

Making the Mary Jumper In Detail:

1. Prepare the material.

WASH and DRY the material, using whatever laundry method you will commonly use with the garment. (The facing material, too) This is very important, because excessive shrinkage might ruin the effect of the jumper, custom-made to the figure of the wearer.

2. Measure and cut the Jumper Length

Unfold the fabric, and lay it out on a flat surface. From one cut edge, measure the Jumper Length measurement in several places across the width of the fabric. (See Designing the Jumper in Inches for this measurement.) Remember that the Jumper Length is both front and back of the jumper added together (in other words, the jumper has no shoulder seams.) To decide how long the jumper should be, it is helpful to either lay the fabric on the floor and lie down on top of it, or drape it over your shoulder.

Add 4" for hem allowance. (This is generous. If you are short on fabric, you may add significantly less. For a lighter fabric like silk or chiffon, you probably will want less).

Mark this line with pins or chalk and cut along it. Lay the rest of the fabric to one side.

3. Mark the centre point for the neck.

Fold the Jumper Length you have just cut in half, with the selvages running down the sides. Where the fold is will be the shoulder 'line' of the jumper. Make sure the two cut edges (the front and back hems of your jumper) are lined up. Mark the folded edge with chalk or pins.

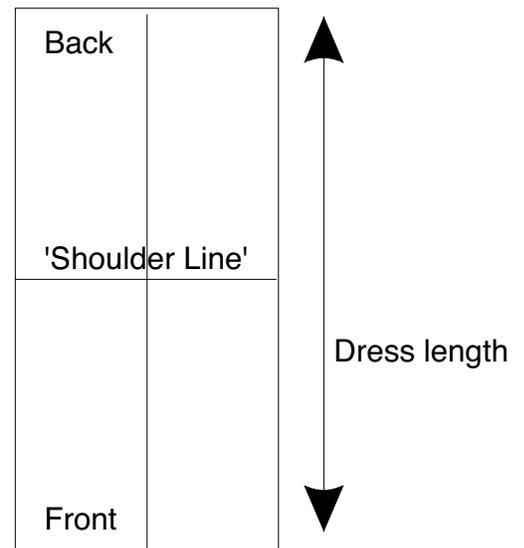
Now, fold the Jumper Length the other way, to get a very long narrow rectangle. Mark the fold line again with chalk, crossing the first chalk line so that there is a large chalk cross in the middle of the fabric. This is the centre point of the fabric and will help make an even neckline.

As a preliminary step, hem the selvage sides of the jumper 1/2". Leave the bottom un-hemmed. This will save time sewing several shorter hems later. You may have to redo the hemming of the arm holes, but this step will gain you more than you will lose.

4. Construct and insert the neckline

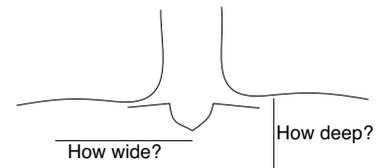
The Mary Jumper looks nice with a variety of necklines – I've done square, sweetheart, v-shaped, and round necklines before. A simpler neckline befits the simple nature of the jumper, so I wouldn't try anything as elaborate as a scalloped neckline.

When cutting necklines, it is far better to cut it too small than too large, which is almost impossible to fix. Also beware of making the jumper neckline too wide. I commonly made this mistake, which resulted in jumpers that fell off my shoulders if I wasn't careful.



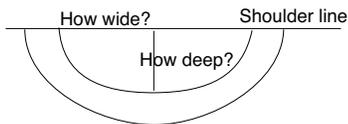
Designing the Neckline

To make your own neckline pattern, decide what shape you want - a round neck? A V-neck, or square? All work well with this jumper. To determine how wide the neckline will be, measure from the centre of your neck (that little hollow in the middle of your throat) out to one shoulder as far as you want. Write this down.



