIFTS ONLY AVAILABLE ON UK NEWSSTAND.

CONTRIBUTORS

A huge thank you to these talented sewists...



For inspiration and top tips, visit www.sewoverit.co.uk

LISA COMFORT

Author, pattern designer and vlogger Lisa Comfort is passionate about sharing her love of dressmaking. Make her Annie Blouse and Ivy Skirt set on page 36, and discover what's next for her London-based shop, Sew Over It, on page 40.



Read all my latest news at www.seesophiestitch.com

SOPHIE TARRANT

Sophie is a Colchester-based writer and lifelong craft enthusiast who loves dressmaking, embroidery and collecting way too much fabric. You can follow her latest creations in needlework at @SeeSophieStitch on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.



Visit my blog at www.sallyandcraftyvamp.blogspot.com

DEBBIE VON GRABLER-CROZIER

Debbie writes and designs for sewing magazines and websites, as well as running her own blog where she shares her designs. Her first sewing book, *The Bag Boutique*, was a global success. Make her backpack design on page 68.



Get in touch with me on Simply Sewing's socials!

EMILY FREER

Simply Sewing Production Editor Emily loves trying new crafts. Her love of sewing started with making dresses for her nieces, but she quickly learnt that making things for adults who aren't rapidly outgrowing everything is much easier.

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Simply Sewing

FRESH IDEAS WITH FABRIC

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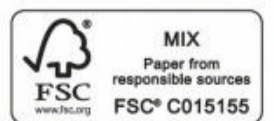
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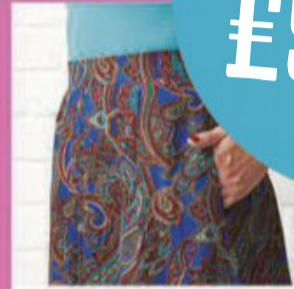
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PINBOARD

IDEAS ♡ INSPIRATION ♡ ACCESSORIES ♡ WEBSITES ♡ EVENTS ♡ STUFF



TWICE AS NICE

Fans of Tilly and the Buttons' classic Cleo pinafore dress love their latest pattern – Bobbi – which can be made as a pinafore dress or skirt! Perfect for all occasions, there are three pocket designs to choose from, and as always the pattern comes with easy instructions and sewing tips, with a size range of UK 6–24. Buy for £14.50 from shop.tillyandthebuttons.com



GOOD FOR THE SOLE

▼ Looking for something new to try? Why not learn a new skill at Tea and Crafting's brand new leather trainer workshop. Choose from a variety of colours and styles and create some truly unique me-made footwear. No experience required! Visit www.teaandcrafting.co.uk to book your place on the next workshop on 19th April. Vegan-friendly faux leather is available on request.



POURING PRACTICALITY

Featuring dolman sleeves with diagonal cutout cuffs, the Maxwell Raincoat and Jacket from DG Patterns is a wardrobe staple. Choose from two different lengths and pocket designs. With a raincoat this stylish, we're not quite saying you'll wish for rain, but it's close. www.dgpatterns.com



STORE IN STYLE

What could make a better birthday gift for a fellow sewist than a purse or bag to store their essentials in? Anna Goss loves a good print as much as we do, and her handmade bags and purses are smartly finished as well as being oh-sew-useful! From coin purses to pencil cases, her range is perfect for stashing bobbins, spools and spare needles safely away. www.madebyannalucinda.etsy.com

SPRING SELECTION

Surface pattern designer Rachel Parker has designed 10 gorgeous new rayons for Dashwood Studio. Rachel's first collection, Gardenia, is inspired by the enticingly exotic natural world and features a nod to design icons William Morris and Josef Frank. Rachel describes the collection as a true celebration of surface design. These folksy floral patterns make us think of warm sunny days with everything in bloom, sunshine reflecting off bright foliage and the sweet sound of birds chirping. Bold prints like these are perfect for making drapery camis, striking kimonos, statement maxis, or luxurious pyjamas. The Gardenia range will be available from mid-February. www.dashwoodstudio.com



Bright, bold, and beautiful, these stunning fabrics from Rachel Parker are a much-needed burst of colour.



MINI PROFILE

ROCHELLE NEW

New York-based Rochelle is the one-woman wonder behind Home Row Fiber Co. For the self-named Fabric Wizard, every process within Home Row is personal, "I design all of my own fabrics, using my own artwork, and then have the fabric custom-printed for me. I cut and sew all of the fabric myself to make my signature project bags. Most of my designs start as a sketch which I then trace in Adobe Illustrator in order to arrange the art as a repeating pattern."

Although running a business single-handedly might sound like a lot for one person, Rochelle works well by herself and enjoys working through sewing assembly lines. Working alone is also made easier by the community she's found through blogging. Her sewing blog, luckylucille.com, was also how the Make Nine challenge evolved; a challenge encouraging people, particularly those who are a bit pressed for time, to focus on nine key projects for the year.

Make Nine began in 2015 when Rochelle "vowed to sew much less clothing with much more intention." Now hugely popular and a great motivation for many sewists, the challenge began as a happy accident, "Instead of sharing my 'Best Nine' Instagram photos of the year I shared my 'Make Nine' sewing plans instead. The challenge was accidentally born in that post and has grown from there!"

Despite getting into sewing to avoid the fast fashion lifestyle, Rochelle found that as a

blogger there was a lot of pressure to constantly make new things, "I found myself sewing one new garment every week, and at the end of the year I had so much clothing that was certainly fun to look at and take photos of, but I never wore any of it. The rate in which I was consuming fabric in order to make clothing that I never actually used felt very much like fast fashion."

The essence of the challenge is to remove the stress and panic of having to fulfil overly ambitious sewing plans – we all want to make all the things! – so this year Rochelle is encouraging people to choose their own 365-day making window, "Allowing makers to pick a start date that's important to them feels much more inclusive and encouraging. If you're reading this now and you want to join us, it's never too late! The more the merrier!"

When it comes to her own wardrobe, Rochelle tries to buy exclusively secondhand. And when it comes to sewing for herself, it's always loungewear – anything comfy to kick back in to watch *Lord of the Rings* or *Poldark*. She also enjoys making bags and accessories, but now makes these for knitters instead of herself since maxing out the number of me-mades she could hold in her own home. She is obsessed with anything knitwear, and as well as meeting her 'anything comfortable' criteria, she has benefited from the practice of knitting itself, "Knitting has taught me patience and an appreciation for the 'slow' in slow fashion. Plus, I've yet to find a way to sew comfortably on the couch with a dog on my feet and a cat on my lap!"

Join the Make Nine challenge using #MakeNine and tag @makeninechallenge on Instagram. Visit Rochelle's blog too for some top tips on choosing your nine items at homerowfiber.co

THE PATTERN EDIT



Jumpsuit patterns

Go for effortless style in a jumpsuit, says Production Editor Emily Freer



JAZZ JUMPSUIT, READY TO SEW

This jumpsuit is so comfortable you'll want to wear it every day. And the good news is, you pretty much can! This pattern comes with an impressive 82

variations so you'll be able to sew as you mean to go on. Choose light and supple fabrics to make this jumpsuit move effortlessly with you. Available at www.readytosew.fr

MCCALL'S 8009 JUMPSUIT

The flared sleeves on this jumpsuit scream glam. Take it up a notch in luxury silk or satin or go for lightweight and laidback in rayon. With plenty of variations to choose from, this is perfect for the advanced beginner. Pattern available in UK sizes 6–22. www.sewdirect.com



AVENIR JUMPSUIT, FRIDAY PATTERN COMPANY

We are in love with how comfortable this jumpsuit is. Wear it with trainers for a casual daytime look or wear it off the shoulder with a pair of block heels for a fancy affair. Designed for woven fabrics with a bit of drape for the billow sleeves and wide legs. Gets yours from www.fridaypatterncompany.com



SERENA JUMPSUIT, DG PATTERNS

Practicality meets sass in this sophisticated and stylish jumpsuit. With a fitted bodice, side seam pockets and statement triangular cutouts, this will be your go-to piece for dress-up days or casual comfort. Ideal for light to medium woven fabric. www.dgpatterns.com





BRIGHT SPARKS

▼ Add a little glittering glamour to winter days with the limited Hamburger Liebe SPARKLE collection, which follows on from their popular GLOW collection. Soft glitter jacquards can be mixed and matched with Cuff Mes and the brand new glitter cords. First to be released in 2020 is the CHOOSE LOVE fabric featuring a gorgeous Hamsa hand and flower design in vibrant pinks, indigo blues and zesty oranges. Find your nearest stockists at www.hantexonline.co.uk



GATHERED

Simply Sewing has a brand new website! Here at Immediate Media, the craft teams have launched a shared website for all our combined creative readers. The new site features all the how-tos, video tutorials, project inspiration and competitions you'd expect, but you can now also see content from our knitting, crochet, papercraft, cross stitch and quilting titles, all in one place! Check it out at www.gathered.how



CARRY ON CAMPING

Tilda Fabrics have recently launched their Happy Campers collection of fabrics and haberdashery items which are just the ticket for spring homestyle and patchwork projects. Flower and bee motifs combine with the Gringdot pattern which was inspired by the vintage wax tablecloths taken on childhood camping trips. We're feeling nostalgic already! For more info and UK stockists visit www.tildasworld.com

3 OF THE BEST

NEEDLE MINDERS

Make the fear of hidden needles in the sofa a thing of the past with these needle minders.

1. How adorable is this sewing mate? Who better to mind your needles for you than this friendly face from Wild Olive. £9.75, www.cloudcraft.co.uk

2. This far-too-relatable needle minder is the perfect disclaimer for the sewist with too many projects and too little time. Get 15% off yours using exclusive code SIMPLYSEWING15 (expires 31/3/20). www.snarkycrafterdesigns.etsy.com

3. Forget snakes on a plane, cats in a bowl is the next big hit for your sewing supplies. Add these furry friends to your sewing must-haves for just £3.75. www.plan2stitch.co.uk





MAKE THE JUMP...

Trend watchers will jump with joy at Sew Over It's brand new Farrah Jumpsuit. Boilersuits are having a fashion moment right now and this design, with cinched in waist, offers a more flattering fit than most. It features a button-up front, drop-shoulder sleeves, handy patch pockets, tapered legs and a comfy elasticated waist. Catering to UK sizes 8-20, it's available to buy as a PDF download at www.sewoverit.co.uk, so jump to it!



SEW FOR SUCCESS

We love the idea behind Secret Projects, an initiative designed to help women in India generate their own income making and selling clothing and homeware. The women are taught how to make products using sourced materials with the least environmental impact. Products include their original 'Secret Pillow' which unfolds into a blanket, and Secret Sari Dresses – they then receive 70% of the profits made. www.secretprojects.org

OUT & ABOUT

SKILLS, SHOWS & EVENTS

19 MARCH

The Faces and Figures in Stitch exhibition at Hampton Court Palace finishes on 19 March. Make sure you book a tour of the Royal School of Needlework showcase before it closes. www.royal-needlework.org.uk

21 MARCH

Unleash your creativity at a free-machine embroidery class from The Makery. Taking place at Sofa.com in Bath. www.themakery.co.uk

4 APRIL

Make yourself a cosy lap quilt at the flying geese workshop taking place at The Sewing Studio in Cornwall. www.thesewingstudio.co.uk

8 APRIL

Head to the bargello embroidery class for beginners at Tea and Crafting in London. www.teaandcrafting.co.uk

INSPIRING BOOKS



TILLY AND THE BUTTONS: MAKE IT SIMPLE

Tilly Walnes
(£25, Quadrille Publishing)

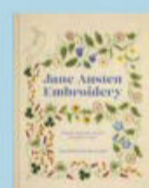
Got an afternoon spare? Tilly Walnes, one of the first ever *Sewing Bee* contestants is also well known in sewing circles for her Tilly and the Buttons blog. Here she's put together some super-speedy projects that can be finished in just a few hours. Choose from six dressmaking patterns, from which you can make 24 easy fit, fuss-free items. www.hardiegrant.com



DECORATING WITH FABRIC

Kate French & Katherine Sorrell (£19.99, Ryland Peters & Small)

Fabric fans looking for ways to use up their stash should check out this new title. The authors provide heaps of ideas on how you can create new looks for every room using homestyle makes, featuring some unique touches such as using vintage grain sacks for cushion covers or mirrored bedspreads as curtains. www.rylandpeters.com



JANE AUSTEN EMBROIDERY

Jennie Batchelor & Alison Larkin
(£16.99, Pavilion)

If you're a bona fide Austen fan, this novel book has plenty of embroidery ideas you can stitch with pride (no prejudice in sight!). Authentic 18th-century patterns have been repurposed into 15 contemporary projects, with a sprinkling of historical facts throughout. www.pavilionbooks.com



JOYFUL MENDING

Noriko Misumi
(£9.35, Tuttle Publishing)

If you've a much loved, yet damaged fabric item, this book gives you the tools to turn tears and flaws into beautiful features. Learn to darn, felt and crochet, as well as use sashiko and other embroidery stitches, to help the environment and save you money. Author Noriko bases her mend and reuse concept on the Japanese philosophy of mindfulness and Wabi Sabi (a love of old and imperfect things). www.tuttlepublishing.com

WIN: 3 METRES OF ORGANIC JERSEY FABRIC & PATTERN

Win three metres of fabric and a pattern from Tilly and the Button's debut fabric collection in partnership with the Craft Cotton Co.

Springtime is almost upon us, and these cheery fabrics are perfect inspiration for making something new to debut post-hibernation. Thanks to a dreamy collaboration between the Craft Cotton Co. and Tilly and the Buttons, you can be stylish *and* comfy with these organic jersey prints. Jersey is perfect for making wardrobe staples; showcase your prints outdoors with dotty tops and geometric dresses, or

snooze in rainbow stripes with a colourful pair of pyjamas. Five lucky winners will receive 3m of Tilly's debut fabric, plus a pattern to sew! Find out more at www.tillyandthebuttons.com and to be in with a chance of winning enter at www.gathered.how/sew_comps.



5 PRIZES WORTH £250



WIN: JANOME SEWING MACHINE WORTH £559

Enter today for your chance to win a brand new Janome SEWIST 780DC computerised sewing machine.

This contemporary sewing machine is the perfect companion for fuss-free sewing. Whether you're mending an old favourite or embarking on a new and adventurous project, the Sewist 780DC has you covered. Choose from 80 different built-in stitches to adorn your garments with, and let the machine handle the fiddly bits with the automatic needle threader and thread cutter. The computerised machine makes things super easy with a 3-style auto buttonhole, a speed control slider, free arm/flat bed conversion, and

needle up/down – freeing you up to be creative and playful with your projects. The extra high lift presser foot also comes in handy when sewing with bulky layers and delicate fabrics. Find out more at www.janome.co.uk and visit www.gathered.how/sew_comps for your chance to win this prize.



JANOME

See www.gathered.how/sew_comps to enter today! (UK only, see competition rules on p6.)

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THIS MONTH...

MIX AND MATCH

This modern pattern includes both a sporty sweater and a slinky evening dress – making it ideal for day or night.

FUNNEL VISION

A drawstring waist, gathered cuffs and strong funnel neckline make the most of the structural nature of thick scuba fabric.

MAKE SOME SHAPES

A bold geometric design on the front of the sweater adds an extra splash of colour.

DIVE IN

Scuba is a wonderfully versatile material that'll give your garments great structure, body and shape. Use our top tips to find out how to best use this futuristic fabric.

Written by Sophie Tarrant

GEMMA

The Gemma sweater from Named Patterns is the perfect project to make from scuba, with a semi-loose fit and a bold geometric design worked into the front. It features elasticated sleeve cuffs, a funnel neckline, and a drawstring waist to really draw attention to the structural nature of the fabric. This pattern can also be used to create a form-fitting maxi dress, too – taking this pattern from casual to formal. Available in UK sizes 4–18, visit www.namedclothing.com for more details.

PATTERN INSPIRATION

Stitch your own gorgeous scuba garments with our pick of the patterns – featuring hoodies, dresses, skirts and more.



1 RIVERMONT

The Rivermont pattern from Cashmerette is another that breezes effortlessly from day to night, with designs for a flattering peplum top and fitted sheath dress to choose from. Both feature the option of three sleeve lengths and are available in UK sizes 14–30, and there's even three cup sizes to choose from, too. www.cashmerette.com

2 MARGARITA

The Margarita dress from Our Lady of Leisure is pure glamour, with an off-the-shoulder neckline, form-fitting princess seams and a flattering wrap around the bust. The bodycon fit works perfectly in supportive scuba fabric, accentuating your curves perfectly. www.ourladyofleisure.etsy.com

3 LODO

The Lodo dress from True Bias is an elevated take on a basic T-shirt dress, with a straight fit through the waist and hips and a slightly tapered hem to create a subtle cocoon shape. It also has a flattering deep-V neckline and extended cap sleeves. www.truebias.com



4 TAMI

The Tami Revolution hoodie from New Horizons Designs was originally intended to be made in fleece or sweatshirt fabric, but we think it would work perfectly in scuba, too. It features options for three different hood styles, shoulder and front closure zips, and thumbhole cuffs. www.newhorizonsdesigns.com

5 M7536

M7536 by McCall's includes four different dress designs that would be ideal in scuba, each featuring flattering princess seams on the bodice and options for gathered and pleated waistlines, to really make the most of the structural fabric. You can also choose from long, short or no sleeves. www.sewdirect.com

6 AXEL

Megan Nielsen's Axel skirt pattern is suitable for a wide range of knits, and we think it'd look great in a sturdy scuba. You can fully customise your design, with three different hem styles to choose from (hankerchief, mini and midi with a slashed front) plus optional hip sashes, too. www.megannielsen.com

FABRIC INSPIRATION

Create scuba staples for every season and occasion with these fabulous prints.

1 We love the bold botanical design of this pretty Floral Suede Scuba print.

www.abakhan.co.uk

2 Florence Bouquet is a superb crepe-finish scuba with a dramatic colour palette. www.fabworks.co.uk

3 Funfair Shooting Stars is perfect for kids' garments – and colour-loving adults, too!

www.fabric-styles.co.uk

4 This mandala print, named V260, is available in a huge array of fabrics, including a gorgeously soft scuba.

www.wowfabrics.co.uk

5 This Tropical scuba crepe is ideal for retro-style summer dresses and skirts.

www.minervacrafts.com



TIPS & TRICKS

Get the most out of your fabric with these handy tips to get your structured scuba project underway.



WHAT IS SCUBA?

By now you've probably got a good idea of what scuba fabric can be used for – but what is it actually made from? First of all, despite the name, it is not the same as the thick neoprene that is used to make wetsuits. It's a double knit fabric created from a mixture of polyester and spandex, with each of the two layers knitted in a different direction, which gives it its silky smooth texture.

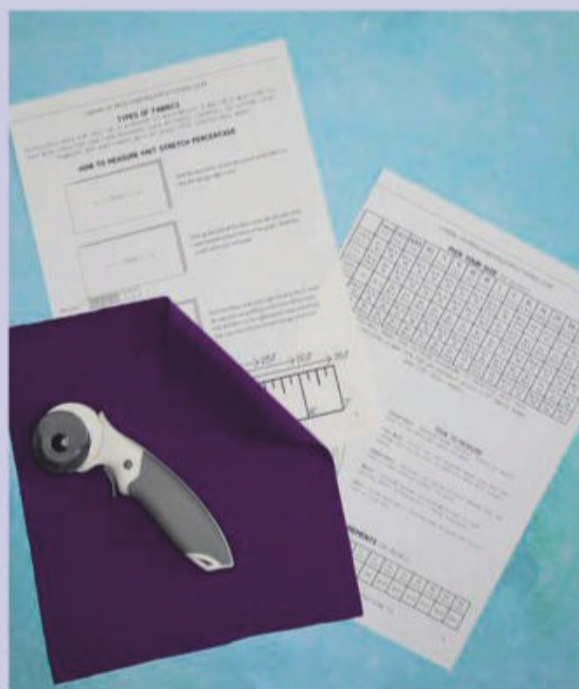


NEVER RIP YOUR SEAMS

If you make a mistake in a project crafted from scuba, always use a seam ripper to carefully unpick your stitches one-by-one. The fabric can tear easily, so tugging at the seams to undo mistakes may create unsightly holes in your scuba fabric.

PICK YOUR PATTERN WISELY

Scuba is a knit fabric but holds very different properties to its thinner counterparts such as jersey or Lycra. When picking a pattern, make sure to look for one that will make the most of scuba's strong, structural nature. Pleated waistlines and bodycon styles are both ideal matches for scuba. Keep in mind that tiny gathers and other fine details may be difficult to work in to such a strong fabric.



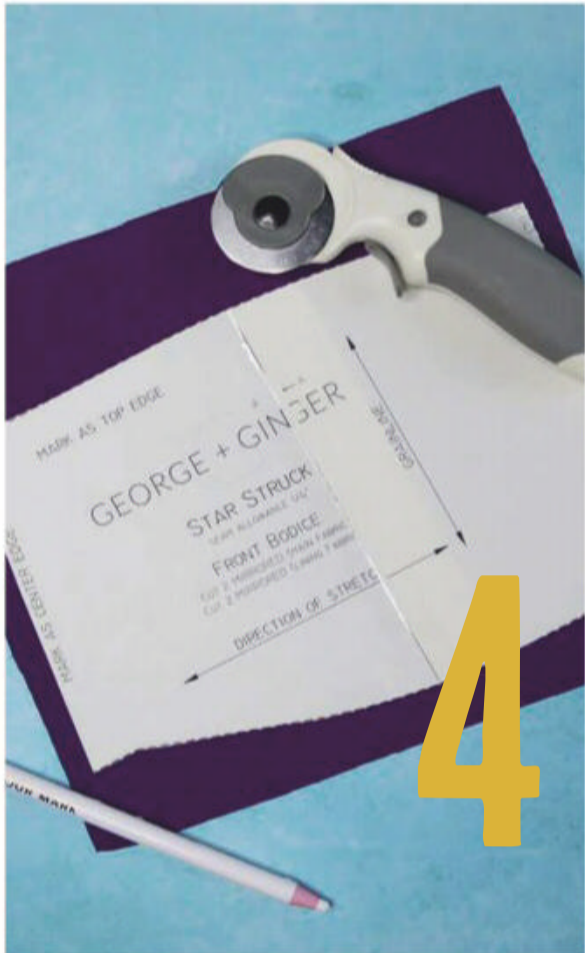
NO NEED FOR LININGS

Due to its knitted nature, garments made in scuba fabric usually don't need lining – so it's perfect for projects that you want to look smart, without the extra fuss and layers. The edges can be left raw, or finished with a zigzag stitch (see step 8) or an overlocker.

USE A WALKING FOOT

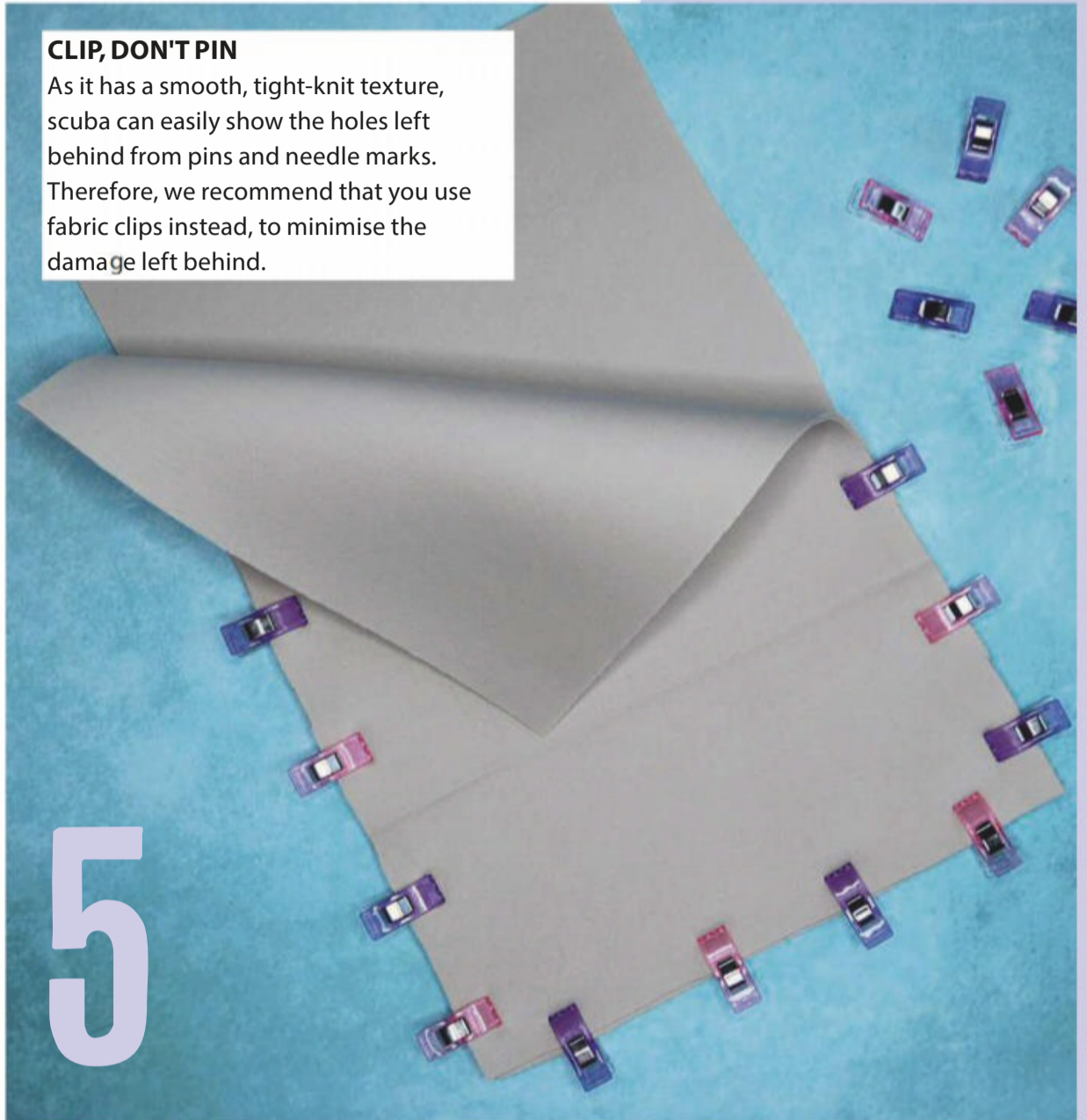
Generally speaking, scuba is fairly easy to work with, but having a walking foot on hand can make life much easier. The fabric has a slightly spongy feel, and a walking foot will grip it well and guide it through the machine for you, ensuring it stays on track. Combine this with a ballpoint or jersey needle to get the best results.





USE A ROTARY CUTTER

Scuba is easy to cut, so try using a small rotary cutter to trim your pattern pieces instead of traditional shears. You'll get smoother lines and it's quicker, too – just make sure to do it on an appropriate cutting mat or another surface that can withstand the sharp blade.



CLIP, DON'T PIN

As it has a smooth, tight-knit texture, scuba can easily show the holes left behind from pins and needle marks. Therefore, we recommend that you use fabric clips instead, to minimise the damage left behind.



FINISH WITH A ZIGZAG

As mentioned above, it's not necessary to finish the cut edges of scuba fabric projects. However, it can be a nice finishing touch. Overlockers are a really great choice, but if you don't have access to one at home, simply use a three-point zigzag machine stitch instead, working it along the cut edge of the fabric to seal and finish the seam.

INTERFACE YOUR ZIPS
Adding a zip to a scuba project can be a little tricky – so it's best to layer your fastenings with a fusible stretch interfacing, making sure to use a low heat on your iron so as not to damage the fabric. This will add strength to the seam where the zip will be added, ensuring it doesn't stretch too much whilst you're inserting it.



USE CORRECT AFTERCARE

As with many synthetic fabrics, scuba needs to be laundered very carefully. Hand wash it (or machine wash on a low heat) and never tumble dry – high heat carries the risk of distorting and shrinking your garments. Simply hang your finished projects up on clothes hangers and allow them to air dry naturally. They shouldn't need ironing but if you do ever need to press them, use a low heat and test on a scrap of fabric first.



SUMMER LOVIN'

Travel in style with Dana Willard's tropical Summer Side fabrics for Art Gallery Fabrics.

Designer: **JESSICA ENTWISTLE** Styling: **LISA JONES** Photography: **ADAM GASSON**



LUGGAGE TAGS

Because no adventure begins with lost luggage and endless queuing at the baggage carousel. These tags make spotting your luggage super easy and add a dash of fun to your bags.

NECK PILLOW

Who said neck pillows had to be purely functional? Relax in style with this cute and comfy neck pillow. Use the handy ribbon tie to carry it or to keep it in place whilst you snooze.





FRIYAY



WEEKEND DUFFLE

This is the perfect 'grab and go' bag for a weekend getaway. Fill it with magazines, sunnies and suncream for poolside relaxing, or use it as a handy portable craft bag – we can just imagine knitting needles and colourful yarn poking out the top.

EYE MASK

Nothing says 'do not disturb' in a more playful way than this eye mask. Catch up on those all-important Zs and wake up feeling fabulously fresh with this holiday nap-time essential.



