

# Truly Victorian

## 1890s Shirtwaists - TV494

### Introduction

A shirtwaist is the original name for what we would call a blouse today. They are usually for summer wear, and are unlined and unboned and come in a vast array of styles. They can be made of any light weight fabric. Shirtwaists start to become popular in the early 1890s and become even more so throughout the next few decades, and are a staple for the working woman and the fashionable woman alike. It can be worn tucked into the skirt, or over the skirt, as desired.

For our shirtwaists, the center front is cut on the straight of grain, and is closed with buttons. The sleeve is the Large Mutton Sleeve popular in 1893-94. The collar is a stand-and-fall that looks particularly nice with a four-in-hand tie, similar to the men's ties of the period. The body portion is gathered to fit a waistband, with a peplum attached to the same waistband. The peplum can be omitted, if desired, to create a Spencer Waist. View A, has a plain front, and View B has a front yoke with gathers at the center portion of the yoke.

For this pattern, please disregard any attempt at standard sizing. Everyone is unique in body type and size, and we have come up with a totally different way of managing patterns. We have included comprehensive directions on how to size and adjust this pattern for a good fit. Although we can't fit everyone, we have tried to do some of the guess work for you. These methods are a little different than what you may be used to, so please read them carefully, before cutting out pattern pieces. **It is strongly advisable to make a mockup of the blouse, before cutting out your fashion fabric, to check fit.**

### Size Chart

SIZE	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Bust	30"	32"	34"	36"	38"	40"	42"	44"	46"	48"	50"	52"	54"	56"
Waist	22"	24"	26"	28"	30"	32"	34"	36"	38"	40"	42"	44"	46"	48"
Back Length	15 ½"	15 5/8"	15 ¾"	15 7/8"	16"	16 1/8"	16 ¼"	16 3/8"	16 ½"	16 5/8"	16 ¾"	16 7/8"	17"	17 1/8"
Back Width	12"	12½"	13"	13½"	14"	14½"	15"	15½"	16"	16½"	17"	17½"	18"	18½"
Adj. Back	16¾"	17 5/8"	18½"	19 3/8"	20¼"	21 1/8"	22"	22 7/8"	23½"	24 5/8"	25½"	26 3/8"	27¼"	28 1/8"
Adj. Front	13¼"	14 3/8"	15½"	16 5/8"	17¾"	18 7/8"	20"	21 1/8"	22¼"	23 3/8"	24½"	25 5/8"	26¾"	27 7/8"
Arm Hole	15½"	16"	16½"	17"	17½"	18"	18½"	19"	19½"	20"	20½"	21"	21½"	22"
44/45"	3 7/8 yards - all sizes													

\*\*Yardages given are with nap.

Notions: Six to eight 1/2" buttons for closure. ½ yard netting (optional).

Suggested fabrics: Lawn, batiste, muslin, silk, seersucker, or other light weight fabrics.

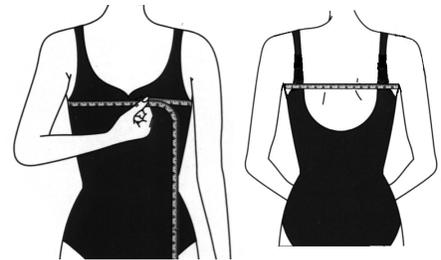
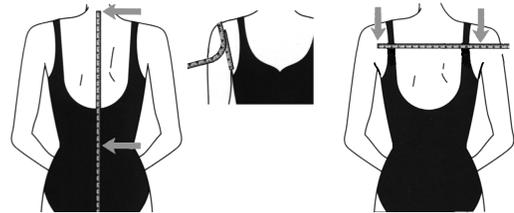
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## Taking your Measures

For this pattern, you will need to take a few body measures. It is best to have someone take these measures for you, (and to take them several times), to make sure that they will be correct. Be sure to take measures over your corset and any underclothes that you will be wearing under your bodice. The measures you need are:

1. **Back Width** - Measure across back, while standing naturally, from the socket of one arm to the socket of your other arm. Do not take too wide.
2. **Back Length** - Take this measure from the nape of neck, down the spine to the waist.
3. **Bust** - this is the full measure around your body. Make sure that the measure is taken over the fullest part of bust and around (not under) shoulder blades.
4. **Arm Hole** - This measure is for your sleeve size. Take measure close under arm and over point of shoulder.



