

1963

## EC63-430 Sleeve Gussets

Anna Marie Kreifels

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# SLEEVE GUSSETS

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# Sleeve Gussets

By Anna Marie Kreifels

A gusset is an inset of the same fabric stitched in the underarm area of a sleeve. Gussets are most commonly diamond or square in shape. In some cases a two-piece gusset is used. Many who sew find the two-piece gusset easier to insert. The size of gussets varies depending on the amount of fullness desired or needed in the sleeve.

The kimono sleeve is styled and cut in one piece with the bodice. It may be designed with or without a gusset, depending on the length of the underarm seam. If the sleeve is cut almost at right angles to the bodice, the underarm seam is usually long enough so the arm can be raised comfortably. If the sleeve is sloped downward and cut for a closer fit under the arm, a gusset is needed to add length to the underarm seam.

Those who sew their own clothes can learn to insert a gusset without much difficulty. Keep these suggestions in mind:

....Transfer the necessary pattern markings accurately. Pay special attention to seam allowance markings.

....Reinforce the point of the slash lines before slashing the bodice pieces.

....Match notches and follow stitching lines accurately.

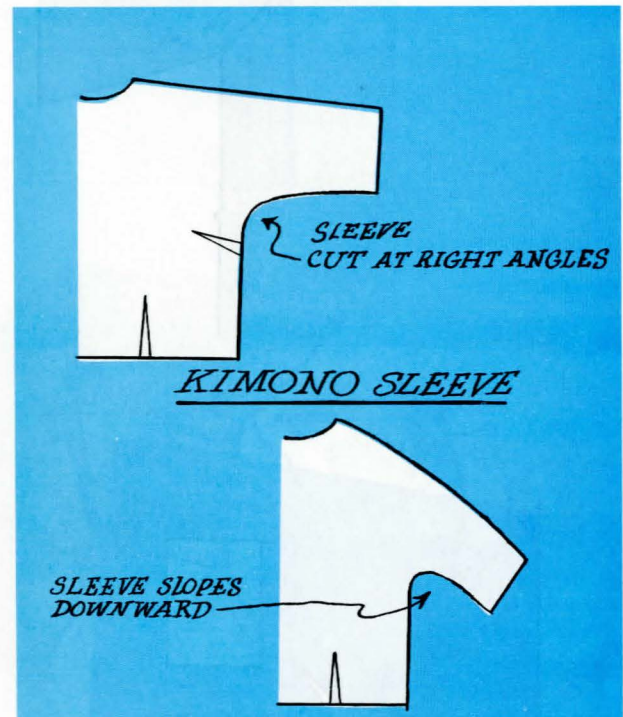
....Try to avoid ripping -- it may cause stretching and raveling.

....Topstitch around the gusset if added strength is needed.

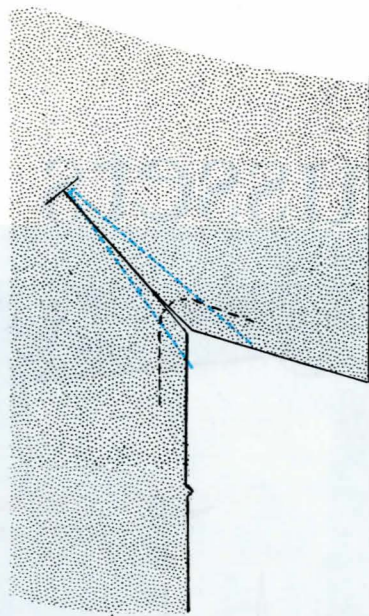
## Reinforcing Slash Line Points

Since the seam allowance at the point of each slash line tapers to nearly nothing, reinforcement is necessary. This reinforcement must be made on each of the slash lines on front and back bodice pieces. Reinforcements are made before the slash lines are cut.