Next to determine how deep the neckline will be, measure from your shoulder down your chest as far as you want. Write this measurement down.

i) Take some graph paper, draw a straight line across it for the shoulder line, and mark the middle. Mark on each side how wide (from this centre point) you have decided to make the neckline, and measure down from this centre point to mark how deep you want your neckline to be.



ii) Now draw the curve, V or square you have decided on. Use the squares on the graph paper to make sure that the curves and all measurements are the same on both sides of the neckline.

iii) When you have a line you like, draw another line the same shape two inches further out. You will have a shape that looks like a big 'smile'. Add a seam allowance of $\frac{5}{8}$ " all around this shape and cut it out. This is the front neckline pattern piece. Hold it up to yourself to check the fit and shape.

iv) Redo this step as often as necessary to get a neckline you are happy with.

v) For the back neckline, use another sheet of graph paper. Draw a straight line again and mark again how wide you've decided to make your neckline. Measure from your shoulder how far down your back you want the neckline (at least as far as that little bump on the back of your neck) and mark this down on the graph paper. Draw a smooth curve, add the 2" and $\frac{5}{8}$ " as with the front neckline and cut it out.

vi) Pin the two paper patterns together at the shoulders and try it on. Is it big enough to fit over your head? If not, remember that it's a bit small because of the seam allowance. Is it still too small?

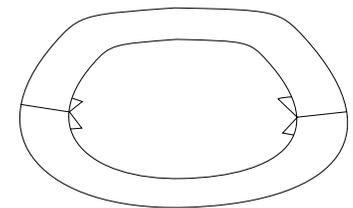
Creating the Facings and Interfacings

I like to make my necklines with a facing and interfacing, since this part of the jumper encounters a lot of stress.

To make the neckline interfacing, pin and cut out one set of the neckline pattern (front and back) on the cotton facing (you can use professional interfacing if you like, but cotton facing is just as nice. It won't be seen in the jumper, so don't be afraid to use ugly scrap material, so long as it's sturdy.

Make sure that the 'up-and-down' on the facing (from the shoulder edge to the bottom) is in the same direction as the up-and-down on the fabric (parallel to the selvages)

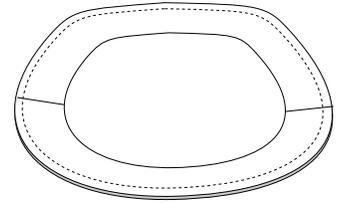
Sew the front and back neck interfacings together at the shoulders with $\frac{5}{8}$ " seams. Press seams open. Try on the neckline facing to see if it's adequate. The neckline should be a little smaller than you like, since when the seam allowances around the neck are sewn, it will become $\frac{5}{8}$ " wider.



Make all the adjustments you want (start over if you need to) at this stage.

Now use your paper patterns again to pin and cut out a front and back facing from the Finishing Material you set aside. Use one end of this length of material, not the middle!

Stitch the front and back facings together at the shoulder seams. Press seams open.



Stay-stitch the facings and interfacings together, wrong sides together. The interfacing is now the wrong side of the neckline piece. Fold the facing in half, to bring the shoulder seams together and mark the centre of the back and front with chalk or a pin.

Inserting the Neckline Into the Jumper

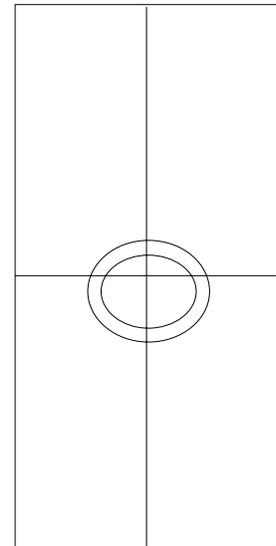
Now unfold the material for the jumper to insert the neckline into it.

Center the facings on the jumper, RIGHT sides together, using the chalked cross as a guide. Make sure the front and back centre lines of the facing match the centerline on the jumper on both front and back. Make sure the shoulder seams of the facing line up with the shoulder chalk lines on the fabric. Make sure there is an equal amount of material on both shoulder lines.

