

This booklet is about sewing skirts.

- Fabric and style choices.
- Fitting and altering the pattern.
- Waist options including darts, facings, elastic, bias and regular waistbands.
- Seam finishing options.
- Hem options including double needle for knits, blind hem, trim and fusing.

All Dunn Designs

Written by Patty Dunn

for

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Skirt-a-facts

Fabric & pattern facts

Waist options

Fitting

Zippers

Hem finishing

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Starting at center back seam. Leave 1" of the ric rac free. Place ric rac to skirt bottom right sides together. Line up edge of skirt in center of ric rac (1/2 of ric rac is showing) Stitch on wrong side of skirt around bottom.

As you approach the end fold ric rac over skirt edge and continue stitching. Trim tail of ric rac.



Turn ric rac down and top stitch around skirt bottom catching seam allowance in stitches.

Stitch in the ditch at center back and side seams to insure ric rac stays in place. Press.



Fabric Fact:

Some FACTS to remember when choosing the pattern style and fabric.

- Soft fabric will be more flattering in a full style. (I do not recommend a straight skirt in a soft rayon. It will show every bump and the seams can not handle the stress (ask me why I know this))
- Stiff or heavy fabrics will be better in a straighter style or possibly a trumpet skirt. Consider the fact a trumpet skirt is close fitting until the bottom.
- Keep in mind when choosing fabric the weight and **DRAPE** or **HAND** is what should dictate your choice of style. One option that changes the drape of a fabric is placing the pattern on the bias.

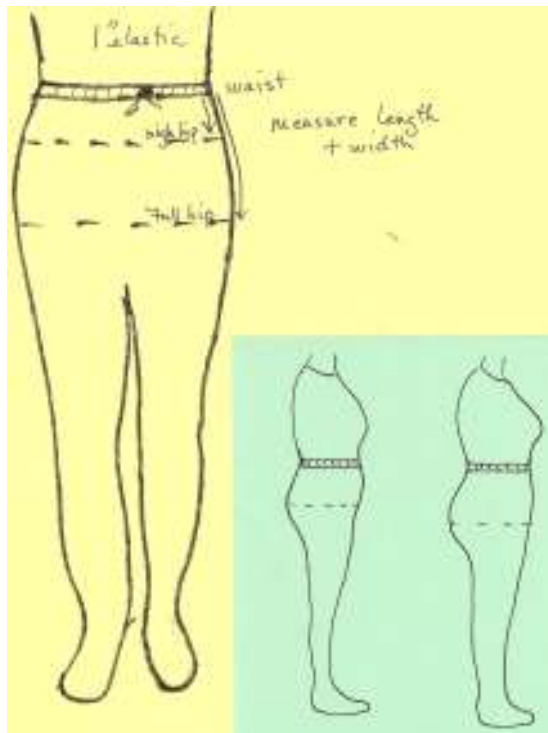
In this booklet we will document your measurements, adjust the pattern, talk about waist finishes, zipper options and hem finishes. The Skirt-a-Facts DVD made for KEDT—TV 2010 compliments this book.

START:

- Find your waist by bending from side to side. As you lean place your fingers at your side waist.

Document all measurement on the following page. The # you place on the red lines will be the measurement you will use for adjusting the pattern.

- Pin a 1" wide piece of elastic around your waist.
- Hip length is as important as hip width to know the location of the fullest part of your hip. Measure length to fullest part of tummy area and fullest part of hip. NOTE green picture—fullness can be low or high.
- Measuring length from waist to floor will also tell you if your waist is level. Anything more than 1/4" difference will need to be adjusted with a pattern alteration.



To sew the hem by sewing machine. Place the correct stitch and foot on the machine. Place hem to bed of machine and fold skirt away from hem. The machine will straight stitch on hem and pick on the fold. Guide the fold with the bar of the foot. Silk thread or invisible thread in the top of the machine will disappear into the fabric. If your machine is adjustable you can take a longer length and *slightly* narrower width. Consider doing a sample on same fabric first. Always press hem before you start and after you finish.



