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Let's Make a Skirt and Blouse : Extension Circular 4-01-2

Gerda Petersen

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Let's Make A Skirt and Blouse

EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING
E. F. FROLIK, DEAN  E. W. JANIKE, DIRECTOR
### SKIRT

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Let's Make A Skirt and Blouse . . . . . 

by
Gerda Petersen
Extension Clothing Specialist

This is the second 4-H clothing project. You will make an outfit that you can wear to club meetings, to school, at home and other places. When someone says, "I like your skirt and blouse," you can proudly say "I made it myself."

You may carry this project for one or two years. Your leader will help you decide what is best. To complete your project:

1. Make a skirt and blouse.
2. Practice good sewing habits.
3. Improve your personal grooming.
4. Care for your clothes as suggested in the manual.
5. Make one other garment or something for someone else.

In "Let's Sew" you learned:

1. To choose good sewing tools and to keep them in a suitable box.

2. To use the sewing machine -
   a. Run the machine slowly so you can control it.
   b. Keep the machine oiled.
   c. Start with both bobbin and spool threads back and to the left.
   d. Start with the needle in the cloth and stop with the needle and take-up lever at the highest point.
   e. Test machine stitching on a bias scrap of your fabric.
   f. Use a seam gauge.
   g. Guide but do not pull the material.

3. To follow construction suggestions -
   a. Straighten your fabric before you begin to cut or sew.
   b. Place pins at right angles.
   c. Baste where necessary and use a thimble.
   d. Stitch with thread that will show as little as possible.
   e. Tie your threads and clip them.
   f. Press as you go.
   g. Fold and stitch hems.
   h. Gather a fabric on the machine.
   i. Apply a band to an apron.
   j. Make patch pockets.
LET'S PLAN YOUR SKIRT AND BLOUSE

This is your first complete outfit. It will be more successful if you choose a simple pattern and a fabric that will be easy to sew.

Plan to buy the fabric for both your skirt and blouse at the same time -- that way you can be sure they will look well together. You will also need matching thread and fasteners such as: hooks and eyes, snaps, buttons, or a zipper.

Choosing the Fabric -- Consider these things:

1. Color -
   a. Choose a color for your blouse that is becoming to you.
   b. Choose a skirt material that harmonizes with the color of the blouse.

2. Decorative design of the fabric -
   a. You may combine a plain color with a print, striped, or plaid fabric. Do not combine two fabrics that have a design, such as a print and a stripe.
   b. If you choose a printed fabric, look for a good design or one that:
      (1) Is made up of parts or motifs that seem to belong together.
      (2) Has motifs that are conventionalized (this means that the motif doesn't look like the real thing, such as a real flower or animal).
      (3) Covers the surface pleasantly and gives no spotted effect.
      (4) Is printed straight on the fabric grain.
   c. Designs in fabrics can make you look taller or shorter.
      (1) Vertical lines (lines that go up and down) make a figure seem taller.
      (2) Horizontal lines (lines that go around or parallel to the floor) make a figure seem broader and shorter.
      (3) A skirt and blouse of the same fabric makes a figure seem taller and more slender, while a skirt and blouse that contrast in color has a broadening effect.
3. Quality of fabric - (be sure to read the label to find out all you can about the fabric then choose a fabric that):
   a. Has a firm weave, will not fray and will be easy to sew.
   b. Is washable. A cotton or cotton blend will probably be best. (Be sure to follow washing instructions if some are given on the label.)
   c. Is colorfast.
   d. Has been treated so it will not shrink more than 1 to 2%.
   e. Is wrinkle resistant.

4. Suitability of fabric to the pattern - straight or gored skirt may require a heavier fabric than a gathered skirt. Plaid or striped fabrics can be pleated nicely.

5. Cut or torn from the bolt - fabric tears straight on the cross-wise grain. If it isn't torn or cut straight add a few extra inches to the amount you buy. The design should be printed straight on the grain.

THE SKIRT WITH GATHERS OR UNPRESSED PLEATS

You will have a chance to use many of the things you learned in "Let's Sew" when you make this skirt. No pattern will be needed. Unpressed pleats give a more slenderizing effect than gathers. Some of you may prefer pleats.

