

Peppermint

The Bowen Dress

A free sewing pattern from *Peppermint Magazine*, created in collaboration with:



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Peppermint Patterns

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step one – find your fit

body measurements

		Size													
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Bust	cm	80	84	88	92	96	100	104	110	116	122	128	134	140	146
	inches	31.5	33.1	34.6	36.2	37.8	39.4	40.9	43.3	45.7	48.0	50.4	52.8	55.1	57.5
Waist	cm	64	68	72	76	80	84	88	94	100	106	112	118	124	130
	inches	25.2	26.8	28.3	29.9	31.5	33.1	34.6	37.0	39.4	41.7	44.1	46.5	48.8	51.2
Hips	cm	88	92	96	100	104	108	112	118	124	130	136	142	148	154
	inches	34.6	36.2	37.8	39.4	40.9	42.5	44.1	46.5	48.8	51.2	53.5	55.9	58.3	60.6

finished garment measurements

		Size													
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Bust	cm	116	120	124	128	132	136	140	146	152	158	164	170	176	182
	inches	45.7	47.2	48.8	50.4	52.0	53.5	55.1	57.5	59.8	62.2	64.6	66.9	69.3	71.7
Waist	cm	116	120	124	128	132	136	140	146	152	158	164	170	176	182
	inches	45.7	47.2	48.8	50.4	52.0	53.5	55.1	57.5	59.8	62.2	64.6	66.9	69.3	71.7
Hips	cm	212	218	224	230	236	242	248	254	260	266	272	278	284	290
	inches	83.5	85.8	88.2	90.6	92.9	95.3	97.6	100	102.4	104.7	107.1	109.4	111.8	114.2
Length	cm	96.5	97	97.5	98	98.5	99	99.5	100.5	101	102	102.5	103.5	104	105
	inches	38.0	38.2	38.4	38.6	38.8	39.0	39.2	39.5	39.8	40.1	40.4	40.6	40.9	41.2

step two – go shopping

suggested fabric

The Bowen Dress works well with light to medium weight woven fabrics. Try a light to medium weight cotton or linen, rayon or viscose. We used an organic sweet pea gauze from Spoonflower and love how light and floaty the dress came out.

fabric requirements

The Bowen Dress uses 3 meters of 150 cm wide fabric for all of the sizes. That’s equal to 3.3 yards of 59 inch wide fabric.

other materials required

You’ll also need buttons for the bodice of the dress. We used 4, 2cm-wide buttons, but you can use whatever buttons you like!

step three – make the pattern

printing the pattern

Download the pattern and open the file using a PDF reader – it's best to use Adobe Acrobat.

When printing the pattern, in the printer settings select 'Actual Size'. This is really important to ensure the scaling is accurate. To check the pattern has printed correctly, measure the little scale at the top of the page.

The following is a picture of the pattern once all of the pages are placed together.



If you'd rather not print out and stick together the rectangular pattern pieces, see over the page for the dimensions.

step three – continued

If you’d rather not print out and stick together the rectangular pattern pieces, here are the dimensions:

			Size													
			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Skirt	Length	cm	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69
		inches	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2
	Width	cm	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	129	132	135	138	141	144	147
		inches	42.5	43.7	44.9	46.1	47.2	48.4	49.6	50.8	52.0	53.1	54.3	55.5	56.7	57.9
Sleeve ruffle	Length	cm	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
		inches	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6
	Width	cm	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	111	114	117	120	123	126	129
		inches	37.8	38.6	39.4	40.2	40.9	41.7	42.5	43.7	44.9	46.1	47.2	48.4	49.6	50.8

assembling the pattern

You can either stick the pages together and then cut the pattern pieces out or cut the pattern pieces out and then stick them together – it’s totally up to you!

When you stick the pages together, make sure that you match the small triangles in the corners and along the longest edges of each page. You will notice that there are small white borders around each page. You can either cut these off or leave them on and overlap the pages a little.

