CHAPTER XIII

MAKING A SAILOR SUIT

Sailor suit.—The sailor suit is chosen as the typical dress to be made because the style is becoming to all, and it is a garment which is especially appropriate for school girls. It is comfortable, allows plenty of freedom, and the style changes but slightly from season to season. School girls of all ages, from the lower grades through college, may wear a sailor suit and feel properly dressed. The white linen, cotton, or wool suits make very appropriate “dress-up” dresses.

Material.—Choose any of the firm, heavy weight materials such as linen, suitings, Indian head, or pique. Any of these will make serviceable and attractive sailor suits. Dark blue or white is the color usually chosen since either launders satisfactorily. The lighter blues, and other colors as well, may be used but are more apt to fade.

Waist.—Take bust measure loosely, and choose pattern which corresponds or is a little larger. Compare your back waist length

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with that of the pattern. An inch should be allowed in length for blousing. Modify pattern to make waist length longer or shorter as you find necessary. Follow directions given under Altering Commercial Patterns, on p. 210.

Skirt.—Take waist and hip measure and choose pattern which corresponds or is a little larger. The skirt should be gathered somewhat at the waist and should be full over the hips, so a little extra fullness will do no harm. The entire garment should be loose and comfortable, giving freedom for all parts of the body.

To estimate amount of material.—Place pieces of the corrected pattern on a flat surface, make a chalk line to indicate the width of the material, and decide how much will be needed. Do not forget the collar, which should be double. See directions for cutting.

Cutting.—The general rule is to place the larger part of the pattern at the cut end of the material. Try placing the various pieces until the most economical arrangement is discovered. Care should be taken at this point as a great deal of material may be wasted by careless cutting. Fold the material either lengthwise or crosswise, and cut pieces for right and left sides at the same time. Place largest pieces on goods first and fit in the smallest pieces as economically as possible. Occasionally, a considerable saving of material may be made by cutting
some of the pieces separately. Judgment must be used in such cases. Either shrink material before cutting or allow from $1\frac{1}{4}''$ to $1\frac{1}{2}''$ per yd. for shrinkage.

**To make the skirt.**—*Seams:* Sew up side seams, using a flat felled seam about $\frac{1}{4}''$ wide, and fell down on the right side.

*Placket.*—The skirt should be fastened directly on the center front line. Turn back the right front, making a hem $1\frac{1}{2}''$ wide on the wrong side.

Cut a piece of selvage $1\frac{1}{4}''$ wide and $12''$ long, or if no selvage is available a lengthwise piece $1\frac{1}{2}''$ wide and $12''$ long. Use this piece in making a faced hem at the top of the left front. The finished hem should be $1''$ wide and $12''$ long.

Having the right sides up, place the right front over the left so that they lap the width of the hem. Pin or baste in place below the placket. Clip selvage at the bottom of the faced hem so that it will lie smoothly.

Begin at the top and stitch $\frac{1}{8}''$ nearer the edge than the first stitching. Continue stitching to the bottom of the skirt. This second row of stitching fastens the right and left fronts together below the placket. Gather the back of the skirt, putting in two rows of running stitches $\frac{1}{4}''$ down from the top.

*Belt.*—Cut two straight pieces of goods $1\frac{3}{4}''$
wide and 2" longer than the waist measure. Turn raw edges toward the wrong side to make finished belt 1¼" wide and crease.

Place belt in front of you with the right side of the top part and the wrong side of the under part up and measure in 1½" from left end and mark with a pin. This marks the center front. Find center of remainder and mark with a pin. This indicates the center back. Find balance points and mark on belt.

The point where the underarm seam should cross the waistline is called the balance point. To determine this point measure one-fourth of the waist measure minus 3/4", starting at the center back.

The side seams of the skirt should meet the waistline at this point, which makes them continuous with the underarm seam.

Pin and baste the under part of the belt to the skirt. The center back, center front, and balance points of belt and skirt should be together and the folded edge of the belt should just cover the lowest gathering thread. Pull up the gathers in the back to fit the space between the balance points on the belt. Distribute the gathers across the back, having the larger part of them toward the center. Place the upper part of the belt exactly opposite the lining belt so that one stitching will secure both. Baste in place.
Test the front, side, and back lengths of the skirt very carefully and turn up the hem. Try on before making the hem permanent, but there should be little change necessary if the measuring has been done carefully.

