CHAPTER 7
WAISTS, BLOUSES AND SHIRT-WAISTS,
PART I.—DRESS WAISTS


PATTERNS. Purchase dress waists, shirt-waists and blouse patterns by the bust measure. (Chapter 2 on Butterick Patterns, page 10—Correct Way to Take the Bust Measure.) The right size is very important for it does away with unnecessary fitting and altering.

A woman may measure exactly thirty-six inches in the bust and yet be longer or shorter waisted than the pattern, or have a longer or shorter arm. Before cutting your material compare the lengths of the waist and sleeve with the corresponding lengths of the person for whom the waist, etc., is being made. (Chapter 3, pages 19—21). Sometimes it is difficult to get the length of the pattern itself when a neck is open and the sleeve is kimono. Butterick patterns are made the correct length for a figure measuring about 15 1/2 inches from the normal collar seam at the back of the neck to the normal waistline at the center back. If a pattern is long or short waisted for you, or long or short sleeved, alter it according to instructions given in Chapter 3, pages 19, 20 and 21.

If your figure is unusual in any way, large or small in the bust, round-shouldered, etc., the pattern should be altered according to instructions given in Chapter 4. If it is necessary to make any alterations in the pattern it is best to make them in the lining first, if the pattern has a lining. The same alterations can then be made in the outside.

CUTTING. Before cutting your material read Chapter 6 on Materials, Sponging, Steaming, Cutting, etc.

LINING MATERIALS. China silk, silk mull and the better grades of percale are the best lining materials in silk and wool.
Brussels net may be used in silk or cotton materials.
Lawn may be used for a lining in the heavier cottons.
Brussels net and Georgette crépe are the linings used for lace, chiffons, Georgette, etc.
Mousseline de soie is also used for the lining of an evening dress.
In dress waists, etc., where it does not show, the lining should be of white or flesh color. Under a transparent waist the lining should be the same color as the skirt or drop skirt, otherwise there will be a sharp break in color between the waist and skirt.

Lay the pattern on the material following the layout for your size pattern and width of material in the Deltor Layouts. If there is no Deltor in your pattern follow the instructions given in the pattern for cutting.

Some dressmakers advocate cutting cotton linings crosswise of the material although the material does not cut economically that way. The advantage is that material cut crosswise will give very little, if at all, and the lining may be further strengthened by making it double at points where the greatest strain will come.

Mark all the perforations with tailors' tacks. (Chapter 16, page 85.)
Mark all the notches with contrasting colored basting thread, taking two or three stitches to mark each notch. Or instead of marking the notches you can clip them, cutting them sufficiently deep so that you can see them easily, but no deeper than is absolutely necessary.
THE LINING. If the waist has a lining it should be made before the outside waist. The lining in a dress waist protects the dress across the shoulders, holds it in place on the body and holds the dress-shields.

REINFORCING. For a stout figure the waist lining should be reinforced. (Ill. 73, page 40.) Before basting the darts or side front seams baste an extra piece of the lining to the front of the waist to the underarm seam. It should reach from the bottom of the lining to just under the bust. When the darts and seams are basted the reinforced pieces are included in the seams.

In a waist fastening at the back, the back portions should be reinforced to a corresponding height.

PUTTING THE LINING TOGETHER. Baste all the pieces together, carefully, following the Deltor for putting together or the Illustrated Instructions included in the pattern.

Put the lining on, bringing the two closing edges together. Pin them carefully, placing the first pin at the waistline. Smooth the lining over the figure both front and back and be careful that the waistline of the lining is at the waistline of the figure. Make any little alteration at the outlet seams and at the front edge.

A blouse or camisole lining (IIs. 69 and 70) should be a little easier in fitting than a fitted lining except when the
camisole lining is used for an evening waist. Draw the lining up well at the shoulder seams, but not enough to draw it from your waistline. It may be fitted at these seams a little more snugly in a final fitting.

ALTERING THE LINING. Sometimes after the shoulders are carefully pinned there will be wrinkles in the front between the shoulder and neck. These wrinkles are caused by the natural hollow of the shoulder. In this case the shoulder seams must be ripped open and the front stretched to the back from the center of the shoulder to the neck. Wrinkles at the back near the neck are often caused by the lining being too long-waisted. Or the shoulder may have been sloped too much if the person is very square-shouldered. It is better to rip the basting and pin the seam again.