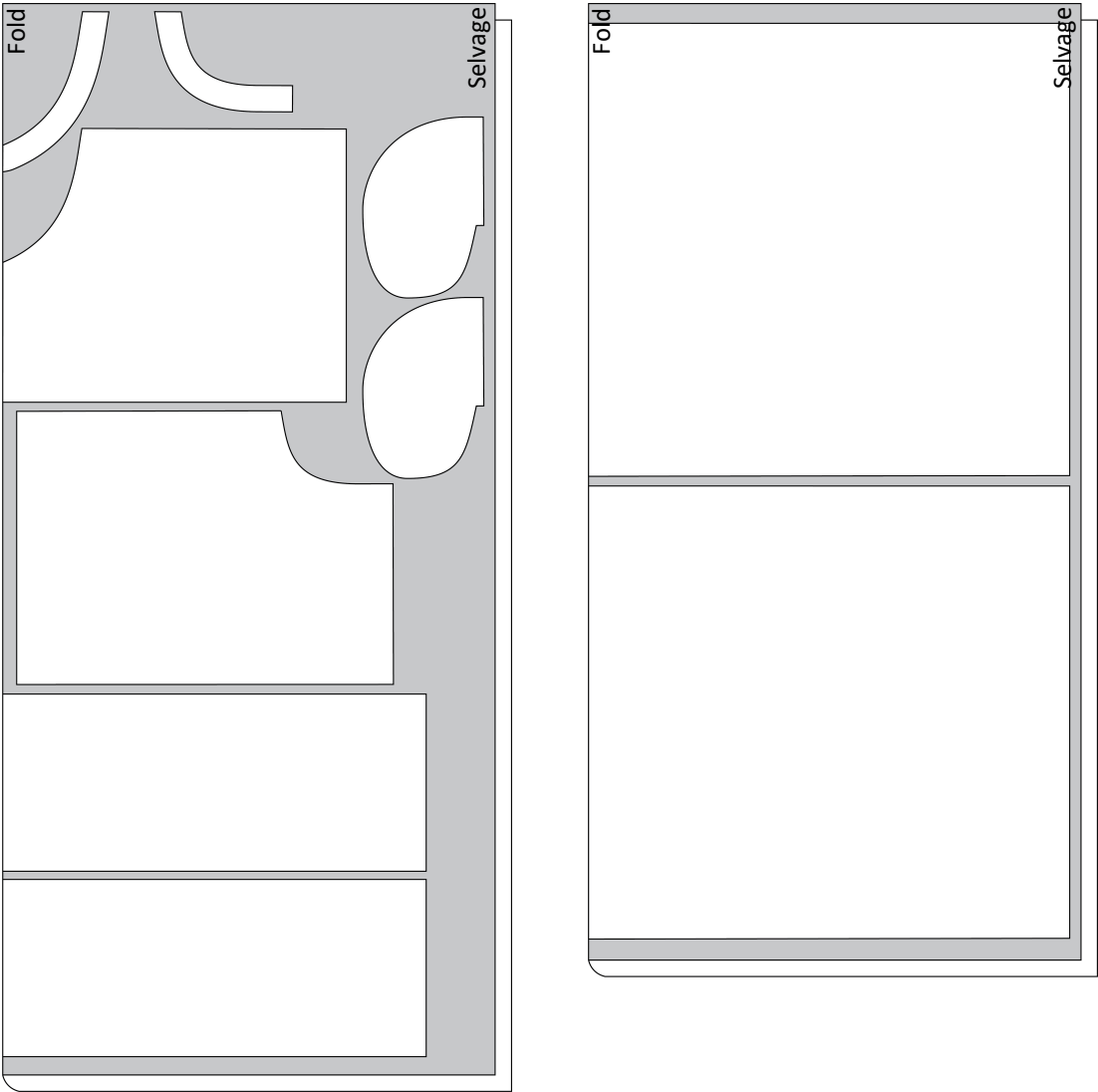
step four – cut up your fabric

Fold the fabric and lay the pattern pieces out on it, as shown in the picture below. It's best to add weights to the top of the pattern pieces, or pin them to the fabric, so the pattern pieces don't move about.

Cut the pattern pieces out of the fabric and mark the notches on the bodice and skirt pattern pieces.

Right side of the fabric

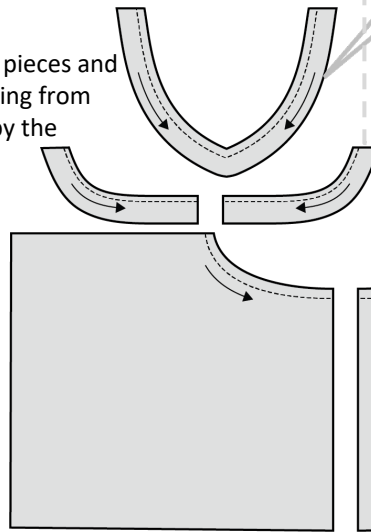
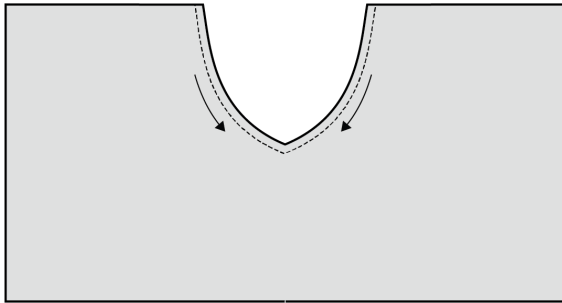
Wrong side of the fabric



step five – get to making

Note: all seam allowances are 1cm.

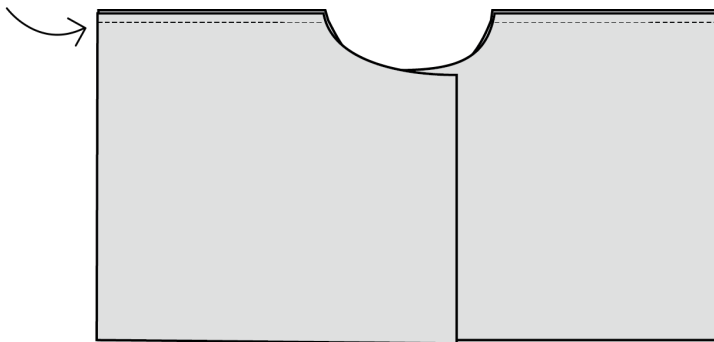
1. Staystitch the neckline of the bodice pattern pieces and also the neck hole facing pattern pieces, sewing from the shoulder down to the centre (as shown by the arrows in the pictures)



Here's a tip!

