



Bib Romper



optional:



rounded bib

The adorable fabric (Robert Kaufman/Michael Miller) for this romper is provided by

STITCH STASH DIVA
 Fun & Bright Fabrics For Your Home and Your Littles!



Etsy shop: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/StitchStashDiva>

This romper is a very simple but customizable design! The tutorial will show you how to make the double ruffle romper with square bib front. Optionally you can add a rounded bib! Additional tutorials are “adding snap button tape” which you will find at the end of the tutorial. The legs are full length but an additional tutorial on page 4 shows you how to shorten the template to make capris. The sizing chart for capri length legs is below the main chart on page 2.

When choosing to make the legs with only one ruffle you want to cut fabric for the BOTTOM ruffle (see sizing chart) only!

Please read the entire tutorial to pick out the sections you need for YOUR romper! There are several options within this tutorial 😊.

Suitable fabrics: quilters cotton, chambray, lightweight denims, lightweight corduroys, cotton knits or any other medium weight knits. Prewashing knits is a must to prevent shrinkage! Knits can shrink up to 20%! See tips on sewing with knits in separate tutorial!

List of required materials:

- Fabric
- Sewing machine
- Serger (optional)
- Measuring tape
- Scissors
- Iron
- Straight pins
- Safety pin
- 3/4" band elastic
- 3/4" ribbon
- 2 pieces 3/4" elastic: 2.5" long for sizes up to 24m, 3" long for up to 2t and 4" long for up to size 8
- Fray check for ribbon
- Snap button tape (optional)

Seam allowance: 3/8" unless otherwise stated

2 **Sizing chart** –based on directional print, if using a non-directional print you will use less!

Measurements are in inches

Size	Approx. torso length fr. Chest to crotch	Yardage bodice	Cut 2 TOP ruffle strips length x width	Cut 2 BOTTOM ruffle strips length x width	Yardage ruffle strips	Cut 1 bib piece width x length	Bib yardage	Neckline ribbon (3/4" cut 2x	Leg bows Cut 4 pieces to length
NB		1/2	2x28	3x28	1/4 each	7x8.5	1/4	17	5"
3-6m	12 1/4"	1/2	2.5x28	3.5x28	1/4 each	7.5x9	1/4	19	5.5"
6-9m	13 1/4"	1/2	2 1/4x28.5	4x28.5	1/4 each	8x9.5	1/3	20	6"
12-18m	13 3/4"	2/3	3.5x28.5	5.5x28.5	1/3 each	8 3/4x10	1/3	22	6"
18-24m	14 1/4"	2/3	4x29	6x29	1/3 each	9x10.5	1/3	23	6 1/4 "
2t	15"	2/3	4.5x29	6.5x29	1/3 each	9 1/4x11	1/3	25	6 1/4 "
3t	16 1/4"	2/3	5x29.5	7x29.5	1/3 each	9.5x12	1/3	27	6.5"
4t	17"	3/4	6x30	8x30	1/2 each	9 3/4x13	1/2	29	6.5"
5t	18"	1	6.5x30.5	9x30.5	1/2 each	10x13.5	1/2	30	6 3/4"
6	19"	1	6.5x31	9x31	1/2 each	10 1/4x14	1/2	31	6 3/4"
7	20 1/4"	1	7x31.5	10x31.5	2/3 each	10 3/4x15	1/2	32	7"
8	21.5"	1	7.5x32	11x32	2/3 each	11.5x16	1/2	33	7"

NOTE: if using knits add a few inches when purchasing fabric to make up for shrinkage!

This chart tells you the approximate finished full leg inseam and how much to shorten the leg template for making capris:

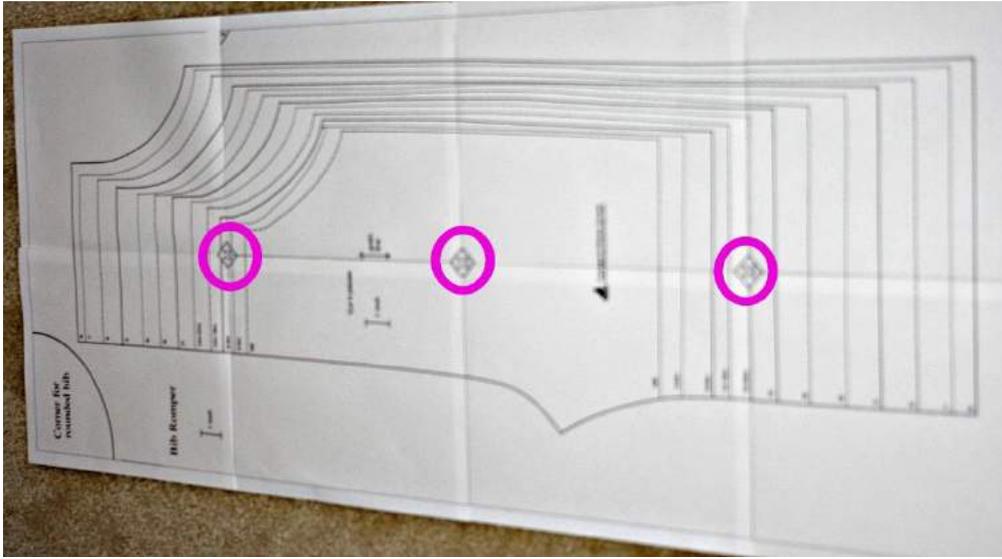
Size	Average full length inseam	For capri inseam, cut template off:
NB	6"	1.5"
3-6m	7"	2"
12-18m	10"	2.5"
24m	12"	3"
2t	12.5"	3"
3t	13.5"	3.5"
4t	15.5"	3.5"
5t	17.5"	4"
6	19"	4.5"
7	21"	4.5"
8	22.5"	5"

To print and assemble templates:

Print on regular computer paper without scaling. Double check the 1 inch print scale on the template!
Print the 1st page! Once it's correct, print the rest.

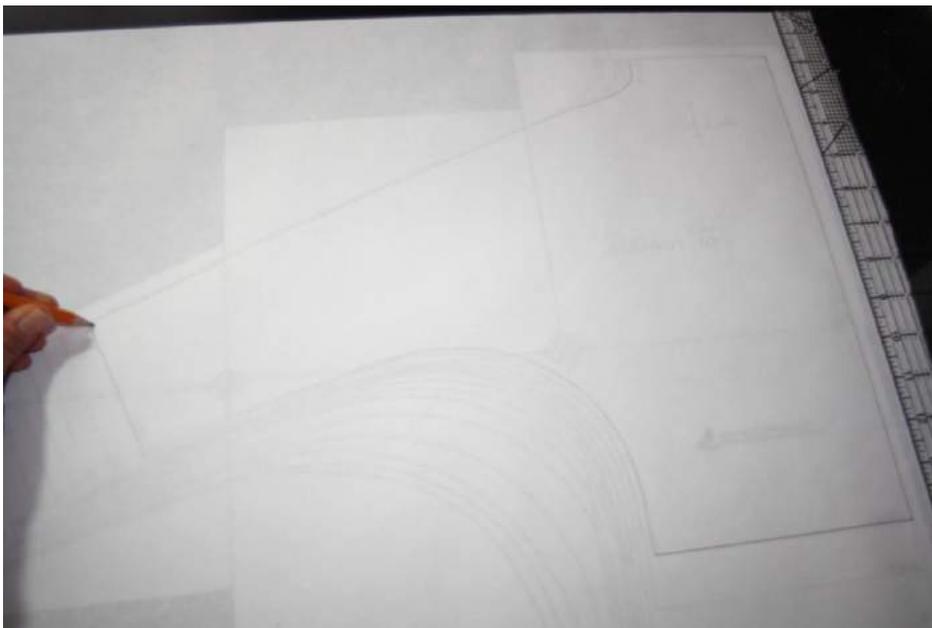
Cut out each page on the straight lines around the perimeter.

Piece pages together matching diamonds with the letters as marked with pink circles:

**To cut out your romper pieces:**

Cut out the corner for the rounded bib.

You may trace the taped together pieces onto a larger piece of paper (a poster roll from Office Depot works great), if desired, as shown below on a different template:



NOTE: if you prefer to make capris please follow the instruction below:

This is your regular bodice template in the full leg length:



See the capri sizing chart on page 2 which tells you how much to shorten the legs. Take your template and measure the inches given in the sizing chart from the bottom edge up. Fold template under or trim off:



Now you will have capri length and can continue with this tutorial!

To cut out the romper pieces:

Fold your fabric in half lengthwise (or from selvage to selvage) and place the romper template onto your fabric with the TOP edge aligning with the top of the fabric print (if applicable). Pin in place and cut around template:



Repeat this to cut out 2 more romper pieces. The picture below shows you 2 of the 4 pieces:



These are your 4 leg ruffle strips (when making double ruffles you need 2 long ones and 2 short ones):



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This is your rectangle bib piece:



NOTE: for making a rounded bib you want to follow the instructions below:

Take your rectangle bib piece as you have cut it out from the sizing chart and fold it in half once so you'll have the fold on the bottom (if applicable your print direction is going down):

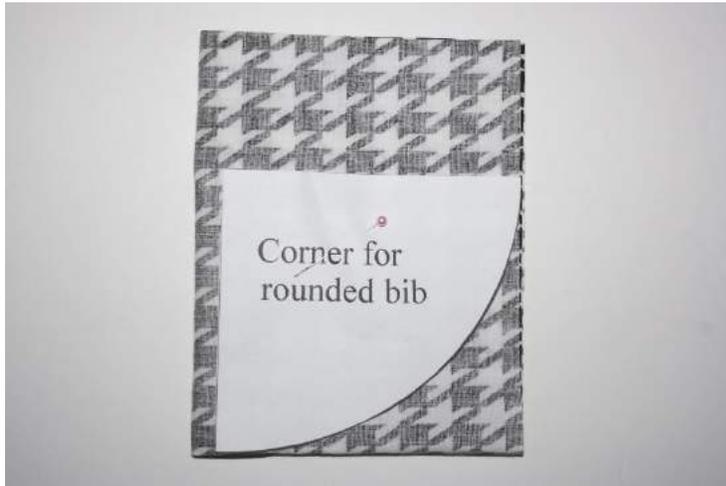


Fold it in half from side to side:



7

Place the round bib corner onto the now 4-ply fabric piece into the bottom/right corner as shown. Your fabric fold is on the left. Pin it in place and cut along the curve:



This is now your rounded bib piece (through cutting it might have gotten separated and you'll have 2 pieces):



To make the armholes:

Take one of your 4 romper pieces and place it with right side down in front of you. Fold in the curved armhole edge $\frac{1}{4}$ " and press:



Cut small slits every $\frac{1}{8}$ inch into the fold as shown:



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Fold in this edge once more and press. Pin in place and sew along the inner folded edge along the dashed line:



This is now your finished armhole seam:



Repeat with all 3 remaining armholes.

To sew 2 romper pieces together:

Take 2 facing romper pieces and put them with right sides together.

Pin the sides underneath the armholes together and sew in place along the dashed line:



Serge/zigzag stitch the raw edge.

This is now your 2 sewn together romper pieces, forming one half of the front and back



Repeat with other 2 romper pieces.

To make the leg ruffles:

Take one of the leg ruffles and place it with right side down, in front of you. Fold the bottom edge 1/4 inch up and press.



Fold it up once again 1/4" and press. Pin in place and sew along the inner folded edge as shown with the dashed line:



Repeat with all remaining leg ruffles.

To ruffle the fabric:

Set your machine to the longest stitch and highest/strongest tension. This way your machine should automatically gather your fabric. If not, please check your machine manual on gathering fabric as not all machines allow this setting. Place your long and short ruffle strip together with right sides up. Pin in place along the top (raw) edge. Then sew along the top edge of your ruffle strip with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance:



Repeat with remaining ruffles.

Reset your machine to regular stitch.

To sew ruffles to legs:

Place ruffles underneath the unfolded leg of your romper. Distribute the gathers to match the leg width as shown:



Flip ruffle up and over the leg and pin both raw edges together. Sew along dashed line:



This is now your sewn on ruffle. Serge/zigzag stitch the raw edge:



If preferred, flip the inner seam up and press the outside of the seam flat, then top stitch right above where both fabrics meet (marked with white arrows). This gives your garment a professional finish:



Repeat with other romper piece.

To sew both romper pieces together:

Place both romper pieces with right sides together and pin the upper portion of the romper along the dashed line. Sew in place:



Serge/zig zag stitch raw edge.

Repeat with other side.

This is now your sewn together romper:



To make the top casing:

First, serge or zigzag stitch the top edge on front and back:



With right sides in, fold down the top edge 1" and press. Sew in place right along the dashed line. When sewing the backside you want to leave a small opening for adding size/care tag as shown below (close opening when ready). Backstitch the beginning and end:



NOTE: if you are adding snap button tape please go now to the end of this tutorial and follow through with the tutorial on how to add snap button tape. Then come back here and continue right after this picture!

