



~ Sewing a Wardrobe ~
4-Gore Skirt



with Tina Bury

Terms

Selvedge - The edges of the fabric that run along the length of the fabric. Normally, you don't want to use this edge in your sewing. This is more obvious in woven fabrics than in knit fabrics.

Right Side of Fabric - On a jersey knit fabric, this is the side that is comprised of knit stitches or neat columns of "V"s. If your fabric is printed, the side with the printing is the right side.

Wrong Side of Fabric - On a jersey knit fabric, this is the side that is comprised of purl stitches or rows of tiny bumps.

Seam Allowance - The amount of fabric that is on the inside of the seam. Generally 5/8 of an inch on most patterns. We're using 1/2 inch for this pattern. {The body of your garment is on one side, the seam is sewn and the fabric left on the other side is the seam allowance.}

Seams - The stitches that hold a garment together

Grainline - Running parallel to the selvedge edge. Garments that are cut off grain won't hang right on the body. They'll twist.

Cross Grain - Running perpendicular to the selvedge edge. Knits usually have more stretch on the cross grain, unless they have two (or sometimes, confusingly, called four) way stretch.

Knit Fabric - Fabric that is made using interlocking loops, much like hand knitting, to create a fabric that is stretchy and generally does not fray. Some common types of knit fabric are jersey, interlock, performance/spandex, sweater knit, waffle knit, ribbed, fleece, french terry.

Woven Fabric - Fabric that is made on a loom with a warp and a weft. The threads/yarns are woven back and forth to create a sturdy fabric. Woven fabrics are very stable and do not inherently stretch. Woven fabrics can be stretchy if they have had elastane or some similar substance woven into the fabric or if they are cut on the bias.

Terms

Percentage of Stretch - How far the knit fabric stretches. This helps to determine if your fabric will be successful with your pattern. Many knit patterns are made to fit the body with negative ease, meaning the garment is smaller than your body (think leggings).

If the fabric you choose doesn't have at least as much stretch as the pattern calls for, your finished garment won't fit.

To figure out the percentage of stretch... take the length of your fabric when stretched to its maximum divide that by the length of your fabric when unstretched, and then subtract 1.

For example, if you take 10 inches (or 10 cm) of fabric in your hand and you can stretch it to 16 inches (or 16 cm), then you have 60% stretch in your fabric. $(16/10)-1=60\%$

Recovery - How well your fabric comes back to its original shape once stretched. Optimally we are looking for knit fabrics that have good recovery so that they don't stretch out of shape. We've all had those t-shirts that become more and more baggy as you wear them - poor recovery is to blame. A small amount of spandex or elastane in the garment helps with recovery.

Ease - The difference between your body measurement and the measurement of the garment.

Negative ease - the garment is smaller than your body (used with knits), most common at the bust and hip.

Positive Ease - the garment is larger than your body.

Design Ease - the amount of ease that the pattern designer intended for the look of the garment.

Bias - A 45-degree angle to the grain. When a woven fabric is cut on the bias it has some stretch and drapes differently than when cut on grain. There is no advantage to cutting knit fabrics on the bias...unless you have a cool pattern and are looking for fun effect.

Matching weights - The rule of thumb when choosing thread, fabric and needles - match the weights. As an example...choose a heavy thread and thick needle for heavy fabric like denim.

Materials Needed

Fabric

This pattern has a good deal of design ease and thus the percentage of stretch doesn't really come into play. Meaning you can use anything from a very stretchy to a knit with hardly any stretch.

Fabric Amount Needed:

44" wide fabric - 1.5 yards (sizes 1-4), 2.25 yards (sizes 5,6)
(112cm wide fabric - 1.4 meters (sizes 1-4), 2.1 meters (sizes 5,6))

56" wide fabric - 1.5 yards
(142.2 cm wide fabric - 1.4 meters)

All-purpose Polyester Thread

Made with a polyester core and polished cotton exterior allowing it to more easily glide through fabric.