The purpose of staystitching is to ensure that the neckline keeps its shape while you sew it.

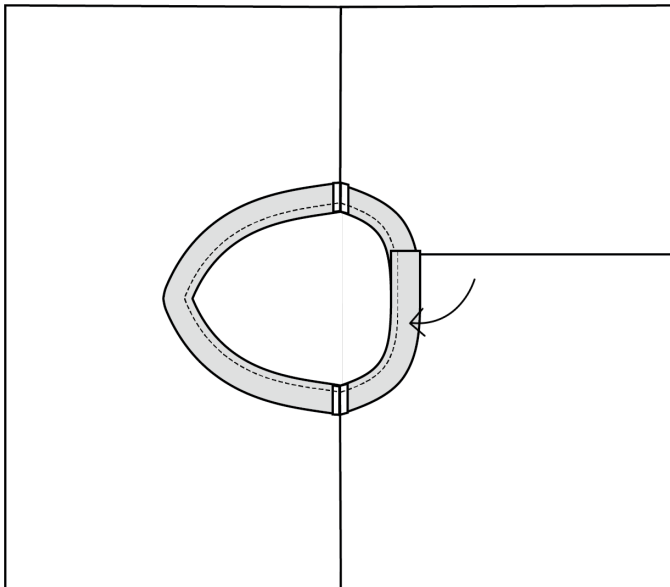
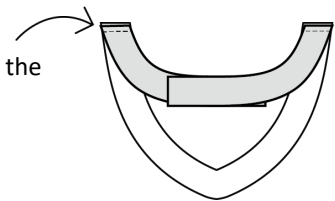
2. With the right sides of the fabric facing each other, sew the Bodice – A pattern pieces and the Bodice – B pattern pieces together at the shoulder seams. Finish the seams and iron them down flat.



Here's a tip!

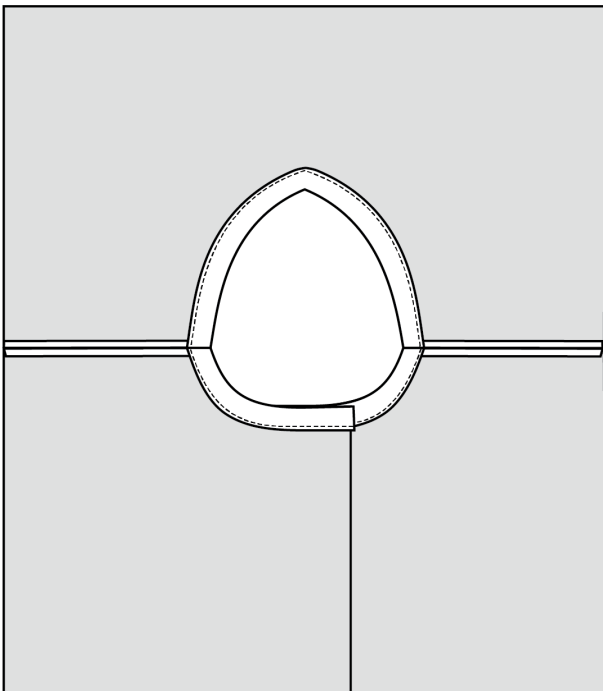
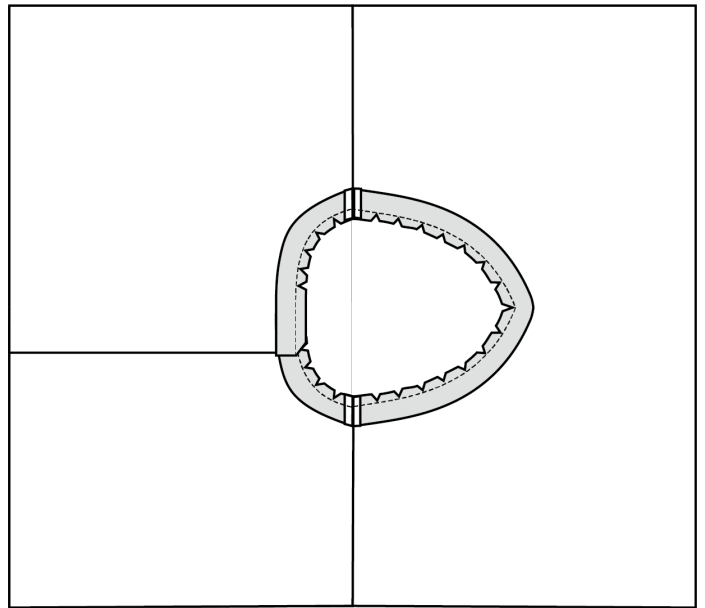
Finishing a seam just ensures that the fabric doesn't fray, and the garment lasts longer. To finish a seam you can either overlock it or use a zig zag stitch.

3. With the right sides of the fabric facing each other, sew the Neck Hole Facing - A pattern pieces to the Neck Hole Facing - B pattern pieces at the shoulder seams. Finish the seams and iron them down flat. Finish the outside edge of the facing.



