

DARTS, TUCKS, AND GATHERS



SEWING SKILLS

Darts, tucks, and gathers are used for proper fitting. Sometimes they are used for decoration. Made correctly, they add much to the appearance and comfort of the garment.

DARTS

To make a single-pointed dart, bring the wide part together first. Be sure markings on both sides match exactly. Pin through markings. Pin enough times to hold marks together exactly (Fig. 1).

Start stitching from either end. Make sure the one or two stitches at the point of the dart are only one thread from the folded edge of the fabric. This keeps the dart from puckering.

For a sharp point on the dart, fasten threads with a square knot (Fig. 2). Or, if you do not object to added bulk, backstitch on top of the first stitches at the point.

Press darts at the shoulder and waistline toward center front or center back (Fig. 3). Sleeve darts are pressed toward the wrist. Underarm darts in the bodice may be pressed upward or downward,

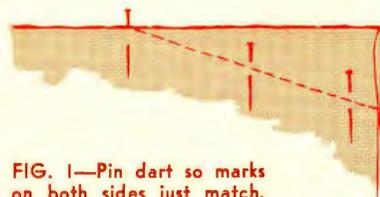


FIG. 1—Pin dart so marks on both sides just match.



FIG. 2—To tie a square knot, bring left thread over and under right one. Pull tight. Then bring right thread over and under left one. Tighten to complete knot.

depending on the pattern. If the fabric is heavy and the dart is more than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide, slash through fold to about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the point (Fig. 4). Press dart open. Press uncut point of dart into a tiny box pleat. Trim edges to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch or less. If the fabric ravels, overcast the edges.

The double-pointed dart, which tapers to nothing at each end, is used to fit garments at the waistline (Fig. 5). Press over a tailor's ham. Shape by stretching fabric along folded edge of dart. If there is not enough ease in the fabric to shape the dart by stretching, clip at the waistline (Fig. 6).

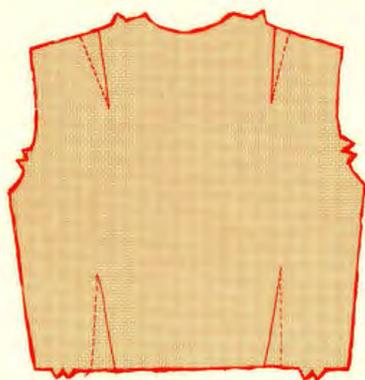


FIG. 3—Press darts at shoulder and waistline toward center front or center back.

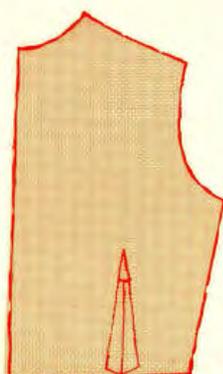


FIG. 4—In heavy fabric, slash wide darts to about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from point. Press open.

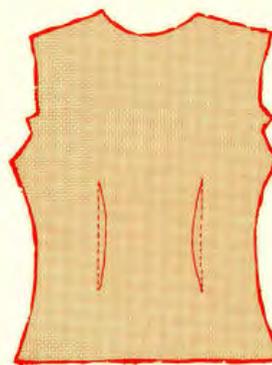


FIG. 5—Press double-pointed darts over tailor's ham, stretch fabric along edge to shape.

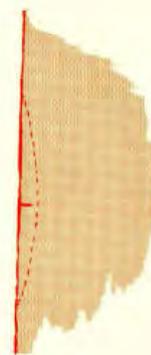


FIG. 6—Clip at the waistline if fabric will not stretch.

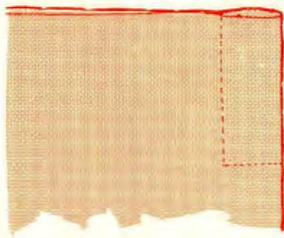


FIG. 7—Stitch tucks along marking and across end.

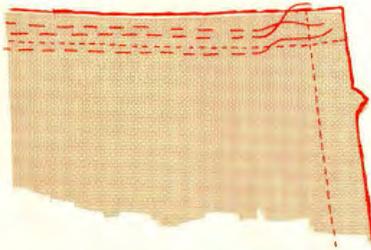


FIG. 8—Use three rows of stitching to make gathers.

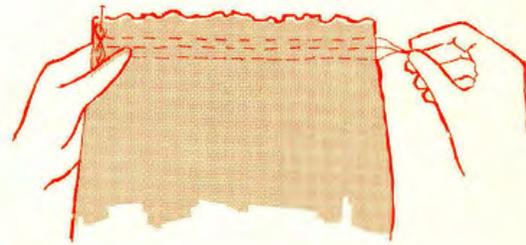


FIG. 9—Pull up bobbin threads from both ends, loop over pins to hold.

TUCKS

Tucks used for fitting are sometimes wider at one end than at the other. Fold tucks together and pin on marked line, as in darts. Stitch along the marking and across the end (Fig. 7). Fasten threads. Press as you would a dart.

GATHERS

To make stitches for gathers, lengthen machine stitch to 8 to 10 stitches per inch.

Make three rows of stitching (Fig. 8). Put the first row in the seam allowance, just missing the seamline. Put the second row in the seam allowance, too, $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch above the first row. A third

row, $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch below the first row, will help control the fabric at the seamline.

The third row will be in the garment, rather than the seam allowance. It should be removed after the pieces have been stitched together. Or, you may leave the third row of stitching off, depending upon the kind and weight of fabric and the amount of fullness.

When you are ready to pull up gathers, hold bobbin threads from all rows of stitching and ease fabric over threads. Ease from both ends. Use your thumb and finger to push gathers even. Pull up ease to the measurement indicated on your pattern. Loop threads around pins to hold securely (Fig. 9).

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