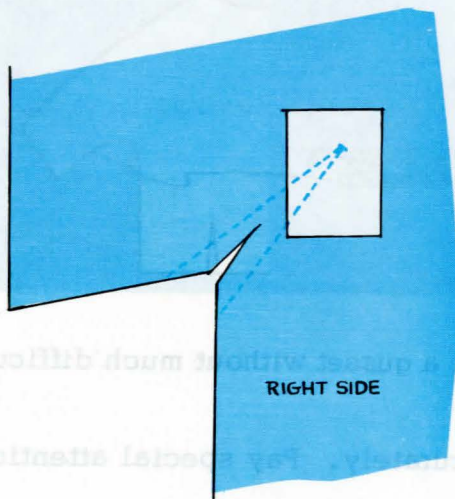
Several types of reinforcement are explained here. Use one which will work well on the fabric you're sewing.



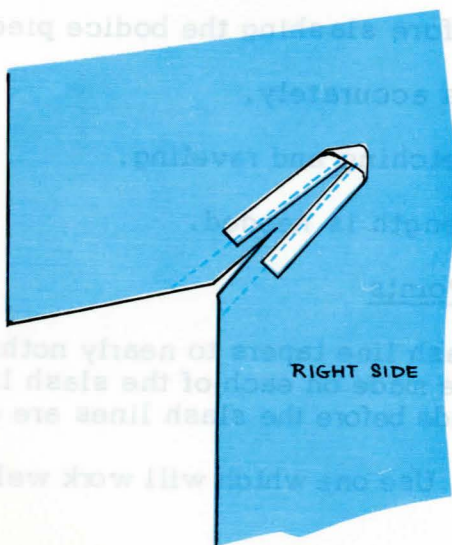




1. Stay-stitch Reinforcement - Place a row of stay-stitching (18 to 20 stitches per inch) on the seam allowance  $\frac{1}{16}$  to  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the marked stitching line. Take one stitch across the point of the slash. Cut between the rows of stitching toward the point, being careful not to cut the stitchings. This line of stay-stitching reinforces the point, adds strength to the cut edges, and serves as a guide line for other stitchings.



2. Fabric Reinforcement - Place a rectangular piece of firmly woven fabric over the point of each slash line. Right sides of the fabric should be together and direction of grainlines should be matched. Stitch the reinforcement piece to the garment with a row of stay-stitching as explained in "Stay-stitch Reinforcement." Cut on the slash line. Turn and press the extra piece of fabric to the wrong side so it forms a seam allowance.



3. Seam Tape Reinforcement - Stitch a piece of woven edge seam tape to the right side of the bodice along the slash line. Stitch as directed for stay-stitching in "Stay-stitch Reinforcement." Slash on the line to the point. Turn and press the tape to form a seam allowance.

4. Iron-on Reinforcement - Press a small piece of lightweight iron-on tape or iron-on interfacing to the inside of the garment over the point of each slash line. Cut on the slash line.



### One-Piece Gusset

Stitch the underarm sleeve seam and the bodice side seam to within  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch of the gusset opening, or to the stay-stitching along the slash line. Backstitch or tie the threads. Press these seams open.