To sew the inseam:

With right sides in, pin the inside of the legs and sew with a seam allowance of 0.5 inch along the dashed line. Backstitch the beginning and end:



To reduce some bulk before finishing the inner seam you may cut off half of the seam allowance and then zig zag stitch the raw seam or cut/serge in one step:



To make the bib:

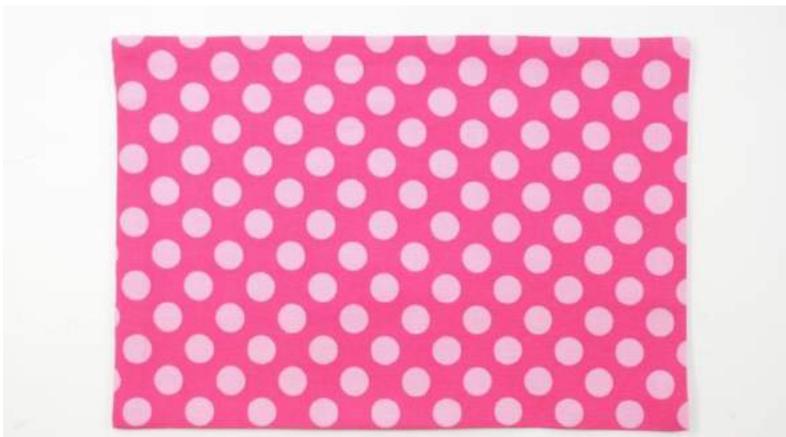
Take your rectangle or rounded bib piece(s) and have the right sides in and the fold on the bottom. Pin and sew along the dashed line, leaving a 3" opening on the top edge. Backstitch the beginning and end on the opening:



Trim off both upper corner diagonally:



Turn piece with right sides out and press after you have gently poked out all corners:



TIP: now would be a good time to add embroidery if preferred! ☺

To sew bib on:

Place bib onto the front of your romper right underneath the seam of the top casing. Fold the back side down so you won't pin/sew through it. Center the bib. Pin in place and sew along the dashed line. Backstitch the beginning and end:

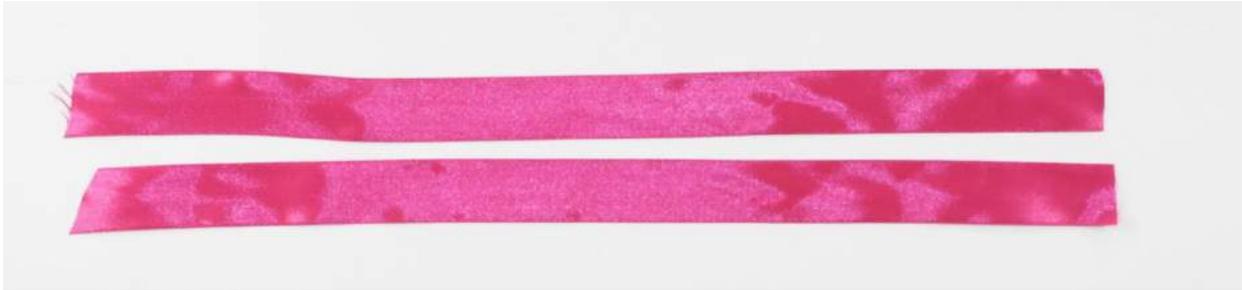


If you prefer to add buttons you may now mark the placement with a fabric marker. Or you can directly sew buttons on at this time.



To make the elasticized ribbon ties:

Take one of your neckline ribbon and cut it in half. Now you'll have 2 shorter pieces:



Place one of the two elastic pieces in between your two ribbon pieces which are right side up:



Flip elastic over to your left ribbon piece and pin, then sew in place along the dashed line. Sew 2 rows:



Flip elastic back to the right and sew other ribbon piece to the remaining end of the elastic.

Top stitch both sides to ensure a good, safe stitch:



To insert ribbon into casing:

Secure a safety pin to one of the ribbon end's and insert it into the casing:



Pull it through until the elastic piece is centered in the casing. You can feel both seams inside the casing to pinpoint it centered. Stitch the center down with your machine by sewing back and forth 5-7 times:



Gently pull on one ribbon end until you can see the seam:



Let the seam slightly go back into the casing and pin the ribbon through the casing in place. Sew along dashed lines about 2-3 times back and forth. This will ensure the ribbon not coming out from the casing and the elastic will stay concealed:



Repeat with other side.

Repeat with other ribbon/elastic for the reverse romper side.

Fray check all ribbon ends.

To make the ribbon bow:

Take one of your ribbon bow pieces.....



.....and fold it in half with right sides in. Pin and sew along dashed lines and backstitch the beginning and end:



Turn piece with right sides out:



Place your other ribbon piece with right side down in front of you and place the sewn ribbon piece into the center with the seam facing up as shown. Then take both ends of the long ribbon piece.....



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.....and tie it into a knot:



Tie once more and arrange the bow so it looks nice:



Trim off both ribbon ends either diagonally or straight and fray check them:



Once dry, pin the bow to the outside of the leg and sew it on with several stitches:



Repeat with other bow and sew it to the other leg.

All done!

Design examples:

Double ruffles



Single ruffles



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This chart tells you the approximate finished full leg inseam and how much to shorten the leg template for making capris:

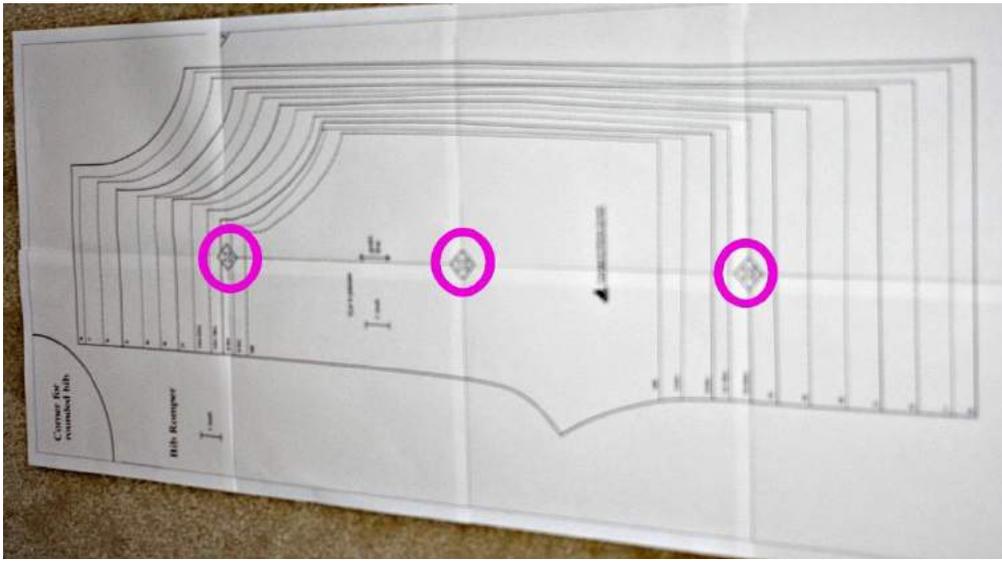
Size	Average full length inseam	For capri inseam, cut template off:
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3-6m	7"	2"
12-18m	10"	2.5"
24m	12"	3"
2t	12.5"	3"
3t	13.5"	3.5"
4t	15.5"	3.5"
5t	17.5"	4"
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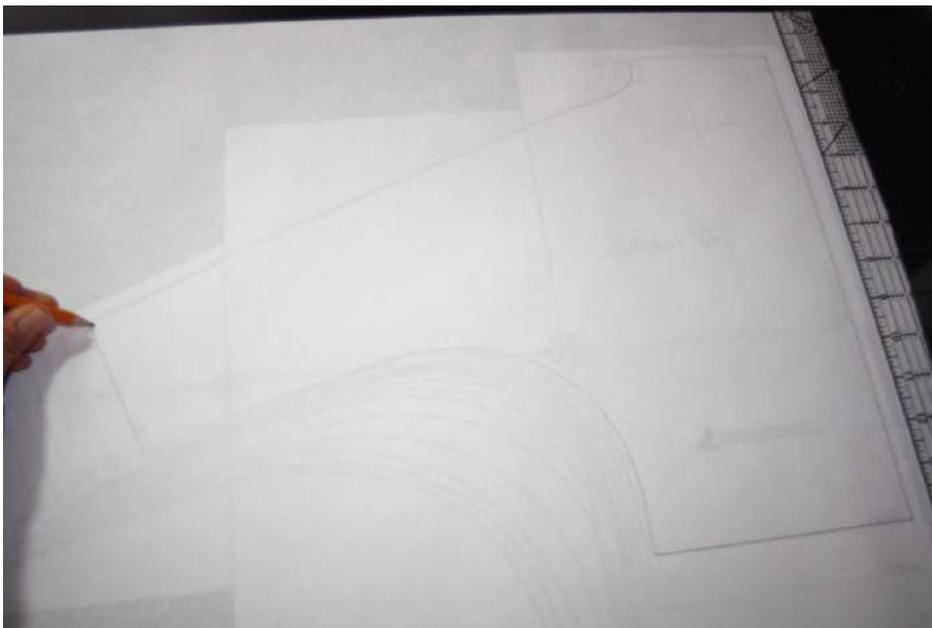
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Piece pages together matching diamonds with the letters as marked with pink circles:

**To cut out your romper pieces:**

Cut out the corner for the rounded bib.

You may trace the taped together pieces onto a larger piece of paper (a poster roll from Office Depot works great), if desired, as shown below on a different template:



NOTE: if you prefer to make capris please follow the instruction below:

This is your regular bodice template in the full leg length:



See the capri sizing chart on page 2 which tells you how much to shorten the legs. Take your template and measure the inches given in the sizing chart from the bottom edge up. Fold template under or trim off:



Now you will have capri length and can continue with this tutorial!

To cut out the romper pieces:

Fold your fabric in half lengthwise (or from selvage to selvage) and place the romper template onto your fabric with the TOP edge aligning with the top of the fabric print (if applicable). Pin in place and cut around template:



Repeat this to cut out 2 more romper pieces. The picture below shows you 2 of the 4 pieces:



These are your 4 leg ruffle strips (when making double ruffles you need 2 long ones and 2 short ones):



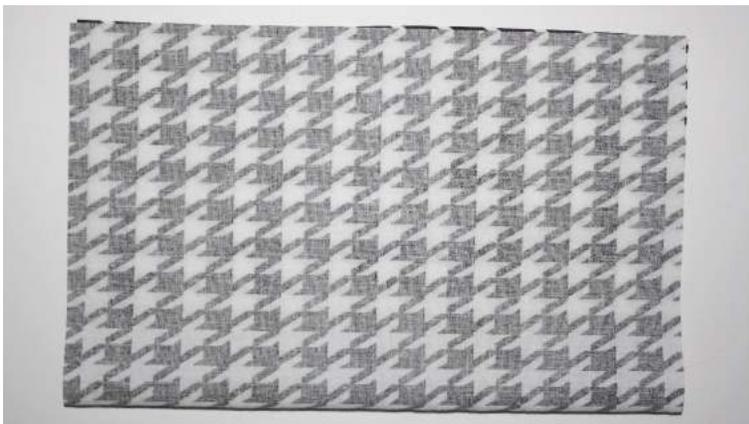
6

This is your rectangle bib piece:



NOTE: for making a rounded bib you want to follow the instructions below:

Take your rectangle bib piece as you have cut it out from the sizing chart and fold it in half once so you'll have the fold on the bottom (if applicable your print direction is going down):

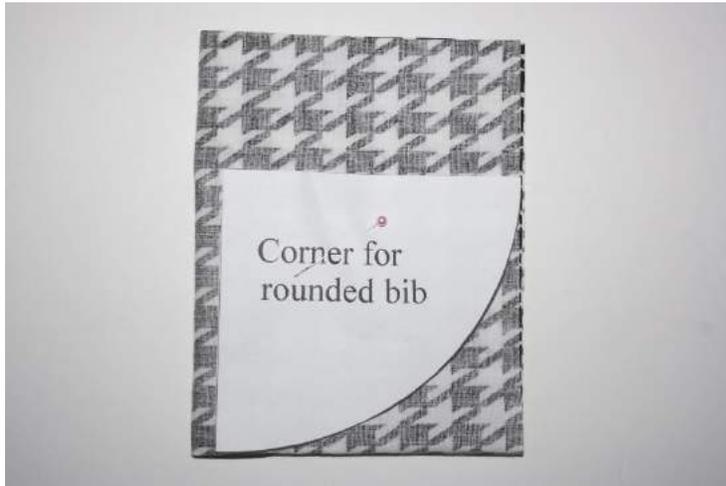


Fold it in half from side to side:



7

Place the round bib corner onto the now 4-ply fabric piece into the bottom/right corner as shown. Your fabric fold is on the left. Pin it in place and cut along the curve:



This is now your rounded bib piece (through cutting it might have gotten separated and you'll have 2 pieces):



To make the armholes:

Take one of your 4 romper pieces and place it with right side down in front of you. Fold in the curved armhole edge $\frac{1}{4}$ " and press:



Cut small slits every $\frac{1}{8}$ inch into the fold as shown:



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Fold in this edge once more and press. Pin in place and sew along the inner folded edge along the dashed line:



This is now your finished armhole seam:



Repeat with all 3 remaining armholes.