I prefer Gutterman brand thread. Invest in quality thread; poor quality thread will not last and will cause issues with your machine.

Word of caution: thread weakens as it ages, vintage thread is never a good idea in a garment or sewing project that will get use.

If you are unable to find a perfect match between your thread and your fabric...opt for a darker shade of thread. Darker colored thread is less noticeable than lighter thread. Also, gray is sort of a magic color and seems to blend into lots of colors.

Needles

For knit fabric we'll be using a ball point or jersey needle.

Change your needle after every 8 hours of sewing. A dull needle will give you all sorts of headaches (like skipped stitches and thread nests under your needle plate).

Elastic, roughly 1 inch wide

You have a few options...1" knit elastic or woven elastic (knit is my favorite) or fold over elastic.

Needed: roughly enough to go around your waist and overlap by an inch (2 cm) or so.

Wonder Tape (optional), 1/4 inches wide

Used to give stability to the hems. Knit hems can sometimes get wavy; wonder tape helps to eliminate that. Wonder tape washes out, allowing your knit to still stretch.

Needed: 1 package (to encircle the hem of the shirt)

Pattern and Pattern Drafting Paper (if tracing the pattern)

I use medical exam paper for tracing and for drafting patterns. This is just like what your doctor uses on the exam table. I get mine online.

Tools Needed

Sewing Machine

Any machine capable of doing a zigzag stitch.

You are welcome to use a serger, but it's not necessary. You can sew knits easily on your home sewing machine, as long as it has a zig zag stitch.

Scissors

Paper scissors and fabric shears.

NEVER interchange the two!

Ruler

I prefer a 2" x 18" clear plastic drafting ruler designed for quilting or sewing. The clear plastic allows you to easily see what you are working on and to measure lines more quickly and accurately.

Tailor's Chalk

Used to trace your pattern onto your fabric prior to cutting.

Flexible Fabric Tape Measure

For measuring your body

Pins

I don't use any special pins while working with knits, although they make ballpoint pins. However, I do make sure the pins aren't overly large.

Seam Ripper

An unfortunate and very necessary tool for effectively removing a seam.

Felt Tipped Pen

Used to trace your pattern onto your paper. It's gentle enough to not rip the paper and dark enough to be seen.

Choosing Your Size

Your Measurements:

_____ Waist
(measure where you want the
top of the skirt to sit)

_____ Hip

_____ Skirt Length

_____ Length from waist to hip
(pattern uses 7.5 inches)

Decide on a size

Begin by **choosing the size that most closely fits your waist measurement.**

Do this by comparing your waist (or where you want the waist of the skirt to hit on your body) measurement to the body size chart, chart on page 8.

I like to **circle that number.**

Then look at the size in the Garment Size Chart and see how it compares to your measurement...

For the skirt, I would recommend that the waist be within an inch or two of your waist measurements (or where you want the skirt waist to hit your body).

If you like a snug fit, choose a garment size that is the same as your measurement or 1 to 2 inches (2-5 cm) smaller.

If you prefer a looser fit, choose a garment size that is 1 - 2 inches larger than your measurement (2-5 cm).

Circle the number you'll be using for the waist in the garment size chart.

Next **compare your hip measurement to the body size chart's hip measurements.** I like to circle this number too. (this may be a different size than your waist...that means you'll likely want to grade between sizes)

Now move to the garment chart and look at the size that corresponds with what you chose for your body measurement. Consider if this is the right amount of ease for your style and your body.

This skirt is designed with a free hip, meaning it's drafted to be a swing skirt and not closely fitted. Consider whether this is the style you want and choose a smaller size at the hip if you want a slimmer skirt.

Circle the numbers on the garment size chart that correspond with how you like your skirt to fit.

This will show you what you need to adjust (by adding or subtracting from the side seams or grading between sizes) on your pattern.

Consider the distance between your waist measurement and your hip measurement.