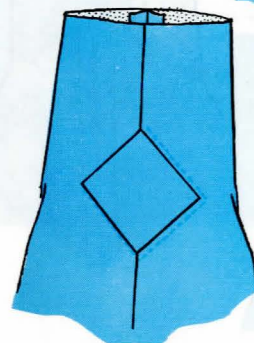
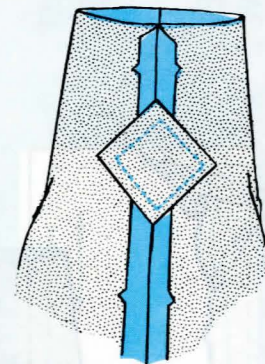
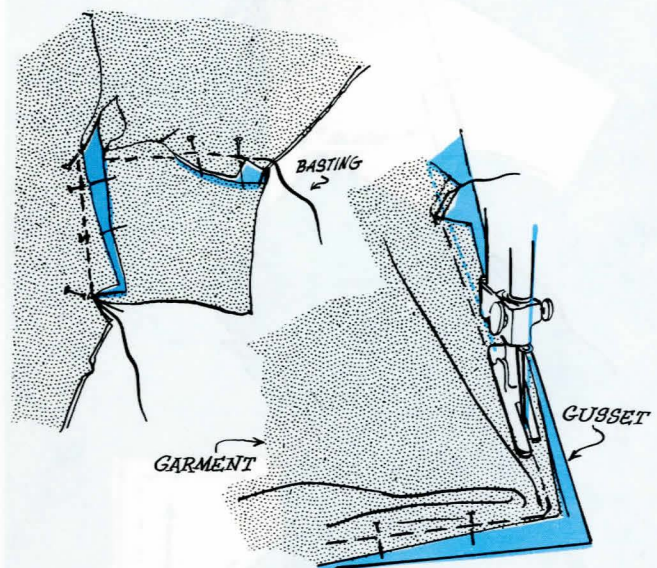
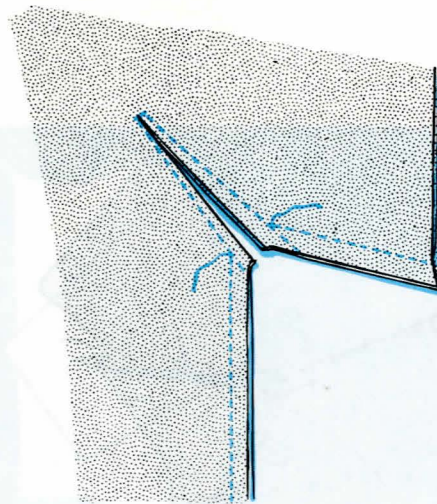
With right sides together stick a pin through the corner of the gusset, matching it to the bodice side seam. Pin two of the gusset edges in place along the bodice slash. Be sure to match the stitching lines carefully. Hand baste in place.

With the garment side up, begin stitching at the exact point where the underarm seam ended. Stitch along the stay-stitch line toward the point of the slash. With the needle in the fabric, pivot at the point and continue stitching along the second edge of the gusset. Stitch only to the exact point where the bodice side seam ends. Tie threads where the stitching begins and ends. Do not stitch across the underarm and the bodice side seam allowances.

Pin and baste the other two edges of the gusset in place and stitch in the same manner.

Press the gusset seam allowances toward the bodice so the gusset lies flat. Folds may form in the bodice and underarm seam allowances where they meet the gusset. Trim excess bulkiness from these folds.

Topstitching may be done around the gusset from the outside of the garment. This adds extra strength in the gusset area, but in some cases may detract from the garment's appearance. If you choose to topstitch, place the stitching on the garment  $\frac{1}{16}$  to  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the gusset seam line.





