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Play Clothes : EC 4-17-62

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PLAY CLOTHES
# middle unit

## LOUNGING and SLEEPING CLOTHES

## PLAY CLOTHES

## SCHOOL CLOTHES

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Before You Start This Project

Does your family have a good Clothing Construction book? If not, we suggest that you buy one. Since information on a pattern instruction sheet is brief, a book will give you additional help. Well-illustrated books are available in various price ranges. Pattern companies publish books that can be purchased for a small sum. Discuss this with your leader and your mother. Your county agent also can give you some help in selecting a book.

To Complete this Project

1. Make a play outfit for a particular occasion.

2. Make one other article. This one might be coordinated with the outfit made under No. 1 or it might be planned for a different "play" occasion.

3. Do some mending.


Play clothes are "fun" clothes. You wear them when you expect to have a wonderful time. They may be gay in color, extreme in style and planned especially for you. But be sure they are always neat, clean and appropriate. What makes a play costume appropriate? It is appropriate if it is suitable for a particular activity, and if it is the type of costume others in your community would be wearing.
SPECTATOR SPORTS

You are certain to be a spectator at some sports event such as football or baseball. You'll want to wear smart, conservative styles. Your regular high school clothes such as skirts and sweaters, suits, or tailored dresses are always appropriate. An all-purpose or classic type coat or jacket also will be needed. Low heeled shoes or spectator pumps, a tailored felt hat or beret or scarf, a simple leather bag and gloves of capeskin, suede, or wool may complete your costume. Jewelry should be simple and in keeping with the rest of your costume.

SPORTS or ACTIVITY CLOTHES

You'll also want to take part in some sport or activity. It is pleasant to excel, but it is more important to participate just to increase your enjoyment in living and to maintain your health and vigor. All types of activities will require clothes that:

* Provide protection against the activity itself and the weather, and are an aid to good health and safety.

* Allow freedom of movement so your clothes won't be a hindrance. Styles with pleats and fullness allow for action.

* Flatter your figure, yet are modest. Becoming styles are well tailored and well fitted. They minimize figure faults rather than emphasize them.

* Are made of fabrics that are comfortable, durable, and easily cleaned.

* Are constructed so they will give with your movements, yet be durable. Reinforced seams, corners of pockets, etc., make a garment durable.

* Are combined in such a way that all parts of the costume seem to belong together. Accessories and jewelry that aren't functional don't belong on play clothes.

These additional suggestions may help you select clothes for a particular activity:

**Hiking**

Wear a short skirt with some fullness, culottes, shorts, slacks, jeans, shirt or tailored blouse, sweater or jacket, scarf or cap, and comfortable shoes.

**Hunting and Fishing**

Wear sturdy clothing such as jeans, heavy leather shoes, shirt, short jacket or storm coat, cap or scarf.
Horseback Riding

Consider what others in your club or community will wear. If you belong to a "saddle club" the group may decide on a certain type of clothing such as jeans, slacks, gay shirts, sturdy sport jackets, bandanas, and oxfords or low heeled shoes. Some groups may prefer western style pants, shirts, boots and hat. More formal riding attire such as riding breeches with high boots or jodpurrs with low boots, felt hat and gloves may be worn in parades.

Tennis

Choose a style that allows great freedom of movement, such as a short knee length sleeveless dress with a pleated or divided skirt, or shorts and ankle socks and special tennis shoes. You will need a sweater or lightweight jacket to slip over your shoulders after the game.

Winter Sports

Choose garments that are warm, light weight and water repellent such as a wool sweater and skirt, slacks, ski pants, pleated skirt, all-weather lined short coat, wool socks, hood, mittens and boots. Several layers of lightweight clothing will be warmer than one heavy garment, because the air space between the layers acts as insulation. Fabrics with a plastic foam backing also provide warmth without weight.

Swimming or Sun Bathing

Swim in a simple one-piece suit with shoulder straps that stay in place. Sun bathe or play on the beach in a style that flatters your figure. It might be either a one or two piece suit. Have a robe or cape to wear over your suit. A bathing cap, fabric sandals or clogs and of course a towel, sun glasses and sun oil make up your necessities for the day.

Picnics & Patio Parties

Check on the picnic place – then choose a suitable outfit. It may be a sun dress and sandals or a skirt and blouse. Slacks, jeans or culottes worn with a shirt or blouse might also be appropriate. Your play shoes should be comfortable and protect your feet.
Folk or Square Dancing

Dance and twirl in a full skirt that bells out. Wear full, pretty petticoats under the dress. The bodice may be fitted. The peasant style of dress is often worn for folk or square dancing. Comfortable, lightweight shoes made of a soft leather are an asset.

