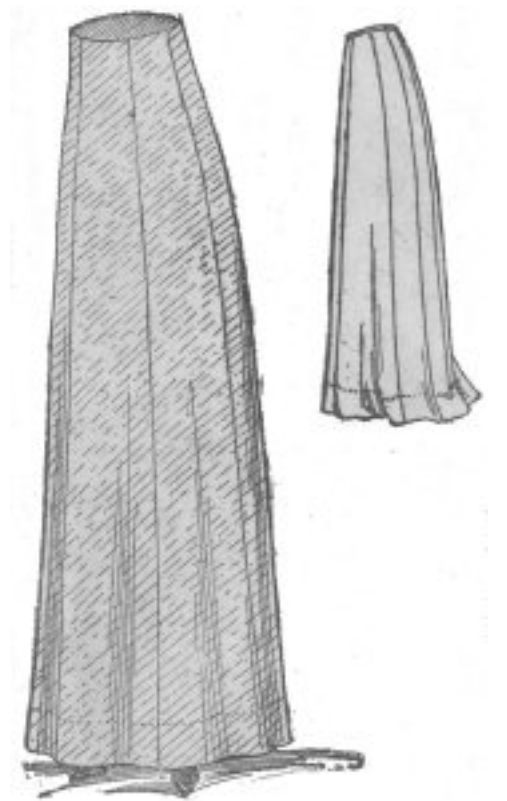


"Beatrix" Walking Skirt Pattern Instructions

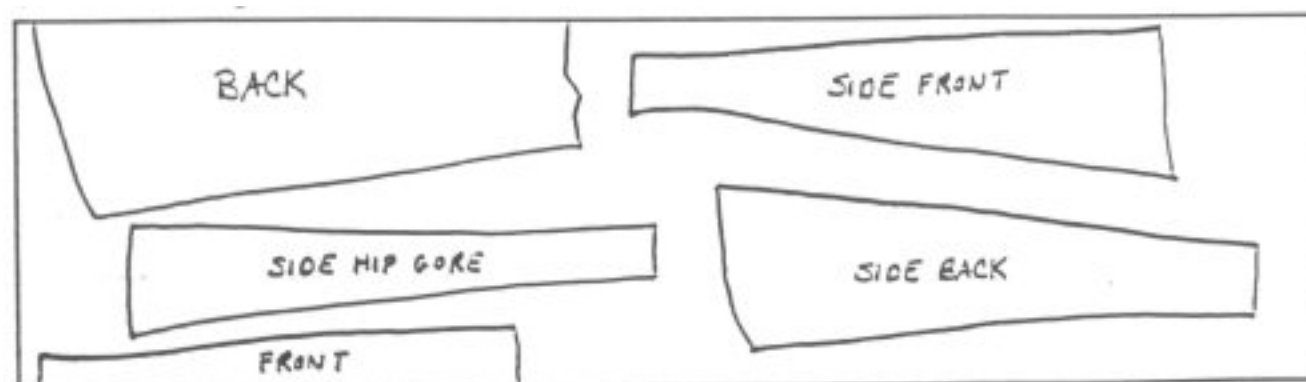


Notes:

