

A Seamless Felted Summer Dress

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In Issue 29, of The Wheel magazine, Maria showed us how to felt a beautiful seamless, two-sided dress. Here are her instructions how to make the dress pattern and template.

MAKING A PATTERN

Making patterns for felting is easy and quick! Unlike sewing patterns, we need very few measurements. This pattern (Figure 1) need just 6 dimensions:

C - chest

WB - width of the back

CH - chest height

SL - shoulder length

LBW - length of the back up to the waist

PL - product length

Note 1:

If you cannot take your own measurements and there is no friend around who could help you, take any T-shirt that fits you, and take all measurements from it.

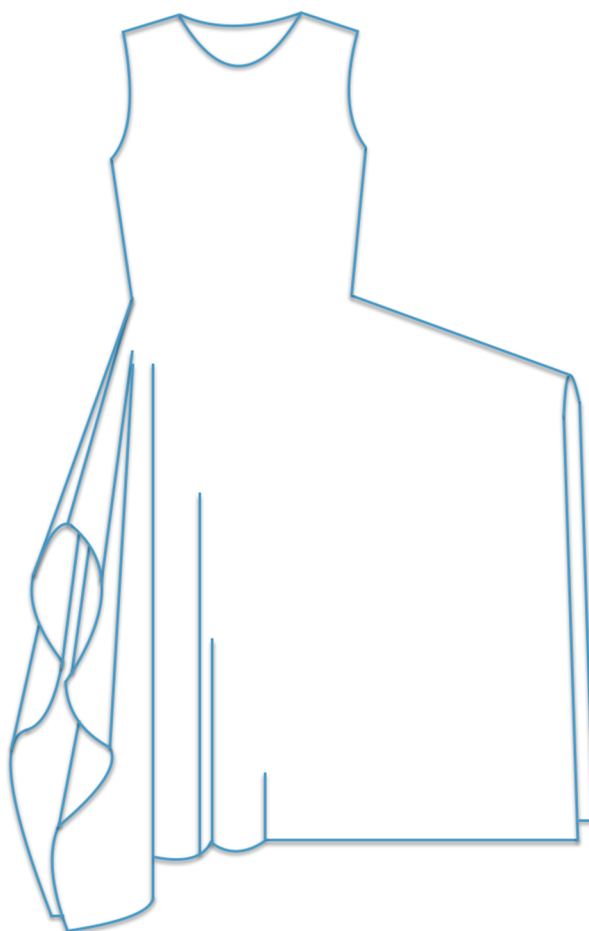


Figure 1. Model of the dress.

When the measurements are taken, you can proceed with making the pattern. To facilitate the work, we will make only half of the pattern - its left side. To do this, mark the point (A) on pattern-making paper and draw a long vertical line from it, as shown in Figure 2. On this line, put the following points:

- Set 1 cm from point A and mark the point A3.
- Point B = chest height.
- Point C = length of the back up to the waist.
- Point D = product length.

Divide the segment from the point A3 to the point B in half and put the point X.

From each of the marked points, draw perpendicular lines to the left and put the following points on them:

A1 = 3 cm.

A2 = shoulder length (set from the point A1).

X1 = $\frac{1}{2}$ of the width of the back.

B1 = $\frac{1}{4}$ of the chest.

The segment CC1 = BB1

The segment DD1 = 60 cm.