To sew 2 romper pieces together:

Take 2 facing romper pieces and put them with right sides together.

Pin the sides underneath the armholes together and sew in place along the dashed line:



Serge/zigzag stitch the raw edge.

This is now your 2 sewn together romper pieces, forming one half of the front and back



Repeat with other 2 romper pieces.

To make the leg ruffles:

Take one of the leg ruffles and place it with right side down, in front of you. Fold the bottom edge 1/4 inch up and press.



Fold it up once again 1/4" and press. Pin in place and sew along the inner folded edge as shown with the dashed line:



Repeat with all remaining leg ruffles.

To ruffle the fabric:

Set your machine to the longest stitch and highest/strongest tension. This way your machine should automatically gather your fabric. If not, please check your machine manual on gathering fabric as not all machines allow this setting. Place your long and short ruffle strip together with right sides up. Pin in place along the top (raw) edge. Then sew along the top edge of your ruffle strip with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance:



Repeat with remaining ruffles.

Reset your machine to regular stitch.

To sew ruffles to legs:

Place ruffles underneath the unfolded leg of your romper. Distribute the gathers to match the leg width as shown:



Flip ruffle up and over the leg and pin both raw edges together. Sew along dashed line:



This is now your sewn on ruffle. Serge/zigzag stitch the raw edge:



If preferred, flip the inner seam up and press the outside of the seam flat, then top stitch right above where both fabrics meet (marked with white arrows). This gives your garment a professional finish:



Repeat with other romper piece.

To sew both romper pieces together:

Place both romper pieces with right sides together and pin the upper portion of the romper along the dashed line. Sew in place:



Serge/zig zag stitch raw edge.

Repeat with other side.

This is now your sewn together romper:



To make the top casing:

First, serge or zigzag stitch the top edge on front and back:



With right sides in, fold down the top edge 1" and press. Sew in place right along the dashed line. When sewing the backside you want to leave a small opening for adding size/care tag as shown below (close opening when ready). Backstitch the beginning and end:



NOTE: if you are adding snap button tape please go now to the end of this tutorial and follow through with the tutorial on how to add snap button tape. Then come back here and continue right after this picture!

To sew the inseam:

With right sides in, pin the inside of the legs and sew with a seam allowance of 0.5 inch along the dashed line. Backstitch the beginning and end:



To reduce some bulk before finishing the inner seam you may cut off half of the seam allowance and then zig zag stitch the raw seam or cut/serge in one step:



To make the bib:

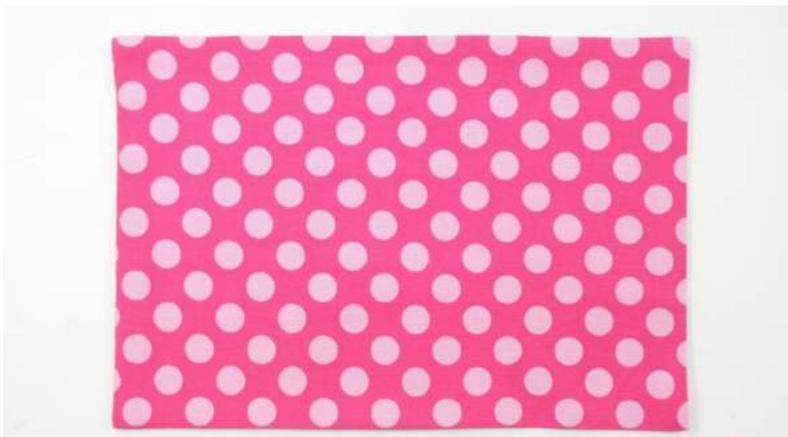
Take your rectangle or rounded bib piece(s) and have the right sides in and the fold on the bottom. Pin and sew along the dashed line, leaving a 3" opening on the top edge. Backstitch the beginning and end on the opening:



Trim off both upper corner diagonally:



Turn piece with right sides out and press after you have gently poked out all corners:



TIP: now would be a good time to add embroidery if preferred! ☺

To sew bib on:

Place bib onto the front of your romper right underneath the seam of the top casing. Fold the back side down so you won't pin/sew through it. Center the bib. Pin in place and sew along the dashed line. Backstitch the beginning and end:

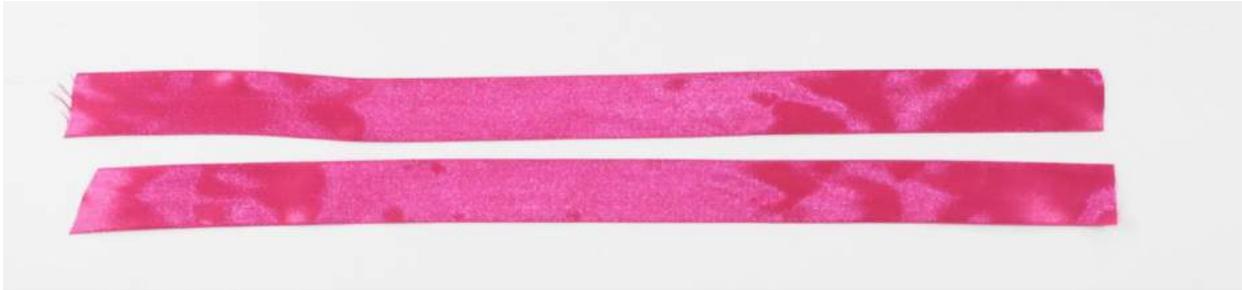


If you prefer to add buttons you may now mark the placement with a fabric marker. Or you can directly sew buttons on at this time.



To make the elasticized ribbon ties:

Take one of your neckline ribbon and cut it in half. Now you'll have 2 shorter pieces:



Place one of the two elastic pieces in between your two ribbon pieces which are right side up:



Flip elastic over to your left ribbon piece and pin, then sew in place along the dashed line. Sew 2 rows:



Flip elastic back to the right and sew other ribbon piece to the remaining end of the elastic.

Top stitch both sides to ensure a good, safe stitch:



To insert ribbon into casing:

Secure a safety pin to one of the ribbon end's and insert it into the casing:



Pull it through until the elastic piece is centered in the casing. You can feel both seams inside the casing to pinpoint it centered. Stitch the center down with your machine by sewing back and forth 5-7 times:



Gently pull on one ribbon end until you can see the seam:



Let the seam slightly go back into the casing and pin the ribbon through the casing in place. Sew along dashed lines about 2-3 times back and forth. This will ensure the ribbon not coming out from the casing and the elastic will stay concealed:



Repeat with other side.

Repeat with other ribbon/elastic for the reverse romper side.

Fray check all ribbon ends.

To make the ribbon bow:

Take one of your ribbon bow pieces.....



.....and fold it in half with right sides in. Pin and sew along dashed lines and backstitch the beginning and end:



Turn piece with right sides out:



Place your other ribbon piece with right side down in front of you and place the sewn ribbon piece into the center with the seam facing up as shown. Then take both ends of the long ribbon piece.....



23

.....and tie it into a knot:



Tie once more and arrange the bow so it looks nice:



Trim off both ribbon ends either diagonally or straight and fray check them:



Once dry, pin the bow to the outside of the leg and sew it on with several stitches:



Repeat with other bow and sew it to the other leg.

All done!

Design examples:

Double ruffles



Single ruffles



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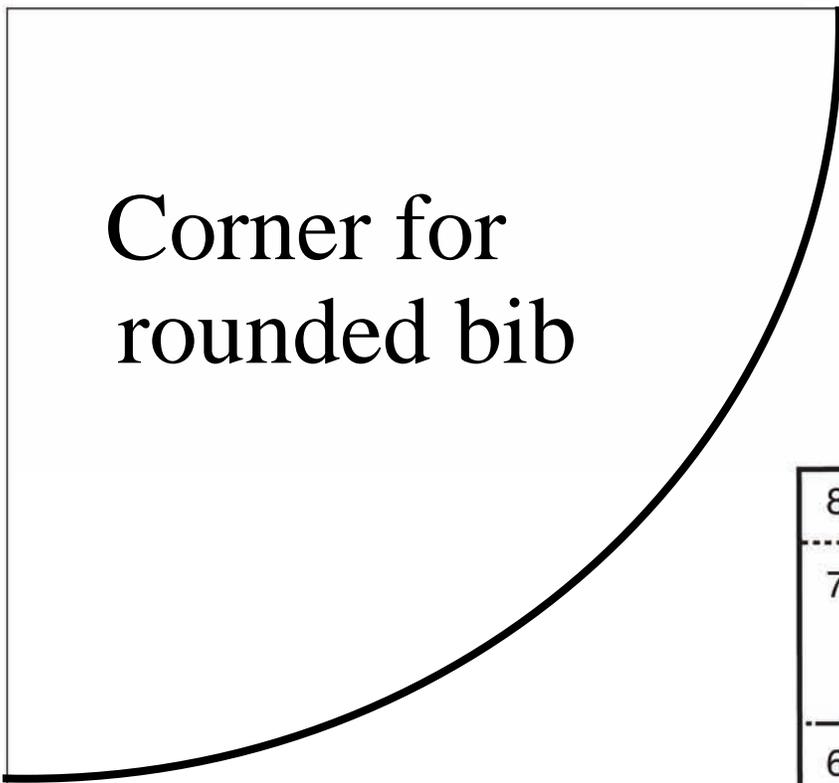
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For questions please email whimsycouture@hotmail.com

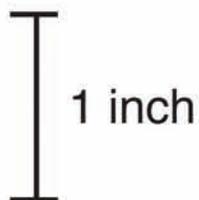
Thank you so much for using this pattern!