### Two-Piece Gusset

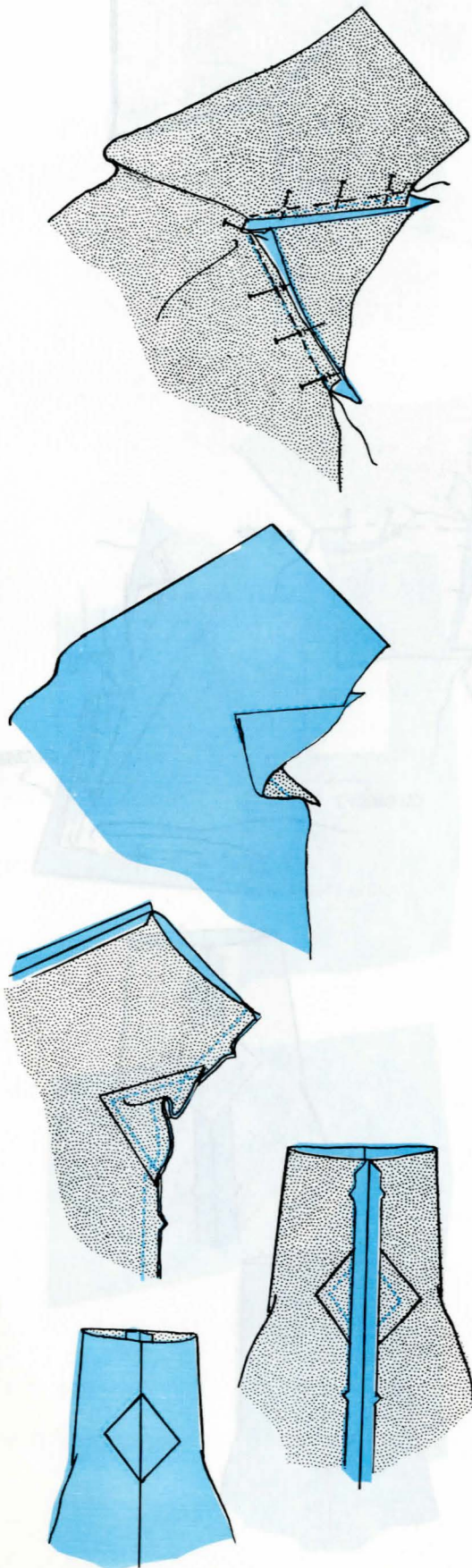
The two-piece gusset is inserted before the front and back bodice pieces are stitched together. Each gusset is made of two triangular pieces of fabric.

Reinforce the points of the slash lines in the bodice front and back. With right sides together pin one piece of the gusset to the bodice front. Match the stitching lines and notches carefully. From the garment side, machine stitch from the edge to the point of the slash line. At the point, leave the needle down in the fabric and pivot to stitch along the second side of the gusset. Press the seam toward the bodice.

Insert the other half of the gusset in the garment back. Press. Topstitching may be done if desired or if added strength seems necessary.

Pin the bodice front and back together. Match notches and also match the gusset points. Stitch the underarm seam continuing the seamline to form the bodice side seam. Gently stretch the bias edges of the gusset as you seam them together. This will help to keep stitching from breaking when the garment is worn. The points of the gusset will meet exactly if stitchings have been done accurately.

Press the underarm seam open. Trim excess bulkiness from the seam allowances where the gusset meets the underarm seams.





### Inserting a Gusset Without a Pattern

A gusset may be inserted at the underarm of a kimono sleeve even though the pattern does not include it. Follow these steps:

1. Marking the Gusset Slash Lines - On the bodice front locate the highest point on the underarm seam line where the sleeve and bodice meet. Then locate a point on the shoulder seam line about two inches from the neck edge. Fold the pattern between these two points. Open the pattern and beginning at the underarm seam draw a line four inches long on this creased line. Transfer the same marking to the bodice back pattern. These lines mark the slash lines for the gussets. The stitching lines should be marked along the slash lines. The seam allowance will be  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch at the underarm edge and tapered to almost nothing at the point of the slash line.

2. Cutting the Pieces - For two-piece gussets draw a right angle six inches long on each side along the straight grain of the fabric. The diagonal line joining these two ends will be about  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches long. The diagonal line must be on the true bias. Cut two of these pieces for each gusset. The seam allowance on each edge of these pieces will be  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.

If one-piece gussets are preferred, cut each gusset piece  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches square with the cut edges on the straight grain of the fabric. The seam allowance on the cut edges of each piece will be  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.

3. Inserting the Gussets - Reinforce the slash lines on the bodice pieces. The gusset point formed by the straight grains of the fabric will fit into the point of the slash line.

For completing the gussets follow the directions as given either in the section on "ONE-PIECE GUSSET" or in the section on "TWO-PIECE GUSSET."