## Sizing Your Pattern

Our unique method of sizing patterns is designed to allow all body types to use our patterns. Most other patterns can only accommodate B-cup sizes. Choosing Fronts and Backs separately will allow people with different cup sizes to fit themselves better. To choose the correct pattern, follow the instructions below:

1. Choose pattern **Back** and **Back Peplum** according to your **Back Width** measure. (These pieces are not interchangeable)  
Example: Back Width measures 14", cut out size E Back.
2. On size chart, find **Adjusted Back** correlating to your Back pattern size.  
Example: Size E Adjusted Back is 20½".
3. Subtract Adjusted Back from Bust measure. This is your **Adjusted Front**.  
Example: Bust measure is 40". 40"(Bust) - 20.5"(Adj. Back) = 19.5" (Adj. Front.)
4. Choose **Front** or **Yoke and Lower Front**, **Front facing**, **Front Peplum**, **Collar Stand** and **Collar** pattern piece that correlates to your Adjusted Front. (If Adjusted Front is between sizes, choose the larger size and customize Front as described in customizing section.)  
Example: Adjusted Front 19½" would be size G Front pattern.  
\*\* If your Front is a smaller size than the Back, cut shoulder longer to equal Back shoulder length.
5. Choose **Waistband** pattern according to your **Waist** measure.
6. Choose **Sleeve** and **Sleeve Facing** pattern according to your **Arm Hole** measure. The sleeve length is 17" for all sizes, armpit to wrist. Lengthen or shorten as needed, both above and below the elbow equally.

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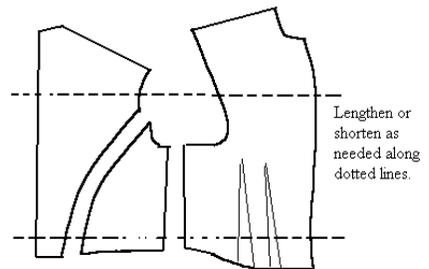
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After choosing your pattern pieces, make a Mockup of your blouse. Sew all Blouse pieces together, leaving the center front open. With someone to help you, check the fit of your blouse. Pin the Mockup on you down the center front with a 1" allowance (½" seam allowance and ½" for closure) on each side. Make changes to your pattern as described below.

### Customizing Your Pattern

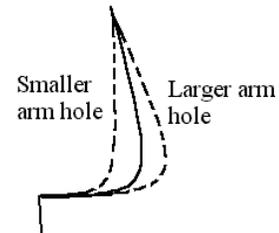
#### 1. Length

When fitting your blouse, the bottom of the arm hole should fit snugly under your arm. Adjust the length to your waist by shortening or lengthening each pattern piece equally, just above the waist. Adjust the height of the Back to reach ½" above the nape of your neck, by folding out the excess evenly across entire back. Fit the Front smoothly from bust point to nape of neck by shortening or lengthening Front, above the arm hole as needed.



#### 2. Arm Hole

Move arm hole on Front forward or back as needed, using cup sizes as a guide line for these changes. The arm hole should fit snugly around your arm, but should not be binding.

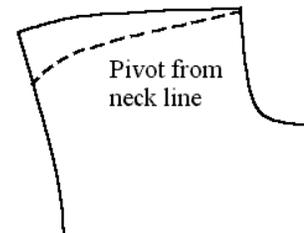


#### 3. Shoulder

The blouse should fit over point of shoulder with a small amount of ease. Take in or let out shoulder, on Front only, by pivoting the shoulder seam from the neck edge.

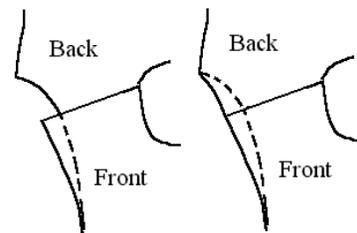
Match shoulder seams at neck edge. Adjust shoulder length on both Front and Back as necessary. (edge of fabric should be well past point of shoulder.)