When adjustments have been made, pin the facings to the neckline around the inside, the RIGHT side of the facing to the RIGHT side of the jumper. (Note: This method will produce a finished facing on the INSIDE of the jumper. For a facing on the OUTSIDE of the jumper, which gives an attractive 'bound' look to the neckline, pin the facing to the jumper with the WRONG sides matching.)

Carefully cut out the neckline hole, using the facings as a guide. When in doubt, cut smaller rather than larger. Carefully (it's full of pins!) try the jumper on at this point to check the neckline and adjust as necessary.

Stitch the neck facing to the jumper neckline. Trim seams and cut corners and curves. Turn the facing to the WRONG (IN) side and press down, so that the seam allowances are hidden between the jumper and facing. Topstitch the neckline. (For facings on the outside, press facing to the RIGHT (OUT) side. Then hem the unfinished edge of the facing and top-stitch it to the jumper). Try it on again to make sure it's perfect.



5. Draw and Baste the Side Seams

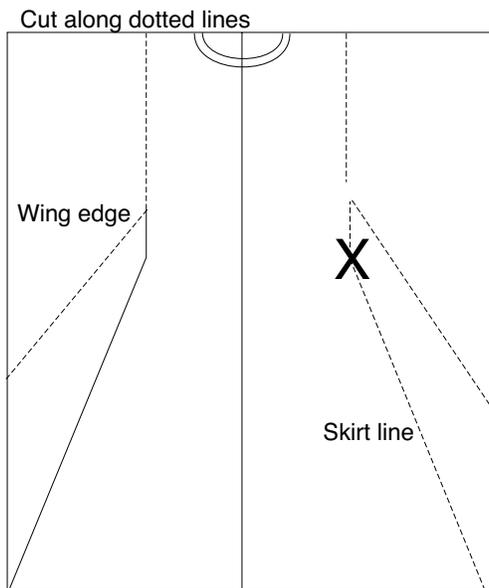
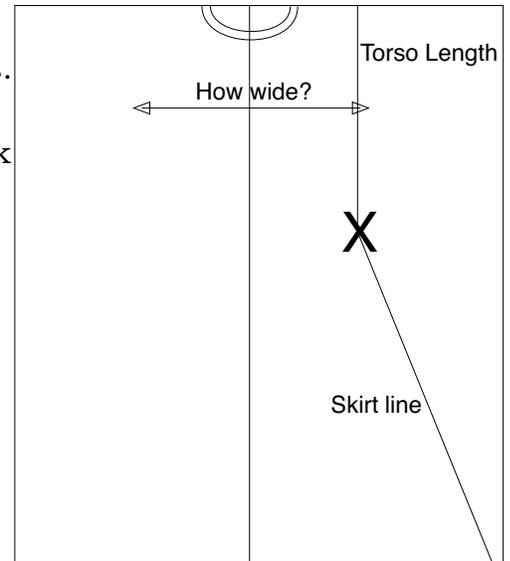
After the neckline is finished, fold the jumper in half again with the completed neckline in the middle, so that the front and back sides are equal in length to each other. Lay it flat on the floor (a table is probably not wide enough).

Decide how wide you want the front panel of the jumper to be. I usually make it as wide as a comfortable (but not too wide) T-shirt. The Mary Jumper, being of more flowing material than most jumpers, can afford to have a wider panel than most other jumpers. Mark the width of the jumper on the material, measuring out from the middle of the neckline to be sure it is even on both sides.

Measure from your shoulders to the top of your hips. This is your Torso Length. Starting at the folded shoulder seam, and following the line of the width of the jumper, mark this Torso Length on the material with chalk. Make an X to mark to top of your hips.

Now, starting from the bottom corner of one side of the jumper, use the yardstick to draw a straight line with chalk to a good inch above the X. This will be the "skirt line" of the skirt. Repeat on the other side of the jumper. Pin along the skirt line.

Now, this is tricky. As the jumper falls from the model's shoulders over her chest to her waist, you will want a gradual slimming effect.



