

The Racerback Dress

designed by
Crafterhours



Knit racerback style dress
in sizes 12 months - 8 years

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Printing directions:

- Press File, then Print.
- In your print dialogue box, make sure there is no scaling. Scale should be at 100%. Pattern prints on letter paper, 8.5 x 11 inches.
- Before printing the whole document, print page 10 to test your scale with the inch and centimeter squares.
- For the pattern only (no tutorial), print pages 10 - 23.
- If you would like to save ink and paper, and are making a size 12-18, print only pages 11-16 and 19-23.

First gather your materials. You'll need:

- 1 yard of knit fabric (You'll have a ton left over but due to the direction of stretch, you'll need to start with this much. You can fit a 12-18 month size on 3/4 yard.) Good knits for this project include jersey, stretch jersey, interlock, or anything with a little stretch. A baby rib (1x1) will work, but will be harder to keep from stretching as you sew. Steer clear if you're a knit newbie.
- Coordinating stretch fabric for the binding. Rib knit is a great option here, but a stretch jersey will work perfectly too. You will need three 20" x 2" lengths of this, with the direction of stretch going lengthwise. A good option is just to cut off a 2" length from selvedge to selvedge on 60" wide knit fabric, if you have it.
- Thread that matches your binding fabric.
- Computer, printer, tape, scissors

Please note:

- All seam allowances are .5" unless otherwise stated.
- I made this tutorial using only my sewing machine, but for those of you who have a serger, feel free to use that for everything except the gathering stitch and hem. For those of you who don't have a serger, don't feel like you're missing out. I actually find that this dress comes together just as easily and more accurately using a sewing machine because I have a bit more control.

Step 1:

Print the pattern. Tape each page together by matching up the letters encased in half-circles. Be sure you're taping within the pattern, not in the empty white space. You will have a front piece, a lower back piece, and an upper back piece. Cut out the appropriate size.

Step 2:

Lay each pattern piece along the fold of your fabric and cut around the edges to produce one symmetrical piece.



Step 3:

Cut your binding fabric. Cut 1 60" by 2" strip from selvedge to selvedge, or if you don't have fabric wide enough to do this, cut three 20" by 2" strips. (for you metric fans, that's 152 x 5 cm, or 51 x 5 cm)

Make sure you are cutting perpendicular to, or against the fabric grain. The binding strip should stretch along the long edge.

Iron the binding in half lengthwise, wrong sides together.



Step 4:

Transfer the gathering marks to the front and lower back pieces. Make sure you flip the pattern and mark the fabric on both sides of the original fold.

Here is the front piece with the start and stop points marked for gathering. I used an air-soluble fabric marker on the wrong side of the fabric.



Step 5:

Using the longest stitch length on your machine, stitch about 1/4 away from the edge between the markings. Gently pull the bobbin thread to gather the fabric as closely as possible. Return to a normal stitch length and stitch over your previous stitching to hold the gathers in place.



Step 6:

Repeat steps 4 & 5 for the lower back piece, gathering until it matches the lower edge of the upper back piece.



Step 7:

Sew the upper back to the lower back, right sides together.



Step 8:

Sew one front and back shoulder seam, right sides together. Leave the other one open for now.



Step 9:

The next seam will need to allow for some stretch, so a straight stitch is not recommended. Use the "stretch stitch" option on your machine, or if you don't have one, set your machine to a zig zag stitch. The width should be slightly narrower than default, for my machine this is around a 2. The stitch length can be lengthened slightly, for me this is around 2.6.



Step 10:

Place the two raw edges of the folded binding even with the raw edge of the neck at the open shoulder seam. Sew through all 3 layers of fabric with your stretch stitch. Use a 1/4 to 3/8 inch seam allowance, depending on how wide you want your binding to be. Important: As you are sewing, use your right hand to stretch the binding fabric slightly. If you pull it too tightly, your main fabric will pucker, but if you don't stretch it at all, it will gap around the neck and arm holes. Apply a light tension to it as you go and you'll be fine. If you'd like, practice a little bit first using scraps from your 2 fabrics. Also be sure your main fabric doesn't stretch at all.