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Corner for rounded bib

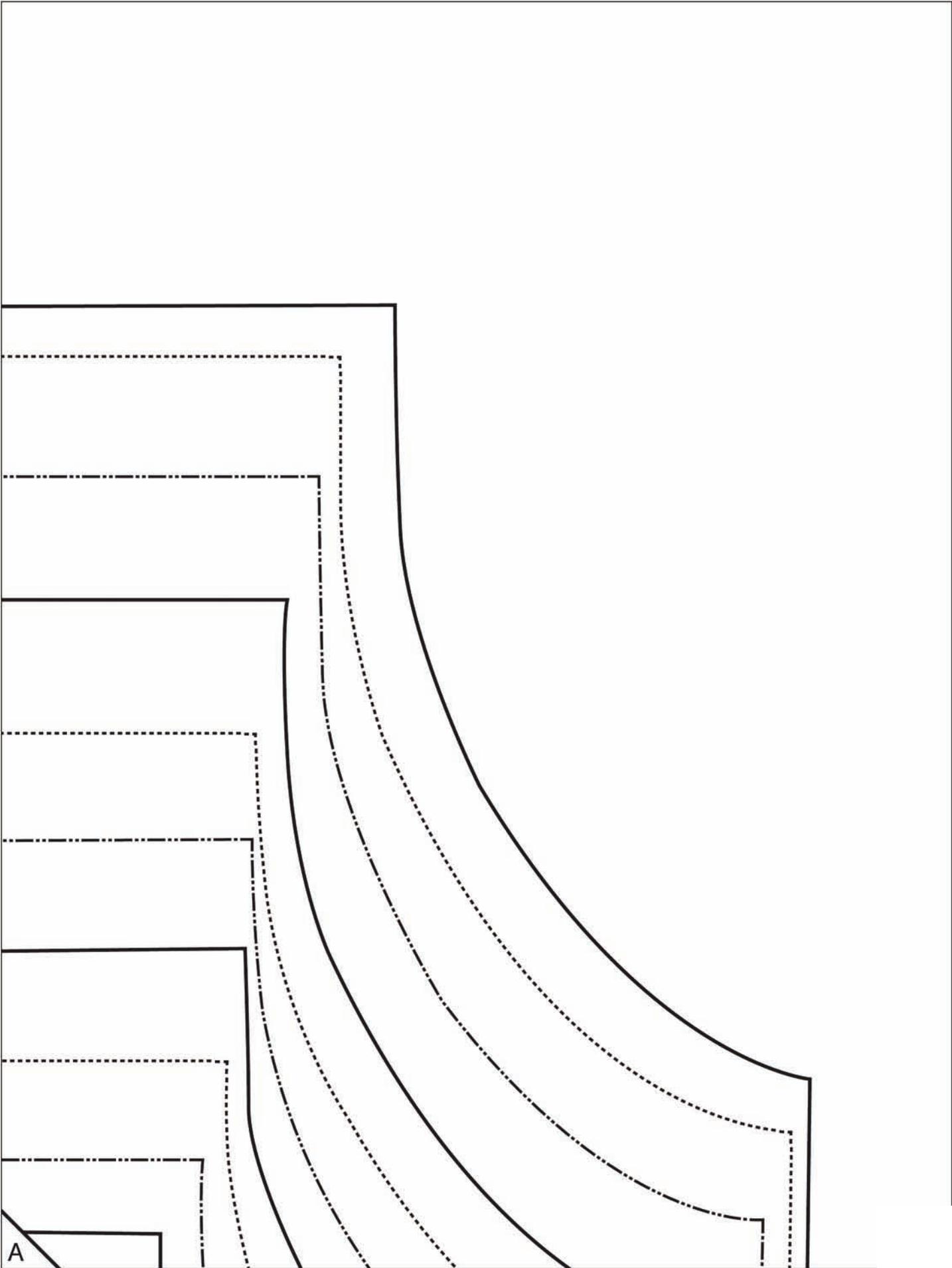


Bib Romper

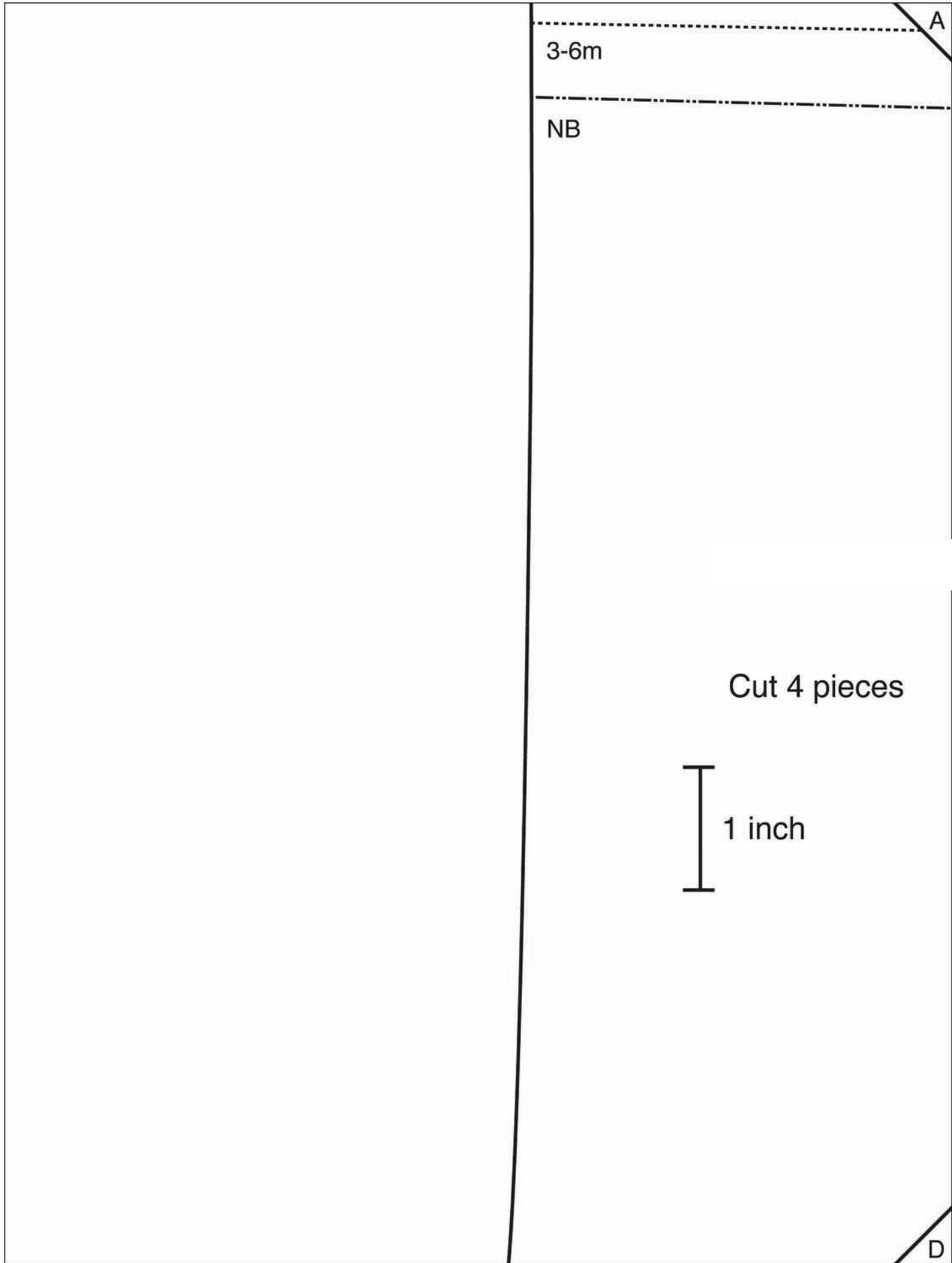


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7
6
5
4t
3t
2t
24m
12m-18m
6-9m

A



A



A

3-6m

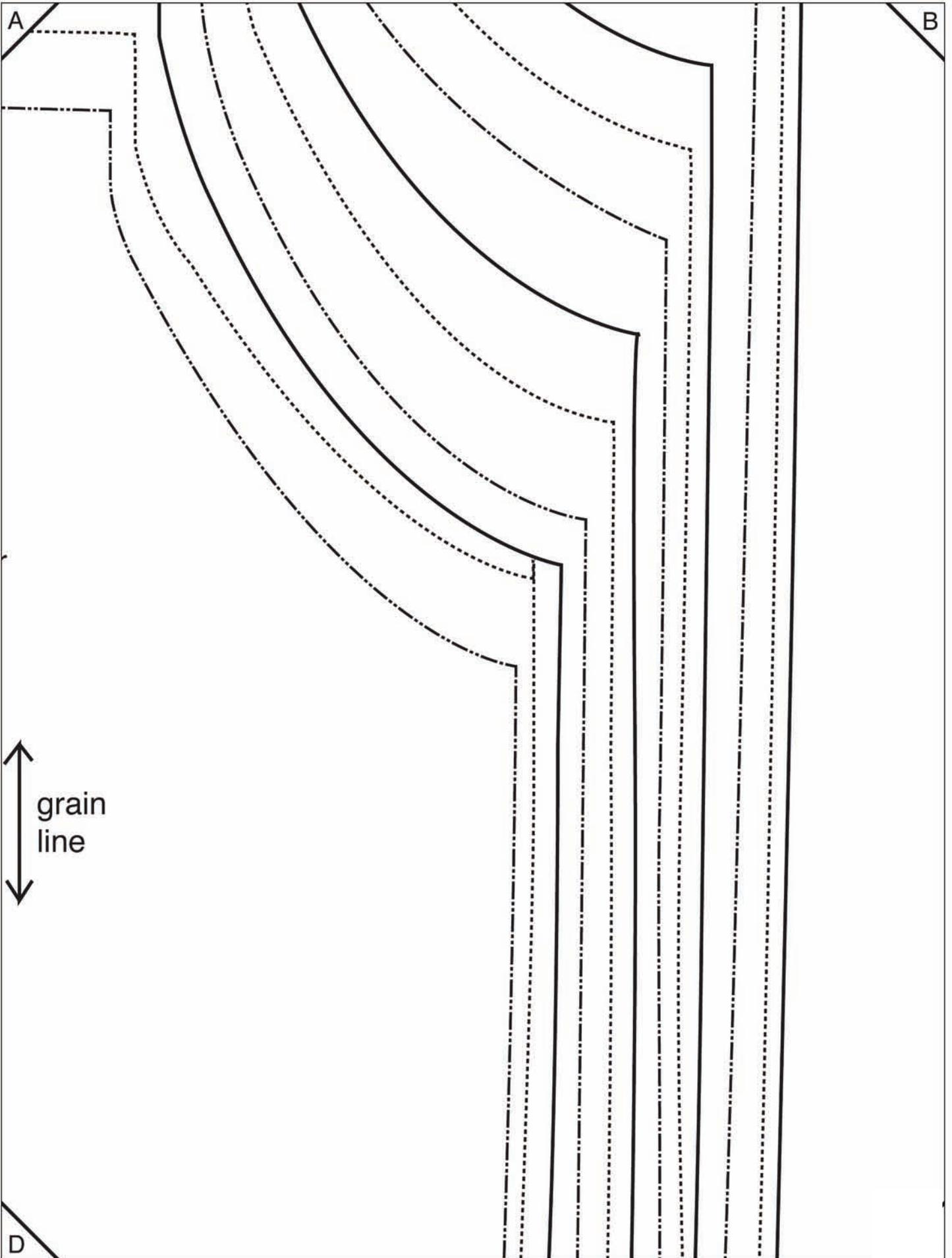
NB

Cut 4 pieces



1 inch

D



D



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www.

NB

3-6m

6-9m

12-18m

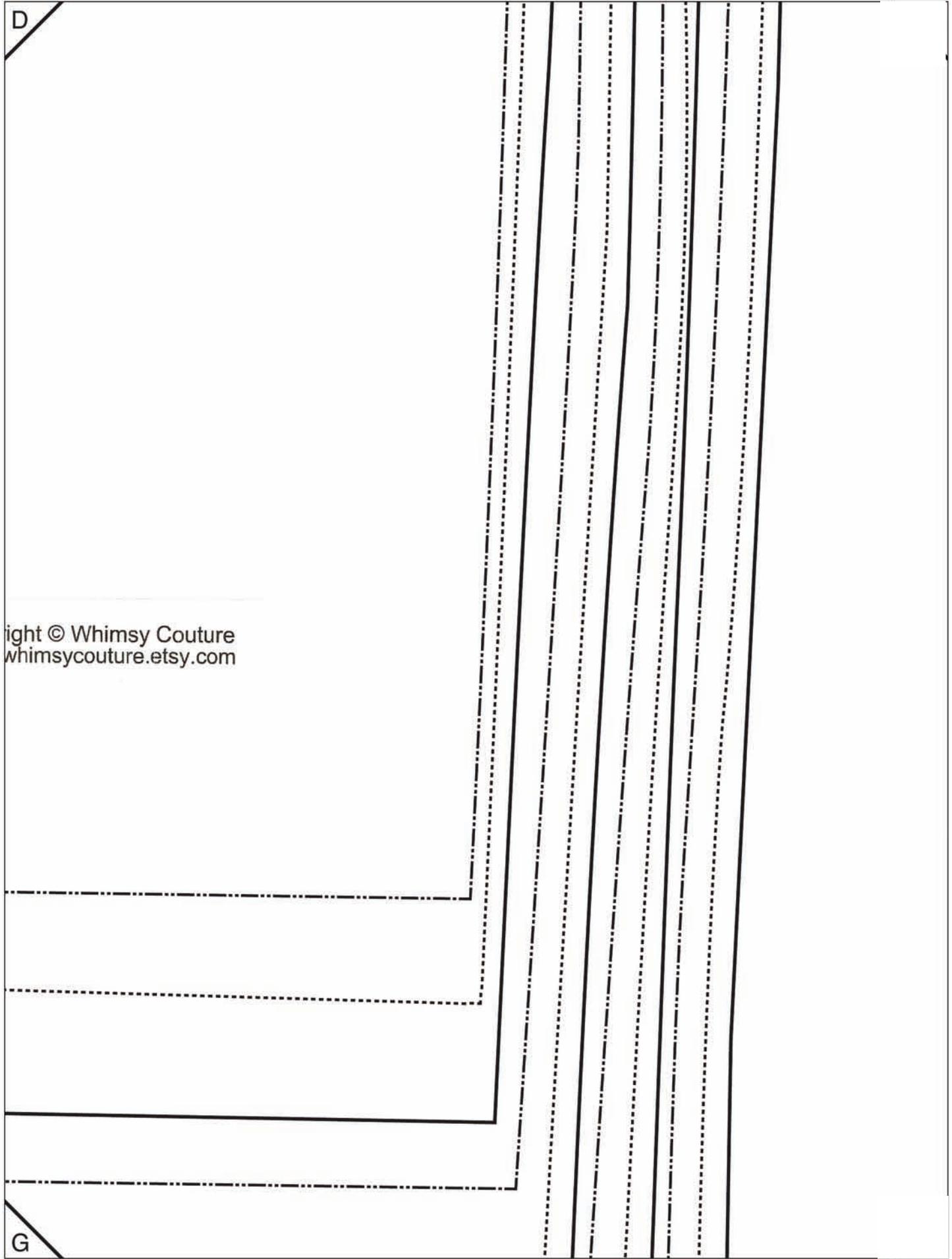
12-24m

G

D

Right © Whimsy Couture
whimsycouture.etsy.com

G



2t

3t

4t

5

6

7

8

G

The image shows a large rectangular frame with a grid of horizontal lines. The lines alternate between solid and dashed styles. The top-left corner of the frame is cut off by a diagonal line, and the letter 'G' is positioned in the upper-left corner of the grid area. The grid consists of approximately 10 horizontal lines, with the top line being solid and the others alternating between solid and dashed. The right side of the frame is empty.