Planning for the Amount of Fabric

Tie a tape measure around your waist. Have someone measure from your waistline down to the point where you want your skirt to end. This will be the finished length of the skirt.

1. If you want to use only two widths of fabric in your skirt, buy this amount:

   Length of skirt _____ inches.

   For hems and seams add 5 inches.

   Total _____ inches times 2.

   Then add _____ inches more for a waistband.

   Waistbands are easier to sew when cut lengthwise on the fabric because the fabric doesn't stretch as much. However,
if only two widths are used and a 6 inch strip is cut lengthwise, the skirt may be too narrow to look attractive. A side placket is usually preferred for this skirt.

2. If you want to use three widths of fabric in your skirt buy:

Length of skirt _____ inches.

For hems and seams 5 inches.

Total _____ inches. Multiply this total by 3.

Cut a 6 inch strip for the waistband along the selvedge edge. A skirt with three widths usually has the placket in center back and a zipper may be used.

First Steps in Making Your Skirt

1. Straighten the fabric.

2. Divide it into 2 or 3 widths (as you planned) and cut off fabric for a waistband and placket.

3. Stitch the skirt pieces together, allowing 5/8 inch for a seam.

4. Leave one seam open 5" to 7" from the top for a placket. Make the machine stitching in the seam strong where the placket ends by stitching back on the same line about an inch.

Skirt Plackets

1. Continuous bound placket. This type of placket is suitable for closing in a full skirt.
   a. Clip the seam at the end of the placket opening to the stitching line.
   b. Cut a binding strip on the lengthwise grain of the fabric that is twice the length of the placket opening. The width of the strip should be twice the width of the finished placket plus two seam allowances (about 2 1/2").
   c. Place right side of placket strip to right side of placket opening with cut edges together. Baste.
   d. Stitch as nearly on 5/8" skirt seam allowance as you can.
e. Grade seam allowance on placket. By grading we mean trimming one seam edge narrower than the other. The widest edge should be next to the outside of the garment to make a smoother, flatter seam line.
f. Turn binding strip to side and away from stitching line toward edge of skirt.
g. Turn free edge under and hem along seam line either by:
   (1) Sewing by hand along machine stitching on skirt, or
   (2) By hemming the free edge to the skirt on the machine.

2. Placket using a slide fastener or zipper.
   a. Seam allowance on skirt must be at least 5/8". (One that is 3/4" will make inserting a zipper easier.)
   b. Opening of skirt placket should be 1" longer than the metal part of the zipper.
   c. A zipper foot on the sewing machine will make work easier and more accurate.
   d. Follow the instruction sheet you will find in your zipper package.
   e. A good zipper placket:
      (1) Opens and closes easily.
      (2) Is stitched straight and strong.
      (3) Stitching is not more than 5/8" from seam line.

Making a Waistband

The width of a waistband depends on present fashions and the size of the girl. The 6 inch strip, which makes a band about 1 3/4" wide is only a suggestion. Make yours wider or narrower to suit your figure. Here are some suggestions to help you make a waistband:

1. The waistband should be as long as your waist measure plus 2 1/2" for seams and underlap.
2. Press a 5/8" fold along one side.
3. From the folded edge divide the rest of the fabric into thirds. Press.
4. Stitch criss-cross along the band through the two thicknesses. Do not stitch through the part with the 5/8" allowance.
5. Stitch a 5/8" seam at the ends of the band to close it.
6. Trim or grade the seam. Turn and press.
Gathering the Top of the Skirt & Attaching the Waistband

1. The top of your skirt will be gathered in a way similar to your apron.
   a. Lengthen machine stitch (6 to 8 stitches per inch). Heavy duty or nylon thread might be used on the bobbin for gathering.
   b. Make two rows of stitching about 1/8" apart with bottom row 5/8" from the top of the skirt.
   c. Since it is easier to pull a thread over a short space, do not stitch the whole top in one continuous line. Begin stitching at the side and stitch to center front or back. Stop and clip the thread, leaving an inch or two of thread. The top of your skirt will then be stitched in four sections.

