Sewing with Simplicity: Garment Sewing for Beginners with Joy Macdonell

Chapter 1 - Introduction
Overview
- Hi, I'm Joy Macdonell with Simplicity Patterns. I'm the education director there and I get to teach people how to use simplicity sewing patterns. I've been using them since I was a little girl and they have the best sewing instructions in the guide sheet. In this class, we're going to cover all kinds of sewing techniques for beginners. We're gonna start with the basics of your sewing machine and teach you all the ends and outs that you need to know to get started in sewing. And then we're gonna look at a Simplicity sewing pattern and we're gonna show you how to read the guide sheet, how to looking for cuttings and markings, how to lay out your pattern. I'll show you how to construct your garment with darts and seams. How to insert zippers in two different ways. We'll show you how to use your facings and how to do all of your finishing techniques. So putting in your hem and your hook and eye and finishing your garment so that you have something that you're proud to wear.

Chapter 2 - Materials
Materials
- For garment sewing basics, you're going to need a sewing machine. Every machine is a little bit different. This particular one has an extension table, which makes it a little easier to sew garments. You're going to need a sewing pattern. In this class, I'll be referencing two different patterns: one for a jiffy dress and one for a circle skirt. On the back of the pattern will be the different views that you can make and your supply list of what you need to purchase, along with the sizes and how much fabric you need for each size that you'll choose. There's a notions list where it'll tell you any extra items that you need, like zippers or hooks and eyes. And there also is a fabric suggestion list, so different types of fabrics that will make your garment nicely. So here I've laid out all the supplies I need for the Simplicity jiffy 1609 dress. I'll need a 22 inch zipper, interfacing. I've picked a linen fabric. I'll need matching thread, a hook and eye, along with pins. I have two different types of scissors: a fabric scissor and a small pair to use with the sewing machine. A ruler and an iron.

Chapter 3 - Basic Sewing Techniques
Sewing machine basics
- To get started in sewing, you want to really get to know your sewing machine. If you haven't purchased one yet, getting to know what types of features and benefits are in a sewing machine will be really really helpful, too. So we'll get started on looking at this machine that I have. This is a Simplicity Brother machine. It is a computerized machine and it does all kinds of things from straight stitches to decorative stitches. But we're gonna focus, kind of, in on what those straight stitches and zig zag and basic things that we need on a machine. The spool of thread is going to sit here and it has a bob and winder right here at the top. We're gonna learn how to threat the sewing machine, we're gonna show you how to wind a bobbin, we're gonna show you where the bobbin sits in the machine, the casting itself is down here. When you're working with a sewing machine the basic idea is that the needle is pushing the thread down and the bobbin is pushing a thread over that thread that goes down and then back up so that you're creating a stitch. So the two pieces work together, your spool of thread up here, and your bobbin down here. And we'll go ahead and get started and

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

show you how to wind a bobbin. To begin you're going to need a spool of thread and an empty bobbin. We're gonna start by putting the spool of thread onto the spindle and there is a cover that you'll want to use. This will make sure that the spool of thread doesn't jump off the spindle as it's winding or as it's sewing. So you want to keep this handy. I'm just gonna put it right down here. And my thread needs to come off my spool from the back side. So I'm simply going to lift this up, put my thread on, any machine, there's always diagrams that help remind you what you're going to do. Go around one, two, then we're gonna come around here. We want to get the thread under this disc. That's gonna help as we're winding, to keep the tension. And within your spool there's a little hole. Thread the thread through that and then the bobbin goes right on here. Then I'm gonna push this over and that engages for making the bobbin. For this particular machine I need to make sure that my foot peddle is unplugged and then my light will light up and I press it and my bobbin will start winding. So I like to begin winding my bobbin and hold my little thread until it breaks away or until it falls out of my hand. And then it will wind right up. You want to check your bobbin to see how full it's getting. There's a little stop that will tell you when it's full enough and then I press the button again to stop it. So I think that's probably full enough. Then I'm going to use my scissors and just cut my thread. And I'll trim this piece right here, as well. Now I'm going to put my bobbin into my casing. This is right down here by my pressor foot. The casing from my bobbin has a cover and I'm simply going to undo the latch and take that off. And then my bobbin sits right into the casing. There is a little diagram here that reminds me how I need to have my thread coming off my bobbin. And that is important. So I want to make sure that my thread is going the way that it's showing on my diagram. And I simply drop the bobbin right into the casing. And then put the thread right around to wind it and then this has a little cutter. So I just give it a pull and my bobbin is now threaded so I want to put my cover back on and I'm ready to thread my machine. Coming back up to the top of the machine, we've just cut the thread from the bobbin. So I'm going to pull this back out so that I'm starting fresh and I'm going to follow the sold line, this time, to thread the machine. So I'm coming down, follow to our number two, and around the top of the machine, our number three, we want to come down, around, up to number four, back down, and then we're gonna come to this little catch and come right across here, right to number seven and then go ahead and cut my thread. Then we're gonna press the lever and that will thread the needle. I'm gonna pull my thread through and put it through my presser foot and now I'm ready to sew. Once you have your machine threaded and your bobbin threaded, you want to do a little test to make sure that everything's working correctly. I have my foot pedal plugged into the machine, I'm gonna slide in my fabric, lower my presser foot. Now I'm just gonna do a couple stitches to make sure everything is threaded correctly. And I'll raise the needle, lift the presser foot, pull out my fabric, I have a little cutter on the side so I can cut my threads. I just want to check to make sure that my stitches look even from the front and from the back. And this looks good to me. Now that we know our machine is threaded correctly and sewing correctly, we can start working with some of the options that are on the machine. Every machine is a little bit different some I'm gonna show you some things that this machine does, most machines will do all of these things. One of the things that I like to use is a back tacking stitch. So stitching forward is very important, but being able to go back and make sure that your stitches stay in place is also important. This particular machine has a little button that I can press that will make it stitch backwards just a couple of stitches so that that will hold my stitches in place. And then I would move forward just a little bit to start and seam that I'm sewing on. I also, my machine will stop with the needle in the down position, which is fantastic. So if I want to turn a corner or I want to adjust my fabric, I just lift my presser foot and turn my fabric, and then I can sew

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

in whatever direction I want to sew. So if I want to go in a right angle to whatever I was doing, I can move that around and then put my presser foot back down and keep right on going. When I'm finished, it'll stop in that down position. I want to raise the needle and then I want to take my fabric out of the machine. And I have a couple different options. I can use the cutter on the side, my machine also has a little button for automatically cutting the threads if I want to do that, which is a nice feature to have. I can also adjust the speed control. When you sew you're using a foot pedal, just like driving. If you tend to be a heavy foot you might want to slow your machine down, or if you know that you want to go fast you can speed your machine up a little bit. Just depending on how you want to operate your machine. So let me show you a couple things that happen if I go slow and I push all the way down on my foot pedal, my machine will still go slow for me. So if you're a new sewer and you don't want to lose control, you can kind of go slower. And then I can also speed up the machine as I go along if I want to go faster. So just a nice feature to have, something nice to be able to do, and I'll go ahead and cut those threads, lift up my presser foot, and my fabric comes right out of the machine. Some of the other things that I can do, I can adjust my stitch length and I can adjust the tension that I'm using. So let me show you, first, the stitch length controls are right here. So if I want to have a stitch that's a little bit longer than normal, let's say I want to do some basting or if I'm using a thicker fabric I might want to go a little longer, I just increase, gonna lift up my presser foot, I would just increase that stitch length and that's as large as I can go here, and then go ahead and make my machine go and my stitch length will be a little bit large. I can not only play around with my length, but I can also play around a little bit with the width of the stitch that I'm using, and that's important in a zig zag stitch. So let me take my length back down. And I know I'm at my general settings when all my gray boxes show up this way and now I'm going to switch to a zig zag stitch, so I'm pressing this button and my computerized piece at 07 will be a zig zag. And if I would like to, I can leave this as it is. And let me show you what that looks like. When this comes out, it's a tight zig zag. So if i want that to be a little bit wider, I lift up the needle, now I press my width and I make it a little bit, this is gonna make it narrower so I want to go the other way, I want to make it wider. And let's go, let's go as big as it'll go, right there. So now I have a really big wide zig zag stitch. So there are tons of things that you can do with a zig zag stitch, from just binding off edges to using it as a finishing stitch. You'll find that you'll use this a lot in all of your sewing so it's a good stitch to know and the width is a good thing to adjust, along with the length. You can also adjust the tension on your machine. That's basically, that means that's how tightly the thread on the top is pulled and how tightly the thread in the bobbing casing is pulled. It's something that I wouldn't recommend adjusting too much as a beginner, but if you feel like something needs to be tightened, you can tighten or loosen your tension, as well. Each sewing machine will come with a variety of different presser feed. You'll find yourself changing these out frequently depending on what tasks you're trying to do with your machine. It's not hard to switch them out, there's generally a little button that will release your foot, this one falls right off when I push the button back here. So I slide him out and then my next foot, this is my zipper foot, and this is one that I use quite frequently. I simply lower the presser foot and it will reach right over the bar and hook right into place and then that new foot is on the machine. When you switch out your presser feet you might need to move your needle where it's located. And there are buttons that I can push that will adjust where that needle is. I want to make sure that I lower the needle with the knob on the side just to make sure that the needle's not gonna hit the presser foot because I don't want to break my needle on that presser foot. So I give that a test and then I'm ready to go. Now that we've started to talk about the presser foot, it's important to talk about the feed dogs, as well. So I'm gonna drop this