Suit your outfit to your activity. Remember, good taste in one place may be poor taste in another. Shorts may be right for a picnic but not for a city shopping trip.

TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT FABRIC

Take a close look at the fabric before you buy a ready-to-wear garment or yardage to make your own. Both beauty and quality in a fabric depend on these things: fiber, yarn, construction (or how the cloth is made) and the finish. A weakness in any one of these steps in the manufacturing process may result in a poor fabric.

Fiber + Yarn + Construction + Finish = FABRIC

Look at the Fiber

The label will tell you what kind it is. It may be either natural or man-made. The most common natural fibers are cotton (found in the ball of the cotton plant), linen (stem of flax plant), wool (outer covering of sheep) and silk (cocoon of silk worm). The first fibers made by man were rayons and acetates (made from wood pulp and cotton linters). Nylon (which is a true synthetic) was made next. Now we have many man-made fibers such as Dacron polyester and Orion Acrylic. Fibers may be dyed. Two or more may be blended to create a more serviceable and attractive fabric. Dacron polyester combined with cotton is an example.

Look at the Yarn

Yarn or threads are made of one or more fibers. Yarns may be made heavy or fine, twisted or smooth or slubbed (has irregular places in the yarn). Some are made to stretch. Helenca nylon is one type of stretch yarn. Yarns may also be dyed. Gingham and chambray are examples of yarn dyed fabric.
Look at the Cloth Construction

It is probably made in one of these ways: Woven, knitted, felted or bonded. Weaving is making a cloth by interlacing yarns on a loom. There are three basic weaves: plain, twill and satin. Variations or combinations of these weaves result in a great variety of fabrics.

Knitting is a process by which yarns are formed into loops which hang one upon the other to make a fabric. Sweaters, hosiery and slips are common examples of knit fabrics. Knits that are made of cotton, wool and man-made fibers may also be purchased by the yard. This may be considered as one type of stretch fabric.

Felting is a process using heat, pressure and moisture on wool which causes the wool fibers to stick together. Wool felt is an example.

Bonding is a process by which a web of short fibers are held together by a plastic binder. Non-woven interfacing is an example.

Look at the Finish

The label should give you information on the kind of finish used. The finish may make a cloth stiff or soft, rough or smooth, dull or lustrous. Cloth may be dyed after it is woven (dyed in the piece). It may be put through a machine that prints a design on it (roller printing). The finishes on some materials stay in during the entire life of the fabrics. These are known as permanent or durable finishes. The durability of a finish cannot be determined by just looking at the cloth. Therefore, be sure to read the label and buy from a reliable store or company. Some of the finishes that will be most important to you in this project are:

A. Preshrunk (won't shrink more than 3%). Sanforized (won't shrink more than 1%).
   A garment can shrink 1% and still fit well, but one that shrinks 3% may not fit well.

B. Wrinkle or crease resistant means fabric will stay fresh and neat looking longer.

C. Water repellent fabric doesn't absorb moisture readily.

D. Soil repellent finish helps prevent soiling.

E. Color fast fabrics resist fading. Some colors resist fading from sunlight, some from perspiration, some from laundering and some resist all three.
THE OUTFIT YOU WILL MAKE

Before You Buy

Plan on Paper

* Make a list of your activities.

* List the kinds of clothes you will need for these activities under the two headings "I really need" and "I'd like to have."

* Have your mother help you decide what to buy and what to make.

* Consider the fact that some play outfits can be worn for more than one occasion. For example, shorts and a blouse may be worn for picnics, hiking or riding a bicycle. If you make a harmonizing skirt to wear over the shorts, this outfit becomes suitable for a number of other occasions.

Look at Fashion Magazines and Pattern Books

Have someone help you decide which lines will be best for your figure. Remember:

* Vertical lines generally make you look taller and more slender.

* Horizontal lines may make your figure seem shorter and broader.

* Skirts are more flattering to many figures than pants. Is your figure the kind that might appear to better advantage in public if it were covered by a skirt?

Determine Size of Pattern Needed

1. Take your body measurements over your slip or over a smoothly fitted dress.

   a. Bust - snugly over the fullest part of the bust.

   b. Waist - comfortably at the natural waistline.

   c. Hip - snugly about 7" below the waist.

   d. Back waist length - from prominent bone at the back base of the neck to the waistline.
2. Patterns are designed according to figure types such as: girls, teens, misses. A pattern book will help you decide which type has measurements most nearly like yours.