If you are making a lot of changes to the shoulder and arm hole, you may wish to measure around your finished arm hole to get the correct size for your k-sleeve. Hopefully, your changes will result with a snug bodice and the arm hole will be correct to your body.



#### 4. Waist

If adjusting for a smaller waist size, it might be best to extend the waist gather stitching on the bottom of the Fronts and Back, and on the top of the front peplum and back peplum, by 1/2" for each size difference. This will keep the gathers better balanced on the waistband.

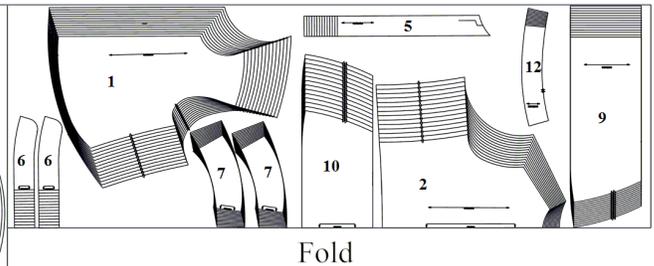
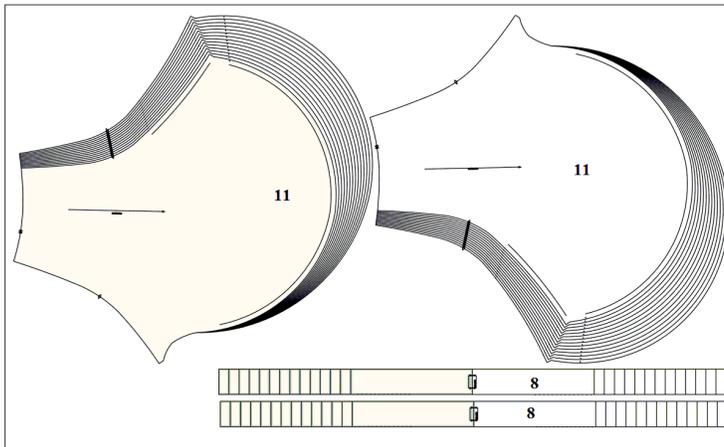


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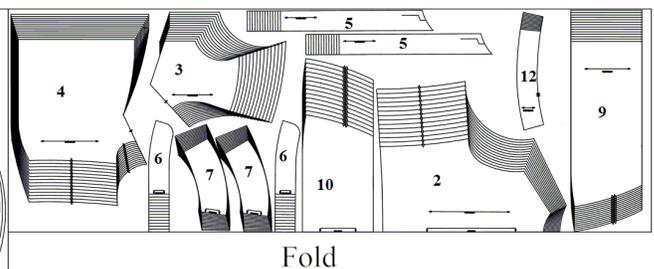
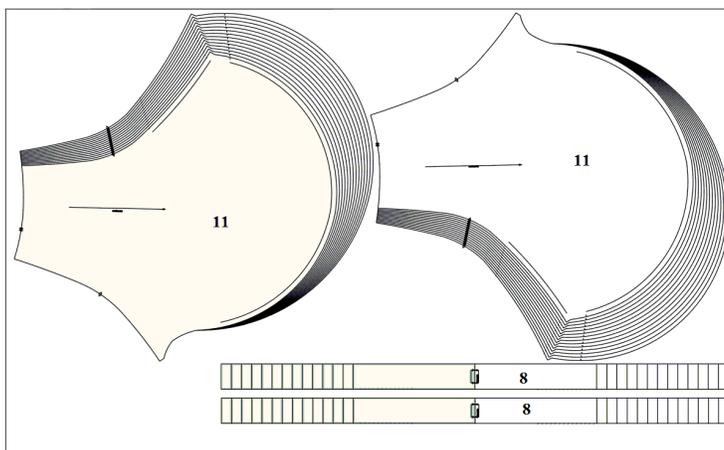
## Sewing Instructions

Note: 1/2" seam allowance has been added to all pieces.