This pattern was created from an original 1909 May Manton "Glove-Fitting" pattern. The pattern cover illustration (seen at right) shows the two options, a walking skirt and a trained skirt (either of which can have a pleated back or a "habit" back). A walking skirt is hemmed at the ankle to allow for freedom of movement (and to prevent the hem of the skirt from getting dusty or muddy). A trained skirt is for more formal occasions (an afternoon tea at someone else's house; a formal visit; an evening reception). The pattern pieces are long enough to accommodate a very tall (six-foot) woman if she makes a narrow hem, but the pattern instructions call for a five-inch hem, which shortens the skirt quite a bit and makes it suitable for women of average height. You can also shorten the pattern pieces if you prefer a narrow hem. The deep hemline was created chiefly to add weight to the bottom of the skirt so that it would drape becomingly, and it does make for a beautiful skirt. But it isn't necessary if you prefer to use less material and want to make a narrow hem by hand or on the machine. The original pattern called for a raised, boned waistline or a narrow waistband. For simplicity's sake, I've included the waistband option only. If you want to create the higher, boned waistline, you only have to add two inches to the top of each pattern piece and insert boning into ten two-inch casings sewn onto each seam allowance (including one on either side of the back opening). This pattern was created chiefly to be worn with the "Beatrix" jacket, although it is also quite appropriate for my Edwardian Walking Jacket pattern. I created both of the "Beatrix" patterns in honor of Beatrix Potter, who spent most of her time out of doors on her rambling farm, working with animals, tending her gardens, sketching and watercoloring - all in a sturdy tweed walking skirt and tailored jacket! Recommended fabrics for this skirt include woolens, tweed, lightweight denim, linen and other suiting materials. For a fancier skirt, you could also use Dupioni silk or heavy crepe. The skirt is unlined, though you can certainly line it or interline it if you so desire. Before you begin, measure yourself to determine the best size for you. The waistline has half an inch of ease included for a comfortable fit and is the most important measurement, since the hipline is roomier and therefore more forgiving. I rate this pattern "easy," since a beginner will be able to put it together, requiring only a bit of help if she has never placed a placket or an invisible zipper before.



Pattern layout:



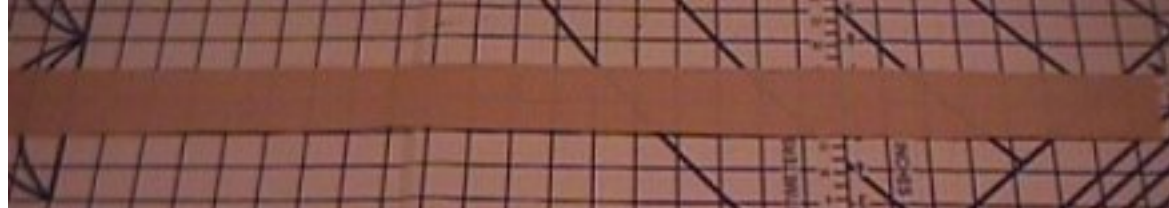
Here is the suggested layout for the skirt pieces on 54"-wide material (fold is on the bottom). You will use the remaining fabric to cut out your waistband (see instructions). 45"-wide material will have less room, and you won't be able to lay out as many pieces next to one another, thus the need for additional yardage. There isn't really any one "perfect" way to cut out this skirt. As long as you obey the grain lines and cut the center front on the fold, you'll be fine! Remember to add at least one yard to the basic yardage amount if you are matching plaid or using fabric with a nap (like velvet).

Assembly Instructions:

I. Cut out the skirt.

A. For pleated skirt back, leave pieces as-is. B. For "habit" (straight) skirt back, use the dotted cutting line on the back piece. C. Use either "walking" or "train" cutting lines for hem length (also be sure to double-check your desired hem length against the actual pieces, then lengthen or shorten accordingly).

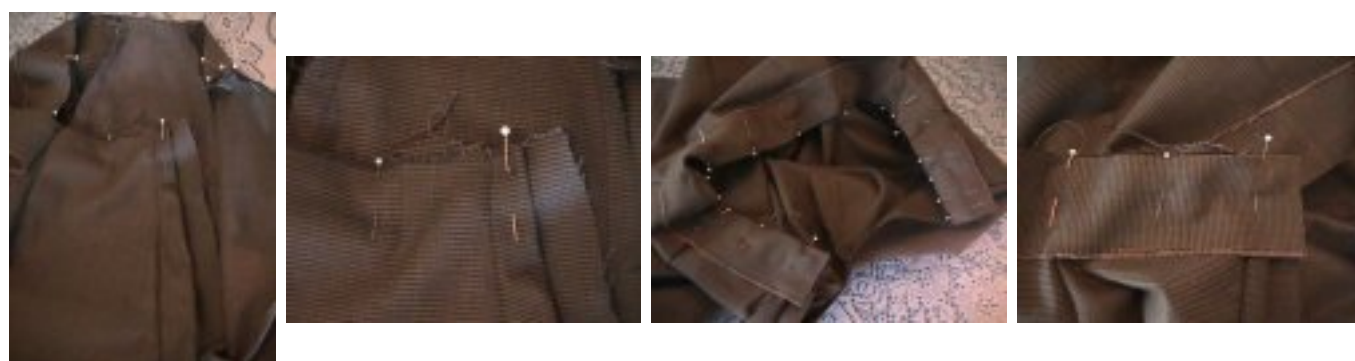
II. **Cut out the waistband.** To do this, cut a rectangle of material that is two inches wide and 1.5" longer than the waistline measurement you'll be using (e.g. if you are a 16 in the waist—30"—cut the waistband 31.5" long).