TRAVEL WALLET

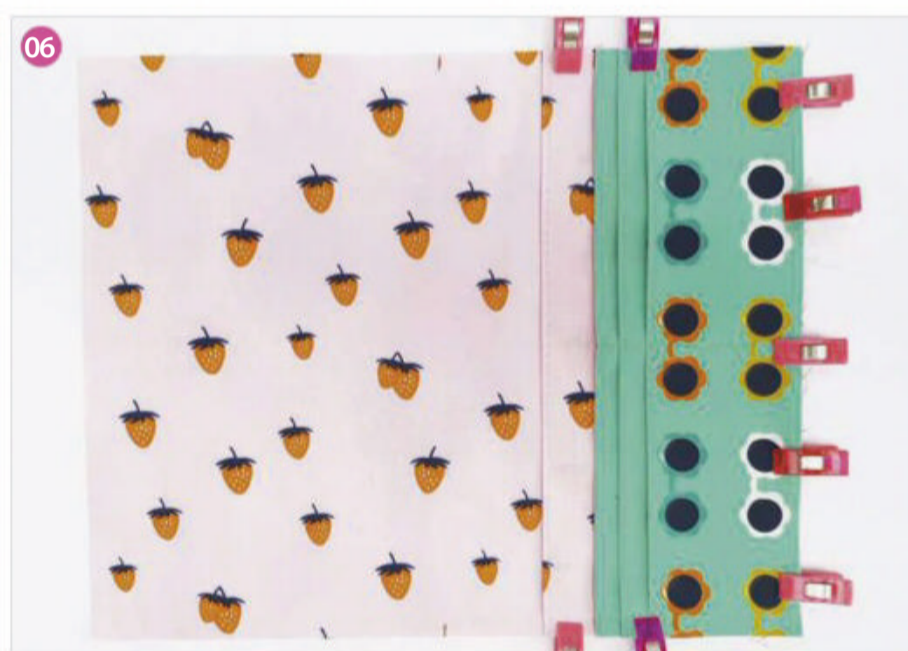
This wallet is the thing of organisational dreams. Say 'no more' to frantically foraging through your bags at ticket queues to find your documents. The perfect accessory for a fuss-free start to your holiday that shows you mean business, but with fun fabric, of course.

DRAWSTRING POOL BAG

When you need to make a quick dash to the pool, shove your swimming kit in this bag and claim that sought-after sun lounger for your own. Make with pretty contrasting straps to stand out. Instagram selfie, anyone?







TRAVEL WALLET

YOU WILL NEED

- Main fabric: 25x90cm (10x36in)
- Lining fabric: 25x80cm (10x32in)
- Wadding: 23x28cm (9½x11in)
- Zip: 25cm (10in)
- Bra strap elastic: 24cm (9½in)
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

FABRICS USED

- The fabrics used are from Summer Side range by Dana Willard for Art Gallery Fabrics. For stockists visit www.hantex.co.uk/agf
- Main fabric: Sunny Shades, mint. Ref: AGFSMS73206
- Lining fabric: Backyard Berry, candy. Ref: AGFSMS73204

NOTES

- Use a 1cm (¾in) seam allowance.
- Use a walking foot if you have one to help sew through the thicker layers.

CUTTING OUT

Step one From the main fabric cut:

- Wallet Outer:** 23x28cm (9½x11in)
- Small Card Pocket:** 23x12cm (9½x4¾in)
- Medium Card Pocket:** 23x14cm (9½x5½in)
- Large Card Pocket:** 23x16cm (9½x6¾in)
- Flap Pocket:** 23x18cm (9½x7½in)

Step two From the lining fabric cut:

- Wallet Lining:** 23x28cm (9½x11in)
- Zip Pocket Front:** 23x11cm (9½x4¾in)
- Zip Pocket Back:** 23x14cm (9½x5½in)
- Slip Pocket:** 23x18cm (9½x7½in)
- Zip End:** cut two 4x6cm (1½x2¾in)

MAKING THE POCKETS

Step one Fold the Flap Pocket in half lengthways wrong sides (WS) facing, press. Topstitch close to the fold. Repeat to create the three card pockets and the Slip Pocket.

Step two Place the Large Card Pocket flat with the Medium Card Pocket on top and the Small Card Pocket on top of that, aligning the side and bottom edges with the folds along the top edges.

Step three Pin, then staystitch down the sides and across the bottom. Sew a vertical dividing line through the centre of all three pockets. **01**

MAKING THE ZIP POCKET

Step one Fold one Zip End in half widthways, WS

together and press. Place this on top of the slider end of the zip and topstitch in place so it just covers the top of the teeth. Trim the side edges of the Zip End to align with the edges of the zip tape.

Step two Fold and press the other Zip End in half as before then place on top of the teeth at the other end, positioning it so that the finished zip with tabs is 23cm (9½in) in length. Trim the Zip End as before. You'll need to trim the zip to length after stitching on the second Zip End. **02**

Step three Place the zip right sides (RS) together with the top long edge of the Zip Pocket Front. With the zip closed, the slider needs to be on the left side. Sew together, close to the zip. **03**

Step four Fold the zip over so the teeth are facing up and press the seam, then topstitch in place.

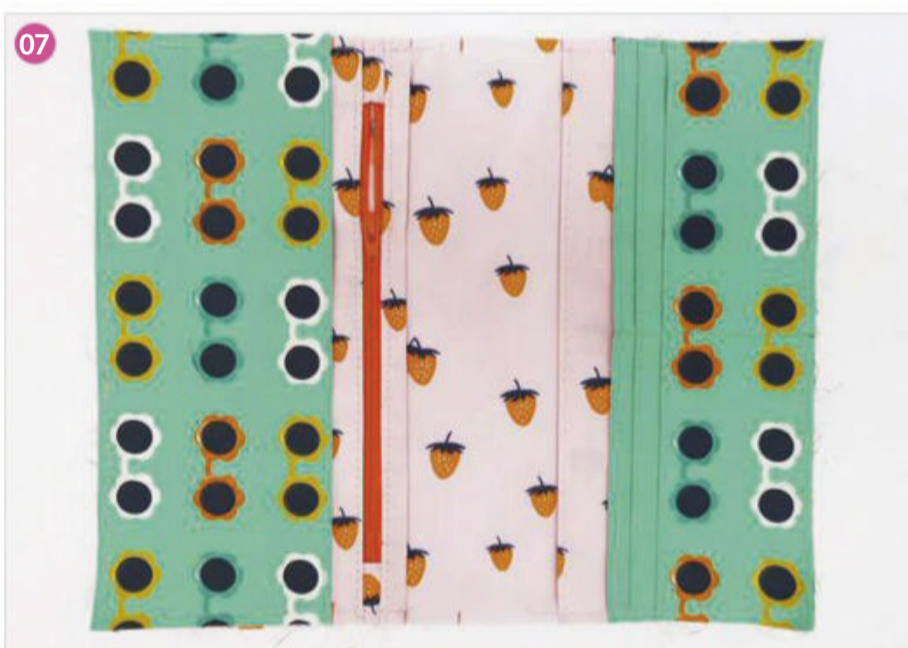
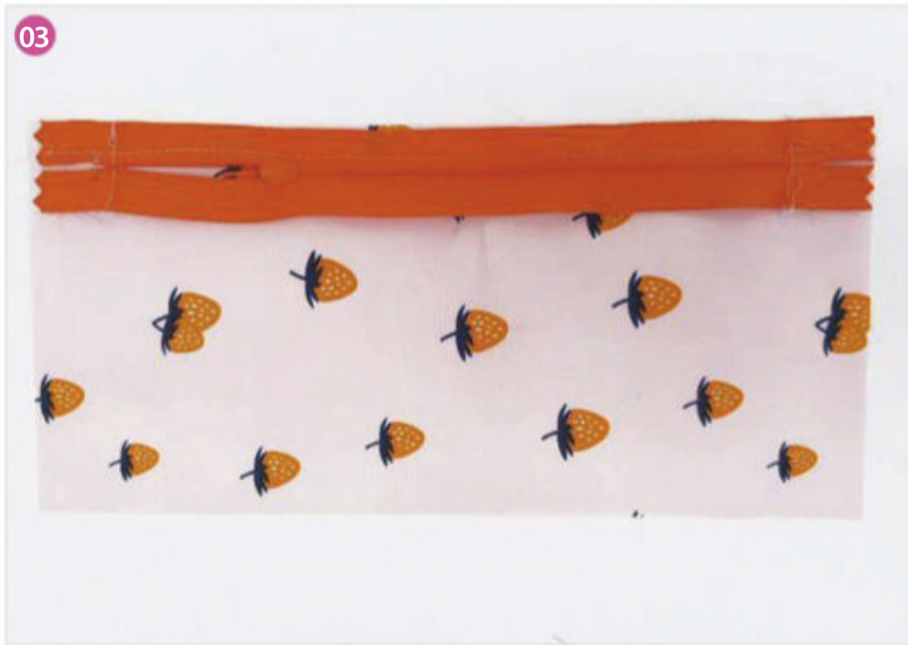
Step five Repeat this process to stitch the Zip Pocket Back to the other side of the zip, making sure the pattern faces in the same direction if your fabric has a directional print. Don't topstitch this time though. **04**

Step six Place the two fabric pieces WS facing so the bottom long edges meet and press. Topstitch close to the zip teeth, through all layers. **05**

ATTACHING THE POCKETS

Step one Mark the centre top and bottom of the two long edges of the Wallet Lining fabric piece.

Step two Place the Slip Pocket RS up on top of the



RS of the Wallet Lining matching the side and bottom raw edges. Place the assembled card pocket section on top, matching raw edges then clip into place and staystitch to hold. ⁰⁶

Step three Place the Zip Pocket RS up on top of the RS of the left side of the Wallet Lining, aligning raw edges as before. Place the Flap Pocket RS up on top, matching raw edges then clip into place and staystitch through all layers to hold. ⁰⁷

ASSEMBLING THE WALLET

Step one Staystitch the wadding piece to the WS of the wallet outer. Mark the top and bottom centre points in the same positions as you marked on the Wallet Lining.

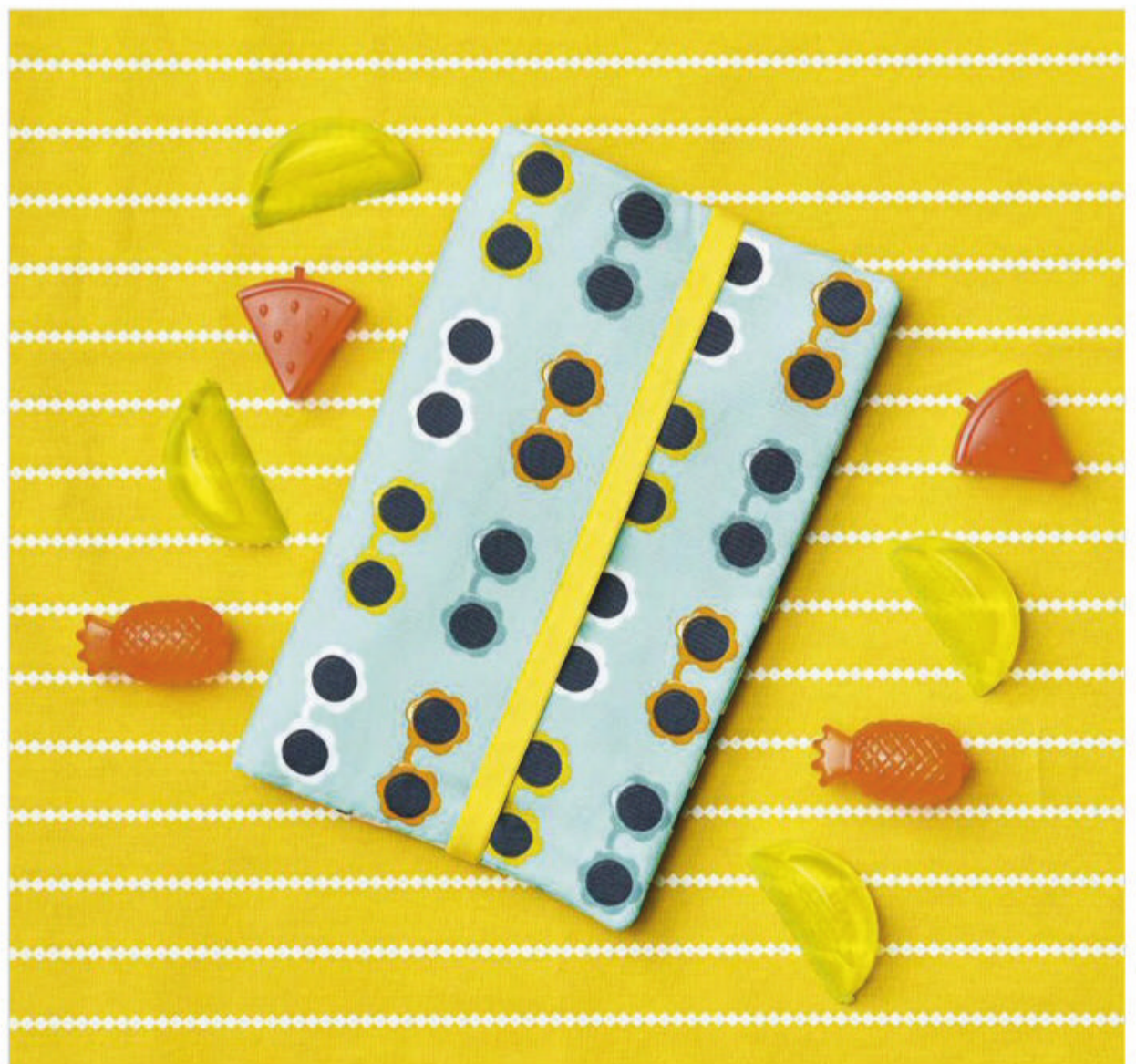
Step two Place the elastic on top of the Wallet Lining so it sits centrally over the card pocket section. Make sure the elastic is vertical and laying straight with the shiny side up. Staystitch the ends into place.

Step three Place the Wallet Outer and lining RS together, aligning all raw edges and marked centre points then clip together. ⁰⁸

Step four Sew together all the way around leaving a turning gap in the centre of the bottom edge.

Step five Trim the seam allowance, clip the corners then turn RS out. Push out the corners, fold the edges of the turning gap to the inside and press.

Step six Close the turning gap with a ladder stitch.





TRAVEL NECK PILLOW

YOU WILL NEED

- Cotton fabric: 60x112cm (24x44in)
- Ribbon: 2.5cm (1in) width x 1m (1yd)
- Beanbag filling
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

FABRICS USED

- The fabric used is from Summer Side range by Dana Willard for Art Gallery Fabrics. For stockists visit www.hantex.co.uk/agf
- Bungalow Bloom, sunrise. Ref: AGFSMS73200

NOTES

- Use a 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance.
- Download the templates from www.gathered.how/ss-templates
- The template includes the seam allowance.

CUTTING OUT

Step one From the cotton fabric cut:
Cushion Front/Cushion Back: cut two pieces using the template. Transfer all template markings.
Inner Gusset: 6x59cm (23/8x23 1/4in)
Outer Gusset: cut two 6x64cm (23/8x25 1/4in)

MAKING THE INNER GUSSET STRIP

Step one Fold the Inner Gusset in half widthways to find the centre. Mark these points 'A' on the top and bottom long edges.
Step two Measure 10cm (4in) away from A on both sides and both edges and label these points 'B'.
Step three Measure and mark 10cm (4in) away from B on both sides and both edges and label these points C. You should have 9.5cm (3 3/4in) left on each short edge. Finally mark a 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance from both the short edges.
Step four Cut the ribbon in half. Pin, then staystitch each ribbon centrally to either end of the Inner Gusset strip, aligning raw edges. Trim the other ends of the ribbon into points.

ASSEMBLING THE GUSSET STRIP

Step one Place the two Outer Gusset strips either side of the Inner Gusset strip with ribbon ends.
Step two Mark a 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance in from the short ends closest to the Inner Gusset strip on both Outer Gusset strips.

Step three Measure outwards from the seam allowance on both Outer Gusset strips and mark these points: 10cm (4in) – D, 20cm (8in) – E, 30cm (12in) – F, 40cm (16in) – G, 50cm (20in) – H and 60cm (24in) – I.

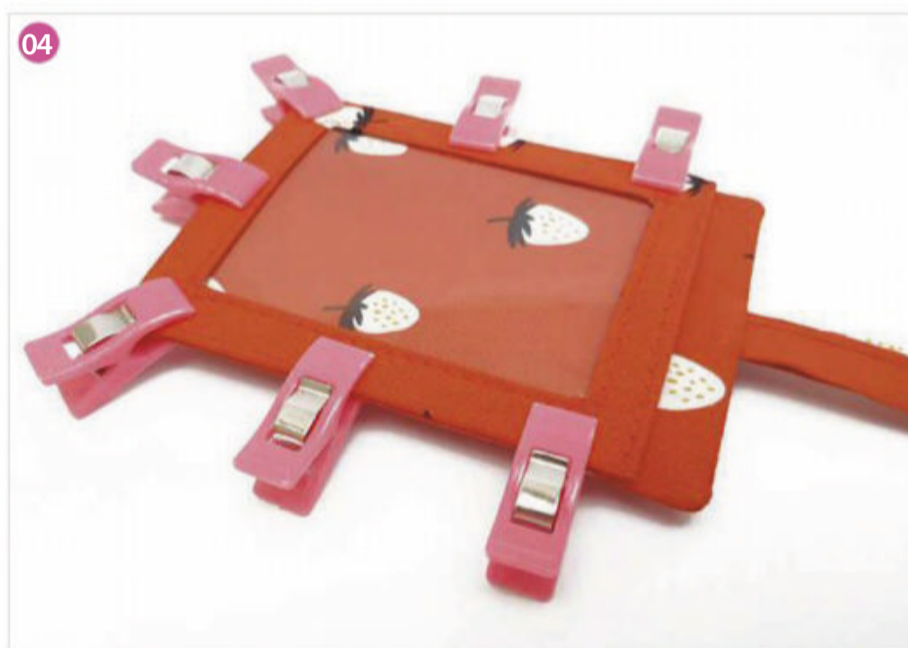
Step four Sew the Outer Gusset strips right sides (RS) facing to the Inner Gusset strip at the marked seam allowance ends, securing the ribbon ends.
Step five Place the short ends of the other Outer Gusset strips RS facing and sew to make a loop. **01**

ATTACHING THE GUSSET

Step one Snip all along both long edges of the gusset loop within the seam allowance.
Step two Lay the cushion front RS up. Place the gusset loop RS down on top then pin together at the corresponding marked points. **02**
Step three Use lots of pins between the marked points to hold the gusset in place, then carefully sew the gusset onto the cushion front. **03**
Step four Repeat this process to pin and sew the Cushion Back on the other side of the gusset but leave a 10cm (4in) turning gap in the seam.

FINISHING OFF

Step one Turn the cushion RS out through the gap, press. Fold the turning gap seam to the inside. **04**
Step two Fill with beanbag filling. Ladder stitch the gap closed.



LUGGAGE TAGS

YOU WILL NEED

For one tag

- Cotton fabric: 20x30cm (8x12in)
- Heavyweight iron-on interfacing: 12x10cm (4¾x4in)
- Wadding: 12x9cm (4¾x3⅝in)
- Clear plastic: 9x7cm (3⅝x2¾in)
- Matching sewing thread
- Basic sewing kit

FABRICS USED

- The fabrics used are from Summer Side range by Dana Willard for Art Gallery Fabrics. For stockists visit www.hantex.co.uk/agf
- Popsicle Party, watermint. Ref: AGFSMS73203
- Backyard Berry, cherry. Ref: AGFSMS83201

NOTES

- Use a 1cm (⅜in) seam allowance.

CUTTING OUT

Step one From the cotton fabric cut:

Tag Front: cut two 12x10cm (4¾x4in)

Tag Back: cut two 12x9cm (4¾x3⅝in)

Strap: 4x30cm (1⅝x12in)

MAKING THE TAG FRONT

Step one Press the interfacing onto the WS of the Tag Front fabric piece. Trim to 11x9cm (4⅝x3⅝in).

Step two Using an erasable fabric marker, draw vertical and horizontal lines 1cm (⅜in) and 2cm (¾in) in from the four outside edges on the RS of the fabric. The outer box is where the fabric will fold over the clear plastic and the inner box is where the clear plastic will show. Draw a cross from corner to corner of the inner box. **01**

Step three Cut along the drawn cross from corner to corner of the inner box. Fold the interfaced fabric back along the drawn inner box lines. Press. **Step four** Trim the points leaving just under 1cm (⅜in) of fabric. Place the clear plastic on top of the fabric wrong side (WS) on the interfaced side. Line up the plastic along the outer 1cm (⅜in) line.

Step five Fold the interfaced outer edge of the fabric over the edge of the plastic on all four sides. Finger press then clip in place.

Step six Check the plastic is centred. Trim off excess fabric leaving just under 1cm (⅜in). Clip in place, folding the long edges under the short

edges at the corner points.

Step seven Topstitch the short top edge then topstitch all the way around the inner edge of the box where it meets the plastic inner. **02**

ASSEMBLING THE TAG

Step one Fold the Strap in half lengthways with WS together and press. Open out then fold the long raw edges into the crease. Fold in half again, press then topstitch to create the strap.

Step two Staystitch the wadding to the WS of one of the Tag Back fabric pieces.

Step three Fold the strap in half to create a loop, matching short ends then pin this to the centre of the top short edge of the wadded Tag Back. Staystitch into place. **03**

Step four Lay the other Tag Back on top RS facing, enclosing the ends of the strap between them and matching raw edges. Sew all around, leaving a gap in the centre of the bottom short edge. Clip corners, trim seam allowances and turn RS out. Press the edges of the turning gap to the inside.

Step five Lay the tag front on the tag back WS facing aligning side and bottom edges. Clip together. **04**

Step six Topstitch the tag front to the tag back starting on one top edge, sewing around to the other top edge.

Step seven Cut a piece of card to fit inside.

WEEKEND DUFFLE

YOU WILL NEED

- Main fabric: 70x112cm (28x44in)
- Contrast fabric: 70x112cm (28x44in)
- Webbing: 3cmx2m (1¼in)(2yds)
- Heavyweight interfacing: 30x25cm (12x10in)
- Wadding: 70x90cm (28x36in)
- Bondaweb: 8x25cm (3x10in)
- Zip: 55cm (22in)
- Matching sewing thread
- Basic sewing kit

FABRICS USED

- The fabrics used are from Summer Side range by Dana Willard for Art Gallery Fabrics. For stockists visit www.hantex.co.uk/agf
- Vlieseline Bondaweb from www.ladysewandsew.co.uk

NOTES

- Use a 1cm (¾in) seam allowance.
- Download the templates from www.gathered.how/ss-templates
- Use a walking foot if you have one.

CUTTING OUT

Step one Draw a 21cm (8¼in) diameter circle on paper and cut out to create the bag end template.

Step two From the main fabric cut:

Outer Bag Body: two 32.5x52cm (12¾x20½in)

Pockets: two 26x21cm (10¼x8¼in)

Outer Bag Ends: two using your template

Step three From the contrast fabric cut:

Lining Bag Body: two 32.5x52cm (12¾x20½in)

Lining Bag Ends: two using your template

Appliqué: 8x25cm (3x10in)

Step four From the interfacing cut:

Pockets: two measuring 13x21cm (5¼x8¼in)

Step five From the wadding cut:

Wadding Bag Body: two 32.5x52cm (12¾x20½in)

Wadding Bag Ends: two using the template

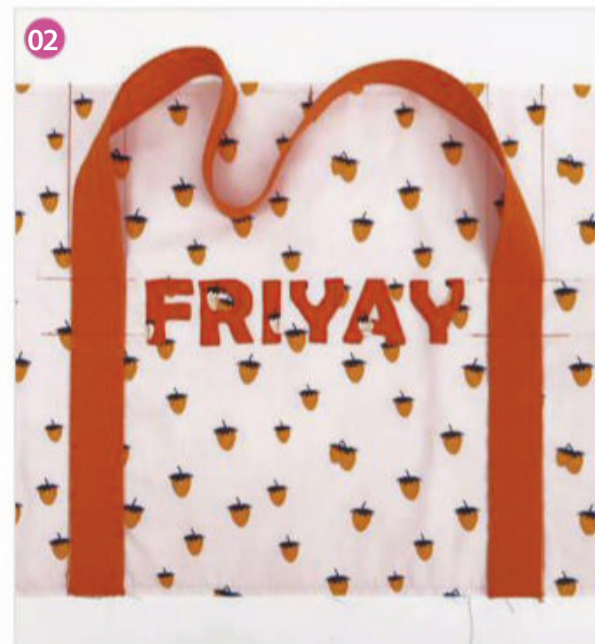
MAKING THE BAG ENDS

Step one Fold one Pocket piece in half lengthways WS facing. Sandwich a Pocket interfacing in the fold. Topstitch along the fold to hold. Repeat to make the other pocket.

Step two Place the Wadding Bag Ends on the wrong side (WS) of each of the Outer Bag Ends, matching raw edges and staystitch into place.

Step three Fold the Wadded Bag Ends in half and in half again, mark the quarter points on the WS.

Step four Lay a Pocket piece on a bag end. The folded edge of the pocket should be 13cm (5¼in) from the base of the circle. Trim excess pocket fabric level with the bag ends and staystitch in place. Repeat with the other bag end. **01**



MAKING THE BAG BODY

Step one Trace the letters in reverse onto the Bondaweb paper then press onto the WS of the contrast fabric. Cut out then peel off the backing.

Step two Place the letters right side (RS) up on an Outer Bag Body piece and press in place. Ours are central and 20cm (8in) from the lower edge. Topstitch around the edge of each letter.

Step three Place one Wadding Bag Body piece on the WS of the appliquéd bag body fabric, matching raw edges and staystitch into place.

Step four Cut the webbing in half. Mark with an erasable fabric marker where the straps will go. Ours are 11cm (4¾in) from each outside edge, stopping 20cm (8in) from the bottom edge to line up with the appliquéd letters. Sew the handle onto the fabric with crossed box at the 20cm (8in) mark. Repeat with the other Outer Bag Body piece and attach the other handle. **02**

INSERTING THE ZIP

Step one Place the zip RS together with the top long edge of the appliquéd bag body, matching the edge of the zip tape to the raw edge of the fabric and positioned centrally across.

Step two Sew together all the way along, 5mm (¼in) out from the zip teeth. Turn RS out and topstitch along the outer fabric.

Step three Repeat to sew and topstitch the other

Outer Bag Body piece to the other side of the zip.

Step four Trim off the zip ends which overlap the fabric ends, sewing back and forth across the ends of the zip teeth to secure. **03**

ATTACHING THE BAG ENDS

Step one Fold the bag main body RS together matching the bottom raw edges. Pin, then sew to create the bag 'tube'. Press the seam open.

Step two Mark quarter points on the ends of the bag tube, with the zip at the top and the bottom seam at the bottom. Place a bag end RS together with one end of the tube, clip all round. Sew all round. Trim excess wadding. Open the zip. Repeat to sew the other bag end to the open tube end. **04**

ADDING THE LINING

Step one Turn under the top long edge of one of the Lining Bag Body pieces by 1cm (¾in) to the WS and press. Repeat with the other Lining Bag Body.

Step two RS facing, stitch the Lining Bag Body pieces together along the bottom long edge. Press the seam open.

Step three Pin then sew the Lining Bag Ends to the Lining Bag Body leaving a 1cm (¾in) gap at the top for the zip to fit. Turn RS out and press.

Step four Place the outer bag in the lining bag WS facing. Pin the unsewn lining section in place on the zip tape. Whipstitch the lining to the tape.

DRAWSTRING POOL BAG

YOU WILL NEED

- Main fabric: 45x75cm (18x30in)
- Lining fabric: 45x75cm (18x30in)
- Contrast fabric: 12x112cm (5x44in)
- Matching sewing thread
- Basic sewing kit

FABRICS USED

- The fabrics used are from Summer Side range by Dana Willard for Art Gallery Fabrics. For stockists visit www.hantex.co.uk/agf
- Main fabric: Sunny Shades, mint. Ref: AGFSMS73206
- Lining fabric: Popsicle Party, watermint. Ref: AGFSMS73203
- Contrast fabric: Seaside Stripes, sunny. Ref: AGFSMS83207

NOTES

- Use a 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance.

CUTTING OUT

Step one From the main fabric cut:

Bag Outer: two pieces 43x37cm (17x14 5/8in)

Step two From the lining fabric cut:

Bag Lining: two pieces 43x37cm (17x14 5/8in)

Step three From the contrast fabric cut:

Drawstring: three strips 4x112cm (1 5/8x44in)

ASSEMBLING THE BAG

Step one Place one Bag Outer and Bag Lining right sides (RS) facing and stitch together along the top edge. Press the seam open. **01**

Step two Repeat this process to sew together the other Bag Outer and Bag Lining.

Step three Pin these two sections RS facing so that the Bag Outers are together and the Bag Linings are together. Make sure the central seams match up for a neat finish.

Step four Mark a turning gap in the centre of the bottom of the lining.

Step five Mark 3cm (1 1/4in) down from the central seam on both the outer and lining sides. The space between these two marks will be for the drawstring channel.

