

Adult China Doll Wardrobe & Templates

for

Civility, Cordelia, Anne, Helena, and Therese

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Dressing a China Doll

In *A Girl's Own Book* (1833),

Mrs. Maria Child wrote:

The dressing of dolls is a useful as well as a pleasant employment for little girls. If they are careful about small gowns, caps, and spencers, it will tend to make them ingenious about their own dresses when they are older.... When little girls are alone, dolls may serve for company. They can be scolded, and advised, and kissed, and taught to read, and sung to sleep—and anything else the fancy of the owner may devise.

Every little girl needs a dolly to play with. For we who are involved with Living History, the task of finding appropriate playthings can be daunting. One very popular item in the mid-Victorian era was a china doll.

You'll notice that her body conforms to the "beauty standard" of the era, with a wide, sloping chest, and very narrow waist by comparison. She is a lady doll, to be dressed in adult styles (somewhat like today's fashion dolls.)

One facet that delighted me during my research were the accessories and miniature items made to go with dolls. Entire industries sprang up in Europe to provide the tiny items. You can create many of them at home; indeed, Godey's Lady's Book published a series on making and dressing a doll from the skin out, and even shared plans and instructions for her accessories and furniture! Use your imagination and the myriad little objects available in craft and hobby stores to furnish a happy home for your doll.

This pattern is designed for intermediate sewing experience, and can be accomplished by a newer seamstress with the help of her Mother or Loving Friend. The clothing can be made by hand (use a small running stitch or back stitch) or machine stitching (use a small straight stitch). A *1/4" seam allowance* is used in either case, and has been included in the templates.

Seams may be left unfinished, or finished with hand overcasting as desired. For the most accurate appearance, do not use a machine zig-zag. Hooks and eyes (or thread eyes), with or without decorative buttons atop them, are best for most fastenings. Do not use snaps or velcro for dolls who will be present in living history settings.

Small bits of trim, or embroidery to mimic trim, can be used for embellishment. For best results, launder clothing gently by hand and air-dry.

As much as possible, use natural fibers for all items. At this small scale, most wools will be too heavy for the clothing to drape well. While you will observe some "stiffness" in the drape of original doll clothing for this very reason, you can also substitute plain cotton cloth for the wool (your doll will not be chilly.) Cotton prints with small motifs are ideal for dresses. Lightweight silks work up well.

Because every doll is handmade and stuffed, the waist measure of your doll may have slight variations from other Elizabeth Stewart Clark dolls. Measure and adjust all waist bands to your particular doll. You may wish to note in the margin what finished waist to use, for future reference. Slight differences in poured thickness, combined with the vitrification process, may also produce small variations in shoulder shape for your doll; plan to do a quick test of the bodice shapes to test any little alterations you might like to do.

Be sure to read all the instructions for each garment before cutting. Pattern pieces should be laid as much as possible on the straight lengthwise grain; however, due to the scale, most garments can also be successfully made cut on the width-wise grain. Pieces indicate if they are to be laid on a fold of fabric; the fabric should be folded along the straight grain. If the pattern piece indicates two fabric pieces are wanted, cut it from a double layer of cloth.

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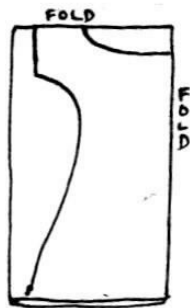
Creating The Foundation Clothing

Your doll can have a full line of accurate foundation clothing. This realism is fun for play, but it also means your doll can be used to demonstrate accurate dressing layers to anyone, without causing you to undress.

All seam allowances are 1/4" unless otherwise notices, and may be stitched by machine, or by hand using a small running stitch with an occasional back stitch. Press or finger-press after each stitching step for the best results.

The Chemise

Cut out paper pattern for Chemise. The chemise is cut on a double fold. See the template page 5.



Cut a rectangle of fabric, 22" by 12". Fold in half, matching 12" edges. (The fabric is now roughly a square, 11" x 12")

Fold in half again, making a rectangle 11" x 6". Lay the pattern along the folds as indicated. Cut out chemise. The fold creates the shoulder "seam" to decrease bulk.

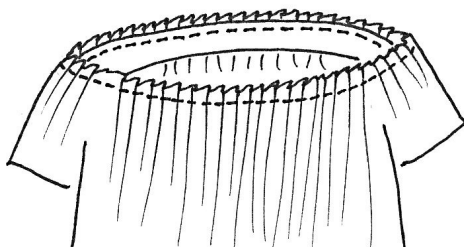
Neckline Band

Work small gathering stitches at the center back and center front of the chemise. (You may also pleat the chemise to fit the band.)

Cut or rip a strip of fabric for the neckline band, 1" wide by 11" long. Seam the short ends and press the allowances open.

Press one long edge to the wrong side, 1/4". Match the unpressed edge right sides together with the chemise neckline (position the band seamline at the center back.).

Draw up the gathers or pleat with very small pleats to fit the neck band. Stitch the seam; press all seam allowances toward the band, and trim to a scant 1/8" wide.



Fold the pressed edge of the band over to hide all raw edges. Secure very close to the pressed fold with a small running stitch or whip stitch by hand.

Variation: Whitework Band

Cut a strip of narrow (1/2" wide) imported Swiss whitework edging, 11" long.

Seam the short ends, trimming and hand-whipping the seam allowances together. Match right sides together with the chemise edge, as for the regular band. Draw up gathers or pleat the chemise to fit.

Stitch the seam. Press all allowances toward the chemise. Trim the chemise allowance *only* to a scant 1/8" wide. Tuck the raw edge of the embroidered trim under to cover all seam allowances.



Hem along this fold with a tiny running stitch by hand to create the neckline facing, and a casing channel for the

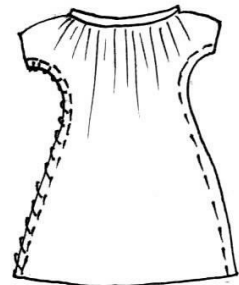
drawstring. You will be catching some of the gathers in the stitching; this is fine, and won't compromise the function of the finished chemise.

Insert Drawstring (Optional)

Thread a needle with crochet cotton. Insert needle at the center front; work carefully through the casing, to emerge again at center front. Leave 4" for each drawstring end. Knot the ends to prevent them pulling back into the casing.

Sew Side Seams

Fold the chemise right sides together along the shoulders. Using a 1/4" seam allowance, stitch from the sleeve opening to the hem.



Trim and hand overcast to finish the seam if desired.

(This side seam may also be flat felled if desired. Press both allowances to one side; trim one allowance to a scant 1/8". Press the other allowance to cover it. Tuck the raw edge under, and secure with a tiny running stitch or whip stitch by hand.)

Hem Sleeve

Fold the sleeve hem to the inside 1/4". Tuck the raw edge under, and secure the hem with a tiny running stitch by hand. Repeat for the other sleeve.

Variation: Whitework Edge

You can also make a whitework edge.

Cut a short piece of 1/2" wide imported Swiss whitework edging, measuring it along the sleeve edge and adding 1/2" for seam allowances (two 1/4" allowances.)

Seam the short ends, trimming and hand-whipping the allowances together. Lay the whitework right sides together with the sleeve opening. Seam with a 1/4" seam allowance. Finger-press the allowances toward the sleeve. Trim the sleeve allowance only to a scant 1/8" wide. Tuck the raw edge of the embroidered trim under, covering all raw edges. Secure with a small running stitch, as above for the whitework band.

Hem the Chemise

Fold the hem 1/4" to the inside. Tuck under the raw edge, and secure the hem with small running or straight stitches.

Light Stays

The vast majority of women in the 1860's wore some form of supportive undergarment. The light stays given here do not change the shape of the doll unless laced extremely tight, but are included to create a complete Lady's wardrobe.

Cut out the paper pattern, and pin to a doubled piece of fabric. Cut two Fronts, and four each of the rest of the pieces. See the template page 6.

With right sides together, stitch the side-backs to the center backs, matching point A. Continue stitching the side-fronts to the side-backs, matching at point B. Continue stitching the center fronts to the side-fronts, matching at point C. You will have two identical stays shapes. Press seams and trim the seam allowances.

Lay the stays right sides together, and stitch along the *back edges only*. Press, and turn the stays right sides out; press again, having the seam directly on the edge of the fabric.

If you would like to stitch in some light cording, or insert thin strips of reed to simulate boning, you can stitch through both layers of the stay to create channels of the desired width. Be sure, if you are using reed or narrow plastic bits for boning, to cut them just a bit more than 1/2" shorter than the stay itself, to allow for binding.

Baste along the upper and lower edges.

Cut a strip of 1" wide bias fabric from white muslin. Match this bias strip right sides together with the upper and lower edges of the stay. Stitch a 1/4" seam.



Trim the seam allowances close to the stitching, and press toward the bias binding. Fold the bias binding to the wrong side, covering the seam

allowances. Tuck the raw edges under and whipstitch to the inner layer of the stays to secure.

If you have not used cording or a boning option, topstitch close to the vertical seamlines to create "stay" lines.

Work Eyelets

To work the thread eyelets at the back closure, first insert a stiletto, skewer, or knitting needle at each desired eyelet point. Wiggle to enlarge a hole without cutting the fabric threads.

Thread a needle with a double strand of white thread. Wax the thread for ease in stitching, and strength.

Bring the thread up to the right side, about 1/16" from the edge of the enlarged hole. Secure with a small back stitch. Keeping your tension even, pass the needle down through the hole, and back up through the right side of the fabric. Repeat around the hole, keeping the tension even and firm to pull the circle open.