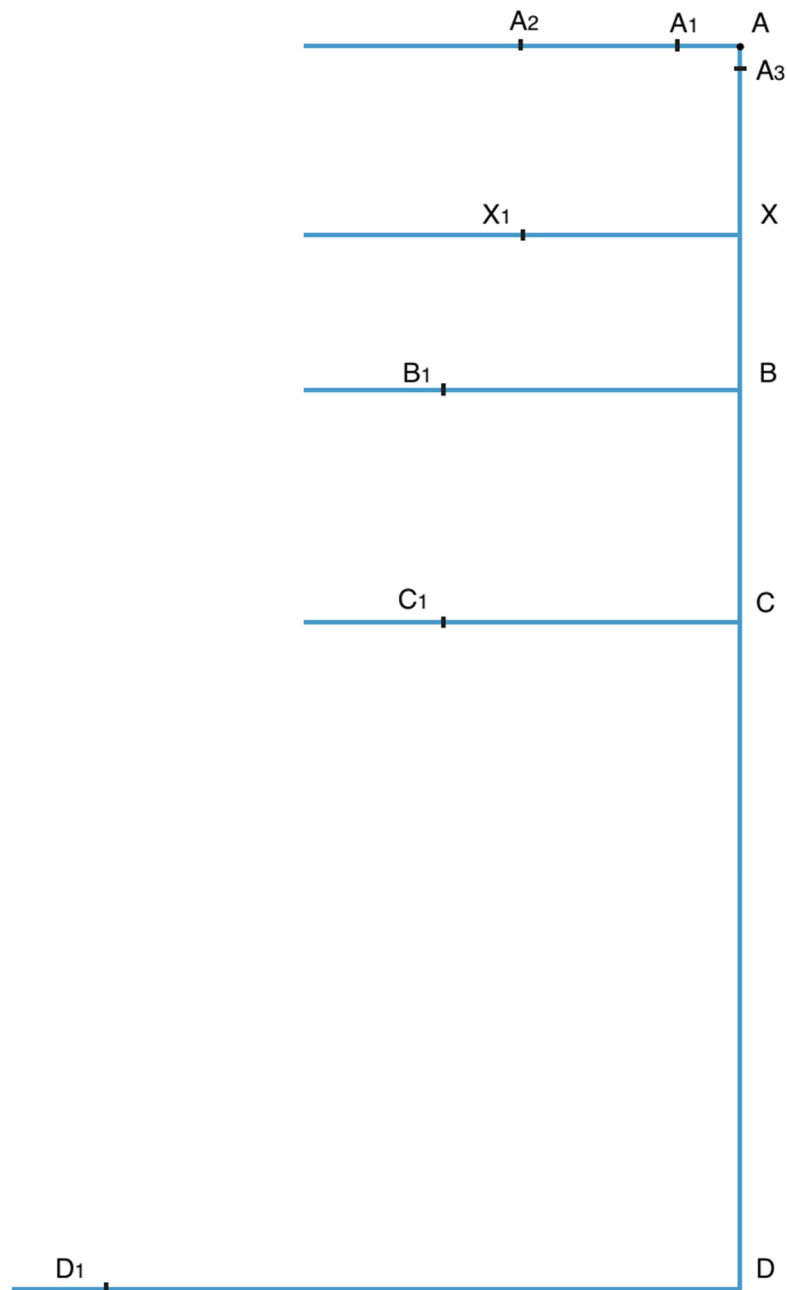


Figure 2: Pattern - the basic measurements.

We have outlined the basic measurements and now we need to make a pattern according to the marked points. To do it correctly, follow our recommendations and check yourself according to Figure 3:

- 1) From the point A2, lower the perpendicular downwards by 5 cm and mark the point A4. Connect the points A1 and A4 to get the shoulder line.
- 2) Smoothly connect the points A1 and A3 to get the line of the neck.
- 3) From the point B1, set a line segment equal to 5 cm perpendicularly up, and mark point B2.
- 4) Smoothly connect the points B2, X1 and A4 to get the armhole line.
- 5) From the point B1, lower the perpendicular line down up to the intersection with the point C1.
- 6) From the point D1, draw a perpendicular up and place point D2. According to our model, the line segment D1D2 = 53 cm.
- 7) Connect the points D2 and C1.

