

Fitted Dress Construction

A Primer

Pre-Project Prepping 4: Transferring to Paper

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Introduction

This is one of a series of instructions for turning your four-panel fitted dress mockup into something that you can wear.

This tutorial was written with beginner to intermediate-level sewers in mind. If something in these documents is unclear, please contact me and I will try to clarify or correct the instructions. There are often many ways to skin a cat. I am presenting techniques which work for me and for those who I've helped construct a gown.

I have provided a bibliography of main sources at the end, but quite a bit of this tutorial is the result of knowledge accumulated throughout years. These instructions are not heavily footnoted, as they're more of user's guide than formal documentation. Many of the references can be found in other papers located at my website. If you need your own documentation I'd suggest checking out the books in my bibliography. They're excellent sources, and are good foundation books for anybody interested in knowing more about the period.

Transferring to Paper

Before sewing the dress together, you may want to capture your mock-up on paper. Though I often call this a "pattern", as shorthand, it's not a traditional pattern. Every fabric acts differently, so it's a good idea to treat this as a starting point. Use a generous seam allowance, and give each dress a final fitting before completion.

Separate your mock-up pieces, and trim down to your preferred seam allowance. Trace onto paper for best results. Freezer paper, craft paper, or other heavy duty paper works great. I don't recommend tracing to muslin, as muslin and other fabrics can lose their shape after a couple of uses.

When tracing, make sure to capture the gores, connection points, and any other markings on the mock-up. If you have measured the distance from the bottom of the mock-up to the floor, make sure to include this. Mark the seam allowance, and be sure to notate on

the pattern what that seam allowance is. Write the name or initials of the wearer on the pattern, as well as the date that the mock-up was made. If desired, note the current weight of the wearer, so future dresses can be expanded, taken in, or an altogether new mock-up can be made.

Continue to *Lesson 1: Patterning the Skirt and Cutting the Dress*

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