A yardstick, held perpendicularly with one end on the floor, will show very quickly and accurately whether the skirt is the same distance from the floor all around.

To make the waist.—Turn lower edge of yoke toward wrong side of the material $\frac{1}{4}''$. Clip around curves so it will lie perfectly flat. Care should be taken to make good sharp corners and smooth curves. Baste in place. Place yoke on lower part of front with edge of yoke on traced line. Baste. Stitch as close to the edge as possible. Turn to wrong side. Turn under the raw edge, making a flat felled seam $\frac{1}{4}''$ wide. Stitch on wrong side as close to the edge as possible. Put yoke on other side in same manner. Make flat felled seams on the shoulders $\frac{1}{4}''$ wide, turning the seam toward front and felling down on the right side.

Sleeve.—If long sleeves are desired, measure bottom of sleeve and also take measurement around largest part of hand loosely. The difference gives the amount to be put into pleats. Divide this amount into six parts, putting three pleats on each side of center. Find center of sleeve and measure $\frac{3}{4}''$ each way and put in
first pleats. Turn pleats away from center, forming a box-pleat. Place two pleats on each side of box-pleat, having \(1\frac{1}{4}''\) between each. Put pleats in other sleeve in same way. Baste in pleats 4'' or 5'' up from the bottom. Stitch as close to the edge as possible, turn a square corner, stitch over 3/16'', turn another square corner and stitch down, keeping rows of stitching the width of the presser-foot apart. Stitch other pleats in same manner.

**Finishing bottom of sleeve.**—A faced hem may be used or a straight piece may be sewed on right side and turned back to form a cuff.

If **short sleeves** are desired the pattern should be cut so that the bottom of the sleeve comes just below the elbow. Gather and put into a band 2'' wide and 10'' long when finished.

**Setting in sleeves.**—Place underarm seams together, find center on top of shoulder, and mark with a pin. Mark center of sleeve in the same way. Beginning at the center with the pins together and the sleeve toward you, place cut edges together and baste. The sleeve should be held just easy. Stitch seam on the right side \(3/4''\) from the edge. Trim sleeve part of seam, leaving \(1/8''\). Finish by felling down on sleeve, making the seam \(1/4''\) wide when finished.

**Seams.**—Pin underarm seams and sleeves together with seam on right side. Care should be taken in pinning to make the armseye con-
tinuous. Stitch seam $\frac{3}{8}$" wide. Make a felled seam $\frac{1}{4}$" wide and turned toward the front. Sew other seam in same way.

**Finish of the front.**—Face back both sides, having edges of hems come on the center front line. Use selvage pieces 2" wide, each of which is finished at the top with a narrow hem. Leave final stitching until later.

**Collar.**—Cut collar double. Place right sides together and stitch around outer edge, being careful to have stitching as straight as possible. Trim edge, cutting away surplus material at corners. Turn to right side. Be sure the corners are perfectly square. Trace a line through both thicknesses of the collar and $\frac{1}{4}$" from the raw edge. Find center of collar at back of neck, also center of neck on waist. Mark with pins. Place the underside of the collar and right side of the waist together with the pins matching. Pin or baste and stitch on the traced line. Trim seam. Turn under the raw edge of the top of the collar on the traced line. Pin or baste and stitch as close to the edge as possible.

**To stitch fronts and collar.**—Begin at the bottom of the right front at waistline and stitch along fronts and around collar as close to the edge as possible. Stitch again $\frac{1}{8}$" to $3/16$" from first stitching. Turn facing on left side of the front toward the center and fasten
securely at the top to keep in place. This lap is used for the fasteners.

*Placing of pocket.*—The top of the pocket should come 6" below the shoulder seam and the upper corner 2" in from the armsye. Place right side of facing to wrong side of pocket, pin and stitch, crease; turn to right side and crease again. Turn raw edge of facing under; baste and stitch as close to edge as possible; stitch also across top of pocket. Turn raw edge of pocket to wrong side and baste. Place pocket in position and baste again. Stitch as close to the edge as possible, continue across top 3/16", then put in another row of stitching 3/16" from the first row.

