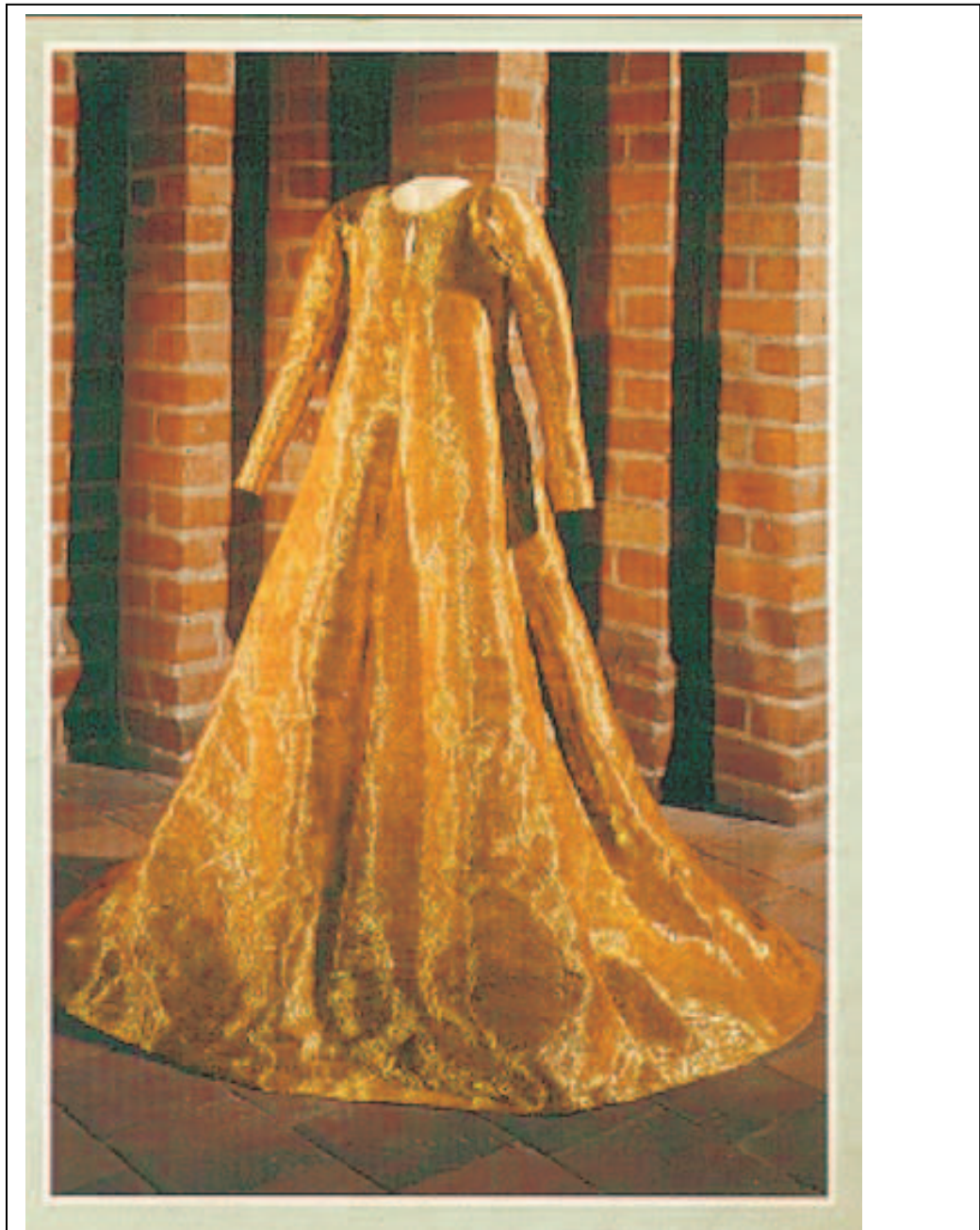


Cotehardie Construction from Extant Pieces

Mistress Mairghead de Chesholme mairghead@juno.com
Mka Jacquelyne Aubuchon

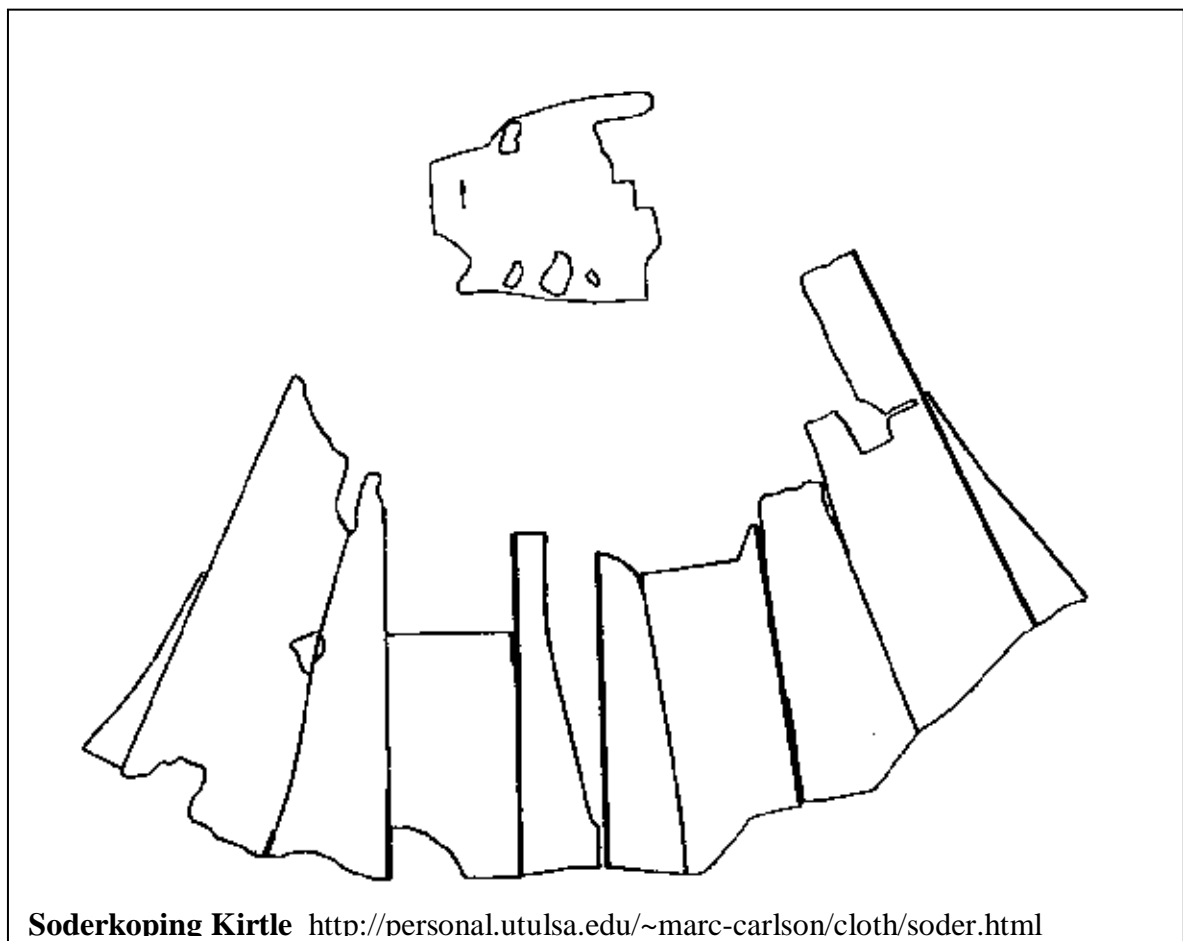


Uppsala gown reconstruction

http://www.kostym.cz/Anglicky/1_Originaly/01_Goticke/I_01_13.htm

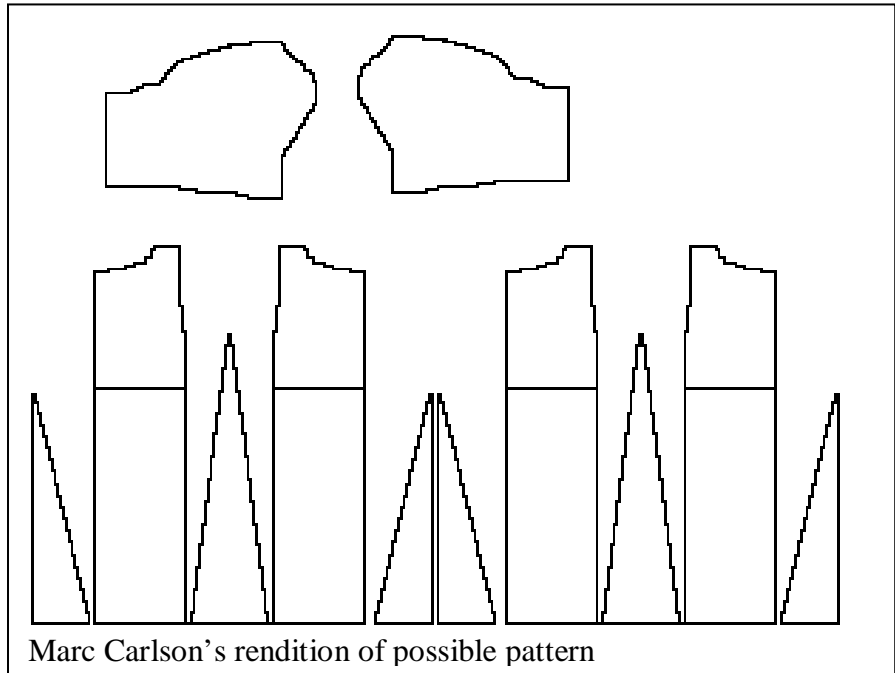
Very few examples of clothing from the High Middle Ages have survived to the present day. Of those garments, even fewer are available for study to the amateur costumer. Marc Carlson's website "Some Clothing of the Middle Ages" provides an invaluable resource for the costumer to find garments with which to make comparisons.