Tie off each eyelet with several tiny back stitches. Use crochet thread to lace the stays, leaving sufficient slack to draw the stays easily over the head or hips, plus extra for tying. Knot each end to prevent pulling the lacing back through the eyelet.

A Note On Waistbands

As you continue on with your doll's wardrobe, you will be adding some bulk to the waist area through successive waistbands. You can minimize some of the bulk by cutting petticoat bands slightly long, to let them sit just below the final dress waist level.

In general, measure your doll for a customized waistband length with each new layer. To the actual finished measurement, add at least 1", which allows two 1/4" overlaps and two 1/4" "tuck in" allowances to finish the short ends.

Split Drawers

The drawers pattern made as-is will allow a plain hem and three 1/8" tucks. You can add length for more decorative tucks by adding 1/4" for each 1/8" finished tuck desired. Remember to tape the upper and lower drawers templates together before cutting your fabric! See the template page 7

Prepare Waistband

Cut out drawers pattern on a fold, twice. Cut or rip a waistband piece 1/4" wide (see the note above regarding waistband length.) Press one long edge of the band to the wrong side, 1/4". Lightly press the band in half to find the center point.

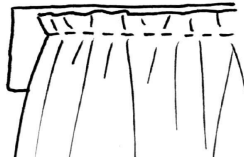
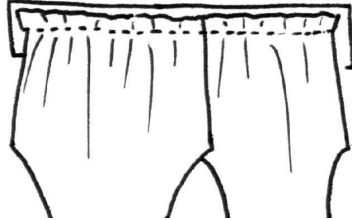
Hem Crutch Edges

Fold the crutch edges to the inside $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Tuck the raw edge under to create a narrow hem; secure with a running stitch by hand or straight stitch by machine.

Finish Waist

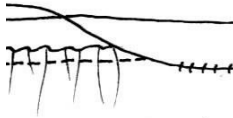
Using a small running stitch (or small machine stitch), stitch a gathering/easing row $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the top edge of each drawers piece.

Overlap the front edges and pin to the unpressed edge of the waistband with right sides together, centering the overlap at the center front point of the waistband.



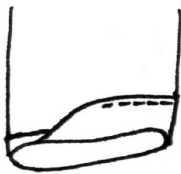
The band ends should extend $\frac{1}{4}$ " beyond the edges of the drawers at the front. Draw up gathers evenly to fit.

Stitch waistband seam. Trim and press seam allowances toward band. Fold the short ends to the inside. Fold the long pressed edge of the band to cover all seam allowances. Secure with small running or whip stitches.



Add a hook and eye to close the drawers at the waist, or thread narrow string through the waistband for a "drawstring" closure.

Seam & Hem Legs



Fold one leg right sides together. Stitch leg inseam. Overcast or fell to finish if desired. Repeat for other leg. Turn lower edge to inside $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Tuck the raw edge under and secure the hem along this fold with a small running stitch by hand.

Variation: Tucked Drawers

Fold the drawers hem to the inside, making the fold depth even all the way around, about $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the hemmed edge. Stitch by hand $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the fold, using a small running stitch. Open drawers back out, and finger-press the tuck toward the hem. Repeat as desired for additional tucks, making a creased fold $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the stitching line of the previous tuck. The pattern allows for three $\frac{1}{8}$ " tucks above the hem.

Variation: Whitework Hem, No Tucks

Trim 1" from the lower drawers edge. Cut a piece of $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide imported Swiss whitework edging, measuring for length against your seamed drawers leg, and adding $\frac{1}{2}$ " for seam allowances (two $\frac{1}{4}$ " allowances.)

With right sides together, seam the edge of the drawers and the whitework trim. Press all allowances toward the drawers. Trim the drawers seam allowance *only*, to a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ ", as for the sleeve hem. Tuck the raw edge of the embroidered trim under, and hem in place. (See the diagram in the chemise section for an illustration of this whitework edge/binding.)

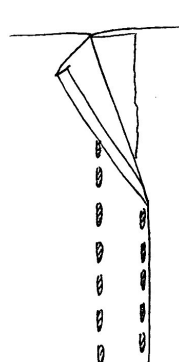
Lay each leg's inseams right sides together, and seam. Finish with a run-and-fell seam, or with hand-whipping.

Variation: Whitework Hem with Tucks

Leave the drawers piece the original length. Attach whitework as above, and stitch the inseams. Turn the whitework edge to the wrong side and work three $\frac{1}{8}$ " tucks as for the tucked variation, placing the first creased fold $\frac{1}{4}$ " above the seamline attaching the whitework to the drawers.

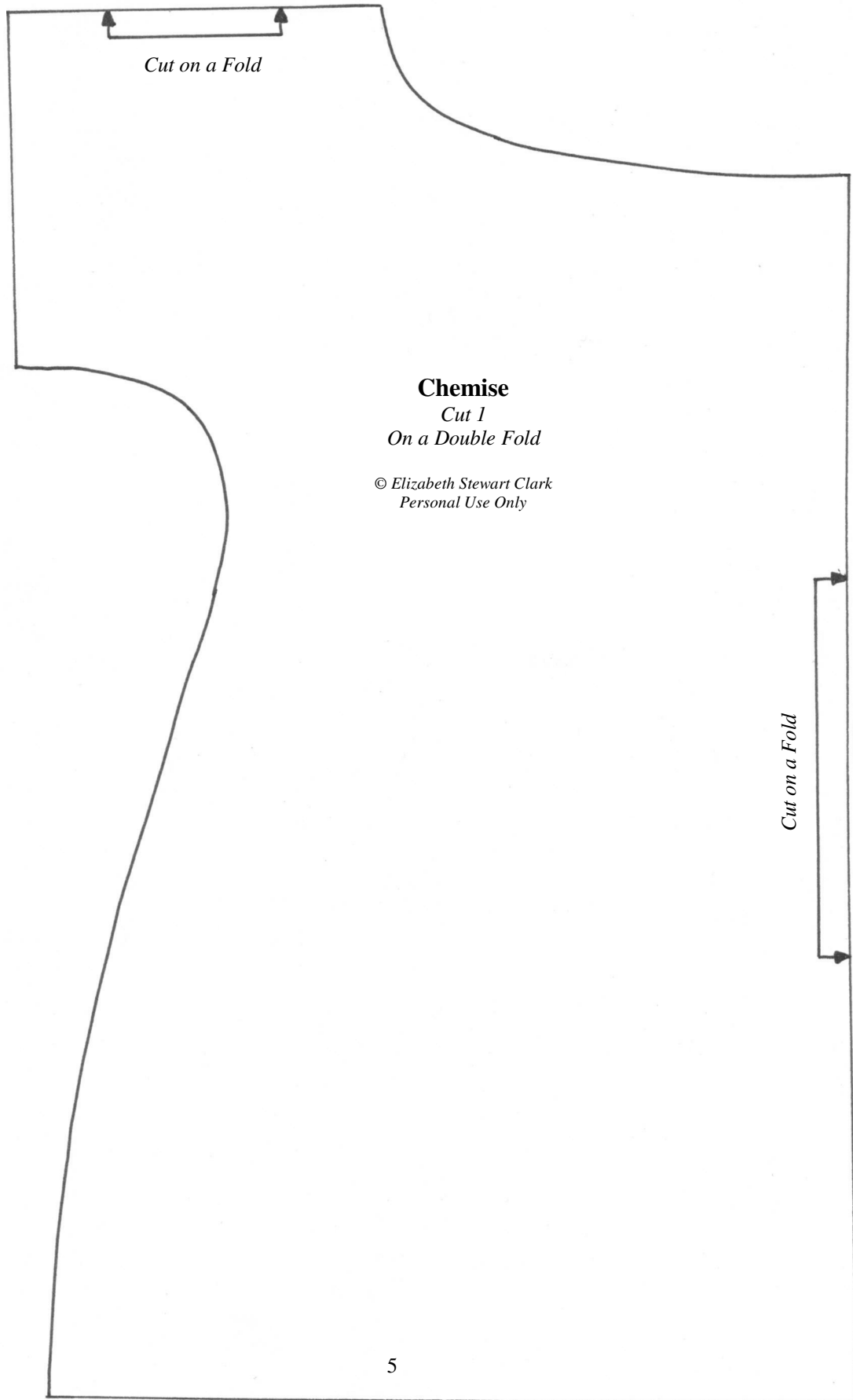
Run-and-Fell Seams

Run-and-fell seams are often used on undergarments because they are very low-bulk, and smooth during wear, reducing chafing due to seam allowances. With all the raw edges enclosed, this seam finish is also very durable. You'll see run-and-fell seams used for chemises and drawers quite frequently. Working them on a miniature scale takes a bit of patience, and some time with a needle and thimble, but the delicate, realistic results are worthwhile.