The pattern assumes a 7.5 inch (19cm) drop from waist to hip. If your drop is significantly different than that, you may want to draw your hip line on the pattern and adjust the pattern's side seams accordingly.

Finally **compare the skirt length to your measurements** and determine if you need to make any length adjustments.

I recommend making any length adjustments at the hip line to preserve the shape and circumference of the hem. (if you add or subtract length at the hem, you'll get either a more full or less full skirt)

Make note of the changes you are going to make on the pattern.

Tips for adjusting the pattern...

1. Make length adjustments first
2. Followed by small circumference (adding or subtracting a bit at the side seams) or grading between sizes
3. Finish with design alterations or large circumference adjustments (using slash and spread method)

Sizing Chart for 4-Gore Skirt

Body Size

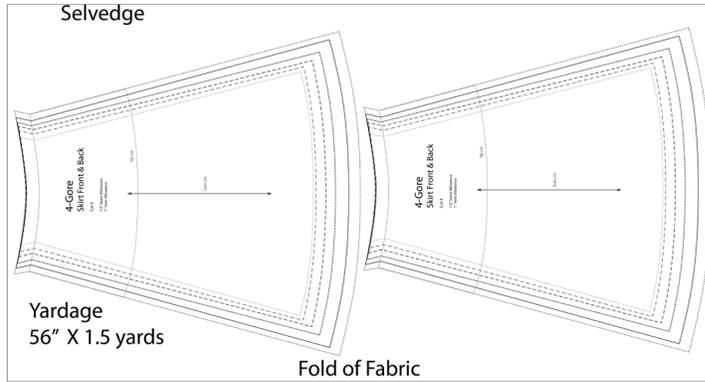
Size	Waist		Hip	
	inches	cm	inches	cm
1	25-26	63.5-66	35-36	90-91.5
2	27-28	68.5-71	37-38	94-96.5
3	29-30	73.5-77.5	39-41	99-103
4	32-34	81-86.5	42-44	106.5-112
5	36-38	91-96.5	46-48	116-122
6	40-42	101.5-107	50-53	127-135

Skirt Garment Size

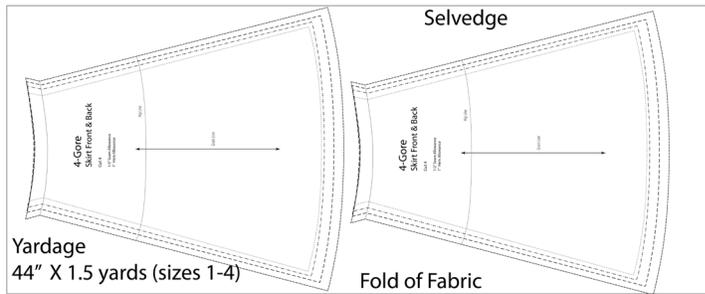
Size	Waist		Hip		Skirt Length	
	inches	cm	inches	cm	inches	cm
1	27	71	43	112	20.25	52
2	31	79	46	117	20.5	53
3	34	86.5	49	124.5	21	53.5
4	37	94	52	132	21.5	54.5
5	40	101.5	56	142.5	22.5	57
6	44	112	60	152.5	23.5	60

Notes:

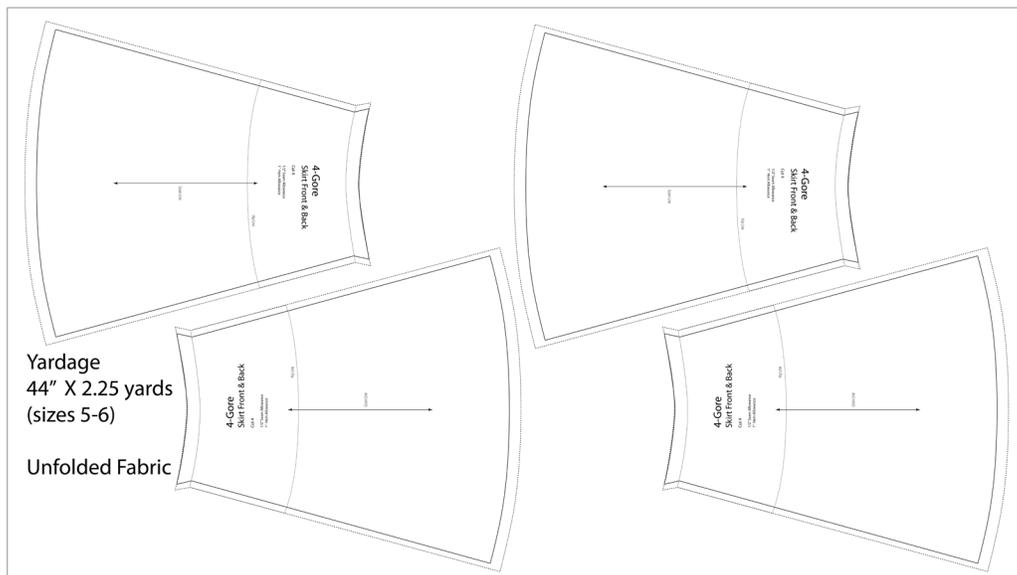
Cutting Layout



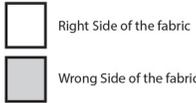
**Fabric at least
56" wide
(142.2 cm)**



**Fabric at least
44" wide
(112 cm)**



Sewing Instructions



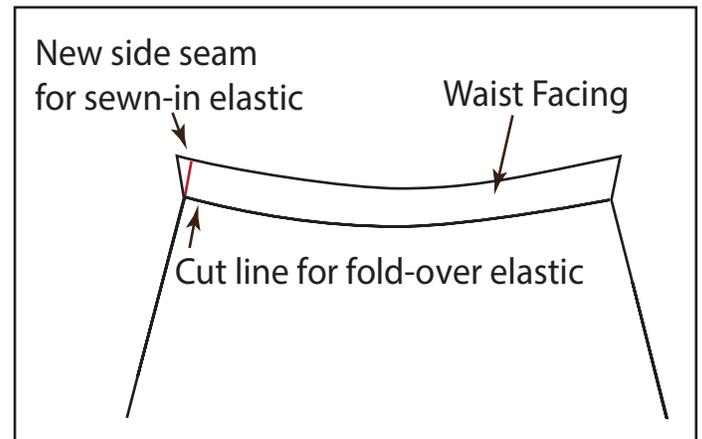
All seams have a **1/2 inch (1.3 cm) seam allowance** and a **1 inch (2.5 cm) hem allowance**. There is **1 inch (2.5 cm) waistband facing attached**.

1. Cut out your pattern

After tracing and adjusting the pattern to your shape, cut out 4 skirt pieces.

**You have some choices when cutting out the waist area.

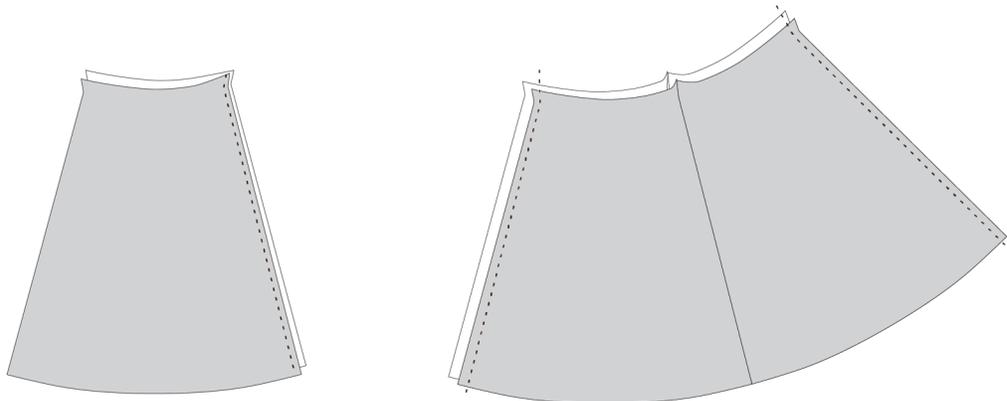
1. If you plan to make a casing and thread your elastic in after you sew, then cut it as is.
2. If you plan to use fold-over elastic, then cut the top edge off at the line.
3. If you choose to sew the elastic in place, then straighten the sides of the waist facing (otherwise you'll have too much fabric when you ease the elastic band in)