4. With the right sides of the fabric facing each other, pin the unfinished edge of the neck hole facing to the neck hole of the bodice, matching the shoulder seams. Sew the neck hole facing to the neck hole of the bodice.

5. Make small cuts in the seam of the neck hole. This will ensure that the neckband sits nice and flat. Be careful to not cut over the stitching!

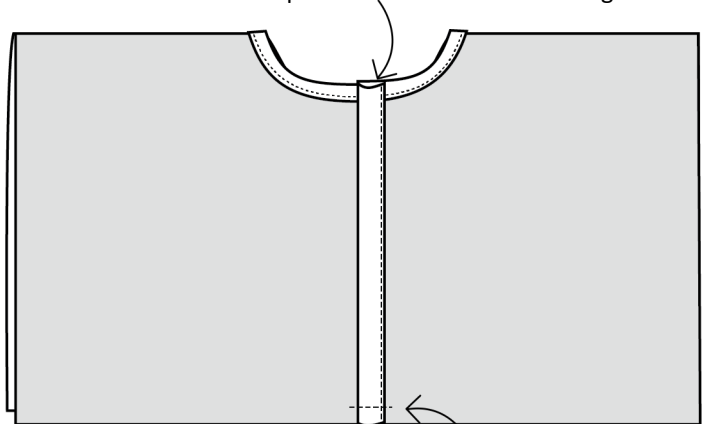


6. Fold the neck hole facing into the inside of the bodice and iron. Topstitch the neck hole facing to the bodice.

7. Fold the centre front seam of the two Bodice - A pattern pieces over 1cm toward the wrong side of the fabric and iron. Fold them over again 4cm toward the wrong side of the fabric and iron. Topstitch close to the folded edge.

Here's a tip!

Basting stitches are the same length as gathering stitches. In this case they are used to hold the two Bodice - A pattern pieces together to make it easier to sew the skirt to the bodice. The basting stitches can be pulled out once you've finished the dress.

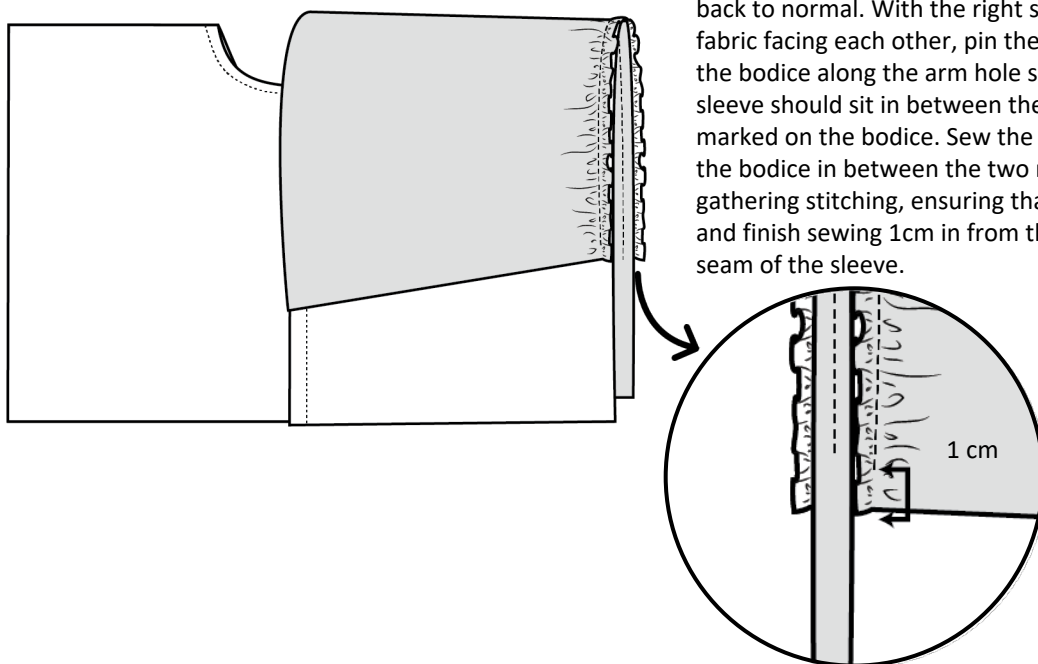


8. Overlap the left side of the Bodice - A pattern piece over the right side by 4cm. Baste stitch the two Bodice - A pattern pieces together, just to hold them in place.