Step 10 cont.:

Apply the binding all around the neck seam, cutting off any excess binding. Depending on what seam allowance you chose, you might also want to trim the seam allowance down to about 1/8 inch so it doesn't flip out to the front. If it still wants to flip up a little, don't worry. Once it is on the wearer, it won't do this.



Step 11:

Starting at the binding, sew across the remaining shoulder seam.



Step 12:

On the wrong side, you will see a fairly large and bulky seam allowance.

Trim the seam allowance on the back side of the dress to about 1/8 inch.



Then fold the longer seam allowance over the short one. Tack it down by stitching down the binding forward and backward once. You don't need to stitch all the way down the shoulder seam.



Step 13:

Apply the binding to both arm holes by repeating step 10.



Step 14:

Starting at the binding, stitch the front and back pieces together at the side seams, right sides together.



Step 15:

Iron up the hem. Because knit won't fray, you only need a single fold hem. If possible, try it on your wearer and determine hem depth from them. If your wearer is not available, follow these guidelines: If you are making the smaller size (ie: a 5 in the size 5-6, a 7 in the size 7-8), iron up 1-1.5 inches. If you are making the larger size (or a size 2), iron up .5 inches.



Step 16:

Hem the dress. You can use a single or double row of straight stitches with a slightly longer stitch length, or you can use a double needle or coverhem machine. Whatever is available to you is fine.



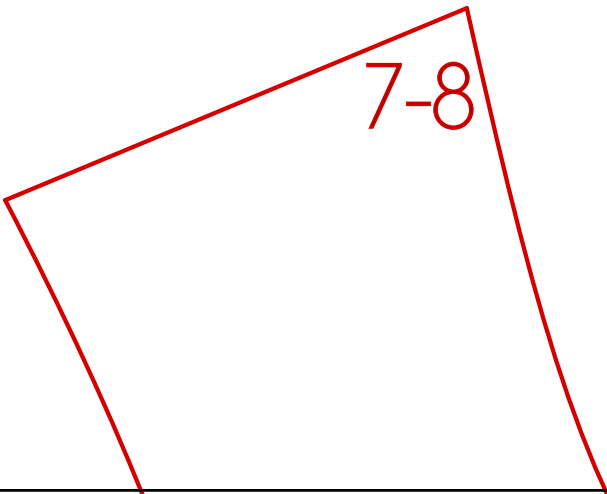
You're finished!