Double needle hem: works best with any knits but also with other fabrics. You must stitch on the top side of the fabric. I recommend temporary glue stick or wonder tape. Place glue on hem, turn up and finger press.



4.0 double needle is the best width for a hem. Thread needles one at a time with the regular threading direction.

If fabric waves or buckles while stitching place water soluble stabilizer underneath as you stitch.



Consider attaching your quilt guide to the back of your presser foot to help stay straight.

Trim extra seam allowance away.

One other hint—if you need more stretch use wooly nylon thread in the bobbin.

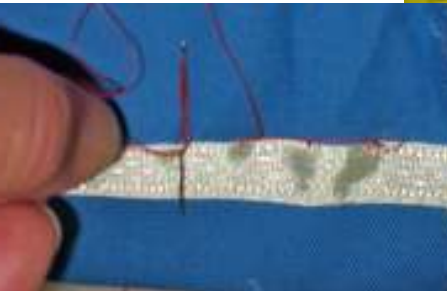


Hems finishes:

It is important to consider the fabric and style when choosing the best hem for your skirt. The fuller the skirt bottom the less hem turn up you want (1/2" turned up twice is max). Softer fabrics may need 1/4" or 1/8" (turned up twice) For straight skirts 1 1/2" is max. A slight A line skirt could go either way. A faced hem works well because it follows the curve of the bottom. No matter what you decide always make sure the bottom hem line matches the seam line of the skirt bottom. The fuller the skirt the more the seam angles. Clip the angle of the hem to eliminate hem bulk and puckering.



3 options to finish raw edge of hem—serge, apply hem tape, or fold over 1/4" and press. To attach hem tape place tape against the right side of hem. Straight stitch along edge.



To hand pick a hem I use a lock stitch. Place needle in fabric and bring loose thread under needle point. Draw thread tight and move to the next stitching point.

Often fitting issues are visible when you place the elastic around your waist. Take these measurements including length from waist to floor (without shoes on) to assure your hemline will be EVEN. To determine how much ease bring tape measure around waist or hip, hold it in place and sit down. Release the tape to the number it feels comfortable. The difference is the amount of ease you will need.

Follow the guide on page 4 and write your measurements below.

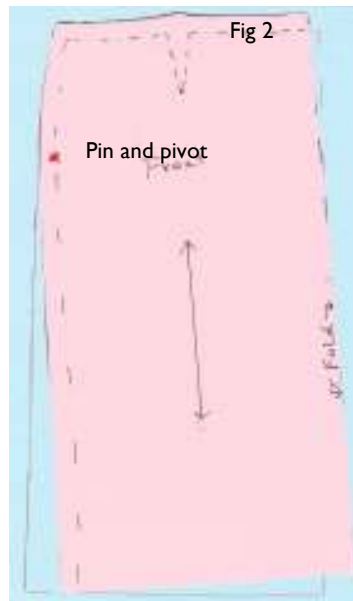
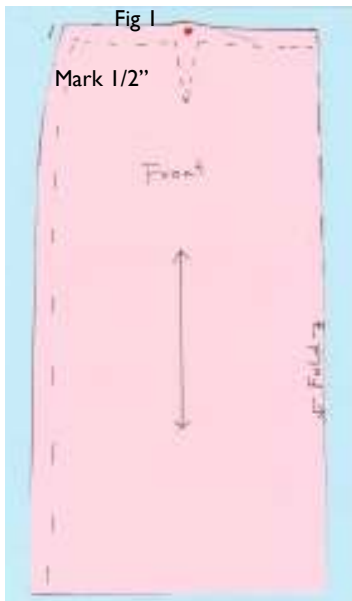
- **Waist** _____ + 1/2" or 1" for FULL tummy = _____
 \div this # by 4 = _____
- Length from waist to floor to floor
 - Center front _____
 - Left side _____
 - Right side _____
 - Center back _____
- **Skirt length short** _____ **long** _____ (your choice).
- **Upper hip** _____ " down _____ " around
 Width around + 2" or 4" (fuller figure) _____
 \div 4 _____
- **Full lower hip** _____ " down _____ " around
 Width around + 2" - 4" (fuller figure) _____
 \div 4 _____

(The measurement on the red line will be the one to use on your skirt pattern)

Fitting issues:

Adding width to waist.

