

Dress A Girl Around the World - How to make a Dress From our Kits:

Dress kit, scissors, safety pin or bodkin, thread, sewing machine, sewing pins. (Please read the DRESS GUIDELINES document as well.)

1. Take the prepared fabric tube and sew in the hem and the front and back casings, which will already be ironed in place.
2. Decorate the 2 pockets if desired (lace, buttons, or ric-rac) and attach to the dress mid-way, approximately waist height. (NOTE: If using our kits, you will find the cut-out from the armhole included. This is NOT the pocket but can be used to decorate the pocket. There are many creative examples using this piece on our website (DressAGirlSFBayArea.com) under 'Pockets'. You do not have to use the piece, and please do not use this piece solely as the pocket.)
3. Attach a safety pin (or bodkin) to one end of one of the cut pieces of elastic and pull it through one of the casing using caution not to pull it too far. Sew across each end of the casing to hold the elastic in place. Repeat this step for the other side. You should now have a gathered top on both the front and back of the dress.
4. Using double-fold, double width bias tape that's included, pin the bias tape to both arm edges, centering it lengthwise so there are equal amounts on each end for shoulder ties. **DO NOT SHORTEN THE BIAS TAPE.**
5. Starting at the half-way point (under the arm) attach the bias to the unfinished armhole, being very careful to catch armhole edges within the tape; sew to the end of the tape and turn under or backstitch across. Finish off the end of the tape on the diagonal with a close zigzag stitch or tie each end with an overhand knot. Do the same on the other half of that armhole, as well as the other. Again, make sure to catch the edges of the tape on the inside and outside of the dress. Finish off the end of the tape on the diagonal with a close zigzag stitch or tie each end with an overhand knot.

Feel free to use straight, zig-zag, or any decorative stitches.

Check out our website at www.dressagirlsfbayarea.com for a couple of videos showing how to make a dress. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS AT ALL, please email suzbeck@yahoo.com. We'd rather answer questions than fix dresses. 😊

Dress A Girl Around the World - How to make a Dress From Fabric:

Fabric (full 44" wide; length 24"-36"), scissors, (2) 7 inch pieces 1/2" elastic, (2) 42" of double-fold bias tape, safety pin/bodkin, thread, sewing pins.

1. Cut 42-44" wide cheerfully colored high-quality cotton or cotton blend into any length ranging from 24" to 36". Serge OR double-seam the fabric into a 'tube.'
2. Lay the fabric 'tube' flat and cut J- shaped armholes at the top corners (3 - 4" by 3 - 4"-depending upon the length, longer dresses should have a longer arm-hole shape.)
3. Using pinking shears, cut 2 pockets ON THE FOLD (5-6" squares or rounded-square) from a coordinating fabric. (The fold is the top of the pocket; folding it provides a facing for the pocket.) This is a good time to decorate the pockets with lace, trims, buttons, or the left-over arm-hole piece (see instructions for making a dress from our kits) Since the edges are pinked, the pockets can easily be added to the dress using a straight stitch without turning under the edges! Position at approximately waist height (fold dress in half to determine) but please use TWO pockets.
3. On the top edge of the 'tube,' iron down a casing for elastic by turning the cut edge under 1/4" and then another 3/4". Iron in place—it needs to be wide enough for the 1/2" wide elastic pieces to slide through easily. Sew casing in place and this step for the back of the dress.
4. Thread 7" piece of 1/2" elastic through each casing using safety pin or bodkin. Sew across each end of the casing to hold the elastic in place. Repeat this step on both ends of each casing. You should now have a gathered top on both the front and back of the dress.
5. Using double-fold, double-wide bias tape, **cut 2 pieces, each approximately 42"long**. These will bind the armholes and become the ties at the shoulders, so they should be long enough to tie a bow at the top. PLEASE TAKE CARE NOT TO MAKE TOO SHORT!
6. Pin the bias tape to both arm edges, centering it lengthwise so there are equal amounts on each end for shoulder ties.
7. Starting at the half-way point (under the arm) attach the bias to the unfinished armhole, being very careful to catch armhole edges within the tape; sew to the end of the tape and turn under or backstitch across. Finish off the end of the tape on the diagonal with a close zigzag stitch or tie each end with an overhand knot. Do the same on the other half of that armhole, as well as the other. Again, make sure to catch the edges of the tape on the inside and outside of the dress. Finish off the end of the tape on the diagonal with a close zigzag stitch or tie each end with an overhand knot.

**Special Note on the ties: Packaged bias tape is folded not quite in half lengthwise. When you get ready to sew it on make sure the narrower half of the tape faces up. That way you will be sure you are always catching the underside of the tape, even around the curves. Beginners should sew one side at a time--open up the bias tape and attach to armhole--then fold it over and sew again--this will insure that the ties are attached properly with no gaps.)*

Feel free to use straight, zig-zag, or any decorative stitches.

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