**Tutorial for adding snap buttons to the
legs of rompers/overalls & pants**



This tutorial is an addition and can be used for all pants, rompers, overalls etc. even store bought ones! For those you can rip the inner seams and pull all the loose threads and start from the beginning of this tutorial.

For handmade rompers/overalls, pants I suggest to go one size up in length to make up for the difference in the crotch area.

List of required materials:

- Sewing machine
- Serger/overlock machine (recommended but not required)
- Zipper foot
- Seam ripper (in case of a seam sewn wrong)
- Snap button tape
- Scissors
- pins
- Pants, overall, romper etc.

If you are adding snap buttons to your sewn garment, finish it up until you reach the inner legs which should be unsewn:



2

Serge/overcast/zigzag stitch the inner leg seams:



Take your snap button tape and lay it onto your legs of your garment to match up the position of the snap buttons. You want to have them equally positioned. Either mark the spot on your snap tape or leave it long in case you mismeasured.

Now separate the snap tape and lay one tape to the side.



3

Start by folding over the front side of your garment starting at the bottom leg hem. I have a ruffled romper so it doesn't matter 😊

Fold the inner seam over to about ¼ inch.....



.....and lay your snap button tape with the end folded under to about ¼ inch and pin it right on top of the folded leg seam. You may also press the folded edge.



4

Pin the snap tape along the folded seam and sew right along the edges of the snap tape with your zipper foot. Backstitch the beginning and end.

This is how the first sewn in snap tape should look like now:



Take your back side of your garment and fold the inner leg seam (your print should now face down) down to about ¼ inch.....



5

.....fold your snap tape end under to about ¼ inch and.....



Pin it right on top along of the folded seam:



6

This is how it should look now:

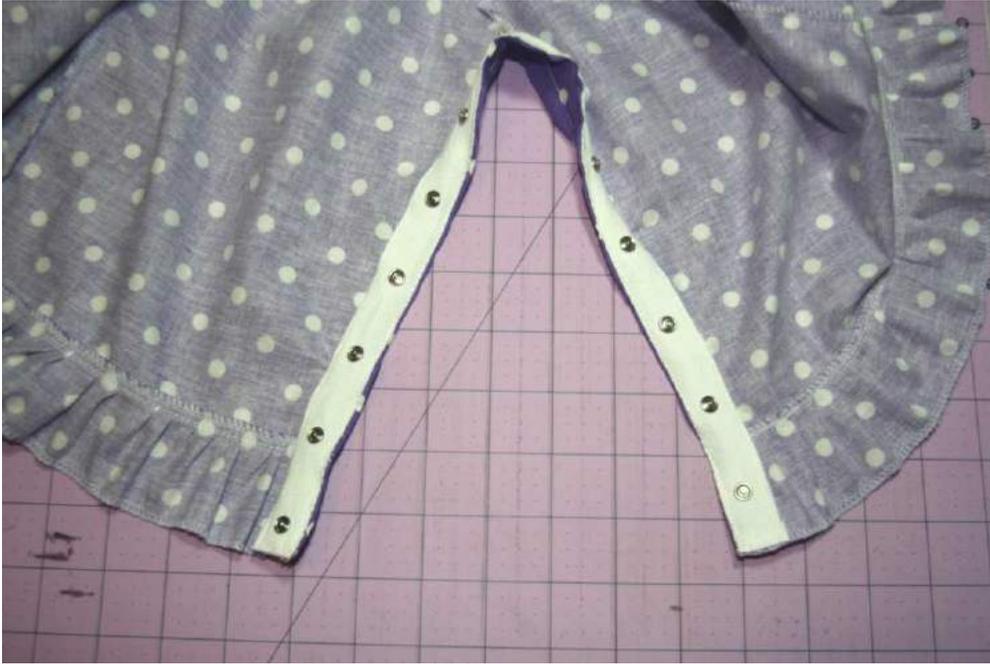


Sew along the snap tape's edge with your machine:



7

This should now be your sewn in snap tape:



Here is the finished look of both sides sewn in:



8

This should now be your finished and snapped together inseam. Ready to be worn and easy to open for diaper changes! 😊



For all questions or suggestions to make this pattern better please email me at

whimsycouture@hotmail.com

Thank you so much for using this pattern!

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For more great patterns please visit www.whimsycouture.etsy.com/ and my blog

www.whimsycoutureboutique.blogspot.com/

This compilation is all about sewing with knits! Here you will find necessary info which can be found on the internet. This info is not part of your purchase. It's free!

Article from Sew Mama Sew!

Tips for Working With Knits & Mock-Coverstitch Tutorial

Many people think that knit fabrics are scary, when, in fact, they are such gentle monsters— kind of like Muppets, really. Although they're kind of funny, they're also super soft and pose no real threat to the motivated sewist. I've taken up sewing with them a lot more since having a baby— there's nothing better for comfort wear, and what's more important than coziness for little ones?



The key to working with these Muppet-like knits is to know which strings to pull to get the professional-looking results that you want. I thought I'd share some of my favorite tricks:

- 1. Know your sewing machine or serger inside and out.** You don't need a serger to sew knits successfully, but you do need to know the capabilities of your machine. Any tips that you read online or pick up in a book won't tell you what settings your machine needs in order to sew knits without frustration. Read the manual and set aside an afternoon to really master your machine, fiddling around with different settings and plenty of scrap fabric. If you purchased your machine (or serger) from a dealer, they usually offer free machine mastery classes for their customers. Take advantage of your dealer! I just had an issue with the coverstitch function on my serger, and I took it in and had someone sit down with me and troubleshoot. It was super helpful.



2. **Get the right needles for the job.** More often than not, I use Schmetz Stretch needles (130/705 H-S) for sewing with knits. On heavier-weight knits, I might use a ballpoint/jersey needle, but if I'm getting skipped stitches, I'll switch back to my trusty stretch needle. You'll also want to have Stretch Twin needles on hand for sewing hems and a mock coverstitch (more on this below!).

3. **Overlock or zigzag stitch all seams.** Knit patterns are cut with less ease because the fabrics themselves are stretchy. Think of the neck opening on a basic t-shirt— it needs to stretch a good deal just to get over your head. So, the seams that you sew on a knit need to stretch as well, or else the thread will break. An overlock stitch on a serger is a very stretchy and strong seam, and is perfectly suited for sewing seams on knits. If you're sewing on a regular machine, check your manual to see if it has a mock-overlock stitch or a jersey stitch. Both are well-suited for knits. The standard option for sewing seams on a basic sewing machine is to use a zigzag stitch, set to a width of .7 mm and a length of 3.0 mm.

4. **Reduce the pressure of the presser foot if your seams stretch out when you sew.** If you're getting stretched-out, wavy seams, it's likely due to too much presser foot pressure. Most machines (and sergers) have the option to lower the pressure of the foot; check your manual. If you have a serger and you're getting wavy seams, make sure your differential feed is set to 1.5 instead of N (N is the setting for woven fabrics, 1.5 for knits).



5. **Consider using a walking foot.** If you've reduced the pressure of the foot on your regular sewing machine and you're still getting unsightly seams, try a walking foot. This nifty foot grabs at both the top and bottom fabrics and pulls the fabric through more evenly.



6. **Use quality thread, and pick up some wooly nylon.** You can always use regular spools of thread to sew knits— you don't need to buy those big cones. That said, if you're using a serger, it does use lots more thread than a typical zigzag stitch on a sewing machine. Most sergers are somewhat picky about thread— any inconsistencies in thread thickness will wreak havoc on the delicate tension balance, resulting in skipped stitches, broken threads, or other ugliness. Stick to quality cones, such as those made by Mettler, and you'll save yourself a lot of frustration.



When you're on the market for quality thread, be sure to pick up some woolly nylon thread. This usually comes in limited colors, but it doesn't matter— you'll only use it in the bobbin of your machine or the loopers of your serger; in other words, it will only show on the wrong side of your garment. Woolly nylon is extra stretchy, making it perfect for use in most knitwear. If you use it in your serger, make sure to test your settings on a scrap piece of the fabric with which you'll be sewing. You'll most likely have to fiddle with the recommended tension of the needles and loopers, as woolly nylon has different properties than regular thread. Once I find the setting that works perfectly for woolly nylon on any given knit fabric, I write down the "formula" and keep it posted near my serger, so the next time I work with a similar fabric, I've cut down significantly on my guess work.

7. Know how to make a professional-looking hem finish on your regular sewing machine.

Even if you're lucky enough to have a serger, you probably don't have a coverstitch machine. (Some sergers have a combo overlock/coverstitch function, like mine, but it can be a bit of a pain because I have to do some extensive re-threading if I want to switch between functions.) A coverstitch is comprised of the two parallel lines of stitching that you see on the hem of your t-shirts, which has a looping stitch on the wrong side of the fabric. The coverstitch is stretchy, and creates a very professional finish when it comes to knitwear. Perhaps you were worried that your knit garments will look too homemade because your only option for hem finishing was a zigzag. The good news is that you don't have to shell out another \$800 just to be able to sew a coverstitch. You'll just need the following:

- a machine that allows you to sew with a twin needle (most do)
- a Stretch Twin needle in either 2.0 or 4.0 mm width
- woolly nylon thread
- Lite Steam-A-Seam 2, 1/2" wide

1. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to fuse the Steam-A-Seam tape to the wrong side of the fabric, about 1/8" from the raw edge that you wish to hem.



Remove the paper backing, then fold the sticky tape to the wrong side of the fabric, using the edge of the tape as your folding guide. Press again following the manufacturer's instructions. You should have a 5/8" hem.

2. Hand-wind a bobbin with wooly nylon thread (don't stretch the thread too tightly as you wind) and insert your bobbin. Since a mock-coverstitch isn't quite as stretchy as a real coverstitch, the wooly nylon will create extra give in your hem, assuring that you won't snap any threads during everyday wear and tear.

3. Change out your regular Stretch needle for a Stretch Twin needle. Check out your sewing machine's manual for instructions on how to thread a twin needle. Thread, then test your stitch on a scrap of your fabric. If you're getting a ridge between the two lines of stitching, you need to reduce the top tension. (Mine is usually at a 4 or 5, but I turn it down to 1 for mock-coverstitching.)

Denver fabrics:

Knit Fabric

Sewing with Knit Fabrics

Knit fabrics are easy to sew and fit, require less pressing and care, and are comfortable to wear. Knit fabrics range from casual sweatshirt fleece to elegant stretch velvets and are available in a wide variety of fibers both natural and synthetic and a combination of the two. The degree of stretch varies from 20 to 35%. Select patterns which are designed for stretch knits only. These patterns require fabric that stretches a specific amount and the pattern envelope gives the degree of stretch.

Knit Fabric Types

Double knit is a firm, medium to heavy weight fabric which has fine ribs and usually looks the same on both sides. Because the fabric has minimal stretch, patterns designed for woven fabric can also be used. Suitable for skirts, pants, jackets and dresses.

Sweatshirt fleece has minimal stretch, flat vertical ribs on right side and a brushed soft surface on the wrong side. Suitable for sweatshirts, pants, jackets, and other sporty garments.

Single knit fabrics and jersey knits are light to medium weight fabrics with flat vertical ribs on the right side and dominant horizontal lines on the wrong side. Fabric stretches from 20 to 25% across the grain. Suitable for T-shirts, tops, dresses, pull-on pants, shorts, skirts, and sleepwear.

Interlock is a light to medium weight fabric with a fine rib on both sides. Fabric stretches 25 to 35% across the grain. Suitable for tops, dresses, pull-on pants, shorts, skirts, and sleepwear.

Velour and stretch velvet are available in various weights. Velour and stretch velvet have a soft brushed nap on the right side, velvet has a shinier appearance than velour. Fabric stretches 25 to 35% or more across the grain. Suitable for tops, shirts, dresses, skirts, pull-on pants, and shorts and easy jackets.

