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Sleeve Drafting Tutorial

SEPTEMBER 1, 2005

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[amended 9/2/05]

Two photos had been unintentionally omitted from this posting due to a formatting error. I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

In response to the many questions that one of our readers received in response to [her comment](#) (http://fashion-incubator.com/mt/archives/tools_and_supplies.html#c410) of using drapery weights as a drafting tool, she has graciously written a tutorial to share with all of you. The following information was prepared by [Carol Kimball \(mailto:csquarew@csquarew.cnc.net\)](mailto:csquarew@csquarew.cnc.net). Thanks Carol!

Errata:

I wrote this tutorial before I knew what the conventions of industrial pattern making were; the best information I could get was that grain lines were red. Now I know that all shell pieces are color coded black so please disregard the red pattern markings as those should be black. Likewise, linings should be blue, interfacing should be red and contrast pieces are either purple or green. I'm just glad that I knew to call it a block!

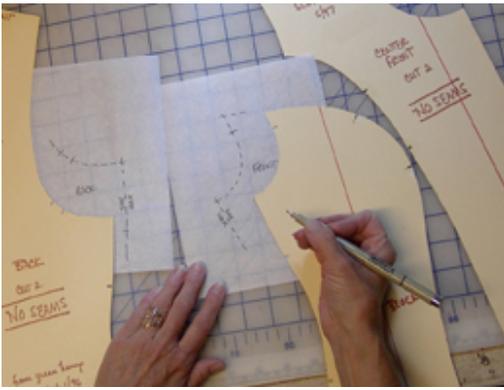
This technique's most common use is to redraft a sleeve for a heavier upper arm. It will fit any client within or outside of standard parameters, so it generalizes to all pattern making.

Materials:

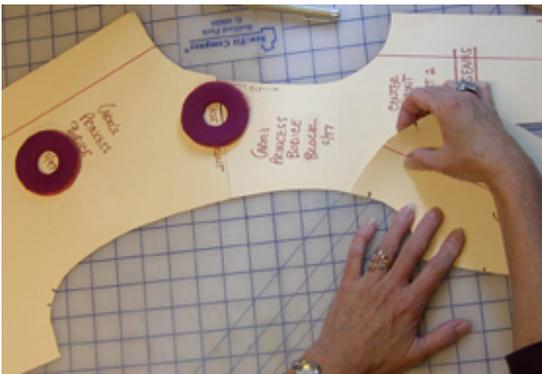
weighted drapery cord, pattern paper, wash-out and permanent markers, pins, pin-able surface, straight edge, bodice pattern

The sleeve is drafted without seam allowances. If you're using a bodice pattern that shows the cutting edge only, add the actual sewing lines and use them as your reference.

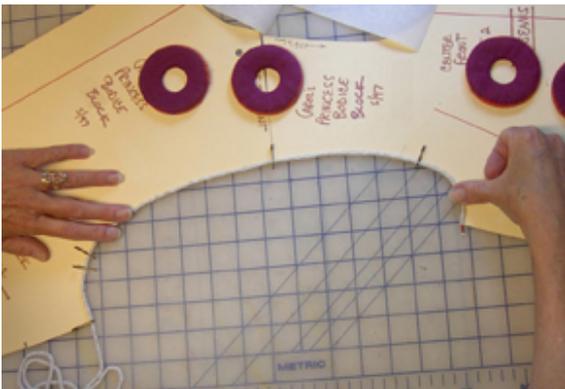
On scraps of pattern paper, trace and label the underarm areas of the front and back arm scyes.



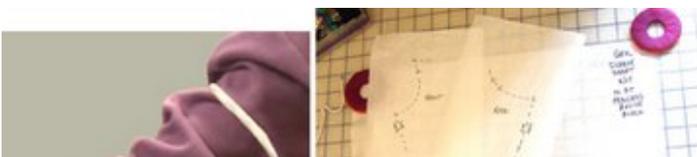
Lay the bodice pattern out so that the arm scye is a smooth, unbroken line.

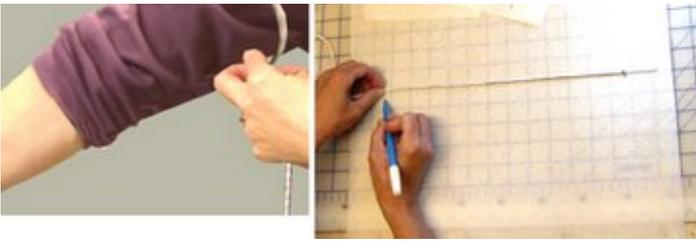


Lay cord exactly on the sewing line. Put pins through the single notch at front, the shoulder join, the double notch at back, and the back side seam.

