CHAPTER 14

MAKING AND FINISHING UNDERGARMENTS

Patterns—Materials—Cutting—Putting the Garment Together—Seams—Trimmings

UNDERWEAR is the easiest type of sewing. There is practically no fitting to be done and the construction is of the simplest possible kind. It is a very good idea, therefore, for a beginner to start with an underwear garment before she undertakes a blouse or dress.

PATTE RNS—Buy your pattern by the measures given on the pattern envelope. No other measure need be considered in purchasing these patterns. It is very important that these measures be correct. The right way to take your measures and instructions for buying patterns are given in Chapter 2, pages 10—12.

Before cutting your material read the instructions in the Deltor or pattern envelope for altering the length of the pattern if necessary. If you are of average size and height it is probable that no change will be needed, but if you are shorter or taller than the average it is advisable to adjust the length of the pattern before cutting your material. To make any alteration that is necessary read Chapter 3, pages 19—23. You should also read Chapter 2 on “Butterick Patterns.”

MATERIALS. The materials most used for nightgowns, camisoles, corset-covers, petticoats, drawers and combinations are batiste, nainsook, long-cloth and cross-bar. These are practical materials, and the plain or flowered batistes, cross-bars and nainsooks are also very dainty. Many women like cotton crêpe for it is easy to launder, and it is used in the plain or flowered crêpes or the crêpes with bird designs. Muslin and cambrie are used for garments that are to have hard wear. The French use cotton voile in dainty colors. For fine underwear the best materials are handkerchief linen, crêpe de Chine, wash silk and wash satin, silk mull, especially with a gauze stripe, silk muslin, and the occasional net and Georgette crêpe for camisoles and petticoats. The Oriental silks, both the Chinese and Japanese, are used for a good many things, especially for pajamas, while outing flannel is used for both pajamas and nightgowns. Pajamas are also made of any of the silk or cotton materials mentioned.

Italian silks and silk jersey are nice for knickers, which are also made of sateen, satin, China silk and crêpe de Chine when they are worn under dresses in place of petticoats. These knickers are more comfortable than a petticoat under a narrow skirt, and may be worn under any skirt of a good weight wool material or under any silk or satin skirt which has a drop skirt. For this purpose it is better to make them in a longer length. Dark colors are practical, especially for the street, but flesh color and white are very dainty. If they are used instead of drawers they should be made in a shorter length, and in either the silk or cotton materials they should be white or flesh-color.

Princess slips are made of crêpe de Chine, Georgette, wash satin, Japanese silk, sateen, batiste, cotton voile and silk mull.

Bloomers for gymnasium suits are made of serge, khaki, sateen, cotton poplin and brillantine in dark colors.

CUTTING. Lay the pattern on the material, following the layout for your size, view and width of material given in the Deltor or following the cutting instructions given on the pattern envelope. Mark the notches with two or three stitches taken in basting cotton, or clip them. In the latter case only cut them deep enough so that you can see them easily. Mark all the working perforations with tailors’ tacks. (Chapter 16, page 85.)
PUTTING THE GARMENT TOGETHER. Put the garment together and baste it, following the Deltor for putting together or the Illustrated Instructions. Try the garment on and if necessary make any slight alteration.

Although there is a particular daintiness and charm about hand-made underwear, much fine and beautiful work may be done on the machine. The saving of time is so great that when a number of pieces are to be made this method is usually given the preference. A few of the smaller pieces—a corset cover, chemise or a pair of drawers—can easily be made by hand, but the amount of work on gowns, petticoats or combination garments inclines one toward the machine method.

One must understand something of the mechanism of the machine. It must be kept clean and well oiled. The number of the thread, the size of the needle, the length of the stitch, and the adjustment of the tension must be adapted to the material. No. 80 cotton is the best for white work, except for tucks and hems and all outside stitching on very sheer and fine materials, when No. 100 or No. 120 may be used. Every make of machine has a table giving the sizes of needles that should be used with certain number threads, which it is wise to follow. Remember that a sewing cotton requires a looser tension than silk.

The hemming and tucking attachments are great time-savers, but many women prefer to gather ruffles,uffs, etc., by hand and stroke them.

IN MAKING underwear it is important that there should be no raw edges. This not only makes it neater and daintier, but it makes it stronger and better able to stand frequent laundering. It is washing that wears out underwear more than the actual use.

SEAMS. In sheer materials it is necessary to make the seams as invisible as possible. French seams are best on this account (Chapter 17, page 86). In fact, French seams are used on all underwear, whether it is sheer or not, because they show the least. These seams should be made as narrow as possible. In materials like batiste, silk muslin, net and Georgette the seams may be joined with a narrow lace seaming. The method that is used for this seam is shown in Illustration 307, Chapter 27, page 133.

In all underwear, seams should be as narrow as possible. In materials like thin silk, net, Georgette, silk muslin and batiste the seam edges may be cut very narrow, rolled and whipped together. The method is the same as in Ill. 152, page 87, only both edges are rolled instead of one.

