

A COMPLETE COURSE  
IN  
DRESSMAKING

IN TWELVE LESSONS

BY  
ISABEL DE NYSE CONOVER

HOW TO MAKE WOMEN'S SKIRTS  
LESSON NINE

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# A COMPLETE COURSE IN DRESSMAKING

BY  
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## LESSON IX HOW TO MAKE WOMEN'S SKIRTS

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## LESSON IX

## HOW TO MAKE WOMEN'S SKIRTS

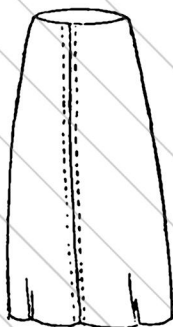


FIG. 405

**A Circular Skirt.**—The Fig. 405 illustrates a one-piece circular skirt with a center-front closing. A skirt of this description ought to be cut only in material of firm texture. It is impossible to prevent it from sagging in loosely woven goods.

**Cutting.**—Diagram 406 shows the pattern laid on the material folded double. The material must be fifty-four inches or wider to cut such a skirt. It is more practical to cut narrow goods into a gored or straight skirt. Directions for marking around the pattern and cutting are given in Lesson II.



DIAGRAM 406

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**Making.**— Where a seam comes at the center-front a slot seam gives an attractive finish. To make a slot seam fold under the seam allowance on both pieces to be joined and press. Cut a straight strip of material about one and one-half inches wide to extend from bottom of skirt up to

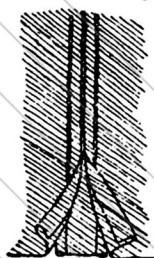


FIG. 407

placket depth and bind either side of it. The Fig. 36, Lesson II, shows how to bind an edge. Lay the edges of the skirt on top of the strip, bringing the edges to the center of the strip. Baste them in place and stitch one-quarter of an inch back from the edge of each piece. (See Fig. 407.) Leave the seam open at the top to placket depth.

Tape the edge of the skirt at the right side of the placket. Use thin but strong linen tape about one-quarter of an inch wide; lay it on the wrong side of the goods a seam's width back from the edge. Catch it to the goods, taking a stitch first on one side and then on the other. (See Fig. 408.) Be careful that stitches do not show through onto the right



FIG. 408

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side of the goods. Turn the raw edge of the seam onto the tape and tack it in place. Stitch a quarter of an inch back from the edge to match stitching in lower skirt. Sew on hooks at regular intervals and slip-stitch facing in place. A placket of this type has an underlap. Cut the material for the underlap about three and three-quarter inches wide and a half inch longer than the depth of the placket. Lay the lining for the underlap on the underlap and stitch down the sides and across the bottom, running the stitching a seam's width from the edges. Trim the seams, turn the underlap right side out and press.

Lay underlap on the left side of the skirt with the center of the underlap a seam's width from edge. Stitch the left edge to the underlap and turn the underlap onto the wrong side of the skirt. (See Fig. 409.) Press and stitch one-quarter of an inch from left edge of placket to match stitching on lower skirt. Slip stitch the left edge and bottom of the placket to outside skirt, using care that stitches do not show through onto the right side of goods.

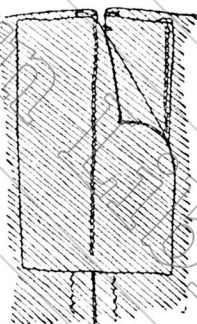


FIG. 409

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Separate skirts are finished with inside belts of gros-grain belting. Usually these belts are two or two and a half inches wide but the width depends on the amount the skirt is cut above the regular waistline. In the case of this skirt the inside belt will fasten at the right side of the underlap. Cut it to correspond to the waist measure with enough extra for hems. Hem the ends. Lap the top of the skirt a seam's width over the belt, letting the belt extend straight up above the skirt. Stitch the two together and cover the raw edges with a narrow bias strip of material or tape. (See Fig.

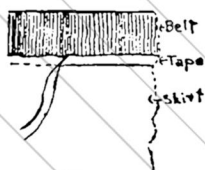


FIG. 410

410.) Note that right side of skirt is free from belt across facing. Finish the inside of belt with hooks and eyes. When the belt is turned down into its finished position, the skirt rolls over it smoothly.

