CHAPTER XVII

OUTER-GARMENTS: TAILORED SKIRTS

TAILORED SKIRT OF LINEN OR COTTON

Suitable Materials

Linen
Linen Crash
Ramie Linen

Pique
Poplin
Indian Head Muslin

PURCHASE the necessary quantity of material of the quality selected. It is not necessary to shrink heavy linens before making up. Cotton materials are more likely to shrink in washing.

Pattern for Skirt.—Use the pattern drafted to measure, designed from drafted pattern or a commercial pattern, for this skirt. Give careful heed to the placing of the pattern. Do not consider the first planning final nor the second, but try laying the pattern without pinning to the material until the most economical method has been found.

General rule for placing the pattern for cutting a gored skirt: this rule applies to material having no up or down: First, place the broad end of the largest gore to the cut ends of the material, having the straight edge of the gore, from the hip line down, parallel with the selvedge. Allow one and one-half inches on the lengthwise seams, one-half inch at the top and the desired hem at the bottom. Second, place the narrow end of another gore between the one just placed and the selvedge, providing for the same seam allowance. Fit the remaining gores as seems best. The center lines of panels are placed on the lengthwise thread of the goods (Fig. 190).

In Fig. 191A is shown the method of placing the pieces of a skirt pattern on material having no up and down, and in Fig. 191B, the method of placing the same on material of the same width, having an up and down. Note the greater amount necessary in the second. In Fig. 192 is shown the placing of a circular skirt pattern on material for cutting out.

Cutting.—When the pattern has been placed in the most economical way, mark the seam allowance lightly and occasionally with chalk, or with tape measure at seam allowance mark on edge.
of pattern, move it along edge of pattern for a guide in cutting. Cut all around pattern on seam allowance marks.

**Marking Seams.**—After the skirt has been cut out, mark all seams, waist, hip and finishing lines, center front and back. Use a tracing wheel on cotton or linen where the tracings will hold, or use chalk-board, p. 317. Do not trace hip line all the way across cloth; one-quarter-inch marking inside seam line will suffice. If the material is too soft to hold tracings until basted, or a chalk-board is not available, mark with tailor basting or tacking, p. 317. When the seams have been traced, mark waist, hip and finishing line, center front and back, with colored thread, or tailor baste them.

**Basting Skirt For Fitting.**—Mark center front and back with colored thread. To baste a *panel front*, turn the edge of the panel on the seam line, and baste one-quarter inch from the turned edge, to keep the line firm. Press edge of panel. Lay the side gore on the table and place the folded edge of the panel to the seam line of the gore, having waist, hip and finishing lines meet. Place pins at right angles to the seam and baste one-quarter inch from the edge (Fig. 193). Baste the left hand side to within twelve inches of the top to allow a placket opening. Baste a one-half inch lengthwise strip of material to the edge of the placket to keep it from stretching while fitting the skirt. To baste two gores together for a plain seam, lay the *straight* edge of one gore on the table with the bias edge of the other on top (Fig. 194); pin traced seam lines together, letting waist, hip and finishing lines meet. If both edges are bias, keep the *more* bias on top while you are pinning them together.

*Fig. 190.—Six-gore skirt pattern placed on material for cutting out.*
Fig. 191.—Placing patterns for gored skirts; A, material with no up and down; B, material with an up and down.
To Baste Tuck Opening.—Baste tuck on right hand side. Mark center front line on both pieces of front. Lay pieces together so that one center front line lies directly on top of the other, letting tuck extend as far beyond center front as you have planned to have the opening (Fig. 195). In basting seams use small stitches twelve inches down from the waist line so as to prevent stretching apart when fitting, and longer stitches on the rest of the seam. Turn the line at the bottom and pin the bottom of the skirt up to keep it clean and aid in seeing the trend of the seam lines. If the edge of the skirt is left to trail on the floor while the fitting is being done, it is not only in danger of becoming soiled, but as the skirt draws away, the seam lines do not appear as they will in the shorter finished length. Baste a bias strip of cambric or lawn, one-half inch wide, to the top of the skirt to keep it firm for stitching.
Fitting the Skirt.—Have a belt finished to the correct waist measure, with hooks and eyes sewed on. If fitting to the normal waist line, the belt may be one inch in width or less. When fitting for a high waist line, use a belt the height you wish the edge of the skirt above the normal waist line. Place belt on figure. When fitting a skirt with a normal waist line, pin the skirt right side out at the waist line to the lower edge of the belt.