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

presser foot off and take a look right here. These little tracks are the feed dogs and that's what helps to work with the presser foot to create pressure that moves the fabric through the machine. So let me put the foot back on, the universal foot back on. And between, the two are working together, the feed dogs and the presser foot are working together to move the fabric through the machine. So when you're sewing you don't have to push fabric through the presser foot and the feed dogs. All you have to do, I can even do it with no hands at all, just let the machine move the fabric through on it's own. So just keep that in mind when you're sewing that you don't have to push your fabric, it will grab it and pull it and move it for you. Another important aspect of your sewing machine is the throat plate. The throat plate of your machine will have measurements on it that will help you set your seam allowances. So when you're putting your fabric into your machine, if your seam allowance is a five eighths inch seam allowance you would look for your five eighths inch mark, slide your fabric up against that mark, lower your presser foot, and that's the distance of the needle from the edge of your fabric. If you adjust your needle position, though, you will need to just double check that these measurements are appropriate for where your needle is set. When you're sewing, it's important to have a nice sharp needle in your machine. So there will be times where you need to change out your needles. There's also adjustments in the needle sizes, so depending on what type of fabric you're sewing with or what type of thickness your fabric is, you might want to adjust your needle size. The smaller the needle size, the lighter the fabric you would use. The bigger your needle size, the thicker the fabric you would use. The needles that you're working with are generally marked with the size on the case. They also have a color coding that will help you determine hat size needle you have if your needle is in your machine or outside of the case. So look for the color coding and look for the sizing. And generally within the handbook of your machine you'll find a little chart that will give you guidance on what size needle you would like to use depending on what type of fabric you're sewing with. Before I change out my needle I want to turn my machine off. My machine comes with a screw driver and we'll use that screw driver to loosen the screw that holds the needle in place. Once you've loosened that screw, you can pull the needle right out. And we're going to put in our new needle. And I want to point out that machine needles have a flat side. That flat side goes to the back when you're putting the needle into your machine. It's always a helpful little tip to make sure that you have it in correctly. You want to slide it up into the slot and then tighten the screw with your screwdriver. And you've changed out your needle. When you get your sewing machine, make sure you keep your manual handy. Look for the different places that you'll reference frequently and I even use post-it notes to remind myself of certain things that I do all the time. Like my needle setting positions, or the size of the needles that I need to use. I do little dog ears in the manual so it's easy and quick reference for me whenever I need to know more information. Now that you know how to work your sewing machine I'm going to show you the ins and outs of how to work with a sewing pattern.

Reading a pattern and pattern pieces

- Now that you know how to use your sewing machine, you're gonna want to choose something to sew. And I've picked a really cute garment, and I'm using a Simplicity pattern. And within the pattern you're gonna find the tissue for the pattern piece itself and the guide sheet. And don't be afraid of the tissue. You're not gonna wreck it, you're not gonna rip it, you're not gonna break it, it'll be fine. You might want to use a big tabletop surface or use your floor to lay this out so that you can see all your pattern pieces. If you look at the front of your pattern, you'll see that you have different views that you can choose from. Each one has a letter under it. There are three different

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

views. View C is shown two different ways, and this is the view I'm gonna choose to make. View A has a collar, view B has a little bow, but either way, you just want to choose which one you want. And on the back of your pattern, you're gonna see the back side, the line art for that view, along with the information that you need for your sizing and your fabric and any extra notions that you need for your piece. Then we're gonna go to the guide sheet because you're gonna see that same information again. In this section, you see the line art. You have the front view and the back view, and again, you have your view letters that you can tell which is which. We're choosing that view C. In this next panel, you have the different pieces that are within your pattern. Each piece is marked by a number and then labeled underneath. So you can see what is in all of your tissue. In the General Directions section you're going to see all the different symbols that will be on your pattern piece. So these are important things to look for within the tissue. The grain line is one of your most important markings because it tells you which direction to put the piece on your fabric. You'll note where there are places where you might have to put the fabric on the fold, or the pattern piece on the fold of the fabric. Sometimes you'll have a center front or a place where you need to know that this is the center of the pattern, and that's marked by these little dash lines. You'll find notches on your patterns where, on the pattern tissue, you'll see little notches that indicate places where pattern pieces are going to mark up. So when you cut your piece, you want to cut out those notches. You're also gonna find little dots. These are important marks that you need on your pattern. So we're gonna transfer dots onto our fabric so that we know how to match up different points within our garment. We're gonna have cutting line. Your cutting line is really important because this is where you actually cut on your pattern piece. And then any marks where you can shorten or lengthen the pattern are gonna be indicated by this double line right here. And then there's an explanation within your guide sheet, how to lengthen and how to shorten a pattern piece. Now that you've familiarized yourself with your guide sheet and your general directions, we need to go back and look at the pattern and determine which actual pieces we need to make our garment. So I've picked view C, and I'm gonna look down into my cutting layouts, and my pattern pieces are marked right here. So I'm gonna need pattern pieces number one, two, four, and five. And depending on what size of my fabric I've purchased, I'm gonna have different layouts. So fabric can come in two different widths. There's a 45-inch, 44- to 45-inch, and there's 50- to 60-inch. My particular fabric is a 60-inch, so I know I'm gonna use this layout right here. Now, I'm gonna go back up and reference what do those pattern pieces look like? I need pattern pieces number one, number two, number four, and number five. Now that I know which pattern pieces I'm using, I'm gonna go to the actual tissue, and it will have a lot of creases in it from being folded up in the envelope. And I like to use a dry iron, no steam, low setting, and just iron that pattern so that I can get a nice, straight piece. You want to do this because if your pattern has any creases, it can affect the sizing when you actually go to cut your pattern, so you do want to take just a few minutes to iron it out. And when you're all done, and there are pattern pieces that you don't need, you can fold them back up and then, with the iron, just iron them right down and put them back into the envelope so you don't have to worry about all those random tissues all over the place. Now, a Simplicity pattern has multiple sizes within the pattern piece itself. So when you look at the pattern, you might get a little confused by all the pieces that are in here. As you start to look at the pattern, you'll notice that it's multiple sizes. So this particular piece has sizes number 6, 10, and 14 in it, and your cutting lines are marked with those sizes. Now, I know I want to make size 10, so I know this is the piece that I need for size 10. And as I move down the piece, I can see that there are some places where there are a lot of multiple markings that can get a little bit confusing. I've slid a piece of scrap paper underneath. I'm gonna

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

use a marker to just mark the size that I want to actually cut. So here we have size number 10, and I'm gonna follow that line, and it's pretty clear right here, but about here it can get a little bit confusing, so I'm just gonna mark right along so that when I go to cut this, I know exactly what I'm following. Remember, your cutting line is that solid line, and you also see some dotted lines on here. This is going to be our stitching line when we're creating our darts that are going to come down the side of the dress. So, remember your cutting line is your solid line, it's what you've marked, and this is what we're gonna cut when we cut out our fabric. Now that you know which pieces you're using in your pattern, and you've got your cutting lines marked, the next thing we're gonna do is cut around the pieces so that we have those for putting onto the fabric. Now, I'm gonna use my fabric scissors on my tissue. I'm okay with that. Some people like to use paper scissors when they're cutting paper only, and fabric when they're cutting fabric only, but I do use my fabric scissors on my tissue, and I'm comfortable that way. So do what you feel comfortable with. And I don't cut around all the particulars of the piece, I just cut out the pieces that I need for the pattern. And I will cut out each of the different pieces that I need for the garment.