- Measure pattern pieces (less seam allowance and dart) at waist and hip for total width.
- Divide each # by 4. Waist _____ Hip _____
- Take your waist measurement from red line on page 5—subtract difference of pattern measurement (less dart).
- Lay pattern on tissue and trace skirt pattern.
- Mark amount of extra you need beside on tissue beside waist (fig 1).
- Place a pin at hip and pivot pattern waist toward mark. Draw the new waist line (fig 2)
- Pivot back to original hip line.



- Do the same on back pattern
- Adjust facing with same amount



Make a fly template the shape of seam allowance. Fold fabric in half and place straight side on fold. Cut from muslin or light weight fabric

Stitch curved side to left (looking down) seam allowance.



Open basting stitch. Open zipper and Zig zag over teeth at top to make zipper stop.

Fly zipper:



Baste center front to bottom at zipper end. Secure stitch and continue stitching seam with a regular stitch length.

Line up zipper tape edge with stitched SEAM line. To avoid tab place zipper above skirt top. Stitch left side (looking down at it) of zipper tape to seam allowance

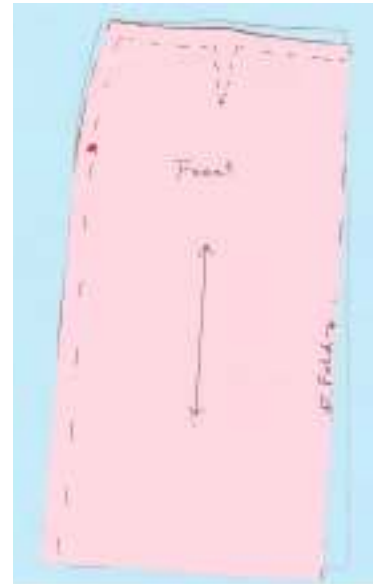


Pull zipper tape to the right side and stitch zipper to seam allowance on other side.

Turn over to top side and draw a line to follow Top stitch following marked line catching fabric, seam allowance and zipper.

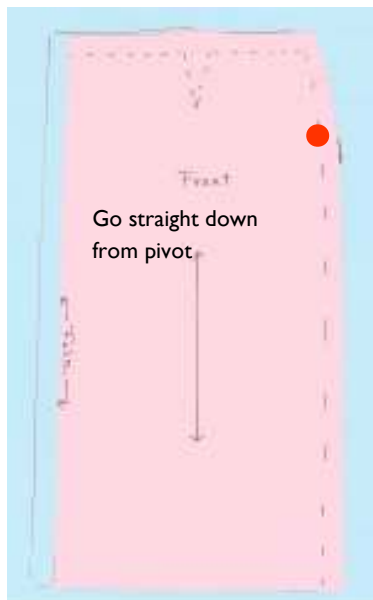
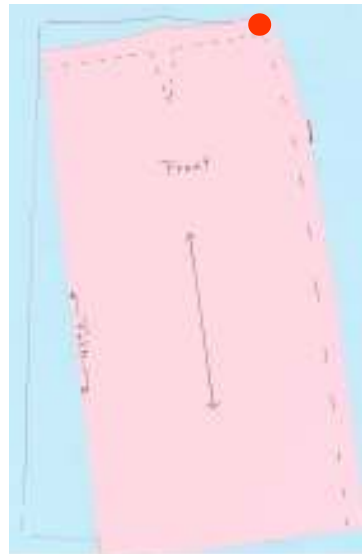
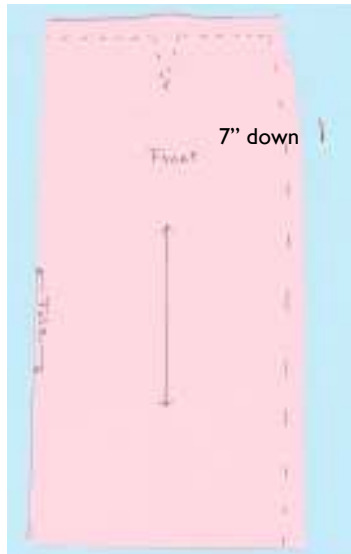
Less waist

- Mark amount inside waist.
- Pivot from hip toward mark.
- Trace new hipline following the pattern.