Pin the skirt to the belt, right side out, at the center back, center front and at the hips. Then pin at the hip line center back, center front and hips. Before beginning to fit, look skirt over very carefully. See if the lines are good. The lengthwise seams of a gored skirt should fall at right angles to waist line. Keep this in mind while fitting, and also that the skirt should set easily about the figure, otherwise in stitching it will become too tight; neither will it allow for any additional shrinkage when laundered. Fitting should be done on the right hand side only, for the first time, unless there is a great difference between the two sides of the figure. Notice very particularly the hip seam on all gored skirts. If there is a tendency to swing forward or back, correct the line, taking from the bias edge.
of the gore nearest the front what is necessary or adding to it, whichever the need may be. Do not change the straight edge of the side gore. If the skirt pushes out in front, it may need to be lifted in the center back or to have some taken from the bias edge of the side gore next front. Sometimes you may find that the grain of the material on the first side gore at the hip runs down toward the back. Correct this by lifting the bias edge on the straight edge of the next gore until the grain of the material is brought into good position. Discard the original hip line on this gore. If you are satisfied that the lines of the seams are good, look at the hip line. This should be parallel to the floor. If it is not, change it by placing a line of pins around the figure. If the skirt is simply loose all over, it may be stitched inside the bastings on all seams, or vice versa. If it fits well at the hips and is loose at the waist, take the seams in where needed. It is sometimes necessary to take more off one seam than the other in order to keep the lines good. In fitting, be careful to place the pins so as to indicate good strong lines.

Making Alterations.—Remove the skirt. Trace all alterations along the line of the seams. Open seams and trace the corresponding seams, and re-baste. Mark all changes in hip, waist or finishing lines with a new thread. Try the skirt on again to see that the
alterations have carried out well. Unless there is a marked difference in the two sides of the figure, no further fitting should be necessary.

Plackets.—Before stitching the seams of the skirt, the facings and stays should be basted to the placket openings. Three plackets will be described, any one of which may serve in turn to illustrate the principle of finishing the opening of the skirt you are making. Plackets usually fasten from right to left.

1. Placket Opening on Seam Having Two Bias Edges (Hip or Center Back Seam).—First mark the folded edge of the upper side of the placket, right hand side, and the line which this touches on the under side of the placket, left hand side, with a colored thread. Cut two pieces of five-eighth-inch linen tape the length of the placket opening and a strip of lawn or nainsook (which has been shrunk) the length of the placket and twice its width. Open the folded edge of the upper side of the placket and turn wrong side out. Take one strip of the tape and place one-quarter inch to the left of the colored thread, marking edge of fold; baste to place and stitch. This serves as a stay to sew hooks on when placket is finished. Baste strip of cambric to wrong side of placket so that the edge comes to the turn of the placket. Fold edge of placket on colored thread and baste one-eighth inch from edge. Stitch as far from edge as outside stitching of seam. Sew snap fasteners or hooks to tape one inch apart, and turn cambric facing over, edge one-quarter inch; hem to place. On the wrong side of the extension baste the second strip of tape far enough to the right of the thread, marking edge of placket to sew snap fasteners or eyes in correct position to meet opposite snaps or hooks. Stitch tape on both edges. Overcast or bind edge of extension with cambric or bias binding (Fig. 196).

2. Placket in a Tuck Opening.—Before stitching the tuck in place, mark the edge on which it turns with a colored thread; then open the tuck, turn to wrong side, and place a piece of linen tape, five-eighth inch wide, one-half to three-quarter inch to the left of the thread marking the edge of the tuck; baste and stitch on both edges. Fold tuck again and baste to place; stitch same width as below the placket opening. Sew hooks or snap fasteners on one inch apart. The extension should have a piece of five-eighth-inch linen tape basted far enough to the right of the marking of placket, so that when the eyes are placed the skirt will hook together properly. Baste
Fig. 196.—Placket facing on bias seam.