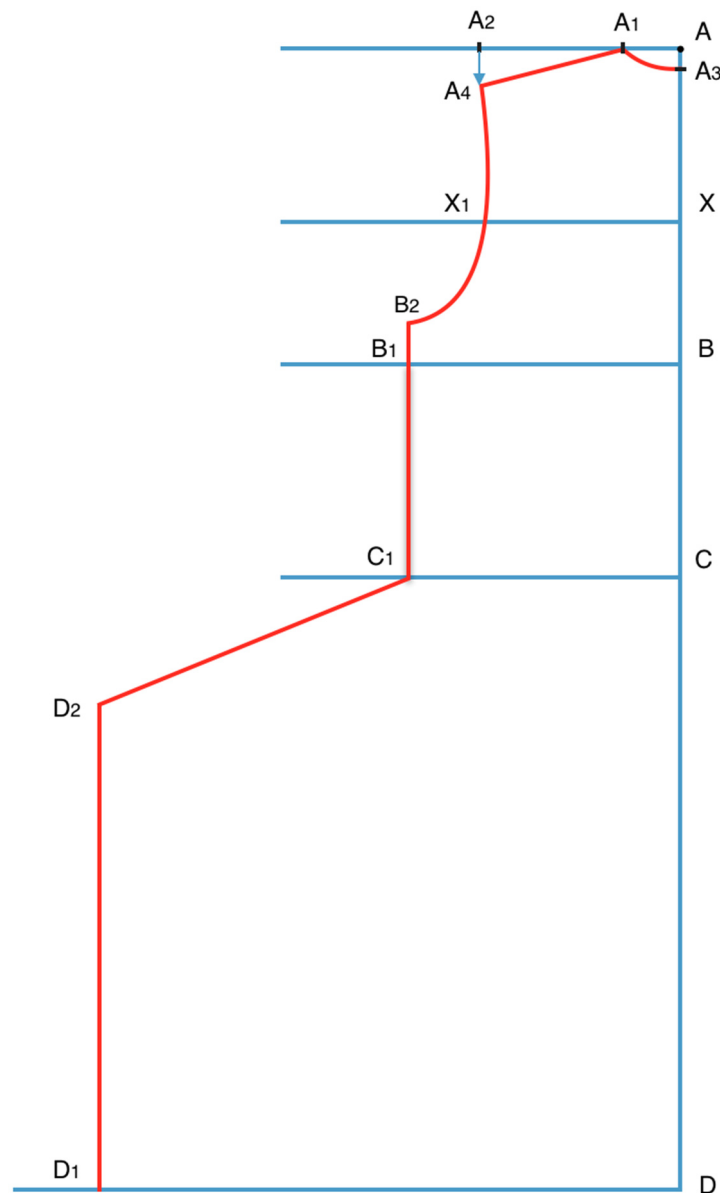


Figure 3: Scheme of the pattern for the dress felting.

So, quickly and easily we have made half of the pattern of the back. It is time to turn it into a template for felting.

CREATING A TEMPLATE

From the created pattern, we need to make a template. A template is the same as a pattern, just increased by the wool shrinkage ratio. As a rule, during felting, the wool shrinks by about 30%. But we prefer to felt the products a bit harder so that the fabric is more durable. In this model, we set the ratio = 1.5. This means

that the finished pattern should be increased by one and a half times. To simplify the task, we will increase only the left half of the pattern.

To increase the pattern by one and a half times, follow the instructions clearly:

- 1) Cut the pattern you have made along the CC1 line, separating the top of the dress from its skirt (see Figure 4 (on the left)).
- 2) Lay each part of the pattern under a large piece of the polyethylene sheeting. Make sure that the sheeting has pressed the pattern and do not allow the pattern to shift with further work.
- 3) Enclose each part of the pattern in a rectangle (draw a rectangle with an indelible marker right over the polyethylene sheeting, under which the pattern was laid).
- 4) Find the centre of the rectangle by drawing the diagonal lines (in Figure 5 (on the right), the diagonals are drawn by a dashed line).
- 5) From the centre of the rectangle draw the rays through all angles and curves of the pattern.
- 6) On one of the rays, measure the distance from the centre of the rectangle to the pattern line (the pattern line in Figure 5 (on the right) is marked in red) and multiply it by a ratio of 1.5. Set the resulting value along the same ray from the centre of the rectangle and mark a point.
- 7) Repeat the steps from the paragraph 5), passing through all the rays.
- 8) By connecting all the points, you will get a pattern increased by one and a half times, or, as it is also called - a template for felting. And if to be exact - the left part of the template.
- 9) Complete the right part of the template (just mirror the left side of the template)
- 10) Cut the prepared template out from the sheeting.
- 11) Since we have enlarged the top and the bottom of the dress separately, you will get two parts of the template. You will need to stick with the tape or to sew one part of the template to another one.