Laying out, cutting and marking fabric
- Once you've cut out all of your pieces, lay them out on your fabric. I've already got mine laid out and pinned down. There are different ways that you can put your pieces on to your fabric. You can use weights. I like to pin them in place. And you wanna fold your fabric in half with the right side facing out with your selvedge edge on one side and your fold on the other side, matching up your cutting lines. And make sure that you pre-wash your fabric. It's important to pre-wash your fabric so that any sizing or any shrinkage is done before you're actually sewing your garment. So, now that I've got all my pieces in place, I want point out a couple of things with the guide sheet that are important to look at as you're laying out your piece. If you remember, I have a 60 inch piece of fabric and I'm using this view for my layout. And you'll notice that some of the pieces are in a dark gray. If I look up here, the dark gray will tell me that my pattern piece needs to be printed side down. If it's a clear, my printed side is up. So let's look at my fabric. And I've got my print side up here. So I have my facing piece here. And, I'm just going to flip it over so I can show you a couple of things. This is my front facing. It has the center fold markings so I know that this edge needs to go onto the fold of the fabric. It tells me to cut one out of the fabric, and it tells me to cut one out of the interfacing. And I'm gonna do that with both of my facing pieces with the interfacing. So, let me put this back into place, right on the fold. And I simply pin that. And when I pin my pattern piece, I just pin a couple of places. And you're going to use this same exact piece when you go to cut your interfacing because you get one piece in your pattern. So, you'll use it twice. We'll pin that in place and then we'll cut out our pieces. When you've got your fabric prepped and you're folding it in half, you wanna make sure that your right sides are facing to the inside. If you're using a single thickness of fabric, your right sides should be facing up. So as you're prepping your fabric and laying out your pieces, and folding your fabric in half, make sure that your right sides are on the inside of your fold. We're gonna cut out our pattern pieces. And, you can start with any piece that you'd like. You wanna have a nice sharp pair of scissors. And you're just cutting right along that cutting line. As I'm cutting, I like to leave the pattern to my left, and the extra piece of the pattern to my right. So, I'm just gonna cut this so that it's a little easier for me to reach. If you're working on a table, you can move around the table and cut from different angles. But make sure that it's comfortable for you. Once you have your piece all cut, you wanna go back to where you have your notches. And, simply cut those out. You can do a full notch or you can just make a single cut so that you have that. And

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

this is within your seam lines, so you won't see this in the end. And there are times where you have double notches. So here's where I have two notches together. I can either cut them each individually, or I can just cut completely across the whole piece. I just need to do the same thing on each spot where I have those marks. The notches are used for matching up your pieces as you're sewing along. So, it's important to mark all of the notches on your pattern pieces. So, go ahead and cut everything out, and mark all of your notches.

Darts and stay-stitching
- Now that we've got all of our pieces cut out, we're ready to start marking for our darts. We mentioned the dots in the beginning of our review of the pattern, but now we're ready to actually find them on the pattern piece and mark them on our fabric. So I've got most of the darts already marked and I wanna point out to you that we're looking for these dots that are right here on all of our darts. There are four different darts on this particular dress. There are two on the back and two on the front. And we need to just mark where we have our sizing and our dots here. So I do this with a needle and thread and I've already got some done. My dot right here, I wanna look for my size ten, because this is the size that I'm making. And I've already got a needle threaded with some red thread. You can use any color, this is sort of a waist color. You just want it to be something that will show up nicely. And I pull it through, and then on the other side, I'm just coming right back up. So it's a tiny little stitch, and I'll flip this over so that you can see what that looks like. This is a tiny little stitch and it's poked through all the layers of the fabric. Then I'll just clip this and you wanna leave yourself, I don't know, about three or four or five inches worth of thread so that when you go to mark, the threads actually pull through each side. So I'm gonna look for my size ten, which is right here. And I'm going to mark my other dot here. Just going down and coming right back up on the other side and then I'll give that a clip. So you would mark for all the dots on your darts on your pattern and then we'll remove the pattern from the fabric. So you're simply gonna take this apart and then we'll carefully separate the layers of fabric keeping those marks in place. Now as I do this I can just take this tissue right off and because we went through both layers, the tissue does not stick to the threads. And now we have all of our markings. And now we wanna make sure that they stay on each side. So what I'm gonna do is carefully separate this, leaving a little bit over here and a little bit down here and then just clip. And do that for all of my darts, just carefully marking them. There we go! Go ahead and mark for all of your pieces, your fronts and your backs, and separate your fabrics. And then we'll start pinning so that we can make our darts. So we're gonna start with our side dart, and this has a three-eighths inch seam allowance. And our first, the point of the dart is right at the top here where we made our mark from the dot. And we're matching up the fabric along that cut edge. I'm just gonna flip it there. And lay these down and then give a pin. Now I'm also looking to match up my marks down here that I marked. And you wanna pin horizontal, this way, so that as you're sewing, you're taking your pins out as you go along. And we'll use the presser foot for our three-eighths inch seam allowance on this particular dart. And I like to put a last pin right up here at that point, and then we'll go ahead and mark for this dart. Doing this similar process. Put in the pin right at the top of the dart, and then line up these marks. Now an easy way to do that, 'cause this one's a little bit different than that bottom one was. I put a pin through those stitches and come up on the other side. And then let that kind of naturally fall. And then go ahead and pin that. Now we'll use our marks for our stitching. On this one, we're gonna go from the point. We're connecting these edges, but we wanna sew from the outside edge to the inside and we're gonna sew right off of this point right here. We want the stitches to go right off. On this bottom dart, we're gonna sew