9. Finish the arm hole seam of the bodice and all four edges of each sleeve pattern piece. Change the stitch length on your sewing machine to the longest length. Sew a row of stitching along the arm hole seam of the sleeve 0.5cm from the edge (the arm hole seam is one of the longer edges of the pattern piece). Sew another row of stitching 1.5cm away from the same edge. Knot the threads at one end of each row of stitching together. Pull on the loose ends of the threads, so that the fabric starts to gather. Keep gathering the fabric until the seam is the following length, depending on your size:

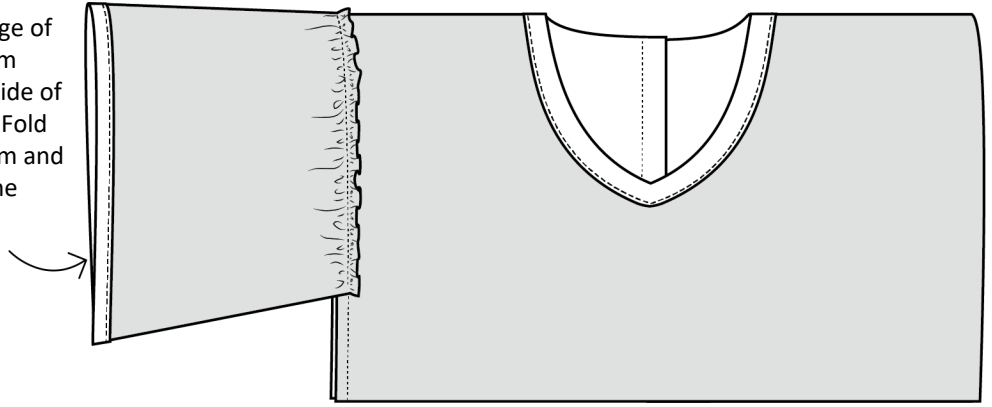
Size A	46.5 cm	Size H	53.5 cm
Size B	47.5 cm	Size I	55 cm
Size C	48.5 cm	Size J	56.5 cm
Size D	49.5 cm	Size K	58 cm
Size E	50.5 cm	Size L	59.5 cm
Size F	51.5 cm	Size M	61 cm
Size G	52.5 cm	Size N	62.5 cm

10. Change the stitch length on your machine back to normal. With the right sides of the fabric facing each other, pin the sleeves to the bodice along the arm hole seam. The sleeve should sit in between the two notches marked on the bodice. Sew the sleeves to the bodice in between the two rows of gathering stitching, ensuring that you start and finish sewing 1cm in from the underarm seam of the sleeve.

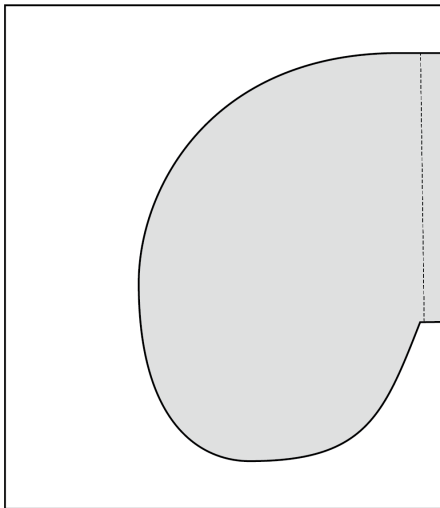


11. With the right sides of the fabric facing each other, sew the underarm seams of the sleeves together.
12. Sew the side seams of the bodice together, ensuring that the stitching meets the armhole seam you just sewed at step 10.

13. Fold the bottom edge of the sleeves over 1cm toward the wrong side of the fabric and iron. Fold them over again 1cm and topstitch close to the folded edge.

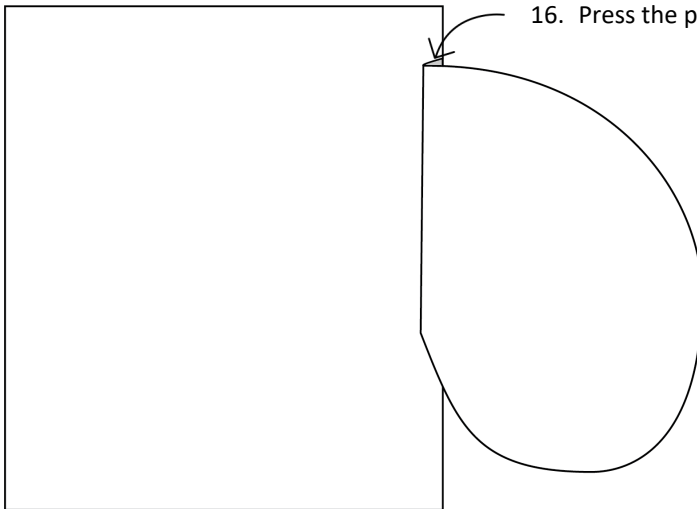


14. Finish the edges of the pocket pattern pieces, and the side seams of the skirt (the side seams are the seams that measure 69cm).



15. Using one of the pocket pieces and the front side of the skirt, place the straight edge of the pocket against the side seam of the skirt in between the two notches, with the right sides of the fabric facing each other. Sew the pocket to the side seam of the skirt, using a 1cm seam allowance.