3. Dress and blouse patterns are purchased according to bust size. When buying a pattern for slacks or shorts, check waist and hip measurement. Then buy the pattern most nearly like your hip measurement, because the hip is the most difficult part of the figure to fit in slacks.

When You Shop

Select the Pattern for the Outfit That You Need. Choose one that will be:

1. Becoming to you.
2. Easy to make if you haven't had much experience with sewing.
3. The size that corresponds to your body measurements.

Select Fabric for the Type of Outfit You Need

1. Select one that is suitable for your pattern and becoming to you in texture and color. If the fabric has a surface design, ask yourself these questions:
   
a. Will this stripe, plaid or other design be becoming to me?
   b. Is the design printed or woven?
      * If it is woven, the design will be straight on the fabric grain.
      * If it is printed, the design should be artistic and one that is suitable for play clothes. It should be printed straight on the fabric grain.
   c. Will the fabric design be hard to match? For example, some plaids are balanced, while others have an up and down pattern or a right and left pattern or both. The balanced plaid is easiest to match.

2. Select a fabric that is durable. A fabric is usually more durable if it:
   * Is a twill weave.
   * Is closely woven or closely knit.
   * Has a balanced cloth (crosswise threads in square inch of cloth number about the same as the lengthwise).
   * Has yarns that don't fray easily or slip at the seams.

3. A comfortable fabric for play clothes absorbs perspiration and is not irritating to the skin.
4. Read the fabric label to find out if it is:
   * Color fast.
   * Wrinkle resistant.
   * Preshrunk.
   * Washable or dry cleanable and other type of care required.

5. Types of fabrics suitable for play clothes are:
   a. The heavier kinds of fabrics that are also used for skirts and blouses.
   b. Sturdy fabrics, such as: sailcloth, tarpon cloth, denim, seersucker, cord, gabardine, corduroy.
   c. Stretch fabrics. A warp stretch pulls lengthwise and may be used for some types of pants. A filler stretch pulls crosswise and may be nice for jackets, skirts and dresses. Two-way stretch is good for swim suits.
   d. Watch for other new fabrics that are fashionable, yet suitable.

Buy Notions, Fabric, Pattern at Same Time

Buy sewing notions, such as matching thread, fasteners, tape or interfacing (if pattern suggests this) at the same time that you buy fabric and pattern.

Making Your Play Outfit

General Suggestions

1. Shrink the fabric (both outer fabric and interfacing) if it hasn't already been preshrunk.

2. Have someone help you check your pattern and alter it as needed.

3. Follow the steps for laying the pattern that you learned in "Skirt and Blouse."

4. Have your mother or leader check your pattern layout before you cut.

5. Use sharp dressmaker pins, stay stitch bias or curved edges and cut with a sharp shears.

6. Handle the fabric as little as possible.

7. Be sure to test your machine stitching on a strip of fabric before beginning on your garment. Fabrics of different weights require different handling. These factors greatly affect the appearance and durability of your stitching:
   * Size of needle (look for a thread and needle guide in your construction book).
   * Weight of thread.
   * Length of stitch.
   * Machine tension.
   * Pressure on presser foot.
8. Plan your work so that you do all of the stitching that you can on one piece before starting on the next.

9. When fabrics are bulky, cut darts along fold to about one-half inch from the point. Press open to form a triangle at the point of dart.

10. Grading seams is very important to eliminate a bulky effect. Each seam allowance is trimmed to a different width. The seam nearest the outside is the widest. Curved seams need to be notched or clipped.

11. Remember to press as you sew. Press each seam before you cross it with another.

12. Make your garment as durable as possible:
   a. Reinforce pockets and seams where there is the greatest strain.
   b. Make the most durable kind of buttonhole. These may be machine stitched. Gripper fasteners might be desirable in some places.

Seams

Play clothes are often required to take much abuse and hard wear; therefore, they need strong, durable seams. The seams should be even in width and stitched straight, with the number of stitches adjusted to weight of fabric. The type of seam depends on:

1. The effect desired for that particular pattern and fabric combination.
2. The weight of the fabric.

Some types of seams that might be used are:

1. Plain seam with finishes described in "Skirt & Blouse."
2. Twice stitched is durable and easily made.
3. Flat felled gives a neat, tailored effect but is more difficult.
4. False felled gives a similar effect and is easier. It is made by first stitching a plain seam, then pressing seam to one side and making two rows of top stitching on the right side.
Plackets

Follow instructions given in your instruction guide. Additional help may be obtained from "Skirt & Blouse" manual, your construction book or E.C. 61-422 "Easy Zipper Methods."

