



Using Our Patterns

If you're new to using our patterns, this guide is for you.

This document is the same for all of our patterns.
Print it once and keep it safe.

Tool Kit

Things to gather before you start.



Unpicker



Pins



Chalk



Needle



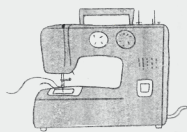
Thread



Iron



Scissors



Sewing Machine



Tape Measure

The Modern Sewing Co. Way

'The Modern Sewing Co. Way' is an approach to making clothes that goes further than just sewing.

There is so much joy in making clothes. It's an opportunity to take time for yourself to think creatively, work with your hands and to make something beautiful and useful to wear. It's a way to switch off from the everyday and focus on yourself and your craft.

We firmly believe that approaching your project with intention and care will help you get the most enjoyment out of the process. So take your time, don't judge the things that go wrong and see if you can learn a new technique or two. And let us know how you got on at the end!

Tips for a smooth sewing session:

- Make sure you have enough light on your sewing machine
- Starting sewing in a nice clear area makes for an easier process
- Make sure your snips/small scissors and an unpicker are ready to hand
- Set up your iron and ironing board close to your sewing machine to make the process smoother
- You might like to pre-fuse all of your pieces before starting
- Sit down with a nice clear head - it's best to not start sewing if you're tired!

New to making clothes?

Scan the code or follow the link to watch our free video series on 'How to Get Started'.



[www.modernsewingco.com/
pages/getting-started](http://www.modernsewingco.com/pages/getting-started)

Printing your Pattern

You have two options for printing out your pattern. Your downloaded pattern folder contains files for both.

Get it Printed in A0

Either send your PDF pattern off to be printed and posted to you by a sewing pattern company, or go to a copy shop with an A0 printer. Search for "sewing pattern printing company" to find a company that does this in your region.

Print it Yourself

Print the A4 & US Letter file on a home printer and tile the pages together. To do this, cut off the bottom and right side of each page then neatly join the edges with tape following the grid on the front page of your printed pattern (example below).

1A	2A	3A	4A	5A	6A		
1B	2B	3B	4B	5B	6B		
1C	2C	3C	4C	5C	6C	7C	
1D	2D	3D	4D	5D	6D	7D	
1E	2E	3E	4E	5E	6E	7E	

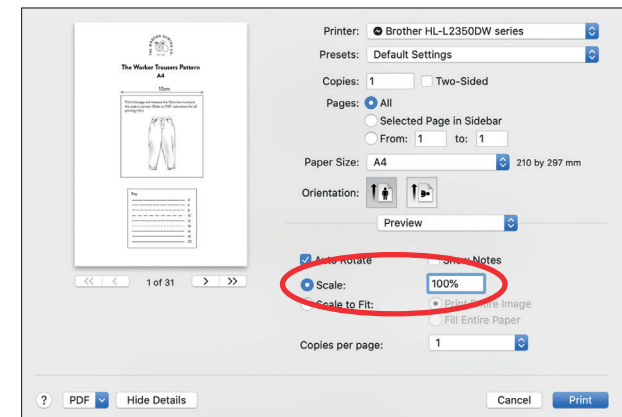
Use tape to roughly join the pages and when you're happy it fits well you can tape up all the edges. It's best to use a large, clean, flat surface for this.

Once you've got your printed pattern cut out all of the pieces in your size.

Checking the Scale

If you're printing the tiled version at home make sure you print to 100% scale. Before printing the whole document, first print page 1 and measure the scale box to check the size is correct.

Once you've confirmed the size, you can print the entire document. Check there is plenty of paper in the tray and don't remove any pages before the whole document is printed.



Sizing

Each pattern comes with space for you to note your own body measurements before you start. You can then compare these to the Body Measurements chart and Finished Garment Measurements chart to select the size you'd like to make.

The pattern file will show all of the available sizes. You can print it out like this and cut along the line for your chosen size.