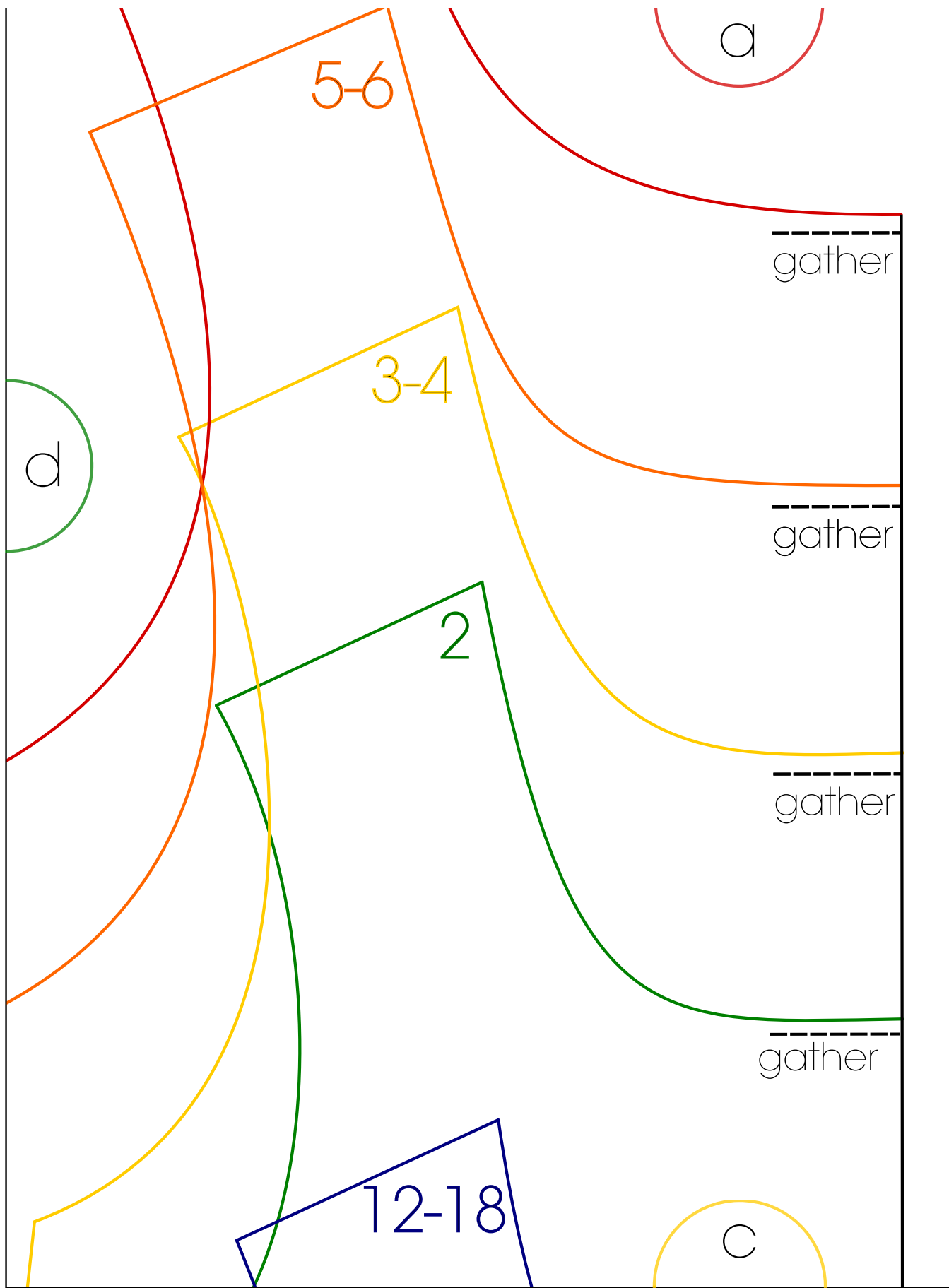
Thanks for using this pattern and we hope you love your new creation!