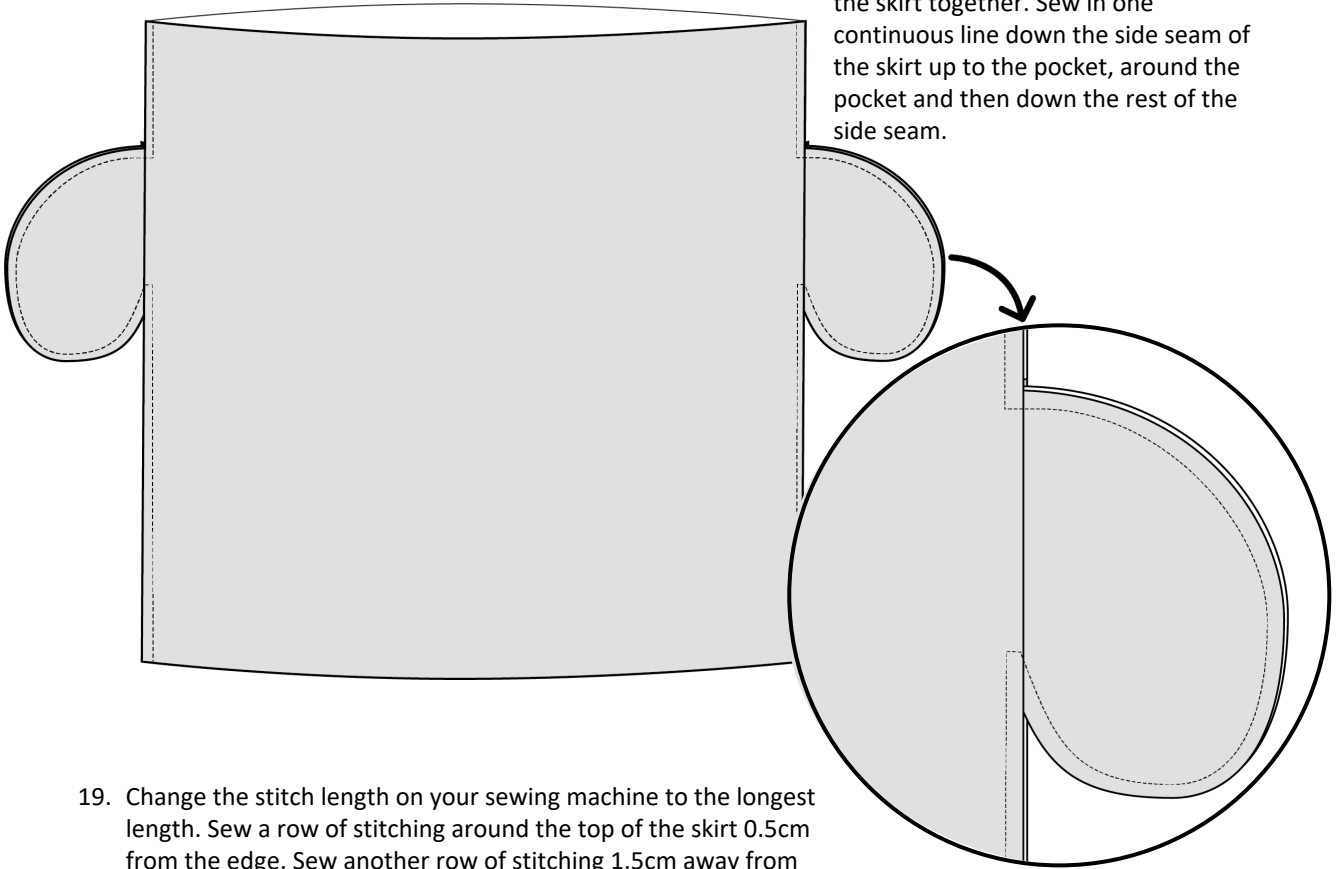
If you drafted out your skirt pieces using the provided table, simply place the pocket so the top of the pocket sits 17cm down from the top of the skirt.



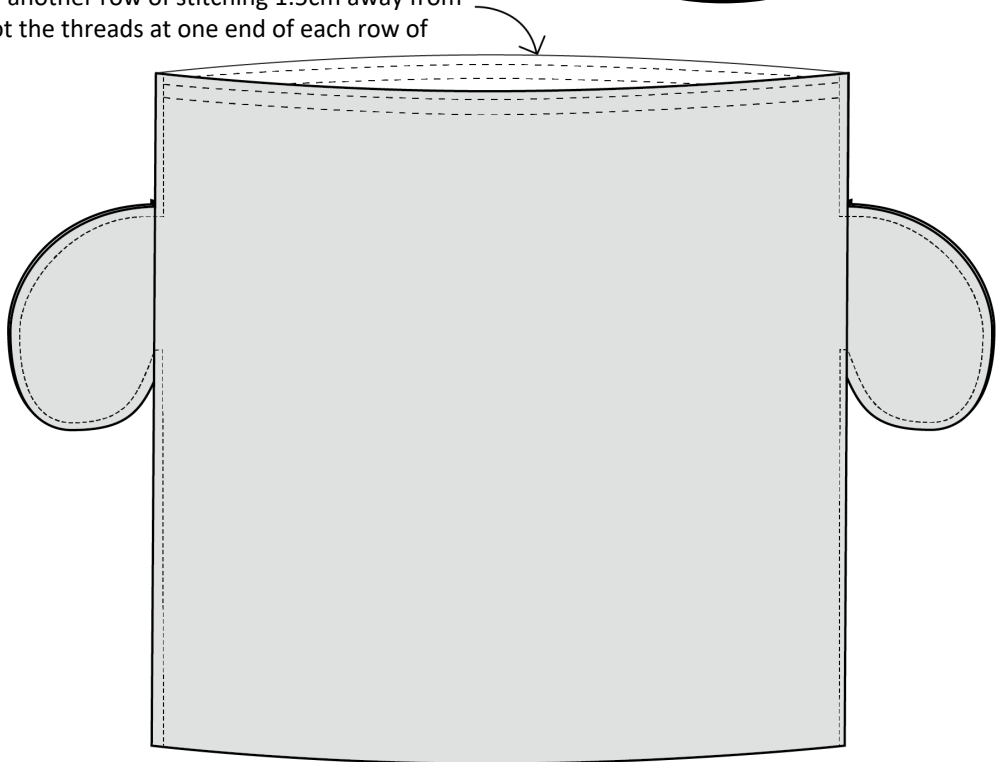
16. Press the pocket towards the outside of the skirt.