2. Attaching the band.
   a. Divide both your skirt top and band into 8 equal parts and mark with tailor's chalk to make the gathers even. Do not include the placket when measuring the top of the skirt. When measuring the band, omit the width of the placket on the front (if a zipper is used) and 1 1/4" on the back (underlap).
   b. Pin the band and skirt together with the right side of the band to the right side of the skirt. Match the marks you have made. The 5/8" fold that you pressed in the band should just cover the bottom row of gathers.
   c. Gently pull the two bobbin threads at the side seams, center front and center back until they are the same length as the band. Adjust the gathers until they are even.
   d. Baste carefully between the two rows of gathers.
   e. Machine stitch along the bottom row.
   f. Grade this seam by trimming off about 1/4" from the skirt seam allowance.
   g. Fold band and baste the other edge of the band to the skirt so the lines of machine stitching are covered on the wrong side.

Pleating the Top of the Skirt & Attaching the Waistband

The depth of the pleats and the way you arrange them depends on the fabric and the effect you want to achieve.

1. Plaid or striped fabrics - Every plaid design presents a different problem.
   a. Match plaids on all lengthwise seams.
   b. Arrange pleats to form a pattern that can be repeated all the way around the skirt.
   c. Pin pleats in place.
   d. Complete the placket.
   e. Make adjustments in pleats until skirt fits waist measure.
   f. Baste pleats in place and crease folds with an iron.

2. Other fabrics - Here is one way of pleating fabrics that are plain colored or have an all-over pattern:
   a. Stitch lengthwise seams (5/8") on skirt allowing for a placket opening on one seam (3/4" seam if you plan to use a zipper).
   b. Complete the placket.
c. Pleating.

(1) Measure circumference of the skirt (distance around).
(2) Measure waistline.
(3) Subtract waistline measurement from skirt circumference.
(4) Divide your answer to step 3 by your answer to step 2. This number will be the depth of each pleat.
(5) Start at the back part of the placket along the waistline edge of the skirt and measure 1 1/4" for first pleat. Put in a pin; measure the distance of your answer to step 4. Mark with a pin. Bring the first pin to meet the second pin. This forms the first pleat. Continue the process using 1" (instead of 1 1/4" as above) to complete the pleating.
(6) Compare the measurement of the pleated skirt top with the waist measurement. (A slight adjustment may need to be made in the last 2 or 3 pleats.) The finished pleats will be 1" apart on the right side of the skirt. The depth of the pleat will depend upon the answer to step 4. Sometimes pleats may overlap on the wrong side of the skirt.
(7) Baste the pleats in place and crease the folds with an iron.

3. Attaching the waistband to the skirt with unpressed pleats.
   a. Machine stitch across the pleats (not more than 5/8" from the top of the skirt) to hold them in place.
   b. Pin the waistband and skirt together with the right side of the band to the right side of the skirt. Remember your band underlap should extend 1 1/4" beyond the skirt placket.
   c. Machine stitch along the 5/8" fold.
   d. Grade this seam by trimming off 1/4" of skirt seam allowance.
   e. Fold the band and baste the other edge so the lines of machine stitching are covered on the wrong side of the skirt.

Finishing the Waistband

1. Press to flatten the seam and make stitching easier.
2. There are two ways to finish this band:
   a. Stitch around the entire belt from the right side 1/16" to 1/8" from the edge of the band.
   b. Sew the edge (the criss-cross side) of the band to the skirt, using hand stitches.

Hemming the Skirt

Have your leader help you decide the skirt length that is most becoming to you. Here are some suggestions that will help you:

1. Fasten the skirt to a hanger and let it hang for a day or two. This will allow the fabric to stretch lengthwise.
2. Put on your skirt. Wear the shoes that you plan to wear with it.
3. Have someone measure the distance from the floor to the desired hemline. Skirt markers help to get an even hemline. There are several kinds that you can buy. You might also use a yardstick. If you use a yardstick be very careful to keep it at a right angle to the floor so the skirt hem will hang evenly.

4. Use pins to mark the hemline.

5. Remove the skirt. Turn the hem along this line of pins and baste near the fold.

6. Use a hem gauge to measure the desired width of hem.

7. Mark with pins or chalk; then trim away extra material. (The hem will probably be 3" to 4" wide.)

The type of hem you made on your "quick-trick" skirt is a good one for a beginner. On this skirt you will want to try one that is less conspicuous. You may try either the machine-stitched or hand finished hem.