For this examination, I have selected five garments for comparison. These garments include the Soderkoping kirtle, Herjolfnes No. 42, Herjolfnes No. 39, Herjolfnes No. 38, and the Uppsala gown. The Herjolfnes garments immediately precede the cotehardie in fashion, but are not necessarily cotes. What they show is a continuity of cut and style that can arguably be carried over to application in construction of cotehardies. For example, think of a man's dress shirt. Envision the places where the seams lie on a modern shirt. One hundred years ago, the technology was radically different, but the seams will correspond on a man's shirt from the 1800's. Clothing construction is constantly tweaked, skirts get longer and shorter, dresses range from fitted to volumous, but the basic lines for seams remain the same. By utilizing what is known on the above five garments one can reasonably reproduce a cotehardie using a pattern that would have been plausible at the time.

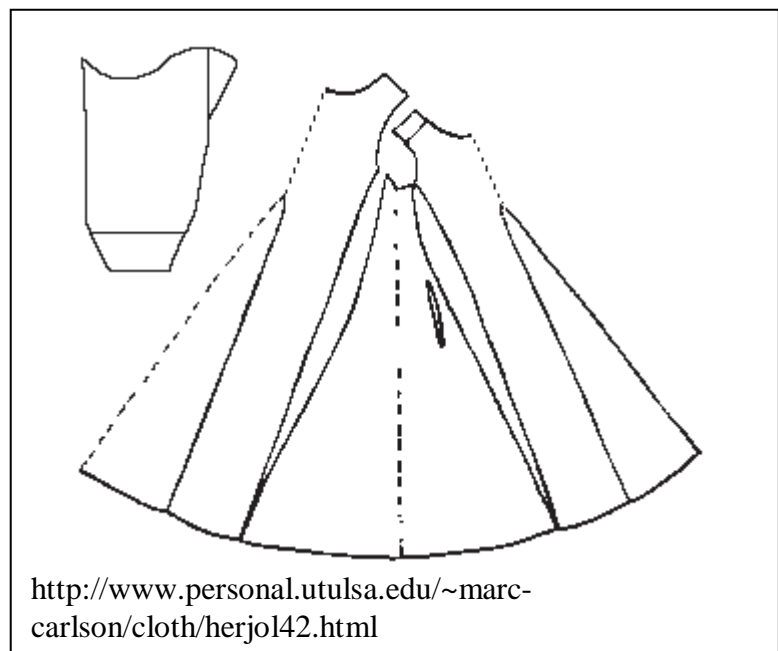


Soderkoping Kirtle <http://personal.utulsa.edu/~marc-carlson/cloth/soder.html>

The first garment and most degraded of the five is the Soderkoping kirtle. This garment dates from 1242 CE. It is a parti-colored garment in blue and red. The seams run laterally in front and back, it also has gores on the sides as well as the front and back. The top part of the garment from the torso area is missing. Marc Carlson presents a theory as to how the garment may have been constructed.



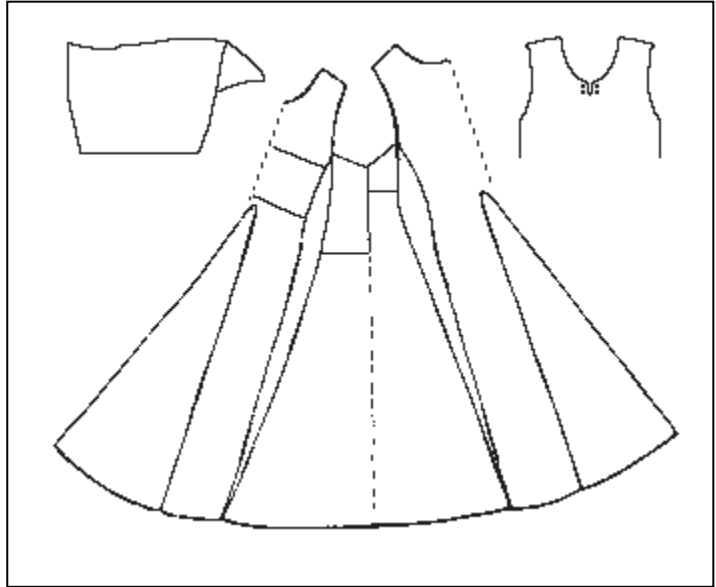
Herjolfnes No. 42 presents us with a garment consisting of front and back gores as well. This garment probably belonged to a male and dates from the mid to late 14th Century. The front and back are solid pieces. The side gores extend to the armscye. The garment is one and a half times as wide as it is long. An interesting note to this piece is the pocket slits. They are not left in the seams where the side gores



meet the front panel, but set in the side gore itself. The hem and pocket slits are edged in cording as opposed to the rolled hem that modern stitchers would employ.



<http://www.gelfling.dds.nl/herj39.htm>
1



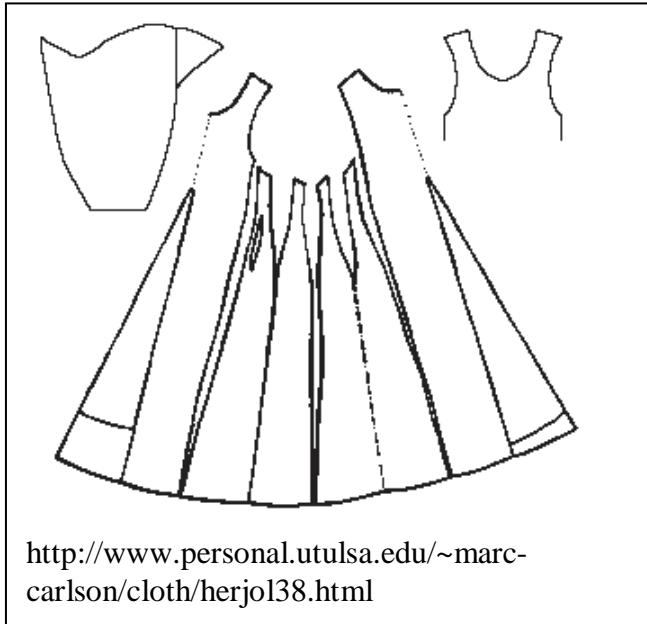
Herjolfsnes No 39 dates from 1420-1530 CE. This places this garment in the time period of the cotehardie. This short sleeved dress bears many of the characteristics of No. 42 in construction. The neckline has a small slit edged with two

holes on each side for lacing. It is noted on research done by Maggie Forest that the Greenlanders used a priksom stitch which is a fine stitch closely resembling a seam done on a modern sewing machine.

Herjolfsnes No. 38 will be familiar to many in the SCA. This garment has been published in many places and is commonly referred to as a "10-gore dress". The title "10-gore" is misleading as it has, similar to No. 42 and No. 39, one gore on each side and a gore in front and in back. This garment makes use of false seams and darts in the side gores giving it the appearance of having more gores than are actually utilized. Each side gore has three darts in the side for shaping that run from under the arm to the hip. As with No. 42., the pocket slits are cut at the hip into the side gore and not left in the seam.



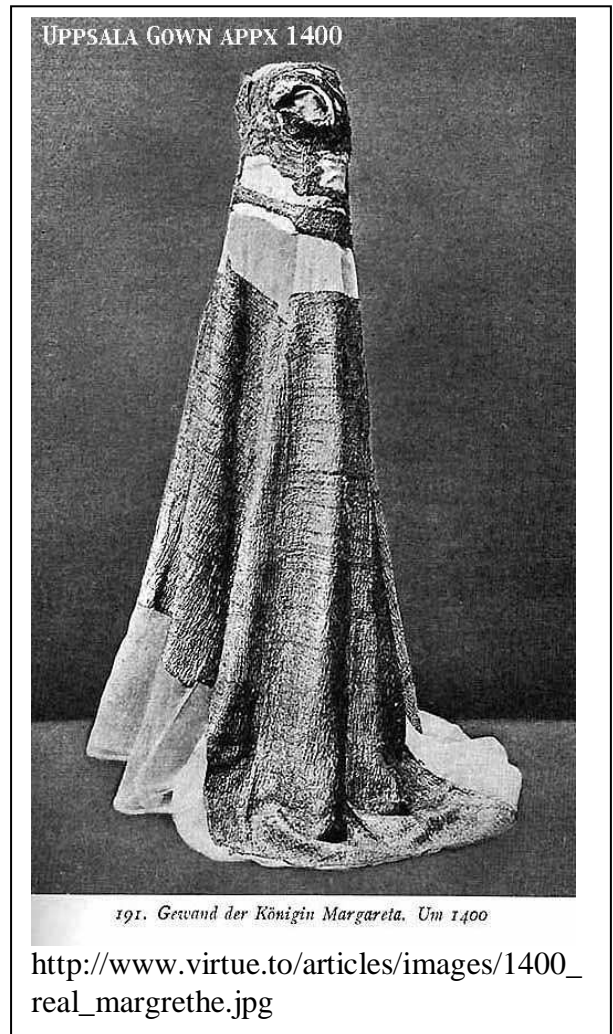
http://www.kostym.cz/Anglicky/1_Originaly/01_Goticke/I_01_36.htm