17. Repeat steps 15 and 16 with the other three pocket pieces, sewing them to the front and back of the skirt so that each skirt piece has a pocket piece attached to each side seam in between the notches.

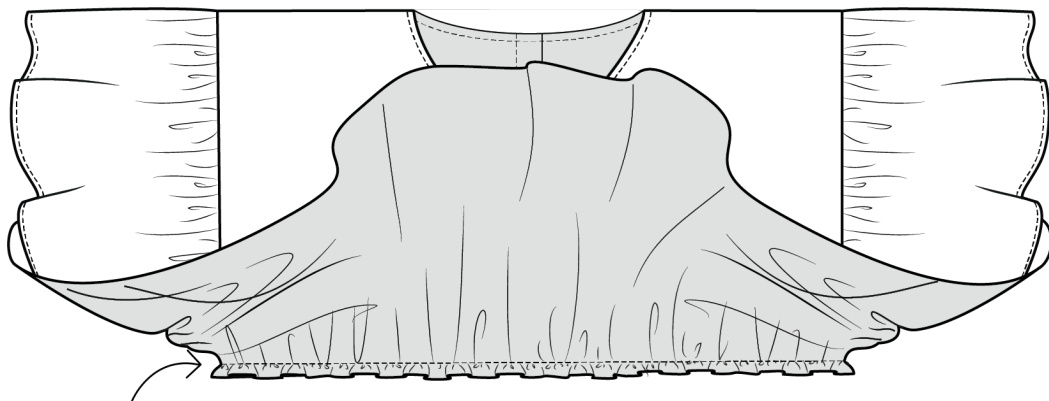
18. With the right sides of the fabric facing each other, place the front and back of the skirt together. Sew in one continuous line down the side seam of the skirt up to the pocket, around the pocket and then down the rest of the side seam.



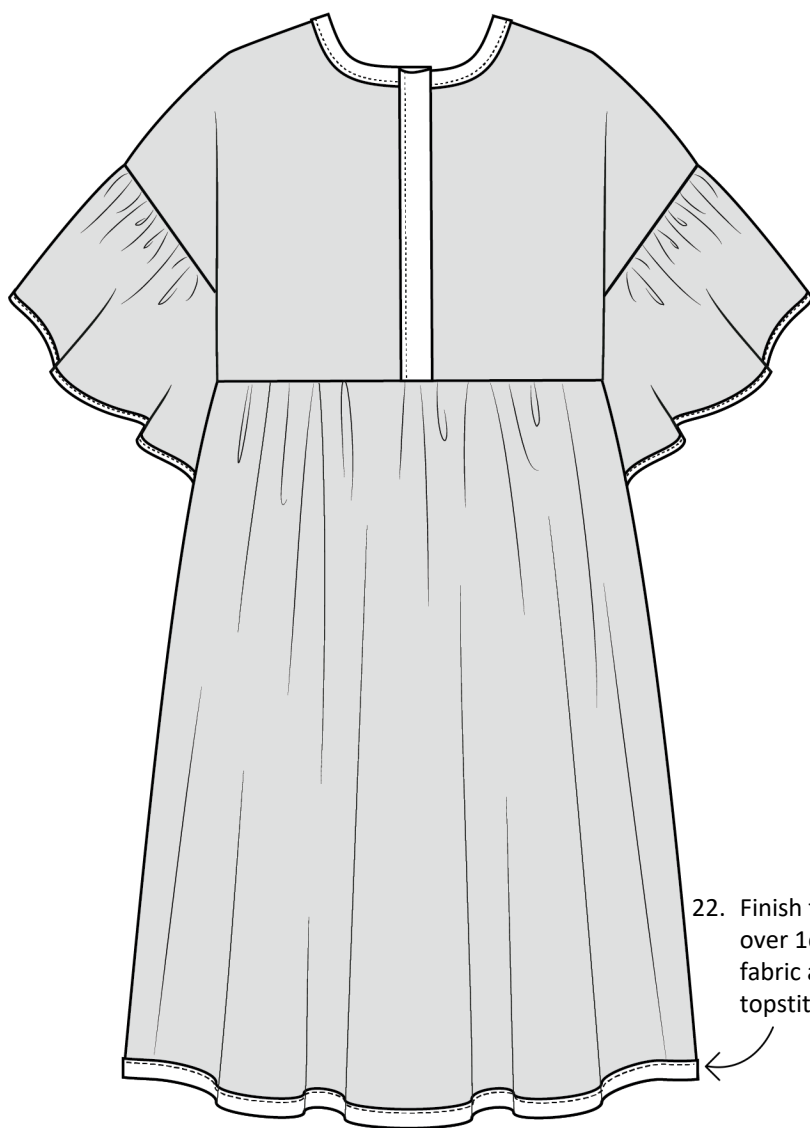
19. Change the stitch length on your sewing machine to the longest length. Sew a row of stitching around the top of the skirt 0.5cm from the edge. Sew another row of stitching 1.5cm away from the same edge. Knot the threads at one end of each row of stitching together.