Fig. 197.—Placket facing in tuck opening.
tape to place and stitch both edges. Sew eyes on to meet hooks. The placket must close smoothly and evenly. Press before stitching. If the tuck should be on the bias, it must also be faced with a straight strip of lawn, nainsook, or batiste (Fig. 197).

3. *Buttons and Buttonholes.*—The buttonhole side must be reinforced to provide for the strain in fastening the skirt. Place a lengthwise strip of cambric or muslin, the width of the tuck on the inside of the tuck. Baste to place. Cut and work the buttonholes through the three thicknesses of material. The buttonholes may be either worked or bound. Two- or four-hole, or shank, buttons are used, the size depending on width of tuck and individual taste. It is better to use a button with a shank which can be slipped through an eyelet and fastened with one of the metal catches specially made for the purpose. These are easily removed for the purpose of laundering the skirt. In any case, stay the extension with a piece of linen tape through which you either work the eyelets or sew the buttons. The edge of the extension, if selvedge, remains unfinished.
Fig. 199.—Cord seam; A, basting for outside stitching; B, wrong side before outside stitching; C, outside stitching; D, wrong side after stitching.
Stitching and Finishing Seams.—A tailored seam implies an outside stitching. There are numerous ways of making this effective. Following are methods of finishing several types of tailored seams:

1. Plain Seams.—While not a tailored seam, it is used at times in tailored skirts where one wishes to have the seam invisible (hip seam or center back). When so used, it is stitched, bastings removed, and the edges overcast together, or the seams opened and each edge overcast separately. It is the foundation of a number of the tailored seams (Fig. 198).

2. Cord Seam.—Stitch a plain seam, remove bastings, turn the edges of the seam toward the front, baste close to the folded edge on the right side, stitch one-sixteenth inch from edge. Trim seam to five-eighth inch on wrong side and overcast edges together. Used on hip seams or elsewhere, if simple stitching is desired (Fig. 199). Single and double stitched seams. A modification of the cord seam may be made by opening the plain seam and stitching close to the edges on both sides of the seam. Another method is to use the stitchings close to the edge and stitch again once or twice or more and as far apart as desired. Such stitchings are purely for ornamentation, so judgment must be used as to spacing in order to secure pleasing results.

3. Tuck Seam.—Baste the same as panel (p. 332) and stitch only on the outside as far from the edge as may be desired. Use quilter gauge or presser foot as a guide in stitching. The edges are finished the same as a cord seam. If using heavy material, the
edge of the seam next the skirt may be trimmed narrower than the other to avoid a ridge on the outside of the garment after pressing (Fig. 200).

4. Welt Seam.—Same principle as cord seam. First stitch the seam as a plain seam, remove bastings, turn seam toward front of skirt and baste close to the turned edge. Trim the edge of the seam next to the skirt narrower than the other and stitch again any desired width (Fig. 201).

5. Fell Seam.—Stitch as plain seam on the right side of skirt, remove bastings, turn seam toward the front, trimming the under edge to one-quarter inch and the upper edge three-eighth inch in width. Turn the upper edge under the lower, baste, and stitch (Fig. 202).

6. Lapped Seam.—In effect this is much the same as the fell seam, but more difficult to make. Lap the edges of the gores, so that the seam lines exactly meet, baste through these lines. Having the edges of the seams exactly even, turn first the edge on the right side of the skirt, then the one on the wrong side. Both edges must be most
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tape (shrunk), and stitch top and bottom of tape (Fig. 205A). Sew hooks and eyes on permanently and make outside belt of linen, for which take two lengthwise strips of linen the desired width of belt plus seams. Allow for lap at ends of belt. Either stitch the two strips together and turn through, baste and stitch again on the outside stitching to be uniform with the seam stitchings, or turn the edges of both strips in together and stitch on the outside, same as other (Fig. 205B). The belt may be fastened with hooks and eyes, snaps, buttons or a buckle. For a button, a buttonhole must

be worked and for a buckle an eyelet or set of eyelets; also a strap to hold the loose end in place. This belt should be tacked to the skirt at the back and over the hips.