- III. **Sew skirt pieces together**, matching notches and leaving center back open from notches upward. A 1/2" seam is allowed on all pieces. To finish off your seam allowances, you can either zigzag the edges, serge the edges or bind the edges with bias binding. I recommend finishing the edges to prevent them from unraveling.
- IV. **Sew waistband to skirt**, matching the ends of the waistband to the edges of the center back opening. The waistband will be an exact fit on the habit back skirt. For the pleated back, you simply pleat the "extra" fabric into the waistband so that you have an inverted pleat over the back closure/seam. The photos below show each of these options in detail.



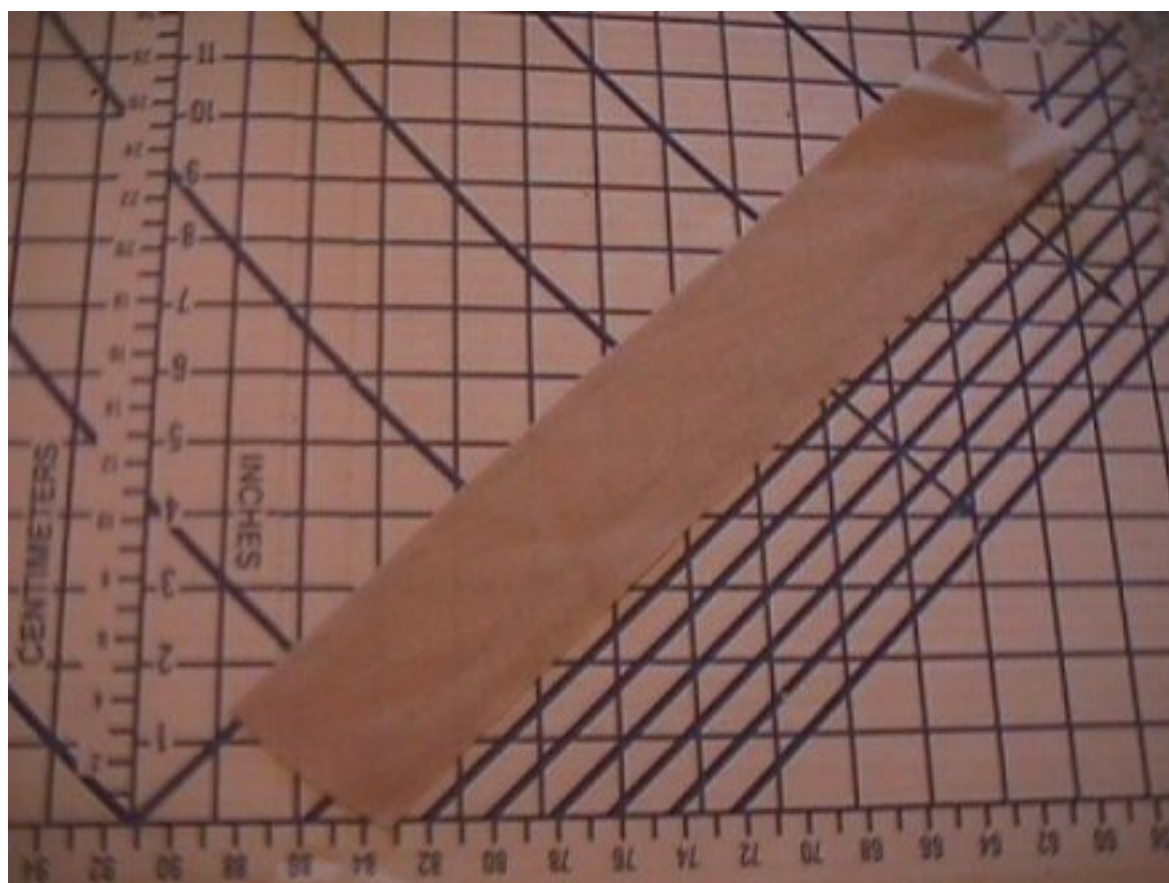
Left to right: Waistband pinned onto straight skirt; sewing waistband; waistband sewn onto skirt.