20. Pull on the loose ends of the threads, so that the fabric starts to gather. Keep gathering the fabric until the length of the top edge of the skirt is the same as the length of the bottom edge of the bodice.

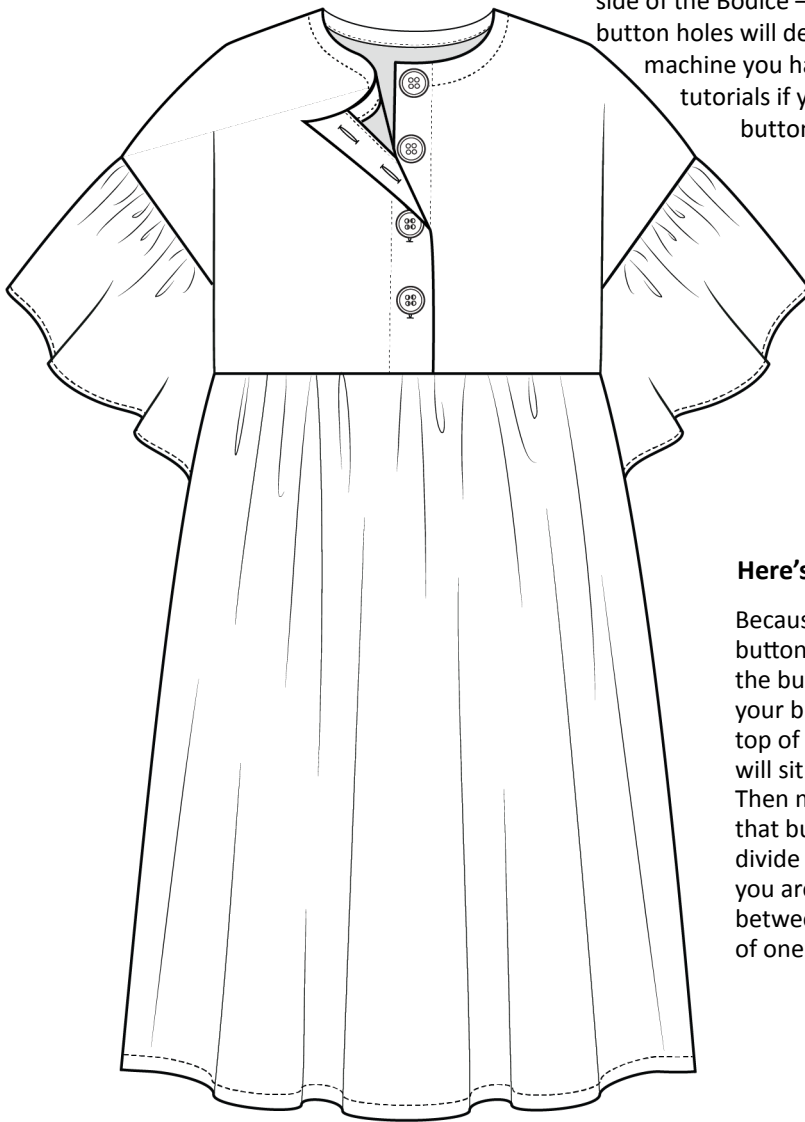


21. Change the stitch length on your sewing machine back to normal. Pin the skirt to the bottom of the bodice and sew the skirt to the bodice between the two rows of gathered stitching. Finish the seam.



22. Finish the hem of the dress. Fold the hem over 1cm toward the wrong side of the fabric and iron. Fold it over again 2cm and topstitch close to the folded edge.

23. Sew your buttons onto the right side of the Bodice – A pattern piece. Sew button holes vertically down the left side of the Bodice – A pattern piece. How you sew button holes will depend on the type of sewing machine you have. It's best to check for online tutorials if you're unsure how to make a buttonhole with your sewing machine.



Here's a tip!

Because you can use any size and number of buttons you fancy, there are no markings for where the buttons should sit on the Bowen Dress. To space your buttons evenly, simply place one button at the top of the bodice (generally the top of the button will sit 0.5cm down from the top of the bodice). Then measure the distance between the middle of that button and the bottom of the bodice, and divide that measurement by the number of buttons you are using. That will give you the distance between each button (measuring from the middle of one button to the middle of the next button).

24. Remove all of the gathering stitching from the dress. Snip the knots and pull on the threads and the stitching should come right out. And that's it, you've made yourself a Bowen Dress!