Sweater and textured novelty knits are available in a variety of weights and textures. The degree of stretch varies. These knit fabrics are suitable for pull-over sweaters, cardigans, simple dresses and pull-on skirts.

Two way stretch fabrics are fabrics with Spandex/spandex and have approximately 75% stretch. Swimwear fabrics of Nylon/spandex usually have the most stretch on lengthwise grain, Cotton/spandex has most stretch on crosswise grain and is suitable for swimwear, activewear, dancewear, leotards and leggings.

Ribbing has approximately 100% crosswise stretch and has prominent vertical ribs on both sides. This stretch makes it suitable for neckbands, waistbands and cuffs. TIP: Do not pre-wash ribbing as it will be more difficult to sew.

Needles and Thread

Use a ball-point needle size 10/70 or 11/75 for lightweight fabrics, 12/80 for medium weight fabrics and 12/80 or 14/90 for heavyweight fabrics. Use an all purpose thread, polyester or cotton wrapped polyester.

Interfacing

Interfacing is used to reinforce closures, add shaping to collars, cuffs and plackets and stabilize areas such as shoulder seams and some necklines. The best interfacing is a 100% polyester fusible lightweight knit interfacing.

Preparing Fabric

Purchase a little extra fabric, because most knits shrink to some degree. Wash the fabric in the same manner you intend to use for the finished garment. This will preshrink the fabric and remove the surface finish which will make it easier to sew.

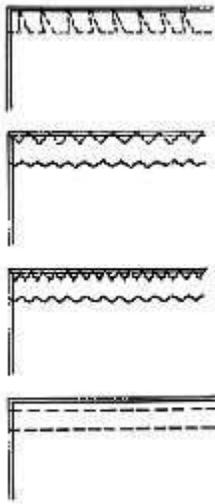
Cutting

Knits have shading and pattern pieces should be cut in one direction and be placed with the greatest degree of stretch around the body. Use weights to hold pattern pieces in place. A rotary cutter works very well with knits, just be sure to use a matt to protect your cutting table.

Sewing Procedures

Seam allowances vary on patterns, the 1/4" (6 mm) seam allowance is the easiest to use.

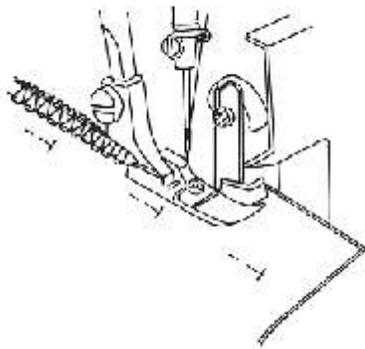
Sew the seam using an overlock stitch. This stitch sews and overcast in one step. It is not necessary to stretch the fabric while sewing as stretch is built in.



The seam can also be done with a narrow zig-zag width and a medium stitch length. This seam will stretch with the fabric (Fig. 2). Overcast the seam allowances together with a larger zig-zag stitch or you can use a three step zig-zag stitch placing the stitches one right next to the other.

On a straight stitch machine, sew the seam using a medium stitch length; stretch the fabric in the front and in the back of the presser foot as you sew. Sew another seam on the seam allowance close to the raw edges to keep seam allowances together. If pattern allows for a 5/8" (1.5 cm) seam allowance, sew the seam, trim the seam allowances, and overcast the raw edges together.

On the Serger (overlock) machine use three or four threads, guide fabric, being sure that the correct seam allowance is used.



Hemming

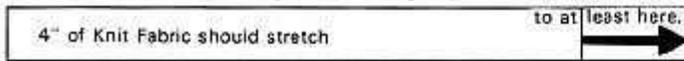
Hems can be topstitched or blind hemmed. Sew the hem with a catchstitch by hand or use the blind hem on your machine. To topstitch hems, loosen the pressure on the presser foot to prevent the hem from stretching. Topstitch with a narrow zigzag and a medium stitch length, a double or a triple needle, or use the cover hem on the serger machine.

Stretch Chart and Gauge

To use the stretch chart or gauge, fold over the crosswise edge of the knit fabric 3" (8 cm). Hold 4" (10 cm) of the folded fabric against the chart and gently stretch to the outer line. If the fabric stretches easily without excessive rolling to the outer line or slightly farther, the fabric has the correct amount of stretch for the pattern. this is an elastic seam.

STRETCH CHARTS

Fabric with 20% stretch across the grain such as: Single knit, Double knit, Interlock



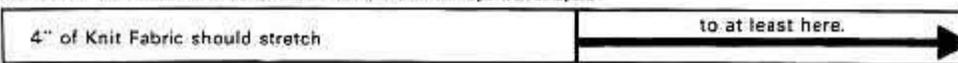
Fabric with 25% stretch across the grain such as: Nylon tricot, Nylon shear, Interlock, Velour



Fabric with 35% stretch across the grain such as: Sweater fabric, Velour, Terry, Interlock



Fabric with 75% stretch such as: Swimsuit fabric, Fabric with Spandex or Lycra



Craftstylish:

Tips and Tricks for Sewing with Knits



Professional knit hems tend to favor the strength of a double row of stitches.

Photo: Ann Steeves

Nowadays, it seems that knits are the fabric mainstay of our lives. Fashionistas and seamsters have embraced the comfort, ease, and wearability that knits afford. But for the beginning (and even not-so-beginning) seamster, there are some techniques that make sewing with knits easier and more enjoyable. Here are a few to get you started.

Use the right needle - The needle you use in a project with knits can make or break the results. Generally speaking, you need a specialized needle to sew knits. There are two types that I use for knits: Ballpoint (also called Jersey) and Stretch. Ballpoint needles are best used for sweater-type and loosely woven knits. They have a rounded point that penetrates the fabric without catching or cutting through the yarns. Stretch needles are perfect for sewing through tightly knitted jersey fabrics with high Lycra content. I use them on all my wool, polyester and rayon jersey garments. For more on choosing the right needle for your project, check out [Machine-Needle Know-How](#), an article from *Threads* magazine.

Stitch type and length - If you have a straight-stitch-only machine, set your stitch length to a medium (2.5mm-3mm) setting. When sewing knits with a straight stitch, you need to stretch the fabric very slightly (and very gently) as it goes under the presser foot. To do this, apply equal pressure on both sides of the needle by slightly pulling the fabric as shown.

Do not pull the fabric as it goes through the feed dogs: you may risk breaking your needle and damaging your machine if you do.

If you have a zigzag machine, set your stitch length to the narrowest zigzag setting (.5mm on many machines), and your stitch width to between 2.5mm and 3mm. If you have a very thick knit, you may need a longer stitch length. You do not need to stretch the fabric as you sew. The slight zigzag will give you the stretch needed.

Seam finishes - Knit fabrics, especially jerseys, don't generally ravel, so you can get away without finishing the seams in many cases. If you are fortunate enough to have a serger or overlock machine, you can use that to stitch and finish your seams in one fell swoop. You can also use your serger to finish the raw edges of hems before sewing them in place. I like to do this when working with sweater knits, terrycloth, or any knit that might have a tendency to "shed" slightly at the edges.

About face - Many patterns for knits call for using a facing for necklines and other exposed edges. With many knits, especially very stretchy jerseys, you can often skip the facing entirely. Simply fold under the seam allowance and stitch in place. I have been able to eliminate the facings on most necklines this way. If you have a very curved edge (like an armhole), you should test on a scrap of fabric cut to about the same curvature to see how you like the results.

Shouldering the burden - When making a knit top or dress, I stabilize the shoulder seams to prevent stretching. To do this, I fuse a piece of interfacing to the back shoulder piece or pieces. I prefer to use a 3/4-inch-wide piece of fusible tricot, which is made even with the cut edge of the fabric, but extends slightly beyond the seamline. This adds stability, but is light enough and has enough give to work with most knits. For heavier knits or sweater knits, I sometimes center a selvage of silk organza in the

seamline and stitch through all layers. The organza provides a lot of strength to the seam, but adds no bulk.

Hemming - If you examine knit ready-to-wear, you'll notice that most hems are sewn with a double row of stitches on the outside. Manufacturers use a specialized machine, called a coverstitch, to achieve this finish. If you don't have a coverstitch, you can still achieve this look. Most zigzag sewing machines can accommodate a double needle. This needle sews a perfectly spaced double row of stitches on the needle side of the fabric, with a zigzag on the bottom.

This stitch has more stretch than a regular straight stitch, and is perfect for giving you a professional-looking finish. Before stitching your garment, make a test on a scrap of fabric. Double needles may require some adjustments to your needle and bobbin tension to achieve a smooth, flat hem. Mark your hem on the right side of your garment. I like to use tailor's chalk that can easily brush or wash away. Then sew along this marking so your double row of stitches is on the right side.

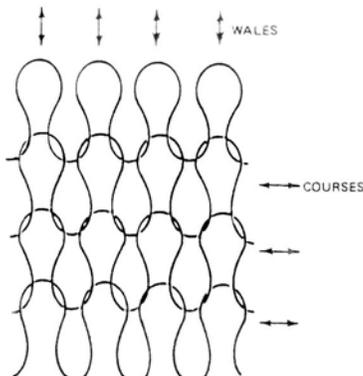
I hope these hints will help you get started with sewing knits. With a little practice, I think you will find sewing with knits addicting!

End of info

Sewing with Knit Fabric

Knits are an important part of every wardrobe because they are comfortable to wear and easy to care for. Because of their elasticity, knit garments do not require a lot of fitting and they shed wrinkles well. Most knits do not ravel, making them quick and easy to sew. Knits are versatile and can be seen in everything from the most casual wear to the dressiest of clothing attire. They come in a variety of fabrics that vary in texture, elasticity, fiber content, weight, and design.

Made from interlocking looped stitches, knit fabrics do not have lengthwise and crosswise yarns like woven fabrics. Instead, the interlocking loops of yarn create lengthwise ribs called **wales** and crosswise lines called **courses**. In single knits, the wales are visible from the right side of the fabric and the courses are visible on the fabric's wrong side.



A single yarn or set of yarns is looped together.

Knit fabrics are either weft or warp constructed. The type of fiber used as well as the method of construction affects the amount of stretch in each. **Weft knits** include single knits, double knits, and rib knits and are created by inter-looping the crosswise or filling yarns. Knitting can be done flat or in the round, creating a tube which is often cut to form a flat fabric.

Single knits are created by knitting

machines with a single bed of needles.

Fabrics such as jersey look different on the reverse side and their edges tend to curl.

Double knit fabrics are constructed on machines with two beds of needles, back to back. Double knits generally look the same front to back, are more stable than single knits, and the cut edge doesn't curl.

Interlock knits are made from fine lightweight yarns, while other double knits are heavier in weight. Velour, terry knit, and sweatshirt fleece are double knit but tend to curl because they have a single knit base and look different from front to back.

Rib knits are created by alternating knit and purl stitches in various combinations. They may look the same or different front to back, edges don't curl, and they may stretch 100 percent in the crosswise direction. Rib knits are generally used for band trims around necklines, armholes, and hemlines but can also be used for form fitting garments.

Warp knits are created by inter-looping the warp yarns. They are knitted flat rather than in a tube. **Tricot** and **raschel** knits are the most common types of warp knits but look completely different because of the types of yarns used in knitting. Raschel knit is a novelty knit with textured yarns, recognized by its lacy construction. Whereas tricot knit is a lightweight knit with lengthwise ribs on its face.

Knit fabrics are typically classified by their amount of stretch.

- **Firm, stable knits** have very little stretch and are handled much like woven fabrics. These may include double knit, sweatshirt knit, boiled wool, and raschel knit.
- **Moderate stretch knits** are those that stretch about 25 percent in the crosswise direction. Moderate stretch knits allow enough stretch for comfort but are not intended to conform to body

contours. These may include lightweight single knits such as jersey and warp knits such as tricot. Interlock knits are lightweight and drapable, slightly heavier than jersey knit, and don't curl at the edge, making them easier to handle than jersey knit. However, runs may form on the crosswise edge. Fleece is a double-napped knit that has a moderate amount of stretch.

- **Two-way stretch knits** may have up to 50 and 75 percent stretch in the lengthwise direction and up to 50 to 75 percent in the crosswise direction. Typically used for leotards, swimsuits, and bodysuits; they can also be used for other form fitting garments.
- **Super stretch knits** stretch 100 percent or more in both directions. Spandex and latex add the extra elasticity to these knits. Super stretch knits are used for performance enhancing sportswear and ski wear.

CHOOSING PATTERNS

Patterns designed for knits generally have fewer pieces and less shaping details, making them quick to sew. Look for the words "For Stretch Knits Only," and always check the pattern envelope for suggested fabrics. Patterns designed for stretch knits have less ease built in than patterns for stable knit and woven fabrics. Facings are often replaced by ribbing, binding, or turned and stitched necklines. Zippers are a more suitable closure than buttons and buttonholes. If these features are not included, choose a pattern that does or one that can be adapted for them.