Using PDF Layers

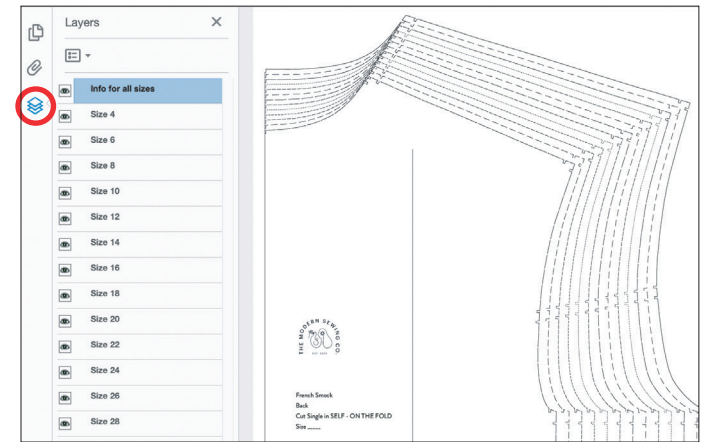
Alternatively, you can make it easier to see the line for your chosen size by turning off the layers for the other sizes before you print.

To do this you'll need a PDF viewer such as Adobe Acrobat Reader (this is free to download). Simply select the 'layers' icon as shown to the right and then untick the sizes you don't want to see.

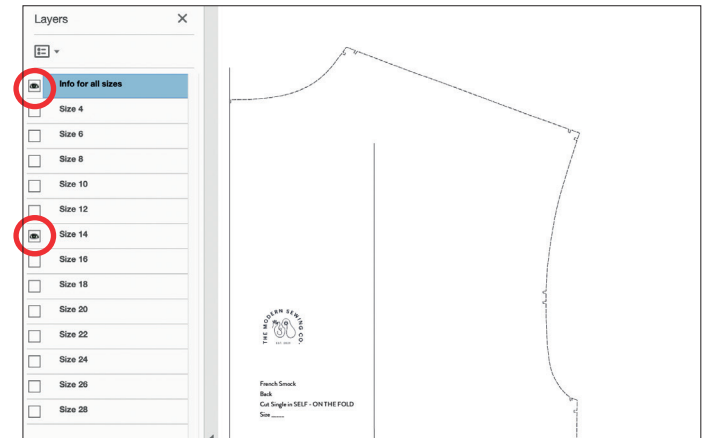
Simple Grading

If you fall between two sizes you might like to print the layers for both sizes so you can draw a line between them by hand to get the shape you want (this is called grading).

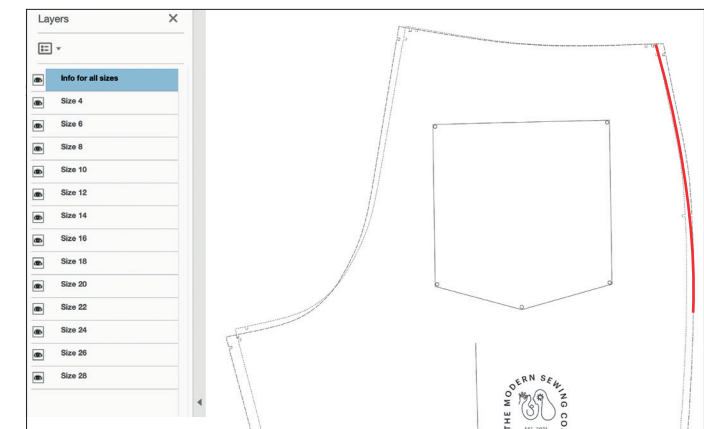
In Adobe Acrobat Reader click this icon to see the layers.



Make sure 'INFO ALL SIZES' stays selected along with your chosen size.



Example of simple grading between a size 12 waist and a size 14 hip.