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

from the bottom all the way right up to our tip up here. And we're gonna sew right off a couple of stitches. And that will make our dart lay nice and flat when we wear the dress. When you're reading your general directions and your steps, there will be indication lines or little arrows that show you which direction to sew as you're working with your darts. So make sure that you're looking back at your directions and look for those arrows to indicate which way to go as you're sewing. This is the dart that we're sewing right here. And I'm gonna just use a ruler to show you visually where you are connecting your dots. So going from this dot up to this dot is what you're doing and you're really just gonna sew right off that fold, give it a few extra little stitches, and that will prevent any bubbles at the end of your dart. So we're gonna put this right into the machine. Take out the pin, 'cause you don't wanna sew over your pins. And then we can sew right over the markings. We're just visually going to go right towards that other mark that we have right there. And we wanna sew right off that edge and give ourselves a few extra stitches. Lift the needle. So our side seam, we're gonna come right in and use the edge of our presser foot. This is a half of an inch, I've set my needle so that the edge of my presser foot is a half an inch away from the needle. And you wanna check your pattern, because your pattern will tell you where your stitches should be. There's little dotted marks that show you that. And we're sewing from the bottom right up over that fold. Again, taking out pins so we don't sew over pins, and stitching right up that edge using the raw edge of the fabric as our guide. (machine whirs) And as you get closer, you can readjust your fabric if you need to. Pull it over, this is on a little bit of a bias, so your fabric will be a little stretchy so you wanna let your sewing machine pull your fabric naturally in. And we're gonna come from here right up to this edge so we've used that edge as our mark, but now we're aiming for the top of our dart. So we're gonna just guide right up there. And sew right off that edge. And give ourselves a few extra little stitches, pull up the needle, and there we have our two darts sewn right in. And at the tip here, we didn't do any back stitching so we wanna just tie the ends into a knot, and that will hold our stitching in place. And we'll do that on each side and then we can clip off those threads and remove all of our red stitches. I'll just tie this off. Now you're gonna do this for all of the darts on the dress. You're gonna have the two on the front and you're gonna have the two on the back. And each time that you come to an edge like that you wanna give that knot. So we'll just pull out our markings, our red stitches. And that just becomes the waist. Continue removing all of your marking stitches and then go ahead and press. You wanna press your darts so that the threads sort of work right into the fabrics. Then you get that nice contouring. And we're gonna follow the directions to press the dart down and towards the center. So we'll just come right in here, and then this one we're gonna press towards the center. And this forms the bust of your garment. You wanna take your time and work with your fabric and work those little threads in there. And this should be a three dimensional effect that you have right in this area. And that will start to create the bust for your garment. Let me show you what this looks like on the actual dress. So our darts are right here and we can see that we just did the side dart. And this is along the bias, so we get a nice stretch within this part of the dress. And then our side dart over here for the bust, and then there are two darts in the back of the dress that we can see right here that go right down the back. And on these, when they're sewn, you start in the center and sew towards the bottom and sew towards the top right off the folds, the same way that we did before. And we have one more dart up here. Same way, we sew right from the top down to that fold right off the edge. And that gives you a nice cross along the back, a contour along the waist, and a beautiful bust right in here. Remember to check your guide sheet for the directions that you sew with each one of the darts. Each of the darts is a little bit different and the instructions are right there in that guide sheet. So our neck edge has a little bit of stretch to it, it's right there on that

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

bias. We're going to do a stay stitch a half of an inch away from the raw edge so that it doesn't stretch as much and the neck edge won't stretch out or pull. The stay stitching will remain in the garment all the way through. It'll just stay right in that seam allowance. Using my presser foot as a guide, I have my needle a half of an inch away from the edge. I'm simply going to stitch right along this edge, and you don't need to back stitch on this. Your end seams will go right into that seam allowance in the end. So you can see this stitching right here along this edge, and that will hold your curve from stretching too much and give you a nice neck edge. Now you'll do this on all four of your front and back panels. The two front panels and the two back panels along that neck edge. Just do your stay stitching to hold that stretch in place.

Interfacing, facings and garment assembly
- Assembling the garment is our next step and we've got the panels that we created, the two fronts and the two backs. We've got our fronts with our two bust darts and the back with the dart across the neckline and the dart down the back. And then the next step is to sew our two front pieces together. I've already sewn the back to the front at the shoulder seam. So I wanna show you how to sew these two parts together. Now I'm gonna pin these two pieces together. Just gonna flip this one over the other and you'll see that they match up really nicely together. And just from the front all the way down and you want the pins to be at a right angle to the edge that you're sewing. And to put a pin in I simply just put the pin in the front through both thicknesses and then bring it right back out. And I like the pins that have a little top to them so that I can definitely see them as I'm sewing because you don't wanna sew over those pins. So we'll just line up this edge and you want to pay attention to as you come to that bottom piece. You want that to line up. So I sort of skip down to the bottom, make sure everything is lining up nicely, and then pin. So we'll sew this at a 5/8 inch seam allowance. You wanna look on the throat plate of your machine for your 5/8 inch mark and make sure that you're needle is in the proper position. So I'll slide this right up. And I also have a little mark down here that shows me that 5/8. So I wanna go ahead and line that up and then we'll begin sewing and I'm gonna do just a little back tacking here, just to hold that seam in place and then we'll sew straight down. (mechanical whirring of machine) As you're sewing it's important to let the machine pull the fabric and you're just guiding it a little bit. You don't have to pull it through. There are teeth on the machine that will pull the fabric right down. So when you get to the bottom of the seam you wanna do the same thing, a little back tacking right there. And then finish that right out. Now that you have your two front panels together you wanna press your seam open. So simply by pressing that open you make that seam look really smooth. And as you get to the bust part you wanna just pull that open and let your ease fall to each side. So you have this nice finished seam. Now that we have all the panels done, the fronts and the backs, the next thing we wanna do is work on the facing that goes on the inside of the collar and the arm sleeves. So the first thing we need to do is apply interfacing as a stabilizer to our facing pieces. And I have the front piece cut out here to show you how to apply this. And I'm just gonna take these apart. So we'll have our two pieces, our interfacing and our facing out of the fabric and I'm gonna open this up. And we'll also open up our interfacing. Now you wanna follow your manufacturer's instructions for how to apply your interfacing to your fabric. With mine, this is an iron on so it's a fusible interfacing and basically what interfacing does is it stabilizes and makes your piece of fabric a little bit firmer so it doesn't flop around on the inside of your piece, your garment. And you want that because you want to have some structure to your piece. So I'm just going to place this one. It doesn't have to be exactly right because our seam allowance is going to come into here and then we're also gonna turn up these

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

edges. So if your two pieces don't match perfectly that's okay. And I'm going to use a press cloth and I have my iron set to a very high setting with steam and I'm going to press. Which means that I'm not ironing and moving my piece I'm just pressing and holding the iron in place. If I were to iron it then I might move the interfacing off of the actual piece of fabric. And once I have that pressed into place you can see that they're now connected together, they're glued together, and that gives this a little bit more body and stability. And we're going to finish this edge by creating, just folding over a quarter of an inch along the edge that's not gonna be sewn to our neckline or in our arm seam. So this is the piece that's just going to be finished off and I'm just gonna use a little ruler that I have and come back with my iron and go about a quarter of an inch. So you'll just go right along your edge, folding this up. And you can use the heat on your surface to kind of press this in a little bit. The nice thing about working on the curves and the bias of the fabric is that the fabric will move right along and take on the form of the curve for you. So once you have this quarter of an inch ironed in we're gonna go right to the machine to sew our seam right down. I'm going to move the needle so that it's a quarter of an inch away from the edge of my pressor foot. So now we'll just sew this right along this edge to finish off the facing. (mechanical whirring of machine) And I'm using the edge of the pressor foot as my guide. To go around the curves you just hold the fabric and the machine will pull it right around. Continue working your facing pieces so that all of your raw edges are finished and then you'll sew at the shoulder seam your front to your back piece. And now we'll come over to our dress that's already got the front panel sewn together and the back panel sewn on and we'll apply that facing. So our right side is facing up. So we'll line up the facing with the neck edge, matching our shoulder seams. Pin this into place and the goal is to get this around our neck edge and around our arm holes. Now, you do have notches right here on your back and you want to pay attention to that because we're gonna sew to that notch and then we're gonna leave this part not sewn so that we can put in our zipper. So this is where we have the two notches. And that's important because then you know that your back facing is on your back and your front is on your front. So those are important notches to pay attention to. Pin your facing to your other arm opening and then we'll go to the machine to sew the facing together with the garment. A good tip so that you can see your 5/8 inch line is to add a little bit of painter's tape right there along that mark and that'll help you stitch along there and see it a little bit easier. Now, I've also got my needle adjusted so that I'm, this is exactly 5/8 inch away from that edge. And I'm gonna go ahead and start stitching following along that painter's tape and when I have the curves I'm just gonna allow my fabric to move along those curves. (mechanical whirring of machine) And we're gonna do this for both of the arms, the sleeves, and we're going to do this on the neck. You wanna stitch all of these down. Now remember when you're sewing up that neck edge and we wanna look for that notch where we know we don't wanna sew past that. So we're gonna start where that pin is. I'm just gonna put that into the machine and here I'm gonna do a little back tack so that my stitches don't come out on me. Stitch back a little bit. You wanna adjust your garment as you're coming through so that all those curves stay together. And if you're coming to a curve like this you can lift up your pressor foot just a little bit as you come through there, adjust your fabrics, and that will help you come right around that curve very nicely. And then we're gonna stop at that notch. There it is right about there so I'm gonna come to it and then do a little back tack. Go ahead and sew your facing to your other arm opening and then we're gonna come in and clip our curves and turn out our facing. And you wanna do this in order to make the fabric move nicely not so that it stretches. See how that opens up and will move with the curve. If we don't do that the fabric won't move with that curve as nicely. So you wanna clip along those curves and then we're gonna reduce a little bit of the bulk in the seam by