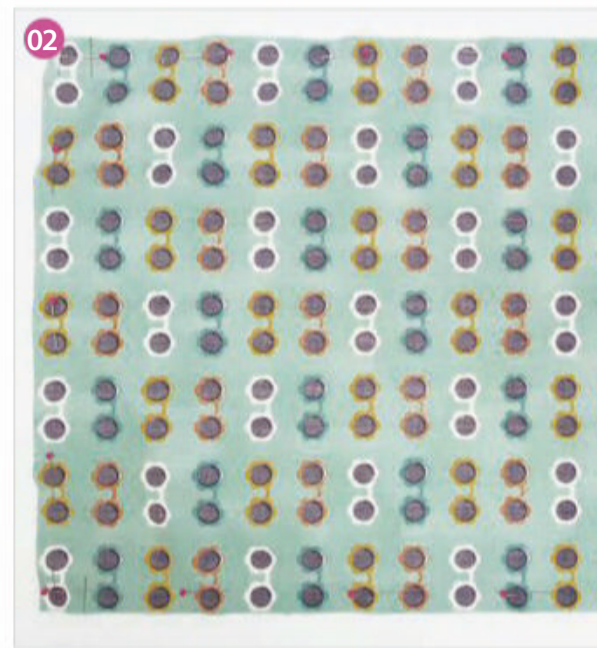
Step six Mark 1cm (3/8in) up from the bottom of the bag front, then 2cm (3/4in) up from that mark on both long sides. This will be where the drawstring is sewn into the bottom of the bag. **02**

Step seven Sew the bag together all the way around, but not sewing through the turning gap, drawstring channel or drawstring bottom gaps.

Step eight Clip the corners then press the seams open all the way around.

Step nine Turn the bag RS out through the turning gap then fold the edges of the turning gap to the inside and slipstitch closed.

Step ten Tuck the raw edges of the drawstring channel and drawstring bottom gaps to the inside then press.



MAKING THE DRAWSTRING STRIPS

Step one Cut off the selvedge from the three Drawstring fabric strips, then join the strips RS together along their short edges to make one long drawstring strip. Press the seams open.

Step two Fold the strip in half lengthways WS together and press. Open out then fold the two long raw edges into the central crease. Press again to create a strip just under 1cm (3/8in) wide.

Step three Cut the drawstring strip in half to make two pieces.

ADDING THE DRAWSTRING

Step one Draw a horizontal line across the front of the bag where the drawstring channel bottom edge is, 3cm (1 1/4in) down from the top seam. Draw the same line around the back of the bag. Pin either side of the channel to hold.

Step two Topstitch all along the top of the bag then sew along the marked line all the way around the bag, reverse stitching at the side seams to secure. **03**

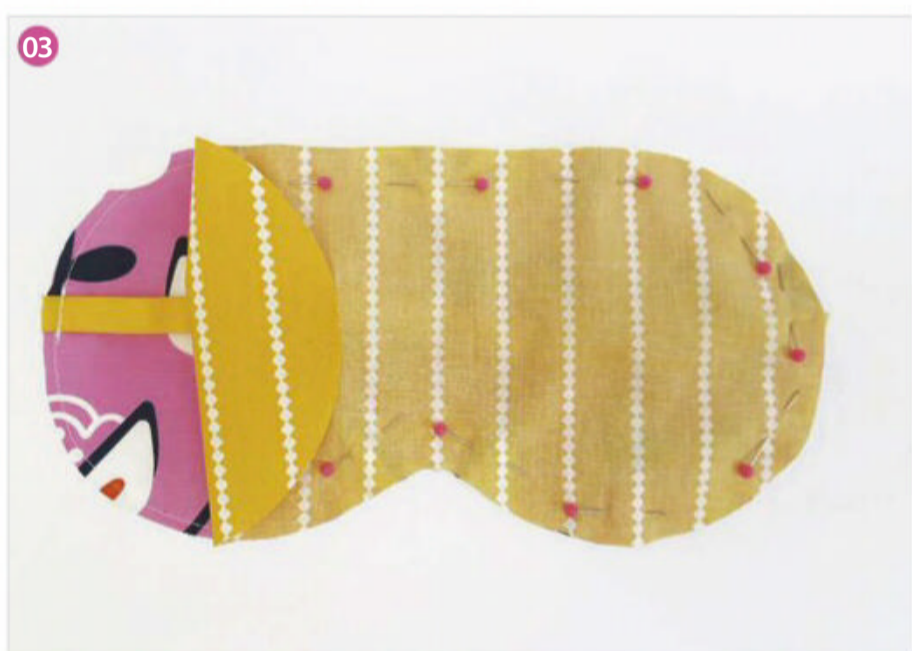
Step three Thread one strip through the drawstring channel along one side of the bag using a safety pin to help guide the strip through. Thread it around through the other channel and back out through the same side seam you inserted it into.

Step four Pull the drawstring strip so both raw ends line up and tack together. Make sure the lining is out of the way so it doesn't get caught, then pin them inside the corresponding drawstring hole at the bottom of the bag. Sew in place through all layers from the outside, reverse stitching a few times for strength.

Step five Repeat to insert the second drawstring strip on the other side. **04**

Step six To close the bag, simply pull the drawstrings tightly.





EYE MASK

YOU WILL NEED

- Main fabric: 15x25cm (6x10in)
- Lining fabric: 15x25cm (6x10in)
- Wadding: 15x25cm (6x10in)
- Bra strap elastic with slider and ring: 50cm (20in)
- Matching sewing thread
- Basic sewing kit

FABRICS USED

- The fabrics used are from Summer Side range by Dana Willard for Art Gallery Fabrics. For stockists visit www.hantex.co.uk/agf
- Main fabric: Bungalow Bloom, sunrise. Ref: AGFSMS73200
- Lining fabric: Seaside Stripes, sunny. Ref: AGFSMS83207

NOTE

- Use a 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance. Template includes seam allowance.
- Download the templates from www.gathered.how/ss-templates
- We used a strap from an inexpensive bra for our strap.

CUTTING OUT

Step one Download, print and cut out the eye mask template.

Step two From the main fabric cut:

Eye Mask Outer: one using the template

Step two From the lining fabric cut:

Eye Mask Lining Fabric: one using the template

Step two From the wadding cut:

Eye Mask Wadding: one using the template

PREPARING THE FRONT

Step one Place the Eye Mask Wadding on the wrong side (WS) of the Eye Mask Outer, matching raw edges and staystitch into place. **01**

Step two Cut a piece of elastic from the bra strap 4cm (1 5/8in) long and thread a ring onto it. Fold the elastic in half so the two short ends meet, and the satin side of the elastic is on the outside. Staystitch this to the right side (RS) of the Eye Mask Outer in the position indicated on the template.

Step three Thread the strap slider onto one end of the long elastic piece, making sure the satin side is on the outside and leaving a short 1.5cm (5/8in) elastic tail. Fold the tail against the elastic non-satin side and sew securely in place.

Step four Thread this long elastic through the ring already sewn onto one side of the eye mask and then back through the slider, so that it now looks like a bra strap.

Step five Staystitch this elastic raw end to the opposite side of the eye mask. If you are left-handed swap sides, so the short elastic piece is sewn to the left front side. **02**

ASSEMBLING THE EYE MASK

Step one Place the Eye Mask Outer and Eye Mask Lining RS together, matching raw edges. Pin together all around and mark the turning gap shown on the template. **03**

Step two Sew together all the way around leaving the turning gap unstitched.

Step three Trim the seam allowance and clip the curves then turn RS out through the turning gap.

Step four Fold the edges of the turning gap to the inside and press.

Step five Close the turning gap with a ladder stitch to finish. **04**

TIP

Use a natural fabric for the lining such as cotton or linen for breathability.

When The Sewing Gets Tough...

When the sewing gets tough, **Juliet Uzor**, winner of **Great British Sewing Bee 2019**, turns to her **Singer Heavy Duty** to work with fabrics like denim. For Juliet's Winter cape project visit www.singerco.co.uk/projects

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☆ COVER ☆
STAR

THE ANNIE BLOUSE AND IVY SKIRT

Sew Over It's Annie Blouse and Ivy Skirt are a match made in heaven. Sophisticated, elegant, and timeless, you'll want them in every colour!





**CLICK
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FROM **£7.99**
WHILE STOCKS LAST



This issue brings the ultimate outfit set for smart daytime or stylish evening wear – designed by Sew Over It (www.sewoverit.co.uk). The Annie Blouse is a beautiful floaty top designed for lightweight fabrics. It goes perfectly with The Ivy Skirt, but offers a completely different look tucked into high-waisted jeans. It's wonderfully versatile!

The Ivy Skirt, with its flattering faux wrap at the front, is designed for medium-weight fabrics and can quickly transform any outfit. Make it in pastel denim for a casual summer essential, use bright corduroy for a cosy winter look, or choose faux leather for your next cocktail evening.

Whatever look you go for, don't forget to share your finished makes using [#simplysewingmag](https://www.instagram.com/simplysewingmag)

YOU WILL NEED

Annie Blouse

- Main fabric: 2.5mx115cm (23/4ydx45in), 2.4mx140cm (23/4ydx55in)
- Shirring elastic
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

Ivy Skirt

- Version 1: 2mx115cm (21/4ydx45in), 1.75mx140cm (2ydx55in)
- Version 2: 1.75mx115cm (2ydx45in), 1.5mx140cm (13/4ydx55in)
- For all versions
- 56cm (22in) invisible zip
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 1.5cm (5/8in) unless otherwise stated.

FABRIC SUGGESTIONS

- Annie Blouse: chiffon, georgette or crepe
- Ivy Skirt: denim, wool suiting or Melton wool

Choose from two different skirt lengths!



SKILLS STRETCH

See our workshop on page 43 for guidance on working with chiffon and similar tricky fabrics.

SHAPELY SILHOUETTE

Shaped with darts at the front and back and a tapered asymmetrical hem, there's plenty of chances to expand your skillset with this skirt.

LENGTH OPTIONS

Choose from mini or knee-length for the Ivy Skirt.



Coquet Bouquet Splendid,
designed by Bari J for AGF.
www.liveartgalleryfabrics.com



Missy Georgette,
www.croftmill.co.uk



Floral Pink, www.dragonflyfabrics.co.uk



Supreme Dyed Daffodil,
www.pongees.co.uk

FABRIC INSPIRATION

FLORAL FUN

Freshen up your wardrobe in time for spring with brighter shades and pretty floral prints.



Dusky Pink Cord, www.dragonflyfabrics.co.uk



Josie Mustard, www.the-denimcompany.co.uk



Pink Herringbone Tweed,
www.stonefabric.co.uk



Go for pretty in pink with this Tulips Babycord from www.higgsandhiggs.com

WEAR IT WITH

SUNNY SHADES

Go for uplifting and cheerful with pastel pairing



Wear resin hoops in sunflower yellow, £15, www.oliverbonas.com

Brighten any outfit with this backpack, £99.50, www.oliverbonas.com



Dainty dress up, £22, www.oliverbonas.com



Super soft, super skinny, super stylish, £22.99, www.newlook.com



Opt for a playful striped sleeve, £45, www.oliverbonas.com

Make an entrance in these fringed heels, £36, www.next.co.uk



Love your pink loafers, £24.99, www.deichmann.com



MY SEWING WORLD



By Lisa Comfort

Sew Over It's Lisa Comfort shares her top five tips for getting started on creating your own wardrobe.

Would you love to be able to sew your own clothes? Lots of Sew Over It's newer customers tell us they've been inspired to start sewing after discovering the negative effect the fashion industry has on the world, both in terms of the environment and the people who work in it. If you'd like to move away from fast fashion, sewing your own clothes is a fantastic way to put yourself in control and reduce your impact.

Not sure where to start? I'm bringing you my top five tips to building your sewing skills whilst creating a stylish wardrobe, all in a conscious, sustainable way. Let's get inspired!

IDENTIFY YOUR STYLE

Before you begin sewing, it's worth spending some time thinking about the kinds of things you like to wear. If your wardrobe is full of minimalist T-shirts and jeans, you might not actually get much wear out of a vintage-inspired dress pattern or a bright bold novelty print, no matter how fun they'd be to sew. Make a Pinterest board of items of clothing you'd like to wear, and refer back to it when choosing fabrics and patterns.

PICK A PATTERN AIMED AT BEGINNERS

Just like there's no point sewing something you won't wear, there's no point sewing something that is too far beyond your skill level. If you choose something too tricky, it's likely to go wrong and the end result might not be very wearable – and could even end up in the bin. A pair of pyjama bottoms is a brilliant first project because they only have a few pieces and they don't require fitting. PJs also make fabulous gifts, so even if you don't want to make a pair for yourself, you're guaranteed to know someone who'd love them.

CHOOSE A SIMPLE-TO-SEW FABRIC

If you've never sewn clothes before, starting with an easy-sew fabric will make your life a lot easier. Natural fibres (with the exception of silk!) tend to be great for beginners; I recommend choosing a stable woven fabric such as cotton poplin or lawn. Avoid anything that's very drapery, such as viscose, which will be tricky to handle, and anything too heavy, such as boiled



Trying one new thing with every project you do is a great way to learn

“Visible mending is a huge trend right now.”



If you'd like to move away from fast fashion, sewing your own wardrobe is a fantastic way to reduce your impact

“When something flummoxes you, don't be afraid to ask for help.”

wool which will make your seams very bulky. Picking an organic GOTS-certified cotton will guarantee that the fabric has been made in a socially and environmentally responsible manner.

WORK WITH WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE

Mending and refashioning your existing clothes to extend their life is the most sustainable thing you can do when it comes to fashion. Visible mending is a huge trend right now, and gives you the opportunity to inject some new personality into a garment that needs a bit of love. Not only that, but there is lots to be learned from your clothes too! Whilst you're mending or reworking them into something else, take note of how they were made. You might notice an interesting seam finish, cool pocket construction or a fun design detail that you could incorporate into your next make.

GROW YOUR SKILLS WITH EVERY NEW PROJECT

If you'd like to work towards a fully handmade wardrobe, you'll need to keep building your sewing skills. Everyday items often feature buttons, zips, cuffs, collars, and pockets, and so it's inevitable that you'll want to incorporate these sooner or later. Trying one new thing with every project you do is a really great way to learn and build up an arsenal of well-practiced skills. And when something flummoxes you, don't be afraid to ask for help. There is always an expert somewhere willing to pass on their extensive knowledge. Ask a sewing friend, go to a local workshop, head to YouTube, or try an online class. www.sewoveritstitchschool.co.uk

Starting with an easy-sew fabric will make your life a lot easier

SEW OVER IT

Stitch School



Sew Over It's Stitch School is full of reliable, easy-to-understand video tutorials that can be accessed 24/7.

Keeping me inspired...

I've really been inspired by the mending and refashioning world over the past few months, so much so that I've pledged to rework an unloved item from my wardrobe into something new each month of this year. One of my first projects was to shorten my Ava skirt to mini-length so I could wear it with tights for winter, and I'm pleased to say it's now on heavy rotation in my wardrobe! You can keep up with my refashioning adventures on Sew Over It's very own YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/sewoverit



Lisa has set herself a refashioning challenge to rework something every month

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COMPLEX FABRICS

Levelling up your sewing skills means trying a range of fabrics ... eek!
Our tips will make working with even the trickiest fabrics a breeze.



Our Technical Editor Roisin loves working with luxury fabrics. Here she shares tips for working with some of the most notoriously difficult fabrics.

This issue's cover projects, the Sew Over It Annie Blouse and Ivy Skirt are made using lightweight and heavyweight fabrics respectively. These fabrics are well known for being tricky to sew and some beginner sewists may be put off by the fabrics alone. With this handy guide we show you simple hacks to help guide the fabric through your machine and get a perfect stitch!

ESSENTIAL TOOLS

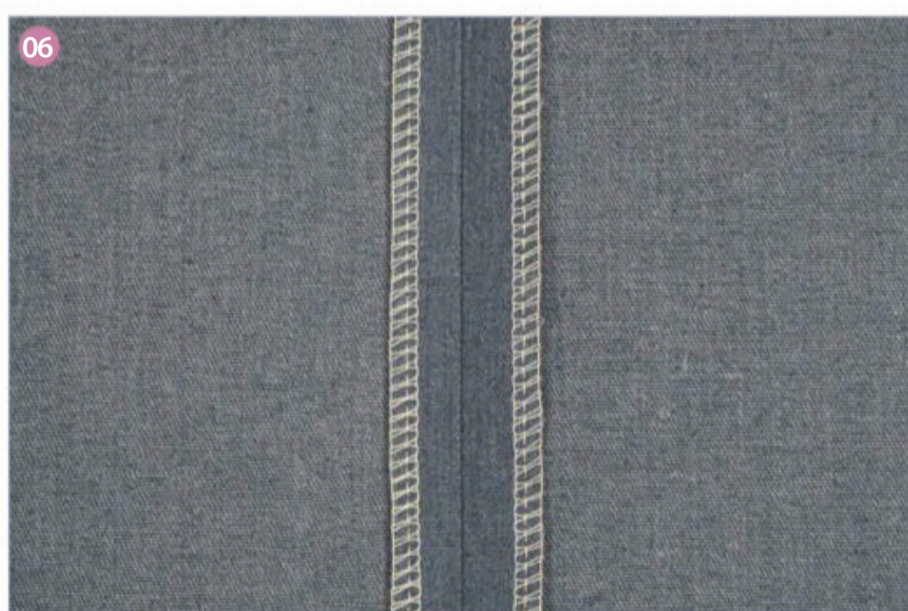
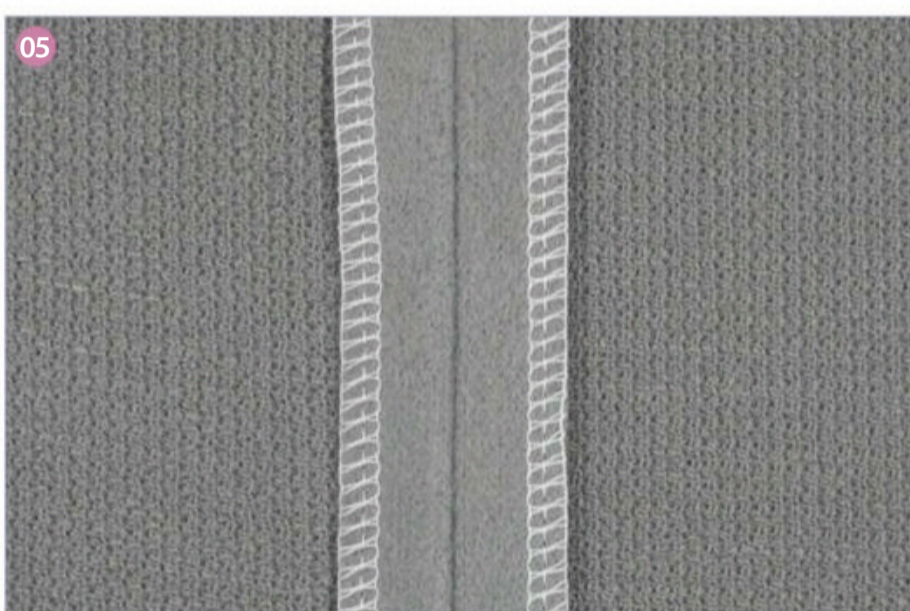
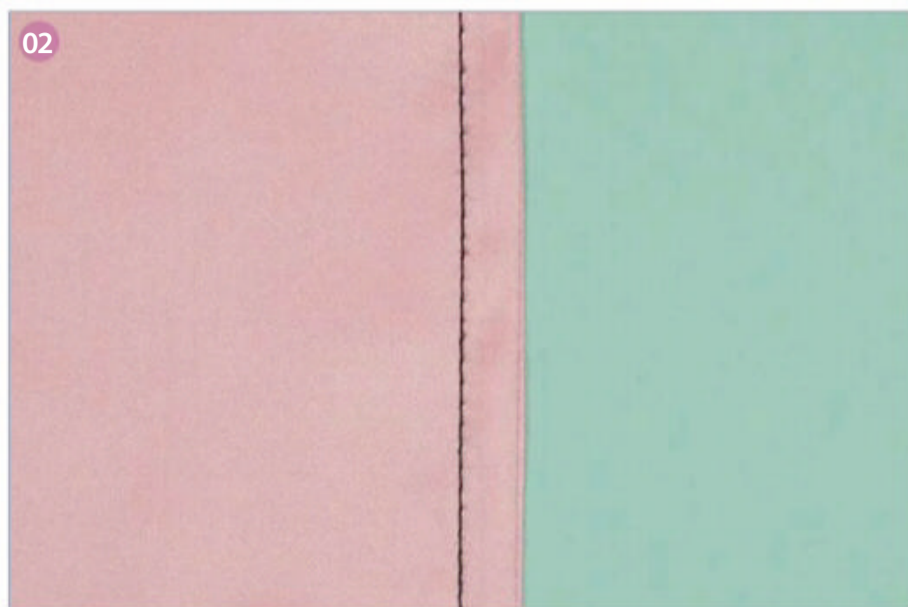
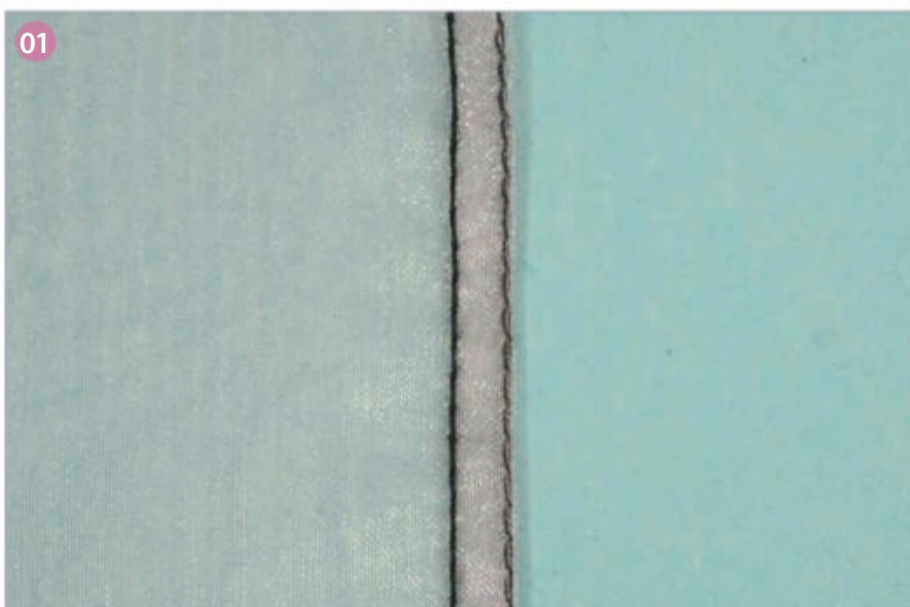
Here are some of Roisin's favourite products for working with tricky fabrics – once you try these you won't look back!

- 1 Specialist tape can be pressed on to the raw edges of chiffon to prevent fraying or distorting as you work with the fabric. It can help to lay the pattern piece underneath the fabric as you press. We like to use Vlieseline Bias Tape available at www.ladysewandsew.co.uk
- 2 If your lightweight fabric shifts around as you are trying to cut it out, sandwich the fabric between two layers of tissue paper, place your pattern on top then cut through all the layers.
- 3 Denim needles are used for stitching denim, canvas and other heavyweight, tightly woven fabrics.
- 4 If you are stitching a heavyweight fabric and your sewing machine is struggling to stitch over bulky seams you can purchase a bulky seam foot raiser tool such as the Hemline bulky seam aid. This is a special tool to assist sewing over a particularly bulky seam. Available at www.jaycotts.co.uk
- 5 Never hang excess fabric off the edge of your cutting table as the weight of the fabric will distort the grainline. Neatly roll up excess fabric.



This Sew Over It Annie Blouse and Ivy Skirt ensemble have been made using a lightweight chiffon and a medium-weight herringbone wool.

WORKSHOP



LIGHTWEIGHT FABRICS

CHIFFON

Chiffon is a strong, sheer fabric with a plain weave. It is often used for special occasion garments such as cocktail dresses, wedding dresses as well as for linings, scarves and lingerie. It can be difficult to work with as the lightweight nature of the fabric means it will shift about when cut and sewn.

Cutting out: Cut using sharp shears for a precise cut or a rotary cutter and mat. Place tissue paper underneath the fabric if it is shifting around on your cutting surface.

Seams: Use French seams for a neat finish enclosing all raw edges. ⁰¹

Pressing: Use a pressing cloth and set your iron to the wool setting. Don't use steam as the water may mark the fabric.

Thread: Use an all-purpose thread.

Needle: Use a very fine 65/9 or 70/10 needle.

SATIN

Although commonly believed to be a fabric, satin is the name of the weave used to give the fabric its lustrous shine. Most satins will be woven in silk or polyester or a mix of fibres. Satin fabrics can be very tricky to sew with as satin weave fabrics are naturally slippery due to their non-uniform weave. Lightweight fibres, such as silk, will add to the slippery nature of the fabric.

Cutting out: Use a nap layout and cut the fabric in a single layer to ensure the grainline remains parallel to the selvedge.

Seams: Use French seams for a neat finish enclosing all raw edges. ⁰²

Pressing: Use a pressing cloth and set your iron to the wool setting. Don't use steam as the water may mark the fabric.

Thread: Use an all-purpose thread.

Needle: Size 70/10, 75/11 or 80/12.

ORGANZA

Organza is a lightweight, sheer, plain weave fabric often made from silk. The fabric has a crisp appearance and will crease easily.

Cutting out: You will need to trace any pieces marked 'cut on the fold' so that you have the whole pattern before cutting. Cut the fabric in a single layer to ensure the grainline remains parallel to the selvedge and to avoid heavy creases along the centre of any cut on the fold pieces.

Seams: Use French seams for a neat finish enclosing all raw edges. ⁰³

Pressing: Set your iron to the wool setting, using steam if needed. A pressing cloth, while not essential, is a good idea to protect your fabric from water or burn marks.

Thread: Use an all-purpose thread.

Needle: Use a very fine 65/9 or 70/10 universal needle or a fine sharps needle.

TULLE

Tulle is a fine, lightweight yet stiff netting that is frequently used for wedding dresses, petticoats, veils and tutus. It can also be used as an interfacing for lightweight fabrics.

Cutting out: Cut in a single layer. Tulle doesn't have a grain but has more give in the width than in the length.

Seams: You do not need to finish the edges of tulle as it does not fray. To avoid snagging sew with a jeans or roller foot. Sew slowly to avoid errors. ⁰⁴

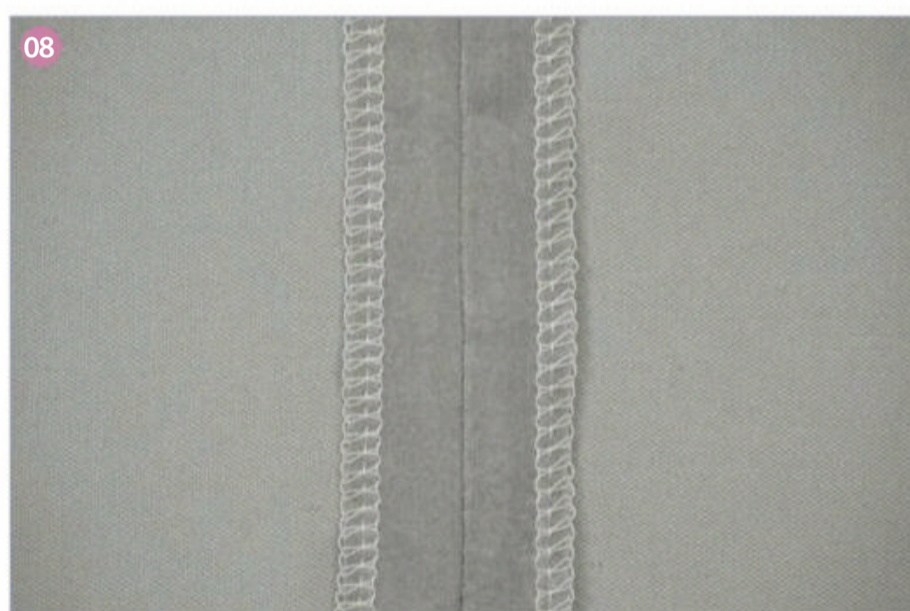
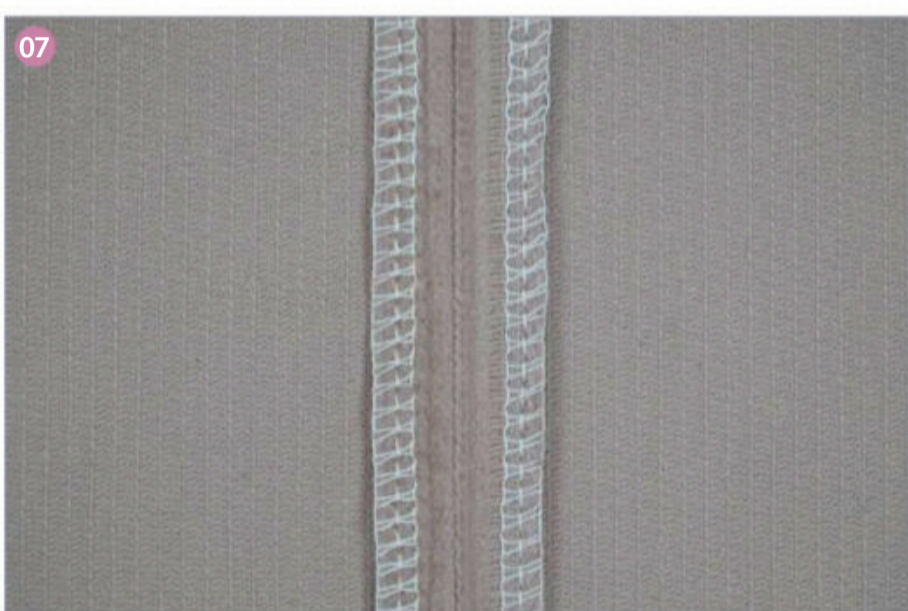
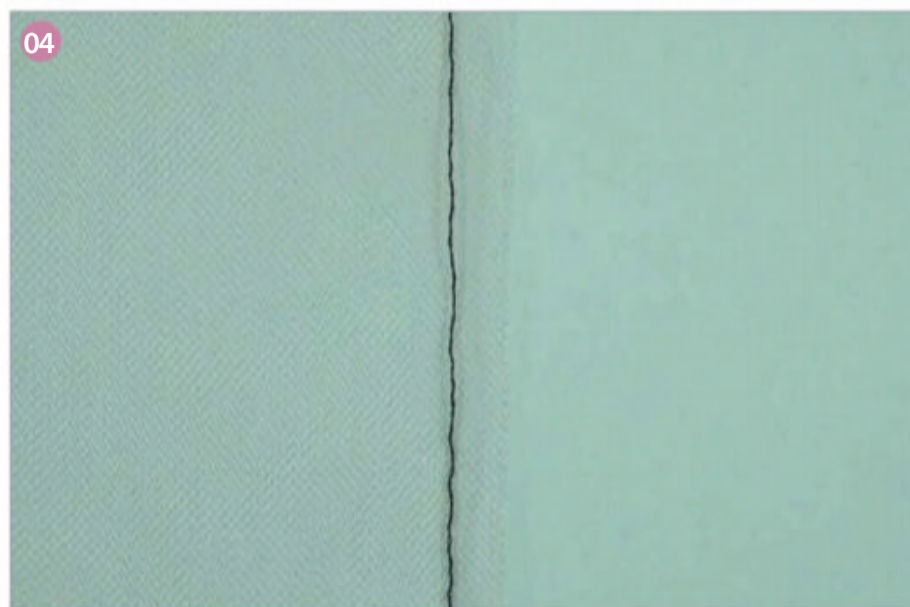
Pressing: Tulle can be damaged easily with the iron and will melt easily, so use a pressing cloth and test the temperature of your iron on a scrap of fabric first.

