

Make a Big Skirt for Autumn

NEW! Foundation Garment Making Course
Art house • Old School Centre • South Brent
September: 7th, 14th, and 21st – Thursdays
10am – 3pm



If you've always wanted to learn to use a sewing machine to make your own clothes – this is a great starting point. Learn the foundations of garment making with this versatile pleated skirt project.

Creating your own hand made wardrobe of clothes means you can choose beautiful artisan style cloths in your favourite colours. Using quality ethically sourced fabrics brings an individual look to your dress code and a dash of style that can't be matched by high street retailers.

Interested in booking a place or finding out more? Please contact Jane by email: how.to.make.clothes101@gmail.com

This Vogue sewing pattern has been chosen to fit in with this season's big skirt look by Toast. Have a look at this link to get some ideas on putting the look together and some inspiration for fabric choices:

<https://www.toa.st/collections/womens-skirts>

This course is designed for beginners wanting to become confident with garment making. You may be a complete beginner who has not used a sewing machine before, or someone who is not yet fully confident in garment making techniques and deciphering pattern instructions.

All the equipment and sundries you need are provided:

- Three high quality flat-bed sewing machines and a professional Babylock overlocker.
- Two steam irons and boards and sleeve board.
- All equipment supplied; paper scissors, specialist rulers, fabric shears, tape measure, glass headed pins, hem gauges etc.
- **Sundries including:** calico for seam sampling, threads for the overlocker, iron-on woven cotton interfacing, skirt zip and any other notions that maybe needed.
- **Craft card covered sewing journal.**

If you have a sewing machine and would like to get to know it better, then bring it along.

Learning Content:

The pattern contains written and diagrammatical instructions covering all the techniques you'll need to know to make this skirt; pattern layout; marking the cloth, and sewing construction by stages. These often appear rather baffling to the novice maker, so they are referred to in the demonstrations to help you become familiar with the terminology used. . .and you can make extra notes and clues to help you next time you make this skirt.

Let me know your WAIST and HIP measurements when booking your place. So I can provide you with the right sized pattern to work from.

Pattern sizes for waist measurements range from 23" to 36"
Fitting adjustments can be made for larger sizes.

Through this process of learning to work with the pattern, you're invited to have an awareness of the pattern shapes, garment construction and its relationship with the human form. With each project a new foundation of design skills is encountered, bringing with it an understanding of the sequential processes of making. Through increased experience you'll begin to recognise how a 2-D pattern relates to the shape of your own 3-D form.

And so the journey into design enquiry begins. . .

From a construction perspective this course provides a great introduction to garment making. I will show you how attention to accuracy of technique results in a professional finish.

I'm a bit hot on this because it allows the garment to come together easily. . .resulting in you achieving a good professional finish. It makes the process so much easier to work with as much precision as can be mustered!

Developing accuracy as a mantra is the key to moving onto more technically demanding construction techniques you may encounter in future more advanced projects.

Sewing skills included on this course:

- Learning to work with a printed tissue pattern and instructions.
- How to choose your size, tweak any fitting requirements and decide what skirt length is best for you.
- Learning about your chosen cloth, grain lines and working with a layout plan.
- How to set up a sewing machine for your project fabric, adjusting stitch tension and testing for stitch quality – including selecting the right type of thread and size of needle
- **This skirt making project includes the following construction techniques:** applying interfacing; making inverted pleats and knife pleats stay-stitching, side seam pockets; inserting a standard skirt zip and creating a deep curved hem.
- Induction for using an overlocker machine, this is to professionally finish the raw seam edges on the inside of the garment.
- You will also learn alternative professional methods of seam finishing, such as:
 - Double stitching and pinking shears
 - Hong Kong finish
 - French seams

These are useful ways of professionally finishing your making projects at home without an overlocker.

- To gain a full understanding of each new technique encountered you will make calico samples ahead of carrying out the actual technique on the skirt itself. These calico seam samples can be added to your sewing journal for future reference.
- A full demonstration of each construction stage is given, as well as diagrams and written instructions from your Vogue pattern. There will also be a finished skirt sample to refer to, so you can

appreciate in 3-D what you're attempting for yourself. These different methods are set out to facilitate different learning styles.