Seam Allowances

The seam allowance on a pattern is the area you use to sew the garment together. It usually ends up sitting on the inside of your garment where two pieces join. The width of the seam allowance differs from brand to brand as well as the type of seam. Our patterns are intended to feel like high end designer clothing which is why our seam allowances are a little smaller than some other home sewing pattern companies. Your pattern will have some of the seam allowances listed below to help you achieve a really high quality finish.

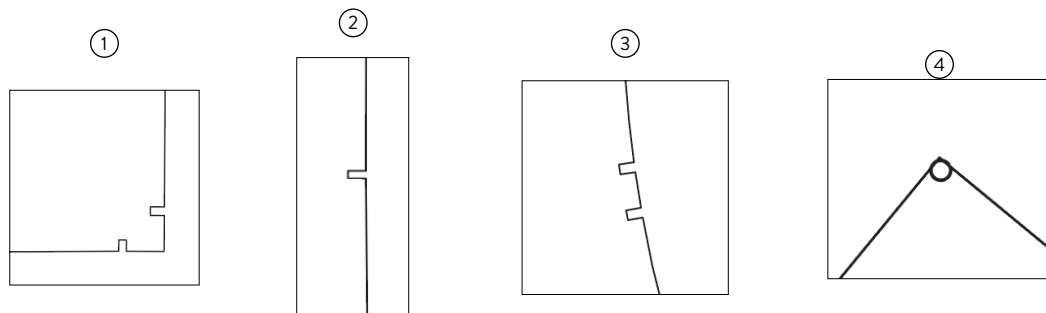
- French Seam - 1cm
- Run & Fell Seam - 1.5cm & 0.7cm
- Flat Fell Seam - 1.2cm
- Areas needing more delicate seam allowances such as collars: 0.5cm

Seam allowances are already included on all of our patterns.

Notches

All of our patterns have notches which are marked as small rectangles on the edges of the pattern pieces. These notches act as guides for helping you jigsaw your garment together. There are a few different types of notches and markings:

1. Notches close to a corner will indicate a seam allowance or hem
2. Notches along the length of the pattern piece are guides to match up with a corresponding notch on another pattern piece
3. A double notch indicates the back side of a piece (for example the back side of a sleeve)
4. A drill hole will be in the middle of a pattern piece to indicate a pocket placement



Cutting Out Your Fabric

Prepare your cutting surface by cleaning the area. It doesn't matter what your surface looks like, as long as it's a large, clean, flat area.

Our lay-plans are worked out for cutting a single layer of fabric as this means you'll have minimal wastage. If you want to save time by cutting two layers together you can find your own lay-plan that works for you (please bare in mind you might need more fabric). When it comes to cutting out your fabric we recommend doing so as neatly as possible. Take your time and cut directly next to the paper pattern. If the fabric pieces are very neatly cut out the sewing process will be much easier and more accurate.

It's very important to snip all of the notches indicated on your pattern piece. You can do so by snipping into each notch by about 3mm. These notches will be crucial in the sewing process and it's much easier to snip them before unpinning the paper pattern from the fabric.

For more guidance please refer to our 'Getting Started' videos via the link on page 1 of this document.

How to Add or Remove Length

You might like to shorten or lengthen part of your garment to fit your own body proportions. This could be your sleeves, torso, legs or crotch rise. If you would like to adjust a particular pattern piece you can do so following the steps on this page.

Our patterns will only have shorten/lengthen lines if the pattern will be compromised when adding or removing length anywhere other than indicated. If your pattern does not have shorten/lengthen lines it means you can add or remove length more freely.

As a rule of thumb, to keep the overall silhouette in tact we recommend adjusting pattern pieces through the middle:

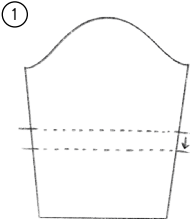
Sleeve - through the elbow

Leg - through the knee

Torso/body - through the waist/10cm below the bust

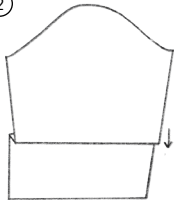
Rise - between the waist and the hip

Remove Length:



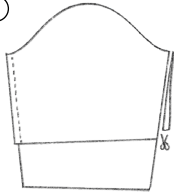
①

Mark the amount you'd like to remove e.g. if you're removing 5cm draw one line perpendicular to the grain line and another 5cm below.