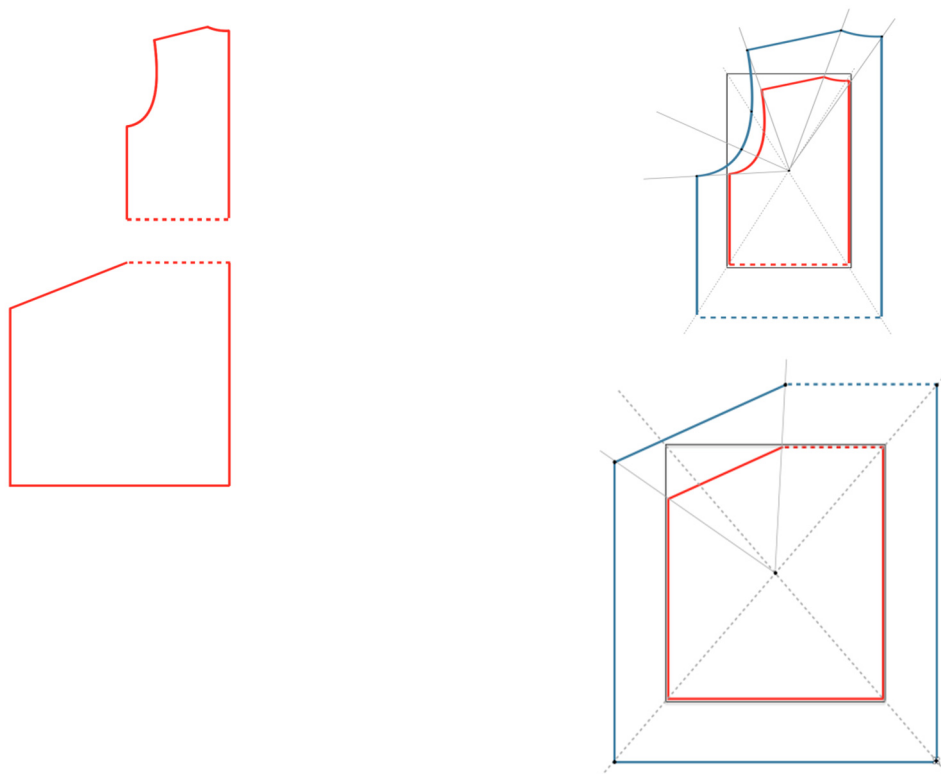
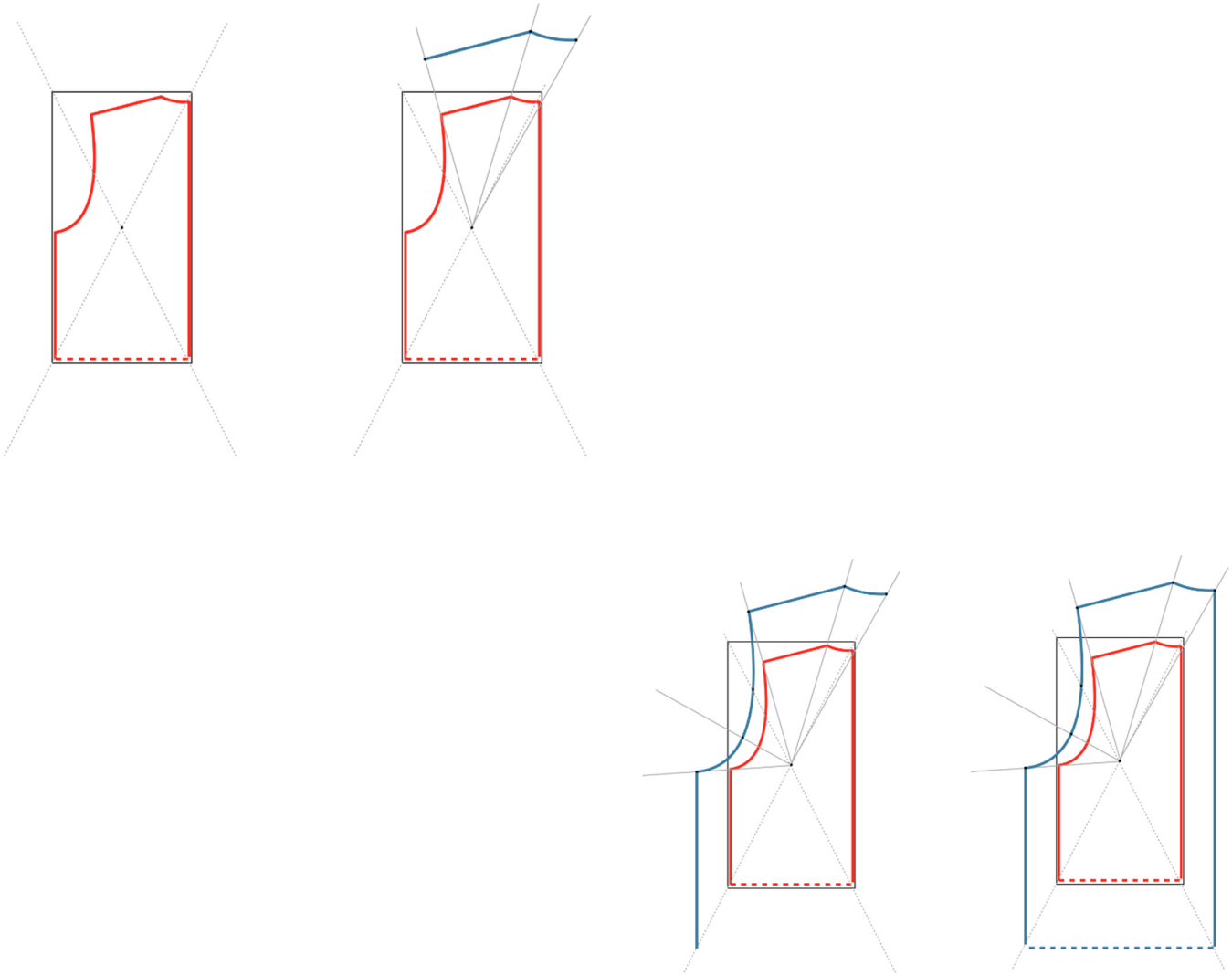


Figure 4. Scheme of enlarging of the pattern up to the template.

a. Pattern divided into two parts. B. An enlarged pattern - a template.

Detailed scheme of the pattern enlarging:



Note 2:

To create a template, polythene is best. As we are wet felting so we cannot use paper. If you do not have such a large piece of polythene, just stick with the tape (or sew) a few pieces together.