To enhance this, the "wings" of the Mary Jumper slope downwards, not upwards, as in the Mary Jumper. In a 45" wide jumper, this is especially necessary. About 2" above the marked X, draw a line with the yardstick that gradually slopes downward. It should end about 18-24" or so from the point where the skirt line reaches the hemline.

This line does not run parallel to the skirt line. Use your judgement. Make it higher if you are uncertain, since you can always trim away more later on. This I will call the "wing edge."

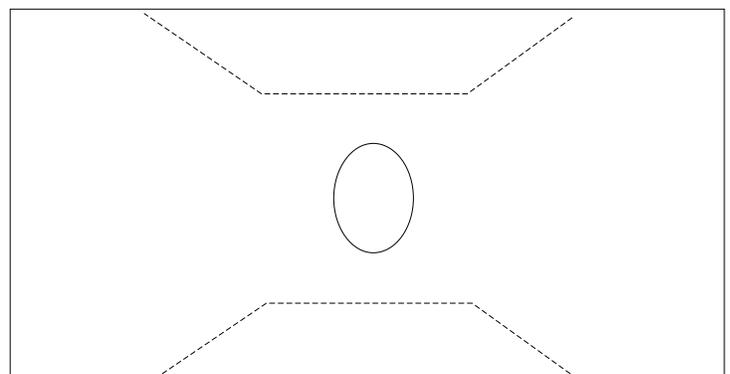
Carefully cut from the shoulder line through both the front and back layers straight down to the X and out

along the wing edge on both sides.

Set the extra material aside to use in making the sleeves of the matching shirt. Try on the jumper, and if you are satisfied with the effect, go on to the next step. If not, trim the wings a bit.

Unfold the jumper. As a preliminary to putting in the pockets, hem the of the jumper 1/2" on both sides, from the tip of one wing all the way up one side and down to the other. You might consider sewing matching or contrasting bias tape all along these edges to reinforce these seams.

The most stressed part of the garment will be the place where the two sides of the jumper meet below the armhole, so reinforcing this seam will save you mending later. Leave the bottom of the jumper un-hemmed.



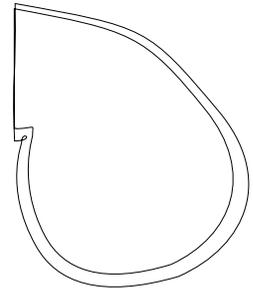
Fold the jumper again, matching up the sides evenly. Using pins stuck perpendicular to the chalked lines, pin the two sides of the skirt together along the "skirt lines" (NOT the "wing edges!").

Baste along the chalked skirt line of both the right and the left side of the jumper.

6. Construct and insert the pockets.

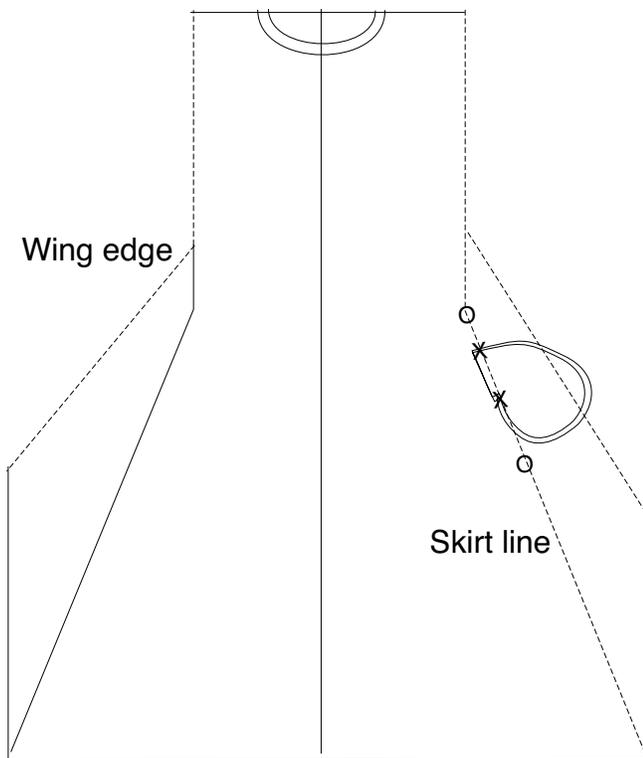
Pockets on a Mary jumper are not necessary, but they are convenient. Because they are hidden in the folds of the "wings," they are unobtrusive. (See Making the Mary Dress for detailed instructions and illustrations on how to design and insert your pockets)