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

clipping away some of this layer. And we wanna do this for the neck and the other arm opening. So now that we have the layers and the clips we're gonna reach through the front side to the back piece back here and pull that through. And what that's gonna do is create that nice finished edge. So it can be a little bit confusing because you're reaching through the front and pulling that back piece all the way through that front facing. But just give it a pull and let everything pull through. It'll get a little thick but just give it a pull all the way and then let me lay this out so that you can see. Let's lay out the front side. You can see what that does is it finishes off those edges right around the neck. Now we're gonna press down the facing so that we have that nice finished edge and get that ready for a little understitching so that we hold the facing in place so that it doesn't roll out as you're wearing your garment. We'll press this, use a little bit of steam. Roll those seams as best you can. And you can manipulate the fabric to how you want it to go. A little push right there. And here this is where we had that notch. So we're just going to press in that 5/8 inch mark. This is such a nice, easy way to give a professional look to your edges with this facing. I love being able to pull it right from the front through the back and we have a nice finished facing. So now we wanna just go to the machine and tack down that facing so it doesn't roll out on us when we're wearing it. You want to pull your facing out and have your seam come onto the facing because we're going to make a stitch along the facing part not on the actual dress, along the facing. And this is what's gonna hold that facing in place and I'm using the edge of the pressor foot along that seam. And you're just gonna do this until you can't go any further. You don't have to get all of it. We just wanna get enough of it that it's not coming loose. So I'm just gonna move that facing a bit like that and then come right in there and tack that down. And this is one of those steps that as a beginner I always wanted to skip but once I did it I was happy and my garment turned out so much better. So you don't wanna skip it. You're gonna come as far as you can and then do just a little back tack. Once you've stitched this down here's what it looks like. It's a nice little stitch right there along that facing. So you wanna tack down all of those facings in any of the places where you can put your pressor foot in those curves. Once you have your facings all tacked down the next thing you're gonna do is sew together your side seams. You wanna open up that facing and then sew all the way down the side with a 5/8 inch seam allowance and then we're gonna show you how to put in the zipper.

How to add a nylon zipper

- There are a couple different types of zippers that you can add to your garments, There's a nylon zipper and an invisible zipper, and I'm gonna show you how to add a nylon zipper to a garment. The first thing you wanna do is sew up to the notch that you have marked on your piece. I've added my painter's tape here so I can find my 5/8 inch mark easily and I have my needle set so that I 5/8 of an inch away from the tape, and I'm going to sew my seam up to my notches and my pattern indicates how far to sew this. So we'll do a little back ... a little backstitch right there, and then sew right up the edge. Now you could pin this if you wanted to. Because it's such a nice straight seam, I haven't pinned mine. (machine whirring) When you get to the notches, you want to do a couple of back ... a little backstitching, so that you've tacked the seam in place. (machine whirring) So we'll get that to stay. So now I'm gonna switch my machine to a basting stitch. And I know I have a basting stitch because I have these nice big long stitch marks. I'm gonna baste from the notch to the top of my piece. And this is just a way to hold these pieces together so that I can press out my seam and get my seam ready to insert the zipper. (machine whirring) These stiches will come out once I have my zipper installed. So we're gonna press the seam open and you wanna go right all the way up. Right past your basting and everything. And this is ... the better you press this I think the better the zipper

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

will go in in the end, so I like to give it a good press. Take my time here. Come right up there to the top. Okay, so now that we have this in place, this is a 22 inch zipper and I know that I want my tab facing the outside, so I'm just gonna place my zipper about 3/8 of an inch away from the edge and I'm gonna go ahead and just line it up over that seam and do a little bit of pinning and a little bit of additional basting just to hold it in place. And as I'm going along, I'm just lining up the zipper teeth to that seam. I like to just pin on either side, that way it'll stay in place. So using a needle and thread I am going to just baste this in place. Now it's different from the basting stitches that I did before because this is actually basting the zipper in place. And I like to use a bright-colored thread, that way I can see it as I'm sewing. But this will come out as well. So I'm gonna baste up one side and then down the other side of the zipper and then I'll flip over the piece and take out the machine basting stitches that we put in that holds the seam together. So I'm gonna flip this over. And here we have everything in nice place and we're just gonna look for those basting stitches and using a seam ripper, we're just gonna come in and take these out. And the reason you wanna take these back out is because wanna be able to move the tab of the zipper as you're sewing your zipper in place. And if you need to, after you do this, you could press it a little bit more, if you're concerned about it staying in place, but it should be pretty good. So there we go. Now, as we're stitching and sewing, this piece can move easily so that we can sew around it. If you have any puckers like this one right here, I could actually go ahead and pin this in if I was a little worried about it. That way I know for sure it's gonna stay in place. So just take a quick review and see if you need to tuck anything back down where you like it and then we'll go to the machine and stitch in that zipper. To put in the zipper, I've put in the zipper foot and I wanna make sure that my needle is coming down right along the edge of that foot right there. So we'll go ahead and get started. And I'm gonna do just a couple of back-tacks to hold, to hold this in place. And I've also got my zipper pull and I'm gonna move that down just a little bit so it gets out of the way of the zipper foot going along. And I'm following right along the edge of that zipper and I can lift up my zipper foot and push the zipper back up. And now it's out of the way. And we're just gonna go right down the sides. And without sewing the side seams, it's a lot easier to install my zipper. (machine whirring) If your fabric gets a little bit of a pucker in it you can lift up that presser foot and give it an adjustment. Fight it back down and keep goin'. So as I come along to the bottom down here, I'm gonna prepare to come across the bottom of my zipper and I can feel the bottom coming up. So as I get there, I'm gonna put the needle into the down position, double-check to make sure that I'm in the right spot and then I'm gonna lift up the presser foot and turn my piece and then come right across. And I wanna keep just taking a stitch at a time until I've got it exactly where I want it to go. And that looks nice and even and so now I'm just gonna come right back up the top part of the zipper. (machine whirring) Alright, and as I get close to the top, I wanna pay attention to that zipper tab again. And watch for that pull. I'm gonna come as close to it as I possibly can. And then I'm getting close enough so I'm gonna lift up that presser foot, slide the pull back down, out of my way, and then I'm just gonna sew up the rest of the zipper. (machine whirring) And then do a little bit of back-tacking to hold it in place. So now that I have the zipper in place, I'm just going to trim my threads and remove my basting stitches. I'm gonna have all these extra threads that are just gonna be kinda hangin' out, so we wanna get rid of those. And then we also want to get rid of the red basting stitches, so we can just pull those right out and that will clean up that zipper. And you'll have some of those extra basting stitches too from when we did our seam, so you wanna get those as well. Now that we've finished putting our zipper in, we need to finish up the top of the zipper. Our facing is sort of hanging a little bit loose. I'm gonna stitch this into place and give it a nice finished edge so that we

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

can hand finish the top of the zipper and add our hook and eye. When we attach the facing to the neck edge, we stopped our stitching at this notch right here and that's because we wanted to leave room for adding the zipper. So now that the edge of the dress has the zipper, we have a little leftover of the facing. We wanna take that and tuck that over the zipper edge because that's going to help us finish that edge, and we need to stitch the rest of this piece right here. So I'm gonna slide that into the machine. And I wanna kinda start where the other stitches were before and I'll do a back-tack here. A few little stitches in there. And this will give us that nice finished edge right around that zipper and tack down the facing. A few backstitches. Our backstitches are important 'cause it holds all of our stitching in place. And I'm doing the other side in the exact same way. So I have my facing folded over the zipper and I'm ready to add my stitches. And I wanna do my backstitching just a little bit and then catch right back up to where that notch is. (machine whirring) Backstitch just a little bit. And now that you've got that done for both sides, I'm gonna trim out a couple of my little threads here. You always wanna get your loose threads out of the way. And then you can see how this piece will fold down and in on each side. That's how you add a nylon zipper to your garment. It's a great zipper to add when you have a perfect match with your garment and your zipper. Sometimes though, when you're shopping, you can't find the perfect match of a color and that's when you wanna add an invisible zipper to your project. And so it's good to know several different techniques for how to install zippers into a garment. So next up, we'll show you how to do the invisible zipper.