Most patterns designed for knits will include a stretch gauge printed on the back of the pattern envelope. Follow the guidelines for recommended stretch. If the pattern does not have a stretch gauge, it was likely designed for stable knit or woven fabric.

The amount of ease built into the pattern design is based on the number of inches or the percentage stretch the specific knit will stretch. If the fabric has more stretch than recommended, the garment may fit looser. If less stretch, then the garment will fit tighter.

Please refer to the stretch gauge chart on page 8. To use the gauge, avoid stretching along the cut edge by folding the fabric back about 4 inches. Most gauges use a 4-inch measurement to check the degree of stretch. Place the folded 4-inch section against the 4-inch section on the gauge and gently stretch towards the right end to see if the fabric has adequate stretch for the pattern. If the folded edge starts to curl, you have stretched the fabric too much. This guide tells you the minimum amount of stretch needed for the pattern. If the knit stretches a little beyond the mark, it is still suitable for the pattern. Generally, stable knits stretch ½ inch or less (10 percent), moderate-stretch knits stretch 1 to 1 ¼ inches (25 to 35 percent), super stretch and two-way stretch knits will stretch 2 or more inches in both directions (50 to 100 percent).

Check for fabric recovery after stretching. When the fabric is released, it should spring back to its original size. If the fabric remains distorted, it will likely stretch out of shape with handling and wear and should be avoided.

Swimsuits and leotards require knits with two-way stretch. Often, two-way stretch nylon spandex has a greater amount of stretch in the lengthwise direction while cotton spandex has greater stretch in the crosswise direction. Use the stretch gauge for the direction indicated on the pattern envelope. There may be separate gauges for lengthwise stretch and crosswise stretch. As with all knits, the greatest amount of stretch should go around the body.

If lining fabric is required for the pattern, be sure that it also meets the recommended stretch guidelines.

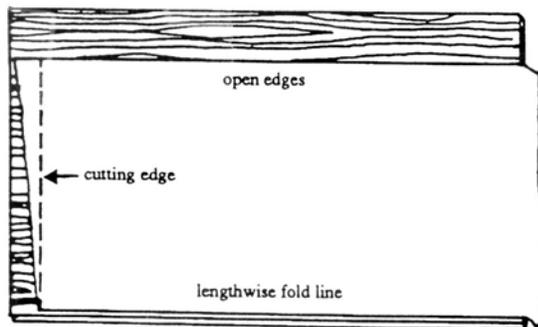
PREPARING THE FABRIC

Washable knits tend to shrink more often and to a greater degree than woven fabrics. Always purchase extra yardage to allow for shrinkage. For best results, wash and dry the fabric as you would the finished garment. Washing also helps to relax the fabric and removes fabric sizing. Excess sizing can cause skipped machine stitches.

Preshrink trim, interfacing, lining, and other notions that will be used in the garment. Generally, rib knit should not be prewashed if being used as a trim. Washing softens it and makes it difficult to cut accurately.

Blocking Knits

Mark “grainline” by marking along a course near each cut end of the fabric. Cut the edges of the fabric so they are straight with the course. Fold the fabric so the lengthwise edges and the cut crosswise edges are even. If the fabric is a tubular knit or doesn't have an open edge, the fabric can be cut along a lengthwise wale or rib-line. Do not use the fold as a guide for cutting because it may not be straight.



Fold knit fabric to check for straightness, and to straighten if necessary.

Lay the fabric on a blocking board or on a similar padded surface with the lengthwise and crosswise edges pinned to the surface at right angles to each

other. If the fabric has wrinkles or is stretched to create the rectangular shape, it is not completely straight of grain and should be blocked. Hold a steam iron about ½ inch above the fabric to steam fabric in place. Let the fabric rest until completely cool and dry so it will retain its shape. If the blocking surface is smaller than the amount of fabric, block the fabric in sections from one end to the other.

Layout, Cutting, and Marking

Determine if the knit has a right and wrong side. Jersey and tricot knits have lengthwise ribs on the right side and crosswise loops on the wrong side. Most knits will curl to the right side when stretched along the crosswise cut edge. If the right side is undetectable, designate one side to be the wrong side by marking with chalk or tape.

Fold the knit fabric with right sides together, making sure that the wales and courses are perpendicular to each other. It may be necessary to fold small sections at a time or cut pieces out separately to ensure that all pattern pieces are cut “on grain.” If the lengthwise fold or crease remains after prewashing and steaming, it is likely to be permanent. Fold knit in such a way as to avoid the crease when cutting. Do not let knit fabric hang over the edge of the cutting table. The weight of the fabric will cause it to be distorted. Roll extra fabric up along one end to prevent fabric overhang.

Lay out all pattern pieces going the same direction by following the “with nap” layout. Use fabric weights or use ballpoint or sharp, fine pins along seam allowances to secure pattern pieces for cutting. Be careful not to stretch fabric

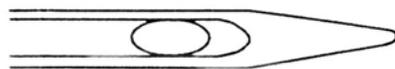
while cutting. A rotary cutter and mat make cutting out knits easy and eliminates movement and distortion.

There are a variety of marking methods. Try pins, water-soluble marking pens, tailor's tacks, or hard milled soap slivers. Test marking pens on scrap fabric to be sure the ink can be removed before using on fashion pieces. Mark the wrong side of each garment piece with tape.

NOTIONS FOR KNITS

As with any project, using the appropriate notions will help in achieving the best results.

- **Pins:** Use ballpoint pins on knit fabric. The rounded points on these pins separate the yarns instead of piercing them, creating holes in the fabric.
- **Needles:** Universal sewing machine needles stitch well on most knit fabrics. Ballpoint needles like ballpoint pins have a rounded tip



Ballpoint Needle



Regular Needle

Use a ballpoint needle with knits.

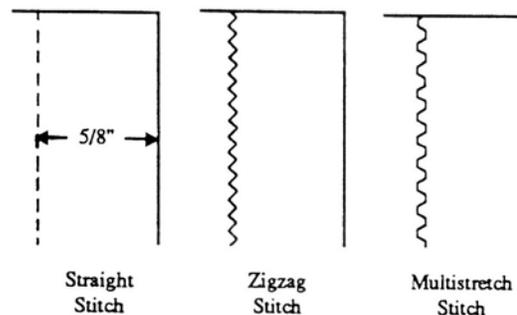
that eliminates snagging, and stretch needles work well to prevent skipped stitches. If skipped stitches are a problem, use a larger needle or try a needle lubricant. All these needles come in a variety of sizes from 60 to 90. Needle size will depend on fabric weight. The finer the fabric, the smaller the needle and thread should be.

Stretch twin needles come in various widths and are great for topstitching hems.

- **Thread:** For lightweight knit use extra fine polyester or polyester/cotton thread; for medium weight knits use an all-purpose polyester or polyester/cotton thread. Mercerized cotton thread does not have as much stretch as synthetic thread. Using a textured nylon thread in the bobbin to sew a plain seam makes it more elastic. Textured nylon thread gives a nice soft edge to serged seams and can also be used in the bobbin when working with a twin needle. Be sure to wind bobbin slowly to prevent thread from stretching, which can cause puckered seams in the finished garment.
- **Elastic:** Elastics differ in their stretch and recovery characteristics. Braided elastic narrows when stretched and can lose stretch and recovery if it is pierced when stitched. Knitted and woven elastics retain their original width when stretched. Non-roll elastic is appropriate for pull-on pants and skirts. Transparent elastic works well when topstitched and can stretch up to four times in length. It can also be used to stabilize seams when not stretched. Elastic used in swimwear should be chlorine resistant.
- **Interfacing:** The choice of interfacing is determined by the purpose and the relationship to the general characteristics of the fashion fabric. More than one type of interfacing may be needed within the same garment. Select interfacings such as a fusible tricot or a stretch non-woven to stabilize areas such as

necklines, collars, cuffs, plackets, and buttonholes. Consider the weight, stretch, and care requirements of the knit as well as the desired finish. Since fleece does not tolerate heat well, a sew-in interfacing is recommended. To determine its compatibility, always test a swatch of fabric with the chosen interfacing before using in the garment.

seams, stitch length can be shortened slightly.



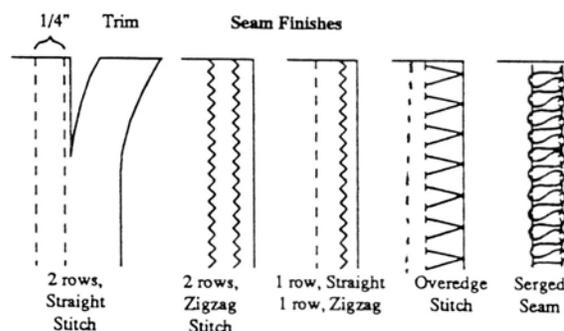
SEWING TECHNIQUES

Seams and seam finishes for knits must stretch with the knits or broken stitches will occur. Check the pattern for recommended seam allowance. Some patterns designed for knits will have ¼-inch seam allowances, eliminating the need for trimming but also eliminating any margin for adjusting size. Select a seam with enough stretch for the fabric.

Sergers are great for sewing knits. A three- or four-thread serger stitch will give a quick, durable, professional finish to seams while maintaining stretch. Adjusting the differential feed on the serger prevents seams from stretching too much and becoming wavy. Sergers and cover stitch machines allow you to duplicate techniques found in ready-to-wear, such as the flat lock or double-sided flat seam.

The conventional sewing machine is also quite capable of producing seams on knit fabric. Use a plain seam for stable and moderate-stretch knits. For lighter weight knits and some medium-weight knits, use a double-stitched seam using a straight stitch, zigzag, or a twin needle. Stitch on the seam line and 1/8 inch away. For greater elasticity in

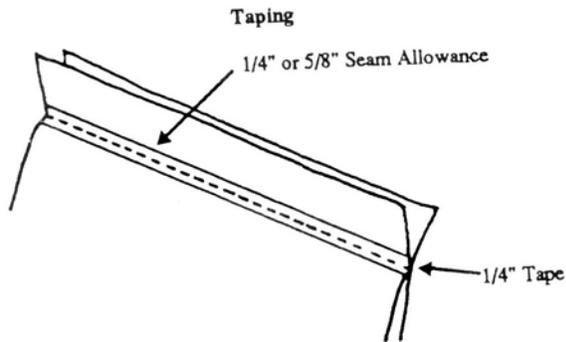
Since knit fabric doesn't ravel, seam finishes are optional. However, if the cut edges curl, serge the seam or sew two rows of stitching ¼ inch apart and trim close to the second stitching line. A wide zigzag stitch or one of the utility or overlock stitches found on most machines will also work to finish the edges. For best results with the overlock stitch, trim seam to ¼ if needed, and use the proper overlock foot for the machine to guide the raw edges along as the stitches are formed over the edge of the fabric. Reducing the foot pressure slightly on soft loose knits will help prevent seams from stretching and being wavy.



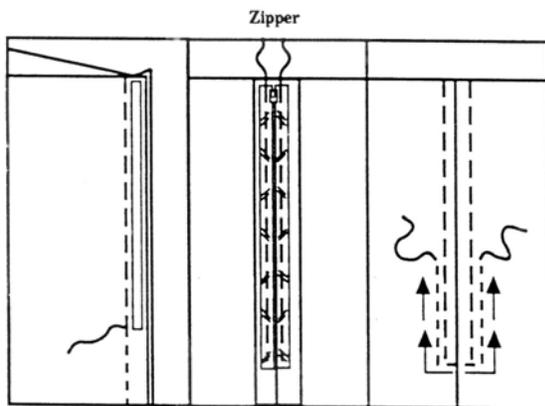
Areas to Stabilize

Seams that get a lot of stress and may stretch out of shape, such as shoulder, neckline, and waistline, need to be taped for stability. Narrow twill tape,

woven selvage, woven seam tape, or transparent elastic can be used. Stay-Tape™ is a lightweight nylon tape that doesn't add bulk and is washable and dry cleanable. Sew the seam, catching the tape in the seam. On lightweight knit, press the seam allowance to one side and topstitch close to the seam line through all layers.



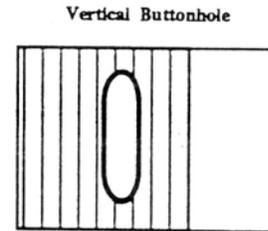
Zipper plackets should also be stabilized by applying a strip of lightweight fusible interfacing or hand stitching a piece of seam tape within the seam allowance area only. Stitch the zipper by beginning at the bottom of the zipper stop and stitch up one side. Start at the bottom again and stitch up the other side.