Course Costs: £175

For 3 x 5 hour workshops, Vogue pattern, sewing notions and your A5 sewing journal.

You will complete the skirt during the 3 day course!

Payment is due by 28th August 2023 – 10 days in advance of course start date. I will be sending out invoices around the 2nd week of August.

PER STUDENT	Total Workshop cost £
COURSE FEE: 3 SESSIONS @ 5 hours per session	150.00
1 x Vogue paper pattern per student.	17.50
SUNDRIES: Including interfacing, zip, overlocker thread and sewing journal.	7.50
TOTALS	175.00

What you will need to bring:

- 1) Enough fabric to make your skirt and a lining fabric for the skirt yoke lining and one side of each pocket bag, this is if you are using a medium - heavier cloth for the main skirt. Otherwise, if you are using a cotton lawn, this will also do as a lining. (see below for quantity lengths).
- 2) Lining requirements for all sizes = 40cms
- 3) 1 reel of Gutterman thread to match your fabric (choose the best match possible, going slightly darker in tone rather than lighter).
- 4) A packed lunch! There is a mini kitchen with a microwave, kettles, crockery etc. . .We have a morning break around 11.30am where I serve my speciality flat white style coffees, with organic dairy or oat milk. . .or instead, speciality teas and biscuits of course.

What cloth is best for a beginner?

What you are looking for is a well behaved cloth, not something slippery, stretchy or very wobbly. This means choosing a woven fabric, not a jersey, nor anything with lycra or elastin woven into it.

On the whole this means using a natural high thread count cotton. These are some of the names you'll come across:

- **Cotton Lawn** – a lightweight high thread count cotton, ideal for a summer or early autumn skirt. This includes the famous Liberty prints: <https://www.libertylondon.com/uk/department/fabric/cotton/cotton-tana-lawn/>
- **Cotton Poplin** – This is a little bit more sturdy than a lawn, it'll give a crisper drape to your skirt.
- **Chambray** – This is a shirt weight cloth that is plain woven, the weft in one colour and the warp in another – like denim.
- **Needlecord** – This is a napped cloth, a type of fine corduroy. A great choice for autumn.
- **Denim** – A twill weave, a medium weight softer style, not as heavy as a pair of jeans, would be a good choice for a sturdy autumn style.
- **Duppion Silk** – Is one of the easier silks to work with and would make a stunning evening / special occasion skirt. . .but maybe save that adventure for after getting your first make under your belt!
- **Linen** – A lightweight high thread count shirting linen would be good, but beware of the very gauzy ones as they are wobbly and difficult to work with. Merchant & Mills produce a nice medium weight '185 Linen Collection' which comes in over 30 colours. It's a bit wobbly, but okay for a beginner: <https://merchantandmills.com/uk/185-collection>

My favourite online fabric stores:

- **Cloth House London** – <https://www.clothhouse.com/>
- **Merchant & Mills** – <https://merchantandmills.com/uk/cloth>
- **Liberty London** – <https://www.libertylondon.com/uk/department/fabric/>

Cloth House and Merchant & Mills provide cloth samples, which are a good idea to get before making your main purchase.

How much fabric do I need?

- 1) Measure your waist** to determine the size pattern you'll be working with.
- 2) Check the width of your roll of fabric** – The top chart is for narrow rolls of fabric, the bottom chart for wider more standard rolls of fabric.
- 3) Decide what length you are making** – Indications of lengths are suggested below, but you can make the skirt any length you choose. My tip is to measure a skirt you already have that suits your requirements and work from there.

The charts below are the fabric requirements as set out by Vogue Patterns. They are calculated for one way printed designs and napped fabrics eg; needlecord. . . This means the pattern pieces all face downwards in the same direction, therefore more fabric is needed.

If you are using fabric with a two way design (as most modern prints) or a fabric without a nap, the panels can be cut going in opposite directions, this saves on the quantity you need to buy.