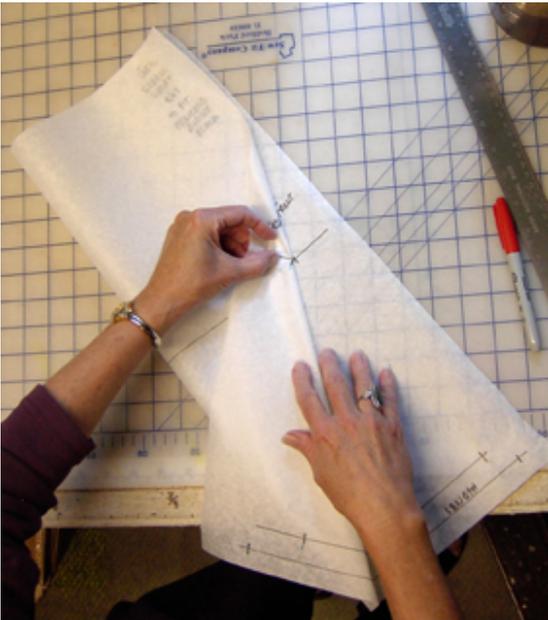


Measure the fullest part of the upper arm, allowing desired ease, and transfer to a large piece of pattern paper. Use a washable marker wherever you don't wish permanent marks (here, on the drapery weight) and go over them with permanent afterwards.





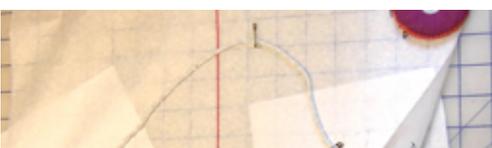
This is the biceps line. Fold it in half and draw the grain line through the fold (red here).



Measure the forearm, adding ease, and the length of the sleeve, from the bottom of the armpit to the finished hem. Transfer to the lower part of the pattern master.

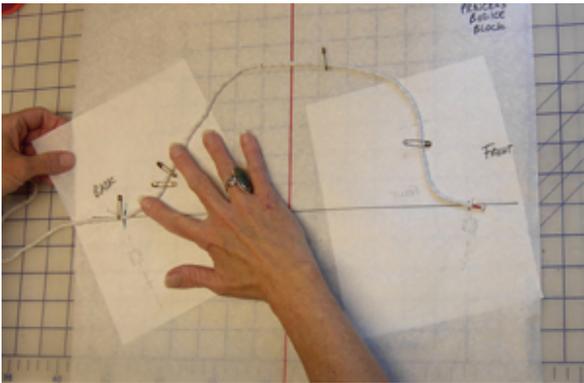


Slip the armscye front and back pieces under the working sheet and pin with the intersections of armscye/side seam exactly under the ends of the biceps line. Re-pin, adding the cord.

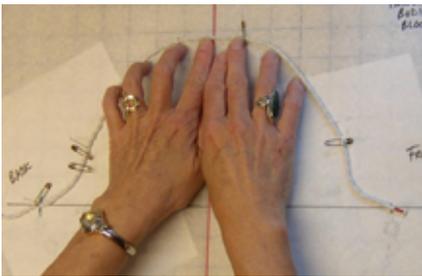




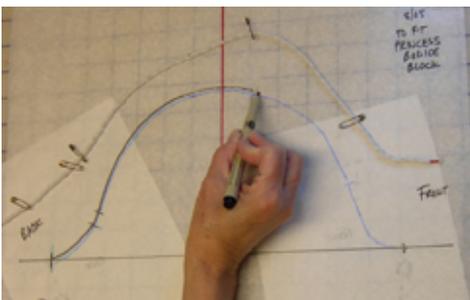
Pivot the armscye sections until the curve will make a smooth transition Pin the cord to the mat above the curve.



With your spread fingers, gently move the cord into a curve. You'll see when it looks even – here it's not smooth yet on the right side. You may put more of the ease where the muscle mass of your shoulder is.



Draw a line just inside the cord with a washable marker and make marks across at the pins. Slide the cord out of the way and redraw the line exactly under where the cord was.

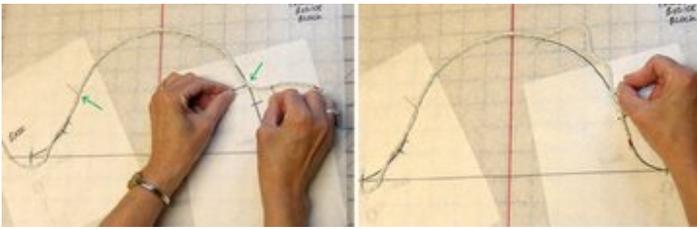


Adding ease.