2. Sew the side seams

Match the sides seams of the two of the fabric pieces with right sides together. Sew the side seam with your favorite stretch stitch.

Do the same with the remaining two skirt panels. Then match up the two sewn pieces, right sides together, and sew those side seams.



3. Sew the waist

I'll go over three ways to install the elastic for the waist band.

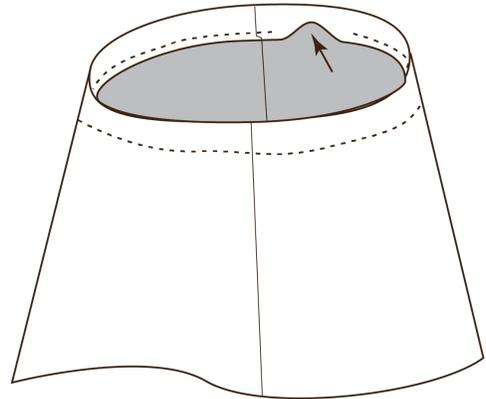
1. Sew a casing with the waist band facing

Fold the waist facing down (1 inch), wrong side of facing towards the wrong side of the skirt, and secure it to the skirt with the stretchy stitch of your choice. Leave a 3 inch gap in the seam to thread your elastic into the casing.

Cut your elastic to the length, by wrapping the elastic around your waist until you have the fit you want and add one inch so that you can overlap the ends and sew them together after you insert it into the casing.

Thread the elastic through the casing. Sew the overlapped ends together and close the casing with your stretch stitch.

I also suggest stitching the elastic down along the 4 seam lines, so that the elastic doesn't twist when you wear the skirt.



2. Use fold over elastic

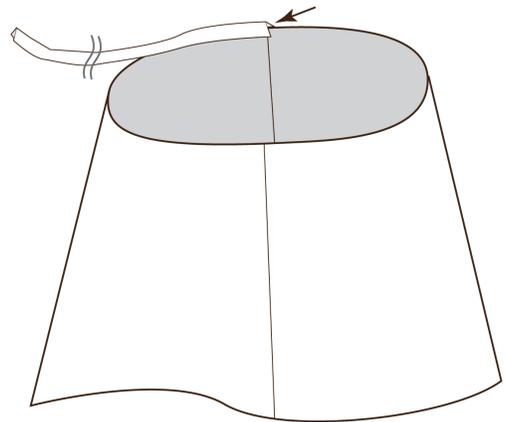
Ensure that you have not included the waist band facing on your skirt (if you have, cut it off)

You won't need to cut your elastic to length, but you want to be sure that you have enough to encircle your waist, plus an inch (2.5 cm) or so.

Beginning at the center back, sandwich the skirt edge between the fold over elastic and begin stitching the elastic down, through all three layers, with the stretch stitch of your choice. Use a wide stitch. This is a great place to use a fun decorative stitch.

Apply light tension to the fold over elastic, but not to the skirt, as you sew so that the elastic will lay nicely. Also check that your raw edge of the skirt is tucked in between the elastic edge.

When you reach the beginning edge, overlap the elastic by an inch (2.54 cm) or so and sew through all the layers.



3. Sewn-in Elastic

This is my elastic finish of choice for simple skirts like this and leggings.