Thread: Use an all-purpose thread.

Needle: Use an extra sharp fine needle in size 60/8, 65/9 or 70/10.

TIP

Always use a new sewing machine needle when starting on a new project for a professional finish.



HEAVYWEIGHT FABRICS

WOOL

Although it is commonly mistaken as a fabric, wool is a natural fibre which primarily comes from sheep but can also come from goats (cashmere and mohair), camels (camel hair), rabbits (angora) and llamas (alpaca). Fabric that can be woven from these wool fibres include cashmere, flannel, and tweed. Heavyweight wool is often used for coats and jackets as it is warm. As heavyweight wools are thick fabrics, they can be tricky to guide through your machine.

Cutting out: Cut using sharp shears. Use a nap layout for wool with a pile or print.

Seams: Use a plain seam and finish the raw edge with an overlocker. ⁰⁵

Pressing: Use the wool setting on your iron and use steam to help remove creases. Steaming natural fibres can lead to shrinkage; this can be used to help ease pieces into place, but steam with care if you don't wish to shrink your fabric! To avoid scorch marks, use a pressing cloth.

Thread: Use an all-purpose thread.

Needle: Use a medium 90/14 needle for sewing with medium to heavyweight wools.

DENIM

Denim originated from Nîmes in France ('de Nîmes' meaning 'from Nîmes'). Denim is a twill weave

fabric that is very durable and washes well, making it perfect for jeans and jackets.

Cutting out: Cut using sharp shears, denim frays easily so try not to handle pieces excessively.

Seams: Fell seams are commonly used in denim garments and are great for finishing raw edges. Alternatively use a plain seam and zigzag or overlock the raw edges to prevent fraying. ⁰⁶

Pressing: Use the steam function on your iron for best results.

Thread: Use an all-purpose thread. Use a specialist topstitching thread to make topstitching pop.

Needle: Use a medium 90/14 denim needle for medium-weight denims or a 100/16 denim needle for sewing with heavyweight denims.

CORDUROY

Corduroy has a ribbed appearance on the right side, it has a pile like velvet so is textured to touch. Corduroy is often used for casual garments such as dresses, skirts, trousers, and jackets.

Cutting out: Cut using sharp shears, the pile of corduroy sheds easily so try not to handle cut pieces excessively.

Seams: Use a plain seam and zigzag or overlock the raw edges to prevent fraying. ⁰⁷

Pressing: Press corduroy from the wrong side. Pressing corduroy can flatten the pile so press gently. 100% cotton corduroys can withstand higher temperatures than mixed blends so test the

heat on a scrap of fabric before pressing your garment to avoid scorching.

Thread: Use an all-purpose thread.

Needle: Use a medium 90/14 needle for medium-weight corduroys or a 100/16 needle for sewing with heavyweight corduroys.

VELVET

Velvet is a pile weave fabric and is woven in two layers. The textured surface is created when the two layers are cut after weaving. Velvet is available in many weights from chiffon to upholstery, however most dressmaking velvets tend to be medium to heavyweight.

Cutting out: When cutting velvet, you will need to use a nap layout so that the direction of the pile is facing the same way all over the garment.

Normally you want the pile to run downwards as you run your hand from the neckline to the hem.

Seams: Use a plain seam and zigzag or overlock the raw edges. Use a walking foot or a knit foot to help guide velvet through the machine. ⁰⁸

Pressing: Pressing can damage the pile of velvet so avoid unless absolutely necessary. If necessary, hold the iron above the fabric wrong side and use steam to remove creases – don't let the plate of the iron touch the fabric as this can crush the pile.

Thread: Use an all-purpose thread.

Needle: Use a size 90/14 needle for sewing with medium to heavyweight velvets.

THE JOY DRESS

Put a smile on everyone's face with this cute and colourful A-line pinafore from **Wild Things Dresses**.

CUTE AS A BUTTON

Add cute colourful buttons to fasten the pinafore.

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FROM **£7.99**
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SKILLS STRETCH

Customise the dress with your own appliqué design.

PATCH POCKET

Add a decorative pocket, perfect for stashing snacks.



The Joy Dress, designed by Kirsty Hartley of Wild Things Dresses (www.wildthingsdresses.com), is happiness personified! Whilst it looks adorable in a bright cord, it would also look great in denim or cotton canvas. Using a thicker more durable fabric makes this garment as servisable for outdoor play and messy nursery days as it is for dressing-up. What's best, the A-line shape gives you plenty of space on the front to play around with different appliqué shapes, colours, and accessories. Let your imagination run wild and create a bespoke outfit for the little adventurer in your life!

Don't forget to share your me-made dresses with us tagged #simplysewingmag

YOU WILL NEED

- Main fabric: 100x145cm (39x57in)
- Appliqué fabrics: an assortment of plains, glitter and metallics to fit the appliqué templates
- Bondaweb: 25x50cm (10x20in)
- Two buttons: 2cm (¾in) diameter
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

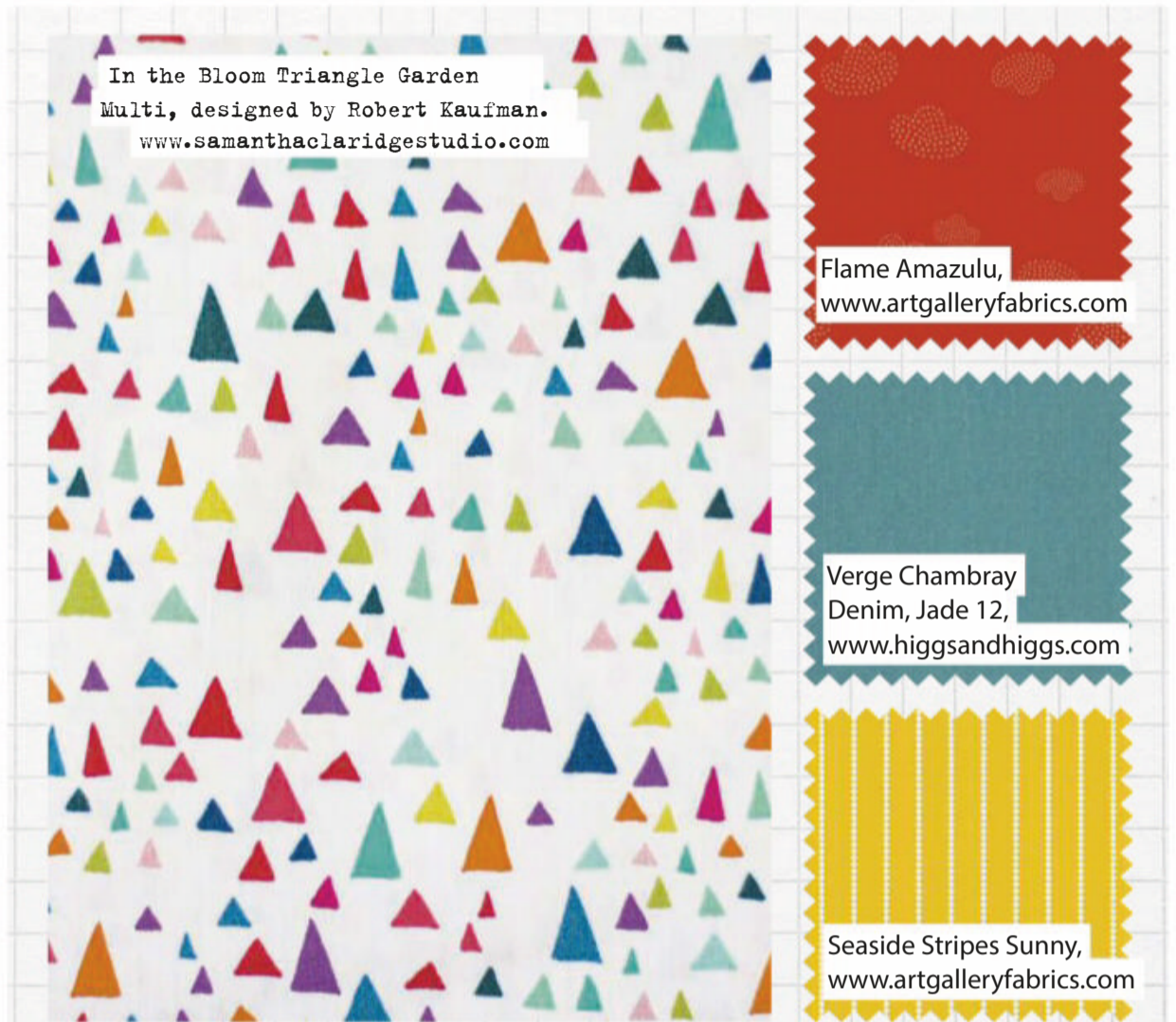
NOTES

- Use a 1cm (¾in) seam allowance, unless otherwise stated.
- The seam allowance is not included in this pattern so you need to add it on when cutting out the fabric.

FABRIC SUGGESTIONS

- Brightly coloured medium/heavy-weight fabrics such as corduroy, needlecord, cotton canvas and denim.
- These appliqué shapes are just the start – once you've got the hang of the technique, you can make all manner of shapes and have fun arranging them, in your own design.

Add even more colour with bright buttons and glittery appliqué!



FABRIC INSPIRATION

PLAYTIME

Feed the imagination with these perky prints and get creative with every colour in the rainbow.



Thingamajigs Giggling, www.artgalleryfabrics.com



Dark lilac needlecord, www.minervacrafts.com



Ruby Star Society Spark Pink, www.samanthaclaridgestudio.com



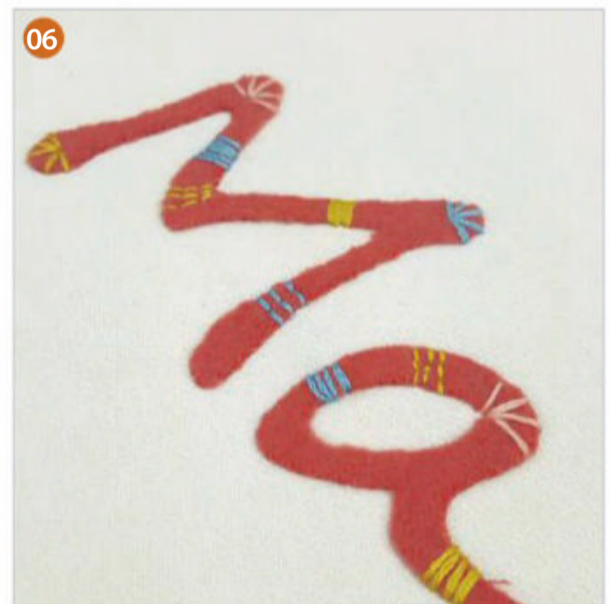
Hei Sky Lavenderine from the Sisu collection, www.artgalleryfabrics.com





JAZZ IT UP

Add a creative touch to a plain jumper and make something completely unique thanks to **Portia Lawrie's** refashion idea. It's so easy, you'll want to embellish all your tees next!



YOU WILL NEED

- Sweatshirt that fits
- Scrap of felt or fleece fabric for appliqué
- Printer
- Bondaweb
- Stranded cotton in at least three shades
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

MAKING THE APPLIQUÉ LETTERS

Step one First decide what words, slogan or names you want to put on to the front of your sweatshirt. Try out a few different options or look online to get some ideas.

Step two Select your font, type your slogan and print it out onto paper so that it is the size you require. If you want to check to see how it looks, cut roughly around the printout and pin it to your sweatshirt so you're happy with the size and style you've chosen. It's worth spending a little time at this stage to get it right. **01**

Step three On the wrong side (WS) of the paper, trace the lettering in reverse with a dark felt pen or a similar thick pen.

Step four Place the Bondaweb paper side up on top of the paper and trace around the outline of all of the reversed lettering.

Step five Place the traced Bondaweb paper side up onto the WS of your appliqué fabric and press into place. **02**

Step six Carefully cut out the lettering using sharp scissors. **03**

ATTACHING THE SLOGAN

Step one Peel off the paper backing from the letters, then position them on to the front of the sweatshirt in your desired position. Pin them into place and try your sweatshirt on to check you're happy with the positioning and adjust if necessary. **04**

Step two Following the manufacturer's instructions, press the letters into place.

Step three Choose at least three colours of stranded cotton that compliment the colour of the appliqué fabric. **05**

Step four Embellish your slogan using a variety of different, improvised embroidery motifs and stitches. Use a sharp pointed embroidery needle to stitch with so you pierce the fabric easily. You'll find a Crewel needle is ideal for two or three strands but you'll need a larger eyed Chenille needle if you're working with six strands. **06**

MORE IDEAS TO TRY

- 1 Apply the slogan to the front, back or even the sleeves of your sweatshirt, Pink Ladies anyone?
- 2 Experiment with using alternative threads or yarns for a different effect.
- 3 Use a fabric and threads in the same colour as your sweatshirt for a more textural/tonal effect.
- 4 Appliqué a friend's name or favourite saying to a sweatshirt for a meaningful birthday gift.
- 5 Choose a French slogan such as 'Très Chic', 'Magnifique' or 'Beauté' for a stylish nod to the fashion capital!

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Crafter's Companion

PINUP

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This roomy and versatile tote bag (one of your four pattern gifts this issue) is the perfect accessory to hold everything from grocery shopping and library books to crafting must-haves and baby changing essentials. The zips and pockets present plenty of chances to stretch your skills and make it totally fit for purpose. This tote works in denim, canvas and linen, but you easily utilise spare furnishing fabrics too. Whatever you choose, personalise it to the max! Find more bag-making inspiration at www.gathered.how/simplysewing

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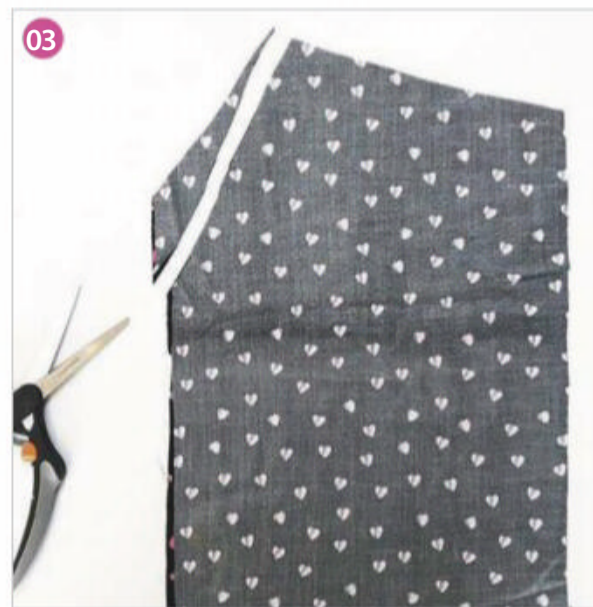
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THE DIP-HEM TUNIC

Sew a comfortable everyday tunic dress using just a few clever measurements, some floaty viscose fabric and **Karoline Dahrling's** handy step-by-step guide.



YOU WILL NEED

- A shirt that fits you to measure from
- Woven viscose or soft woven cotton sateen: 140x130cm (55x51in), for sizes up to 16.
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Use a 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance unless otherwise stated.
- Always wash and iron your fabric before sewing to make sure it does not shrink.
- You will need more fabric if you would like a longer or wider dress, or if you need to make it larger than a size 16.
- If you are unsure about fit, then cut the shirt dress with extra seam allowance to allow for alterations.

FABRICS USED

- Woven viscose from Stoff and Stil: www.stoffstil.co.uk

CUTTING OUT THE FRONT AND BACK

Step one Fold the fabric in half with right sides (RS) together aligning the selvages, then fold in half again to create four layers of fabric.

Step two Lay your folded shirt with the collar and sleeves tucked in on top of the fabric. Cut along the fabric folds to make four separate pieces of fabric, keeping them stacked on top of each another. **01**

Step three Decide how long you would like your finished shirt to be and add 2cm (3/4in) extra for the hem allowance. Cut the length of the fabric to this measurement. If you are unsure it is always best to add a little extra and trim it later on.

Step four Ensure the collar and sleeves are tucked in then draw straight down each long side adding extra seam allowance if you would like the garment to be a little looser. At the neck opening follow the line of the tucked-in collar. On the shoulder point be careful not to trace a dramatic slope towards the arm hole, this seam line should be straight and gradual.

Step five Mark a 2.5cm (1in) seam allowance all around your drawn lines then cut along them. **02**

Step six Take the top two layers of the fabric off for the shirt back and put to one side, these should be a mirror image of each other.

Step seven The remaining two layers will be for the shirt front, these should also be a mirror image of each other. If you would like the shirt dress to be shorter at the front then cut off approximately

15cm (6in) from the hem of each front piece.

Step eight On the two short front pieces, mark and cut 2–3cm (3/4–1 1/4in) down the front neckline. This will make the neck opening a bit lower at the front of the shirt. **03**

Step nine Overlock or machine zigzag the edges of all the cut-out pieces, except for the bottom edge which will be hemmed later.

CUTTING OUT THE SLEEVES

The sleeves will be a lot looser than your original shirt sleeves as they are simply rectangular pieces joined to the armhole for a relaxed fit.

Step one The sleeve length in our sample is 30cm (12in), however you can cut adjust this to suit. The sleeve width should be approximately 10cm (4in) more than the width of the shirt's arm opening. Add 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance all the way around then cut four pieces according to your measurements.

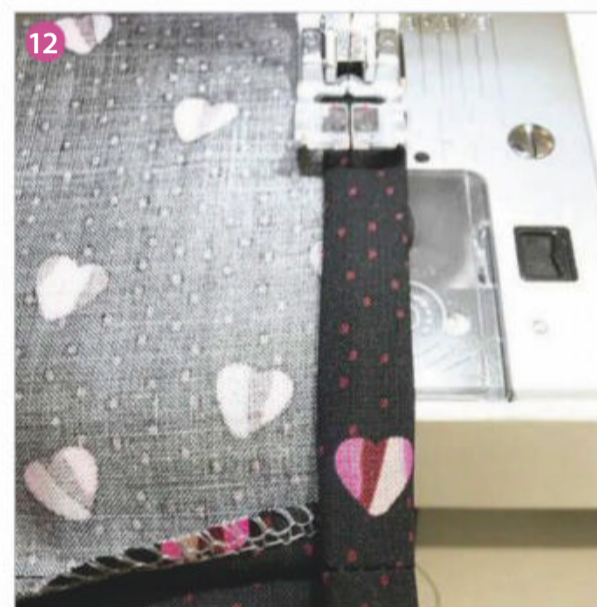
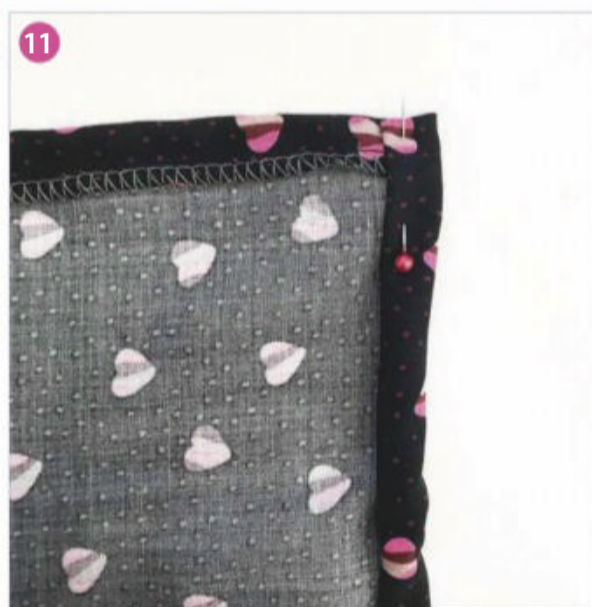
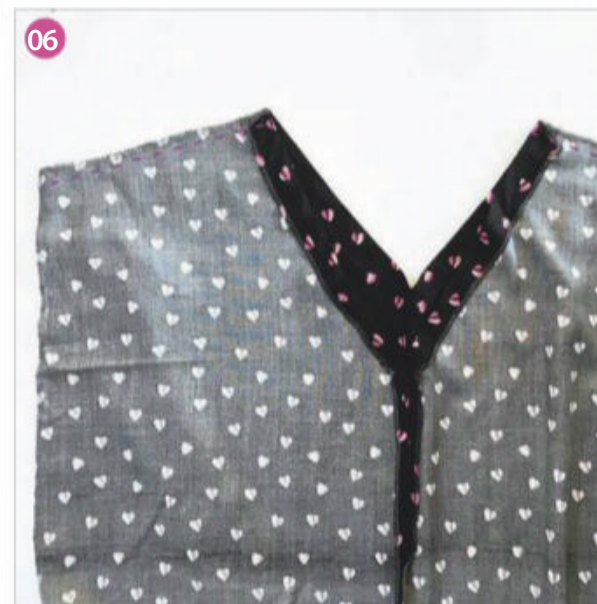
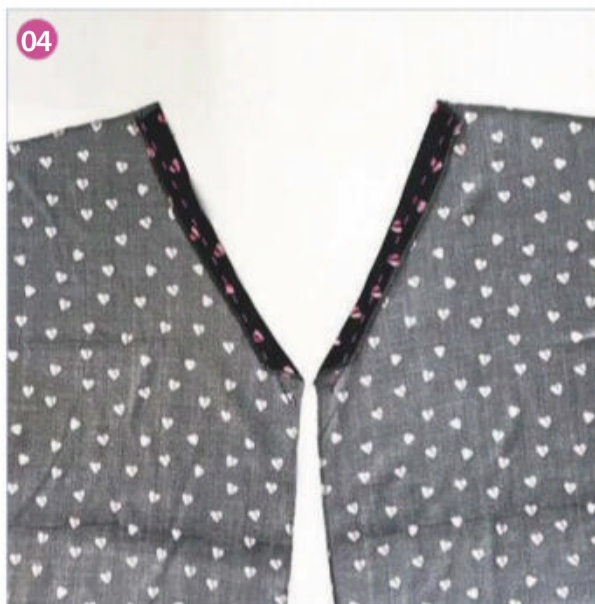
Step two Overlock or machine zigzag the edges of all four sleeve pieces except for the bottom edge which will be hemmed later.

ASSEMBLING THE DRESS

Step one Fold and press under the necklines on all four shirt body pieces by 1.5cm (5/8in) to the wrong side (WS).

Step two Stitch in place 1cm (3/8in) in from the folded edge. **04**

Step three Place the two front pieces RS facing



and stitch together down the front edge, making sure the two folded edges meet up accurately. ⁰⁵

Step four Repeat this for the two back pieces.

Step five Place the joined front pieces and the joined back pieces RS facing, then pin the shoulder seams together.

Step six Stitch the shoulder seams together. ⁰⁶

ATTACHING THE SLEEVES

Step one Place two sleeve pieces RS facing and stitch together along the top edge.

Step two Lay the main body out flat with RS facing up. Place the sleeve piece RS together on top of the main body, lining up the sleeve seam with the shoulder seam. Pin in place.

Step three Stitch the seam to the main body. ⁰⁷

Step four Repeat to stitch the other sleeve to the other side of the shirt body.

STITCHING THE SIDE SEAMS

Step one Place the shirt front/back and sleeves RS together, aligning raw edges and pin together.

Step two Stitch the side seams starting at the sleeve hem, then sew around the under arm and down towards the hem. Finish stitching 30cm (12in) from the bottom at the back to leave an opening for the slit. ⁰⁸

Step three Repeat on the other side.

Step four Turn the edges of all slit openings to the WS by 1cm (3/8in) and press then pin in place. ⁰⁹

Step five Topstitch close to the edge to hem the

slits, stitching across the top of the slit opening when you reach it for a neat finish. ¹⁰

HEMMING THE SHIRT

Step one Turn the bottom raw edge under by 1cm (3/8in) to the WS and press then turn it under again by 1cm (3/8in) and press. Fold the corners neatly where the hem meets the slit and pin in place. ¹¹

Step two Stitch the turned under edges to hem. ¹²

Step three Turn the raw edges of the sleeves under twice, press then stitch to hem.

MORE IDEAS TO TRY

- 1 Play with the sleeve length; shorten for summer or lengthen for cooler months.
- 2 Use the same techniques to create a top, a mini dress or a maxi dress.
- 3 The 'looseness' of your finished dress is dependent on the fit of the template top you use *and* the distance from the garment edge you trace your new underarm/side seams. Make a looser or tighter fitting dress if you like!
- 4 Add inseam or patch pockets to add an extra function for everyday wear.
- 5 Add belt loops to the waist and create a simple belt from leftover fabric.





WHEN SEWING BECOMES SELF-CARE

From quieting a busy mind to helping forge a connection with others, there are many mental health benefits to be gained from sewing.

Written by Melanie MacLeod

Given the fact that you've got this magazine in your hands, chances are you're a keen sewer, but can you remember what first ignited your love of needlecraft or enamoured you to embroidery? For many people, their passion for craft arose from the positive impact it had on their mental health.

"There are so many benefits to taking up a hobby, with science substantiating the positive impact they have both physically and mentally," says Edward Griffith founder of www.lovecrafts.com. "Some benefits are obvious, but there are also hidden ones, like the opportunity to practice mindfulness."

We've heard talk of mindfulness for a good few years, and while it may conjure up images of yoga classes and adult colouring books, sewing is among the most mindful

practices out there, as it allows you to switch off from the modern world, demanding your full attention. Sewing calms the mind and helps you focus your energy on the task at hand, rather than allowing your thoughts to flitter all over the place. "After a busy day, sitting down with some embroidery is a respite from the daily hustle and bustle," says Clare Hunter, author of *Threads of Life*. "I find being able to concentrate quietly on just one thing very soothing and relaxing."

Indeed, a survey carried out by LoveCrafts.com, which asked participants questions about their hobbies, reported that 53% of the 5,000 people asked said they enjoy their hobby because it relaxes them. "Sewing and stitching allows us to zone out from the daily pressures of life and can be a welcome distraction from worrisome or intrusive



thoughts," adds Stephen Buckley, head of information at mental health charity, Mind.

We're with Clare and Stephen on this – we've lost count of the times we've sat down to read a book and found ourselves scrolling on our phone instead, but sewing doesn't allow for this, instead offering an activity that busies your hands and requires total absorption. It acts as the perfect antidote to the pressures of the modern world, as Clare points out: "So much of my life is now spent tip-tapping on my phone or computer and touching hard surfaces, that I find it calming to handle the contrasting softness of cloth and the silkiness of thread."

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Sewing doesn't only benefit the social media generation though; "I've worked with older people with dementia and have watched as they rediscovered an able self through sewing, its rhythm reviving a physical memory," shares Clare.

For the elderly, sewing is also a great way to combat loneliness, and connect with their community again – though of course feelings of isolation can strike at any age, especially if you're suffering with your mental health.

"Sewing with other people as part of a community project can be a very joyful experience," says Clare. "The camaraderie of sharing a collective creative endeavour is heartwarming and sociable. I've made many new friends through community sewing projects that I might never have got to know if I hadn't had the chance to make something with them."

"Sharing your sewing is very cathartic – we all feel better when we find a safe place," adds Gillian, head 'sewcialist' at The Sewcialists blog (www.thesewcialists.com), which aims to unite people through sewing.

Designer Patrick Grant of *The Great British Sewing Bee* agrees, telling us: "I spoke to a fan of the show whose husband had died, and they hadn't left the house for six weeks. Sewing allowed them to regain their confidence. It was really lovely and heartwarming, and a touching thing to hear."

Clare has her own experience of sewing being a relief from grief, too: "When my mother was dying, I sat by her beside, talking and embroidering," she explains. "As well as recounting stories from my childhood I also told her about what I was sewing, describing the colours and the stitches I was using. It was my mother who taught me how to sew and so embroidery seemed the best thing to share with her as we made our farewell to each other."

While sewing can help ease the pain of

grief, it can also help to embrace those who feel on the outside of society. "For prisoners, participating in a community sewing project can provide a way to feel connected to the outside world, helping them feel like they matter, with their skills and imagination being acknowledged," Clare adds.