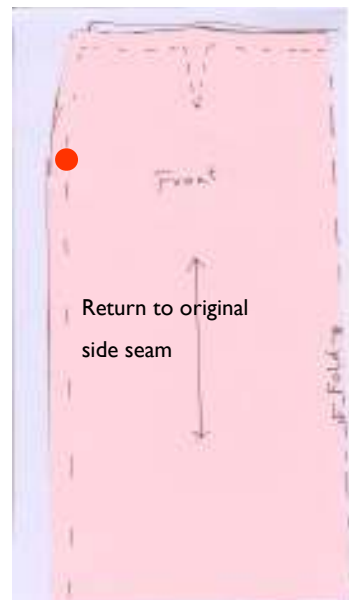


Adding hip width

- Mark hip area at correct level for length
- Pivot from waist side
- Place pin at hip and pivot bringing side straight.
- Redraw side seam



OR



One other option is to hand pick the zipper. Instead of top stitching use a needle and thread. Stitch through zipper tape into outside fabric (like you are putting in a hem).



Lapped zipper:



Lay zipper tape matching edge of tape with edge of seam allowance. Coil will be *beside* seam stitch.

Stitch keeping tape lined up.

Turn zipper back exposing fabric folding seam allowance on itself. Stitch folded seam allowance to zipper



Pull zipper tape to opposite side and stitch to seam allowance. Top stitch using a quilt guide attachment following the center stitch line.



Center zipper: Cut a strip of interfacing 1 1/4" X 12". Fuse to edge of back seam allowance where zipper will be sewn



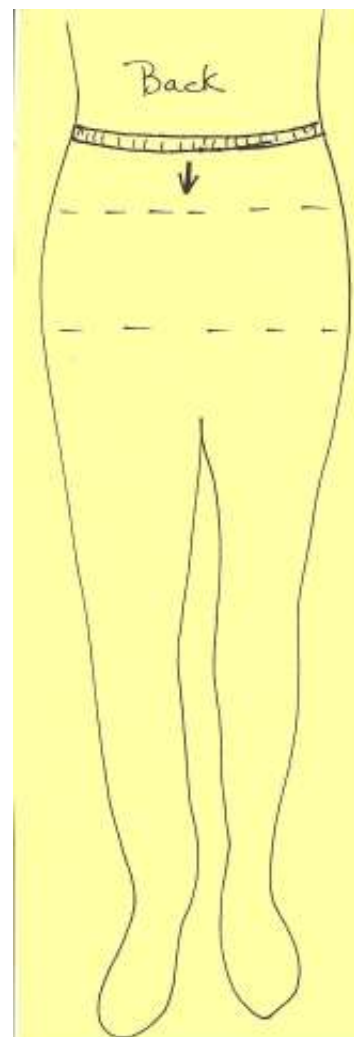
Mark where end of zipper will be. RST baste seam to mark.

Secure stitch and sew the rest of the seam below where zipper will be sewn .