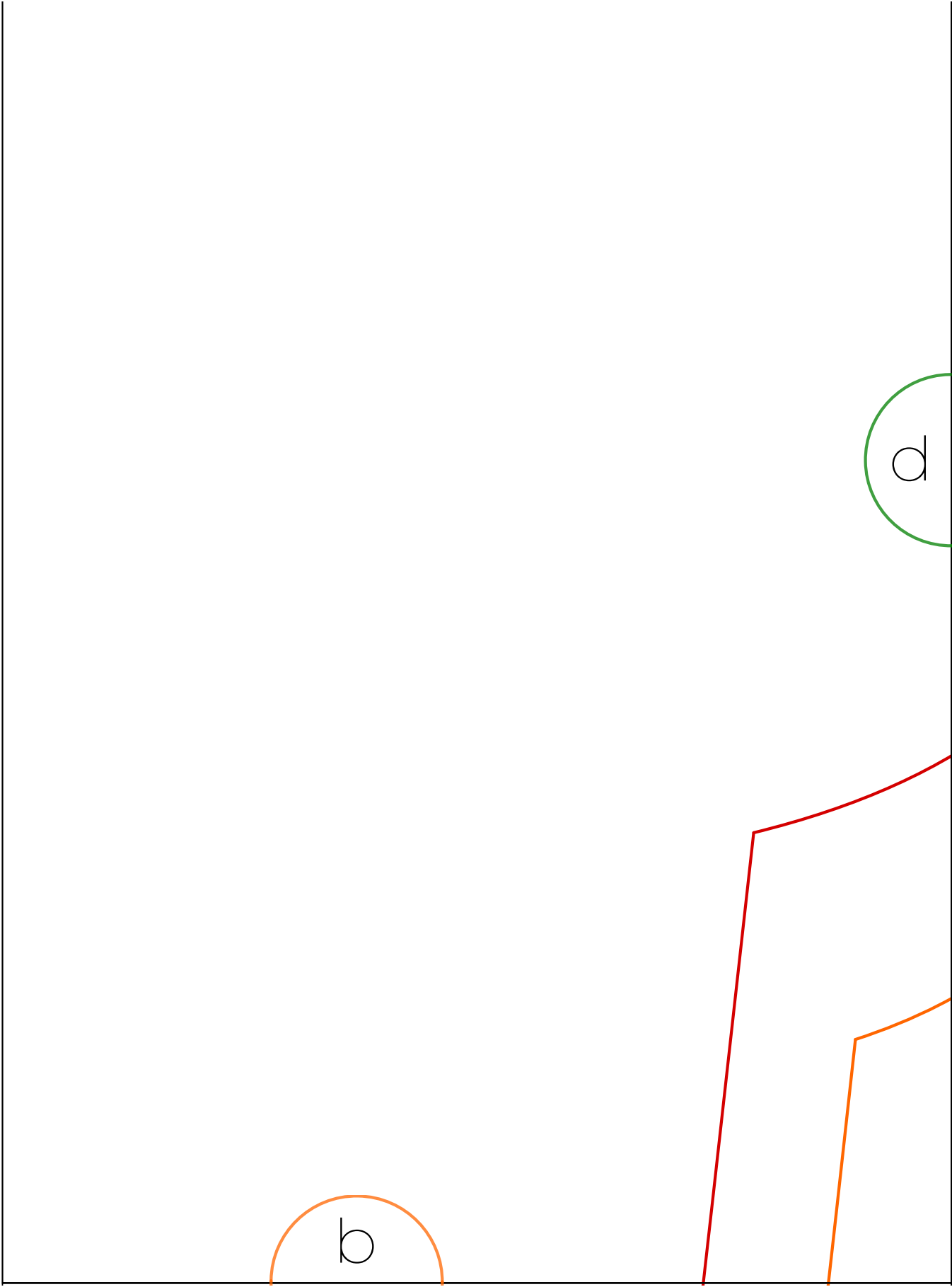
We'd love to see what you've made with this pattern. If you'd like, visit www.crafterhoursblog.com to find the link to our flickr page where you can post your own projects for everyone to see.

