

Getting Started

The costumes come in kit form, with the pattern printed directly onto the fabric. It is important to lay the fabric out on a flat surface - the floor is fine - before you start to cut anything out.

Make a note of how the pieces are labelled. Each piece has a title outside the cutting line and once they are cut out, you won't be able to refer to what it is. You could cut out this title and pin it onto the corresponding piece if you are worried.

The cutting lines for the pieces have construction notches. The front pieces have one notch and the back pieces have two notches. Another good way to distinguish between front and back is to attach a safety pin to all the back pieces (or all the front pieces) and group them together.

Make sure your scissors are suitable for fabric too, as scissors that you cut paper with will not be as sharp and could snag the cloth.

Read the instructions and if anything doesn't make sense, please call us. We want you to enjoy making your costumes and are very happy to help, if something goes wrong.

Follow the order that is given in the instructions for making up your costumes. We have had test sewers construct the costumes and this was the order that they felt was easiest and gave the best results.

All seam allowances are 1.5cm.

All hem allowances are 3cm. Hems on jackets are 2.5cm. Sleeve hems are 2.5cm.

Not all costumes come in all sizes, so if your child is smaller than the size of the costume - even though it is the right age - adjust the sewing line by taking it in by .5cm. Make sure you match the edges of the fabric to allow for the pieces to line up properly as with the original sewing line.

If your child is shorter than average, adjust the hem-line by reducing the length of the garment and cutting out the pieces inside the original cutting line. This could be done after the child has tried on the nearly finished garment, so that you can see exactly how much you need to reduce the length by.

If your child is larger than the size of the costume - even though it is the right age - adjust the cutting line by cutting out the pieces 1cm outside the original cutting line. Make sure that you match the edges of the fabric to allow the pieces to line up properly as with the original cutting line.

If your child is taller than average, adjust the hem-line by cutting out the pieces 2.5cm below the original hemline.

Always use a damp cloth - tea-towel - to iron the costumes. This will protect the fabric and help to keep the seams neat.

As with all clothing please do not allow your child to wear this costume near naked flame or fire.

Sewing Instructions

VICTORIAN WEALTHY GIRL

Firstly lay out the piece of fabric on a clean, flat surface - the floor is fine - and read through the instructions. Do this before you cut anything out, so that you understand what to do next. **The pattern pieces in this kit are marked with letters to help you piece the right ones together. All seams are 1.5cm allowance. Remember to reverse stitch at the beginning and end of every seam to stop it unravelling.**

With scissors that are sharp and suitable for fabric, carefully cut round the outline of all the pattern pieces. **You may want to pin the printed name to each piece to avoid confusion when you start to sew.**

Collar Cuffs and Up-stand collar

The scalloped edge of these pieces is the outside edge. Neaten this raw edge and then turn under a narrow hem by following the scallop line.

With right sides facing, join side front SF and front F pieces. Match the notch at the waist line and the edges at shoulder and hem line. Stitch from shoulder to hem, neaten raw edges and repeat on the other side.

With right side up, lay collar C piece underneath the front panel, so that the wrong side of the front F is facing the right side of the collar C. Match the edge of the collar C at the shoulder line and stitch together to the dot just below the waist on F. Turn the collar C to the outside, match the shoulder lines and hold in place with a pin for the time being. Repeat the process on the other side.

With right sides together join side back SB and back B, matching the notches at the waist line and the edges at shoulder and hemline. Stitch together, neaten raw edges and repeat on the other side.

With right sides together, match the shoulder line of the front and back panels. Make sure the collar is flat and neatly sandwiched between the two. Match the outside of the armhole as the front panel will be narrower than the back at the neck edge. Stitch shoulder seams together, neaten raw edges and repeat on the other side.

Neaten raw edges of the bodice BD except for the neckline. With right side up place this underneath the front panel, so that the wrong side of the front F is facing the bodice BD. Match the shoulder line so that the neckline of the bodice matches the neckline of the back. **On the right shoulder only**, stitch along the shoulder seam line to attach the collar securely, so that the back and bodice pieces are smooth at the neck edge for the up-stand collar.

Turn under a narrow hem on the short edges of the up-stand collar. With right sides together, match the edge of the collar to the shoulder seam of the left shoulder. Match the raw edges and pin the other end of the up-stand to the dot on the bodice neckline. Stretch the fabric slightly to ease the seam together smoothly and stitch through. Neaten raw edge.