Try on skirt to turn hem. There will be a good deal of fullness in the top of the hem so run in a thread and draw it up to the size of the outside. If the material is woolen, shrink out some of the fullness before finishing the hem by covering with a damp cloth and pressing with a hot iron. Bind the top of the hem before stitching. It gives a neater

## HOW TO MAKE WOMEN'S SKIRTS

finish than a turned-under hem. The Fig. 36, Lesson II, shows how to stitch on binding.

**A Gored Skirt.** — The Fig. 411 shows a seven-gored skirt. A gored skirt is much easier to fit than a two-piece or circular skirt. It is particularly well suited to a stout figure. It might be made in any medium weight or heavy goods, but is not practical for sheer materials.



FIG. 411

**Cutting.** — Diagram 412 shows the pieces of the pattern laid on the material. Vary the layout to work best on the width of goods you have. Refer to cutting directions, Lesson II.

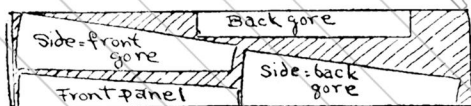


DIAGRAM 412

**Making.** — Make an inside belt of gros-grain belting. Cut it the size of the waistline plus enough for hems at the ends. Hem the ends and sew on the two lower hooks and eyes. (See Fig. 413.)



FIG. 413

If there is any doubt regarding the fit of the skirt, baste the seams with the raw edges extending on the right side of the goods. Pin the top of the

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skirt to the top of the gros-grain belt and try on. If it is large at any place pin out the surplus goods in the seams. Remove the skirt. If any of the seams have been taken up, trim them off until there is just the regulation three-eighths of an inch seam allowance left. Rip the bastings and bind the edges of the gores. Then join the seams taking the regulation seam allowance and press the seams open. It is much easier to bind the edges of the gores before the seams are joined than it is afterwards. If a more tailored finish is preferred the seams may be double stitched. In this case do not bind the edges of the gores before joining. Make plain seams, bind both raw edges in one binding, turn the raw edges toward the back of the skirt. Baste, press and stitch the second time, working from the right side of the skirt and running the stitching about one-quarter of an inch from the first stitching.

If you are fitting a woman whose waistline runs up in front, do not match the notches in joining the gores but raise the front panel a quarter of an inch above the first side gore and the first side gore a quarter of an inch above the second side gore, and so on to the back. This will prevent the skirt

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from poking out in the front. (Older women with high abdomens are apt to have a waist-line that runs up in the front.)

The same method can be followed out in fitting straight-in-front figure where skirt swings to the back and binds over the knees. In this case raise the gores at the back so the waistline slopes up more in the back.

Nowadays skirts are closed usually at the side front. In the case of the gored skirt the best place for the placket is at the left side of the front panel. Finish the edge of the panel at the placket with a facing just as described in finishing right side of placket in circular skirt. The left side of the placket ought to be finished with an extension. Cut the extension twice the width of the facing plus seams at all edges. Fold it and stitch across the bottom. (See Fig. 414.) Turn the extension right side out. Join one edge to the skirt, then turn under the free edge and stitch as shown in Fig. 415. Sew eyes to extension to match hooks on other side, or omit hooks on panel side and finish closing with ball-and-socket snaps.



FIG. 414 FIG. 415

Sew top of skirt to gros-grain belt, as de-

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scribed in making circular skirt. In this case end of belt comes to the front edge of the facing on the panel and the skirt is free from the belt across the facing. The other end of the inside belt comes to the end of the extension. Sew hook and eye to top of the belt. Hem bottom of skirt.



FIG. 416

**Two-piece Skirt.** — A popular type of skirt is a two-piece skirt cut slightly circular and having some fullness at the top. (See Fig. 416.) This style is made both in wash and woolen materials.

**Cutting.** — Diagram 417 shows the pattern laid on the goods. See Lesson II for detailed cutting directions.

**Making.** — The skirt illustrated has inset pockets. Slash pockets and patch pockets

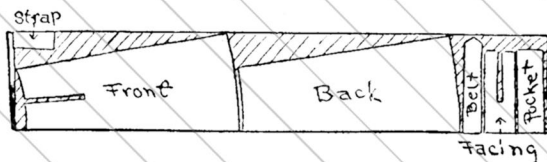


DIAGRAM 417

are also used on skirts of this type. See making slash pocket in boy's trousers, Lesson VII, and patch pocket on apron, Lesson II.