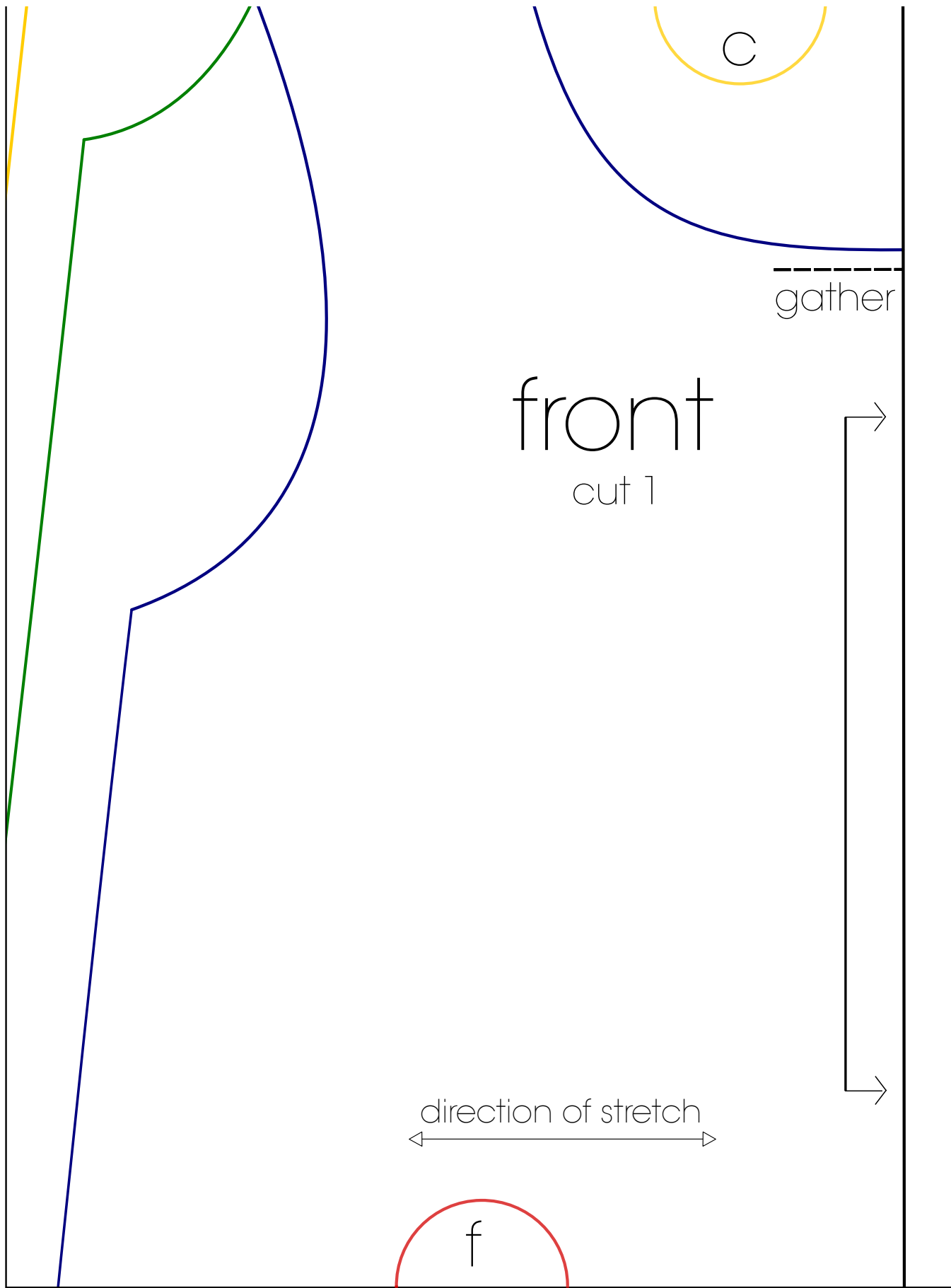
1
inch

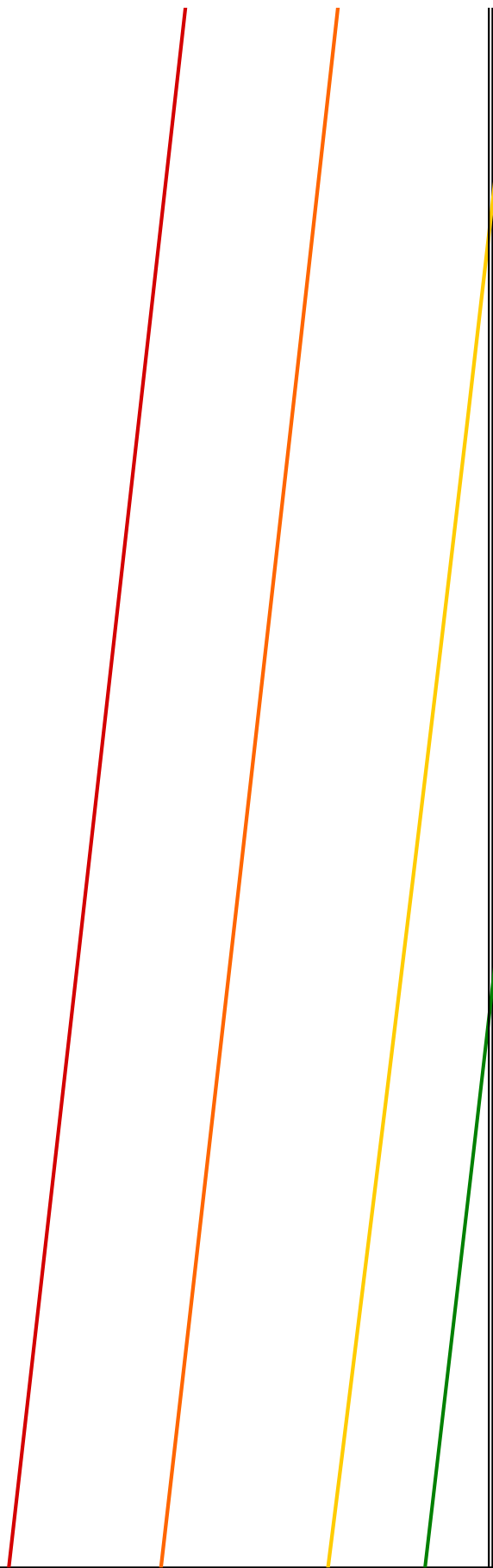
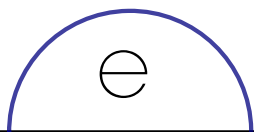