**Putting skirt and waist together.**—Put a gathering thread on the waistline which allows 1" for blousing.

Put together with corresponding points of waist, belt, and skirt meeting at center front, center back, and balance points. Draw up gathering threads and fasten. Arrange gathers, leaving about 2" almost plain under the arms and 3" at center front. This will bring the greater number of the gathers at the center back and at the sides of the front. The upper part of the belt should just cover the gathering thread.

Turn in ¼" at each end of belt, then baste belt in place. The upper edge of the lining belt
should come exactly opposite the outer edge so that one stitching will secure both. With the right side of the belt up, stitch around belt as close to the edge as possible. Snappers may be used to close waist and skirt at the front. Place snappers 2½” apart. The belt should be fastened with two hooks and eyes, since the strain is greater at the waistline.

**Use of Commercial Patterns and Principles of Cutting and Fitting**

I. **Taking measures.**

**Waist.**

1. Length of back—measure from highest vertebra to bottom of tape at waistline.
2. Width of back—measure from shoulder to shoulder across widest part of back.
3. Front length—measure from collar line to bottom of belt at waist.
4. Chest—measure from shoulder to shoulder across widest part of chest—usually 2½” below neck.
5. Bust—measure over fullest part of bust—raise tape line slightly in back—stand in back of person measured.
6. Neck—measure around neck at the collar line.
7. Underarm—measure from armpit to bottom of belt at waist.
8. Waist—snug.
9. Sleeve: inside—measure from large muscle at armpit to the bone at the wrist, with arm straight; outside—measure from top of shoulder over elbow with arm bent to outside wrist bone.

Skirt.
1. Waist.
2. Hip—9 to 10 inches below waistline or over fullest part of hips (loosely).
3. Front length—from top of tape at waist to floor.
4. Side length—from top of tape at waist over hips to floor.
5. Back length—from top of tape at waist to floor.

II. Altering commercial patterns.

Shirtwaist pattern.—Choose pattern which corresponds with the desired bust measure (choose type of pattern to suit the individual. Butterick and McCall patterns run large; Ladies’ Home Journal and Pictorial Review run small).

Compare your own length of back with that of pattern. If back is too long, lay pleat across the pattern 3” below the arms eye, thus taking out surplus length.

If too short, cut pattern at the same point below the armseye, and spread apart the necessary amount.
III. Preparation of perfect fitting patterns.

A. Cutting.

Cut back double, placing center back on lengthwise fold of material. Mark notches with chalk or tracing wheel.

Lay front pattern on cloth so that larger part of pattern comes at the cut end of the material. Allow about 1" at the center front for adjustment in fitting. Mark notches same as for back.

Front shoulder should be $\frac{1}{4}''$ shorter than back—stretch front to fit the back.

B. Fitting.

Pin together down front, being careful to keep front straight with the thread of cloth. Tie tape around waist and adjust gathers. Have few or no gathers for a distance of 3 or 4 inches across center front and the same under the arm. Distribute gathers across back, placing more at the center.

The thread of the cloth running across the chest should be at right angles to the center front line. Pin to hold front in this position while fitting.

1. Shoulder seam.

For normal figure the shoulder seam should come 1" back of the top of the shoulder. If the person is round shouldered this line is placed still farther back.
The correct placing of the shoulder seam frequently means that more material must be taken up from either the front or back.

The waist at the neck and shoulders should be perfectly smooth and flat.

2. Underarm seam.

The underarm seam should start directly under the shoulder seam, continuing straight to the waistline. The point where the underarm seam crosses the waistline is called the balance point. To determine this point measure one-fourth of the waist measure minus \( \frac{3}{4}'' \), starting at the center back.

Take out any extra fullness there may be across the bust or back, at the underarm seam. The waist should lie smooth and flat around armseye and on either side of underarm seam.


Take a straight piece of cloth 2\( \frac{1}{2}'' \) or 3'' wide and place around the neck so that it feels comfortable and so that the lower edge will come where the collar will look best and be most comfortable. Mark lower edge of collar line on waist. A seam allowance of at least one-fourth of an inch should be made beyond this line which represents the line of sewing.

4. Armseye.

If too tight—slash in material until armseye feels comfortable. When the waist is taken off, trim out portions, making a smooth curve. The
line at the armseye should slant out gradually as it approaches the shoulder seam.

If there is too much fullness at the armseye toward the front or back so that it stands out just in front or in back of the armpit, lay a small dart in the pattern, taking out the extra fullness.