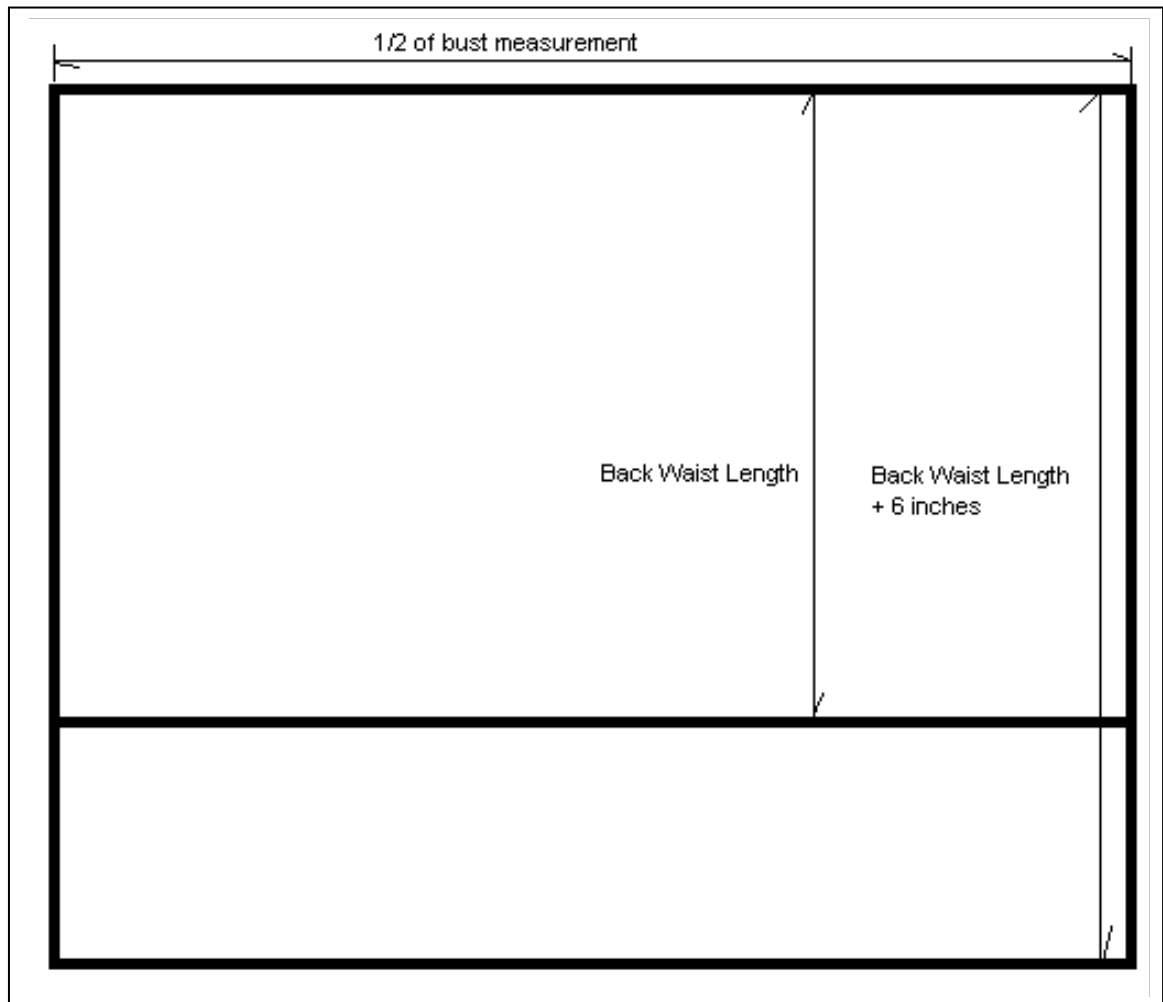
The last garment utilized for this comparison is the Uppsala gown. Reportedly made for Margareta Valdemarsdotter, the 10 year old future Queen of the Kalmar Union, this dress dates from 1403-1439 CE. This garment is a four panel piece that flares on each side of the piece at the hips. Unlike the four panel popular in the SCA, there are no straight sides to the pattern pieces. A recent reconstruction is available for view at the Uppsala Cathedral and is pictured at the beginning of this paper.

By comparing archaeological data from these existing gowns, we can see several commonalities to the structure. First, each quadrant of the garment flares in front, back, and at the sides. With the first four garments, the flaring is achieved with the use of gores. The Uppsala gown accomplishes the same effect without cutting a separate piece for gores. By examining the Herjolfnes gowns, we can see that much of the fitting is accomplished at the side gores. The sleeves that have survived show us a fairly large armscye. The sleeve piece itself is fitted flaring dramatically to fit the armscye, often with the utilization of a gore. We can also see a commonality in the gore widths of the skirting in that the gores are at least as wide as the body panels.

From this we can approximate a period patter that will achieve the look of the close fitted and supportive cotehardie for women. Begin by taking the following measurements: height, bust, waist, hips, duck hand, sleeve length, and bent elbow. Using the Sartor System we will develop a pattern. At the back of this handout is a

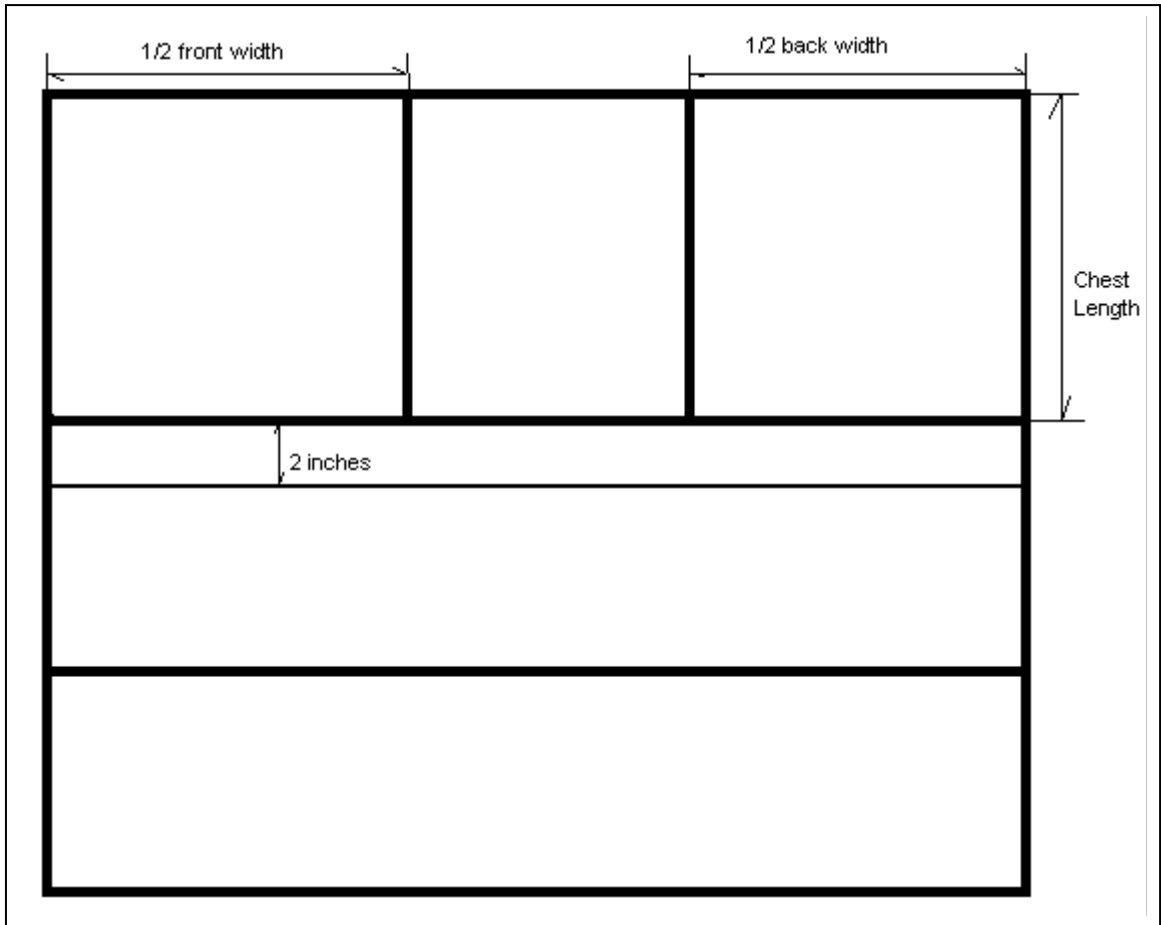


worksheet to fill out for the required measurements. Once you have the basic measurements, follow the steps to design your pattern.