FEEL-GOOD FACTOR

One of the beautiful things about sewing, however, is that it can be solitary rather than a group activity – whichever you need for your mental health. For people who suffer with social anxiety or depression, or find it daunting to leave the house, sewing can be done alone, drawing focus away from themselves, and providing a sense of accomplishment and achievement unrelated to anyone else.

"Completing a small achievable task can be really rewarding," concurs Stephen, while Gillian adds: "Sewing gives people a sense of pride and confidence, a challenge and a chance to escape."

If someone does choose to participate in a sewing club, it's a non-threatening environment enabling them to spend time with other people in a low-pressure space, with little demand made of them beyond their stitching. LoveCraft.com's study reported that 21% of people said their hobbies boost their self-esteem. "Sewing is particularly helpful for the socially fragile,"

says Clare. "It helps to improve mental wellbeing in so many ways which is why it is so often used in occupational therapy. It's a salve to mental fragmentation."

"I met a girl who told me sewing had really helped with her mental health," Esme Young, also of *The Great British Sewing Bee*, told us. "She was suicidal, then started sewing and it made her feel calmer. Making something for herself with her brain and her hands, away from the computer, was just what she needed."

Gillian has her own experience of sewing bringing her back to herself. "I suffered a concussion and was unable to work, drive or see clearly for months. Sewing was one of the few things I could do, because I could take it seam by seam in my dim, quiet sewing room. It helped me feel like I was myself when so much of my identity was gone."

Whether sewing is a solitary activity for you that eases your busy mind, or it's a way to connect with others, just know that every time you pick up a needle and thread, you're doing some good for your mind and mental health. Who said self-care had to be bubble baths and spa music?

LET'S GET SEWCIAL

Want to get involved? Here's a few groups, blogs and campaigns guaranteed to inspire you online.

Sewcialists

This welcoming and inclusive blog is a space where everyone is welcome to share their sewing stories – if you can sew, they want to hear from you! Each month volunteer authors take over the site and there are different themes to work to. It's a fun way to connect with people who share your hobby and see just how far-reaching a craft it is.

www.thesewcialists.com

Fine Cell Work

Fine Cell Work is a charity that trains prisoners in needlework during the hours in their cells, in order to foster hope, discipline and self-esteem. The initiative aims to allow them to leave prison with skills and money saved up, along with the self-belief not to reoffend. While you might not feel up to being a mentor to the ex-prisoners, volunteers are always needed to promote the charity, put the sewing kits together, and for admin at the HQ.

www.finecellwork.co.uk

Craftivist Collective

Dubbed as 'quiet activism for everyone including introverts', the Craftivist Collective is an inclusive group of people committed to creating beautiful work that helps spread their message in a quiet and conscious way – think mini banners for protests or bunting stitched to support your cause, be it workplace equality or climate change. The collective organises group stitch-ins where members can share ideas, spread the word about their cause and create something meaningful.

www.craftivist-collective.com

Mind Crafternoon

Chances are you've heard of Mind's Crafternoons; designed to raise money for the charity, they're also a great way to connect and get crafty with your local community. Whether you organise your own crafternoon or simply attend someone else's you'll get double the feel-good – raising money and doing your favourite activity, win-win.

www.mind.org.uk

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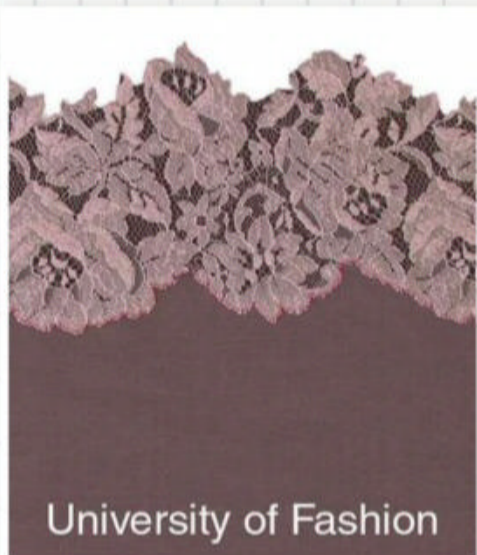
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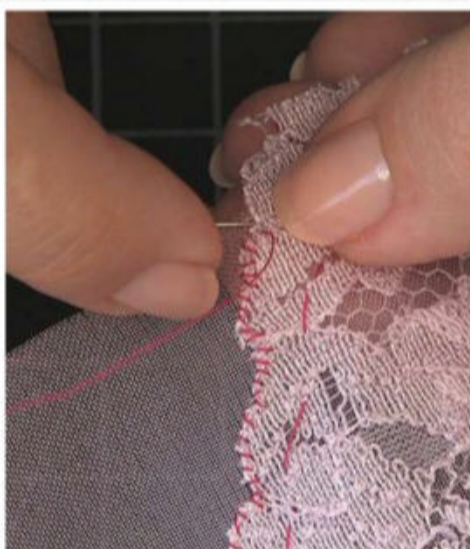
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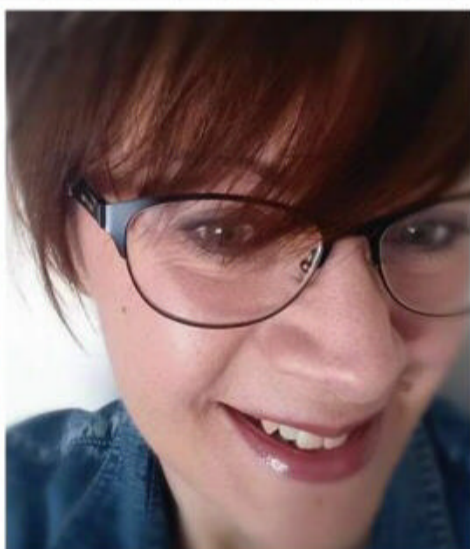
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SILK RIBBON EMBROIDERY

Our Silk Ribbon Embroidery lesson will teach you how to create a beautiful 3-dimensional embroidered flower motif using a tambour frame. You will learn how to set up and use a tambour frame and the tools needed to embroider this beautiful design, which include a tambour hook, crewel needle, beading needle, silk ribbon, as well as seed and bugle beads. Let this unique embellishment inspire your imagination.

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SEWCIAL RETREAT 2020 - 12TH-14TH JUNE

Set in the luxury Swindon Marriott Hotel, Purple Stitches' Sewcial Retreat boasts two and a half days of crafty fun alongside delicious food, wonderful sewing workshops and room to relax! This is the perfect opportunity to get inspired by industry experts and enjoy a weekend with other crafters. In the June getaway, celebrity portrait artist Samantha Molloy will teach you how to create a stylish illustration using thread techniques. Plus, Jo Westfoot of The Crafty Nomad will share her top tips on foundation paper piecing using one of her popular quilting patterns.

WEB purple-stitches.com EMAIL hello@purple-stitches.com



SEWCIAL RETREAT 2020 - 25TH-27TH SEPTEMBER

Purple Stitches' exclusive, previously sold out retreat is back with new dates! Spread over two and a half days, in a 4-star luxury hotel in Swindon, Sewcial Retreat is ready to welcome you for a weekend of sewing and quilting fun. In their September Retreat, quilter Lucy Brennan of Charm About You is returning with a bespoke machine-pieced quilt project ready to inspire and challenge you. Whilst Katy Jones from Crafter's Companion will share her love of die-cutting and she'll be teaching an exclusive project using her beloved die-cut machine.

WEB purple-stitches.com EMAIL hello@purple-stitches.com



DAPPER DAYS

Gift this practical washbag for the man in your life to take the hassle out of the morning grooming routine.

YOU WILL NEED

- Main fabric: 30x147cm (12x57in)
- Lining fabric: 60x112cm (24x44in)
- Faux leather: 5x25cm (2x10in)
- Wadding: 50x90cm (20x36in)
- Foam interfacing: 50x72cm (20x28in)
- Zip: 41cm (16in), for the washbag
- Zip: 18cm (7in), for the pocket
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 5mm (1/4in)

CUTTING OUT

Use the templates to cut the following pieces

Step one From the main fabric cut:

Outer Front/Back: two

Outer Zip Panel Front/ Back: two

Outer Base: one

Step two From the lining fabric cut:

Lining Front/Back: two

Lining Zip Panel Front/Back: two

Lining Base: one

Zip Pocket Lining: one

Internal Pockets: four

Binding: cut and join strips, 3.5cm (1 3/8in) wide to make a total length of 2m (2yds)

Step three From the faux leather cut:

Zip Tabs: one

Zip Pull: 5mm (1/4in) x 15cm

Step four From the iron-on wadding cut:

Wadding Front/Back: two

Wadding Zip Panel Front/Back: two

Wadding Base: one

PREPARING THE PIECES

Step one Make the binding into single fold binding using a bias tape maker.

Step two Press/tack each of the wadding pieces to the wrong side (WS) of their lining pieces.

MAKING THE FRONT ZIP POCKET

Step one Find and mark the vertical centre of the Outer Front. Then find and mark the lengthways centre of the Zip Pocket Lining.

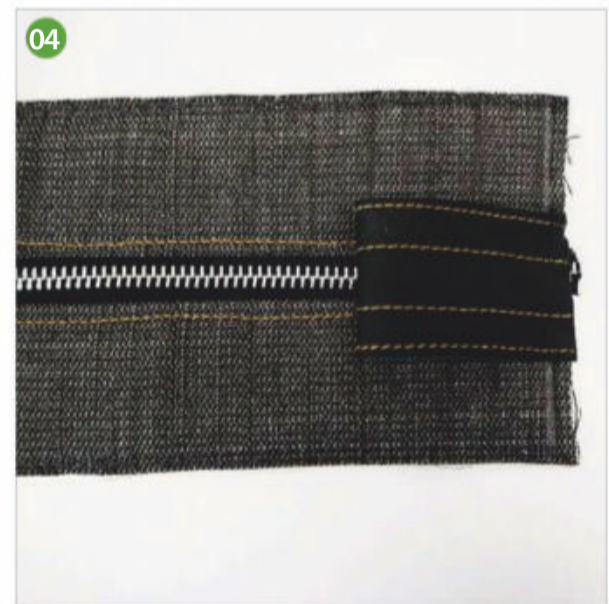
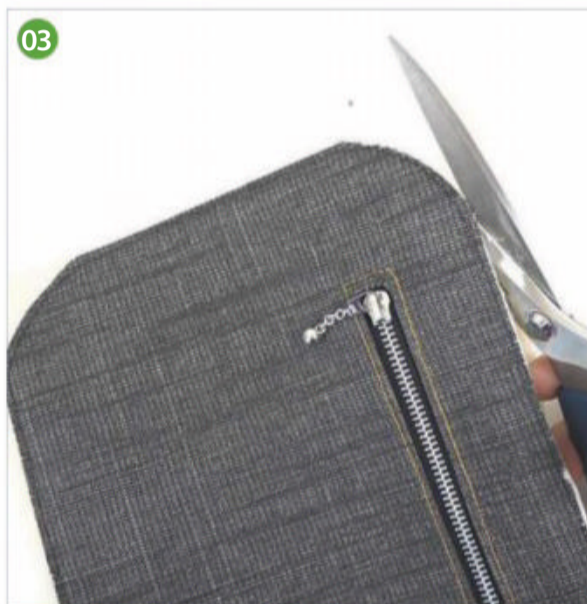
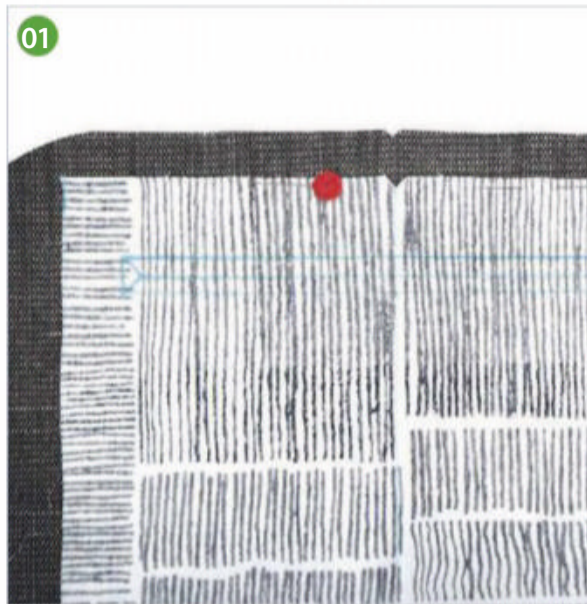
Step two Measure down 1cm (3/8in) from the top long edge of the Outer Front. Place the Zip Pocket Lining on top right side (RS) together, so the short end of the lining is on the mark and the centre creases align. Pin in place.

Step three Measure 2.5cm (1in) down from the top short edge of the Zip Pocket Lining and mark a horizontal box 1cm (3/8in) wide x 18cm (7 1/8in) long. This is the sewing line.

Step four Mark another horizontal line with angles at each end across the centre of the sewing box. This is the cutting line. ⁰¹

Step five Sew along the sewing line and cut along the cutting line. 'Post' the lining through the hole. Smooth it out on the back and press.

Step six Place the pocket zip under the hole so



the teeth show though, topstitch in place.

Step seven Bring the loose end of the Zip Pocket Lining up to meet the other edge, RS facing, sew the sides and top to complete. ⁰²

ATTACHING THE ZIP PANEL

Step one Pin the main fabric Outer Front, Outer Back, Outer Zip Panel Front and Back and the Outer Base RS up on the foam interfacing. Stitch each one into place within the seam allowance then trim the excess foam back. ⁰³

Step two Place the Outer Zip Panel Front RS up with the main zip RS down on top and the Lining Zip Panel Front RS down on top. Align the raw edges with the zip tape edge. Clip together then sew along the length of the zip.

Step three Flip the layers RS out. Press, then topstitch close to the edge of the main fabric.

Step four Repeat to sew the Outer Zip Panel Back and lining to the other side of the zip.

Step five Topstitch twice along each long side of the Zip Tab. Cut the tab in half widthways to make two tabs.

Step six Fold a tab in half and pin over the end of the zip. Repeat at the other end of the zip. ⁰⁴

ATTACHING THE BASE

Step one Attach the base to one end of the assembled zip panel by making a sandwich with the Outer Base and Lining Base RS together and the zip panel in between. Sew across, flip the

panel open and topstitch.

Step two The base is longer than needed to allow for error so, before repeating at the other end to make the loop, fit the zip and base onto the front section to check fit. Trim as needed.

ADDING THE INTERNAL POCKETS

Step one Place two pieces of Internal Pocket fabric RS facing and sew along the top edge.

Step two Flip the pieces RS out then press so that the seam sits on the top. Topstitch just down from the top edge to make one pocket. Repeat with the other two Internal Pocket fabric pieces to make the other pocket.

Step three Place a pocket RS up on top of the Lining Front, aligning side and bottom edges, then sew into place down the sides and across the bottom within the seam allowance. Stitch a vertical seam down the centre of the pocket to divide it and stop it sagging. Repeat to attach the other pocket to the RS of the Lining Back.

ASSEMBLING THE BAG

Step one Place the Outer Front and Lining Front WS facing and stitch all round within the seam allowance. Trim the edges or overlock/zigzag. Repeat with the Outer Back and Lining Back.

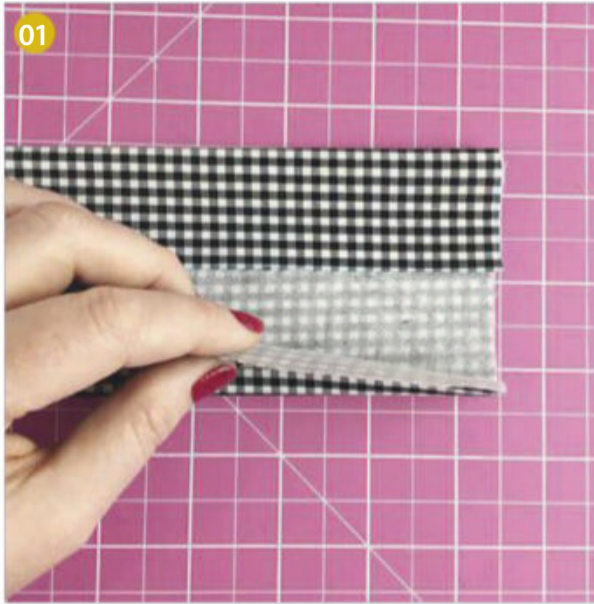
Step two Pin and sew the front and back panels RS together to the centre zip loop panel. Bind the inner raw edges with bias tape.

Step three Add the zip pull to the main zip.

SEW SMART

A bow for your beau! Refashion an old shirt to make a cute and simple bow tie.





YOU WILL NEED

- Used garment to refashion such as a shirt or blouse
- Bow tie clasp with slider: 19mm (¾in)
- Iron-on interfacing
- Loop turner or chopstick
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 1cm (¾in) unless otherwise stated

CUTTING OUT

Step one From the main fabric cut:

Main Bow: two 25x14cm (9⅞x5½in)

Bow Centre: 4x8cm (1⅝x3⅓in)

Neck Strap: 5x55cm (2x21⅝in)

Step two From the interfacing cut:

Main Bow Interfacing: two 25x14cm (9⅞x5½in)

Bow Centre Interfacing: 4x8cm (1⅝x3⅓in)

MAKING THE BOW TIE

Step one Press the Main Bow Interfacing to the wrong side (WS) of the Main Bow fabric, repeat with the Bow Centre and corresponding interfacing piece.

Step two Take one of the Main Bow pieces and measure the centre point on each short end. Fold the fabric at each end to meet this centre point and press. **01**

Step three Fold the short ends to meet in the centre and stitch down either side of the centre seam as close as possible to the raw edge. **02**

Step four Repeat with the other Main Bow piece. Place the two pieces WS together and stitch down the centre. **03**

Step five Take the Bow Centre piece and stitch down one end and along one side then trim the seams and turn through. Press.

MAKING THE NECK STRAP

Step one Repeat with the Neck Strap piece, (use a loop turner or chopstick to help push the

fabric right side out) this will make the strap.

Step two Now add the slider part of the clasp to the raw end of the Neck Strap and stitch the fabric in place turning the raw edge under. **04**

Step three Attach the hook part of the clasp to the strap, with the hook facing out. Then thread the other end of the strap back through the slider part, this will form the adjustable strap.

Step four Attach the last piece of the clasp to the other end of the strap and stitch the fabric in place.

ASSEMBLING THE BOW TIE

Step one Pinch the centre of the bow, then bring the top and bottom edges in to meet in the middle. Hand stitch in place. **05**

Step two Hand stitch the bow to the neck strap between the adjuster and the clasp.

Step three Take the small bow centre piece and wrap it around the middle of the bow and strap. Hand stitch in place at the back of the bow. **06**

TIP:

Use contrasting fabric to make the bow tie and strap for a colourful statement

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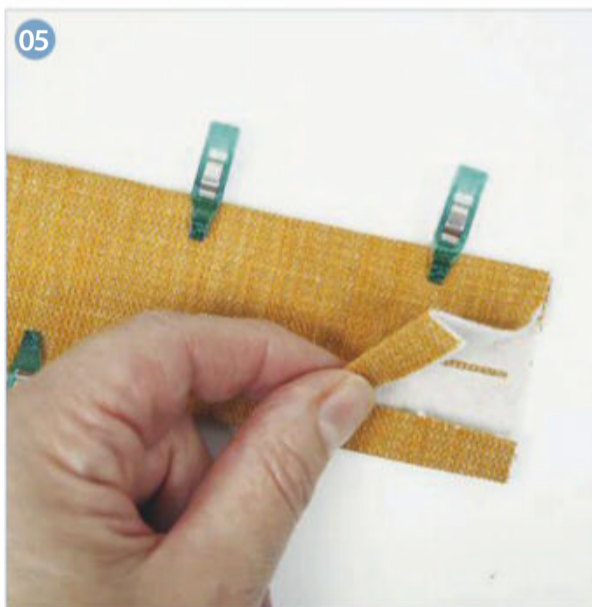
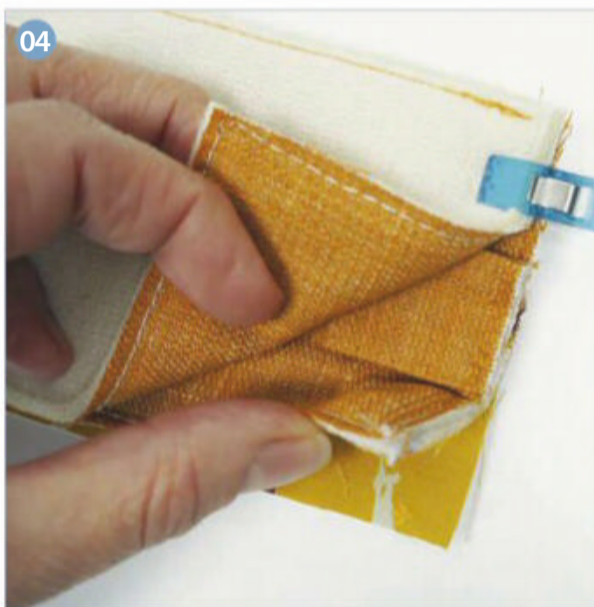
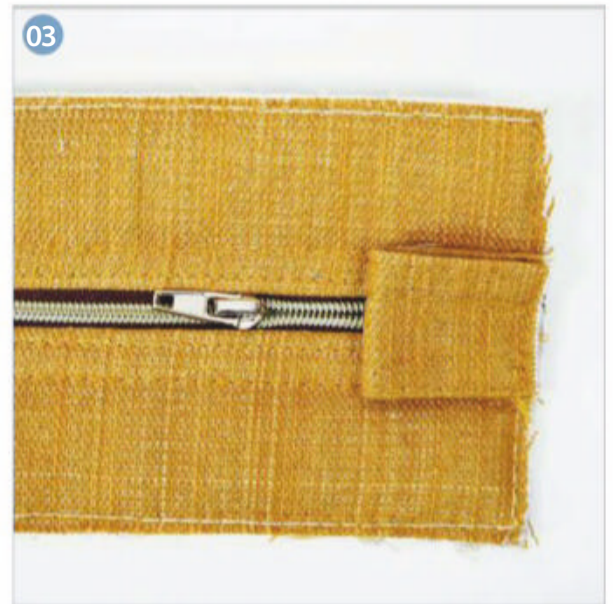
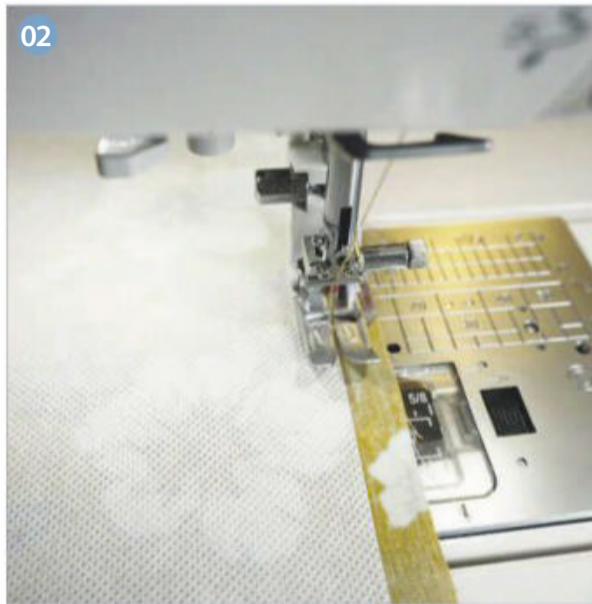
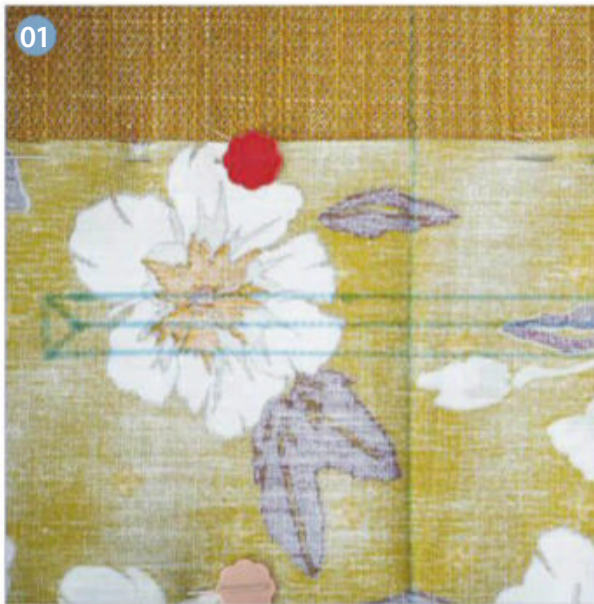
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THE GRAB-AND-GO BAG

Fashion meets function with **Debbie von Grabler-Crozier's** crossover sling backpack. Use a bold contrasting lining to give the handy pockets a playful finish.



YOU WILL NEED

- Main fabric: 60x147cm (24x57in)
- Lining fabric: 100x112cm (39x44in)
- Lightweight iron-on interfacing: 15x45cm (6x18in)
- Iron-on wadding: 60x90cm (24x36in)
- Foam interfacing: 70x72cm (28x29in)
- Decovil 1 Light fusible interfacing: 30x25cm (12x10in)
- Bundfix tape: 2.5m (2¾yds)
- Zip: 50cm (20in), main bag
- Zip: 12cm (4¾in), front pocket zip
- Zip: 14cm (5½in), lining pocket zip
- Snap fastener: for the front pocket
- Strap slider bar: 4cm (1½in)
- 2 rectangle rings: 4cm (1½in)
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

FABRICS USED

- Interfacing: Style-Vil foam interfacing from Vlieseline. Visit www.ladysewandsew.co.uk

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 5mm (¼in) unless otherwise stated

CUTTING OUT

Step one Cut out all the pattern pieces.

Step two From the main fabric cut:

Outer Front/Outer Back: cut two

Outer Zip Panel Front/Outer Zip Panel Back: cut two on the fold

Outer Side/Base: cut one on the fold

Front Pocket Body: cut one

Front Pocket Flap: cut one

Strap: cut two 7x120cm (2¾x47in)

Zip Tabs: 8x14cm (3⅞x5½in)

Strap Tabs: cut two 7x20cm (2¾x7⅞in)

Step three From the lining fabric cut:

Lining Front/Lining Back: cut two

Lining Zip Panel Front/Lining Zip Panel Back: cut two on the fold

Lining Side/Base: cut one on the fold

Slip Pocket Lining: cut four

Front Pocket Body Lining: cut one

Front Pocket Flap Lining: cut one

Outer Zip Pocket Lining: 17x30cm (6¾x11⅞in)

Inner Zip Pocket Lining: 35x20cm (13¾x7⅞in)

Binding: cut and join strips, 3.5cm (1⅜in) wide to make a total length of 120cm (47in)

Step four From the iron-on interfacing cut:

Slip Pocket Interfacing: cut two, trim off 5mm (¼in) all round

Step five From the iron-on wadding cut:

Front Pocket Flap Wadding: cut two.

The remainder will be cut at a later stage

Step six From the Decovil 1 Light cut:

Front Pocket Body Interfacing: cut one, trim off 5mm (¼in) all round

Front Pocket Flap Interfacing: cut one, trim off 5mm (¼in) all round

PREPARING THE PIECES

Step one Make the binding into single fold bias binding using a bias tape maker.

Step two Press to fuse the WS of the following lining fabric pieces to the iron-on wadding then cut round each of them; Lining Front, Lining Back, Lining Zip Panel Front, Lining Zip Panel Back and Lining Side/Base. Don't attach the wadding to the Front Pocket Flap or Front Pocket Flap Lining at this stage.

Step three Place the following main fabric pieces RS up onto the foam interfacing; Outer Back, Outer Zip Panel Front, Outer Zip Panel Back, Outer Side/Base. Stitch into place all round the edge within the seam allowance then cut round each of them.

MAKING THE FRONT POCKET

Step one Trim off 5mm (¼in) all round the edge of one piece of Front Pocket Flap Wadding then press it centrally on the WS of the Front Pocket Flap main fabric. Press the Front Pocket Flap Interfacing on top of the wadding.

Step two Press the WS of the Front Pocket Flap Lining onto the other piece of Front Pocket Flap Wadding.

Step three Place the Front Pocket Flap and the corresponding lining piece RS facing and stitch together all the way round, leaving a gap in the centre of the top flat edge. Trim seam allowance, clip corners and notch curves. Turn RS out then fold the edges of the gap to the inside and press.

Step four Topstitch narrowly around the edge of the pocket avoiding the straight back area. Attach the male half of the snap fastener.

Step five Press the Front Pocket Body Interfacing centrally to the WS of the Front Pocket Body main fabric then place it RS facing with the Front Pocket Body Lining. Place this RS together with the Front Pocket Body Lining and sew all around, leaving a gap in the centre of the bottom edge.

Step six Clip the corners and turn RS out through the gap. Fold the edges of the gap inside and press so the seams lie on the edge.

MAKING THE OUTER FRONT

Step one Measure 2.5cm (1in) down from the top short edge on the WS of the Outer Zip Pocket Lining. At this point, draw a box 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) deep x 12cm (4 $\frac{3}{4}$ in) long. This is the sewing line.

Step two Draw a second line with angles at each end horizontally through the centre of the sewing box. This is the cutting line.

Step three Pin the marked Outer Zip Pocket Lining onto the Outer Front panel with RS facing, positioning it 6.5cm (2 $\frac{5}{8}$ in) down from the top curved edge and on the vertical centre line. ⁰¹

Step four Sew around the sewing line and cut along the cutting line including the angles. 'Post' the lining through the hole and smooth out on the back then press.