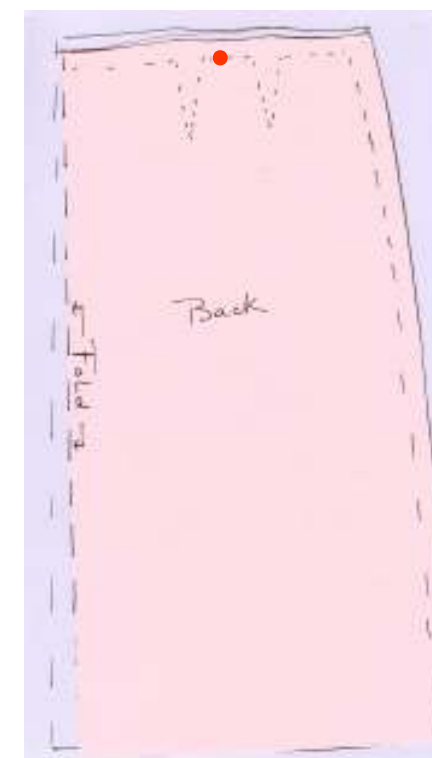


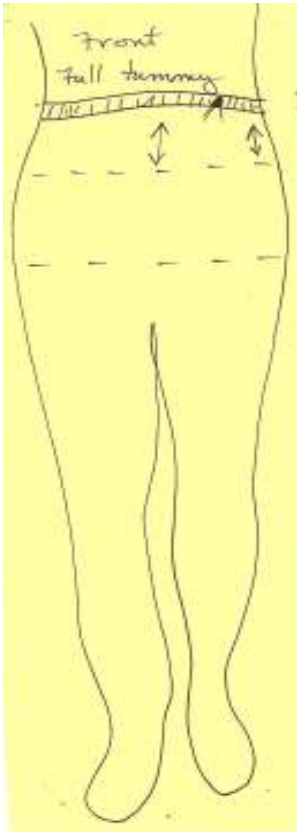
1. On wrong side place zipper coil *right on seam stitching*. 2. Stitch zipper tape to SEAM ALLOWANCE. stopping every few inches to check making sure coil still lines up with seam. Turn other seam allowance flat and stitch other side of zipper. 3. Lay flat and top stitch following the seam. Notice in picture I have attached the quilt guide to the back of the foot. Follow the seam line with the guide.

Sway back - if the elastic you pinned around your waist dips in the back make the following sway back adjustment.



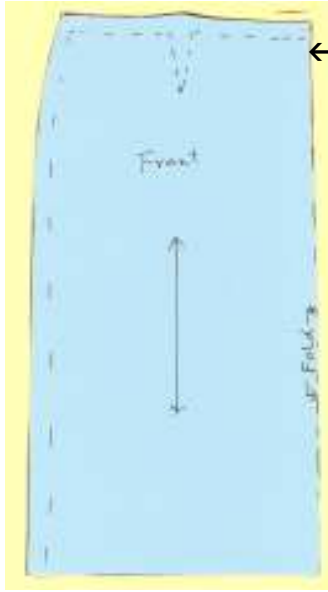
Trace pattern on tracing paper. Mark amount you need to dip at center back. Tip pattern down to mark and redraw waist.



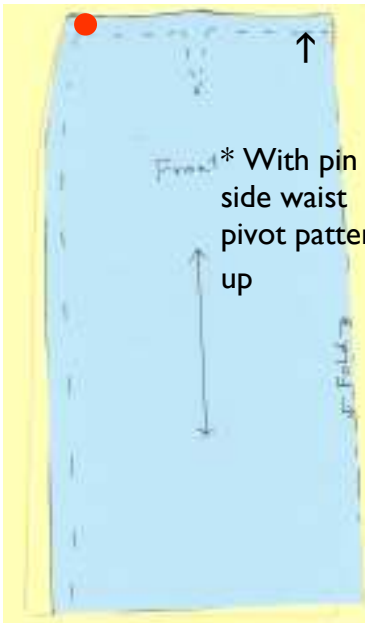


Full Tummy—

- Measure amount from upper hip to waist on side and center. If needed pin another elastic band around upper hip to find distance.



- *Trace pattern.
- *Make mark above center of waist front .



- * With pin at side waist pivot pattern up



- * Trace pattern following the pivot



To line up plaids and seam. Sew one side. Close zipper and mark where lines are. Open zipper and stitch other side.



Line up seams in the same way.