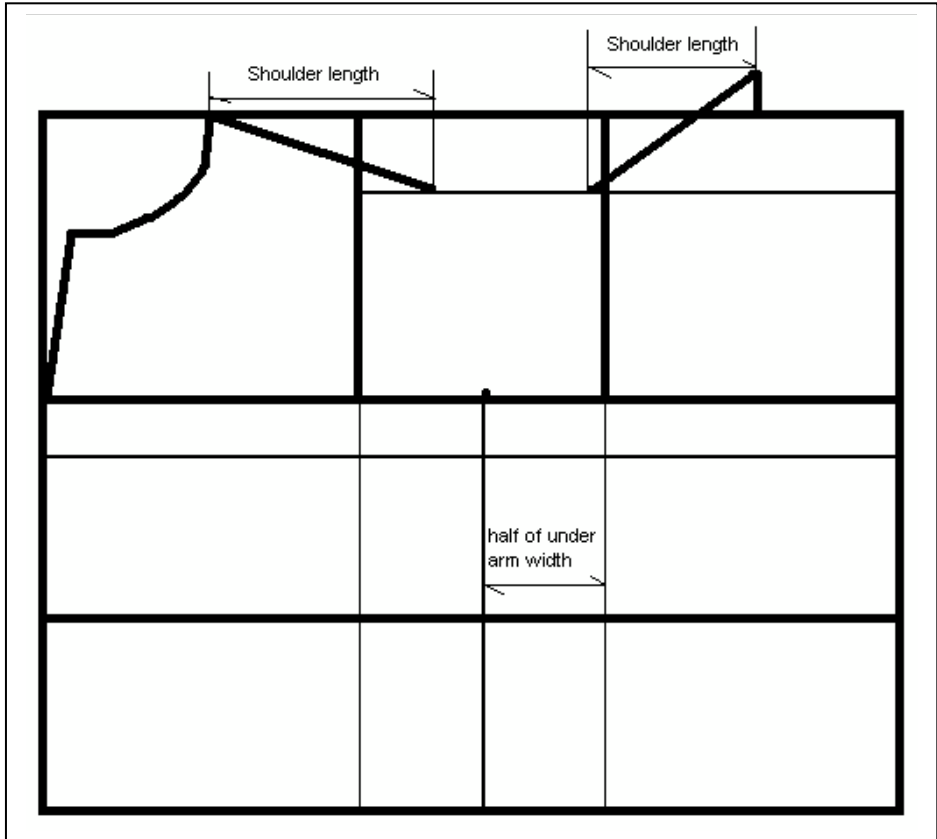


Begin with the basic body block. Draw a box. First from the corner of your paper, draw out half of your bust measurement. Then draw a line down the back waist length plus six inches. Square out your box from the back waist length and the back waist length plus six inches. Square down from the end of the bust measurement line to complete your square.

Next Measure down from your beginning point the chest length and square out to the front of the garment. From the top (shoulder) measure in $\frac{1}{2}$ of the front width and square down. From the back measure $\frac{1}{2}$ of the back width and square down. Draw a line across the body two inches below the line for the chest length. We now have the front panel rough outline, the back, and in the center a box for the armhole. The line two inches below the chest length represents the under bust. The bottom line represents the hips and the line between the under bust and hips represents the waist.

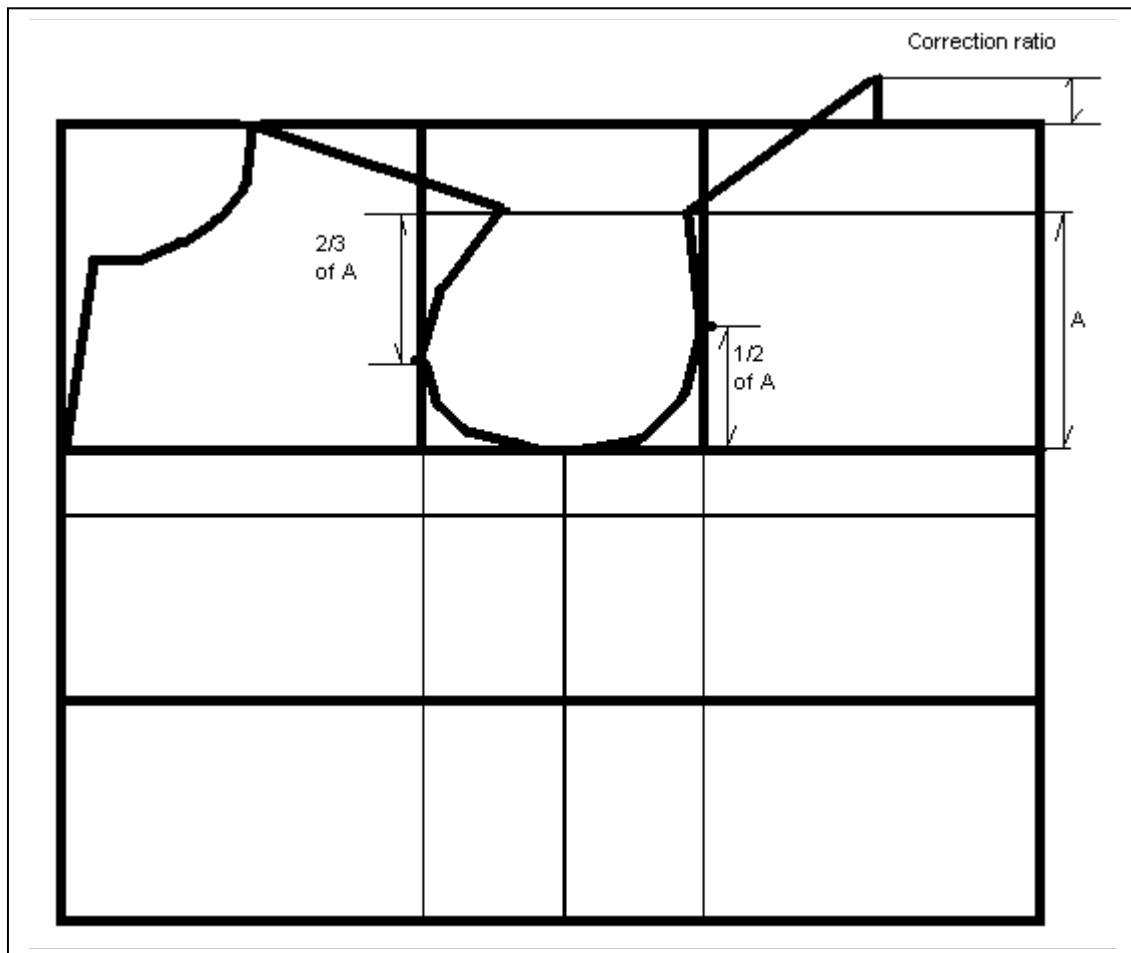


Next, we will outline the natural neck line and slope of shoulder. From the back draw a line out at the 1/5 the chest length beneath the shoulder. On the front,



split the front panel in half to mark the neck width. Subtract $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch from that measurement and mark down for the front of the neck. Round out the neckline. From the top of the front panel draw a line the length of the shoulder and

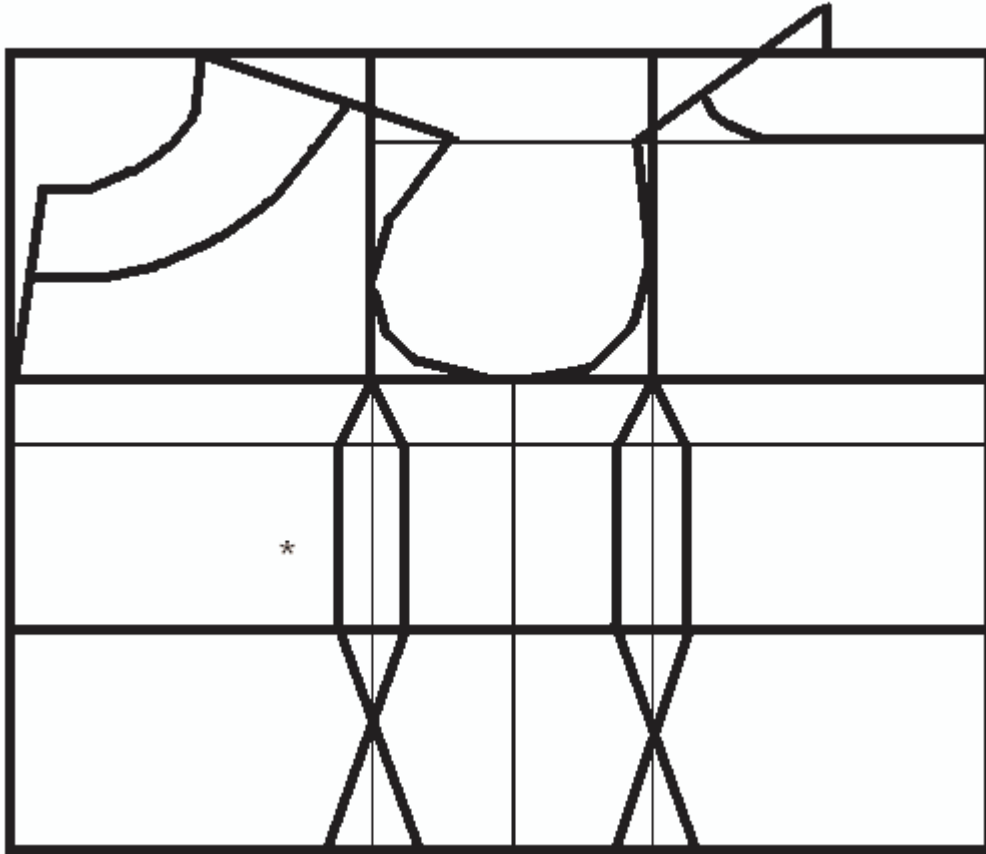
intersect it with the shoulder slope line. On the back panel, measure over the same distance as in the front and draw a line up the length of the correction ratio. Draw a line the same length as the shoulder intersecting the shoulder line as in the front. At the bottom of the armscye square, draw a line downward at the midsection.