If the waist draws to one side it means the waistlines have not been pinned together at the line of basting. The top of the darts, if there are any, must come just below the curve of the bust and they may be raised or lowered if necessary. If the armholes feel too tight be careful not to gouge them out under the arm or at the front. Snip the armholes about 3/8 of an inch, to give sufficient spring for the arm. If it isn’t enough pare the edges off a little and snip the seams a trifle deeper. If the neck is too high or tight cut it out the same way, taking care not to do too much at once.

Pin the alterations and mark carefully the line of pins with tailor’s chalk. Without removing the pins baste through chalk marks keeping a well-shaped line for the seams. Try the lining on again to be sure that the alterations are right. Stitch the seams just outside the basting so as not to make the waist smaller, bearing in mind that the sewing of the seams will tighten the lining a trifle. Stitching outside the bastings also allows you to take them out, for if you stitch on top of them it will be impossible to pull them out.

THE LINING SEAMS. In stitching the side-back seams have the back next to the feed of the machine and the side back next to the presser foot, and hold the parts well up at each end of the presser foot. Otherwise the side-back seams are liable to pucker and pull when being sewn. In making seams in which one portion is pulled on to another, place the full portion downward next to the feed because if it is placed next to the presser foot, the foot would be likely to push the fulness out of place.

In a blouse or camisole lining the seams can be French seamed (Chapter 17, page 86), or bound with seam-binding, (page 88), or finely overcast. (Chapter 16, page 82.) Use ribbon seam-binding on silk, and lawn binding on a cotton lining.

In a fitted lining notch the seams at the waistline and two or three times above and below it, enough to allow them to lie flat when pressed. Bind the seams neatly with ribbon seam-binding, run on loosely and press them open. (Page 88.) Some dressmakers prefer to overcast the seams closely and most imported French dresses are finished in that way.

In some linings, especially those of lawn, the seam edges are simply pinked. Illustration 71 shows a seam edge bound, another overcast, a third notched and ready to bind. It also shows the notching necessary to make a side seam lie flat when it is pressed open.

THE LINING CLOSING. If a hem is allowed at the closing edge, the hem or closing line is usually indicated by a notch at the top and another at the bottom of the pattern. Fold a line from one of these notches to the other, keeping the hem an even width. Later this will be turned over for the closing. Make a stay for the hooks and eyes from an extra strip of thin lining two inches wide. Fold it lengthwise through the center and place it
on the inside of the lining with a fold at the line that marks the closing. Turn over both thicknesses and baste them very carefully. Then stitch with one row of stitching \( \frac{1}{2} \) of an inch from the edge and another \( \frac{3}{8} \) of an inch inside of that. (Ill. 71.)

Where no hem is allowed at the closing edge of the lining it is necessary to face it. Cut two pieces of the lining material the same outline as the front or back where the opening comes, and about two inches wide. Baste one on the outside of each front or back with their right sides together. Stitch the seams and turn the facing over toward the inside. Stitch it just as you would a hemmed edge.

Hooks and eyes are then sewed on. (Chapter 24, page 116.) Sew the hooks and eyes right through the lining allowing the stitches to go through to the right side so as to make the sewing strong and durable. Be careful in sewing on the hooks and eyes on the second side to have them exactly correspond in position to those of the opposite side.

**INSIDE BELT.** An inside belt is sometimes used in fitted linings. Get the regular silk or cotton belting for this purpose and make it three inches longer than your waist measure. Turn back an inch and a half at each end, sew on a hook on one edge and the eye on the other (Ill. 72), and hem the raw edges over their ends. (Ill. 72.) Mark the center of the belt and sew it to the center front seam if the lining opens at the back. If it opens in the front, sew it to the center back of the lining with the lower edge of the belt half an inch above the normal waistline. (Ill. 73.) Sew across the width of the belt with a long cross-stitch to the inside of the seam.

**FINISHING THE NECK AND ARMHOLE EDGES OF THE LINING** depends on the lining material and on the waist material. In silk or cotton linings turn the edges under; clip them whenever necessary to make them lie flat. In the silk lining finish them with ribbon seam-binding sewed on flat like a facing. In a cotton lining use lawn binding in the same way.

Narrow lace may be whipped to the edges. (Ill. 70.) This is always done in a French dress or any good dress.