②

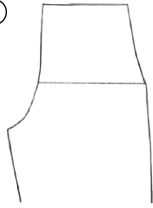
Fold these two lines to meet and stick down with tape or glue.



③

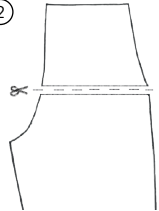
Lastly, smooth out the side seams to remove the irregular shape as shown.

Add Length:



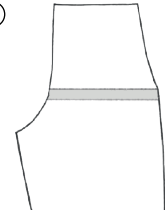
①

Draw a line perpendicular to the grain where you'd like to add length.



②

Cut the piece at this point.



③

Open the gap by the amount you want, glue a piece of paper underneath and then smooth out any uneven edges.

How much fabric do you need?

Fabric is woven in different widths - if you have a wider fabric you generally need to buy less length. Fabric sellers will usually sell lengths in increments of 50cm or 10cm.

The pattern instructions give an indication of the minimum quantity you'll need for your chosen size based on two different fabric widths - 150cm & 110cm. There are also suggested lay plans for getting the most out of your fabric.

If you have a fabric of a different width, or a print or weave that needs specific placement, you may need more fabric. You might want to work out your own lay plan before you buy the fabric.

Pre-washing Your Fabric

Once you've chosen your fabric you'll need to pre-wash it (unless your fabric is specifically not machine washable). The pre-wash will ensure your piece won't shrink in the wash after you've stitched it together. Wash at 40 degrees without detergent and hang out to dry. Give the whole length of fabric a really good iron before starting your cutting.

If your fabric is naturally dyed, you'll need to be a bit more careful with your washing process. You can either hand wash your fabric or put through the machine on a gentle cycle. It's best to dry away from direct sunlight and avoid folding it while it's still damp. Once it's dry you can iron as normal before cutting your garment.

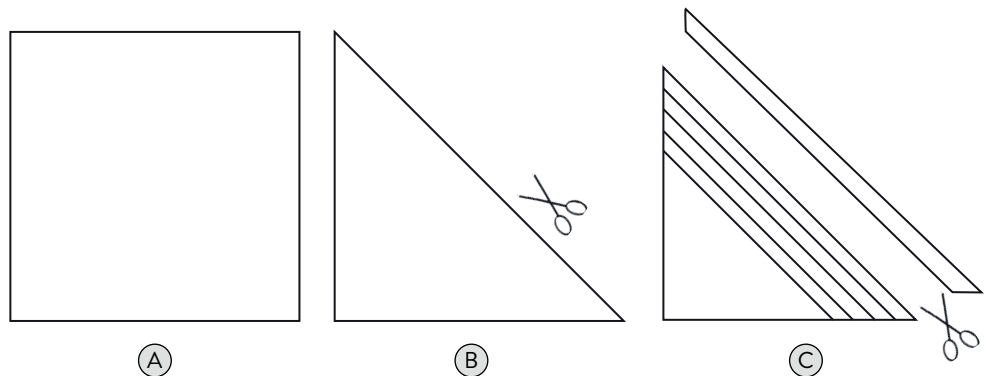
Making Your Own Binding

A lot of our patterns include binding finishing details which help to elevate the look and feel of a garment. We recommend making your own binding using lightweight cottons or linens. Shop bought binding can be less flexible and often contains polyester which doesn't iron well.

To make your own binding you'll need a piece of light weight cotton or linen, a ruler, tailors chalk/pencil and scissors. It can be useful to choose a neutral colour for your binding fabric so you can use it across multiple garments. Please note this method will give you lots of excess binding strips that you can stash for future projects.