1. Machine stitched hem -
   a. Press a 1/4" fold to the wrong side at the top of the hem.
   b. Fold hem back against right side of garment with hem extending 1/16 inch beyond the fold. Place the material with folded hem underneath on the machine.
   c. Stitch on the extending edge for 5 or 6 stitches then swing the material to the right and make one stitch in the fold of the garment; then pull the material back and make another 5 or 6 stitches in the hem; then another in the fold. Continue until completed.
2. Hand finished hem -
   a. Press a 1/4" fold to the wrong side at the top of the hem.
   b. Machine stitch 1/16" to 1/8" from the edge.
   c. Pin carefully. Thread a needle with a single strand of thread and hem by hand using one of these stitches:

   (1) Slip stitch. This stitch can be done quickly and is easy to remove if you want to lengthen your skirt.
   (a) Fasten thread in fold of hem and take a tiny stitch in garment parallel to hem and right beside the place where the thread comes out of fold.
   (b) Insert the needle in fold of hem directly opposite end of this stitch.
   (c) Slip needle along in fold for about 1/2 inch.
   (d) Pull needle through, then make the tiny stitch in the skirt right beside it. Repeat. The long stitches are hidden in the fold.

   (2) Lock or Cross Stitch. This stitch is neat and is stronger than the slip stitch.
   (a) Start the hemming by taking a tiny stitch on under side of fold of hem.
   (b) Directly across from this stitch take a tiny stitch in the garment.
   (c) Then put the needle into the fold of the hem just back of the place where the needle left the fold.
   (d) Slip the needle along inside the fold for about 1/2". Then begin again with (b).
   (e) This method makes tiny cross stitches at the top of the hem about 1/2 inch apart. Long stitches are hidden in the fold.

Fasteners

You may use either hooks and eyes or buttons on your skirt band. If you use the continuous line placket two snaps in the placket will help to keep it closed.

1. Hooks and eyes. Four hooks between the sizes of 3 and 5 will hold the band securely
   a. Place one near the top, one near the bottom, and one near the center of the band. The fourth hook might be placed back of the middle hook at the end of the underlap.
   b. Make several buttonhole or overhand stitches around the rings of each hook and eye. Your leader can show you how to do this.
   c. Make several plain stitches near the top of the hook to hold it in place.
2. Buttons. You may prefer to use one or more buttons on your band. Choose buttons that are washable and flat, and that blend with the fabric. Your mother may help make buttonholes on the machine. One or two hooks placed about an inch from the buttons will help to eliminate some strain.

To sew on buttons:

a. Fasten the thread by taking one or two stitches in the spot where the button is to be placed.
b. Bring needle through button and back into fabric.
c. Place pin across center of button and continue sewing back and forth over the pin.
d. Remove pin and wind thread firmly around threads under button to form a stem or shank. This shank gives room for easy buttoning. Buttons sewed too close pull the cloth and may even tear it.
e. Bring needle to wrong side of fabric and fasten with several tiny stitches.
f. The stitches in a button should go in the same direction as the buttonhole. If the buttonhole goes crosswise, the stitches should go crosswise.

3. Snaps. Two or more snaps might be used in the continuous placket.

a. Mark the position for the snaps, placing socket part on the underside of closing and the ball part on the overlap.
b. Use an overhand or blanket stitch to sew snaps in place.

YOUR FIRST BLOUSE

Choosing a Blouse Pattern

1. Look for one that will be easy to make, such as: One that slips over your head, that has no collar, that is sleeveless or has only cap sleeves.

2. Look for one that will be suitable for your fabric and becoming to you.

3. Buy the pattern size that most nearly corresponds to your bust measurement. To find your bust measurement:

Have someone place a tape measure around your body over the fullest part of the bust. Measure from the back and keep the tape measure smooth and parallel to the floor.
Using the Pattern

1. Write your name on each piece of your pattern so it doesn't get mixed with your neighbor's pattern.

2. Learn what the pattern markings mean.

3. Study your pattern guide and circle the style or view that you plan to make. Then circle the layout plan for that style. Follow this when placing your pattern on the fabric.