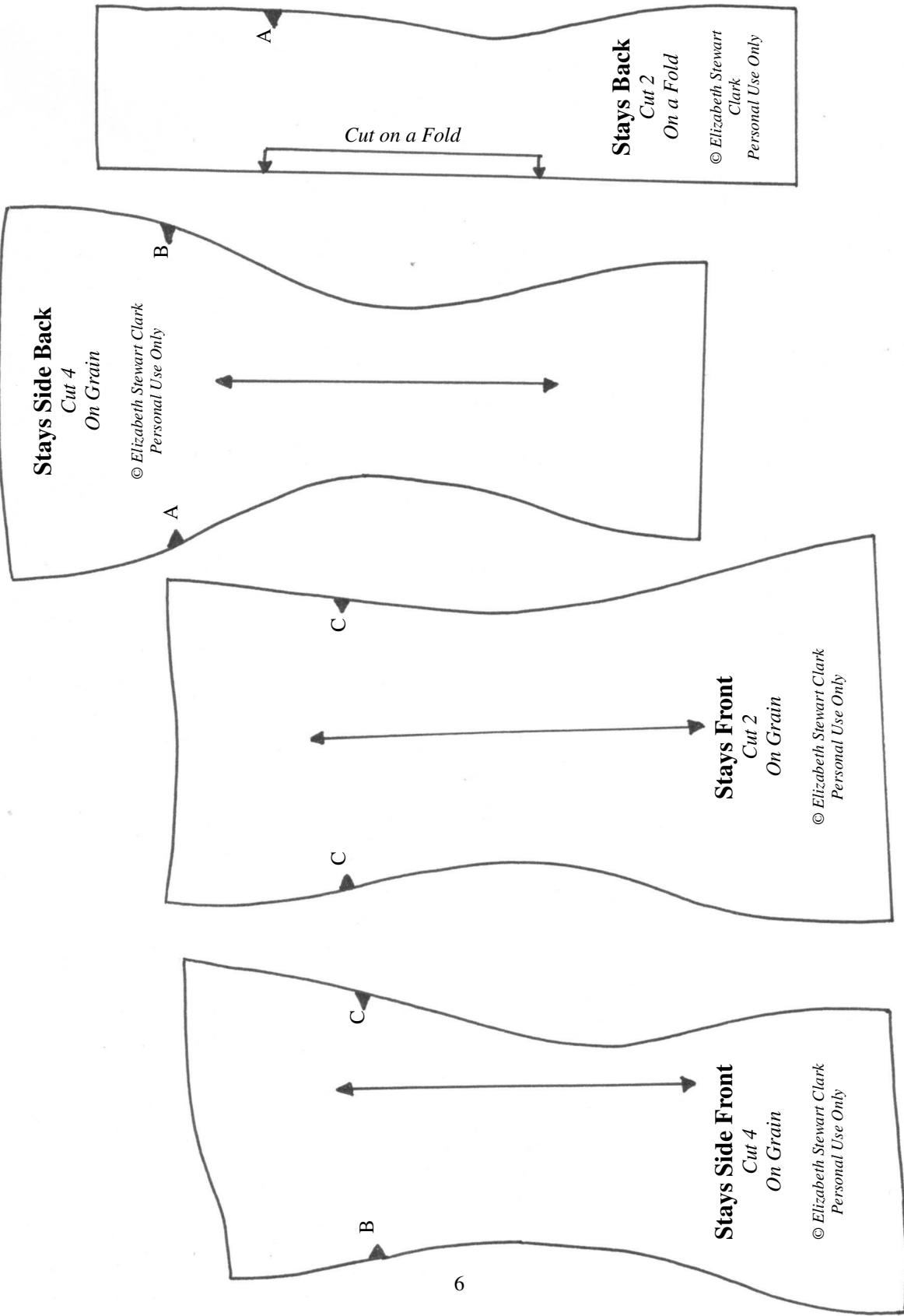


Stitch the seam right sides together with a small running stitch or back stitch. Press the seam allowances open, then to each side, to make the seam very crisp. Trim away one seam allowance to a very scant $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Press the full-width seam allowance over the trimmed allowance, and tuck the raw edge under, enclosing the seam. Hem this folded edge down with a small running stitch, or a tiny whip/fell stitch.

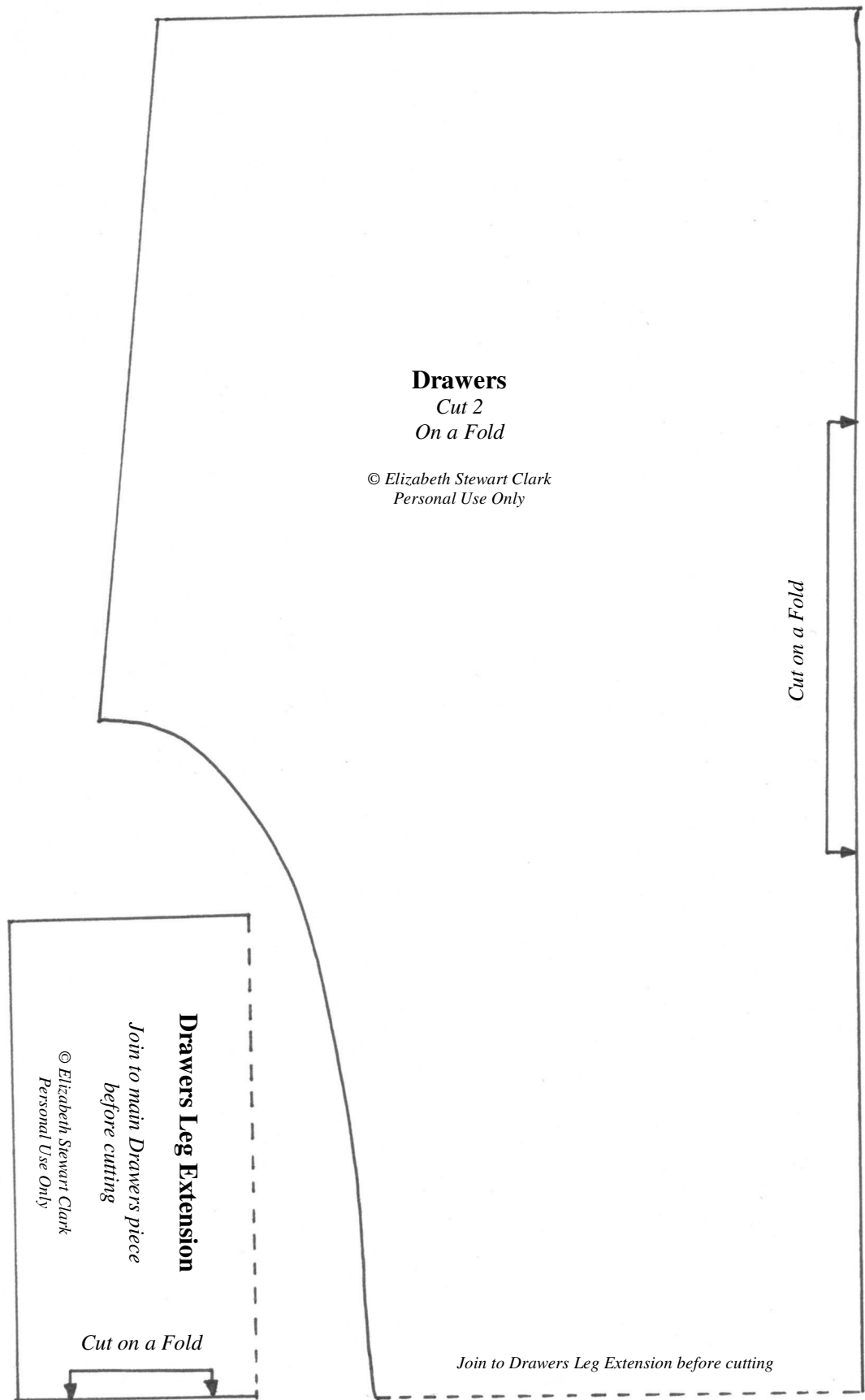
China Doll Undergarment Templates: Chemise



China Doll Undergarment Templates: Stays



China Doll Undergarment Templates



Petticoats are required for a good historic silhouette! Make your doll a full complement just for fun, though she'll need only one or two for everyday use. Five options are given here; mix and match techniques as needed!

Basic Petticoat

Cut or tear a rectangle 15" by 30" (or 45" for a very full petticoat). Prepare a waistband 1" wide (refer to the note on page 3 for help in determining the band length.) Press one long edge to the wrong side ¼". Fold band in half to find the center front point; crease or mark with a pin. There are no templates for these projects.

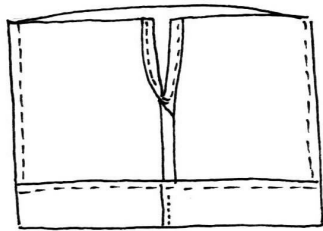
Seam Petticoat

Fold in half, meeting the short ends. Seam this back seam, leaving 2" open near one edge for a waist placket. Press the seam open.

Add a Hem

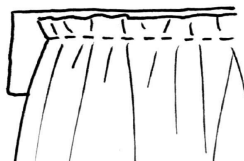
Press the hem edge to the wrong side ¼". Turn up another 1" to create a broad hem. Stitch close to the fold to secure the hem.

Hem Placket & Treat Waist

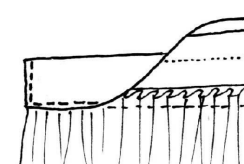


Hem the back placket by tucking the raw edge under, and securing with a straight stitch by machine, or running stitch by hand. Work two rows of small gathering stitches by hand along the entire waist edge.

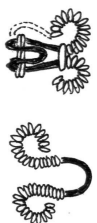
Waistband



Match the band and waist edge right sides together, having the band extend past the skirt placket edges ¼". Draw up gathers to fit the band. Seam.



Press all allowances toward the band. Trim to a scant ⅛". Tuck the short ends to the inside, and fold the long pressed edge over to cover all raw edges and seam allowances. Secure all the way around the band with tiny whip or running stitches.