2. Another finish for the normal waist line, is a belt of cambric or muslin, over which may be worn a separate belt of linen or to which may be sewed one thickness of linen to simulate a separate belt. For a separate belt, the cambric may be cut to be finished as narrow as three-quarter inch, but when the linen is to be stitched down to it, the cambric belt must be made as wide as the outside finish. For this, take a lengthwise strip of cambric twice the width of the belt plus the seams and two inches longer than the waist
Fig. 205.—Waist line finishes for tailored skirts; A and B, normal waist line; C and D, raised waist line.
measure. Turn one inch back at each end and crease one-quarter-inch seam on both long edges. Fold the belt through the center lengthwise. Pin around the figure, and turning back the upper part, pin the skirt to place on the turned edge of the lower part. Remove skirt, baste to place, also baste upper edge down and stitch all around belt on edge. Make separate belt. If making belt in one with skirt, take a lengthwise piece of skirt material, three or four inches longer than waist measure, according to the style of finish desired, and the width of cambric belt plus seams. Turn seams, baste to cambric belt, placing facing on extension, stitch all around belt to coincide with seam stitchings.

Finish of Skirt with Raised Waist Line.—There are two methods of placing to belt, either of which has its advantage. For both, have belt prepared, correct waist measure, with hooks and eyes. (1) Use ribbed cotton belting, which, if shrunk, is better starched to
give it firmness, (2) or percaline belt with featherbone extenders. The latter shrinks little and does not soften up. Turn the ends of belting but once, so as not to make it thick; sew on hooks and eyes, and finish the ends with a blanket stitch to keep from raveling.

1. Place bias strip of cambric at top edge of skirt, so as to keep it firm when turning and stitching. Turn the edge of the skirt on the line marked for high waist line (Fig. 205C). Stitch through turned edge, one-eighth inch from turn, and baste skirt to belt, and hem belt on wrong side to stitching (Fig. 205D).

2. Turn edge of skirt as in Fig. 205C, baste to belt and stitch through both belt and skirt.

The first method has the advantage of admitting easy change of belting if belt softens, or shrinks in washing. In the second method there is less danger of the unskilled worker stretching the material in stitching the skirt at the top.

Laying and Finishing Hem.—When a good finishing line has been turned and marked with thread, lay the skirt out upon the table and measure up from the finishing line at close intervals, the depth you wish the hem to be plus one-quarter inch for turn or sewing edge; mark carefully with pins or chalk. Cut on this line.
There are several methods of removing the fulness at the top of the hem, each having its preferred place according to the materials of which the skirt is made (Fig. 206).

1. Fold the fulness at the top of the hem in small darts which must not run to the bottom of the hem, because they would make points in the edge. Hem the edges of the darts down.

2. Gather the fulness in top of hem with fine gathers and draw up to fit the width of the skirt at this place (Fig. 212). Shrink fulness out. Where materials are used that are not heavy, the edge of the hem is sometimes just turned in and stitched. Where there is any thickness, however, it is better to take a strip of bias binding and lay the folded edge, one-quarter inch from top of hem, baste and stitch to the hem only. Then lay the other folded edge of the binding down to the skirt, baste and stitch, or hem by hand. Bias binding is preferable because it gives sufficiently not to hold the hem tight after laundering (Fig. 207). Be careful in placing it, however, not to hold it tight. Make a bias join at the ends. When placing darts, press them into place before laying hem. Before stitching hem, press, so as to have good stitching.

3. When finishing the bottom of a five- or six-gored skirt, after the line is turned, if the seams are stitched only to the finishing line, when the hem is turned, it will be possible to dispose of all the fulness in the hem, at the seams, by lapping it underneath, and cutting it away, making a perfectly smooth hem. This could not be done unless one were sure not to need the extra length to let down; unless instead of cutting the material away, it is simply lapped underneath, which might be done if the material were not too heavy.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS

1. What type of material would be best for a separate tailored skirt of cotton or linen, heavy or light weight?
2. Should the design be simple in line?
3. Are circular skirts practical as washable garments? Why?
4. State a rule for basting gored skirts for fitting.
5. What kinds of seam finishing would you use for such skirts?
6. How would you finish the placket of a linen skirt opening under a tuck?
7. How would you finish the hem?
8. Describe two methods of finishing skirts at the belt.