4. If the fabric is folded, the crosswise ends should be perfectly straight with one selvedge exactly on top of the other. Place pins along selvedges and ends to hold the fabric in place.

5. Measure with a ruler or tape measure from "straight of material" marking on pattern to selvedge to be sure all pieces are straight with the grain of the fabric.

6. Anchor your pattern pieces with pins on "straight of material" line first. Then place pins about every 4 inches at right angles to the edge. Do not let pins extend across the cutting line or you may ruin your scissors.

7. Lay all pattern pieces and pin carefully. Have your layout checked by your mother or leader before you begin to cut.

8. Cut carefully with long, even strokes. Cut with the grain of fabric. Cut the notches outward.

Marking the Fabric for Sewing

It will be easy to fit your blouse pieces together if you transfer all the pattern markings to your cloth very carefully. There are several ways that you might do this. You might use:

1. Tailor's chalk.

2. Dressmaker's tracing paper - A waxed type of carbon paper made in white and several colors. It is used to mark darts, seam lines, center front, etc., on fabrics. The lighter colors are preferred for most fabrics. Markings should be made only on the wrong side. It is best to try marking a scrap of fabric then pressing it with an iron to make sure the marking won't show through to the right side. The paper is placed between two pieces of cloth so both pieces can be marked at the same time with a tracing wheel. This is a small wheel with sharp points.
3. Tailor's tacks - Thread marks that do not mar your fabric. They may be made in this way:
   a. Use a long double strand of contrasting thread (or darning cotton).
   b. Take a little stitch through pattern perforations and both layers of fabric, leaving an end 2" to 3" long.
   c. Take a second stitch at the same place.
   d. Repeat "b" and "c" at the next perforation.
   e. Remove pattern.
   f. Lift two layers of fabric apart gently and snip thread loops, leaving tufts in both fabrics.

Stay-Stitching

Stay-stitching is a line of machine stitching placed on the seam allowance just inside the seam line on bias or curved edges. This will keep the fabric from stretching out of shape as you work with it. Use about 12 stitches per inch and stitch with the grain-line; see the arrows in the illustration.

Baste Stitching (Or Machine Basting)

Use only on fabrics that will not be marred by having machine stitching removed.

1. Use on darts and side seams to prepare a garment for fitting.

2. Adjust machine stitch regulator for the longest stitch.

3. Use a contrasting thread that is colorfast and baste stitch with the fabric grain.

4. Remove basting by snipping the bobbin thread every few inches and pull out short threads.

Darts

Darts are used to make cloth fit smoothly over curved parts of the body.

1. Baste the darts in your blouse for fitting. The point of the dart should point toward the fullest part of the bust.
2. Machine stitch the dart from the widest part to the point.

3. Finish the point of the dart securely either by tying the thread on the wrong side or by stitching back 6 or 7 stitches. (Be careful not to spoil the shape of the point when back-stitching.)

4. Press the dart smoothly over a pressing mitt, tailor's cushion, or over a turkish towel that is rolled up.

5. The underarm darts are usually stitched and pressed downward before the side seams are stitched.

6. Waistline darts are usually pressed toward center front and center back.

**Seam Finishes**

1. The finished seam should not be less than 1/2" wide.

2. If the fabric doesn't fray, use a plain seam. Pinking the seam makes it look more attractive.

3. If the fabric frays slightly, a line of machine stitching about 1/8" from the pinked edge might be desirable.

4. If the fabric frays a great deal zigzag or press the seam edge under and machine stitch.

5. The underarm darts are usually stitched and pressed downward before the side seams are stitched.

6. Waistline darts are usually pressed toward center front and center back.

**Facing Armseyes & Necklines**

Follow your pattern instructions for finishing your blouse. These suggestions may help you achieve a neater effect with a fitted facing.

1. Stay-stitch both edges of facing. The stitch on the outer edge of the facing should be about 1/4" from the cut edge.

2. Seam the pieces of the facing together and press the seam open.

3. Turn the outer edge to the wrong side of fabric on the 1/4" line and stitch close to the folded edge. This gives a nice, finished edge to your facing.

4. Stitch facing to armseye or neckline with shorter stitches such as 14 to 16 stitches per inch.

5. Grade and clip, or notch seam, so the facing will fold back smoothly and make a sharp edge on the neckline or armseye.