Fastening

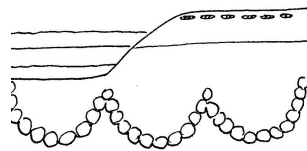
Use a #2 hook and eye to close the band. Work whip or buttonhole stitches around the entire base loops, and partway up the

hook base. Take a few short stitches across the base of the hook to keep it flat. When sewing on the eye, work whip or buttonhole stitch around the base loops, and at least half-way up the sides of the eye.

Whitework Petticoat

Cut or rip a rectangle 14" by 30" to 35". Prepare a waistband as for a basic petticoat. Press one long edge to the wrong side ¼". Fold band in half to find the center back point; crease or mark with a pin. Cut a 30" or 35" length of 1" to 1½" wide imported Swiss whitework edging. Follow the construction steps for seaming the plain petticoat. Stop before folding up the hem.

Seam the short ends of the edging together; trim and hand-whip allowances. Lay the petticoat hem edge and whitework raw edge right sides together. Seam. Press all allowances toward the petticoat.



Trim the petticoat allowance *only* to a scant ⅛". Tuck the raw edge of the whitework allowance under, and secure in place with a small running stitch.

Follow the plain petticoat instructions, resuming at hemming the placket.

Tucked Petticoat

Tucks can be added to any petticoat style, but must be planned before cutting. For each desired 1/8" tuck, add 1/4" to the cut length of the petticoat fabric. For each desired 1/4" tuck, add 1/2" to the cut length of the petticoat fabric. Follow the basic petticoat instructions through hemming (or through attaching the whitework edge for whitework/tuck combinations)

To make tucks, turn the skirt inside out. Fold the hemmed edge to the wrong side, creating an even fold ¾" above the stitching line of the hem (or attachment line of the whitework). Press.

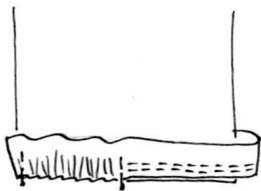
Stitch ¼" from the fold to create the first 1/4" tuck. Open out the petticoat and press the tuck toward the hem. Repeat, placing the fold ¾" above the stitching line of the first tuck. Repeat once more to form a final tuck (three, total.). Feel free to change the spacing of the tucks as you desire. For a very aesthetic look, make each pressed fold three times the finished desired depth away from the last stitching line; for example, to space 1/8" tucks 1/8" from one another, the folding lines will be 3/8" from the previous stitching line.

Resume the construction process from the plain petticoat, at hemming the back placket. Continue as for the plain petticoat, through fastening.

Single Flounced Petticoat

Cut or rip the petticoat 14" by 30". Prepare a waistband 1" wide, following the notes on page 3 for length. Press one long edge to the wrong side ¼". Fold band in half to find the center back point; crease or mark with a pin. Cut or rip one flounce strip across the full width of fabric (45"), 1½" wide.

Stitch the back seam and prepare the placket and waist as for the plain petticoat. Seam the short ends of the flounce strip, and press the allowances open, trimming slightly. Press one long edge to the wrong side ¼". Tuck the raw edge under, and hem along this fold with small running stitches. Work gathering stitches along the remaining long edge.



Lay the flounce and hem edge right sides together. Draw up the gathers to fit the hem, distributing evenly. Seam. Press all allowances toward the petticoat. Trim and hand-whip to neaten.

Continue with the waistband and fastenings as for the plain petticoat.

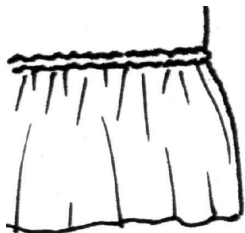
✂ *Tip: if your doll will be wearing multiple petticoats, vary the waistband lengths to reduce bulk around the waist. Otherwise, you may find that individual bands sit well, but when two or more are worn, the waist is much wider than expected.*

Multiple Flounce Petticoat

Begin as for a single flounced petticoat. Cut additional flounce strips as desired. Attach the hem flounce as above. For additional flounces, follow this procedure:

Draw or press a placement line 1" from the previous stitching line or hem line. Seam the short ends of the flounce. Press one long edge to the wrong side ¼". Tuck the raw edge under and hem with a small running stitch.

Fold the remaining free edge to the wrong side ¼". Press. Lay a piece of narrow string or crochet thread into the fold. Baste by hand just below this cord, as you might for making piping.



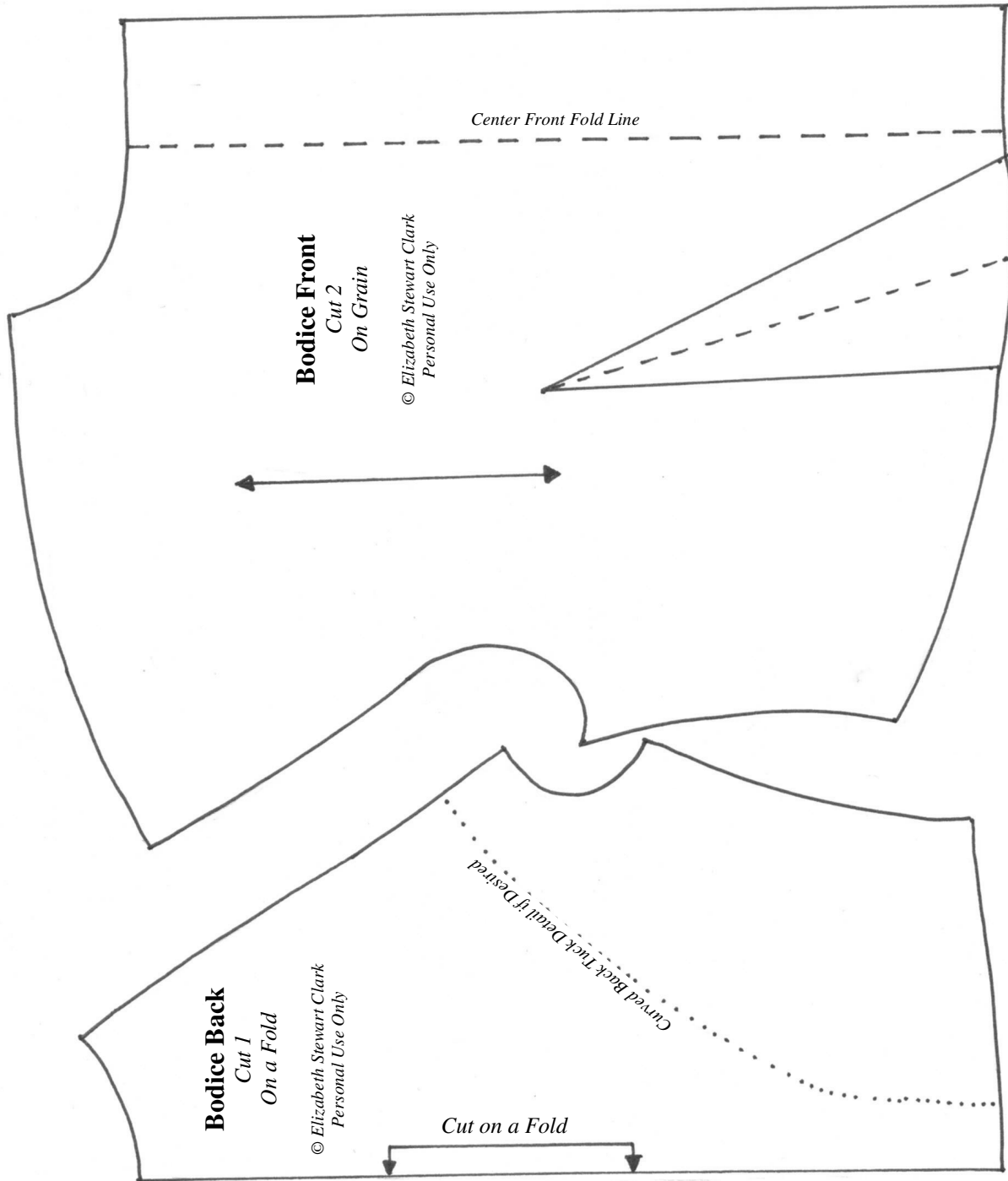
Lay the flounce right side up on the right side of the base skirt, positioning the corded edge along your placement line. Pin as needed, drawing up the cord to lightly shirr the flounce to fit the base skirt. It

will not look "gathered", but will be slightly fuller than the base skirt.