Cut out four pockets from your extra material or from contrasting material (don't mix knits with non-knits for this step). Starting the seam about 5/8" from the long straight edge of the pocket, sew the backs and the fronts together with a 1/2" seam, leaving an opening wide enough for your hand to slip inside easily. Save yourself mending time by reinforcing the pocket with another line of stitching 1/4" outside the first.



Press the open ends of the pocket out. Clip and notch the curves. Turn the pockets inside out, so the seams are on the inside.

Decide the most comfortable position for the pockets. Measure down from your shoulder to the top of where you want the pocket to be. Typically I place mine about 3" below my navel line so that when my arms are down, I can rest my hands in my pockets comfortably. Mark this spot on the jumper.



Pin the pocket's right side to the WRONG (IN) side of the jumper so that the opening is even with the basted skirt line seams. This can be a tricky and sometimes frustrating step. Try pinning and sewing the front edge of the pocket first, then removing the pins and pinning and sewing the back edge.

Sew the pockets onto the jumper. Since the top of the pocket will be a stress point, reinforce the seams.

Remove the basting stitches of the skirt that are closing up the pockets.

Try on the jumper to make sure the pockets are positioned comfortably and unobtrusively. When satisfied, reinforce the opening edges by sewing seam tape over the

pocket seams, stitching one or two rows at the top and bottom of the pocket.

7. Sew the side seams

The most stress put on the Mary Jumper is the seam under the arm where the skirt seam meets the armhole, particularly where it joins the pocket. After a while, I've noticed small

tears on this part of the fabric. The next time I make this jumper, I am going to try some manner of reinforcing this seam with bias tape on the inside of the jumper.

Sew a seam down the skirt line ending at the top of the pocket opening. From the bottom of the pocket opening, run a finished seam down the skirt line of both the right and the left side.

Finishing

The bottom hem of the jumper as it stands is uneven, since the wings will fall more deeply to the floor on either side of the jumper. You have two choices at this point.

For a more formal jumper, I have left this uneven hem, which can give a pleasingly dramatic effect. Some women like the jumper this way. I would advise trimming them so that the edges don't drag on the floor (a tripping hazard, plus they get dirty). In this case, give the jumper a machine hem of 1/2" or more (the hem tends to "roll up" on some fabrics so you may want a wider hem to prevent this happening).

The other choice is to even out the wings so that the hem of the jumper is even all the way around, as in a standard skirt. I have chosen to do this with my work jumpers, to minimise the wings catching on sharp edges as I do my chores.

To even out the hem, put on the jumper. You will need a helper. Stand on a level surface a few feet from the ground. As you turn slowly, have your helper mark where you want the hem to be.

If you are lacking a helper at this point (husbands sometimes don't understand how to mark hems) mark a point on the jumper where you want the hem, then put the jumper on a hanger. Working slowly, mark the jumper with pins or small dots where you want the hem to be.

Measure up from the floor if this helps. Cut the jumper 1/2 or more below your marked line and hem as you chose.

I usually open out the "wings" and tuck the bottom tips over the hem, running a seam down the middle of the wing to keep it there.

The Sash

To make a sash with your extra strip, simply hem the strip of material on all sides and use. Edge with silk or cotton tassels if you chose.

I've gotten away with not hemming my knit sashes, as the edges sometimes "roll up" and hide the raw edge.

Note: Never stretch out knit material while you are hemming it.