If zipper is longer—Set machine on widest width and 0 length (or drop feed teeth) Zig zag (5 width) over closed zipper coil about 1" below point where you stopped stitching.



Cut zipper just below zig zag stitch

Fold a scrap of fusible interfacing over zipper end. Stitch sides to zipper. Trim off extra.

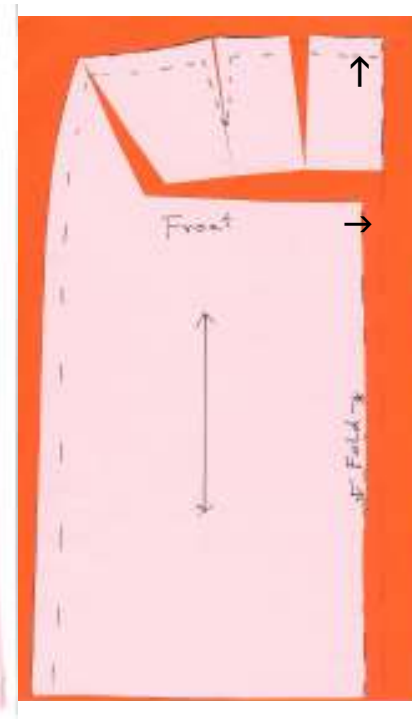
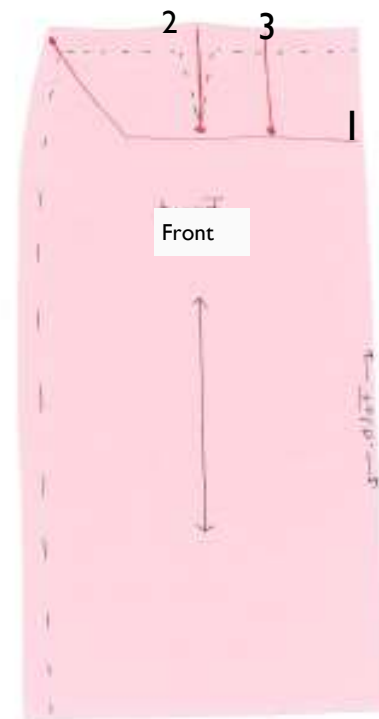


Attach regular zipper foot on your machine. Pull end of zipper away from seam and stitch center back seam starting where zipper stitching ended.



Open seam and stitch zipper tape to seam allowance at bottom. Do this on both sides moving needle position if necessary. Press seams open

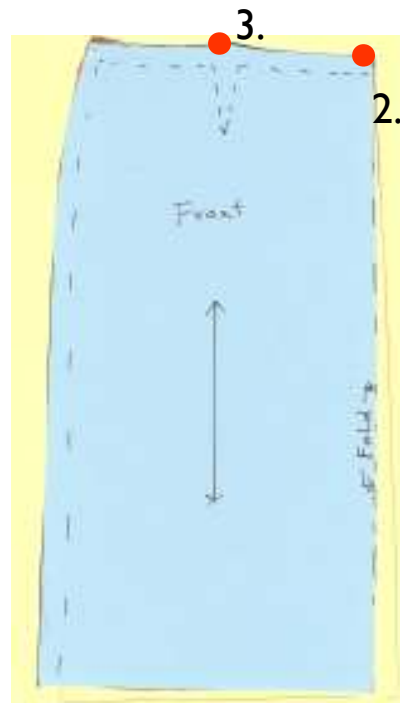
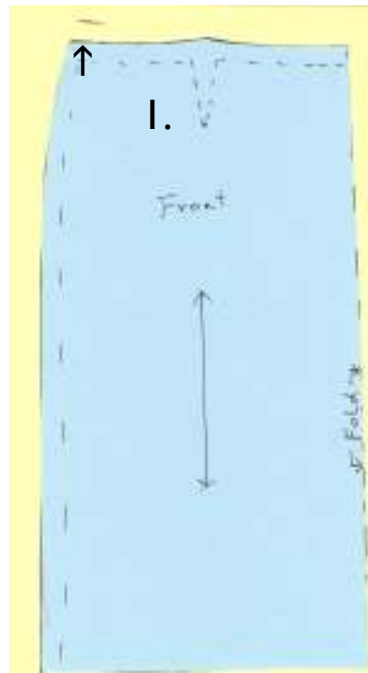
- For more tummy height plus width:
- (1) 1/2" below dart point mark a line cross pattern. Stop about 3" from side and angle line up to top of side waist. (stop 1/16th" before you get to edge of pattern. Slash pattern to that point.
- (2) Mark and slash pattern through dart (leave 1/16").
- (3) 2" from dart (toward center) mark and slash.
- Pull top of pattern up and over amount needed.
- Draw new pattern line which will add extra. width in center front. Continue center front line adding width in center.