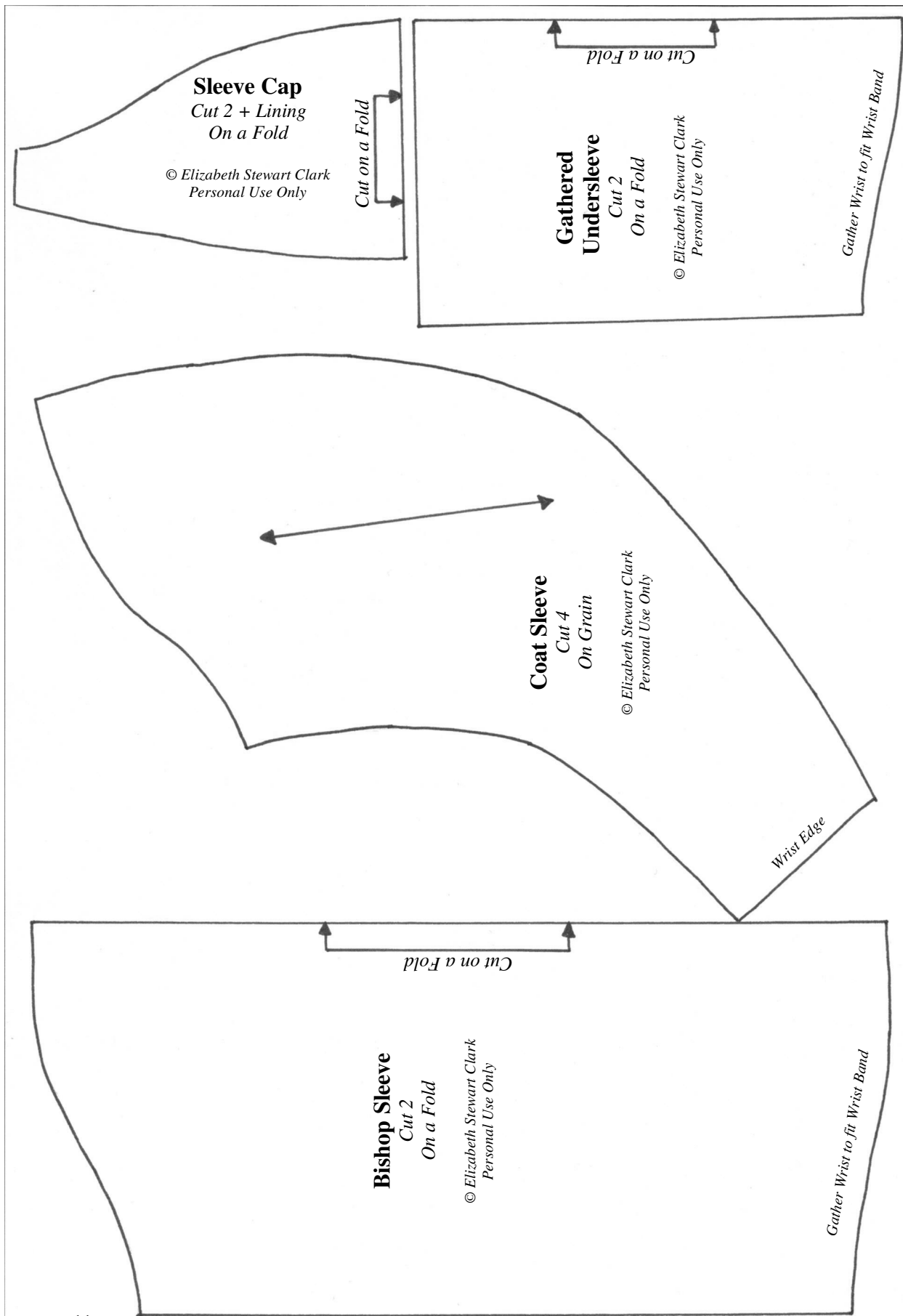
To secure the flounce, stitch through all layers directly below the cording, using a small running stitch. The cording can be knotted off and trimmed, then hidden between the flounce and base skirt, or can be removed at this point if you like.

Repeat this process with additional flounces as desired.

China Doll Bodice Templates



China Doll Bodice Templates



China Doll Bodice Templates

Wrist Band
Cut 2
On Grain
© Elizabeth Stewart Clark
Personal Use Only

Curved Collar
Cut 1
On a Fold
© Elizabeth Stewart Clark
Personal Use Only

Cut on a Fold

Collar
Cut 1
On a Fold
© Elizabeth Stewart Clark
Personal Use Only

Cut on a Fold

Open Coat Sleeve
Cut 4 + Lining
On Grain
© Elizabeth Stewart Clark
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Wrist Edge

Creating Dresses

The basic bodice given here fastens in front, just as an adult dress does in the era. You can use regular-sized (#2) hooks and eyes to close the dress, or use #2 hooks and thread eyes, or even tiny worked buttonholes. You can use a beading stitch, or even small glass beads, to make “buttons” down the center front of any dress if you choose.

Mock Buttons

Thread a needle with a doubled length of embroidery thread, and mark your positions with pencil. Secure your thread with a tiny back stitch on the mark.

Work a short (1/16”) repeated back stitch through the same holes several times, building a small mound of thread.



To finish, bring the needle to the wrong side and run it under several of your back stitches. In embroidery, this stitch is called a “granito” (modern terms), or a “beading stitch” (1820-1880).

Move to the next position and repeat. If you work with a thread length 18” or so, you will need only one or two needles full for 5-7 buttons, and there is no need to break threads between buttons, if you run the needle between the fabric and the lining to get to the next position.

The basic bodice has a high neckline and fitted bodice. Basic sleeve variations are given: a full bishop sleeve, a shaped coat sleeve, and a shorter, more open coat sleeve. These may be further varied by adding trimmings, ribbons, and embroidery to mimic braiding, or by adding sleeve caps, or undersleeves/cuffs. The construction process will be broken down into several steps for simplicity; read all the steps before beginning to minimize any difficulties.

This section begins with bodice construction, then the construction of various sleeve types, and lastly, the construction and attachment of skirts. You can adapt petticoat instructions to make a variety of skirt styles, as well.

The Bodice

Cut two front bodices and one back bodice in fashion fabric; repeat with lining fabric. Transfer any markings to the fabric as needed with a sharp pencil or chalk. See the templates on page 10.

Match a lining piece to each fashion fabric piece. For all construction steps given, they will be treated as one. Flatlining or underlining in this way is very common at mid-century.

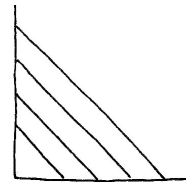
With right sides together, and using a ¼” seam allowance, stitch the fronts to the back bodice at the shoulders and side seams. Press the allowances toward the back bodice. If your fabric is prone to fraying, use a small whipstitch to finish all layers of this seam allowance together.

Front Bodice Facing & Neckline Finish

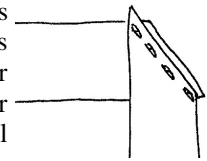
Turn under a scant ⅛” along the front bodice openings. Press. Fold and press again along the center fold line of each front bodice.

The majority of mid-century bodices employ a bias binding or piped bias binding to finish the neckline. You can create your own bias strips from your dress fabric for the most period-appropriate finish.

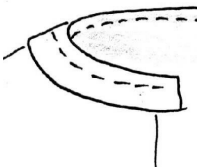
Bias strips are cut on a 45° angle to the selvedge or straight grains of the fabric. The more precisely your bias strips are cut, the more easily they will wrap around curves without puckering.



You can piece together short sections of bias strip to create a length of bias binding from small scraps of your fabric. Many period bodices (for dolls and for humans) show careful piecing of bias strips for binding.



Lay a strip of bias fabric about 1” wide right sides with the bodice neckline. Leave about ¼” of the bias strip extending beyond the folded front plackets. Sew and press the seam. Trim the seam allowance to a scant ⅛”.



Wrap the bias strip over the neckline edge, to enclose all raw edges. Tuck the free bias edge under; trim it a bit if there is too much width to roll and tuck firmly. Tuck the short ends to the inside, and hem the binding down with a tiny whip or running stitch.



Alternately, prepare a 9” piece of corded bias piping from the fashion fabric, sew it right sides together with the neckline edge, and turn into place on the inside of the neckline. The piping cord will run right along the neckline edge. You can then trim all but the outermost piping seam allowance, and tuck that raw bias edge under for a neat, finished facing.

You may attach hooks and eyes down the center front at this point, or after the skirts have been attached.

Shaping the Bodice

One dart is marked on each side of the front bodice. Test the fit on your doll and adjust the dart depth and position as desired. If you like the look of two darts on each side, divide the fullness evenly and take it up in two tiny darts.

With right sides together, fold the darts along their centers and stitch firmly. Press darts toward the side seam.

If you would prefer, you can also gather or pleat the darted area, instead of darting.

Add Sleeves

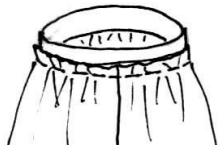
Bishop Sleeves

Trace the paper pattern template and cut two bishop sleeves (page 11), each on a fold of fashion fabric. Cut two wrist bands (page 12). Press one long edge of each wristband to the wrong side 1/4", and set aside.

With right sides together, stitch the inner arm seam of the sleeves. Overcast the allowance to finish if desired.

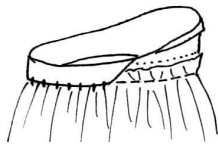
Work two rows of small running stitch along the wrist edge. (Or, you may use tiny pleats to fit the sleeve wrist to the wristband.)

Open up the folded edge of the wrist band, and stitch the short ends together. Refold the crease.



Lay the wrist edge of the sleeve and free edge of the wristband right sides together, drawing up the gathers to fit the band. Stitch a 1/4" seam to join them. Press the seam allowances toward the band.

Trim the seam allowances slightly to decrease bulk inside the wristband.



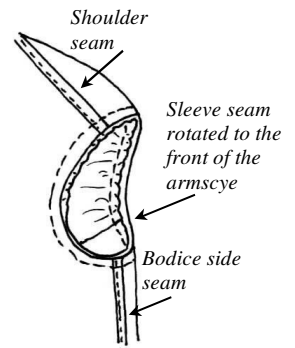
Fold the band in half, meeting the creased edge with the seam line and covering all raw edges. Hem the creased edge with small running or whip stitches to finish the sleeve band.