6. Press both edges of this enclosed seam toward the facing.

7. Stitch through facing and seam allowance about 1/16" from seamline stitching. This is sometimes called sharp or understitching. It will help to keep a sharper edge when facings are turned back. (Do not stitch through neckline or armseyes of blouse.)
Finishing the Bottom of a Blouse

Finishes for the bottom of a blouse depend on the kind of fabric and the fullness of the skirt. Here are three suggestions; choose the one that you think will be best.

1. The neatest and most durable finish is a machine stitched hem about 1/4" wide. This hem is also the bulkiest.

2. Pink bottom edge of blouse. Turn a 5/8" fold to the wrong side. Make two rows of stitches about 1/4" apart. This method is flatter than No. 1.

3. If your fabric doesn't fray and you will wear your blouse tucked inside a slim, straight skirt, pink the bottom edge and then reinforce with machine stitching.

Final Pressing

1. Press both skirt and blouse in the same direction as the fabric grain. Pressing on the wrong side keeps fabric from becoming shiny.

2. Press seams open (there may be exceptions to this rule).

3. Press the skirt hem upward from the bottom.

4. Slide the iron upward between the gathers to the band of the skirt.

5. Hang the outfit carefully on a hanger when you have finished pressing.

YOU ARE YOUR OWN BEST EXHIBIT

You will want to exhibit your outfit or take part in the Dress Revue at the County Fair.

Your outfit is fresh and attractive looking, but how do you look? Give yourself the full-length mirror test.

Do you see a 4-H girl:
Who has a clean body?
Who has neat and well combed hair?
Who stands and walks straight and tall?
Who smiles at the world?

Is that girl wearing an attractive outfit:
With colors that harmonize and are becoming to the girl?
That is clean and well pressed?
That has a blouse tucked neatly into the skirt?
That has a skirt that hangs straight?
With shoes and socks that are neat and clean?

Did you pass the mirror test? Perhaps you need to improve your grooming habits.
Cleanliness

Cleanliness is the one most important single factor in being a well-groomed girl. Your skin, nails, teeth, hair and clothing must all be clean. Have you already developed these grooming habits?

2. Caring for your hands and nails (see "Let's Sew").
3. Brushing your teeth at least twice a day.

Care of Hair

Here are some suggestions for the care of hair that will help you have beautiful hair as well as clean hair.

1. Wash it once a week or every 10 days. If your hair is very oily or if you are out-of-doors a great deal you may need to shampoo it more often. Try different kinds of shampoo until you find the one that does the most for your hair.

2. Brush the hair thoroughly with a clean, stiff brush to loosen the dandruff before shampooing. Put your head down and brush from the roots down to the tip of the hair. Then brush back, away from the face. For daily care 100 strokes will help to exercise the scalp and keep it healthy.

3. Wet the hair with warm water, apply shampoo and work the lather into the scalp with the pads of your finger tips (not the nails). Massage the scalp thoroughly, using a circular motion. Rinse out this first lather in warm water, then apply shampoo a second time.

4. Rinse three times, or until the hair "squeaks" between your fingers.

5. Dry the hair with a clean towel. Blot the moisture and lightly massage the scalp.

6. Set your hair when it is slightly damp (be sure your comb and brush are clean). Methods of putting up hair vary with fashion. Watch magazines for suggestions.

7. A good haircut is essential when you wear your hair short.

8. There are some very good home permanent solutions on the market. If you use one be sure to follow instructions carefully.
Your Figure and How You Carry It

Your 4-H outfit will look more attractive if you have a nice figure and walk proudly.

1. Keep your weight as near the standard for your height and build as you can by observing health and diet rules.

2. Good posture is good body balance while sitting, standing and walking. Test your posture in these ways:
   a. Stand with your back against the wall with the back of your head, shoulders, buttocks and heels touching the wall. If you can place your hand between the wall and the small of your back, there is too much curvature, and you need to improve.
   b. Have someone hold a yardstick or rod at your side and at right angles to the floor. If your body is well balanced, the line should pass through the lobe of the ear, the tip of the shoulder, and slightly in front of the center of the hip, knee and ankle bone.