If you are choosing this option, get in touch with me, particularly if you are purchasing a quality cloth which costs more; I will calculate the amount you'll need.

Most garment making fabrics are 140cms-150cms wide. Or the more artisan woven types are made on narrower looms, so the fabric widths are around 110cms-120cms. . .

Needless to say, the wider the cloth the less fabric you will need to buy and vice versa.

FABRIC REQUIREMENTS for 115cms width fabric:

SKIRT STYLE	LENGTH	SIZE 24"	SIZE 25"	SIZE 26 1/2"	SIZE 28"	SIZE 30"	SIZE 32"	SIZE 34"	SIZE 36"
KNEE LENGTH	20"	1.5m	1.5m	1.8m	1.8m	1.8m	1.9m	2.m	2.1m
CALF LENGTH	28"	2.2m	2.2m	2.2m	2.3m	2.3m	2.4m	3.8m	3.8m
ANKLE LENGTH	38"	2.8m	2.9m	3.m	3.1m	3.2m	3.6m	3.7m	3.8m

FABRIC REQUIREMENTS for 150cms width fabric:

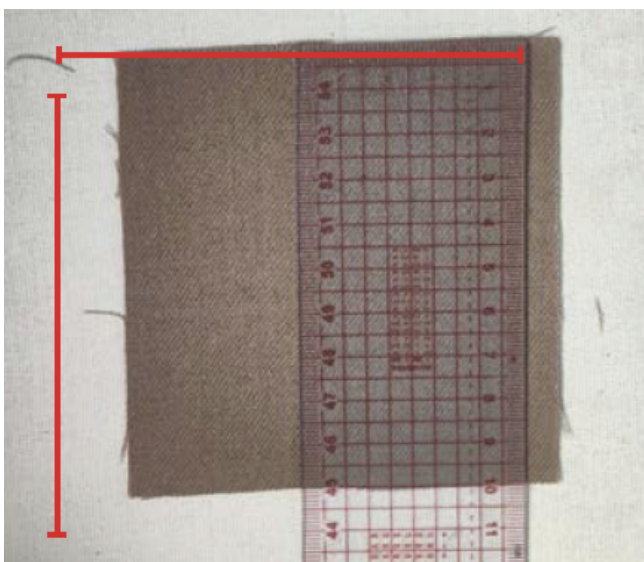
SKIRT STYLE	LENGTH	SIZE 24"	SIZE 25"	SIZE 26 1/2"	SIZE 28"	SIZE 30"	SIZE 32"	SIZE 34"	SIZE 36"
KNEE LENGTH	20"	1.2m	1.2m	1.3m	1.3m	1.3m	1.4m	1.4m	1.4m
CALF LENGTH	28"	1.6m	1.6m	1.6m	1.8m	1.8m	1.8m	1.9m	1.9m
ANKLE LENGTH	38"	2.2m	2.2m	2.2m	2.2m	2.2m	2.3m	2.3m	2.3m

DO NOT WASH YOUR FABRIC BEFOREHAND!

Good quality fabric does not need pre-washing. . .Some cloths do shrink a bit, even so – it is best not to wash first as this dulls the ‘brand new’ look of the cloth and distorts the straight grainline.

INSTEAD – STEAM TREAT your main fashion fabric. . .

When using wool or another natural fibre, instead of pre-washing I recommend steaming the full length of the fabric on the wrong side. Make sure to repeat this step at least twice with a very steamy iron and leave it to rest and cool on a flat surface.



To check if your fabric is likely to shrink. . .Test a square of the fabric to check shrinkage level, e.g. 10 x 10 cm / 4" x 4", press and steam it heavily.

Remeasure the square to identify whether the fabric you are planning to use shrinks a lot.

NB: Liberty Tana Lawn does not shrink, so no need to test.

Do not hesitate to email with any queries. . .

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After completing this course you will have gained a comprehensive experience and understanding of the sewing techniques needed for skirt making.

If you would like to be the first to know about
new workshops
sign up for an email newsletter at:
<https://www.howtomakeclothes.co.uk>