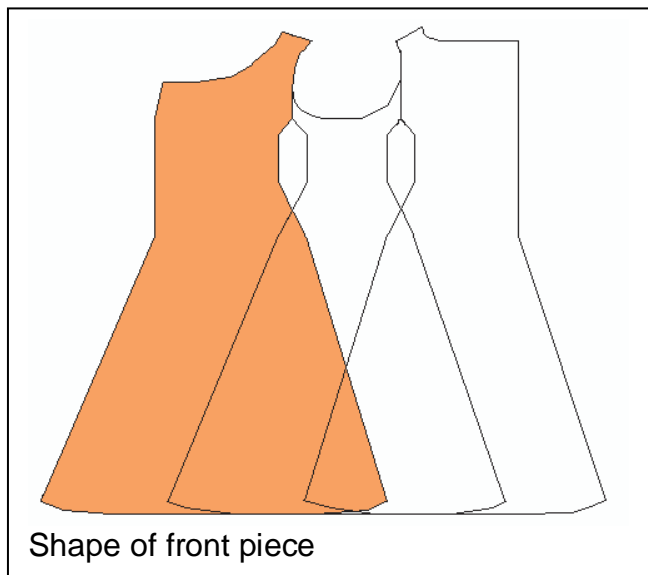
Next we will draw the shape of the armscye. You will see a box in front of you at the armscye area. To the front, make a mark $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way down from the bottom of the shoulder line. Make the next mark $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way across the front half of the underarm. The last mark is placed at the halfway point of the back. Connect the end of the shoulders to these marks with a sloping curve.

Now we will mark the waist suppression and under bust suppression and start the top of the side gore. First, take the waist suppression measurement we calculated at the beginning. Divide this number by 8. Follow the line delineating the side of the front piece to the waist. Mark out at the waist this distance on both sides of the line. Do the same at the under bust line. Follow the back line delineating the side of the back piece and mark in the same way. Subtract the waist measurement from the hip measurement. Divide this number by 8 and do the same on each line at the hip. Connect the lines as shown.

* Take 1/4 of waist suppression in at side of each panel

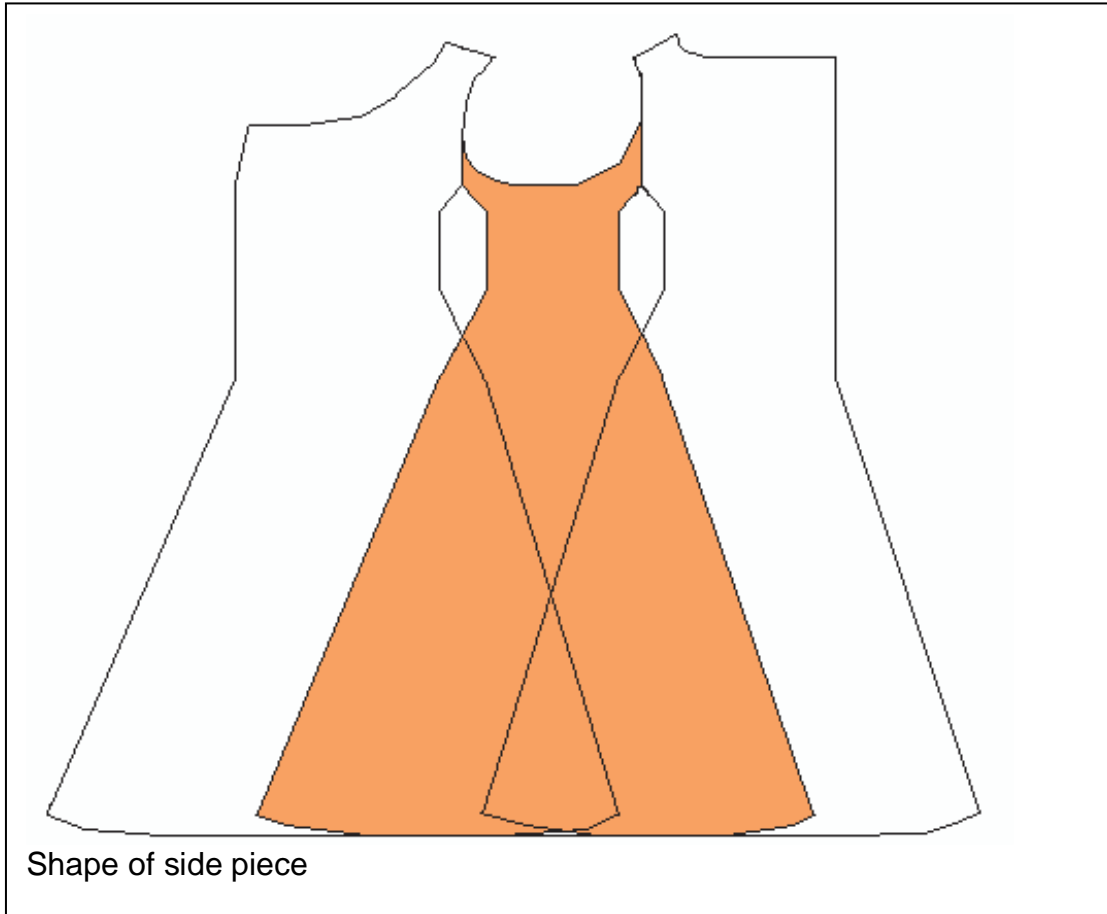


Finally, we will lay out the neckline. From about two inches from the shoulder start drawing the front and back lines. Round the back down to the shoulder line placed earlier. In the front, mark the half way point of the front slope. Round out the front as in the diagram. You now have the basic torso shapes for your pattern pieces.

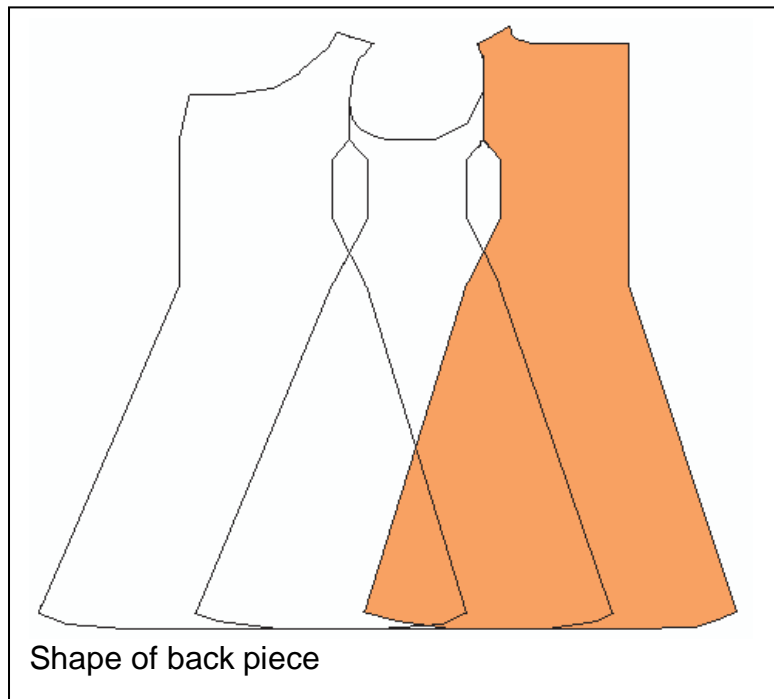


Make a mock up from this pattern to check fit in the torso. Take in at the seams as needed to adjust pattern to fit. Once finished mark alterations on a new pattern piece and cut out.