<u>View A</u>	<u>View B</u>
Cut 2 of <b>1-Front</b>	Cut 2 of <b>3-Yoke</b>
Cut 1 on fold of <b>2-Back</b>	Cut 2 of <b>4-Lower Front</b>
Cut 2 of <b>5-Front Facing</b>	Cut 1 on fold of <b>2-Back</b>
Cut 2 on fold of <b>6-Collar Stand</b>	Cut 3 of <b>5-Front Facing</b>
Cut 2 on fold of <b>7-Collar</b>	Cut 2 on fold of <b>6-Collar Stand</b>
Cut 2 on fold of <b>8-Waistband</b>	Cut 2 on fold of <b>7-Collar</b>
Cut 2 of <b>9-Front Peplum</b> (optional)	Cut 2 on fold of <b>8-Waistband</b>
Cut 1 on fold of <b>10-Back Peplum</b> (optional)	Cut 2 of <b>9-Front Peplum</b> (optional)
Cut 2 of <b>11-Sleeve</b>	Cut 1 on fold of <b>10-Back Peplum</b> (optional)
Cut 2 of <b>12-Sleeve Facing</b>	Cut 2 of <b>11-Sleeve</b>
	Cut 2 of <b>12-Sleeve Facing</b>



**View A**



**View B**

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2. **View B:** (for view A, begin with step 3 on page 5)

a. With **4-Lower Fronts**, sew 2 rows of gather stitching along the top edge between the dots as marked on the pattern. Also, sew 2 rows of gather stitching along the bottom edge between the dots as marked, and ending 1 1/2" from the center front edge.

b. Sew the top of the Lower Front to the bottom of **3-Yoke**. It is easiest to sew this in two segments. Start with the notched edge, and sew from the armhole to the bottom of the point. Clip the **4-Lower Front** seam allowance in to the end of the stitching. Gather the **4-Lower Front** to fit the side of the point, and then sew from the bottom of the point to the center front edge. This will allow the fabric to get around the point smoothly.

c. Press seam allowances upwards. Topstitch along edge of yoke, if desired.

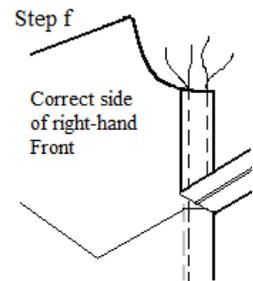
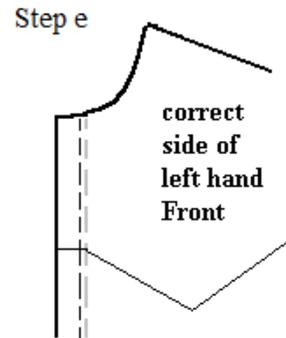
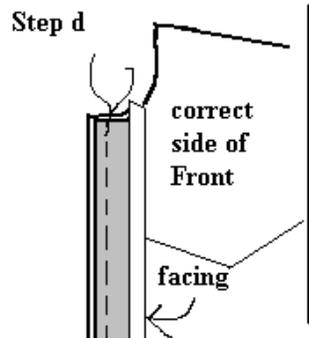
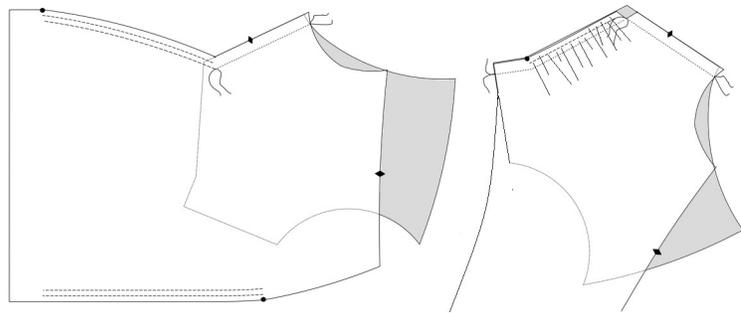
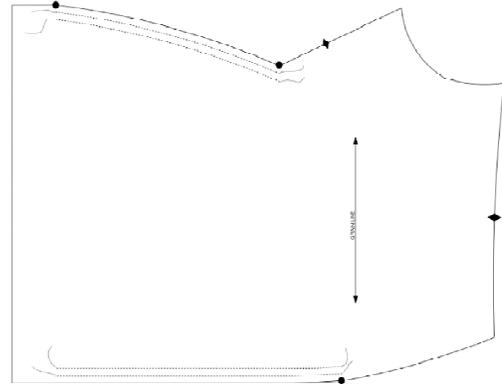
d. With 2 of the **5-Front Facings**, fold the longer edge to the wrong-side 1/2" and press in place.