Work a row of running stitches along the armscye curve of the sleeve. (You may also fit the sleeve into the armscye of the bodice with a few pleats at the back of the arm.)

Turn your bodice wrong side out. Insert the sleeve to have right sides together, matching the inner-arm seam of the sleeve to a point somewhat forward of the base of the armscye on the bodice.

Stitch the seam; finish the edge with hand whip-stitch if desired.

Virtually every other sleeve for the mid-century, regardless of shape, inserts in this same manner.



Gathered Frill Variation

This delicate finish is lovely for sheer dresses. The bishop sleeve in a sheer is light and airy.

Add 3/8" to the overall length of the sleeve template at the wrist edge. Seam the bishop sleeves at the inner arm seam and hand-whip the allowances together.

Press the wrist edge to the wrong side 1/4". Tuck the raw edge under and hem the wrist edge with a small running stitch.

Crease the sleeve about 1/4" up from the hemmed wrist edge. Work two rows of running stitch, one just on this crease and the second just above it, taking care to make the stitching intervals as similar as you can.

Draw up the gathers enough to bring the sleeve in at the wrist, but still admit the hand easily. Tie off the gathering threads securely. Cover the gathered area with a small piece of ribbon, stitched flat on each edge. This will stabilize the gathering.

Coat Sleeves

These sleeves are semi-fitted at the wrist, but have a wide, shaped area about mid-arm/elbow. This, combined with the forward placement of the inner-arm seam in the armscye, causes the sleeves to hang forward of the body, and gives the impression that the sleeves are about to shake hands with one another.

Adult-scale coat sleeves generally employ a placket in the inner-arm seam. At the doll scale, this placket is omitted, and the wrist is cut just wide enough to admit the hand easily.

Double your fashion fabric to cut each sleeve in mirror image. Cut four total sleeve sections (template page 11). Lay mirror-image sets together, and seam along the inner (shorter) and outer (greater) curves. Hand-whip the seam allowances together if desired; the curved seams sometimes need a bit of snipping to lay well, without crimps.



Turn the wrist edge to the wrong side 1/4". Tuck the raw edge under, and hem the wrist edge to finish.

Insert the finished sleeve into the bodice, as for a bishop sleeve; most coat sleeves are not gathered at the armhole, but are rather pleated to fit the armhole, with tiny pleats at the back of the arm,

meeting the outer arm seam approximately where the shoulder seam intersects the armhole. (This will quite naturally rotate the inner-arm seam to the front of the armhole curve.)

Finish as for a bishop sleeve.

Open Coat Sleeve Variation

The open coat sleeve is cut slightly shorter, and wider than the wrist-length coat sleeve, and is designed to be worn with a decorative white undersleeve. It is a perfect foundation for all manner of 1860s sleeve embellishments, including braidwork, fanciful shaped cuffs (combined with other embellishments), ruching, quilting, and decorative covered buttons. Take your inspiration from original engravings, photographs, and extant garments. Many of the more decorative open sleeves of the 1860s are the open coat shape, rather than an 1850s "pagoda" style open sleeve.

Cut the open coat sleeve template in two mirror-image sets, as for a regular coat sleeve (template page 12). With right sides together, seam the inner and outer arm seams of each mirror-image set. Turn the wrist edge to the wrong side 1/4"; tuck the raw edge under and hem flat. Proceed with any decorative embellishments you like!

Sleeve Caps

Sleeve caps (also known as jockeys) can be added to nearly any sleeve style for a bit of added panache and detail at the shoulder line.

Cut two sleeve caps in the fashion fabric (on a fold of fabric), and two in a lightweight lining fabric if desired (you may choose to simply hem the sleeve cap.) For a lined cap, seam the underarm seam of the fashion fabric and lining pieces, creating mirror-image sets for the right and left arms. (Template page 11.)

Press the lower edge of each to the wrong side 1/4". Nest one lining into each sleeve cap, matching the folded lower edges together. Use a small running or felling stitch to attach the lining to the inside of the folded fashion fabric. (This finish is slightly lower in bulk than a sewn and turned seam; bulk is a big

consideration in doll-scale clothing.

Sleeve caps can be varied by adding a frill along the edge, or overlaying a bit of trim, or using chainstitch to mimic a braided pattern. Use French knots or small beads for "button" trims.

The Skirts

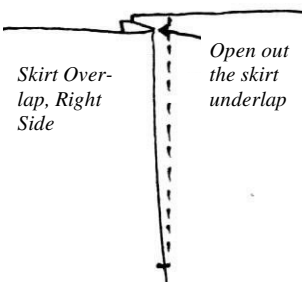
Beyond the basic skirt given here, you may choose to follow or vary any of the instructions given in the Petticoats section to recreate your favorite skirt looks, with the small exception of using whitework edgings to trim plain or patterned cloth skirts. Fashion-fabric tucks, flounces, and frills can all be found on 1860s skirts.

Skirts may also be embellished with braidwork in the lower third of the skirts. You can simulate complex braiding with a tiny chain stitch by hand, using several strands of embroidery floss.

The skirt opening will make a "Straight" placket with the bodice, opening at the front. You can also use adult bodice instructions (found in the Dressmaker's Guide and many historic clothing patterns) to create an off-set placket. Both variations are found in original doll's clothing and adult clothing.

Cut or tear a skirt piece 15 1/2" by 40-45".

Fold the skirt in half, having right sides together and meeting the short edges. Stitch back seam within 2" of the upper edge (the open area will form the placket at the waist). Press and finish seam as needed.



One side of the skirt placket will form the overlap with the bodice, and its placket edge will be folded to the inside after the skirt is set. The other will form an underlap, extending flat.

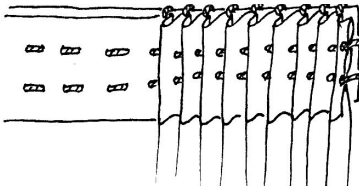
If you have used a full width of fabric, both edges will have a selvege finish; if you have used a partial width of fabric, turn a very narrow hem at the underlap edge of the placket.

Turn hem edge of the skirt to inside 1/4" and press. Turn again, 3/4", and press. Secure the hem with a small running stitch. (In adult-scale dresses, a turned hem is more commonly replaced with a faced hem. You may use faced and faced and taped hems in doll's dresses, as well; refer to The Dressmaker's Guide, Second Edition, for the full-size alternatives.)

If you will be applying decorative trim to the skirt, it is easiest to do this now, before the skirt is gauged or pleated.

Unfold the overlap portion of the placket. Prepare the skirt for gauging or pleating by folding the waist edge to the inside 1/2". Press the fold.

For gauging, thread a needle with a double thread; make one row of very small running stitches just beneath the thread. Knot the thread at each end, having the knot to the wrong side of the fabric. Run another row of running stitches 1/4" below the first, taking care to make your stitches at the same intervals. Tie off as before. You may draw up the pleats a bit at this time, but do not knot off or cut the extra threads, to allow for adjustments in the fullness.

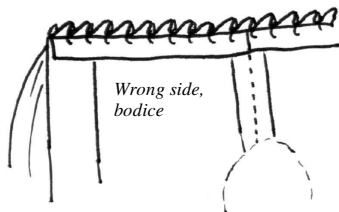


For pleating, mark the quarters of the skirt along the folded edge. Do not pleat at this time.

Attach the Skirt & Bodice

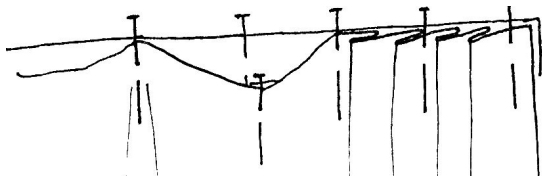
Fold the lower edge of the bodice to the inside 1/4". Press.

Pin the skirt right sides together with the folded edges even, and front plackets matching.



Match center and quarter marks as needed. Draw up gauging to fit. Tie off gauging threads to prevent them loosening. Whipstitch the valley of each gauged pleat to the fold of the bodice.

For pleats, match the center front, center back, and side quarter marks in the skirt and bodice waist. Continue to divide each section down, matching the mid-points, until you can easily fold fairly consistent pleats (directional knife pleats, box pleats, or stacked box pleats) to control the fullness of the skirt.



Whipstitch through both the folded skirt and bodice edge, making the stitches small and even.

With gauging and pleats, take an extra stitch every 1/2" to secure the whipping. Tie off whip stitches securely.

Fold the overlap placket edge to the wrong side, and secure with whip stitches.

Attach hooks and eyes at the front bodice opening as needed. Remember to place the rounded portion of the hook just back from the folded edge; place a thread eye or a metal eye to correspond on the underlap side. Be sure to take a few stitches through the "butt" end of the hook, to secure it to the bodice facing well.