Step five Pin the front pocket zip into the opening on the WS and topstitch into place.

Step six Bring the two short ends of the pocket RS together and sew together down the sides and across the top to complete the pocket.

Step seven Pin the zip pocket up and out of the way. Place the Front Pocket Flap 4cm (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ in) down from the zip and centrally then stitch into place with a double row of top stitching.

Step eight Line the Front Pocket Body up with the flap so that the flap overlaps it by 5cm (2in). Sew into place with a double row of topstitching.

Step nine Attach the female half of the snap fastener on the Front Pocket Body so it meets up exactly with the male half on the front pocket flap when pressed together. Unpin the zip pocket and smooth it down.

MAKING THE SLIP POCKETS

Step one Press one piece of Slip Pocket Interfacing centrally on the WS of one of the Slip Pocket Lining fabric. Place this RS together with one non-interfaced slip pocket piece and sew together all the way round leaving a gap in the centre of the bottom edge. ⁰²

Step two Clip across the corners and turn RS out

through the gap. Fold the edges of the gap to the inside and press so the seams lie right on the edge. Repeat to make the other slip pocket in the same way.

ASSEMBLING THE LINING

Step one Place the top of the Inner Zip Pocket Lining 9cm (3 $\frac{5}{8}$ in) down from the top edge of the Lining Back on the vertical centre, RS facing.

Step two Measure 2.5cm (1in) down from the top of the Inner Zip Pocket Lining and mark a sewing line 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) deep x 14cm (5 $\frac{1}{2}$ in) long. Make the zip pocket in the same way as the outer zip pocket.

Step three Measure 15cm (6in) down from the top of the Lining Back and place the top of one slip pocket at this mark and positioned centrally across. Topstitch into place down the sides and across the bottom. Stitch a vertical line through the centre to stop it gaping and also to section it. Add more lines if you require.

Step four Position and stitch the other slip pocket on the Lining Front in the same way as for the slip pocket on the Lining Back.

MAKING THE ZIP TABS

Step one Fold both long edges of the Zip Tab piece over by 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) to the WS and press. Fold in half with WS together and press to make a tube 3cm (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ in) wide. Topstitch twice down each side to close and decorate.

Step two Cut the tube in half to make two 8x7cm (3 $\frac{1}{8}$ x2 $\frac{3}{4}$ in) tabs. Fold each tab in half, matching short ends. Tack to secure the ends.

MAKING THE ZIP PANEL

Step one Place the Outer Zip Panel Front RS up with the main zip RS down on top and the Lining Zip Panel Front RS down on top. Match the raw edges of the fabric with the edge of the zip tape to make a zip sandwich. Clip or pin together then sew along the length of the zip.

Step two Flip the layers the right way out then press and topstitch along the length with a double row of stitching.

Step three Repeat to sew the Outer Zip Panel Back and the Lining Zip Panel Back to the other side of the zip.

Step four Stitch the layers together all round the outer edges within the seam allowance.

Step five Pin and stitch one zip tab over one end of the zip. It needs to lie centrally across the zip with raw ends matching. ⁰³

Step six Repeat to stitch the other zip tab over the other end of the zip.

ATTACHING THE SIDE/BASE

Step one Make a sandwich with the Outer Side/Base and Lining Side/Base RS together and the zip panel in between. Sew across the end. ⁰⁴

Step two The side/base is a little longer than needed to allow for seam allowance anomalies. So, before you repeat this process at the other end of the zip panel to make the central loop, fit

the zip and base onto the bag front section to check for fit. Trim as needed.

Step three Stitch the layers together all round the outer edges within the seam allowance.

MAKING THE STRAP AND TABS

Step one Press to fuse the Bundfix tape to the WS of the two main fabric Strap pieces. Fold over the outer edges only using the perforations as a guide to create two straps 4cm (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ in) wide. Press.

Step two Place the two long Strap pieces WS facing and clip or pin together. ⁰⁵

Step three Sew together with two rows of topstitching down both long edges in a matching thread to close and decorate.

Step four To make the main strap look more attractive, professional and durable, unpick the topstitching a little way at either end then fold the raw ends in before gluing the ends shut with some fabric glue.

Step five Take the two Strap Tab pieces and fold the long sides under on both and then clip them together in the same way as you did for the strap to create one tab 4cm (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ in) wide.

Step six Sew together with two rows of topstitching down both long edges in a matching thread to close and decorate. Cut in half widthways to make two strap tabs.

Step seven Fold each Strap Tab in half, enclosing a rectangle ring in each, matching raw short edges. Tack the ends closed.

Step eight Thread one end of the strap under and over the slider bar so it overlaps by 4cm (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ in) then topstitch into place. ⁰⁶

ASSEMBLING THE BACKPACK

Step one Lay the completed front panel RS up on a piece of foam interfacing and stitch in place within the seam allowance. Trim the foam level with the fabric. Place the Outer Front and Lining Front WS facing, matching raw edges. Stitch all round within the seam allowance.

Step two Place the Outer Back and Lining Back WS facing, matching raw edges. Stitch together all round within the seam allowance.

Step three Pin and sew the assembled front outer to the zip/side/base gusset panel, RS facing.

Step four Pin and sew a strap tab with rectangle ring to the top curve on the Outer Back panel, matching raw edges in the position shown on the template. Attach the other strap tab to the side of the bag in the position on the template.

Step five Pin and sew the back panel RS together to the other side of assembled zip/side/base gusset panel.

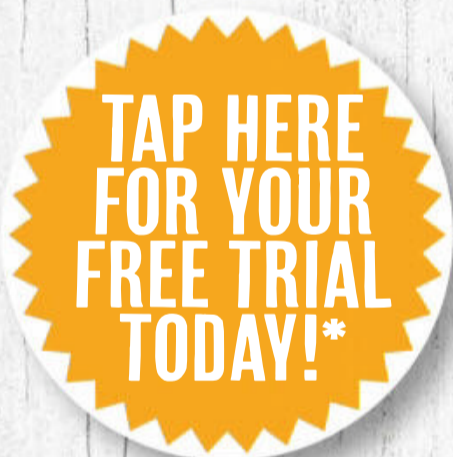
Step six Bind the raw edges inside with bias tape by folding it round the edges and machine/hand stitching in place.

Step seven Attach the strap by bringing the loose end through the top rectangle ring and back through the bag slider. Thread it through the side rectangle ring then fold the end over by 4cm (1 $\frac{5}{8}$ in) and topstitch in place.

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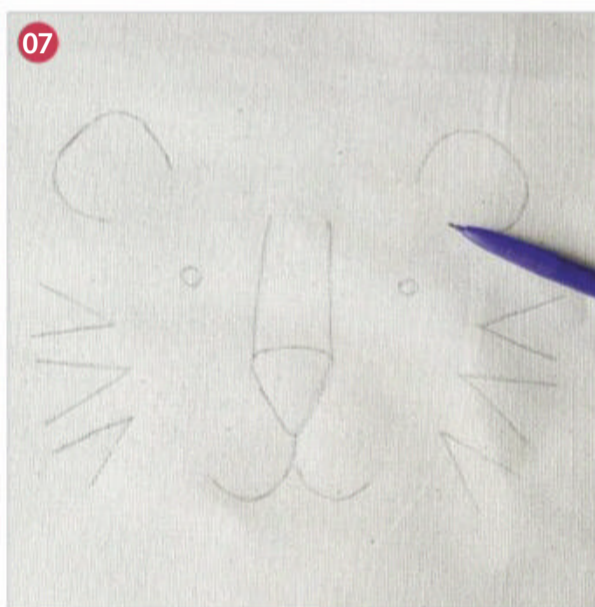
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WILD THING

Bring a touch of the wild indoors with this jungle-themed wall hanging from **Anna Alicia**.





YOU WILL NEED

- Plain natural heavy weight canvas: 1m x 30cm (32 x 11in)
- Dowel: 28cm (11in), 8mm–1cm thick
- Macramé cord: 40cm (16in)
- Stranded cottons in black, pale blue, mustard, mid-green
- Layout or tracing paper (2 sheets A4)
- Pencil
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Download the templates from www.gathered.how/ss-templates

PREPARATION

Step one Download, print and cut out the templates for the hanging.

CUTTING OUT

Step one From the canvas cut:

Wall hanging: Lay out your canvas, measure and cut a rectangle 80 x 26cm (31½ x 10¼in). **01**

MAKING THE PANEL

Step one Lay your canvas out in portrait position. Mark a point at the centre of the bottom narrow end. Next, mark a point 13cm (5¼in) up from that end on each of the long sides. Draw lines joining each of the side points to the centre point and cut along those lines, creating a point at the bottom end of your canvas. **02**

Step two With your canvas laid out flat (and face down if it has a right side), fold the long edges and pointed edge (but not the short straight edge) in by 5mm (¼in) twice, pinning as you go. At the tip and the edges of the point, take some time to create neat corners. **03**

Step three Sew along all the folded edges of your panel about 2mm (⅛in) in. **04**

Step four At the top edge of your panel (the unsewn edge) fold the canvas over by 1cm (⅜in) then again by 2.5cm (1in). Pin and then sew about 2–3mm (⅛in) in from the edge of the folded strip. Lay out your panel and press. **05**

EMBROIDERING THE HANGING

Step one Trace the lion and tiger face templates out onto layout or tracing paper. Press quite heavily as you draw as you will use these to transfer the drawings to the canvas (a soft pencil such as a 2B is ideal for this, but any pencil should work). Position your tracing of the tiger face face-down about one-third of the way up the panel, with the pointed end of the panel at the bottom. Now draw over the back of your drawing (you should be able to see the lines through your paper), pressing firmly as you draw. **06**

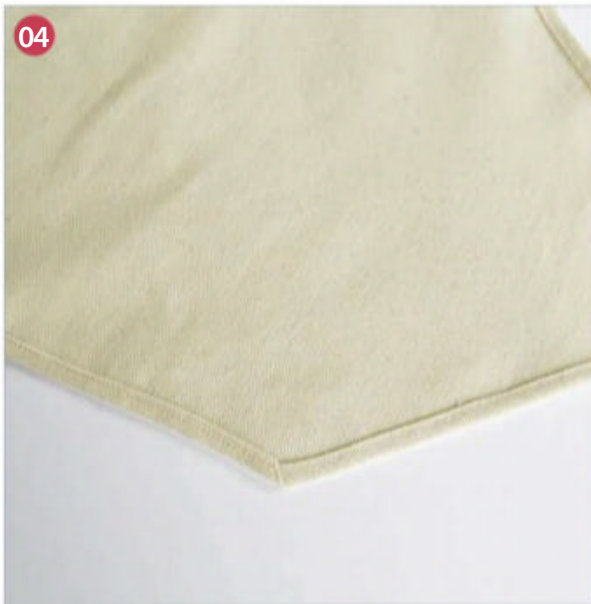
Step two Remove the paper. You should be able to see a faint transfer of your drawing. You may need to draw over the lines to make them easier to see if they are too faint. **07**

Step three Repeat the above steps with the lion face template but this time about one-third of the way down from the top (the end of the fabric with the channel).

Step four Finally, add the leaves. You can do this in the same way, using the templates, or just draw them out free-hand. **08**

Step five For the lion's mane use a long straight stitch for each line, using three strands of mustard stranded cotton. Repeat to create the V-shapes of the tiger's stripes. **09**

Step six For the remaining face and ear details, use two strands of black cotton and sew in a double running stitch (i.e. a running stitch in



one direction and then going back in the other direction to fill in the gaps). Sew around the edges of the eyes in black stranded cotton using double running stitch, then fill them in the circles fully with three strands of blue cotton in a satin stitch. **10**

Step seven Sew the leaves using double running stitch in three strands of green cotton. At the end of each section of embroidery stitch a knot at the back to secure your thread. **11**

Step eight Give the panel a good press, using a pressing cloth to protect your embroidery.

FINISHING

Step one Slide the dowel through the channel. Tie one end of the cord to one end of the dowel.

Step two Repeat at the other end, shortening the cord if necessary. **12**

TIP

Sketch your own animal templates in a similar modern style for a truly customised wall hanging.



FUN FOR EVERYONE

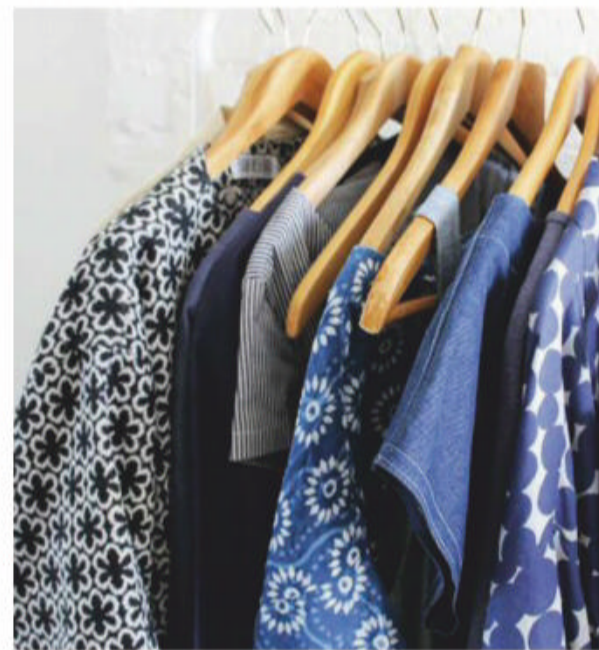
Designer Fiona Hesford is busy making sewing accessible to all

Written by Rachel Avery





Fiona Hesford's pattern collection mirrors her own style, opting for casual and easy-to-wear items. It's also important to Fiona that her patterns are simple to make and many of her dress patterns (including the Suki Kimono shown below) have handy step-by-step guides on her blog www.sewgirlblog.com



Leading by example is a trait that comes naturally to designer and sewist Fiona Hesford. Her advice for budding crafters is "not to run before you can walk and to try and avoid projects that are overly challenging," which is exactly why her own Sewgirl designs are "simple and straightforward to make."

As with a lot of creatives, Fiona's passion for making was sparked early on in her life: "I was aged eight or nine and I spent a lot of my time making a patchwork quilt with fabric offcuts, as well as hand sewing lots of clothes for my Sindy doll."

PASSION FOR PATTERNS

This love affair with patterns, textiles and handmade garments was almost certainly influenced by the matriarchs in her family; her mother, who championed handmade clothes, and her grandmother who was an accomplished tailoress.

The Laura Ashley prints that hung in Fiona's bedroom as a child also played a part in nurturing her imagination for design and

pattern. And her own 'Funky Flower Friday' posts on Instagram, showcasing the best floral prints of the week, demonstrate how this dedication to patterns has not waned over the years.

Days spent working as a fashion designer

"I WOULD LIKE SEW GIRL PATTERNS TO HOLD THE FLAG FOR SIMPLE, PRACTICAL, TIMELESS CLOTHING THAT CAN BE MADE IN A VARIETY OF FABRICS."

in Paris harnessed Fiona's passion and her fashion background shines through in her blog – scrolling its pages, you'll notice Fiona includes handy styling tips for her garments.

So, what's her own signature style? "I often wear a loose fitting tunic, perfect for working in as I like comfortable clothes that can be worn everyday," shares Fiona. And her own Sewgirl patterns are of a similar style: "I am



LEVEL UP

As a sewing pro and an expert teacher, Fiona is full of top tips and advice for sewists at every level.

BEGINNER

Top tip: When you start crafting, use a well-behaved fabric like cotton or a linen/cotton mix – something that's not too slippery or hard to work with.

Project recommendation: Start with simple projects like the Sewgirl Hilda tunic to build your confidence.

INTERMEDIATE

Top tip: When using iron-on interfacing to reinforce certain areas like waistbands, iron it to the reverse side of the fabric before pinning and cutting out the pieces.

Project recommendation: For a pattern using viscose fabrics, see the Sewgirl Suki kimono pattern.

ADVANCED

Top tip: Make a calico toile before starting a more complex pattern. Adjustments can be made and issues can be worked out on this prior to the final garment. It's always better to be safe than sorry!

Project recommendation: Master the technique of concealed zips with the Sewgirl Cecily dress.

inspired by what I like to wear myself, my philosophy is that if I don't want to wear it, no one else will." And it looks like her customers agree with this ethos, with the casual, easy-to-wear Edith tunic being the most popular pattern of all. "I would like Sewgirl patterns to hold the flag for simple, practical, timeless clothing, that can be made in a variety of fabrics," adds Fiona. And perusing through Fiona's website, you will be treated to an array of super-wearable designs you'll be desperate to sew at home.

As well as ensuring the end product is something that can be worn by many, her mission is to ensure the designs are ones that can be made by many too. "Each Sewgirl sewing pattern has its own blog post with extra photo step-by-step instructions aimed as a learning resource to help people with their sewing experience," explains Fiona. This crafting guru has thought about the finishing touches too – each pattern comes with its own Sewgirl label, something Fiona sees as "the cherry on top of the cake" for any finished me-made project.

Novices can learn a lot from Fiona's skills, and luckily for them she is keen to share her wealth of sewing knowledge. "I love teaching complete beginners how to sew and I get a big kick out of seeing the impact it has on people and how it empowers them to create things. Sewing really is a fantastic pastime and a valuable craft, and I think that everyone should do it!" she reports. Her regular 'Make Your Mother Proud' workshops

are testimony to this. Held in Chichester, South East England, they start with the basics – an introduction to machine sewing, followed up with a focus on dressmaking for those who want to learn more. And yes, the end result will be something your mother would definitely be proud of.

Fiona lives by the coast and although glorious summer days are often spent in a beachside cafe, she actually prefers dressing and crafting for the colder months. "My favourite season to design for is autumn

"SEWING REALLY IS A FANTASTIC PASTIME AND A VALUABLE CRAFT, AND I THINK THAT EVERYONE SHOULD DO IT!"

because I love to layer my clothes, and autumnal colours are amongst my favourite." Scroll through Instagram (@fionahesford_sewgirl) and you'll see which patterns and designs she is currently loving. As well as a space to showcase her work, Fiona champions social media platforms for being "a great tool to encourage people to sew."



The Cecily dress (left) features a boat neck and pleats at the waist for an elegant and comfortable fit. The Lottie Duster coat (above) is a lightweight jacket ideal for 'adventurous beginners' to try.



Fiona loves to wear a loose-fitting comfortable tunic dress. Above, Fiona wears the roomy simple-to-make Hilda tunic. The Edith tunic pattern (shown top-right) is her most popular item on Etsy. Fiona's Instagram feed is broken up with bursts of vibrant 70s prints like the one shown bottom-right.

LOOKING FORWARD

Looking to the future, Fiona comments on the huge responsibility of the sewing industry: "The industry must play a part in encouraging people to think more about what they wear and buy. In the future we will see more fabrics that have less of an impact on the environment. I also want to address sustainability as much as possible with my brand; my vintage Hmong bag kits contain artisanal fabrics, for example. We will inevitably move away from the throwaway culture." But the positive impact of homemade clothes isn't just reserved for the environment, Fiona recognises the positive impact it has on her relationship with the items she wears too: "When I sew my own clothes, I notice how much more connected I feel to them." We couldn't agree more.

To see Fiona's upcoming workshops visit her website www.sewgirl.co.uk. Fiona holds workshops for her own patterns and also posts tips, inspiration, and guidance on her Sewgirl blog. Keep up to date with her latest patterns and favourite prints on Instagram, @fionahesford_sewgirl.



PATTERN EXCLUSIVE

Don't miss our April issue (no. 67, on sale 19 March) as it will come with a new Sewgirl blouse pattern, produced exclusively for you – our *Simply Sewing* readers. We're so excited about this collaboration, you're going to love it. Put it in your diary, folks! =

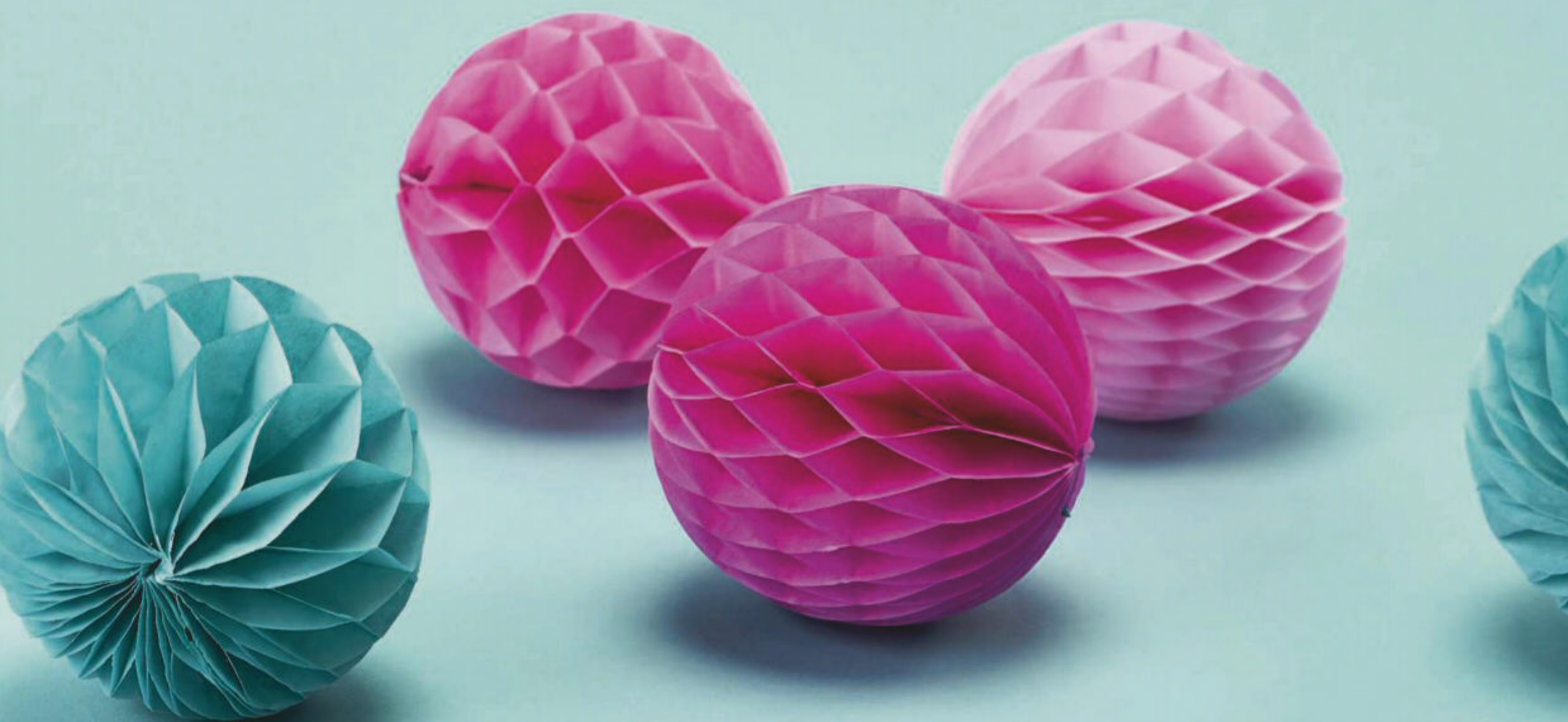


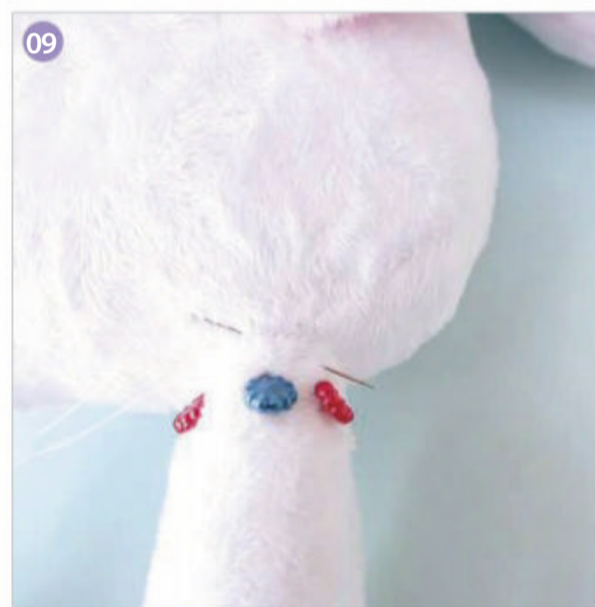
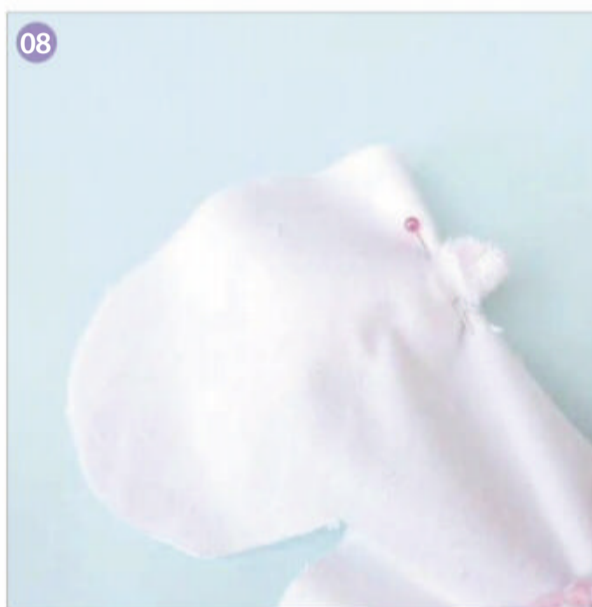
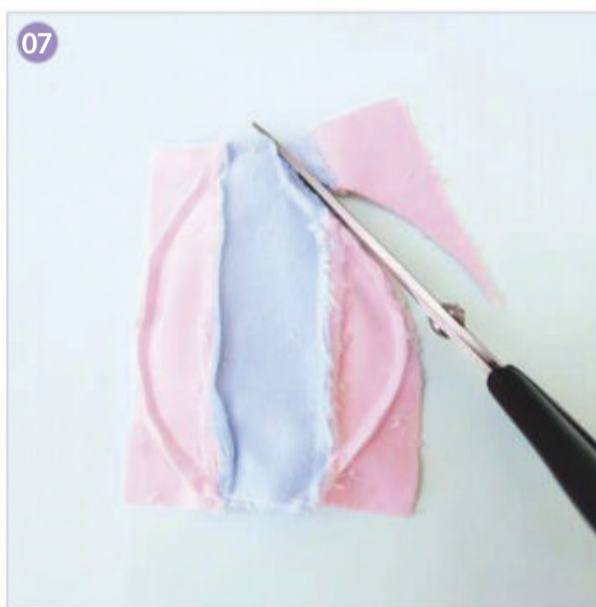
Sewgirl



A TOUCH OF MAGIC

Lucy Ward's unicorn is the perfect fleecy friend for fairytale adventures. Make yours in pretty pastels with a sparkly horn for the ultimate cuddle companion.





YOU WILL NEED

- White smooth cuddle fleece: 63x52cm (25x20½in)
- Pink smooth cuddle fleece: 40x 32cm (16x13in)
- Blue smooth cuddle fleece: 26x18cm (10x7in)
- Purple smooth cuddle fleece: 28x13cm (11x5in)
- Pink satin: 22x10cm (8¾x4in)
- Black and pink stranded cotton
- Polyester toy filling
- Basic sewing kit

FINISHED SIZE

- Approximately 35cm (in) tall

NOTES

- Download the templates from www.gathered.how/ss-templates
- Fabric measurements are WxH.
- Cut pattern pieces so that the stretch is on the width. The nap on the fabrics should run downwards, except for the ears and mane, which should run upwards.
- Use 6mm (¼in) seam allowances unless indicated.
- Fasten off at the beginning and end of stitching.

CUTTING OUT

- Step one** Print and cut out the templates.
- Step two** Pin the pattern pieces onto the fabric wrong side (WS) and draw around them. Cut out, then transfer markings to the fabric WS.
- Step three** From the white cuddle fleece, cut:
- Body:** one pair
 - Outer Ears:** one pair
 - Legs:** four pairs
- Step four** From the pink cuddle fleece, cut:
- Wings:** two pairs
 - Inner Ears:** one pair
 - Mane Scallops:** two medium pairs and one large pair
 - Tail Strip:** two pairs
- Step five** From the blue cuddle fleece, cut
- Mane Scallops:** two small pairs and two large pairs
 - Tail Strip:** one pair
- Step six** From the purple cuddle fleece, cut:
- Hooves:** four pairs
- Step seven** From the pink satin, cut:
- Horn:** one

MAKING THE LEGS

- Step one** Pin a Hoof to the end of a Leg, with right sides (RS) facing. Pin, tack and sew. ⁰¹
- Step two** Trim the seam and remove the tacking stitches. Repeat for the remaining three legs.
- Step three** Pin then tack each Leg piece, RS together. Matching up the seams where the

legs join the hooves. Sew, leaving the top short ends open. Remove tacking, trim the seams and turn RS out.