Suggestions for Making Shorts and Other Pants

The method for sewing different kinds of pants is similar. It is also similar to making a straight skirt, with the exception of the crotch.

1. Check your pattern and alter it if needed.

* Measure length of slacks from the side of the waistline to the desired length. Check this measurement with your pattern.

* To measure the depth of the crotch, sit on a straight chair and measure from waistline down to the seat of the chair. On the front pattern piece, draw a line from the deepest point of the front crotch across to the side seam. The length from the waist to this line should be the same as the measurement from the waist to the seat of the chair.

* To alter the pattern:

a. If crotch is too long, fold a tuck across the pattern to shorten between waist and crotch on both front and back pattern pieces.

b. If too short, lengthen by slashing the pattern and spreading.

c. If leg needs to be lengthened or shortened, make the adjustment in the leg below the crotch.

d. Be sure to retain the original straight of material line on fabric grain.
2. Stitching the crotch.

* Set your machine to take shorter stitches, 14 to 18 stitches per inch (depending on the weight of the fabric) on the crotch curve.

* This seam needs double stitching for added strength and reinforcement.

3. Crotch and hipline must fit perfectly in order to look well and feel comfortable.

   a. Length and depth of darts should be adjusted so they fit smoothly over your body curves. The dart should end just above the fullest part of a curve.

   b. Side seams should be straight and perpendicular to the floor.

   c. Center front and back seams should be located on center of the front or back of your body.

   d. The waistband should be snugly fitted, yet comfortable.

   e. The length of shorts and slacks depends on the present fashion and your figure.

Suggestions for Special Fabrics That Are More Difficult to Sew

1. Corduroy

   * Corduroy has a nap which affects the color. To avoid a two-tone look in your garment, place all pattern pieces so the nap runs in the same direction.

   CORDUROY LAYOUT

   * To machine stitch, it may be necessary to loosen the tension slightly, lengthen the stitch and use less pressure on the presser foot.

   * Corduroy is bulky when turned back against itself, therefore tape of a smooth, lightweight fabric may be desirable on hems and facings.

   * Press gently on the wrong side, using a steam iron or a dry iron over a slightly damp cloth. A terry towel between pile side and ironing board gives extra padding and keeps the pile from flattening.

   * Raise nap by brushing lightly.

2. Felt

   * Felt has no grain and can be cut in any direction.

   * Edges such as hems do not have to be finished because felt will not ravel.

   * Lining fabrics or iron-on tape can be used when double thicknesses are needed.

   * When stitching, try a fairly long stitch (about 10 per inch) and easy tension.
3. **Knits**

* Knits may need to be lined to preserve their shape. This will depend on the pattern and amount of stretch desired.

* Zig zag machine stitching is very good. If using a straight stitch machine, stretch fabric slightly while stitching so seam stitching will not break as easily when garment is worn. Machine tension might be loosened slightly.

* Stay stitching is very important to keep curved edges from stretching more than you want them to. Use a straight stitch for this. Interfacing or seam tape may be needed to keep necklines from stretching.

4. **Woven Stretch Fabrics**

* The fabrics may need to be preshrunk (read the label for information).

* Do not reverse fabric grain, for example use pattern that requires lengthwise stretch on a lengthwise stretch fabric.

* Avoid pulling or stretching when laying pattern. Let fabric relax.

* Length of stitch may vary, depending on the weight of the fabric.

* Synthetic or stretch threads are probably best for stitching. Mercerized thread might also be used.

* Press lightly with a steam iron and do not stretch while pressing.

* Fit carefully, allowing for some give in the stretch grain.

* Avoid heavy pressure on presser foot.

**ALL DRESSED!**

**Let's Do a Bit of Checking**

1. Are you well groomed?

2. Is your outfit right for the time and place you are wearing it?

3. Does the whole outfit look as if it belonged together?

4. Is the jewelry appropriate? Is there enough but not too much of it?

5. Is the outfit becoming to you?

6. Do you need a foundation garment and, if so, are you wearing one?

7. Does your outfit fit well?

8. Do you wear it proudly?
ONE THING MORE!

Let’s keep this outfit and the other garments in your wardrobe well mended. Taking care of a rip or tear as soon as possible may double the life of your garment. The place where the tear is located and the kind of fabric will determine the way you mend. Tears may be mended by using:

* An iron on patch.

* An inset patch that is machine stitched.

* An inset or hemmed patch that is done by hand.

* Hand or machine darning.

Your county agent can secure an Extension Circular for you that will explain how to do this mending. Being responsible for your own clothes is one step toward becoming an independent person.

Helping others can give you a feeling of being of service.

Why not help with your family mending?