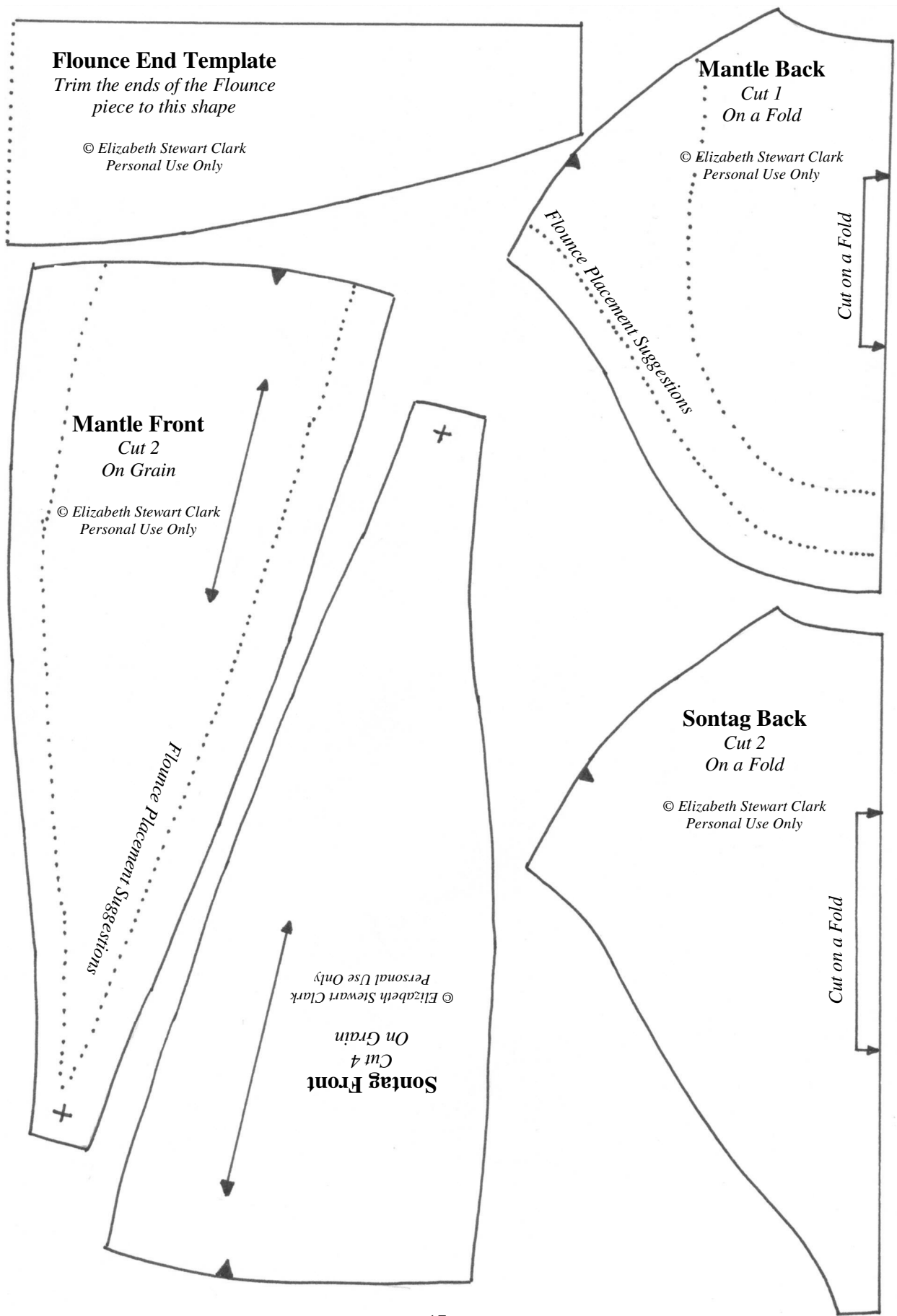


Secure the "butt" end!

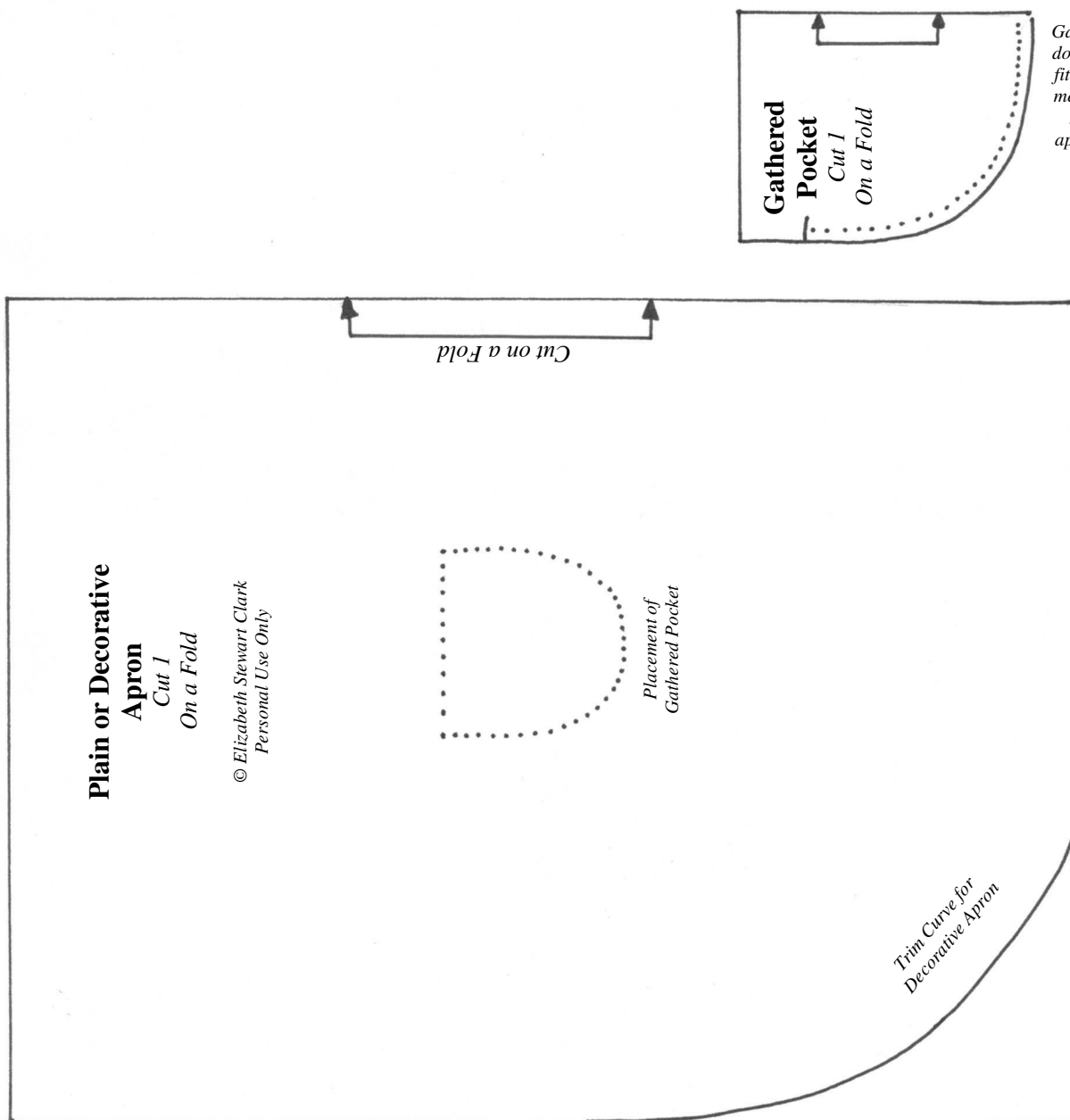
It is not vital that the hooks be exactly spaced, only that they close the bodice smoothly.

Your dress can be varied by using different fabrics, different trims, and different skirt treatments; take inspiration from *cartes d'visite* (CDV's), other photographic images, surviving garments, and fashion illustrations from the era. (Your doll can also be a wonderful wardrobe planning tool: try out your design ideas on a miniature scale before committing to an adult-sized garment!)

China Doll Accessories Templates



China Doll Accessories Templates



Gather along dotted line to fit the placement dots on the main apron piece.

Creating Accessories

Add a Collar & Cuffs

A white collars and cuffs are just as important for your doll as for your own wardrobe, adding the finishing touches to the dress. Small bits of narrow Swiss handloom edgings, or cotton lace edgings, are perfect for collars and cuffs, as can be small pieces of fine white cloth.

Cloth Collar (or Rounded Collar)

Cut one collar piece (templates page 12) from soft, fine white cloth. Press the outer edge to the wrong side 1/4", and crease well. Tuck the raw edge under and hem flat. Alternately, use your favorite narrow hemming technique to add a fine hem to the collar edge.

(If your collar will be part of a permanent display only, you can also simply press the edge to the wrong side, and secure the crease with tiny running stitches, trimming the excess allowance on the wrong side to a scant 1/16".)

Lay a strip of white bias fabric right sides together with the neckline of the collar piece. Sew the 1/4" seam, and press all allowances toward the bias strip. Trim the allowances slightly. Fold the bias strip to cover all the trimmed allowances, and baste into place through all the seam allowances.

(This is slightly different from a full-sized collar, as the bias edge is left visible and "raw." It will soften with time and use, but will not fray out. This finish reduced the bulk that would occur if the bias edge were tucked under and hemmed down.)

With the cloth collar hemmed, you can also whip a narrow lace edging to the hemmed finish, or baste a lace edging overlaying the cloth of the collar.

Whitework or Lace Collar

Using the collar shape as a template, arrange a strip of edging smoothly at the outer edge of the template, having the raw edge extend beyond the neckline. Whip or narrow-hem the cut ends of the lace or whitework edging.

Form tiny pleats as needed to curve the trim around the neck edge. Finish as for a plain cloth collar, with a bias binding that can be basted inside the neckline of your doll's dress.

Permanent Collars

Hem a cloth collar, or form a lace or edging collar over

the collar template. Rather than binding with bias, fold the raw edge to the inside of the bodice. Secure with very tiny running stitches, very close to the neck edge.