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To make the inset pocket face the opening in the skirt with material cut the same shape as the opening in the skirt. Bind the outer

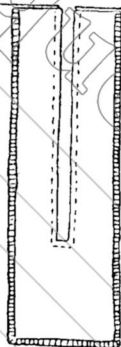


FIG. 418

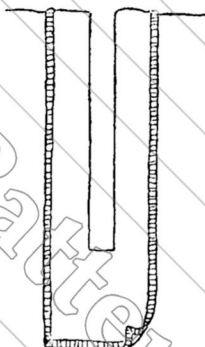


FIG. 419

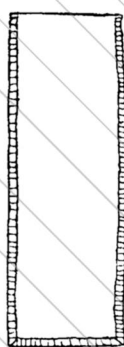


FIG. 420

edge of the facing. The Fig. 418 shows the facing stitched to the right side of the skirt and Fig. 419 the facing turned onto the wrong side. Before turning the facing onto the wrong side slash the seam at the corners nearly to the stitching so that the corners will turn neatly. Baste the facing in place and press. Bind the outer edge of the inset section. (See Fig. 420.) Place the skirt over this and stitch as shown in Fig. 421.

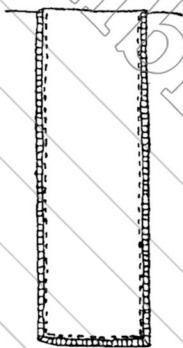


FIG. 421

Bind the edges of the gores

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before closing the seams. Usually the side joinings of a two-piece skirt are made open seams. Leave the left side seam open to placket depth. Finish the placket as described in the gored skirt.

Run three rows of shirring around the top of the skirt. (See Fig. 422.) Join skirt to gros-grain belt as described in circular skirt. In this case front end of belt comes to front edge of facing at left side and the other end



FIG. 422

of belt comes to end of extension. Be sure to keep the fullness distributed evenly in each half of the skirt. That is, when the skirt is folded at center-front and center-back, the side seams ought to match. Always be careful to notch the center-front and center-back of the skirt before gathering the top. Hem the lower edge of the skirt as described in making circular skirt.

Very often a skirt such as this one has a belt. Line the belt and sew belt straps to sides as described in making Russian-blouse suit, Lesson VII.

**Skirt With Yoke.** — The Fig. 423 shows a yoke skirt suitable for either wash fabrics, such as cotton gabardine, or woolens, such as serge.

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**Cutting.** — See Diagram 424 for layout of pattern on the goods and read fore part of Lesson II for cutting directions.

**Making.** — If the yoke is lined the skirt will set better than if it is a single thickness. Cut the lining the same shape as the outside yoke. Close the right side seams in the outside yoke and lining, making plain seams and pressing them open.



FIG. 423

Turn up the bottom of the outside yoke to form a tuck and press the edge. Then baste the tuck in place. Mark the center-front and the center-back at the lower edge of the yoke. Bind the side edges of the lower gores and join the side. Press the seams open.



DIAGRAM 424

Leave the left side seam open to placket depth. Finish the front edge of the placket with a facing as described in finishing the gored skirt. Mark the center-front and the center-back of the skirt at the top. Lap the yoke over the skirt and stitch as shown in Fig. 425. Stitch the yoke lining to the

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yoke at the front edge of the placket. (See Fig. 426.) Turn the lining onto the wrong side, fold under the free edge and fell by hand. (See Fig. 427.) Finish back edge of placket with extension as described in making gored skirt. Join skirt to inside belt of gros-grain

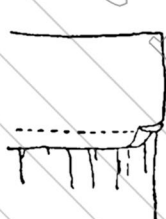


FIG. 425



FIG. 426

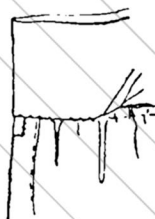


FIG. 427

belting and stitch hem at lower edge as described in making gored skirt.