How to add an invizible zipper
- I'm going to be adding an invisible zipper to a skirt, to show you another option for how to install a zipper. First, you need to prepare your zipper. I have a seven inch zipper here, And I'm just gonna go ahead and unzip it. And I wanna show you, when you unzip it, the teeth are coiled over. Your first step is to press those teeth so that it's all flat right there. So you do want to put your iron to a pretty high setting with some steam. And just press this nice and flat. And take your time in pressing this because this will make a difference when you go to insert that zipper. And then do the same thing on the other side. There you go. Now when you get to the pull part, you just try to flatten it as much as you can. And that's what preps our zipper for the installation. I wanna show you the skirt that I'm gonna be working on. This is a circle skirt. So, it has two halves to it. And I've sewn up one half of the skirt already, following my notch marks right up the side. And then I've also added a little bias tape on the top as my facing, so that when I'm all done, My bias tape will cover up that waste for me. Following all those same methods, and I did not sew this facing all the way to the edge, the same that we did with the nylon zipper. The difference between installing the nylon zipper and the invisible zipper is that, I don't want to sew this side at all until after I've installed that zipper. So, I'm going to put my sides together. And I know that I want my zipper ultimately to have the pull going this way. So when I start to imagine that, then I know that my right side of the zipper needs to be on the right side of my fabric. So I'm going to flip that whole zipper right over. And I wanna place it about 3/8 of an inch away from the top of my piece up here. And I'm gonna eye ball that and put in a pin just to hold my zipper in place. I don't need to do any additional basting, and I don't need to pin the whole zipper. I can pin it in a couple of spots just to hold it there. But when I come back to sew it, it doesn't have to be perfectly down. When you're installing an invisible zipper foot, you do need to have the appropriate foot for the job. There are lots of different ways that you can this. And, on the market, if you can't find a specific invisible zipper foot for your machine, there is a set that you can purchase that has the invisible zipper foot and it has option different shanks for

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

different types of machines. So this is a good way to go. But if your machine has a foot, specifically for doing invisible zippers, I would recommend investing in that particular foot. This one has a channel along the bottom, which allows for the teeth of the zipper to go right down that edge. And you can simply sew with your needle right in that center setting, and it installs that zipper really, really nicely. So I'm gonna use this one right now. I'm gonna put my teeth under the right side of this foot right here. And it has a little groove that fits perfectly. And then go ahead and start stitching down a couple stitches. Do my back tacking. Just to make sure it doesn't move on me. And then you can see how those teeth just curl right up underneath that groove. And then go ahead and stitch this into place. Now, I wanna make sure that the edge of my fabric and my zipper line up. And then let it go. Once I get to the bottom, this foot is good because it has sort of that flat top to it. so we're gonna get as close as we can to that pull, and then do a couple of little stitches right in there. And that holds our first side in place. And then we'll take this out of the machine and show you how to set it up for the second side. I'm just gonna clip away my threads from sewing that on. And I want to give this sort of an audition. Make sure I've got everything working correctly. Flip over this edge and you can see that my pulls on the right side, and it zips right up. And see how nicely that invisible piece... It's invisible because the teeth just pull that fabric right over. So it gives you that really nice finish right there. And I really like the pulls on these kinds of zippers. So the next thing we need to do is remember, right side of the zipper to the right side of our fabric. And sometimes it's best just to go ahead and flip that zipper over, and give yourself a little pin, so that you remember where it's gonna go. And then we'll flip it back and unzip it. Cause we wanna sew this when it's not zipped. I'm just gonna pull this side out a little bit. And now, just like we did before, we wanna go about 3/8 of an inch down from our edge, and give this a pin in place. I'm gonna make sure that my pin, the ball goes here, because when I put it into the sewing machine, I don't want the top of my pin in the way. We'll give one more pin a little further down. And then if you want to, it's always a good idea, to make sure that your edges are gonna line up nicely. So that your zipper's in the same spot on each side. So I'm looking to make sure that the top of my fabric and the top of my zipper are lined up in the same way. And that's what's gonna make it go in real nice and smooth. Here are the teeth of my zipper, and I'm gonna feed that right into my presser foot. This time I'm using the left side grooves on that foot, to line up my zipper. And I'm gonna go ahead and get that started. A couple of back stitches. And then we'll install that right on down. It's a good idea, if you've never installed an invisible zipper, or any zipper at all, there's no harm in practicing. So if you have some extra swatches and an extra zipper, you can always practice and give it a try. And then, you'll know for when you really wanna install one that you have confidence in your skill. I'm gonna do the same thing and get as close as I can. And then back up a couple stitches, just to make sure that stays in place. All right, now that we have this sewn in, let's just cut away those threads again. And you'll notice that the bottom of the zipper has a little bit of a weird turn in it. And every time I do this, I think, "Oops. Did I do it wrong?" And then, I just give that a turn and I go, "No, it's right." So now, we can, we can see how that zipper zips right on up. There we go. And see how nicely that goes in? All you see is the pull right there. And our tops are lined up, our zipper's just perfect. And now, we need to close up this back seam, and I'll show you how to do that so that everything matches up and your seam becomes a perfect seam with a beautiful zipper. All right, I've got my back seam all lined up here. And I also switched out my foot to where it was before. I need to move my needle to the side because the zipper has about a half inch seam allowance. I'm going to put a whole half inch seam allowance into the back seam, instead of a 5/8 inch seam allowance. And that will allow everything to line right back up again. So, my half inch is at the edge of my regular zipper foot, and I'm gonna

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

sew towards that zipper. So we'll get that started. Do a little back stitching here. Tack that in place, and then we'll sew right up the edge. And you wanna pay a little bit more attention as you get closer to the zipper. So here I am, getting closer to my zipper, and I'm just gonna pull the bottom of the zipper a little out of the way, and I can see where my stitching is. So now, I want to line up these stitch marks as close as I can to these down here. And I also wanna pay attention to my fabric laying nice and flat, and matching up nicely. That will prevent any bubbles. And then do a little back stitch. And go ahead and pull that out. The back seam is finished, and I've lined up my back seam to my zipper seam. And I'm happy with the results. So I wanna flip this over and just check it out on the other side. And I can see, that everything is matched up really, really nicely, I don't see any bubbles here. So when I go to press all of this out, it should be a nice, beautiful zipper right there in my skirt. The last step to finishing up our zipper is to finish the top of the zipper with our facing. So I am going to open up my bias tape, and lay it right across to the back. And then I wanna finish sewing my bias tape along that zipper, and then that's what's gonna open up and finish off that edge. So I can sew down my facing and include my hook and eye, and I'm all nice and ready to go. So I've got my tape wrapped around the back of my zipper edge, so I could finish that off. And put this into the machine, and I'm stitching at about 1/4 of an inch, right on that fold line. And I can finish that right off. And I wanna do this to both sides of my zipper. So I've just pulled this out of the machine, and this is what's gonna let me finish off my piece so nicely. I'm gonna follow along these fold lines, and then fold this down, so that my bias tape comes right along that edge and I get a nice finished edge for my skirt. Right along with that zipper. ^And then that's where I put my hook and eye ^to finish up my piece. ^Now that you know two ways to put in zippers, the nylon zipper and the invisible zipper, give them some practice, get confident with them. And you'll know both ways. Because there are times when you might need to install a nylon zipper in an underarm seam. Or where it's not as open, where you can do an invisible zipper. So practice both, and you'll be great at them.