e. Sew these **5-Front Facing** to the Assembled Front (Yoke/Lower Front), along the center front edge, with right-sides together.

f. Turn the Facing to the wrong-side of the Assembled Front, and press in place. Baste folded edge of the Facing in place.

g. With the 3rd **5-Front Facing**, turn both long edges to the wrong-side slightly less than 1/2", and press in place. Lay the 3rd **5-Front Facing** over the **right-hand** Assembled Front, wrong-side of Facing to right-side of Front, so that the center front edge of the 3rd Facing is slightly beyond the edge of the Front. Topstitch down both sides of the 3rd Facing, 1/8" away from the edges.

h. Continue with Step 4 on page 5.



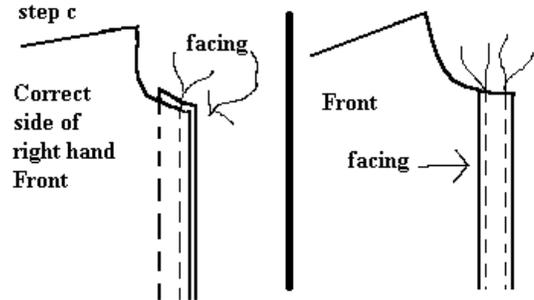
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3. **View A:**

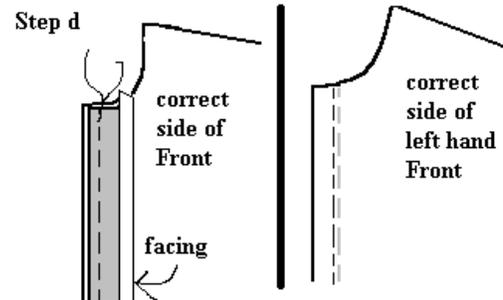
a. With **1-Fronts**, sew 2 rows of gather stitching along the bottom edge between the dots as marked on the pattern.

b. With **5-Front Facings**, fold the longer edge to the wrong-side 1/2" and press in place.

c. For the right-hand side - Sew the **5-Front Facing** to the **1-Front**, along the center front edge, with **right-side of the Facing** to the **wrong-side of the Front**. Turn the Facing to the right-side of the Front, and press in place. Topstitch down both sides of the Facing, 1/8" away from both of the edges.



d. With left hand side - Sew the **5-Front Facing** to the **1-Front**, along the center front edge, with right-sides together. Turn the Facing to the wrong-side of the Front, and press in place. Topstitch down the folded edge, 1/8" away from the fold, to hold in place.



4. **View A and B continued:**

With **2-Back**, sew 2 rows of gather stitching along the bottom edge between the dots as marked on the pattern.

5. Sew the Fronts to the Back at the side seams, and at the shoulder seams. For a more finished look, use a French seam as follows:

a. Match the seam edges together, with **wrong-sides together**.

b. Sew a seam with 1/4" seam allowance.

c. Trim the seam allowance to 1/8", and press the seam flat from both sides.

d. Turn the fabrics so that the **right-sides** are together.