High hip adjustment:

High hip usually needs height plus width.

- Measure distance of each side from upper hip line.
 - Make note of which hip is high.
1. Mark height on tissue.
 2. For hip height and fullness pivot from center point at waist.
 3. For only height and not extra fullness pivot at dart.



Remove zipper from machine and zip up zipper. Mark bottom of opposite side matching original stopping point.



Bring opposite side of skirt to unsewn zipper tape. Double check zipper making sure it has not twisted. Zipper should be right side down against right side of fabric.



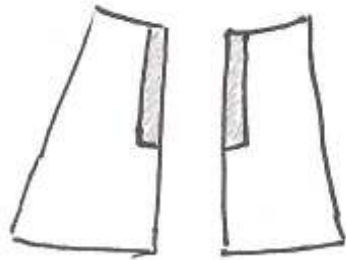
Stitch opposite side of zipper tape in the same manner as you just did stopping at marked point.

Press zipper and seam flat.



Zippers

Stabilize seam with a strip of interfacing where zipper will be.



Invisible zipper:

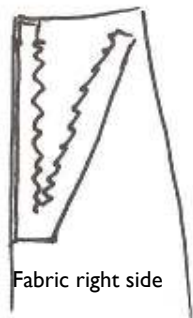
Do not sew seam first.



Open zipper, turn zipper to wrong side and press coils flat.

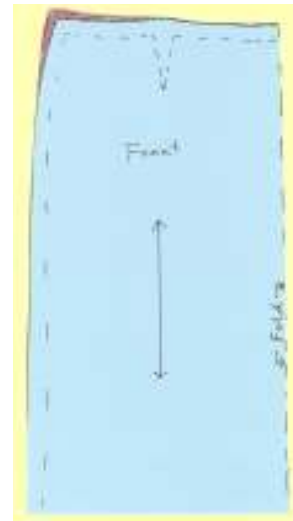


Mark where zipper will end.



Place zipper right side down with right side of fabric facing you. Match zipper tape edge with fabric edge.

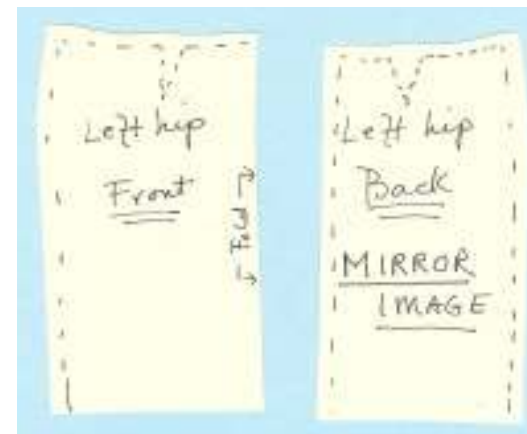
Place groove of special invisible zipper foot over coil (groove farthest from fabric edge needle will be to the right of groove). Make sure needle is lined up with foot hole (move slider so coil is over zipper teeth and needle lines up with the presser foot hole) Stitch down zipper to marked point.



- Cut pattern on fold (both sides with high hip).



- Open fabric and with **WRONG** side facing you trim the regular hip side by placing original pattern on fabric and follow hipline.