Chapter 4 - Finishing Garments

Finishing touches

- In finishing your garments there are lots of techniques that are involved. From tacking down your interfacings, to tacking down your bias tape, slip stitching a lining and even adding hooks and eyes. And I'm gonna show you how to do each of these different things, but we're gonna start with sewing down our bias tape along the waist edge. This is the skirt where we installed the invisible zipper. So now we're gonna finish off this waist edge with the bias tape. And I've just folded it right on down so I have a nice finished edge. And I've gone ahead and switched to a zipper foot because I can get nice and close to that edge. I've moved the needle out a little bit towards that left side and I'm gonna use my zipper foot as my guide as I stitch along. I just wanna make sure all my pieces are nicely down. And then we'll go ahead and get started in our stitching. And I am going to back tack just a little bit here. Just to hold that in place. And then as you're sewing this edge (motor humming) You wanna come along and stitch right along that edge right there. And use your presser foot as your guide and just take your time and rearrange your fabric. (motor humming) And look to make sure your needle is catching that edge. (motor humming) I like this machine because I can adjust where that needle goes very nicely and it captures this for me. Bias tape is a pre-made tape that you can purchase. This is a double fold bias tape and it's cut on the bias of the fabric so that it stretches to move around the curves of the waist. (motor humming) (machine beeps) So you can see how nicely that finishes right off. Our stitching is right here on the outside. And on the inside it comes right along that bias tape and it gives you a nice finish along your zipper. So, now you're

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

ready to apply a hook and eye as a little closure just to hold that top part. And that's a very common finishing technique for any top of a zipper. I'm gonna show you how to sew a hook and eye to this green dress. This is the hook and this is the eye. And we're going to stitch this on with a thread and a needle. I've already got my needle threaded and I wanna use it as a double sided. I just wanna lead my whole piece so that it goes down to two ends. And I'll even those up. And then I wanna tie a knot in my thread. So, I'm simply gonna pinch the thread right under the needle. And I'm gonna wrap the thread three times around. And then pinching these pieces in my hand, I'm just gonna slide the needle up through the thread. And then that's gonna tie my knot. It's the easiest way I know how to tie a knot. Give that a little trim. And then we'll start... Because we haven't tacked down this interfacing we're gonna stitch right on top of there. And we'll apply our hook right in here. And it's pretty much right on that zipper. So, I'm going to get that first loop right onto the needle. Gonna put the needle through that second loop, back through the tape. And once we have that tacked in place then it's just a matter of stitching. Back and forth through there. To tack this down. And I like my hook to face to the inside. Some people prefer the hook to face the other way because they feel like it's a little, it might hit their skin. So, depending on how you feel about it, you can turn your hook around. You can do it either way. Whichever feels better for you. You wanna tack this in pretty well because it does play an important role in holding your dress together. And that looks pretty good to me. Then I'll just go ahead and tie this off. And to do that I'll just pick up a piece of the fabric here. Pull my knot down, and loop my needle back through those pieces, hold them tightly, and do that one more time. And I like to go ahead and pull from what's closer, that way, it doesn't get stuck on everything. And we'll do exactly the same process for the eye part but I'm just gonna bury my thread end down into that zipper tape. Before I cut it off. To attach the eye on the other side of the hook, I like to connect the two together, and then I'll hold that together so I know that they line up nicely as I'm stitching the eye onto the other side of the garment. And I'm gonna get my needle into my fabric to start with. I'm just gonna get that knot. And I'm tying the knot the same way as I did before. Have that right there and I can trim off any ends. And then I wanna hook these two together to make sure that they line up. And just gonna put the needle in there, come over to the other side, get that into position, and then just make my stitch here. And there we go. We have our hook and eye in place. Next, we're going to tack down our facings. This way they don't kind of flop around when you're wearing your garment. There are four spots we're going to tack it down. We're going to tack it down at the neck, under the arms, and in the back by the zipper. I'm just gonna show you how to do this in the neck facing, here. You're simply coming in. I've got a knot in the bottom of my thread. And I'm going to pick up a piece of that seam, not on the outside of the garment, just within the seam. And I want to grab a little piece of the facing, and then come right back down to the seam. And this doesn't have to be done several times, it can just be once or twice. It's just enough to keep that facing from moving on you. So, we'll just come back one more time. And then we can tie that off. And I'll do that under here with a simple, little knot. One more time through there, and then clip off my threads. You're gonna want to tack down those facings. Each place where there's a seam. At the bottom of the center front, under each of the arm holes, and then in the back, right by that zipper. You want to tack down those facings. The next thing I wanna do is, I wanna show you how you would tack down a lining when you have a full lining that comes down to the waistline. This is a full bodice lining. Just like our interfacing where we had it around the neckline and under the arms, this forms the same way, except that it comes all the way down to the waistline. We've done our understitching at the neckline and now we wanna tack this lining to the waist, so that when we're wearing the garment, all of the facings stay where they're

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

supposed to stay. And we have a nice finished edge within the inside so, this dress is on our dress form inside out right now. And this is a good way to show how the two pieces come together. This is where the bodice and the skirt have come together. And I've already folded this lining up and created a, pressed in a seam. And now I wanna take my thread and needle and just slip stitch the two pieces together. I'm going to start by putting my needle, this is within my seam allowance just in that seam allowance that my knot starts there. And then I want to pick up long this stay stitching line. I don't want to actually have my stitching showing towards the front. And then I'm gonna come up to my lining and I simply want to just pick up along that fold, just a little bite of that fabric. And then I'll start stitching these two together. I'm just gonna pick up a bite from down here and then little bite from up here. And I like to use that fold as the spot where I pick up my piece. So, a little piece from here, and a little piece from up here. Now, depending on, on your preference you can go very, very tight stitches and keep them very close. I have a pretty good, thick thread that I'm using so I'm gonna make my stitches a little further apart. And my goal is to just cover up that seam. And I also wanna pay attention to how that bodice is coming down from the top. I wanna pay attention to how that neckline is rolling to the inside and that my lining is coming down nicely right to that waist. Just gonna show you a few more of these stitches and you'd simply go all the way around your garment this way. The finishing steps are some of the steps that people like to skip. But they're really important to make sure that you take your time to do them because it does matter in how the garment drapes on your body. So, to get something that lies nicely and has a good facing on it, you wanna take the time to tack those facings in place, get those linings in place, sew down your waistbands, add your hook and eye because that's what make your garment look finished and makes it wear nicely in the end.