You want to keep the waist facing for this method, but you don't want the shaping (flare) that's included. Cut that off and re sew that portion of the side seams, if you need to.

Cut your elastic to length, by wrapping the elastic around your waist until you have the fit you want, and add one inch to overlap the ends.

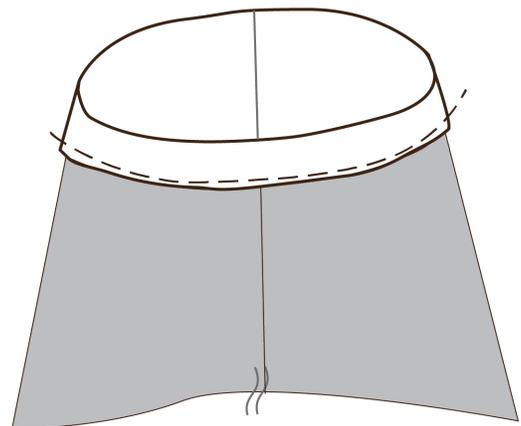
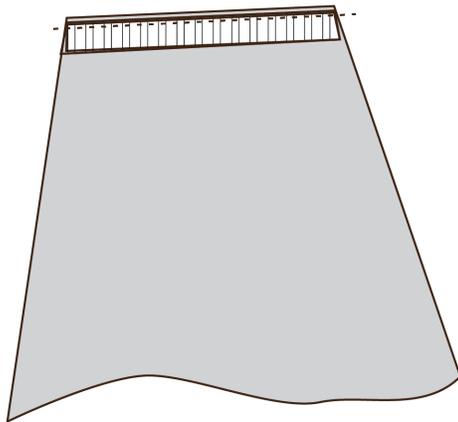
Sew the elastic together. Divide the elastic circle into quarters with pins.

Pin each quarter to a side seam placing the edge of the elastic a scant 1/8th inch from the edge of the waistband facing. The elastic should be on the wrong side of the fabric.

Stitch the elastic into place along the top edge of the waist facing, stretching the elastic as you go.

Fold the elastic down, towards the wrong side of the skirt. Pin the elastic and facing down at each side seam.

Sew the edge of the facing and elastic down using the stretch stitch of your choice, apply tension to the elastic (which is now sandwiched between the skirt and the facing) to ensure you don't get any bubbles or folds in the skirt fabric.



4. Finishing the hem

If using wonder tape: Apply wonder tape to the wrong side of the hem edge. Working in quarters, fold the hem under 1" (2.5 cm) and stick down, easing the edge if necessary. (This helps the fabric to stay smooth and not become wavy once you sew.)

Once you've folded the hem under 1 inch (2.5 cm), stitch down with a stretch stitch of your choice, using either a single needle or a twin needle.

Resources

Fabric, thread and notions

organiccottonplus.com - Organic fabric, natural dyes

stonemountainfabric.com - curated collection of fabric

makermountainfabrics.com - curated collection of fabric

merchantandmills.com - curated collection of fabric and patterns and several books

thefabricstoreonline.com - Merino Wool Jersey

**** Offers 10% off your first order when you join their email list**

blackbirdfabrics.com - curated collection of fashion fabric

**** One time 10% discount on fabric with code KINSHIP10**

naturesfabrics.com - specializing in natural fabrics

**** 15% discount with the code kinshipsewing2020**

fabric.com - a wide variety of fabrics

Tutorials, patterns

Purlsoho.com - patterns, tutorials,

Seamwork.com - online magazine, garment sewing patterns and tutorials

Craftsy.com - online classes for sewing and making in general

Creativebug.com - online classes for sewing and making in general

Fashion Fabric 101 - <https://kinshiphandwork.com/digital-courses/>

Links

Free online class on Craftsy.com on sewing machine basics

<https://www.craftsy.com/sewing/classes/sew-ready-machine-basics/35762>

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