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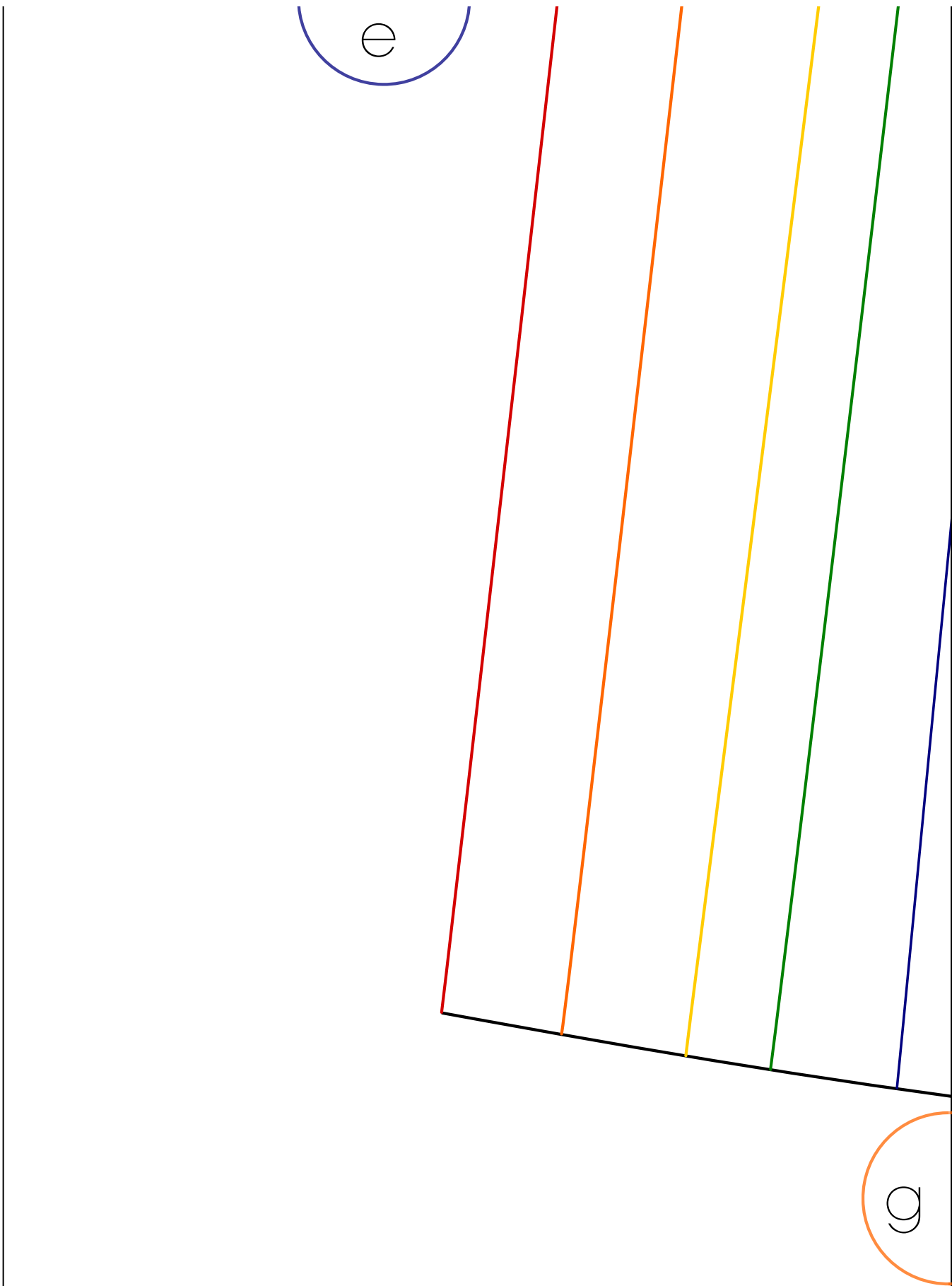