Left to right: Pleat pinned on pleated skirt back; close-up of pinned pleat; waistband pinned over pleated skirt back; close-up of pinned waistband.

- V. To **finish off the back opening**, you can either insert a placket closure with hooks and eyes or use an invisible zipper (placed directly into the center back seam). Obviously, an invisible zipper is *not* correct for the time period, but if you aren't striving for period accuracy, it is a very nice way to finish off the skirt, since it makes for a smooth back closure with no telltale stitching lines. To add an invisible zipper, simply follow the instructions included with the zipper or the invisible zipper foot.

A. To make a placket, cut a piece of fabric on the bias twice as long as the back opening (including the waistband) and 2 3/8" inches wide.



B. Pin placket to right side of skirt back opening (including waistband).



C. Stitch placket to skirt, starting at the top edge of the left side of the waistband (left as you are looking at it) and taking up a 1/2" seam. When you reach the center, leave your needle in the fabric (right in the middle of the center back seam), lift the presser foot and pivot the fabric to head back up the other side of the back opening.



When you've finished inserting the placket, turn under 1/4" of the free edge of the placket and press (or serge the raw edges to keep them from unraveling).

D. Press the placket so the left side is completely turned under along the seam line. You will turn the right side of the placket in only enough to cover the placket seam on the inside of the skirt.



Now the left side of the back opening will overlap the right and make an even closure, as seen below.



Placket seen from the inside of the skirt.

VI. Finishing the waistband. Turn under or serge to finish the edge of the waistband. Fold the waistband to the inside of the skirt so that it completely covers the waistline seam.



Left: Waistband turned under once to cover waistline seam and pinned. *Right:* Waistband turned under once, seen from outside of skirt.

[Note: In these photo instructions, I will show you how to fold the waistband under twice if you prefer a narrower band. See the instructions below.]



Double-folded waistband, seen from outside of skirt.

In order to make a double-folded waistband, you'll need to clip some of the material out of the top of the turned under placket. If you do not, the waistband will be too bulky and will have a knobby overlap. Below you see where I have clipped a small square of fabric out of the left-hand side of the placket:



Now, to fold the placket and waistband properly, let me walk you through it step by step. 1. Turn the placket to the inside along the seam line (as explained above); 2. Fold down the first half of the waistband down to the cut you made; 3. Fold the waistband under again, completely covering the waistline seam. Pin in place.



Now, for either fold-down method, you are ready to finish the inside of the waistband. You can either whipstitch the waistband in place over the seam, or you can "stitch in the ditch" on the front of the skirt, catching the waistband overlap like this:



Use skirt hooks and bars to fasten the waistband and placket.

VII. Hemming. Try on the skirt and mark the hem. Hem skirt by hand or on the machine.

Enjoy your new creation!

[Back to Pattern Information](#) | [Home](#) | [Send Feedback](#)

Beatrix Walking Skirt Pattern copyright Mrs. Jennie Chancey, 2003-2009.