Hemming and fabric variations

- Hemming is the last step in your garment, and there are several different ways that you can put your hem into your piece. You can use a hem tape. You can do a rolled hem. You can do just a simple folded hem. I'm gonna show you two different types. I'm gonna show you the hem tape and a rolled hem. And in order to get the length that you would like, you can either follow your pattern and write on your pattern. Where that hem is indicated, you can follow that hem. Or if you'd like to shorten or lengthen your piece, you can do that too. So whichever one you'd like, I'm just going to show you how to finish off kind of a raw edge with a little bit of hem tape to make a nice, pretty inside for your dress. What I've got here is a flexible hem tape, and you can find this in the packaged tape section in your craft store or your fabric store. And I like it because it does make it a nice flexible, so if I have a curve or anything, this will move around with the curve. But it finishes off a raw edge. Like my linen here has some fraying and things that are happening, and I really want to contain that so that when I'm wearing this garment, I don't see all these stray pieces into the future. So I'm simply going to sew this right down to the edge of my fabric using a zigzag stitch, and I'll do that on the machine. I've set my machine to a zigzag stitch, and I have my zigzag foot in place. (sewing machine clatters) And I want to use a zigzag because that helps just to tack down the tape as well as to hold the fibers in place. And I'm just going right along that edge. This won't show. So once you've overlapped your two edges, go ahead and stop. And I'm just gonna switch real quick (sewing machine beeps) to a basic stitch so that I can tack that in just a little bit, that way it won't slip out later on. And we'll take that out, and now we'll press in the hem. Now that I have my hem tape on, you can see my zigzag stitch. My hem tape's right here, and I just want to trim off these extra pieces that are coming out from the edges. And as I'm sewing in my hem, I'll probably take a

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

little bit more time to take care of these. But for right now, we'll just snip them out of the way. Okay, so now we're going to press in our hem, and I've decided that an inch and a half is going to look good in this hem for my dress. So I have a ruler that has a sliding gauge on it, and I'm just going to slide it up to an inch and a half and then turn my hem. And since I'm working on a flat surface, I'm gonna push part of this away. So I'm only pressing in what I want here. And once I work with this gauge, I can get my exact inch and a half here. And then I'll get my iron and go ahead and start pressing. I just want to double-check, and the pressing will set that. (steam hisses) Course, you want to give it a little pin as well. I like to put my hand on top of the steamed, the hot piece, because that will absorb some of the moisture and it will also make sure that I have it exactly where I want. My fabric is staying right where I want, and then I'll go ahead and put in a little pin to mark my hem. It's not every time that I put in the hem where I'm actually gonna go ahead and do the stitching. So sometimes I'll put the hem in and I'll pin it, and then later on when I go to watch TV or something, that's when I'll pull this out to go ahead and do my hand stitching. So this is something you can do at the ironing board, set, and then when you go to sit down, you can do your stitching. So go ahead and press in your hem. And then have the person that's going to wear your garment, whether it's you or somebody else that you're making it for, try it on, and make sure you like where that hem is falling. You can make any adjustments. And then once you have it all pressed in, then you'll go right to hand stitching. I've already got my needle threaded. And this is not, this is just a regular, it's probably like a size of a quilting needle. So if you purchase an assortment of needles, just pick one that you like and the eye that you can work with. And I've already tied my knot down here. And I'm using the same color thread that I used to make the dress, and I'm just gonna start by picking up a bite of the actual fabric. And I'm also starting on a seam because I think this helps you to give yourself a good little chunk in there and you're not picking up anything that's going through the front side. That's my pin, let's take that out, so it doesn't get confusing. But you're not picking up anything on the front, you just want to pick up in that seam allowance and get that hem started. So we'll get that started here, and I'm gonna do one more like that, just to lock it down. Then, when I get to my single part of my fabric, so that this, this is the front side, the goal here is just to take a little bite of the fabric. Just want to pick up a little bit of it, and then come down here and pick up a little bit of your tape and your fabric. The nice thing about this hem tape is that it's got a little line on it so that when I pick up the bite from fabric, I can come over here and see where I need to pick up in my hem. So I'll just go all the way around the dress, picking up just a little tiny bite, and let me show you what that looks like on the other side. It's just a little piece. So when your fabric and your thread are matching, you can't even see those stitches that I picked up before. So we'll just keep going, and you can remove your pins as you go along. Just a little tiny bite and a little stitch. And you don't want to pull this too tight. If you pull it too tight, it will create a little pucker. So if you feel like, ooh, I pulled something a little tight, just stretch your fabric back out and keep right on going. Now, the other thing that can happen, you do want to pay attention to how big you're letting your stitches get. Sometimes when you're putting on your dress, you might catch your hem in a heel or something, so, you don't want to let your stitches get too big that it could catch on your shoe by accident. I want to show you a finished hem that I've already got done. This one, I used a gray hem tape instead of the white hem tape. But you can see, when you get this whole hem in and you have all of your stitches down, that it's a very nice, finished look to the garment. And on the outside, you can't even see any of those stitches. One of the tricks to doing that is to just take your iron and go over where your stitching is because that will help incorporate those threads into the fibers of the garment. I like to use hem tape on my hems because I think it makes it look very clean and pretty on

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

the inside. There's also a second advantage in that if I'm working with a woven fabric, the hem tape helps keep the fabric from fraying as I'm wearing the garment over time. There are several different ways that you can put a hem into a garment. Using a hem tape is one, and I'm going to show you how to do this on a, how to use a stay stitch on a bias so that your hem won't stretch over time. This will keep the hem nice and straight, and it's an easy way to press in a hem and sew it on the machine. This particular circle skirt is on a bias, so that means it has a lot of stretch to it. So we want to stabilize that stretch by adding a stay stitch in here that will hold this garment so that it doesn't stretch as I'm wearing it or stretch over time too much. So the first thing is to go 5/8 of an inch away from the edge and add that stay stitch, and then we're going to do two folds and then stitch right along that edge, that we get a nice, finished edge on our skirt. I've got my regular presser foot on here, and I've gone ahead and put my painter's tape down to mark my 5/8 inch mark. And I'm going to slide my fabric over to that edge, and I'm simply gonna just sew a regular running stitch. all the way down my fabric. (sewing machine clatters) Once you've come all the way around, I'm gonna do a little backstitch. The stitch that we just put in is what's going to create our line for our pressing. So you can see, just by following along and finger pressing, I'm already able to put that, that hem right into place. And that stitching really just helps in making this hem beautiful and perfect all the way around. So you can kind of get that started by pressing it by your hands, and then the next step is to come right up with the raw edge to the stitched edge. And then that's gonna fold over one more time, and this we're gonna press with the iron. Continue pressing all the way around, and then we'll be ready to go to the machine. I've moved the needle over just a little bit so that I can catch the edge of this hem as I sew along. So I've got it all folded and pressed, and I'm gonna go ahead and just stitch right along that edge. (sewing machine clatters) And I'm using the presser foot as a guide. So I'm using this clear edge right here as a guide as I go along. And you'll do this all the way around your hem. (sewing machine clatters) So I want to show you what that hem looks like on a finished garment. On the outside, public part of the dress, this is what it would look like, our little hem here. And then on the inside or more private side, this is what it looks like. And it's a very nice, beautiful hem that holds nicely. It's not a real thick hem. So on a full skirt like this, it allows the garment to still drape and be really pretty and to feel nice when you're wearing it. So a rolled hem is great option for a nice full skirt on a bias. All the techniques that you learned in this class will set you up with a great sewing foundation. As a beginner, sometimes it's hard to get over the idea of what pattern do I pick, what fabrics do I pick, what am I going to make, and thinking through all the different options that you have. Now that you know how the garment is constructed, you can make some other choices that will lead you to pieces that you can make that will fill out your wardrobe. So looking at our patterns, there are illustrations that we have, photographs on the front. But think beyond what you see on the pattern, and think about where do I want to wear this garment? What do I want it to look like? What types of fabrics can I choose? We've done up several different versions of our dress in different types of fabrics, and it completely changes the look of the piece. So this is our evening look with a little bit of silver and metallics and some textures in the materials. This is our sort of daytime office look, which is a linen blend. It's a nice, simple dress that holds the structure well. And then this dress is made with a cotton blend. It's a nice piece to wear during the day or maybe on the weekends. But this one garment goes in all these different ways, just by changing up the fabrics. If we look at our circle skirt, we did a lot of the same things. With the linen blend that we sewed, we made a beautiful, flowing skirt that will kind of move with you during the day, or you could dress this up for an evening outfit. And then we changed out to a cotton blend. And in this option, this is more of a floral. It's a lighter fabric. It's got a little bit more casualness to it.

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026

So, by choosing fabrics, you can really choose the look of the dress. One of the other things that we did, we changed up to an eyelet, and we did a little lining underneath and made it a little bit longer. And all of these options are generally within a pattern, so you have many choices and many different views that you can pick from. The sewing techniques that you've learned in this class really do give you the foundation for making all kinds of different clothes and being very creative with your choices in fabrics, patterns, and structure. So have fun making new clothes for yourself.

© Joy Macdonell and Creativebug Inc., 2026