

FEATURED PROJECT

Maxi-mize the Dress

Notes

Swatches

SUPPLIES NEEDED

One length of 60" wide lightweight knit (length measurement should be from your shoulder to the floor)

¼ yard of lightweight knit for the neckline tie and the origami squares

"My Apologies for Looking So Hot Camisole" instructions and camisole

1 yard of 3/8" wide elastic

Sulky thread to match the fabric

Matching Dual Duty XP thread and bobbin

Water-soluble marking pen

CUTTING

- Get the correct size for your dress by first measuring your hips, and then add 12" to the hip measurement. This is the total width measurement for the dress. Now, cut one panel of fabric that measures: shoulders to floor x hips + 12" cut this out of the 60" wide knit fabric. Save the left over fabric for the waistline elastic casing strip and the armhole binding strips.

- Fold the rectangle of fabric in half lengthwise. Using the camisole from the previous vodcast, mark the armholes on each side of the fabric. Place the cami 1 ½ inches below the top raw edge to allow for the upper casing. One armhole will be marked on the folded side, the other armhole on the side that will be seamed later. You will need to mark one armhole and then lift the cami up and over to the other side to mark the second armhole, this is because the dress is fuller across the width than the cami.

- Now that the armholes are marked, cut away the extra fabric.

INSTRUCTIONS

- To mark for the waistline elastic casing, measure down 12" for a casing that will be at the waistline OR 8" for a casing that will be just below the bust line, from the top edge of the dress on both the front and the back. Fold the top of the dress over on that mark and press this line...it makes it easier to see instead of marking it with a marking pencil!

- Cut a strip of fabric from the left over fabric that measures 1 ¼" wide by the width of the dress front and back measurement (that would be the same measurement as your hips + 12"). This is for the elastic casing.

- Pin the strip of fabric on the line you pressed for the elastic casing. Make sure the casing strip stops at each side seam, so it is not included in the seam when the side seam is sewn later. Sew the long strip to the dress near the casing edge, then sew down the other side. Trim the excess casing away if needed.

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- Stitch the side seam with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam, using a stretch, zigzag or overcast stitch so the seam gives with the stretch of the fabric. Take care not to stitch the casing ends into the seam.
- Measure your waist or under your bust line, depending on where you placed the casing, and cut a piece of elastic that length, less 2" for a snug fit. Using a safety pin, thread the elastic through the casing. Sew the ends of elastic securely together.
- To make the binding for each of the armholes, cut 2 strips of knit from the leftover fabric. Each strip should measure 1" x the measurement of the armhole opening. Pin one strip to each of the armhole openings with the right sides of the knit facing each other. Stitch the strips to the armholes using a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance, gently stretching the knit as you sew. This will build some "give" into the stitches so they won't pop and break.
- Fold the facing strips to the inside of each armhole. Press and pin the facing strips. To hold the facing strips in place, top stitch $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the edge of the armhole. On the inside of the armholes, trim away the excess strip, close to the stitching line.
- To make the casing for the neck scarf, fold both the front and back top edges over $1\frac{1}{4}$ " to the inside of the dress, press and pin. Stitch the front and back casings 1" from the fold, backstitching at the ends to prevent tearing.
- To create the origami trim at the neckline, cut several $3\frac{1}{2}$ " squares (we used 7) from the black knit fabric. Place the squares onto the top edge of the dress. The squares should lay on point, with the top point just falling off the top edge of the dress and the two side points lining up with the stitching on the casing. Pin each square to the dress, laying one square next to the other all the way across both the front and back top edges.
- Using Sulky thread, top stitch the squares at the very top edge of the dress. The top points of the diamonds will fall over to the front of the dress.
- For the neck scarf, choose a knit fabric that does not ravel or run. Cut one long strip of knit 6" x 54", then just cut the short ends at an angle and use the full width of fabric un-seamed for your neck scarf.
- With the front of the dress facing you, slide the scarf through the front casing left to right. Now, slide the scarf through the back casing right to left. Both ends of the scarf will hang out on the left side of the dress. Tie ends together and you're ready to go!

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