If you hang your own skirt and have difficulty in turning the lower edge evenly, try this plan. After the skirt is joined to the inside belt try on the skirt and stand beside a table which comes below the largest part of the hips. This is about fifteen inches down from the waistline. First stand with the center-front of the skirt touching the table. Stick a pin in the skirt at the center-front on a level with the table. Turn a little to the side and put another pin in the skirt; turn still further around and put

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another pin in and continue until you have pins every two or three inches apart all the way around the skirt on a level with the table. Stand in front of a mirror and turn up the center-front of the skirt the desired amount. Then remove the skirt, measure from the lower edge to the pin at the center-front. Turn the hem the rest of the way around the skirt, keeping the distance the same from the pins to the lower edge at all points. If turned in this way the skirt is bound to hang evenly for any difference in length will come above the pins, as the fullest part of the hips was above the pins.

**How to Use a Foundation Pattern to Copy New Styles.** — Select some good fitting seven- or nine-gored skirt pattern, cut with normal waistline and without seams. Copy it in strong, firm paper and mark center-front and center-back, first gore, second gore, etc., on the pattern.

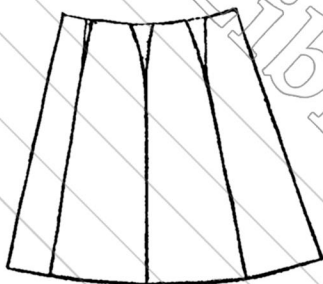


FIG. 438

If you are using a seven-gored foundation and want to make a two-piece skirt, lay the

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pattern pieces together on another piece of paper as shown in Fig. 428. Mark around the outside and indicate where the side seam comes.

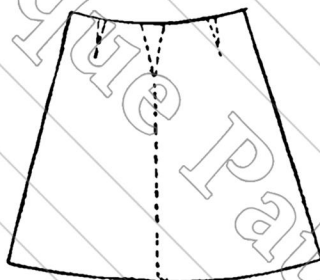


FIG. 429

When you remove the pattern you will have a diagram as shown in Fig. 429. Cut out the two pieces and you have a pattern for a two-piece skirt. As most two-piece skirts have

fullness at the waistline, the darts centerway of the gores need not be cut out. These will give just a little graceful ease at the waistline.

If you want to make the skirt smaller at the bottom lap the pieces as shown in Fig. 430. Note that this makes larger darts or if the darts are not cut out it throws more fullness at the waistline. If you want to make skirt fuller spread the gores at the bottom, keeping the pattern pieces together at points six inches below the waistline.

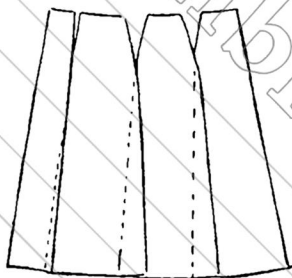


FIG. 430

If you want a raised waistline measure

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around the body where you want the top of the skirt to come. Place the skirt pattern on another piece of paper and mark a line parallel to the top of the gore the distance from it that the new skirt is to be above the normal waistline. Add enough on either side of this new line so that the tops of the gores will equal the new waist measure.

Draw lines from the new waistline to the old gore. (See Fig. 431.)

If this pattern is used the skirt will have a fitted appearance at the waistline. If you



FIG. 431



FIG. 432

want a straighter look, draw the lines straight to the hips as shown in Fig. 432, filling in the old waistline.

If you want to add a tuck or pleat at any place in a skirt, fold the tuck or pleat in paper, lay the skirt pattern on the paper in the desired position and mark around it for the new pattern. See adding tucks to a blouse, Lesson V.

Pleat the top of a straight skirt just as described in making a child's pleated skirt, Lesson VIII. But in this case do not press the pleats in all the way to the bottom until

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the skirt has been tried on. Pin the pleats at the top, pin the skirt to the gros-grain belt and try it on. Then pin the pleats at the hips and lower edge, keeping the fold of the pleat as nearly on the straight thread of the goods as possible.

Bear in mind in making any skirt the importance of pressing the pieces before you stitch. Do not spare the iron and spoil the skirt. It is a good idea to practice making plackets on left-over pieces of material — try finishing a piece of material with an old end of gros-grain belting to make sure you understand finishing the top of the skirt. File the lesson for reference.