- Back pattern piece must match same hip as front pattern. (This is easy to mix up) The back hip adjusted side will be the mirror image of front. When cutting fabric cut with right side facing up.

Skirt Construction

When you purchase a pattern it is a guide to making your garment. There are techniques beyond the pattern that you can do to help make the garment successful. The suggested fabric on the pattern envelope is a wide range. The instructions hit general information. Even if the pattern does not address an issue like finishing the seams if you have the knowledge take liberty and use what you know and go beyond the pattern instructions.

Seam finishing options



Serger

Running zig zag

Sewing machine overcast stitch



Seams Great—Thin nylon tricot tape. Fold over raw edge of fabric and stitch. The tape naturally rolls when pulled slightly. *Be sure and press seams with a cooler iron setting.

Good finish for fabric that ravels.

Waist bands

Cut desired band width X 2 + 1 1/4". Cut the length of waist. Interface band unless it is a bias band. Stitch band to waist using 5/8" seam allowance.



Fold and press unsewn band edge up 1/4". Turn band down meeting fold 1/8" BELOW band stitching line at waist. Pressing is very important. Press in the creases. They will guide you later.

Stitch in zipper placing top of zipper teeth right at fold line. For more info about zipper set up go to page 20.



Fold band over zipper toward right side of skirt (1/4" edge is folded up) Stitch following zipper teeth. Turn right side out and press.



Stitch on top side following the seam. The back will catch the turned up edge .



Trim fabric close to stitching.



Mark center and sides by folding elastic in half—mark folded edges.



Sew with presser foot against elastic using the 3 step zig zag stitch. (elastic is on wrong side of fabric) Stretch elastic to meet marked points at side and center front and back.



Turn elastic down. You can top stitch following edge of elastic or I like to straight stitch down on sides and front and back—this holds elastic in place and does not look as bulky.



Another option is to turn down seam allowance. Fold edge of fabric down. Stitch raw edge.

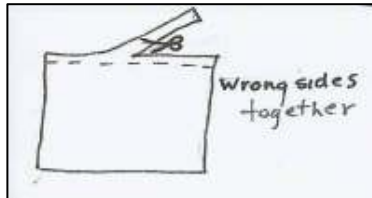
For best results use an edge stitching foot. Adjust needle position so stitch is in center of folded edge. Turn 1/8" back and line guide bar of foot against folded edge. Straight stitch. Press seam open.

Good for stable fabrics—not for knits or fabric that ravel.



French Seam:

- Place front and back with **WRONG SIDES**
- **TOGETHER,**
- Stitch 1/8" from the raw edge (remember the **WRONG** sides are together.) **TRIM** the seam allowance close to the stitching line. Avoid cutting the thread.



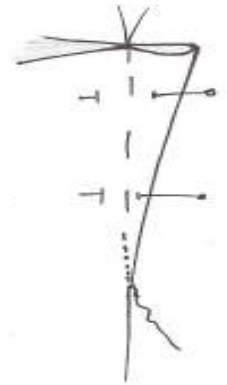
- Press seam flat then press seam to one side. Turn skirt **RIGHT** sides together and press again – the seam allowance is now sandwiched between.
- Stitch the seam 1/4" from the edge. ****Use the edge of your presser foot as a guide against the seam edge.** Press the seam flat, open and press seam to one side.



(Turn fabric right sides together and stitch seam)

Darts:

Pin dart RST (right sides together)
Stitch from top to bottom bringing stitch length to **ONE** about an inch above point. Stitch on fold as you get to point and stitch off fabric continuing to stitch for an inch. **Press** darts toward center front and center back .



Elastic waist:

1. Sew side seams.
2. Mark center back and front.
3. Measure elastic around your waist. Pull tight enough to feel comfortable.
4. Mark and cut elastic (no seam allowance)
5. Place a small piece of fabric or interfacing below cut edge of elastic and stitch elastic to fabric. Butt ends of elastic together and stitch with a zig zag running stitch. Stitch 3 rows—one down center and one on either side of center.