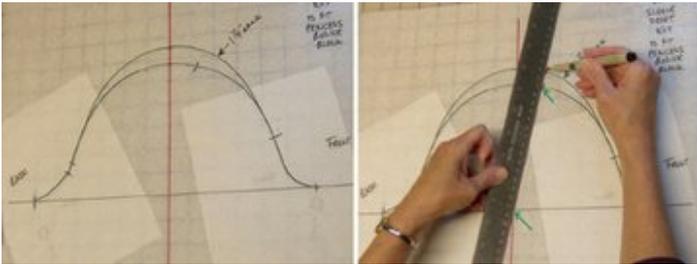
You must have extra fabric to go over the shoulder muscle at the top of the sleeve. We will add 1 1/4", appropriate for most fabrics.

The ease area is as shown over the top of the sleeve, between the green arrows. Slightly more ease is needed at the back. The short section between the pins at right is the ease we'll add.





To find the sleeve notch on the cap with ease, lay a straightedge through the intersection between the grain and biceps lines, and through the notch on the line without ease. This is close enough.



If you want to be more precise, use the section without ease and measure the length between the ease pins. Measure the back section from a pin to the shoulder notch. This will give a ratio which might be 8.5 : 14.

Your formula is

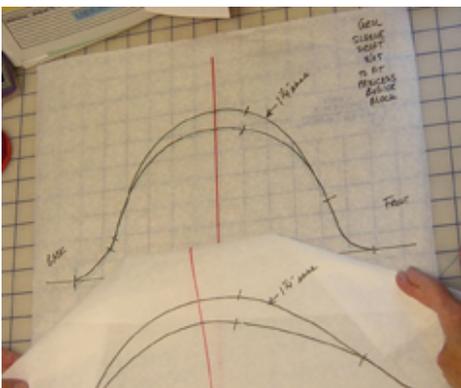
$$8.5 = X$$

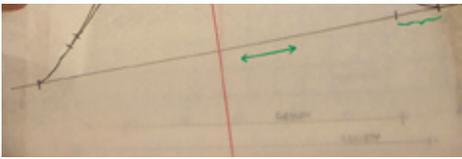
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$$14.5.25 (14 + 1 \hat{A}1/4 \text{ " ease})$$

$X = (8.5 \text{ times } 15.25) \text{ divided by } 14, \text{ or } 9.25 \text{ "}$. Measure from the back pin $9 \hat{A}1/4 \text{ "}$ along the line with ease, and this gives a more correct shoulder notch position.

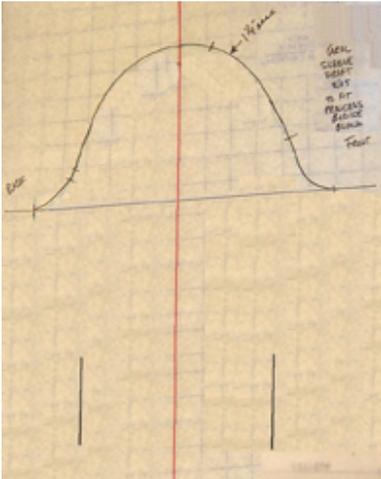
Here are two sleeve caps that will ease into an armscye exactly the same way. The lower one has had the amount at the right biceps line added. As the cap becomes wider and flatter, the curves at the sides diminish. A kimono armscye is a straight line.



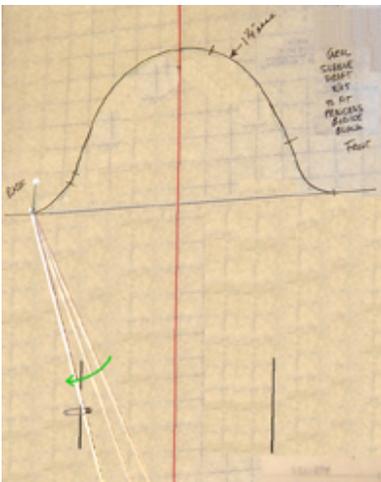


Label this master and copy it to another piece of paper that will become your working pattern.

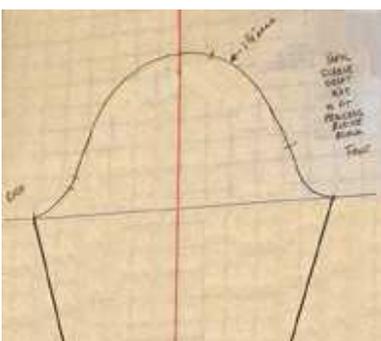
Fold the forearm line on your master in half and use it to make guidelines on your working pattern.



Pin a length of cord that's the length of the sleeve to one end of the biceps line. Swing it in an arc until it meets a forearm guideline.



Draw the stitching lines and hem line. When folded on the grain line, the pattern from the biceps line down must be symmetrical.





Complete the pattern by adding width of hem and seam allowances (not shown).

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