CHAPTER X

BE YOUR OWN DESIGNER

How to Use a Block Waist Pattern. — A plain waist pattern can be used as a basis for working out new designs. Use a plain high neck waist pattern without tucks or fullness. Cut off the seam allowances. Seams are confusing when working out a new design.

To add a yoke. Pencil the outline of the yoke on the pattern. See Fig. 111. Lay the pattern on another piece of paper. Mark around the upper portion of the pattern, and run a tracing wheel across the lower line of the yoke. Remove the pattern, and add seams beyond the marks at all points. Make a pattern for the lower portion by marking around the outside lower lines and trace across the yoke line, adding seams.
To put in fullness below the yoke draw lines every two inches apart parallel to the center-front if it is the front of the waist, or parallel to the center-back if it is the back of the waist. Split the pattern along these lines and spread the pieces, keeping the edges parallel. Start with the piece nearest the center-front if it is the front of the waist, or center-back if it is the back of the waist. Square a line out at right angles from the top of this piece. Place the next piece with the top touching the line squared out from the first piece. Square a line out from the second piece in the same manner and place the top of the third piece on this line. Place the rest of the pieces in the same manner. See Fig. 112. Mark around the outside edges. Remove the pattern. Draw straight lines from the highest to the lowest point on the yoke edge and smooth the curve at the bottom of the waist. Add seams at all points.
To add fullness at the top of the piece only, mark lines two inches apart on the pattern and split it into narrow pieces, but spread the pieces at the top only. Thumb tack the pieces so they just touch at the bottom, and spread them at the top. Mark around the outside edges, remove the pieces and draw new lines touching the highest and lowest points. Add seams.

To add tucks, mark where the tuck will come on the pattern. Lay the pattern on a plain piece of paper. Mark around the front portion as far as the tuck if it is the front pattern, or around the back portion as far as the tuck if it is the back pattern. Remove the pattern and lay in the tuck. Then lay on the pattern again and mark the rest of the outline. See Fig. 113. Add seams to pattern and cut piece while tuck is folded in place.

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For groups of narrow tucking, spread the pattern as for fullness, see To Add Fullness, page 119, or tuck the material, then lay on the plain pattern and cut out the piece, allowing seams.

To add a hem, allow half the depth of the hem beyond the edge of the pattern, then the width of the hem plus a seam to turn back. This allows for a lap at the closing.

To take out the fullness at the bottom of the waist fit it out in darts, split the pattern at the armhole or lay in pleats at the underarm seam.

There are two kinds of darts, those from the bust to the bottom and those at the shoulder. To locate darts below bust, cut pattern in cheap material and try on, pinning up darts to fit the figure. For a dart at the shoulder, mark a line centerway through the shoulder, following the slant of the shoulder, then running parallel to the centerfront down to the bottom of the pattern. Lap out the desired amount of material below the bust which will spread the pattern
at the shoulder. Mark around the piece, indicating dart, and add seams. See Fig. 114.

Another way to take out the fullness is to spread the armhole. Slash the pattern parallel to center-front. On a level with the bust line, slash over to the armhole. Keep the pattern together at the bust line, lap the lower edge and spread the armhole. See Fig. 115. Of course this enlarges the armhole a trifle. Trace around the outside of the pattern, smooth up the curve at the armhole, and add seams.

The fullness can also be taken out at the underarm. In this case, slash the pattern parallel to center-front to the bust line. From the top of this slash run three slashes to the underarm seam. Keep the pieces together at the bust line. Lap the pieces at the lower edge which will spread the pieces at the
underarm. Mark around the outside of the pattern and add seams. See Fig. 116. In making the garment take up the amount spread at the underarm in pleats.

**Position of lace or insertion** should first be indicated on the block pattern. Pencil on where the center of the lace or insertion is to go. Then mark the finished edge of the lace or insertion. See Fig. 117. Lay the pattern on the goods and run over these marks with a tracing wheel.

To sew on lace or insertion, see *Lace or Insertion*, page 116.

**How to Use Block Skirt Pattern.**—A seven-gored skirt of normal waistline, without seams, makes the best block pattern.

*To make fewer gores*, place the pattern on another piece of paper. Lay the lower portion of the gores along side of each other, mark around the outside of the pieces and
the darts thus formed. See Fig. 118. Divide this pattern into as many pieces as desired, marking darts at the seams which will equal the darts taken out originally. See Fig. 119. Lay this diagram over another piece of paper and run a tracing wheel around the outline of the new gore. Remove the pattern, add seams and cut out. To make the skirt smaller at the bottom, lap the gores as indicated in Fig. 120.

*If the skirt is to have raised waist line, measure around the body where the top of the skirt will come. Lay the gores on a plain piece of paper, mark the position of the new waist-
line above each gore, and add sufficient to either side of the gores to equal the new waist measurement. If the skirt is to have a fitted appearance at the top, run the lines from the top of each gore to the old normal waistline. See Fig. 121. If the skirt is to hang straight from the raised waistline to the hips, draw a straight line from the top of each gore to the hip. See Fig. 122.

Add pleats to a skirt in the same way as adding tucks to a waist. See To Add Tucks, page 120.

To add a group of pleats coming only part way on a skirt, mark on the plain gore the outline the gore will take and the exact position of the pleats. See Fig. 123. Lay the pattern on another piece of material,
trace the outside edges and the new outline along what will be the folded edge of the first pleat. Add seams at the outer edges and add the width of the pleat plus a seam beyond the fold edge of the pleat. See Fig. 124. Slash the pattern where the pleat turns back, and fold the pleat back before cutting out the bottom of the gore. Cut out the pleated section in the old pattern and use it as a guide for cutting the new pattern with the pleats on. See Fig. 125. Follow the same method in laying in the pleat as in laying in tucks in a waist. Cut an extension on the gore which is to join to the pleated section. See Fig. 126.
To determine the size of pleats in a straight side-pleated skirt, decide on the number of widths to be put in the skirt, join the pieces, measure the top of the skirt and the waistline of the figure. The difference between the waist measure and the top of the skirt will give the amount of material to be taken out in the pleats. Divide this equally by the number of pleats and it will give the amount to be taken up in each pleat. To space the pleats, decide how wide you want the space at center-front, subtract this amount from the waist measure. Then divide the remaining waist measure by one less than the number of pleats. This gives the width of the spaces between the pleats.

How to Hang Your Own Skirt. — Finish off the waistline of the skirt and try it on. Stand near a table which comes about fifteen inches below the waistline. Place pins in the skirt where the table touches the skirt. Turn up the skirt at the center-front the desired amount. Remove the skirt and
make the distance from the pins to the lower edge the same at all points. As the curve of the hips comes above the table any differences in the length will be from the pin to the top.