- A** - Cut your piece of fabric 1 metre x 1 metre with the selvedge edge parallel to the edge.
- B** - Fold the opposite corners to meet each other creating a large triangle and then very neatly cut down the folded edge.
- C** - Using a ruler and chalk, neatly draw lines parallel to the cut edge. We like to use a 3cm binding but you can choose to have it wider or narrower if you prefer. Chalk the lines across the whole piece of fabric and then cut into strips.

You can find our free video on making binding on our website by visiting the link/QR code on the first page of this document.





If your garment will be made from jersey, the next 2 pages are for you.

An overlocker is a great tool for sewing jersey however you can also sew it perfectly well with a standard domestic sewing machine. There are a couple of things to be aware of to help you get a great result and it's also worth spending some time testing your stitching options on some scrap fabric before you get started.

Needle:

It's recommended to use either a jersey needle or a ball point needle for sewing jersey. These needles have a slightly blunt end to them which stitches in-between the knit rather than breaking through the threads. If you use a normal needle you might not notice any damage, however after a few washes the fabric might start to pucker.

Thread:

Your jersey needs to be able to retain its stretch so along with choosing a special stretching stitch you'll need a strong thread. A standard polyester thread will be just fine but a cotton thread might end up snapping and unravelling.

Trimming the Seam Allowance:

Jersey fabric doesn't fray so unless you're using an overlocker (which trims excess fabric for you) you'll need to trim any extra seam allowance manually. You don't need to use pinking sheers for this, normal scissors are fine. Trim nice and close to your stitching leaving roughly a 3mm gap.

Starting your seam:

To avoid the jersey getting pushed into the bottom of your sewing machine, start each seam about 2cm in and then back stitch to the end before sewing the rest of the seam. This is particularly useful when sewing with lighter weight jerseys.

Sewing with an Overlocker:

If you have an overlocker then you can use it to sew this garment. Just be aware to check the seam allowance as you'll have some excess fabric to trim off with the blade as you sew each seam. You want to make sure not to trim too much or too little. Check the general seam allowance and sew some tests on scrap fabric to find where you need to line up the edge of the seam against the blade.





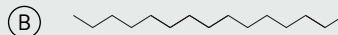
Choosing Your Jersey Stitch

Domestic Sewing Machine

If you don't have an overlocker this page will help you to choose the right stitch setting on your domestic sewing machine. Most domestic machines should have a standard zigzag stitch, however some will also come with other stretch stitch options. It's a good idea to do a few tests on some scrap fabric and check the strength by giving them a pull in two directions - down the seam and also pulling both sides apart. You're looking for a stitch that keeps some bounce in the stretched seam and also holds both sides together firmly.

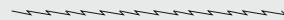
Zigzag stitch:

If your sewing machine doesn't have any stretch stitch options you can use a zigzag stitch. It's best to choose quite a short and narrow setting to make sure the thread has enough give and won't snap. The diagram below shows a good width/length ratio against a bad one. Stitch 'A' should be strong enough to hold with enough stretch. Stitch 'B' is not likely to be strong enough to hold the seam - it will probably pull apart, pucker and snap on stretching.



Lightning Bolt Stitch:

This stitch is a special stretch stitch and looks like a continuous lightning bolt. It's a very narrow zigzag but with an overlap of the previous stitch. The straighter shape of this stitch helps to reduce the puckering that a zigzag stitch sometimes makes but it also has the give and stretch that a regular zigzag has. It's great to use for sewing stretch fabrics because it's very similar to a straight stitch and allows the seam to be pressed open if needed.



Triple Straight Stitch:

The triple straight stitch is another stretch stitch which is particularly strong because it locks three times. It's a good stitch to use for sportswear, leggings and other tight garments as it's a much stronger seam. This stitch works well on medium to heavy jerseys but not on lightweight fabrics as the seam could stretch and look wavy.