With right side up, place cuff CF underneath the sleeve at the hemline, so that the wrong side of the sleeve S is facing the cuff.

Stitch through and open out cuff, so that the wrong side of the sleeve S is facing up. Fold the seam you've just created under the sleeve. Using the width of your presser foot as a guide, stitch along the seam to keep the fabric in place, then turn cuff to the outside and pin in place for the time being. Repeat on the other side.

Take the sleeve S and with right-sides facing matching the notch at the centre of the sleeve to the shoulder seam. Make sure that the notches for front (single notch) and back (double notch) face the right pieces. Pin the centre and then stretch the fabric slightly to allow the edges to ease together. The sleeve will be more full than the armhole, but this can be pinned or gently eased with your fingers for a smooth line. Stitch in place and neaten raw edges. Repeat for the other sleeve.

With right-sides facing, match the cuff line of the sleeve S and place side-front SF on top of side-back SB. Match the notches at the waist and line up hem line at the side-seam. Match the armhole seam, pin in place and stitch the underarm from hem to cuff. Neaten raw edges. Repeat on other side. It'll be starting to look like a dress now!

Match the centre front seam and stitch from hem to the dot at the centre front opening.

Join the ruffle R pieces on the short edges, stitch together and neaten raw edges. This will form a circle. Neaten one raw edge of the circle and turn under a narrow hem. On the other edge of the circle, adjust your stitch length to create a gathering line. Allow the threads to have about 10cm length before you cut them and on the wrong side, pull one of the threads to gather the fabric. **This takes a while but gives a really nice finish to the dress.**

Arrange the gathers evenly around the circle and then with right sides facing pin the ruffle R at all the seams around the hemline. You may need to make adjustments, so take the time to make sure that the ruffle fits the skirt as once you start to sew, you can't change anything, other than by taking the ruffle off and starting again!

Stitch the ruffle in place and neaten the raw edge. Turn to right side.

The ruffle needs to be partially concealed, so measure 5cm above the ruffle on each seam, fold the fabric of the skirt under at that point and pin the ruffle seam to the skirt on the skirt seam lines. The hemline is fuller than higher up the skirt, so there will be a bit of fullness to work into the stitching line. Work from the right side of the fabric and use your tape measure to make sure that the stitching line is 5cm all the way round. Stitch the ruffle to the skirt.

Now for the Velcro. There needs to be several pieces to attach the bodice to the front underneath the collar. (You can, if you wish stitch the right side of the bodice to the dress, you won't be able to see a stitching line under the collar) or simply use Velcro. Make sure you use a piece to close the left shoulder. Run this along the shoulder seam and match the bodice so that the fabric is smooth (and doesn't look like its being held in place by Velcro!) Stitch in place on both pieces.

The skirt needs Velcro to close it at centre front. This will be hidden by the collar. Match both sides of the skirt so that they are smooth and stitch the Velcro in place.

Join the centre of the collar at the lower edge. Match the pieces and stitch through. Neaten the raw edged. Fold up the bottom and hand sew in place so that the bow can be attached here. Tie a bow with the ribbon and sew in place.

Finally, the up-stand collar needs a couple of hooks and eyes to keep it closed. These will have to be hand sewn and then you are finished.

Everything looks better if it's neatly pressed, so **using a smooth tea-towel to protect the fabric** iron the seams and hemlines flat. The frill will look much nicer if it has a pleated look to it.

Well done!

If you're a confident sew-er, follow the quick-sewing guide and use your own method of construction.

Quick-Sewing Check

Edge collar, cuffs and up-stand collar, join side front to front, attach collar.

Edge bodice and attach to right shoulder only. Join side back to back and sew shoulders of front and back panels together.

Hem edges of up-stand collar and attach dress. Attach cuffs to sleeves. Put in sleeve and sew underarm seams from cuff to hem. Join centre front. Join centre front of collar.

Join ruffle pieces and gather, attach to skirt, create a pleated hemline by stitching ruffle to skirt above seam-line.

Add Velcro to shoulder seam and bodice, centre front of skirt and sides of bodice. Hooks and eyes to up-stand collar. Make bow and attach to lower edge of collar.