3. If your posture doesn't pass the test, try to find out why. Here are some possible reasons:
   a. General weakness of the body. This may be due to illness or to very rapid growth.
   b. Poor mental attitude. This may be caused by unhappiness, lack of self confidence, shyness, over consciousness of height.
   c. Improper shoes and arch troubles.
   d. Malnutrition, due to lack of the proper foods.
   e. Over-tiredness, due to lack of sleep and relaxation. Posture is usually better in the forenoon than late afternoon when the individual is tired.
   f. Habit and carelessness is the most common cause.

4. If your posture problem is caused by weakness or poor health see your doctor. If bad habit or carelessness is your problem, you can help yourself. Here's how:
   a. You must really want to do something about it. You must make up your mind to train your muscles out of old bad habits into new good habits. It's not easy and it can't be accomplished in a short time.
   b. You must become conscious of your posture and carriage and work on it all the time. Take a deep breath now and then. It will help to pull you into line.
   c. Exercise to build up your muscle tone. Exercise also gives muscles practice in adjusting the various parts of the body so they can balance one another. It's a model's muscle control that makes her look so straight and tall. Work to control your muscles, so you can walk smoothly and gracefully.
   d. Remember to sit, walk and think tall.
LET'S PLAN YOUR SECOND SKIRT AND BLOUSE

One plus one can make four when it's skirt and blouse coordinated outfits that can be mixed and matched. If you have two blouses that can be worn with either of your two skirts you really have four outfits.

As you begin planning your second skirt and blouse do these things:

1. Review the points given under "Let's Plan Your Skirt and Blouse" near the beginning of this circular.

2. Choose a commercial pattern for your skirt.

3. Choose a more difficult pattern for your blouse.

Your Second Skirt

1. Buy the skirt pattern that most nearly corresponds to the size of your waist and hips.
   a. Take a snug measurement at your natural waistline.
   b. Take an easy measurement around the fullest part of the hips.

2. Follow the same plan for using your pattern as you did when making your blouse.
   a. Follow the directions on your instruction sheet.
   b. Check fabric grain and pattern markings very carefully before you cut.

3. Keep your fabric on a table. Handle it as little as possible to keep it from stretching.
4. Do all you can with one piece before starting on another. For example: When working with the skirt back:
   a. First stay-stitch.
   b. Pin and baste darts and center back seam.
   c. Follow this same procedure with skirt front.

5. Stitch skirt seams from the bottom toward the top. This will help to keep the seams from stretching.

6. Press as you sew.
   a. Press skirt from bottom toward the top. Press with the fabric grain.
   b. Press skirt darts toward the center front or back.
   c. Press seams open (there may be some exceptions).
   d. Press the seam in a pleat closed to the top of the hem. Snip to the seam line at this point. Press the rest of the seam open and grade before hemming.

After the hem is in place, stitch on top of the seam line across the hem. This makes the pleat crease and hang better.

7. The waistband may be finished as suggested for the peasant skirt or you may follow the instructions given in your pattern guide.

Making the Second Blouse

Since you are choosing a more difficult pattern, you will learn some new things, such as making a collar, setting in sleeves, making a blouse with front or back closing.

Follow the instruction sheet in your pattern envelope. Remember to observe the rules you have learned before, such as stay-stitching, cutting and stitching with the grainline, pressing as you sew, sewing on fasteners, etc.

Collars

Here are some pointers to help you make nice, sharp edges on your collar and to keep the under collar from showing:

1. If the under collar in your pattern isn't smaller than the upper, trim off a slight 1/16 of an inch all around the outside edge of the under collar. Be careful not to trim too much.

2. Place the right side of the under-collar on the right side of the upper collar. Pin carefully, making outside edges meet.

3. Stitch the collar.
   a. Round collars will have sharper edges if you set your machine to take short stitches around curves (16 to 18 stitches per inch).
   b. Collars with points:
      (1) Stitch the point of the collar with one diagonal stitch across the corner instead of leaving the needle down and making a sharp turn.
      (2) Trim the collar point close to the stitching line.
4. Grade the seam. Leave the wider seam allowance on your upper collar. Cut out notches to within 1/16 to 1/8 of an inch from the stitching line on the curved edge, as shown in the illustration.