Glossary

Terms you'll come across in our patterns

Materials

- ▮ **Selvedge** - this is the ribbon like edge running down both sides of the fabric
- ▮ **Fusing** - Fusing is an iron-on adhesive fabric which helps to stiffen parts of the garment (for example the cuffs, collars, facings and button stands). It is sometimes called 'interfacing'.

Sewing

- ▮ **Press** - pressing is another term for ironing
- ▮ **Snip** - this is a small cut into the fabric, sometimes during the sewing process. It helps to manoeuvre the garment when you're sewing around tight corners or curves.
- ▮ **Trim** - trimming is sometimes required when bagging out pieces, especially into tight corners in order to turn them out.
- ▮ **Bagging Out** - this is the process of sewing two pieces together and then turning them out on themselves (for example a collar piece or pocket flaps).
- ▮ **Right sides together/wrong sides together** - this means you need to check which way your fabrics are facing before sewing them together.

Patterns

- ▮ **Grain Line** - this is the direction of the warp which is the long threads running down the fabric, parallel to the selvedge. It will be marked on your pattern with a line and arrow. This will show you where to place your pattern on the fabric.
- ▮ **Notch** - notches are marked on the pattern and will need snipping into by about 2mm. The notches act as guidelines to help place the pieces together properly.
- ▮ **Drill Hole** - these are marked on the pattern with small stars and will need to be punched through by making a small hole. You can then chalk through these holes to mark directly on to your fabric. We use drill holes to mark areas such as pocket placements.
- ▮ **Seam Allowance** - the seam allowance will be indicated on your pattern. The amount will differ depending on the construction method required for sewing.
It will range from:
 - 1cm - french seam
 - 1.5cm - run & fell (front seam)
 - 0.7cm - run & fell back seam
- ▮ **Facing** - a facing is a piece on the inside of the garment that echoes the same shape as the outside of the garment. It is usually cut in self and fused. If the garment has a lining, the lining will be attached to the facing.

Cutting

- **Cut 1 Pair** - cut the pattern piece through 2 layers of fabric to give you 1 pair/2 pieces. Make sure you have one left side and one right side and not 2 of the same. You can do this by folding the fabric selvedge to selvedge and cutting through both layers together.
- **Cut Single** - cut single means just cut 1 piece. However make sure you check you're cutting it with the fabric the right side up. If not, your piece might end up back to front.
- **Cut Right Side Up** - check you have your fabric/fusing facing the right side up before cutting.
- **Cut in:**
 - **Self** - 'Self' is a term used to describe the main fabric of the garment.
 - **Contrast** - 'Contrast' will be a second fabric used for the exterior of the garment.
 - **Lining** - 'Lining' is simply your lining should the garment need it
 - **Pocketing** - if an unlined garment requires a lighter weight fabric for the pockets it will be labelled as 'pocketing'. It's a good idea to use a sturdy but lightweight cotton for pocket bags
 - **Fusing** - Cut the piece in iron-on fusing.

Seams & Stitches

- **French Seam** - this is a seam type that fully encloses any raw edges will leaving a delicate finish
- **Run & Fell** - this is a seam type that fully encloses any raw edges and requires topstitching which gives it a more heavy duty feel
- **Overlock** - overlocking closes off frayed edges by trimming and stitching on an overlocking machine. The same result can be achieved on a domestic sewing machine by hand trimming and stitching using a zig-zag stitch.
- **Reverse Stitch** - at the beginning and end of your seams using a reverse stitch will help to strengthen the seam. You do this by reversing back and forth about 1cm from the edge.
- **Topstitch** - a line of stitching seen on the outside of the garment. This can be for strengthening purposes as well as decorative.
- **Stay Stitch** - a stay stitch is a line of stitching sewn right next to the seam. It is a hidden stitching line which is purely functional, used to strengthen and reduce stretch around curved edges.