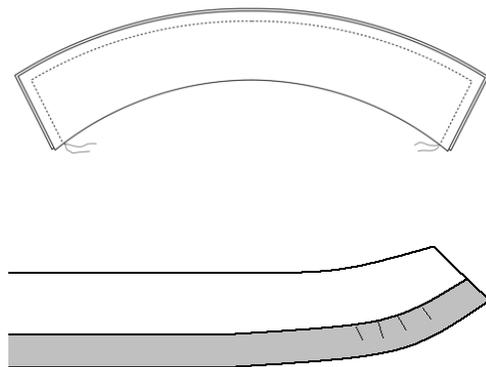
e. Sew the seam with 1/4" seam allowance. The raw edges of the seam allowance should now be rolled inside the two seams for a clean finish.

5. Collar:

a. Match the two **7-Collar** pieces together, with right sides together. Sew around the outside edges of your collar. Do not sew across the neck edge.

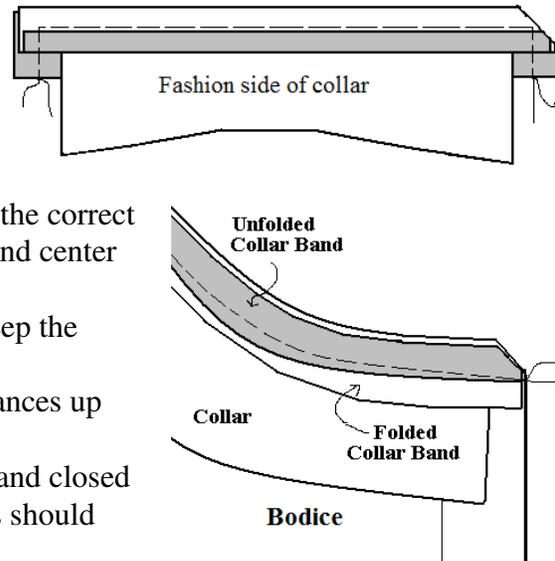
b. Clip the edges and corners of the collar, turn correct side out, and press. Baste across the raw neck edge, to hold the edges together.

c. With one **6-Collar Stand**, baste a stitching line 1/2" from the neck edge. Fold the edge to the wrong side, along the stitching line, and press in place. This will be your inside Collar Stand.



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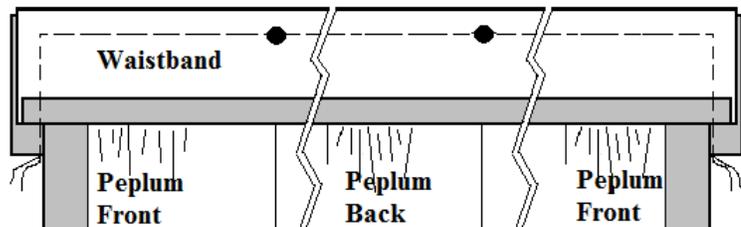
- d. Pin the complete Collar between the two Collar Stands, matching center backs. The folded Collar Stand should be right sides together with the fashion side of the Collar. The non-folded Collar Stand should be right sides together with the underside of the collar.
- e. Sew along the long edge of the collar and stands, and across each end.
- f. Clip the curves, turn the Collar Stand correct side out, and press.
- g. Pin the raw edge of the non-folded Collar Stand to the neckline of the shirtwaist. The correct side of the Collar Stand should face the correct side of the shirtwaist. Match center backs and center front edges.
- h. Sew around the neck edge. Be careful to keep the folded Collar Stand free of all stitching.
- i. Clip the neck edge and turn the seam allowances up inside the Collar Stands.
- j. Hand stitch the folded edge of the Collar Stand closed on the inside of the neckline. All raw edges should now be inside the Collar Stand.



6. Peplum (Optional):
  - a. With each of the **9-Front Peplums** and the **10-Back Peplum**, sew 2 rows of gather stitching along the top edge between the dots as marked on the patterns.
  - b. With **9-Front Peplums**, turn the front edge to the wrong side 1/2" and press. Turn again to the wrong side 1" and press. Topstitch, or hem stitch, in place.
  - c. Sew the **9-Front Peplums** to the **10-Back Peplum** at the side seams. For best results, use a French seam as described in step 4.
  - d. Hem the Peplum along the bottom with a small hem.