5. Turn the collar right side out. Work the edge out smoothly with your fingers to bring the seam line back slightly on the under side so a fold edge is along the outside edge of the collar.

6. Baste along the edge of the collar and then press.

7. Remove the bastings and understitch the collar like you did the facings on your first blouse. This should keep the under collar hidden.

Interfacing

Interfacing may add body or stiffness or it may reinforce fabric where there is pull or extra wear.

1. Fabrics for interfacing include scraps of the same material as the garment, muslin or batiste that has been preshrunk, or other washable fabrics suggested by your leader.

2. Interfacing in a collar should be cut the same size as the upper collar. Cut away interfacing at point of collar before stitching into collar seam. Trim interfacing close to stitching line. Follow steps 5 and 6 given above. Understitch between the upper collar and the interfacing. Stitch close to collar and seam line.

3. To reinforce the buttons and buttonholes in a blouse:
   a. Stitch a 2 inch strip of fabric on the wrong side of the blouse facing about 1/4" from the fold.
   b. Or interface the whole blouse facing if you prefer.

Placing of Buttons & Buttonholes

The buttons should be on the center front line of the blouse when it is buttoned.

To be sure they will be, both buttons and buttonholes must be correctly placed.

1. The ends of the buttonholes nearest the edge of the lap come 1/16" to 1/8" past the center front line. The distance past the center depends on the size of either the button or the shank.

2. The length of a buttonhole should be the diameter plus the thickness of the button.

3. Sew buttons on left center front line.

4. Buttons and buttonholes should be an even distance apart or spaced in a logical order.
Sleeves

Steps to follow in making sleeves:

1. Stay-stitch from underarm seam to the first notch about 1/2" from the edge. Change the machine to the longest stitch and continue over the cap of the sleeve to the next notch. Change the machine back to the regular stitch and stay-stitch to the underarm seam.

2. Again adjust the machine for long stitches and stitch another row of stitches on the seam line from the first notch to the second notch.


4. Turn your sleeve to the wrong side. Clip the first and last long stitch. Draw up the two rows of ease stitching until the sleeve is the same size as the armhole. The top of the sleeve cap is usually smooth and the fullness is greatest in the bias area.

5. Shrink out the sleeve fullness. Even if you have a preshrunk fabric, you will have a smoother sleeve cap if you steam press it before basting it into the armscye.

6. Pin, then baste the sleeve into the armscye. Be sure to match notches, the two underarm seams, and the shoulder seam with the top of the sleeve.

7. Put on the blouse to check the fit of the sleeve.

8. Machine stitch the sleeve in place. A second row of machine stitching about 1/16 inch from the first row will add extra strength.

9. To make the sleeve fit more comfortably under the arm do one of these things:
   a. Snip the seam allowance around the curve to second row of machine stitching.
   b. Trim off seam allowance 1/8 inch from second row of stitching from front notch to back notch.

10. Press armscye seam into the sleeve cap. A smooth line can be obtained by using a pressing mitt or tailor's ham.

11. Use the same method of hemming the sleeve as you used on your skirt or finish as suggested in your instruction sheet.

Be sure this outfit is clean and well pressed when you wear it.
CARING FOR YOUR CLOTHES

To keep your skirt and blouse outfits as well as your other clothes new-looking as long as possible, follow some of these suggestions:

1. Put soiled clothes in a laundry hamper or clothes chute.
2. Hang your other clothes on hangers when you take them off.
3. Air and brush your coat.
4. Keep buttons and other fasteners sewed fast.
5. Hem your own skirts and dresses if they need adjusting.
6. Care for your shoes by:
   a. Cleaning them with a brush to remove loose dirt and wiping them with a cloth.
   b. Allowing them to dry thoroughly (but not near heat or in the sun) between wearings. Filling toes with tissue paper helps absorb moisture and retain shape of the shoe.
   c. Polishing them, when they are dry, with the kind of polish best suited to the leather.

FINISHING YOUR PROJECT

Another suggestion or two:

1. Make additional garments for yourself, your family, or friends. Be sure to keep a record in your record book of everything you make while enrolled in this project.
2. Don't exhibit everything you make, but choose your best work for your club achievement day or county fair.
3. Don't carry this skirt and blouse project more than two years. You are now ready for the next project.