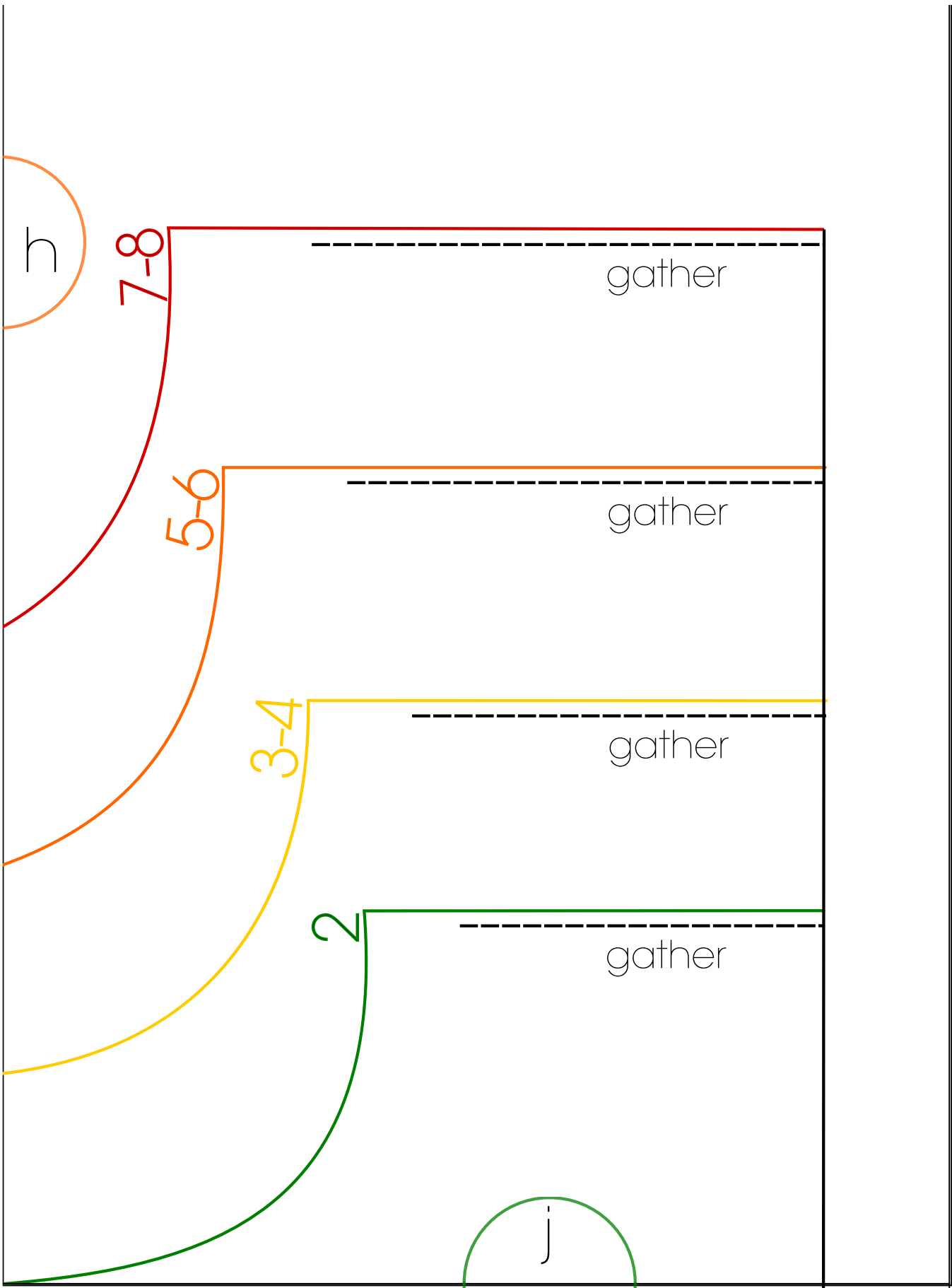


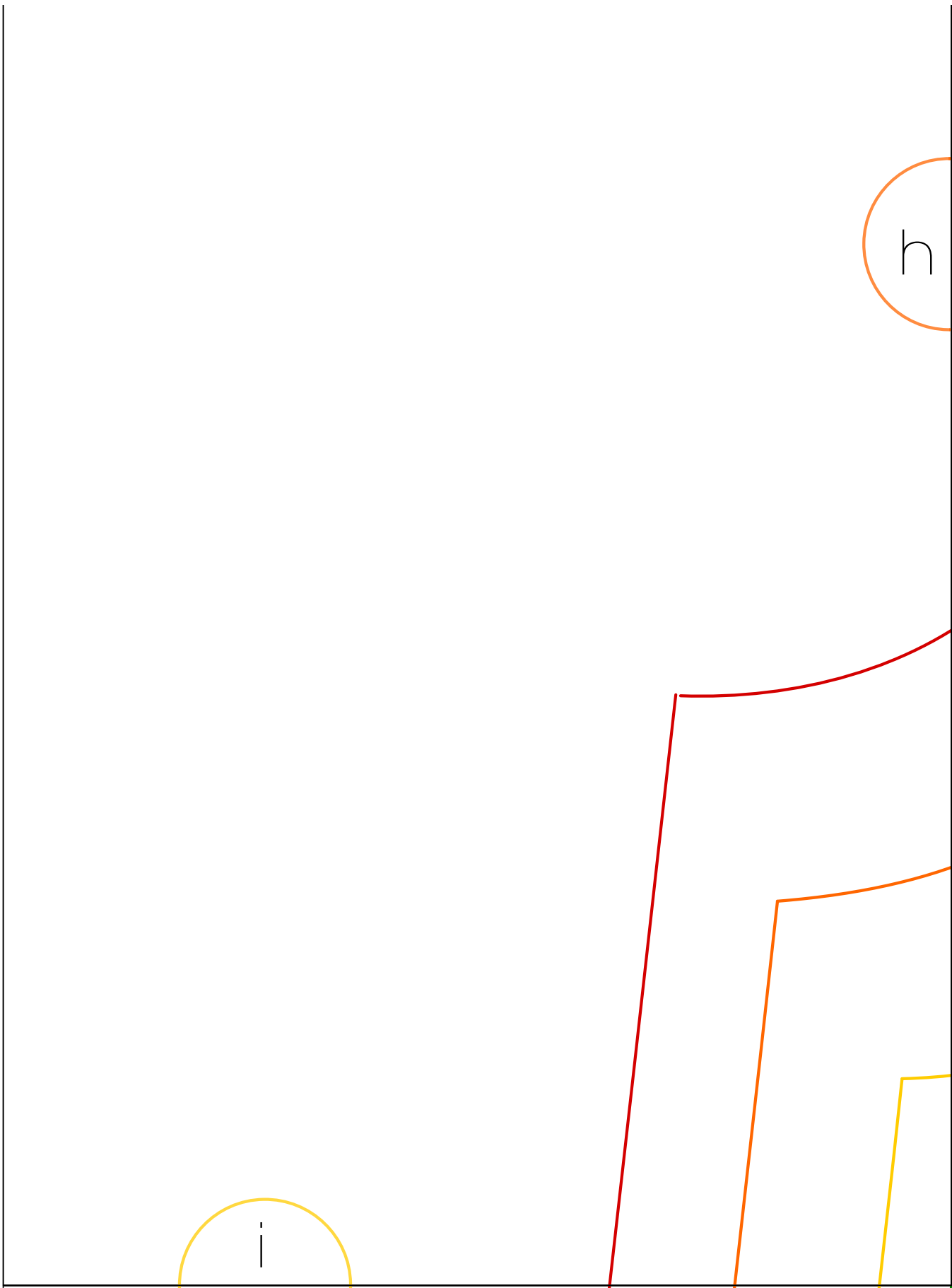


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12-18

gather

lower
back

cut 1

direction of stretch