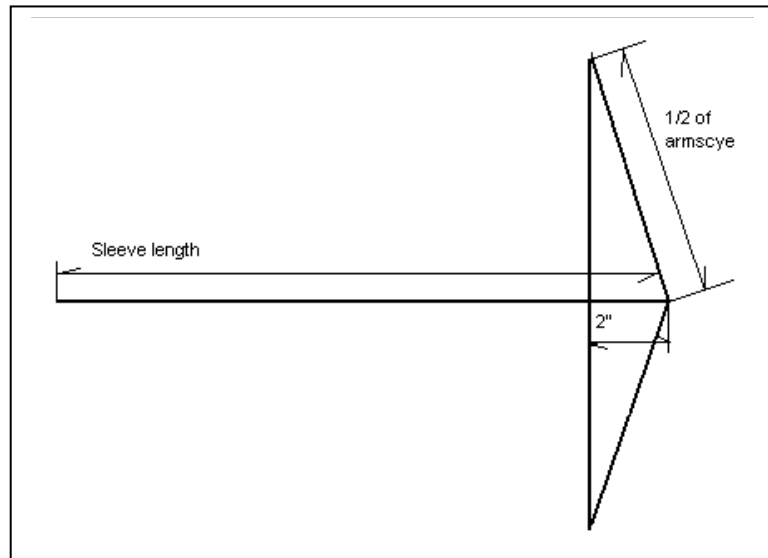
Measure your desired length from your hip. If you would like the skirt to pool, add 3 to 6 inches. Using your torso pattern, lay one piece at a time on new paper to make final pattern. Measure desired length from base of



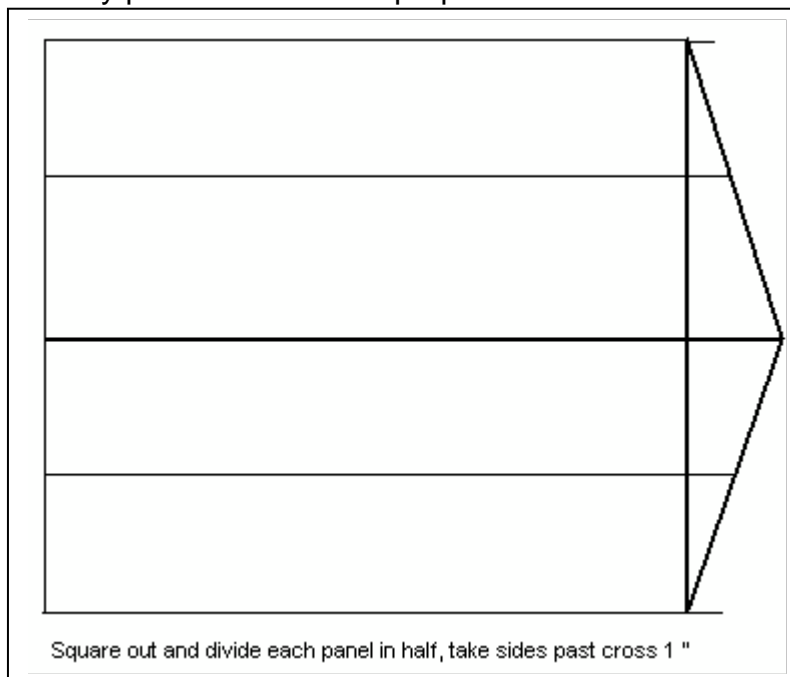
pattern and square out across front. Using a yard stick or piece of twine. Anchor one end of desired length at side of pattern and pivot to desired width marking at end of string to lay hem. If not using a gore in front, do the same at center front and center back. If using a gore make gore piece with pivot method with sides and center of gore to desired length. You now have your pattern pieces for the body.



Now move on to the sleeve pattern. Measure the armscye with a flexible measuring tape and divide by two. On a new sheet of paper draw a line down the center the desired length of your sleeve. Two inches from one end, draw a line perpendicular to the first. From the end of the line draw a diagonal line the length of half of your armscye meeting the second line you drew. You now have the foundation of your sleeve pattern.



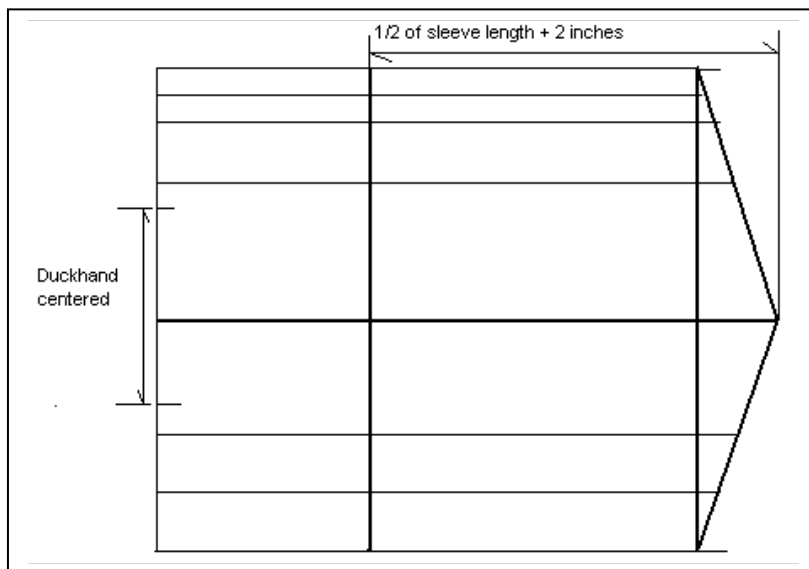
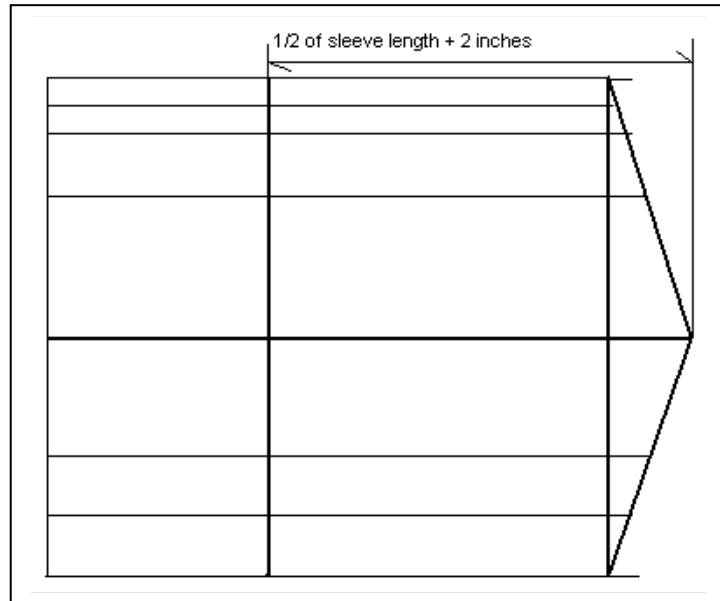
Next we will square out the sleeve at the opposite end of the triangle we have drawn as shown in the diagram. Extend each side piece one inch longer than where the diagonal intersects with the side. Half each side lengthwise. Keep dividing side sections in half as shown until you have it divided as shown. Next measure the center point from the peak of the triangle to the wrist to find the halfway point. Make a line perpendicular to the center as shown two inches from the center towards the wrist.



Mark the width of the wrist by centering the duck hand measurement at the center wrist.

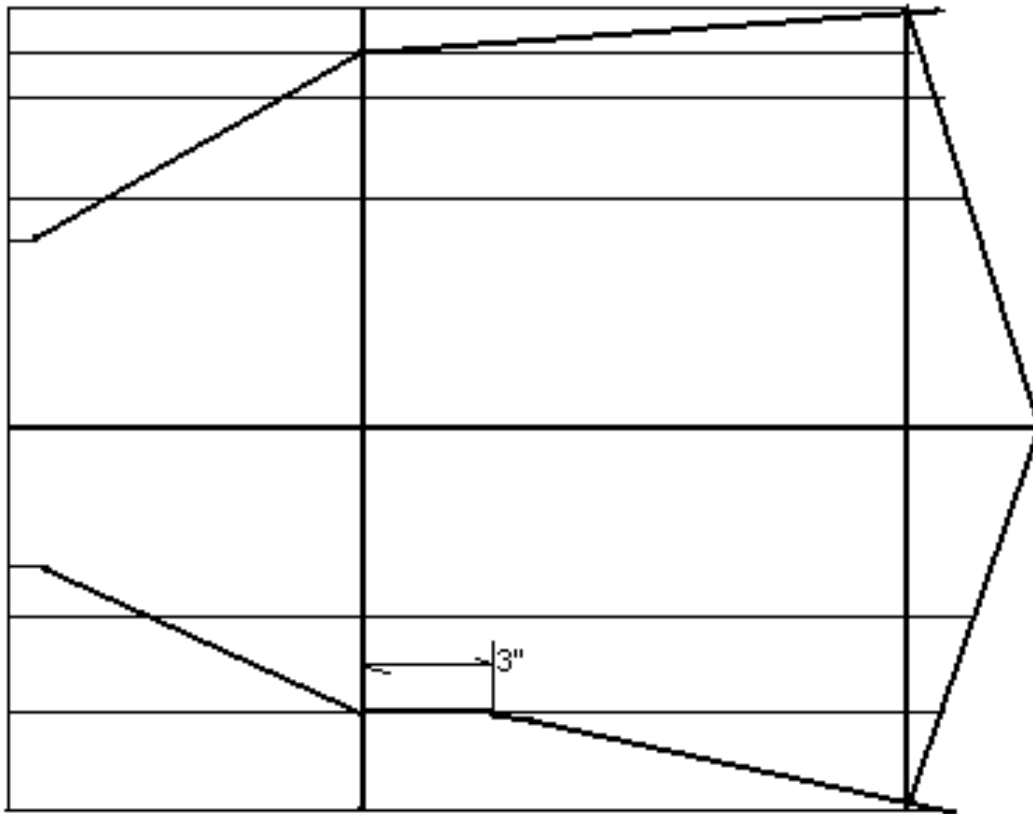
Now we will lay out the sides of the sleeve. Draw in from the sides of the wrist about one inch. This enables you to have a little bit of fabric to roll under for a hem. By following the diagrams connect the lines as shown.