Reinforce zipper with lightweight fusible interfacing.

For buttonholes, the lengthwise grain of interfacing should follow the direction of the buttonhole. A corded buttonhole will also give more stability to buttonholes on knit fabric. Some machines even

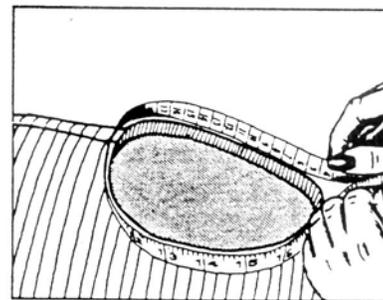
have special stretch buttonhole stitches. If the fabric has a lot of crosswise stretch it may be necessary to make vertical buttonholes to get a smoother, neater looking buttonhole.



Use vertical buttonholes that run parallel to ribbing.

Ribbing

Rib knit trim is designed to have great crosswise stretch and recover to its original size and shape after stretching. It is generally sold by the inch in tubular form. Rib knit is folded double with the folded edge used as the outer finished edge for band trims. Some ribbing comes with finished outer edges and is then applied single layer. Select a ribbing similar in weight to the fabric. If pattern pieces are not provided, cut ribbing twice the desired width and long enough to fit around wrists, upper arms,



Stand tape measure on end to determine ribbing length.

and ankles. Add 1/2 inch for seam allowances in both directions. To measure necklines and armholes, stand measuring tape on end along pattern seam line to determine length accurately. Cut ribbing two-thirds the

measured length of garment seams lines plus ½ inch for seam allowances. V-necklines are cut the same measurement as the garment neckline seam measures. Ribbing may be applied flat or in-the-round. In the flat method leave one seam open before applying ribbing. For the in-the-round method, seam ends together, trim seam allowance if necessary to ¼-inch. In both methods, fold ribbing is half lengthwise and press crease, match center and quarter marks to each other, and stretch ribbing to fit as it is sewn in place.

Pressing

Knits do not require a lot of pressing during construction, another reason that makes them quick to sew. When pressing is needed, test on fabric scraps for the correct amount of steam, heat, and pressure. Remember to press and not iron the fabric. To prevent the fabric from being flattened too much, place the fabric on a terry towel and use a press cloth.

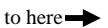
Hems

Allow the garment to hang 24 hours before measuring the hem. Hems can be done by hand or machine, or they can be fused. For very heavy knits, double stitch the hem. If topstitching a hem on textured knits, a zigzag stitch may look straighter than a straight stitch. A cover stitch is also good for hemming knit garments. If a cover stitch machine is not available, using a stretch double or triple needle can duplicate the look of the cover stitch. The two or three rows of topstitching on the right side and a row of zigzag stitching on the bottom side gives the necessary stretch required for knits. Choose a 2.5 mm or 4 mm twin needle and textured nylon thread in the bobbin and lengthen the stitch length slightly. If the knit tends to curl, interface the hem area with a lightweight fusible tricot knit interfacing. A machine blind stitch can be used for an invisible hem on stable knits for a dressier look.

Sewing Checklist				
	Needle size	Machine Setting	Marking Methods	Seams
Single Knits	8/60–11/75	12 / 2mm	Chalk, marking pens, soap sliver	Plain, double sewn, twin needle
Double Knits	8/60–14/90	10–12 / 2–2.5mm	Chalk, marking pens, soap sliver, thread	Plain, double sewn, welt, slot, piped
Interlock Knits	6/60–11/75	12/2mm	Any type except wax	Plain, double sewn, twin needle, stretch
Raschel Knits	12/80–14/90	10–12 / 2–2.5mm	Pins, tailor tacks	Plain, double sewn
Sweatshirt Knits	10/70–14/90	9–12 / 2.5–3mm	Chalk, marking pens, soap sliver	Plain, zigzag, double sewn, twin needle, welt, serged, flatlock, piped
Athletic Mesh Knits	10/70–12/80	10–15 / 1.5–2.5mm	Marking pens, tape	Double sewn, serged, zigzag
Tricot Knits	8/60–12/80	12 / 2mm	Outward notches, chalk, soap sliver	Double sewn, twin needle
Sweater Knits	10/70–14/90	10–12 / 2–2.5mm	Pins, thread	Double sewn, zigzag, serged
Stretch terry/velour	10/70–14/90	10–12 / 2–2.5mm	Chalk, marking pens, soap sliver, pins	Plain, double sewn, welt, piped
Action Knits	10/70–14/90	10 / 2.5mm	Chalk, marking pens, soap sliver, pins	Stretch, twin needle, serged

STRETCH GAUGE

Fabric with 20% stretch such as: jersey knit, double knit, and interlock knit

Stretch 4 inches of folded knit fabric from here  to here 

Fabric with 25% stretch such as: nylon tricot, interlock, and velour

Stretch 4 inches of folded knit fabric from here  to here 

Fabric with 35% stretch such as: sweater knit, velour, and terry knit

Stretch 4 inches of folded knit fabric from here  to here 

Fabric with 75% stretch such as: swimsuit knit, fabric with spandex or Lycra®

Stretch 4 inches of folded knit fabric from here  to here 

For more information on sewing knit fabrics, see Claire Shaffer's *Fabric Sewing Guide*.

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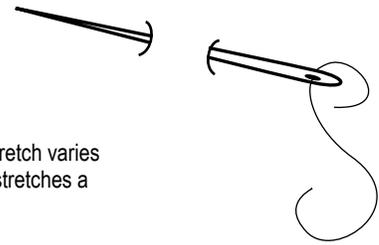
Denver Fabrics

Sewing Made Easy!

Sewing with Knits

Knits are easy to sew and fit, require less pressing and care, and are comfortable to wear.

Knits range from casual sweatshirt fleece to elegant stretch velvets and are available in a wide variety of fibers both natural and synthetic and a combination of the two. The degree of stretch varies from 20 to 35%. Select patterns which are designed for stretch knits only. These patterns require fabric that stretches a specific amount and the pattern envelope gives the degree of stretch.



KNIT FABRICS TYPES

Double knit is a firm, medium to heavy weight fabric which has fine ribs and usually looks the same on both sides.

Because the fabric has minimal stretch, patterns designed for woven fabric can also be used. Suitable for skirts, pants, jackets and dresses.

Sweatshirt fleece has minimal stretch, flat vertical ribs on right side and a brushed soft surface on the wrong side. Suitable for sweatshirts, pants, jackets, and other sporty garments.

Single knit and jersey are light to medium weight fabrics with flat vertical ribs on the right side and dominant horizontal lines on the wrong side. Fabric stretches from 20 to 25% across the grain. Suitable for T-shirts, tops, dresses, pull-on pants, shorts, skirts, and sleepwear.

Interlock is a light to medium weight fabric with a fine rib on both sides. Fabric stretches 25 to 35% across the grain. Suitable for tops, dresses, pull-on pants, shorts, skirts, and sleepwear.

Velour and stretch velvet are available in various weights. Velour and stretch velvet have a soft brushed nap on the right side, velvet has a shinier appearance than velour. Fabric stretches 25 to 35% or more across the grain. Suitable for tops, shirts, dresses, skirts, pull-on pants, and shorts and easy jackets.

Sweater and textured novelty knits are available in a variety of weights and textures. The degree of stretch varies. These knits are suitable for pull-over sweaters, cardigans, simple dresses and pull-on skirts.

Two way stretch fabrics are fabrics with Spandex/Lycra and have approximately 75% stretch. Swimwear fabrics of Nylon/Lycra usually have the most stretch on lengthwise grain, Cotton/Lycra has most stretch on crosswise grain and is suitable for swimwear, activewear, dancewear, leotards and leggings.

Ribbing has approximately 100% crosswise stretch and has prominent vertical ribs on both sides. This stretch makes it suitable for neckbands, waistbands and cuffs.

TIP: Do not pre-wash ribbing as it will be more difficult to sew.

NEEDLES AND THREAD

Use a ball-point needle size 10/70 or 11/75 for lightweight fabrics, 12/80 for medium weight fabrics and 12/80 or 14/90 for heavyweight fabrics.

Use an all purpose thread, polyester or cotton wrapped polyester.

INTERFACING

Interfacing is used to reinforce closures, add shaping to collars, cuffs and plackets and stabilize areas such as shoulder seams and some necklines. The best interfacing is a 100% polyester fusible lightweight knit interfacing.

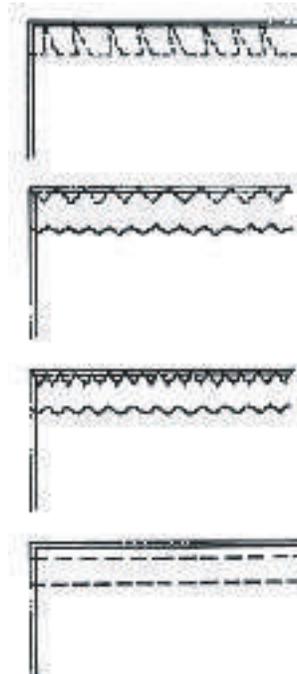
PREPARING FABRIC Purchase a little extra fabric, because most knits shrink to some degree. Wash the fabric in the same manner you intend to use for the finished garment. This will preshrink the fabric and remove the surface finish which will make it easier to sew.

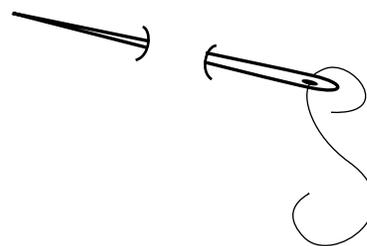
CUTTING

Knits have shading and pattern pieces should be cut in one direction and be placed with the greatest degree of stretch around the body. Use weights to hold pattern pieces in place. A rotary cutter works very well with knits, just be sure to use a matt to protect your cutting table.

SEWING PROCEDURES

Seam allowances vary on patterns, the 1/4" (6 mm) seam allowance is the easiest to use.





Sewing with Knits – page 2

Knits are easy to sew and fit, require less pressing and care, and are comfortable to wear.

SEWING PROCEDURES

Seam allowances vary on patterns, the 1/4" (6 mm) seam allowance is the easiest to use.

Sew the seam using an overlock stitch. This stitch sews and overcast in one step. It is not necessary to stretch the fabric while sewing as stretch is built in.

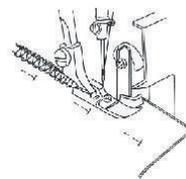
The seam can also be done with a narrow zig-zag width and a medium stitch length. This seam will stretch with the fabric (Fig. 2). Overcast the seam allowances together with a larger zig-zag stitch or you can use a three step zig-zag stitch placing the stitches one right next to the other (Fig.3).

On a straight stitch machine, sew the seam using a medium stitch length; stretch the fabric in the front and in the back of the presser foot as you sew (Fig. 4). Sew another seam on the seam allowance close to the raw edges to keep seam allowances together. If pattern allows for a 5/8" (1.5 cm) seam allowance, sew the seam, trim the seam allowances, and overcast the raw edges together.

On the Serger (overlock) machine (Fig. 5) use three or four threads, guide fabric, being sure that the correct seam allowance is used.

Hemming

Hems can be topstitched or blind hemmed. Sew the hem with a catchstitch by hand or use the blind hem on your machine. To topstitch hems, loosen the pressure on the presser foot to prevent the hem from stretching. Topstitch with a narrow zigzag and a medium stitch length, a double or a triple needle, or use the cover hem on the serger machine.

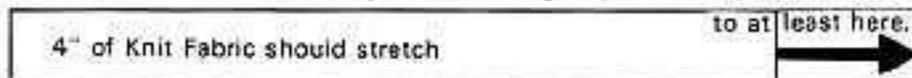


STRETCH CHART AND GAUGE

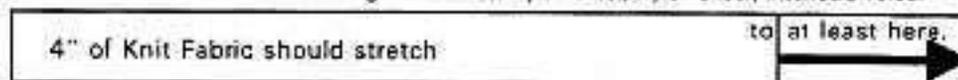
To use the stretch chart or gauge, fold over the crosswise edge of the knit fabric 3" (8 cm). Hold 4" (10 cm) of the folded fabric against the chart and gently stretch to the outer line. If the fabric stretches easily without excessive rolling to the outer line or slightly farther, the fabric has the correct amount of stretch for the pattern. This is an elastic seam.

STRETCH CHARTS

Fabric with 20% stretch across the grain such as: Single knit, Double knit, Interlock



Fabric with 25% stretch across the grain such as: Nylon tricot, Nylon sheer, Interlock, Velour



Fabric with 35% stretch across the grain such as: Sweater fabric, Velour, Terry, Interlock



Fabric with 75% stretch such as: Swimsuit fabric, Fabric with Spandex or Lycra