7. Waistband:

- a. With one **8-Waistband**, baste a stitching line 1/2" from one long edge. This will be your inside Waistband. Fold the edge to the wrong side, along the stitching line, and press in place.
- b. Pin the complete Peplum between the two **8-Waistbands**, matching the dots on the Waistband to the side seams of the Peplum. The Waistband front ends should extend 1/2" beyond the front edges of the Peplum. The non-folded Waistband should be right sides together with the Peplum. The folded Waistband should be right-side to wrong-side of the Peplum. If omitting the Peplum, skip to step 7d.
- c. Gather the Peplum to fit the Waistband.
- d. Sew along the top edge of the Waistband and Peplum, and across each end.

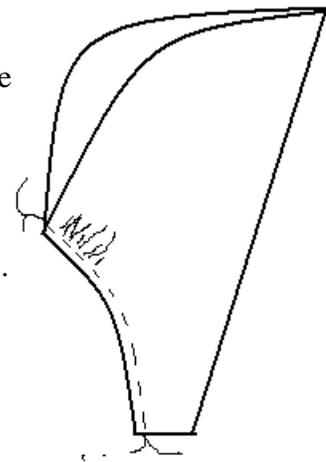
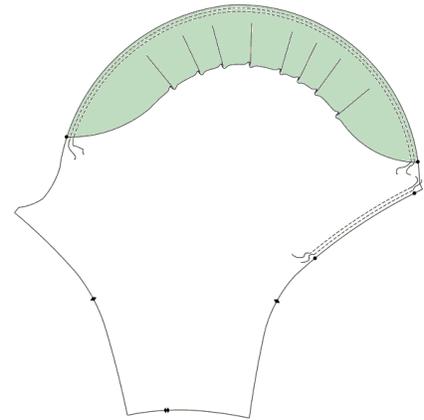


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- e. Clip the corners, turn the Waistband right-side out, and press.
- f. Pin the raw edge of the non-folded Waistband to the bottom edges of the Shirtwaist. The right-side of the Waistband should face the right-side of the Shirtwaist. Match center backs, center front edges, and the side seams, exactly the same as for the Peplum.
- g. Gather the Fronts and Back to fit the Waistband.
- h. Sew along the waist edge. Be careful to keep the folded Waistband free of all stitching.
- i. Turn the seam allowances up inside the Waistbands.
- j. Hand stitch the folded edge of the Waistband closed on the inside of the waistline. All raw edges should now be inside the Waistbands.

8. Sleeves:

- a. (optional) For puffy sleeves, cut a strip of netting the width of the netting and about 10" deep. Fold the netting in half lengthwise, and baste all the raw edges together. Sew the strip to the wrong side of the sleeve head, between the dots for the gather stitching, with the folded edge to the middle of the sleeve. Let the ends of the netting fade off the sleeve, so the only raw edges of netting are at the seam allowance.
- b. With **11-Sleeves**, sew two rows of gather stitching along the side seam, and around the top edge, between the dots as marked on the pattern.
- c. With right sides together, match the side seams of each **11-Sleeve** together. Gather the longer side to match the shorter side. Sew with 1/2" seam allowance.
- d. With **12-Sleeve Facings**, turn the top edge (without notch) to the wrong side 1/2" and press.
- e. With right sides together, match the side edges of each **12-Sleeve Facing** together. Sew with 1/2" seam allowance.
- f. Match the **12-Sleeve Facings** to the wrist edge of the **11-Sleeves**, with right-sides together. Match notches and seams. Sew with 1/2" seam allowance.
- g. Turn the Sleeve Facings to the wrong-side, and hem stitch in place.
- h. Fit Sleeve into arm hole of Shirtwaist, with right sides together, and matching the sleeve seam to the notch on Front armpit. Gather sleeve top to fit arm hole. Make sure sleeve's elbow curves toward front.



9. Buttons:

- a. Place button holes on right-hand Front, 1/2" from center front edge. Place one horizontal hole on the Collar Stand, and one or two horizontal holes at the ends of the Waistband. Place 3 to 5 vertical button holes between the collar and waistband, spaced as desired.
- b. Place buttons on the left-hand front, 1/2" from the center front edge to correspond with the button holes on the right.