In all materials that suggest daintiness machine hemstitching may be used for the seams and for trimming. (Chapter 25, page 118.) In the heavier cottons and silks where a tailored finish is desired flat fell seams (Chapter 17, page 87) are used. They should be made as narrow as the material will permit. Flat-stitched seams (Chapter 17, page 87) are the strongest seams for underwear and are often used for drawers, especially for children's drawers and for pajamas. They are always used for the pajamas when a mannish tailored effect is desired. A fell seam is used to piece the material in cutting unusually wide garments such as drawers, etc.

The edges may be hemmed (Chapter 18, page 91.) faced (Chapter 19, page 94) or trimmed in the various ways suggested in this chapter.

For bloomers, both French seams and flat-stitched seams are used. A strong flat seam is especially good for gymnasia wear. It may be made by stitching the seam and pressing it open flat. The curved part of the front and back should be slashed half-way to the stitching every little way, so that the seam will be perfectly flat and will not draw.

Trim off the corners of the slashes to give a curved edge (Ill. 112) and finish the edges of the seam with a narrow ribbon binding or with a bias binding of sateen or percaline the shade of the material. Use flat-stitched seams in piecing.

BINDING THE SEAM. The seams of bloomers may be bound with ribbon binding sewed on by hand with a running-stitch or stitched on. Or the seams may be bound with sateen or percaline cut in bias strips an inch wide. Baste the bias binding on the right side of the seam edges, turn it over the raw seam edge turning in the raw edge, and baste on the under side, keeping the turned edges even on both sides of the seam. Stitch
close to the inner edge of the binding. This type of binding is more serviceable than ribbon binding for a garment that is to receive hard wear.

**TAPING SEAMS.** If the bloomers are used for gymnasium the strain on the seams will be very great. They can be reinforced with firm black linen or cotton tape about \( \frac{3}{8} \) of an inch wide. Baste this tape directly at the center of the seam on the inside of the garment and stitch through the tape, seam and garment close to each seam edge.

(II. 113.) This will give the effect of a tailored seam from the outside as shown in Illustration 114. Be sure the tape is in one continuous piece from waistline in front to the waistline in back and from the lower edge of one leg to the lower edge of the other.

**TRIMMINGS.** The daintiest and at the same time the most effective trimming for lingerie is hand-embroidery. It is used on all the most beautiful French underwear, and is very lovely to look at, and yet adds very little to the cost of the garment. It is the only trimming that does not wear out, and it never requires mending. For every-day wear the simple scallops and eyelets which can be used in place of beading are very satisfactory. More elaborate designs can be used on finer lingerie for evening wear, etc. One can get very beautiful effects by combining hand-embroidery with lace. All the best designs of different kinds of embroideries suitable for underwear are to be had in Butterick transfers which are illustrated in Needle-Art.

Tucking made either by hand or by machine is used on all types of underwear. It may be either plain or fancy tucking. (Chapter 20, page 97.)

**DOUBLE** bands of net or Georgette are hemstitched to underwear of silk or batiste to finish the edges and to form a finish and also a casing for a ribbon. They are also set in garments below the hems, and have ribbon run through them. Satin bands are used on garments of Georgette, net, silk muslin, etc.

**NOVELTY** braids, particularly rickrack, are stitched to the edges of garments. They form a beading as well as a finish for the edge, since the points are only caught on one side of the braid.

**MEDALLIONS** of silk, Georgette and net, many of them embroidered, are set in garments of a contrasting material.

**NARROW** crocheted edges, often forming a beading, are used on many of the better class of undergarments in all materials, even satin. Needle-Art gives these edges both in crochet and tatting.

**CROSS** overcasting and double overcasting (Chapter 25, page 124) such as are used as a trimming in waists and dresses are also used as a trimming on underwear of Georgette, batiste, nainsook and silk muslin.

**SHAPED** hems and facings are used at the edges of garments of all materials. They may be made of either the material of the undergarment or of contrasting material, and are either set in with machine hemstitching (Chapter 25, page 118) or else are feather-stitched in place (page 126). These hems and facings may be shaped at either the inner or outer edge. Rows of narrow bias bands of the same material or of contrasting material are used around necks and at the lower edges of flounces. They are very pretty in fine striped or checked material on a plain material and are stitched on by machine or hemstitched.

**DRAWN-WORK** and hemstitching are very lovely on handkerchief linen, batiste and voile, and are used a good deal on the better class of French underwear. They are very dainty.
NET PLAITINGS are used at the edges of garments of Georgette, silk, silk muslin and batiste.

RIBBON and satin plaitings are used on garments of Georgette, net, thin silk and batiste.

LITTLE colored flowers usually made of satin, Georgette or ribbon are used on finer underwear, especially at the top of flounces. Rosettes are also used on fine underwear. Many silk garments are finished with bandings and cordings of the underwear materials. Edges are often finished with picot and sometimes have several rows of machine-stitching above the edge, either straight, scalloped or in points.

LACE is used on almost all underwear. It is usually a machine lace, though on the finer underwear certain real laces are used, such as Valenciennes, Irish, filet and Binche. The different ways in which you can use lace as a trimming are given in Chapter 27, pages 134–136.

RUFFLES are frequently used for trimming on petticoats and drawers when full styles are in fashion. (See Chapter 27, pages 132–133.)