Now we will make the curve for the armscye. Many people find this the most intimidating part of the process. The easiest way is to take a piece of string and make a gentle curve following the diagram. When you are satisfied with the curve, draw it onto the pattern. Don't over think or second guess yourself; it is really difficult to do this wrong. When finished you should have a pattern piece that looks like this. The angle at the bottom of the diagram may be done with a gore.

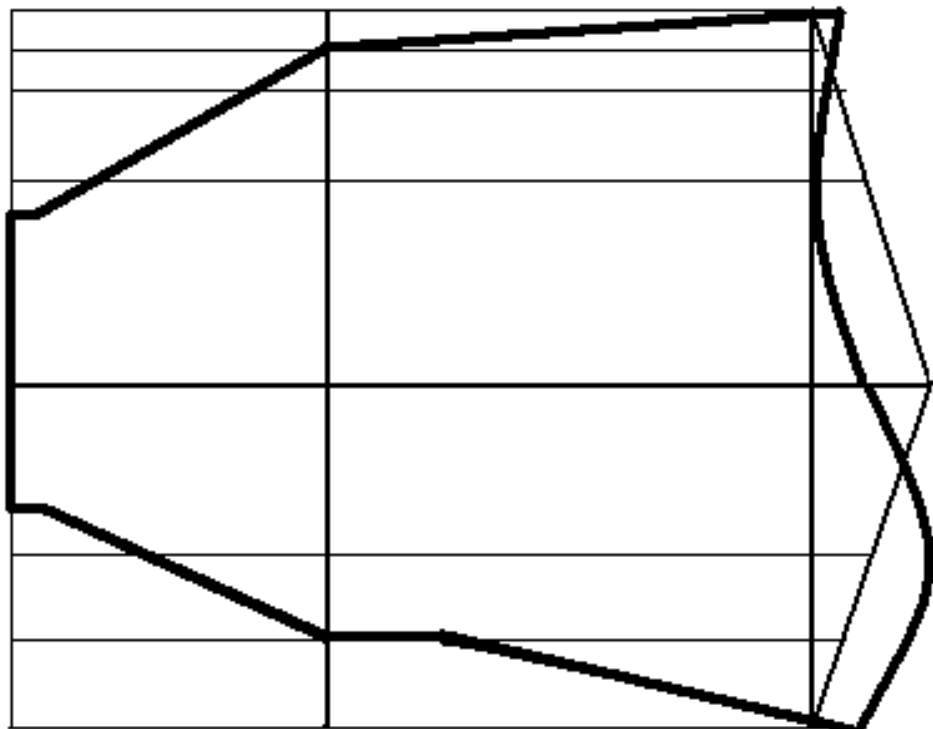


In period there are large variations in the patterns utilized by period stitchers. They were going for a look and just like today, each person who made garments had their own individualized variation on how to accomplish that look. There is no one way to pattern a period piece of costume. This method provides

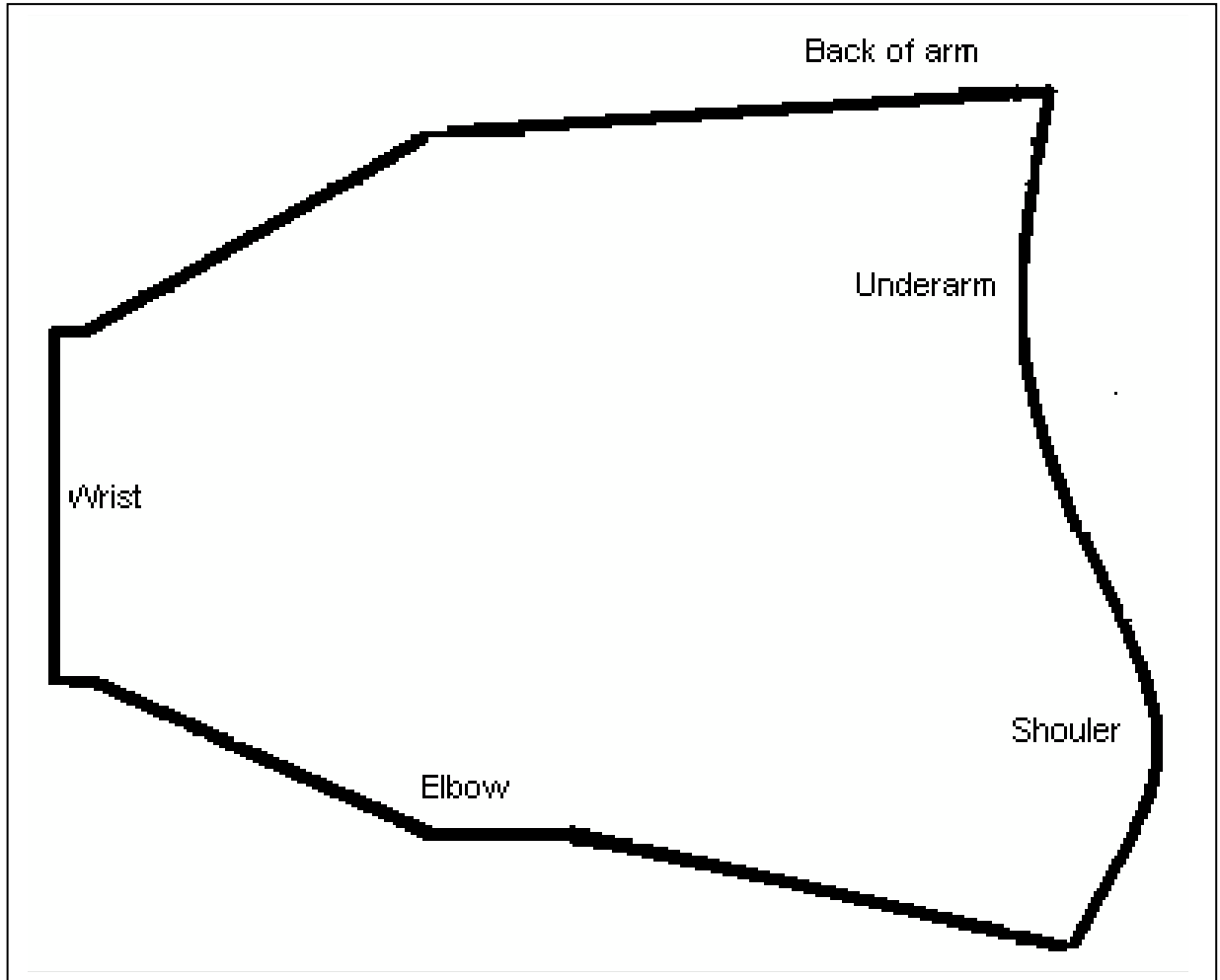
you with a period foundation that follows what has been uncovered in extant pieces.



Connect wrist to elbows and elbows to shoulders as shown



Draw curve as shown peaking by gored section with underarm opposite



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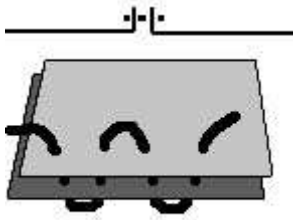
Vincent, John Martin. *Costume and Conduct in Laws of Basel, Bern and Zurich, 1370-1800*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1935.

Helpful Stitch Techniques

<http://heatherrosejones.com/archaeologicalsewing/index.html>

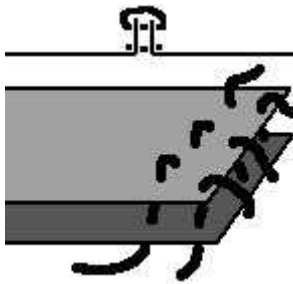
Seams to join fabrics: Running Stitch and Variants

Running stitch RST (Fig. 17)



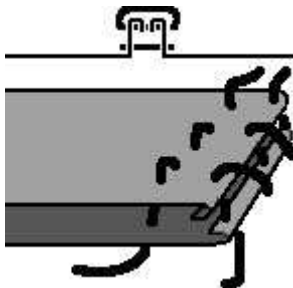
- Medieval: Running Stitch Seam. Various stitch lengths, leaves raw edges, common in many examples. [Crowfoot et al. 1992, pl.155f, Fig. 126A]

Running stitch RST + raw edges overcast together (Fig. 18)



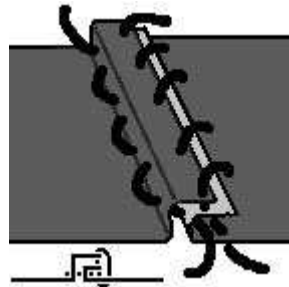
- Medieval: Wool, right sides together: running stitch seam, raw edges overcast together. [Hägg 1984, Hedeby (northern Germany), (10)]

Running stitch RST + raw edges turned under towards each other and overcast together (Fig. 19)