If the lining is of net or Georgette, narrow lace may trim the neck and armholes. (Ill. 70) Apply the lace as explained in Illustration 311, page 134, or the edges may be finished with a narrow bias facing (Chapter 19, page 94) of the lining material and narrow lace whipped to the edge, or the neck and armhole edges may be picoted. (Chapter 25, page 119.)

**THE TOP OF A CAMISOLE LINING** used under transparent materials may be finished with a facing of the lining material. Or an allowance may be made for a hem if the pattern has none and the hem used to form a casing. The lower edge of the facing or hem may be machine hemstitched. One or two additional rows of hemstitching may be put below as a trimming. Lace may be whipped to the top if desired. (Ill. 69.) Work a buttonhole in the lining at each side of the center, run a ribbon through the casing (Ill. 69) and tie the ribbon in a bow.

A wide band of lace may be used to trim the top. (Chapter 27, page 134.)

Or the top of the camisole lining may be turned to the outside and covered with lace binding. Ribbon is run through the binding and tied in a bow.

The shoulder-strap of a camisole lining may be of ribbon or lace. (Ill. 69.)

The finish of the lower edge of the lining depends on the design of the pattern of the
waist. If it is a fitted lining extending below the waistline and not attached to another edge, it may be finished according to the instructions for finishing the neck and armhole edges of silk or cotton linings on the preceding page. Or the edge may be simply bound with seam-binding.

THE OUTSIDE WAIST should be put together according to the Deltor or Illustrated Instructions with the pattern.

If any alterations were made in the lining the same alterations should be made in the outside waist. Try the waist on to be sure that it fits properly.

FINISHING THE OUTSIDE WAIST. The finish depends on the material and the design of the pattern. The seams are finished differently for silk, wool and cotton. (Chapter 17.)

The underarm seams of a kimono waist made of a non-transparent material should be clipped to prevent their drawing at the curve. They are then finely overcast or bound with seam-binding. If the material is transparent, cut away the seam to one-quarter of an inch width and overcast it finely, or have the seam machine hemstitched. (Chapter 25.)

Piecing in a kimono sleeve where the material is transparent should be machine hemstitched. (Chapter 25.) In any other material it may be piped. (Chapter 26.) In silks or satins the piecing seam may be machine hemstitched or fagoted. (Chapter 25.)

THE COLLAR. Removable and attached collars for the open neck and the high collar are given in Chapter 23, page 110.

FINISHING A COLLARLESS NECK. In sheer materials the edge of a collarless neck may be picoted (Chapter 25, page 119) or bound with a bias binding (Chapter 26, page 131).

In silk, satin, heavier cotton materials and linen the neck edge may be bound.

In wool materials the neck edge may be bound with a lighter weight material like satin, or with braid.

In any material which is not sheer the neck edge may be picoted.

A soft finish is much used on silk and wool materials and on velvet. For this soft finish turn under the seam allowance on the neck edge and cover it with seam-binding sewed on flat like a facing. No sewing should show on the outside. In silk and wool materials if there are seams or closing edges or embroidery or trimming of any sort, the inner edge of the seam binding may be tacked to the seam, closing edge, etc. In any other case it should be left free and simply lie flat against the edge. Press the neck edge and since there is no strain on it the seam-binding will lie flat against the neck and stay in place. In velvet the inner edge of the seam-binding may be blind-stitched, for this can easily be done invisibly on this material. In heavier cotton and linen materials use seam-binding as a facing. The inner edge must be hemmed invisibly or stitched in place on wash materials.

THE SLEEVES are considered by some people as the most difficult part of a costume. Great caution is necessary to keep them exactly alike, from the time the sleeves are cut until they are finished and sewed in the armhole. If not correctly cut and basted, one sleeve may be larger than the other. If they are not stitched in the armhole exactly alike, one may twist while the other hangs without a wrinkle. The finish of the bottom of a dress sleeve is handled in Chapter 23, page 111.

In sewing in a set-in sleeve hold the sleeve toward you when basting it or sewing it by hand, for it is easier to control the ease or fulness in this position.

THE ARMHOLE. Do not bind the armhole. After the sleeve has been sewed in, overcast the armhole seam unless the material is transparent and is to be machine hemstitched. In sheer material which is not hemstitched the armhole seam should be cut to about one-quarter of an inch width before overcasting it.

THE FINISH OF THE WAISTLINE OF THE OUTSIDE WAIST is a matter of style. Follow the information given with the pattern. The waist may be made separately or joined to the skirt. In both cases instructions for finishing it are given with the pattern.