Cuffs

(There is no template for this item. Cut to measure with your doll's dress.) Cuffs are made very easily by trimming a strip of edging the same diameter as the cuff of the sleeve; join the short ends with a small running stitch; hand overcast it for strength.

Lay the cuff right side to wrong side with the sleeve, and secure it with small running stitches. The cuff will peek out from the wrist edge of the sleeve.



Undersleeves

Undersleeves are used beneath non-sheer open sleeves, and sometimes beneath sheer open sleeves (in this case, the undersleeves are of a similarly fine, sheer fabric as the dress sleeve, but in white.) The Undersleeve template is found on page 11. Cut two on a fold, and two wrist bands (template page 11).

Fringed Shawl

There is no template for this project. Cut or tear a 14" by 14" square of fabric. Run a row of straight stitches 1/2" in from the edge. Remove threads to fringe each edge to the stitching line. Fold the shawl into a triangle, and wrap your doll.

Rectangular Plain Apron

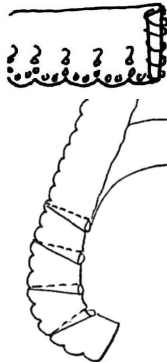
Cut one apron shape on a fold (template page 18) Cut a waist band measuring 1" by 8 1/2". If you would like a small square pocket, cut a square 2" by 2".

Run a row of running or straight stitches along the waist edge

Fold the other three edges to the wrong side 1/4". Tuck the raw edges under, and hem with a straight or running stitch.

For the optional square pocket, fold all edges of the pocket to the wrong side 1/4", mitering corners. Hem one edge with small running stitches. Pin pocket in place on the apron. Stitch to the apron using a small running or straight stitch, or very small whip stitches, on three sides.

Form the waistband as instructed for the drawers waistband. Slipstitch opening closed. Attach a hook and eye to fasten the apron, overlapping the band ends 1/4", or firmly stitch on tape ties at the band ends.

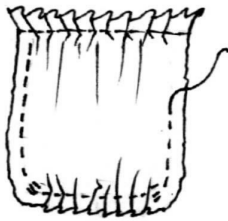


Decorative (Rounded) Apron

The decorative apron might be made in sheer cotton or silk, or even from wide cotton netted lace (omitting the pocket.)

Cut one Apron on a fold (template page 18), trimming the curved corner as noted on the template, one Gathered Pocket on a fold, one binding strip 1"x2" long, and two 6" lengths of narrow ribbon.

Fold the straight edge of the pocket to the wrong side, a scant $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Tuck the raw edge under, and secure the hem with a tiny running stitch.



Just below the upper pocket edge hem, work two close rows of gathering stitches, securing knots on the wrong side of the pocket. Draw up the gathers to match the finished pocket outline on the apron pattern piece, plus a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance around the curved edges. Knot the

gathering threads, but do not remove them.

Work a running stitch along the curved edge of the pocket, $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the cut edge. As you approach the lower curve, take two small back stitches to secure your thread.

Continue across the bottom edge of the pocket; when you reach the upward curve, draw up your running stitches to match the width of the finished pocket outline on the apron template. Secure with an additional two back stitches, and continue with your running stitch to the upper hem of the fabric.

With your fingers, fold the cut edges to the wrong side $\frac{1}{4}$ "; your running stitches will mark this line for you. For the best results, press lightly with a bit of steam to set the edges and gathers.

Lay your apron piece over the paper pattern, and lightly mark the pocket position with pencil. Pin your pocket in place, and secure with a tiny whip stitch around the curved edges of the pocket.

Hem Apron

Pressing with your fingers as you go, turn a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ " of the curved apron edge to the wrong side; stitch with a running stitch very close to the fold. Press the apron lightly.

To complete the apron hem use the Narrow Hem technique illustrated in the Summer Mantle section, page X. Work two rows of gathering along the top apron edge. Lay the waist binding right sides together with the apron, having the edges of the binding extend $\frac{1}{4}$ " beyond the apron edges. Stitch the seam, and press the allowances toward the binding; trim to reduce bulk.

Press the long free edge to the wrong side $\frac{1}{4}$ " ; tuck the raw short ends inside, and fold the binding to cover all seam allowances. Secure along the edge with a tiny running stitch.

Tuck the cut end of the ribbons into the binding end; secure with running stitches across the edge of the binding.

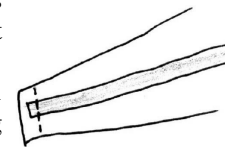
Sontag or "Bosom Friend"

A sontag, or bosom friend, is a warm wrap for cool weather wear. Because it wraps around the front of the body, and ties to close, the arms are left free for work, without sacrificing the warmth of the body. The sontag keeps the chest and back well-warmed, and can be worn alone, or under a coat or shawl for extra warmth. Make it of soft flannel for a cozy Dolly.

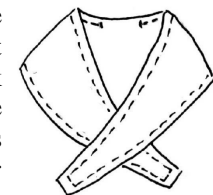
Cut one back on a fold (fashion fabric and lining), two fronts on straight grain (fashion fabric and lining), and two 6" lengths of narrow ribbon for the closure. (Templates page 17.)

Lay the sontag fronts right sides together with the back, matching the triangles marked on the pattern piece (this will prevent you stitching the fronts on backward!). Stitch the shoulder seam. Repeat with the lining.

Lay each piece of ribbon right sides together with the sontag fronts, at the X marked on the pattern piece. Align the cut end of the ribbon with the narrow edge of the sontag front. Baste across the short end to secure the ribbon.



Lay the lining right sides together with the sontag. Stitch from one shoulder seam, down the front edge, around the outer edge, back up the opposite front edge, to the opposite shoulder seam. (This leaves the back neck open for turning.) Take care that you do not catch the ribbons in any of these seams!



Press well, and clip the corners to reduce bulk.

Turn the sontag right side out, taking care when pressing to turn the corners fully out. Turn the seam allowances at the back neckline to the inside, and whipstitch to close.

You may like to work a very small running stitch or backstitch around all the edges as topstitching, to keep the lining and outer layer together neatly.

To dress your Dolly in her new sontag, wrap the ribbon ends around her waist and tie them firmly at the front or back waist, as you choose.

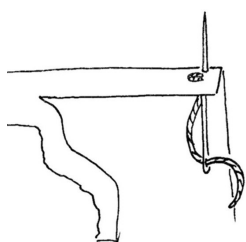
Flounced Summer Mantle

The summer mantle should be made of very light, nearly sheer materials, such as organdy, organza, dotted Swiss, or voile. It may also be made in fine silk if desired. Using imported Swiss embroidered edgings for the flounces will give a nice "whitework" mantle, when combined with a delicate batiste base. Hand stitching will give the nicest result on these delicate fabrics.

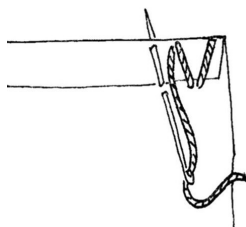
Cut one back on a fold, two fronts on the straight grain, and two flounces, each 30" long by 1½" wide. Use the Flounce Template to trim each flounce end into a gentle curve. (Templates page 17.)

Lay the fronts and back right sides together, and stitch with a very small running stitch. Press the allowances toward the back with your fingers, and use a hand overcast to finish the seam allowances as one.

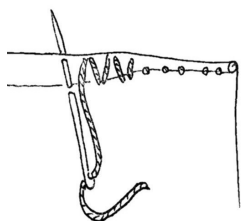
Hem the outer mantle edge and the neckline/front mantle edge using a very narrow hem, particularly if you are using a sheer fabric.



Work a narrow hem by turning the raw edge of the fabric to the wrong side ¼" and creasing or pressing. Trim the folded allowance to a scant 1/8" or less. Secure your thread with a tiny backstitch through a fold a few times.



Next, take a short running-stitch "nip" through the fabric just below the trimmed allowance. "Spike" through the fold just above it, then take another running stitch nip just below the trimmed allowance, about 1/8" to the left.

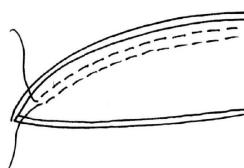


Repeat this "spike & nip" process four or five times, then gently draw up the thread; the edge will "roll" over on itself, and create a very tidy, very narrow rolled hem.

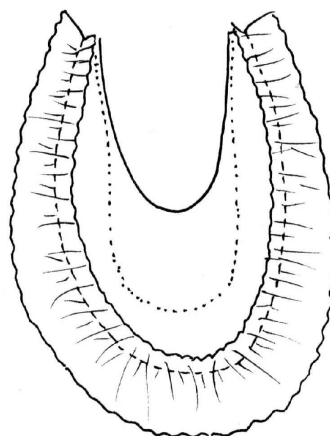
Use this method may be used to narrow-hem the flounces and mantle sections.

Turn the pointed front ends to the wrong side and secure with a small whip stitch; there is no need to further finish the raw edge here, though you may choose to tuck it under before whipping in place, if you like.

Hem the long edges of each flounce using the Narrow Hem method above.



Work a row of tiny running stitches ¼" from the upper, curved edge of each flounce.



Pin the flounce in place on the mantle, drawing up the running stitch to lightly gather the flounce.

Secure the flounce with a tiny running stitch and occasional back stitches along the gathering line.

At the mantle front points, turn the flounce ends to the wrong side and secure with a small whipstitch as desired.

Add the second flounce in the same way.

You may leave the mantle as a loose wrap, or may choose to add narrow ribbon ties down the front edges as a closure.