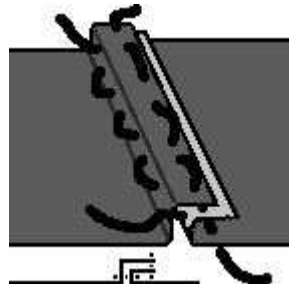
- Medieval: Wool, right sides together: running stitch seam, raw edges turned under together and overcast. [Hägg 1984, Hedeby (northern Germany), (11)]

Running stitch RST + raw edges paired and hem-stitched to one side (Fig. 20)



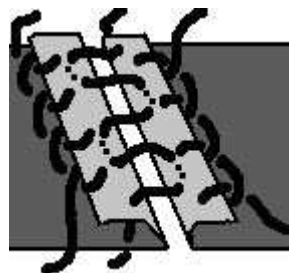
- Medieval: Wool, overlapped: either running stitch then the raw edges paired and hem stitched to one side, or similar but both stitch lines hem stitch. [Hägg 1984, Hedeby (northern Germany), (19)]

Running stitch RST + raw edges paired and topstitched to one side w/running-stitch (Fig. 21)



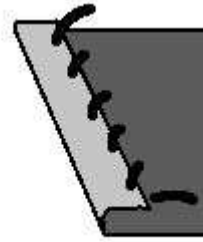
- Medieval: Wool, overlapped: either running stitch then the raw edges paired and running stitched to one side. [Hägg 1984, Hedeby (northern Germany), (20)]

Running stitch RST of (single-fold with no stitching) (Fig. 22 - figure shows Thorsbjerg variant w/blanket-stitched edges)



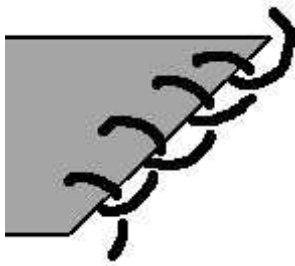
- Hallstadt: Wool, single-fold edges placed right sides together then sewn with a running stitch through all four layers. [Hundt 1961 (a)]
- Sub-Roman: Flattened Running Stitch. Two pieces of woolen fabric are joined (presumably at the selvages) with a running stitch right at the edge that is then flattened. [Hald 1980, Arden, Denmark, Fig. 292]
- Sub-Roman: Running Stitch in Folded Edge. The lengthwise sleeve seams of the Thorsbjerg shirt

has the (finished) edges folded inward, then these are placed right sides together and are sewn with a running stitch through all four layers. Presumably, this is relatively loose so that it can be flattened. The fabric is a wool twill. [Schlabow 1976, Northern Germany, Fig. 142]



Wool - Edge finishes: Blanket Stitch and Variants

Blanket stitch of (unfolded edge) (Fig. 26)



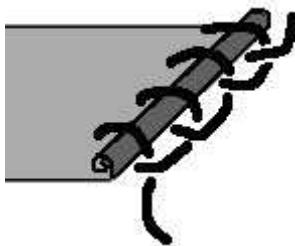
- Hallstadt: Wool, edge of unknown type (but presumably cut?) with variant buttonhole stitch, closely set. [Hundt 1987 (b)]
- Sub-Roman: The Thorsbjerg shirt has some raw edges of the woolen fabric finished with a blanket stitch before the seams are sewn. [Schlabow 1976, Northern Germany, Fig. 141]

- Sub-Roman: A scarf-like woolen object with the Thorsbjerg material has one long edge on the selvage and the other long edge turned (once?) and hem-stitched. [Schlabow 1976, Northern Germany, Fig. 198d]
- Medieval: Wool, single fold with hem stitch. [Hägg 1984, Hedeby (northern Germany), (2)]
- Medieval: A single-fold hem (i.e. with raw edge exposed) is typical for woolen fabric. 14th c. London. [Crowfoot et al. 1992, p.156, fig 17 A, 128 A, Fig. 160]

Hem stitch of (fold number uncertain)

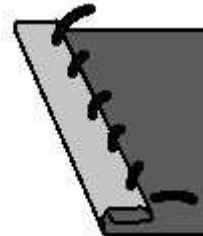
- Medieval: The type of stitch used for basic garment construction is not mentioned. Hems are usually turned under and overcast. [Norlund 1924]

Blanket stitch of (narrow rolled hem) (Fig. 29)



- Sub-Roman: One fragment from Thorsbjerg has a narrow rolled edge that has been hemmed with a blanket stitch. [Schlabow 1976, Northern Germany, Fig. 202a]

Hem stitch on double fold (Fig. 31)



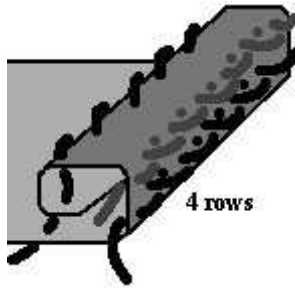
- Hallstadt: Wool, uncertain but appears to be double fold with hem stitch. [Hundt 1960 (b)]
- Hallstadt: Wool, narrow double fold with hem stitch. (Numerous examples of this.) [Hundt 1987 (a)]
- Sub-Roman: The Marx-Etzel shirt has a narrow, two-fold hem with hem stitch on all free edges (neck, armholes, hem). It is possible that the side seams have been finished in this way and then sewn together, but this is not mentioned. [Schlabow 1976, Northern Germany, Fig. 146, 148]
- Sub-Roman: A rectangular garment (cloak?) from Röst has a double-folded edge with hem stitch all around (all four sides). [Schlabow 1976, Northern German, Fig. 209]
- Medieval: Wool, double fold with hem stitch. [Hägg 1984, Hedeby (northern Germany), (3)]

Wool - Edge finishes: Hem Stitch and Variants

Hem stitch of (single fold) (Fig. 30)

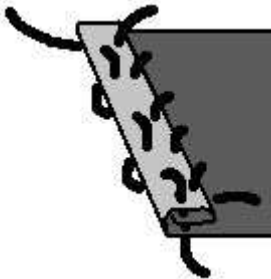
- Medieval: 14th c. London. Rarely, double-fold hems are found in wool, particularly when it may be a trailing hem. [Crowfoot et al. 1992 , p.156, fig 17 A, 128 A, Fig. 160]

Hem stitch on double fold + stem stitch on fold before folding (Fig. 32)



- Hallstadt: Wool, double fold with hem stitch, but before this, four rows of white and blue decorative stem stitch have been done on what will be the folded edge. [Hundt 1970]

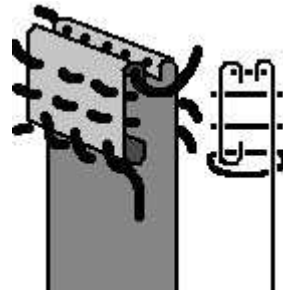
Hem stitch of (double fold) + running stitch top-stitching (Fig. 33)



- Medieval: Wool, double fold with hem stitch, plus running stitch through fold. [Hägg 1984, Hedeby (northern Germany), (4)]
- Medieval: Double-fold hem with hem stitch, but with a running stitch as top-stitch next to the folded edge. [Crowfoot et al. 1992 , p.156, Fig. 127 C]

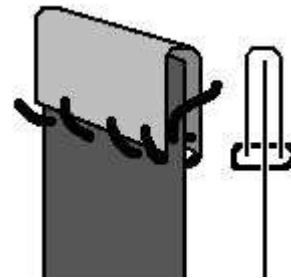
Wool - Edges with applied facings

Unknown (running?) stitch RST of (fabric and facing) + hemstitch of (single-fold of facing to wrong side of fabric) (Fig. 39)



- Medieval: A narrow straight-grain band of silk is used to face a neckline on a woolen fabric. The band has been sewn to the wool right sides together with an unknown stitch (but probably running stitch), then turned, with the edged turned under and overcast to the main fabric along the edge. After this, two rows of running stitch (in the wool color) have been added. 2nd quarter of the 14th century London. [Crowfoot et al. 1992 , plate 2 B, p.158, Fig. 131]

Hem stitch of (tape facing folded over cut edge) (Fig. 40)



- Medieval: A silk tape is folded in half over the edge and then hem-stitched, possibly through both edges at once? The example is binding the edge of a leather purse. Late 14th c. London [Crowfoot et al. 1992 , p.158 Fig. 130, Fig. 153B]

Worked holes (Fig. 48, 49)

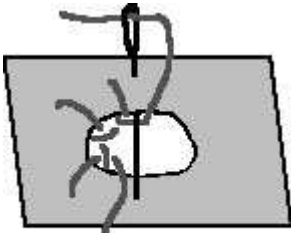
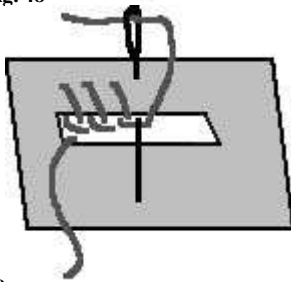


Fig. 48

Fig.



- Medieval: Eyelets are worked in two rounds of buttonhole stitch in silk, worked through both the main woolen fabric and a narrow silk facing strip. Late 14th c. London. [Crowfoot et al. 1992 , p.164, Fig. 139]
- Medieval: Buttonholes: worked in silk buttonhole stitch through the main woolen fabric and a silk facing. The slit is perpendicular to the edge. 14th c. London. [Crowfoot et al. 1992 , p.169f, Fig. 145]