

Supply List

Advanced Sewing: Couture Dress

Contact: portlandsewing@gmail.com

BRING: A sewing machine in good working order and your machine manual and attachments.

ALSO BUY OR BRING: *(Please label all equipment with your name)*

- Thread to match your garment fabric*
- Cotton thread for basting*
- Sharps #10 and Betweens #10 hand sewing needles*
- Beeswax*
- Seam ripper*
- Seam gauge*
- Point turner*
- Fine pins with glass heads or dressmakers silk pins*
- Pin cushion or magnetic tray*
- 60" tape measure*
- Shears—one for paper, one for cloth*
- Small scissors or nippers*
- Water soluble pen*
- Tailor's chalk*
- Waxed tracing wheel and tracing paper*
- Needlepoint tracing wheel*
- 2" x 18" Clear grid ruler
- French curve: Armhole, neckhole, hip and varyform*
- 2-3 yards of Venus muslin*
- Notebook and a pen or pencil

* Available at Portland Sewing for 20% student discount.

DURING THE FIRST SESSIONS, YOU WILL PREPARE A MUSLIN:

A muslin, or toile, is the essential first step for any couture project. Use unbleached muslin – any kind as long as it is of reasonable quality. If your design calls for fabric that stretches, then your muslin fabric must stretch as well. In this case, use stretch poplin.

Make a muslin copy of at least the bodice and sleeves (and pants, if applicable). If your skirt is fitted, make a toile of the fitted part as well. Make the toile whether you are drafting your own pattern, adjusting a commercial pattern or using a commercial pattern without having to adjust it. Once it is correctly adjusted, it will become your pattern.

Couture relies on stitching lines, not your cut raw edges. So your first step will be to mark accurate stitching lines on your pattern. Take your body measurements. Choose the cutting lines on multi-sized patterns accordingly. Measure 5/8" from all cutting lines (Note: your tape measure typically is 5/8" wide) and mark the stitching lines.

Layout a sheet of dressmaker's carbon/tracing paper with the colored side up. Pin your pattern to a double layer of your muslin. Put the muslin on top of the carbon. Mark your stitching lines with a tracing paper and wheel. Also mark: Grain lines, notches, darts, the waist, the apex of the bust, design details, hem lines, center front and center back, boning placement (if applicable).

Cut out the muslin pattern pieces, giving yourself seam allowances of at least 1". You may want to allow extra fabric at the neckline, the base of the bodice and the bottom of the sleeves and hems.

Remove the pattern paper. Put the pins right back into the double layer of muslin. Flip the double layer over on top of the carbon. Now mark the second side using the first set of marks you made as your guide.

Machine baste the marks with dark thread on each piece of muslin. Go all the way to the end of the muslin; don't pivot corners. Don't thread mark notches. Write the name of each pattern piece on its right side and mark an arrow showing which way is up on each piece of muslin.

Baste the garment together by hand or machine. You're now ready for a fitting.

DURING THE FINAL SESSIONS, WE WILL CREATE YOUR GARMENT.

PREPARE YOUR FABRIC:

Buy the amount suggested by the pattern for your size. If you're worried about shrinkage, buy $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ yard more.

- For washable fabrics: Wash, dry and press.
- For silk (e.g., crepe, charmeuse): Lay your fabric out on a flat pressing surface and steam to see if it shrinks. If you have too much fabric to shrink it all, take your fabric to a dry cleaner for steaming.
- For dry clean only fabrics (e.g., wool, some rayons & linens): Take to a dry cleaner for steaming.

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