

# 1-2-3 Pinafore

© Elizabeth Stewart Clark 2006-2010.

This article may be copied for personal, non-profit, and educational use. For permission for other uses, please contact us at [www.elizabethstewartclark.com](http://www.elizabethstewartclark.com).

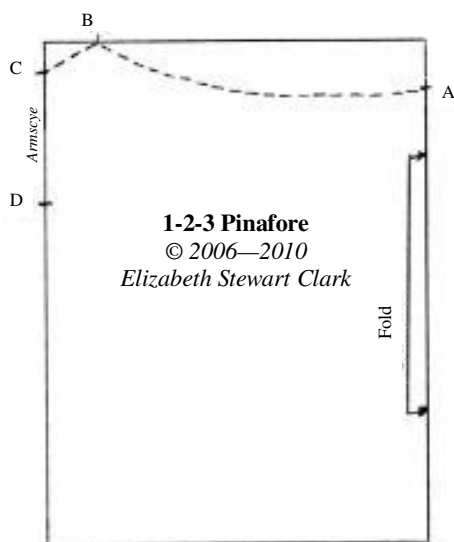


Pinafores are a staple item for children's wardrobes. This simple article is suitable for small boys, and girls of all ages, and may be made very small for infant use as well. It may be made in white cotton, or in prints and plaids. The fullness may be pleated or gathered (the instructions discuss gathering). If patch pockets are wanted, stitch them close to the center front line before finishing the neck or waist.

These pinafores are simple to cut and construct; plan to make one for each day of your longest event. Most pinafores will use two widths of fabric; for small children, two widths of 36" fabric is sufficient. For older girls, two widths of 45" fabric provides enough "swish" to fit over their skirts nicely.

You will need three measurements:

1. **Overall Length:** measure from the middle of the shoulder (along a modern T-shirt seam line) to the desired hem. Add 2" for seam and hem allowances.
2. **Armhole Depth:** measure from the middle of the shoulder, to about 1" below the armpit for children up to 5 years, and to about 2" below the armpit for older children.
3. **Neckline Circumference:** drape a piece of string around the child's upper chest, where you would like the neckline to sit. This should be wide on the shoulders, but not off the shoulder—about 1-2" inside the joint. Add 1" to this length for turnings and allowances.



## Drafting & Cutting

Cut two widths of fabric, each as long as your Length Measurement (#1) above. Fold each in half, meeting the selvages. Stack the two pieces, aligning the folds as in the diagram above

- **Point A:** 3" down along the fold, measured from upper right edge. (2" for small children)
- **Point B:** 2" in along the top edge, measured from upper left point
- **Connect A and B with a smooth curve.**
- **Point C:** 1" down along the selvages, measured from the upper left point.
- **Connect B and C with a straight line.**
- **Point D:** measure down from C an amount equal to the Armscye Depth (#2 measurement)

Cut along the lines you've drawn, A-B, B-C, as shown above. Unfold one pinafore width and cut it in half, along the former fold. This will become the back pinafore pieces.

## Stitch The Seams

All seam allowances are 1/2".

With right sides together stitch the pinafore shoulder seams (B-C line), matching the backs to the front.

With right sides together stitch the side seams from D to the hem edge. Finish with a hand-overcast as desired, and press allowances to the back.

## Work Hems

Turn the armscye edges 1/2" to the wrong side; tuck the raw edge under if you have trimmed off the selvages (or, use the selvedge as a natural finish). Secure the armscye hem with small running or straight stitches.

For a *tape closure*, turn the back pinafore edges to the wrong side 1/2"; tuck the raw edges under, and secure along the fold with running or straight stitches. For a *button closure*, turn back edges under 1", then tuck the raw edges under. )

Turn the lower hem edge to the wrong side 1"; tuck the raw edges under and secure along the fold with running or straight stitches.

## Work the Neck Band & Neckline

Cut or rip a strip of fabric along the width of your fabric, 1 1/4" wide. Trim it to the length of measure #3.

Press one long edge to the wrong side 1/2". Fold the band in half, matching the short ends, and in half again, to find the



Find more free articles and projects in the Compendium at [www.thesewingacademy.com](http://www.thesewingacademy.com)  
Email for "tech support" with your historic clothing projects or research questions, or visit us on-line at [www.thesewingacademy.org](http://www.thesewingacademy.org).

"quarter marks." Mark the center front of the pinafore with a pin.

Work two rows of running stitches along the neckline edge. Pin the un-pressed edge of the band right sides together with the pinafore, having the short ends extend ¼" beyond the back placket edges. Match the center points, and pin; match the shoulder seams with the quarter marks of the band and pin.

Draw up the gathers to fit the band, keeping them quite flat for an inch or so to either side of the shoulder seam. Do not gather the back hemmed area. Pin as needed.

Stitch with a ½" seam allowance; press all allowances toward the band. Trim the allowances to ¼".

### ***Finish Work***

Tuck the short ends of the bands to the wrong side; fold the band in half, meeting the long pressed edge of the band with the seam line, covering all seam allowances. Secure along the fold with a running or straight stitch.

To close the pinafore, run a tape through the neckline binding. Or, work buttonholes and buttons down the back of the pinafore, to about waist level. Most will close securely with a button at neck and waist, or neck and mid-back; space as needed for your child.

### ***Waistband Variation***

For children who desire more definition of the waist, this pinafore pattern can be made with a set-in waist band.

Measure your child's waist comfortably over her clothing. Cut or rip two strips of fabric, equal to this measurement plus 2" for seam allowances and overlap, and 2" wide.

Measure your child from the middle of the shoulder to waist level. Draw a line across the pattern at this point, parallel to the hem edge.

Cut the pattern and fabric layers apart along the waist line; stitch the shoulder seams and side seams, and hem the armhole, as above. Stitch the "skirt" portions right sides together along the side seams. Hem the skirts and finish the neckline as in the basic instructions above.

Hem the "bodice" portion of the pinafore back with the 1" method; the skirts may be hemmed with the narrow option.

Work gathering stitches along the waist edge of the skirts, and pinafore bodice, as in the neckline directions above.

Lay one waistband strip (which will become the outer waistband) right sides together with the pinafore waist edge, having the short ends of the band extend ¼" beyond the pinafore backs. Draw up the gathers to fit.

Lay the second waistband strip to "sandwich" the bodice, and stitch the seam with a ½" seam allowance. Press all allowances toward the band, and trim to ¼" to reduce bulk.

Pin the skirt right sides together with the outer waistband, with the waistband extending ¼" beyond the back skirt edges.

Draw up the skirt gathers to fit; stitch the seam with a ½" seam allowance, and press all allowances toward the band.

Press the short ends of the outer band to the wrong side ¼". Press the long, free edge of the inner band to the wrong side ½", and tuck the short ends under as with the outer band.

Pin the inner band into place, covering all seam allowances. Whipstitch, or secure with a running stitch, along the short band ends, and the skirt/band seam.

Work a buttonhole in the center of the band at the back opening, and add a corresponding button on the opposite side.