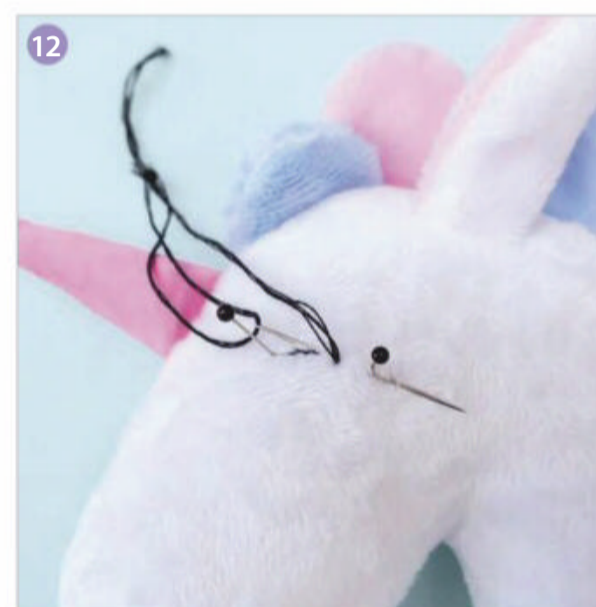
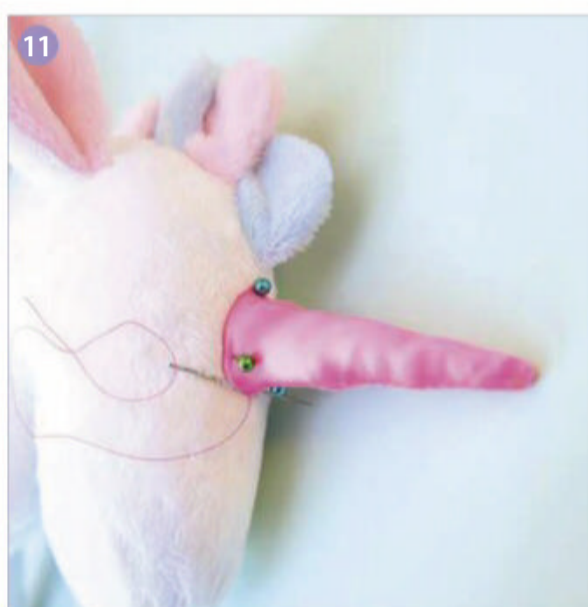
Step four Using a wooden stick or similar, stuff each leg firmly. Pay attention to poking the stuffing into the corners of the hooves. Leave a 1cm (½in) area unstuffed at the top and turn the raw edge under. Tack if you wish to keep the turn in place. Set the legs aside for now.

MAKING THE MANE

- Step one** Pin all Mane Scallop pairs RS together. Sew along the curved edge, leaving the straight edge open. Trim the seams, and clip small notches in the curves. Turn RS out. ⁰²
- Step two** Arrange the mane pieces in a line, with the smallest at the ends and the largest towards the middle. Layer them from left to right, so that each scallop overlaps the next by 1cm (½in).
- Step three** To attach the scallops together into one joined section, pin them together, then make a small running stitch through both layers of the fabric along the very bottom edge of each scallop. Set the piece aside. ⁰³

MAKING THE EARS

- Step one** Pin an Outer and Inner Ear piece RS together and sew, leaving the short straight edge open. Trim the seams, clip the curves and turn RS out. Repeat for the other ear.
- Step two** Oversew the open ends of each ear to



close them, then fold each ear in half inwards, vertically down the middle to form a 3D shape. Sew a couple of hand stitches at the bottom to secure the fold and then set aside. ⁰⁴

MAKING THE WINGS

Step one Pin, tack and sew each Wing piece, RS together. Trim the seams and clip notches, especially in the deep V areas. Turn RS out.

Step two Make a small horizontal running stitch through both layers of fabric, along the length of each wing, to form three 'tubes'. Place stuffing into these 'tubes', pushing firmly with the stick into the seams. Do not overstuff and leave at least 1.5cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in) at the open end unstuffed, so that the wing can be sewn into the seam of the body. ⁰⁵

Step three Oversew the open ends of each wing, so that the stuffing remains in place.

MAKING THE TAIL

Step one Pin a pink Tail Strip RS together with a blue Tail Strip along the long edges. Then pin the other pink strip to the opposite side of the blue piece. Tack and sew. Repeat to create the other side of the tail. ⁰⁶

Step two Trace the tail template onto the WS of one of the assembled strips. Pin the top strip onto the bottom strip, RS together, matching up the seams. Sew along the drawn line, leaving the short end open. Once sewn, cut out, leaving

a 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) seam around it. ⁰⁷

Step three Trim the seams, then turn RS out. Stuff firmly. Turn under the raw edge of the tail by 1cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in). Set aside.

INSERTING THE EARS AND WINGS

Step one Push an ear through the slit in the body piece, taking it from the RS through to the WS. Pin and tack in place. Sew with several lines of stitching to ensure the ears are secure. ⁰⁸

Step two From the RS of the body, push the wing through the slit and pin it in place. Sew over several times to create a strong seam. Trim the excess fabric from the seam.

MAKING THE BODY AND THE MANE

Step one Insert the mane into the body between the marks, facing inwards. Pin along its length. Continue to pin around the body. Remember to leave the opening at the back for turning and stuffing. Tack all around, checking that the mane is properly positioned in the seam. Sew, then trim all seams and clip notches before turning the body RS out.

Step two Stuff the head and body, using the stick to help. Close the gap with ladder stitch.

ATTACHING THE LEGS AND TAIL

Step one Using extra long pins, position the legs on the body. Each leg should sit just to the side of the body's bottom centre seam. Pin all legs,

to check the unicorn can stand! Ladder stitch each leg in place, sewing around twice to ensure the legs are secure. ⁰⁹

Step two Pin the tail high on the body, midway over the centre seam. Ladder stitch in place, again sewing around twice for security. ¹⁰

MAKING THE HORN

Step one Fold the Horn piece lengthwise down the centre, RS together. Pin and sew down these long side lengths. Trim the seam and turn RS out. Stuff, poking the stuffing to the tip of the horn. Leave a 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) gap unstuffed at the open end so that you can turn it under to hide the raw edges.

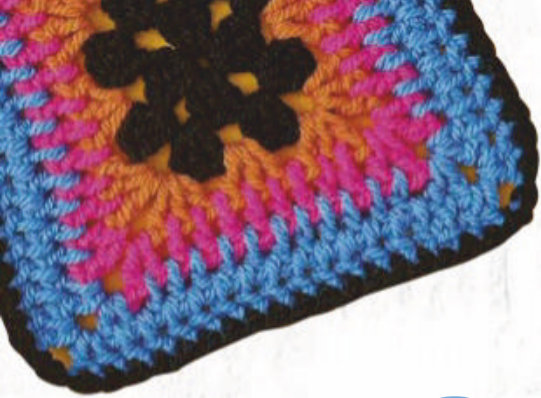
Step two Place the horn 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) in front of the mane and across the centre head seam. Pin in place, then ladder stitch all around. ¹¹

MAKING THE EYES AND NOSE

Step one Mark the where position you would like the eyes to sit. Use four strands of black stranded cotton and sew a backstitch in a slight arc. ¹²

Step two Make three straight stitches to create eyelashes towards the back of the eye. Repeat on the other side. Ensure the eyes are level.

Step three Sew a small satin stitch into a circle for the nose, using four strands of pink stranded cotton. Mark out with pins first to check the circles on each side are level.



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KATIE JONES



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left is for you to join in the fun! The bright, bold design perfectly exemplifies Katie's iconic style, and the quirky 2-in-1 CAL means you choose how to hook it! To celebrate, we wanted to offer you an extra-special limited time offer...subscribe today and receive a **14-ball bundle of Stylecraft Special DK yarn**, PLUS pay just £30.95 every six issues – saving 28% on the shop price. Each issue, you'll receive the next Carnaby CAL instalment, so month-by-month you can transform them into either a blanket or jumper. Plus, every issue's bursting with over **20 beautiful crochet patterns** for gifts, garments, accessories and more, not to mention a fab crochet gift too. Don't miss the fun – subscribe today!

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STITCH

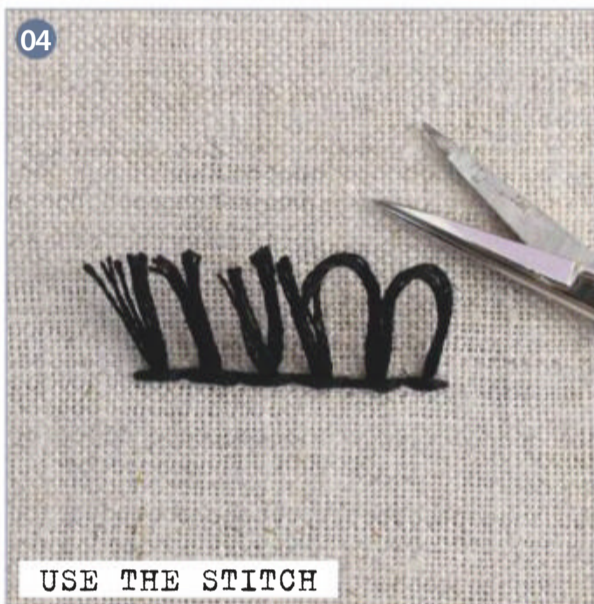
library

Discover Turkey stitch and sew your own quirky sleep mask with realistic eyelashes on linen with Mollie Johanson's design.



CUT OUT & KEEP

TURKEY STITCH



YOU WILL NEED

- Fat quarter linen fabric
- Fat quarter flannel fabric
- Elastic 36cm (14in)
- Black stranded cotton
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 7mm unless otherwise stated
- Fat quarter = 45x56cm (18x22in)
- Download the templates from www.gathered.how/ss-templates

TURKEY STITCH

Step one Download, print and cut out the templates for the sleep mask.

Step two Unlike most stitches, start on the front and go down through the fabric, leaving a short tail on the surface. Come back up just to the left of the starting point, then go down to the right of the starting point. This makes one fringe piece, plus a stitch to secure it. ⁰¹

Step three Come up through the same hole as the starting point where the fringe piece is. Go down to the right of the securing stitch, leaving a loop that's the same length as the fringe piece. Come back up at the end of the securing stitch. ⁰²

Step four Go down to the right of the end of the loop, securing the stitch.

Step five Repeat steps three and four along the length of the line, keeping the loops as close in size as possible. End with a securing stitch and then knot the thread on the back. To make a fuller fringe, add more lines of turkey stitch, staggering the placement of the stitches. ⁰³

Step six Snip the loops of the thread and trim them to even out the line of fringe. ⁰⁴

MAKING THE SLEEP MASK

Step one Embroider the sleepy eyes pattern on linen using turkey stitch and six strands of black stranded cotton. Work with the design upside down so the fringe lays correctly as eyelashes. Cut out the pattern piece from linen, then cut a thin

cotton wadding piece and a flannel piece. ⁰⁵

Step two Layer the linen and flannel right sides (RS) together, with the elastic between them and the wadding on the bottom. The ends of the elastic should extend from the edges by approx 5mm (1/4in). Pin and sew around the edges with a 7mm seam allowance, leaving an opening at the top for turning.

Step three Clip the curves and turn the sleep mask RS out. Hand sew the opening closed. Stitch around the edge of the sleep mask with three strands of coordinating embroidery floss and running stitch to finish. ⁰⁶



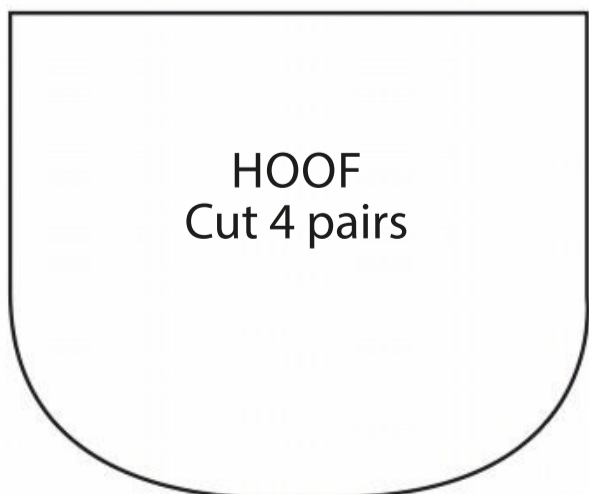
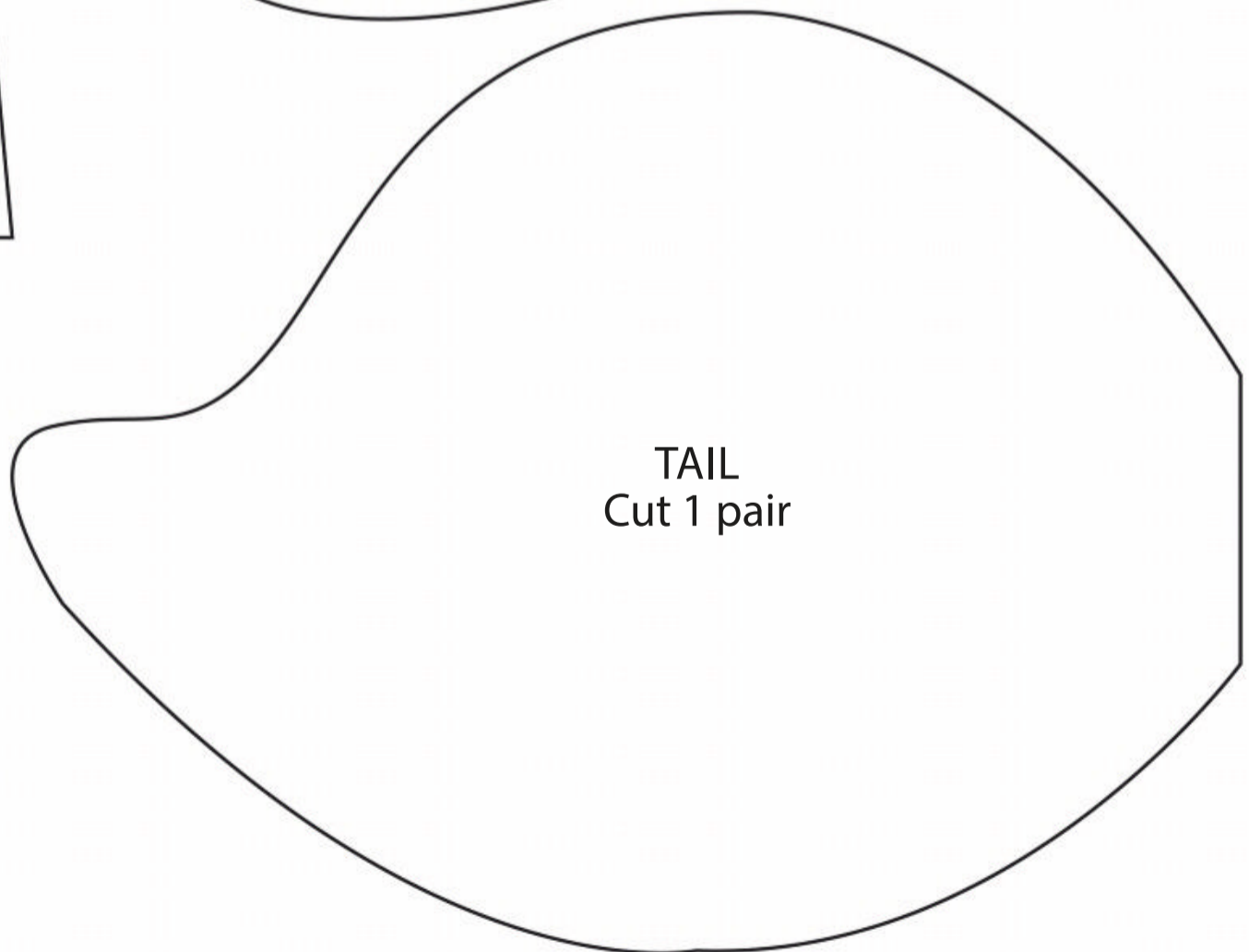
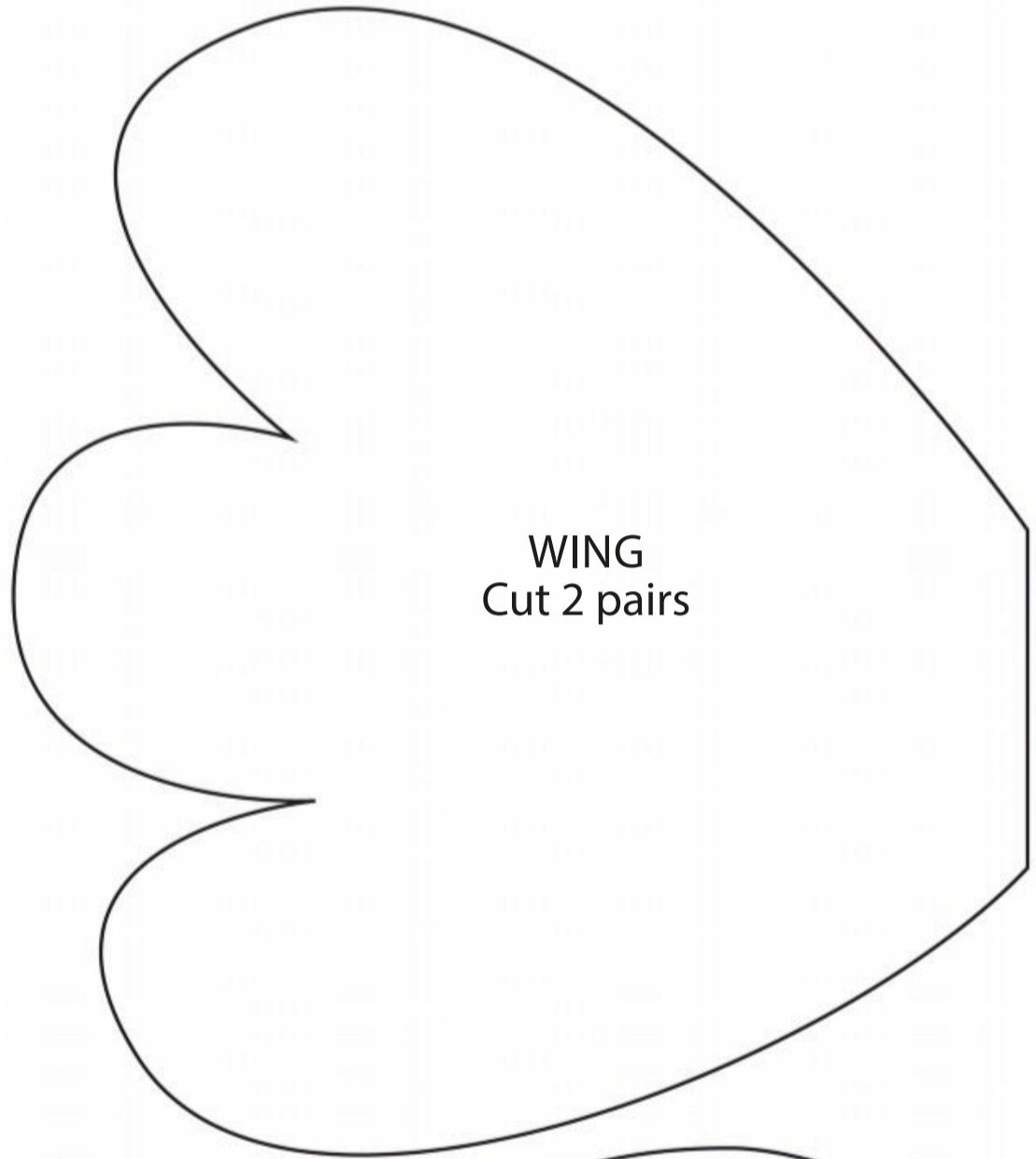
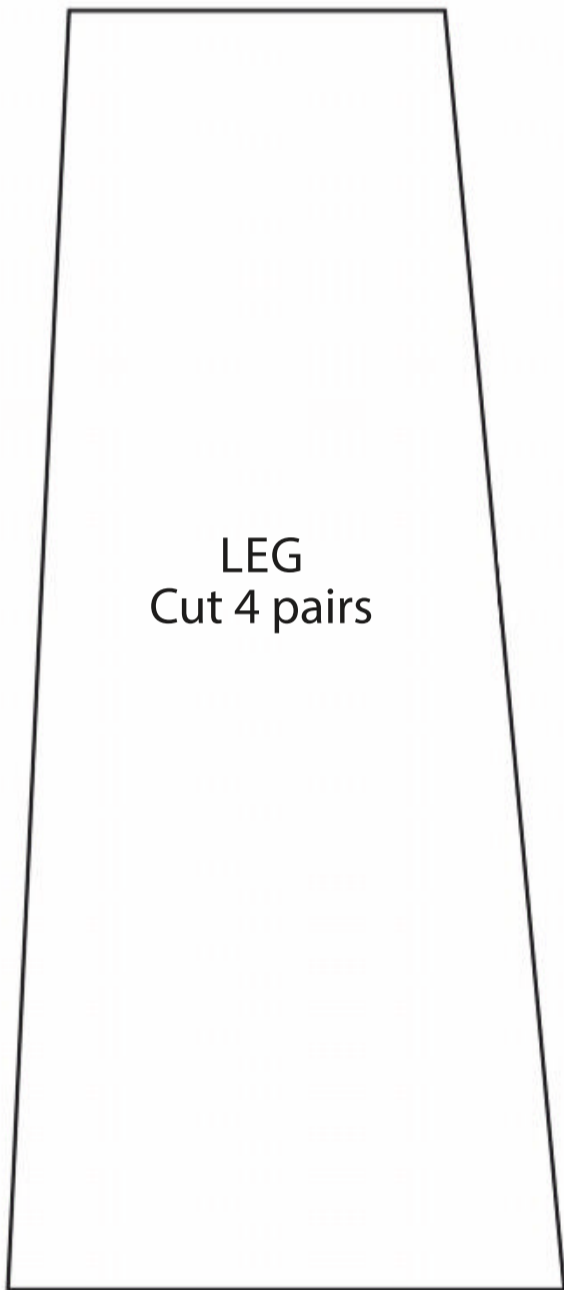
TEMPLATES

Here are the templates you will need to make some of the projects in *Simply Sewing* issue 66.

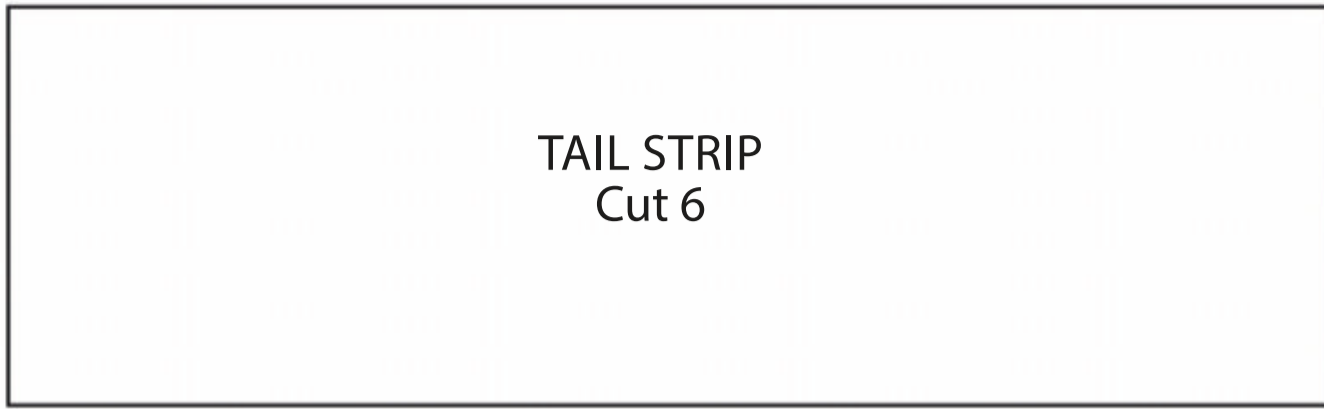
UNICORN TOY

PAGE 80

ACTUAL SIZE



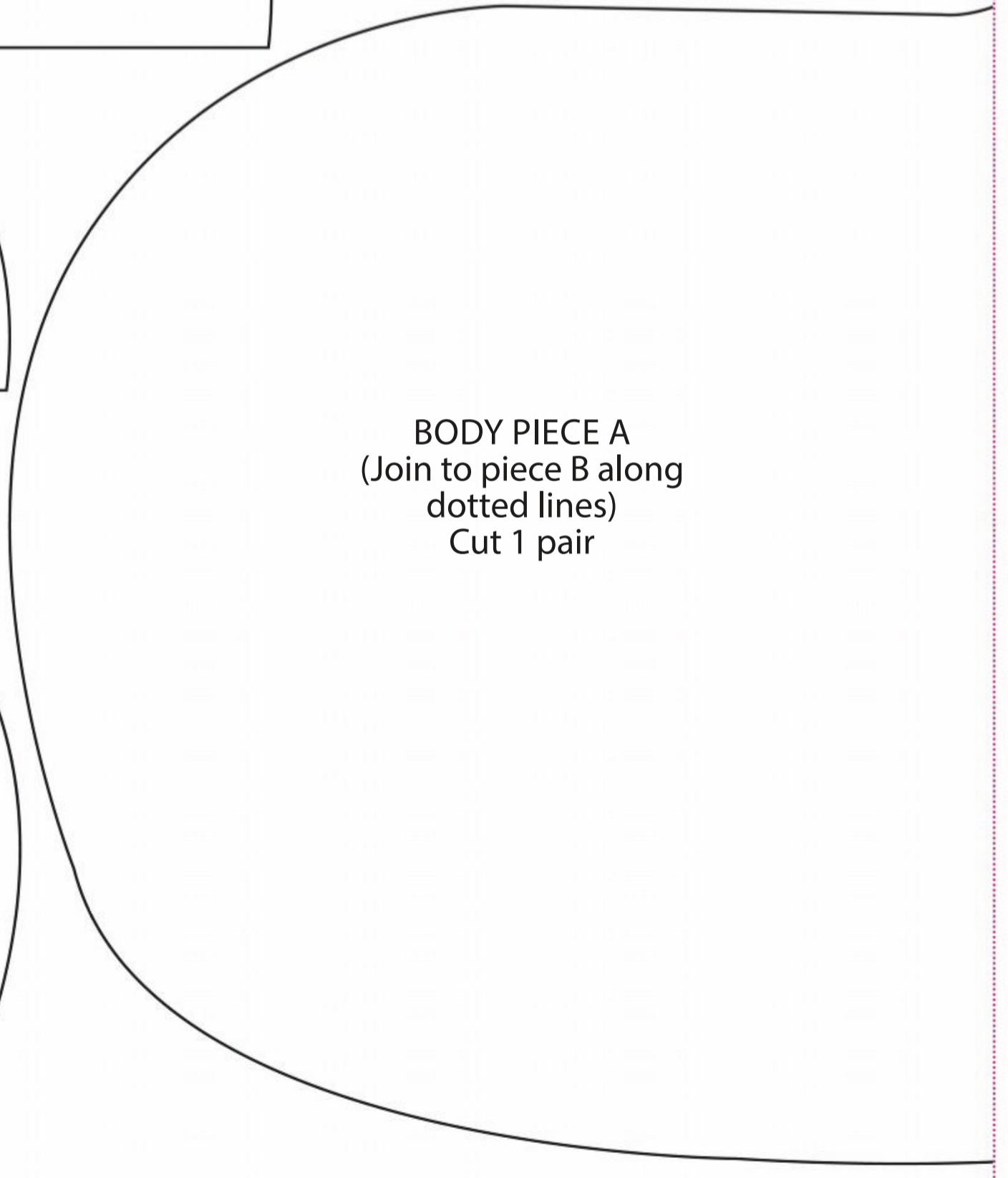
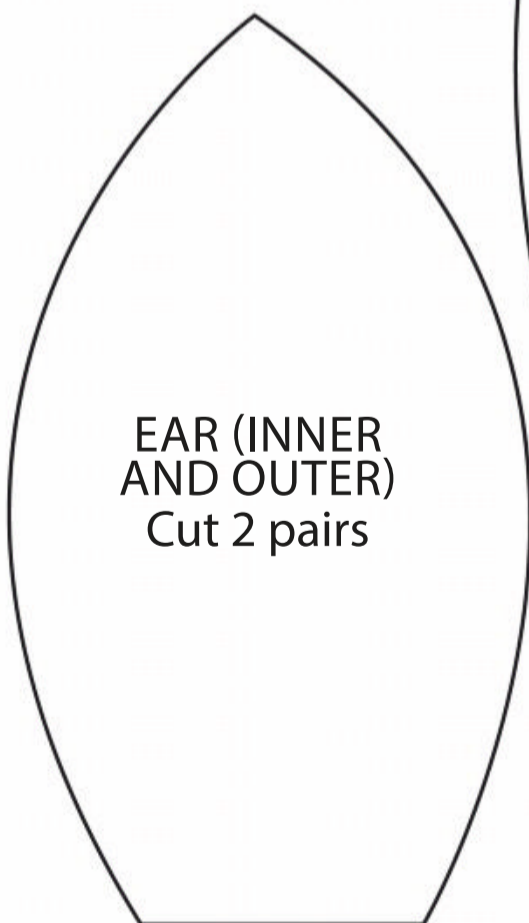
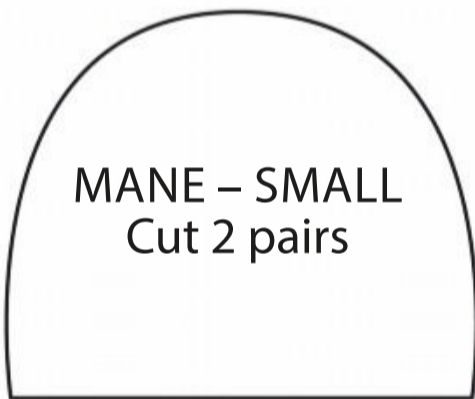
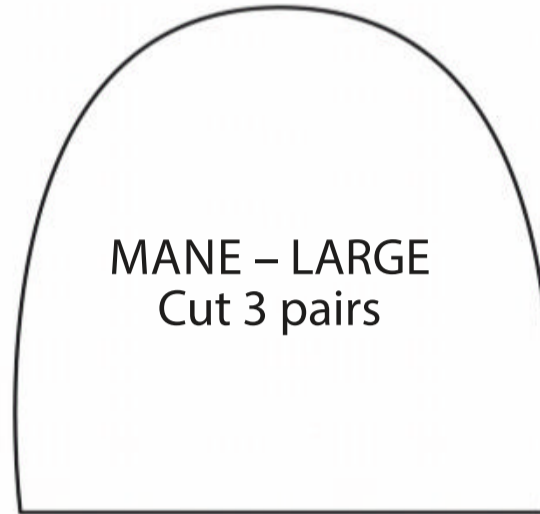
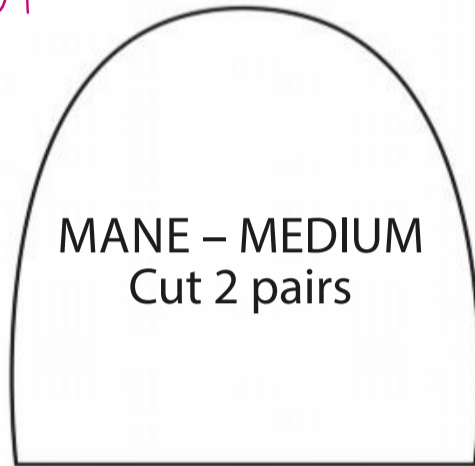
—→ TEMPLATES ←—



UNICORN TOY

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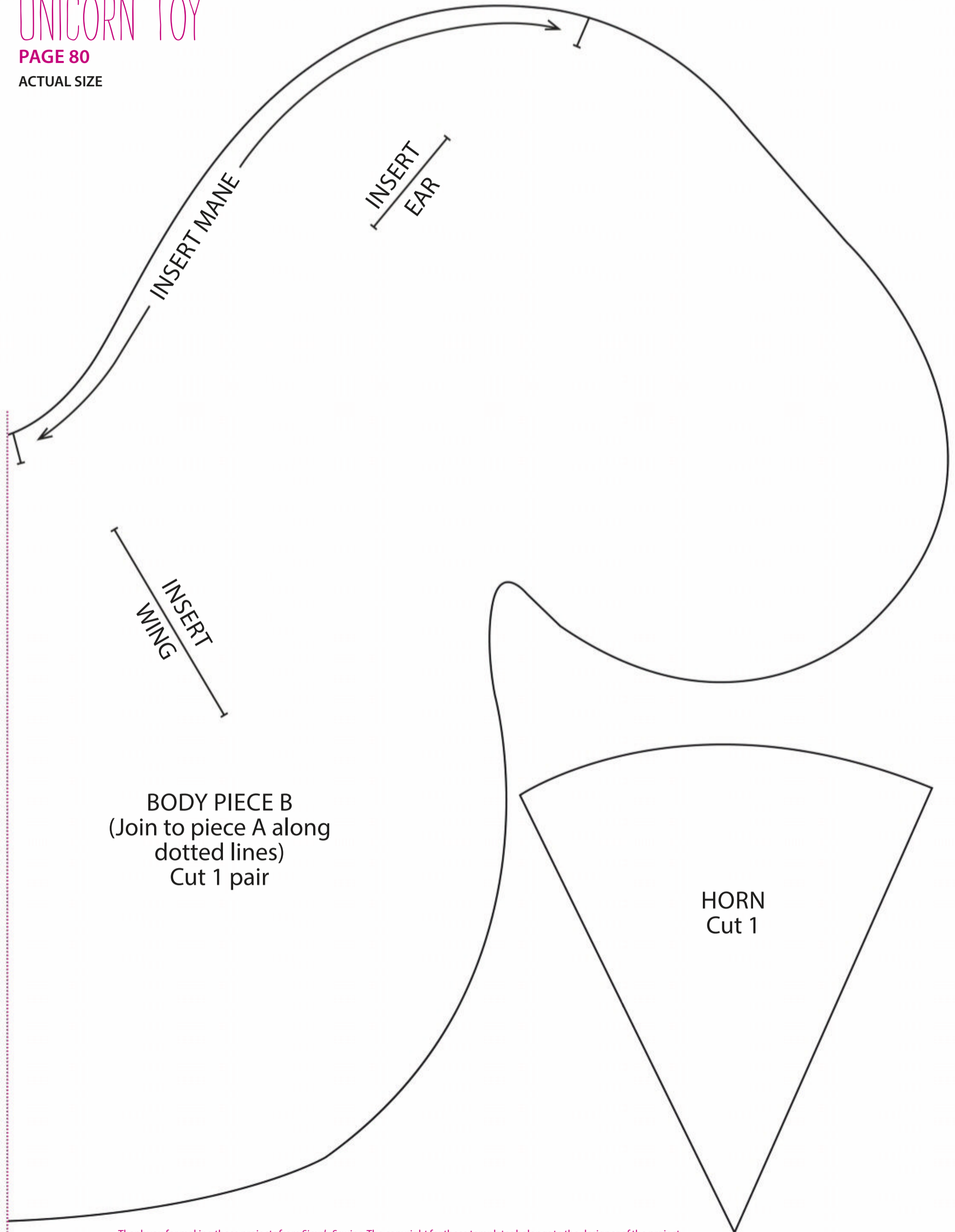
ACTUAL SIZE



UNICORN TOY

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ACTUAL SIZE



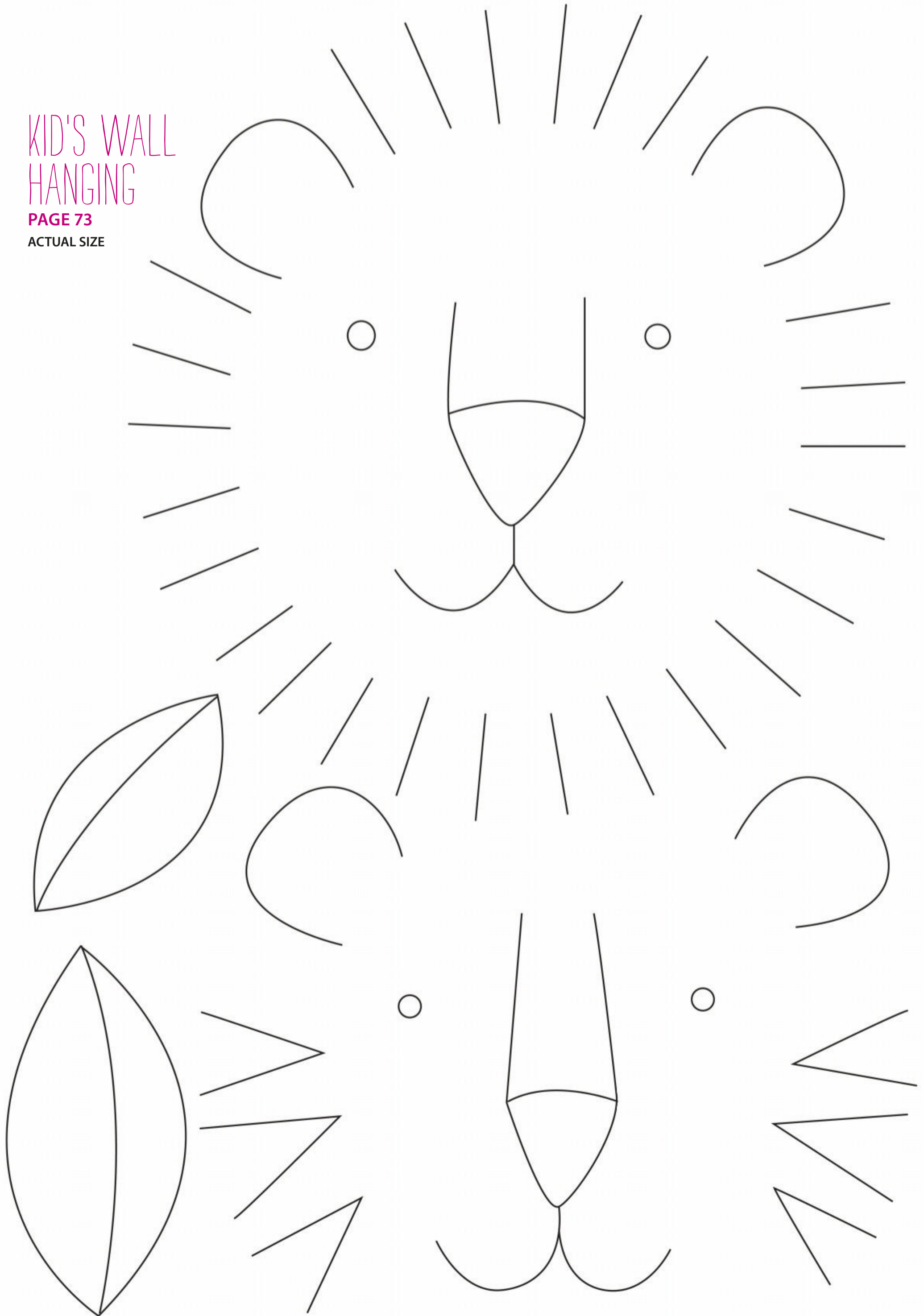
BODY PIECE B
(Join to piece A along
dotted lines)
Cut 1 pair

HORN
Cut 1

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KID'S WALL
HANGING

PAGE 73
ACTUAL SIZE



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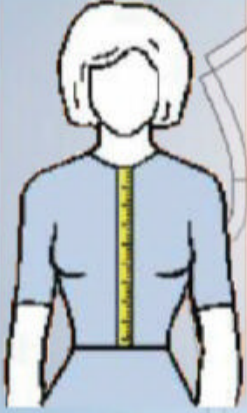
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Simply Sewing

FRESH IDEAS WITH FABRIC

THE GUIDE

You'll find essential information, useful stitches and key sewing techniques on these pages.

TAPE MEASURE

A flexible fabric tape measure will take accurate measurements.

SEAM RIPPER

This sharp blade cuts through and unpicks stitches.

SHEARS

Keep a pair of sharp shears just for cutting out your fabric.

THIMBLE

Wear to protect your fingers when handstitching.

MARKING PENCIL

Choose a colour that shows up on your fabric.

TAILOR'S CHALKS

Chalk temporarily marks fabric and can be easily brushed away.

SMALL SCISSORS

Use for snipping threads and cutting notches.

FABRIC CLIPS

Use these instead of pins when sewing thicker fabrics.

PINS

Stainless steel pins with sharp points are best.

PINKING SHEARS

These cut a zigzag edge on fabric to neaten.

FABRIC WEIGHTS

Use instead of pins to hold your pattern in place.

BOBBINS

This forms the underside of the machine stitch.

THREAD

This forms the top side of the machine stitch.

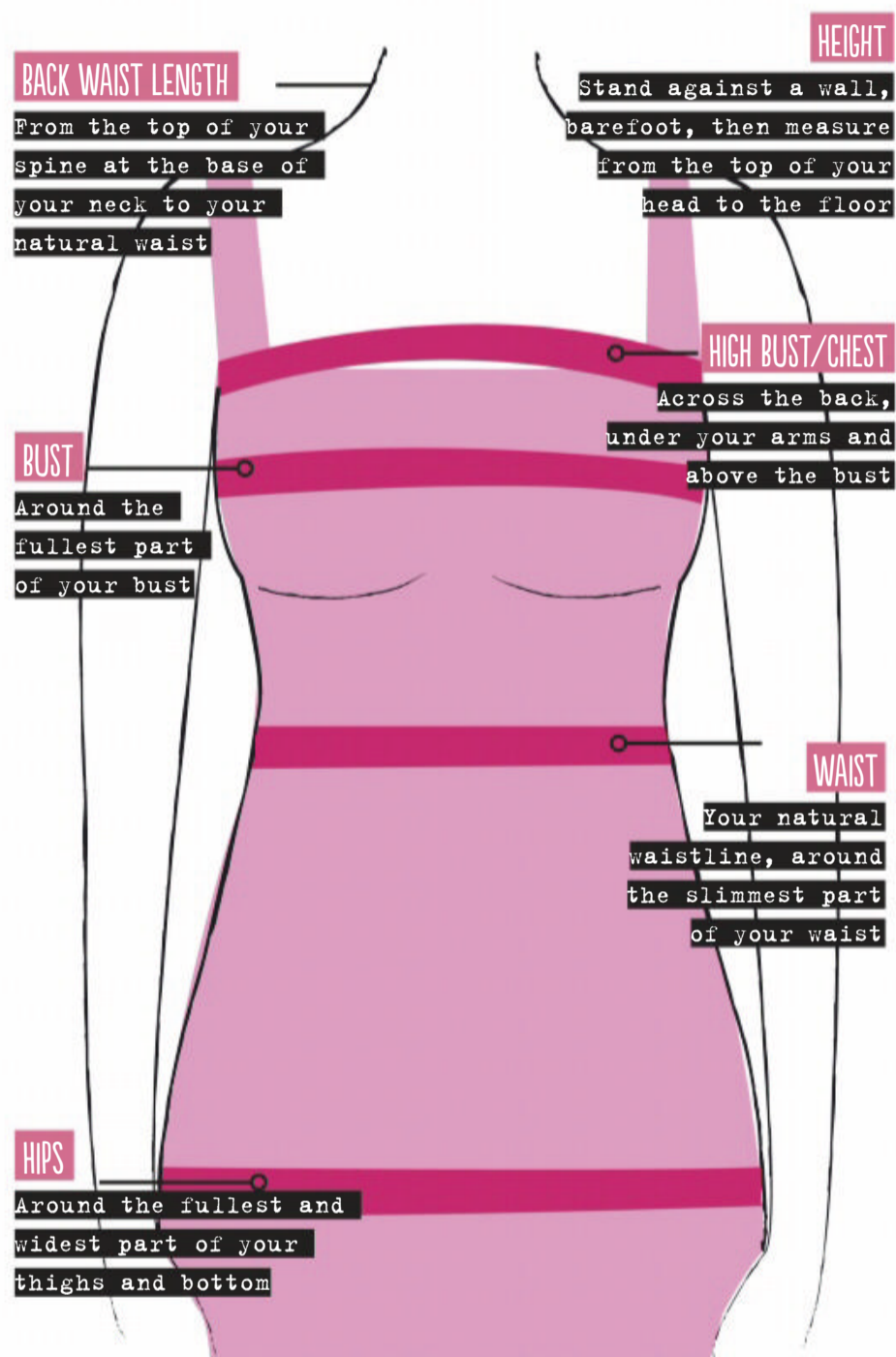
HOW TO MEASURE YOURSELF ACCURATELY

ALWAYS MEASURE YOURSELF BEFORE you choose a pattern size to cut out. The sizes do vary greatly from pattern to pattern, so it's always best to measure yourself accurately and then refer to the pattern's size chart to find your size. The chart will usually be printed on the pattern envelope or on the instructions inside.

Measure yourself in your underwear and preferably in the bra you'll be wearing underneath

your garment as this can alter the measurements slightly. Use a fabric tape measure as it'll curve around your body well for accuracy. You can measure on your own if you stand in front of a mirror, but, for best results, ask a friend to help so they can check the tape measure is sitting in the right places. Make sure the tape measure sits snugly around you but is not pulled tight.

Take the measurements shown in the diagram and note them down.



HOW TO USE A PATTERN

Preparing your fabric and cutting out your sewing pattern accurately is just as important as the actual sewing. Wash your fabric before you begin as fabric can shrink and run. Once dry, press it well.

PREPARING THE PATTERN

Patterns often come with several options of different finishes so you may have more pieces than you need. The instruction sheet will tell you which pieces to use. Roughly cut out all of the pieces outside the lines then press the pieces using a dry iron on a low heat to remove the folds and creases.

CUTTING OUT THE PATTERN

Choose your size using your measurements and the size chart. Cut along the corresponding lines on your pattern. When you reach any fiddly curves, take care to cut along the correct size lines.

CUTTING LAYOUTS

Choose the correct one for the width of fabric you're using, the

size you're cutting and the style of garment. Many patterns have more than one option (or view) and each one can have a different layout.

CUTTING OUT

Lay your fabric flat and smooth it out. Fold or place the fabric as shown on the cutting layout. Lay the pattern pieces in the order and right side or wrong side up as shown. Check to make sure that the grainlines on the pattern are parallel with the selvages by measuring. Pin your pattern pieces carefully in place and cut around them through the fabric using a pair of dressmaker's shears.

TRANSFERRING MARKINGS

The markings on the pattern pieces need to be transferred to the fabric. They're really important for matching up fabric pieces later and for positioning elements such as darts and pockets. You can mark these with chalk, fabric markers, snips on the fabric, or with small tacking stitches.

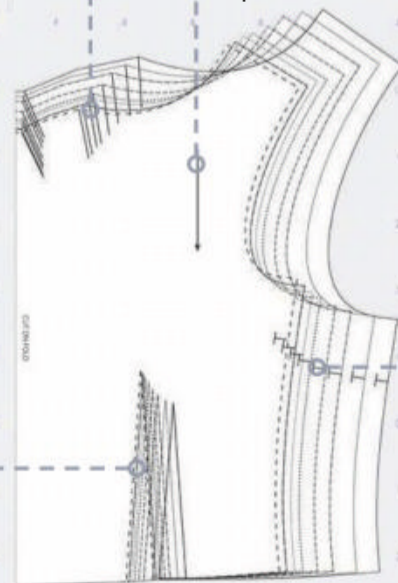
PATTERN MARKINGS

Pleats: These lines are matched up to create pleats on the cut out fabric pieces.

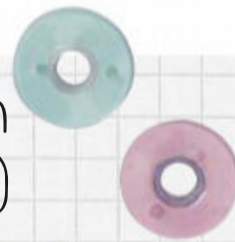
Arrows: Grainline arrows are used to show which direction to pin the pattern on the fabric. The grainline runs parallel to the fabric edge.

Darts: These lines are for matching up to create darts within the fabric pieces.

Notches: Shown as triangles or small lines, these are marked on the edges and are mainly used for matching up pattern pieces.



CHOOSING AND BUYING FABRICS



IT'S IMPORTANT TO CHOOSE the correct fabric for your pattern. Most patterns give suggested fabric types that will work best with the style of garment. Use this to guide you as some patterns need more drape, body or structure than others.

Fabric can be made from natural fibres such as cotton, linen, wool and silk or synthetic fibres such as acetate, acrylic, nylon, polyester, rayon and viscose. All these fabric come in different weights, or thicknesses, which suit different garments.

Lightweight fabrics are ideal for lingerie, nightwear and summer clothing, and include cheesecloth, chiffon, crepe-de-chine, georgette, lawn, muslin, organdie, organza and voile.

Medium-weight fabrics, which work for dresses, shirts, trousers and childrenswear, include calico, cotton, crepe, dupion, linen, poplin and finer wool.

Heavy-weight fabrics are used for garments or projects needing more strength, like coats, jackets, winter wear and bags. Canvas, corduroy, denim, tweeds, velvet and wool are all in this category.

Some patterns require fabrics that are quite fluid and have a good drape to make them hang properly, such as a circle skirt or blouse. Synthetic or synthetic mix fabrics such as rayon, challis, chiffon or lightweight jersey have a better drape to them.

Stretch and knit fabrics such as jersey and lycra are virtually crease free and comfortable to wear. They

can be bought in a variety of thicknesses and qualities depending on their use but are ideal for sportswear and casual clothing.

Interfacing gives an extra layer of support to your fabric – for example, to stiffen facings and collars. Choose an interfacing that's slightly lighter than your main fabric, and if you're using a fusible (iron-on) option then always test it on a scrap of the fabric first as it can melt if the iron is too hot.

Interfacing is available in different weights and as an iron-on (fusible) or sew-in version. With fusible interfacing, press the shiny side to the wrong side of your fabric. Tack sew-in interfacing to the wrong side of the fabric pieces around the edges.

If you're buying fabric off a roll (or bolt) then you'll usually buy it by the metre. This is only the length of the fabric you're buying – the width depends on the width of the roll. Fabrics are sold in standard widths, which vary according to their purpose – for example, dressmaking or quilting fabric generally comes in standard widths of 112cm (44in) or 150cm (60in). Curtain or soft furnishing fabric is normally 137cm (54in) wide and is really useful for bags and aprons as it's thicker and stronger than dressmaking fabrics. The fabric requirements on the pattern instructions will tell you what length of fabric to buy, usually with two width choices. Some patterns, such as large circle skirts, can only be cut from the wider fabrics.

FINISHING SEAMS

ONCE YOU HAVE FINISHED stitching your seam, it's best to press it open on the wrong side so it lies flat. Sometimes it's better to press it to one side to reduce bulk but the pattern instructions will tell you this.

Usually the seam allowances are left as they are as they help to strengthen the seam, but sometimes they cause too much bulk so they are trimmed to half their original width.

If your fabric has a tendency to fray you should neaten the raw edges after you have worked the seam. There are several ways of doing this. To machine-finish them, set your sewing machine to the zigzag stitch then stitch close to the raw edge all the way along. The zigzag must be small enough to stop the fabric from fraying but large enough to enclose the bulk of the fabric. Practise a few lengths and widths before you begin. Alternatively, you can trim the raw fabric edges with a pair of pinking shears. If you have an overlocker then you can stitch, cut and finish the seams all in one process.

MACHINE NEEDLES

There are many different needle types and they vary by the shape of the point, eye and shaft thickness. Choose the correct one for smooth stitching.

UNIVERSAL

A great multi-purpose needle which can be used for woven fabrics and has a slightly rounded point for stitching knit fabrics, too.

BALL POINT

This needle has a more rounded point than the universal needle so you won't get snags, ladders or holes. Perfect for knit fabrics.

JEANS

A strong needle, ideal for stitching several layers of fabric or tightly woven fabrics like denims.

SHARPS

With a sharp point, these are for sewing very fine and delicate fabrics and neat buttonholes.

LEATHER

This needle's wedge-shaped cutting point is used to work strong seams on non-woven fabrics like leather, suede and vinyl.

STRETCH

Designed for sewing two-way stretch knits such as lycra and silk jersey. It prevents skipped stitches on fine knit fabrics.

QUILTING

This will pierce multiple layers whilst keeping straight stitches so it is ideal for patchwork and machine quilting.

TOPSTITCH

This has an extra-sharp point and eye, so thicker topstitching thread can be used. It's perfect for straight stitching with thicker threads on any type of fabric.

TWIN

Used for parallel rows of stitching such as pintucks and hems.

NEEDLE SIZE GUIDE

UK SIZE	US SIZE	FABRIC
60	8	Silks
70	10	Lightweight fabrics
75	11	Medium weight fabrics
80	12	Medium weight fabrics
90	14	Medium weight fabrics
100	16	Heavy weight fabrics
110	18	Upholstery fabrics/denim
120	20	Heavy canvas

GLOSSARY

For a full glossary of sewing terms visit www.gathered.how/simplysewing

DRAPE

A term used to describe the way a fabric hangs under its own weight. Different fabrics have different drape qualities.

EASE

The addition of extra fabric in a pattern to allow the finished garment to fit the body well.

EDGE STITCH

A row of stitching on the very edge of a garment, usually 2-3mm (1/16-1/8in) from the folded or seamed edge. Used to hold the fabric edge neatly in place.

FACING

This pattern piece is cut separately to stabilise and create a neat finish on the edge of a garment, such as the neckline.

FAT QUARTER

A term used to describe a cut piece of fabric often used for patchwork projects, usually measuring 46x55cm (18x22in).

FINISHING/NEATENING RAW EDGES

This is done to stop the fabric edges, particularly of a seam, from fraying. It can be done by machine zigzag stitch, using an overlocker or trimming the raw edge with pinking shears.

GRAIN/GRAINLINE

The lengthwise fabric grain, running parallel to the selvedge.

NAP

Fabrics like velvet, corduroy and fur have hairs or loops which all lie in one direction and are called the nap, or pile. When cutting out pattern pieces make sure the grainline arrow always runs in the direction of the nap.

NOTIONS

Small tools or accessories used

in sewing such as zips, fasteners, lace and buttons.

RIGHT SIDE (RS) / WRONG SIDE (WS)

The right side of the fabric, also called the 'public' side, has the design on it. The wrong side is the other side – this is usually a little duller or faded on plain fabrics.

SEAM ALLOWANCE

The fabric between the raw or cut edge of the fabric and the seam is called the seam allowance. Your pattern will tell you the required seam allowance measurement. This is usually 1.5cm (5/8in) for dressmaking, but can vary.

SELVEDGE

The finished woven edge of fabric, often with the fabric name printed on it. The grain runs parallel to this and the bias diagonally. Called selvage in the US.

STAYSTITCHING

A line of regular machine stitching usually worked 3mm (1/8in) inside the seam line, often used to stabilise curved edges to stop them stretching out of shape.

TACK/TACKING

A line of temporary stitching used to hold fabric pieces together before machine sewing, worked in the same way as running stitch. Known as basting in the U.S.

TOPSTITCHING

A line of stitching worked 5mm (1/4in) from the folded or seam edge. Used to hold the seam in place and as a decorative finish.

UNDERSTITCHING

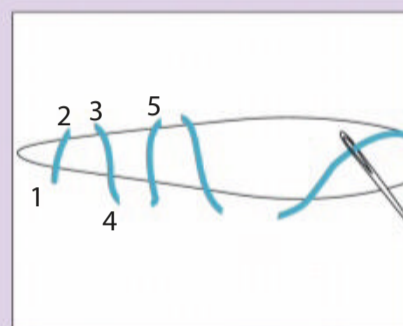
A line of stitching worked through the facing and seam allowance 3mm (1/8in) from the seam to stop the facing rolling to the outside of the garment. Understitching will not be visible on the outside.

STITCH GUIDE

Use these basic hand stitches to complete your home and dressmaking projects.

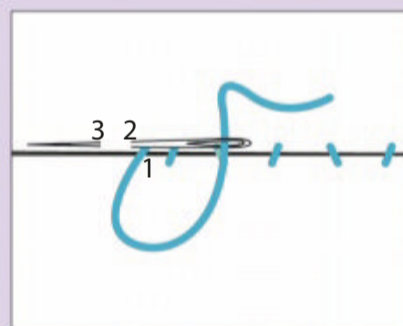
LADDER STITCH

Used to join together and close two turned-under edges invisibly, such as on a dress lining or soft toy. Bring the needle up at 1 on one side of the seam, then in at 2 on the opposite side and out at 3, so the stitch is 3mm (1/8in) long. Push the needle back in the opposite side at 4 and out at 5. Repeat this to close the edges.



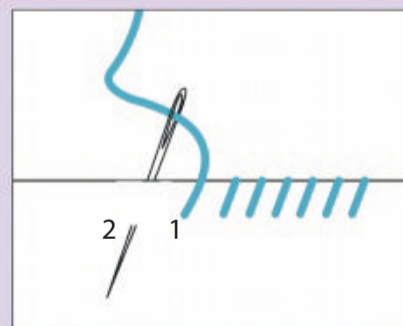
SLIP STITCH

This stitch is used most often for hems where you need to stitch a turned-under edge to a flat piece of fabric using small, almost invisible stitches. Bring the needle up at 1 on the turned-under hem then back in at 2 and out at 3. Make this horizontal stitch as small as possible so it can't be seen from the front. Repeat this by making a vertical stitch back into the turned-under edge then continue in this way to complete the hem.



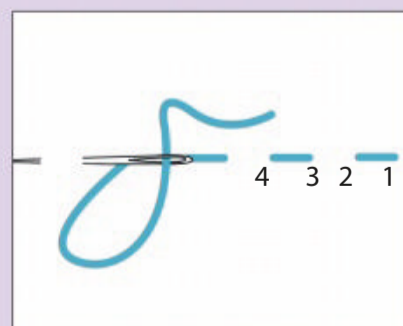
WHIP STITCH

Whipstitch is used to join the edges of two fabrics together, such as felt and other fabrics that don't fray. With the right sides together, bring your needle out at 1 on the front of the fabric, then over to the back of the other, and through and out at 2. Continue to work small stitches close together over the top of the two fabric edges.



RUNNING STITCH

This can be used to gather fabric and as a decorative stitch worked around the edge of a finished project. Bring the needle out at 1, in at 2, then out at 3 and in at 4, and so on. Make the length of the stitches the same length as the gaps between them for an even finish. You can work several running stitches on your needle at once.



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FOLKSY FLUX

Skandimama's Karoline Dahrling's cosy folklore coat is an ever-evolving faithful friend that keeps her warm.

"This coat has been with me for many years. It has changed a bit over time, but the statement back has always stayed the same.

I moved back to Denmark from London in August 2009. I was heavily pregnant, moving into a new house that had to be decorated, and I spent many happy hours in one of my favourite places at the time – IKEA. That is where I found the wall hanging designed by Hella Jongerius that I used for the back of the jacket.

I was in love with the piece instantly, but since I had enough paintings, collages and homemade artwork to cover the new walls, I decided to do something else with it; I made it into a coat. It is very boxy and super warm.

The first version of the coat had red fleece for the front and the sleeves, so when I walked

the pram around with my firstborn that winter, I imagined I looked like someone out of a folksy winter tale. And I actually really enjoyed that.

A couple of years ago I cut the coat apart and changed the red fleece to a subtler brownish wool taken from a thick scarf and added fabric from a red tablecloth. I used a silvery grey knit from an 80's jumper found in a charity shop to make the collar bigger, so it could be even warmer and cosier. Perfect for the cold and windy Scandinavian winters.

I am excited to see how this coat will change again over the following year: putting in new favourite pieces of material, but forever keeping the bold artwork on the back."

See more at www.skandimama.com and on Instagram @karoline.skandimama



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