

Couture Inspired Dress Pattern

This is an original pattern, created for the V&A Golden Age of Couture exhibition website.

It is based on a 1950's ready to wear dress from the V&A collection and has been sized for modern day UK sizes 10, 12 and 14.

The dress is close fitting with a waist seam, flared skirt and pockets. It is fitted above the waist with band detail and lined top body.



Day dress by Horrockses Fashion. Grey cotton printed with pink roses and white daisies, Britain, 1953. Museum no. T.640-1996

You will need

- A 20in (51cm) zipper (the original dress used a 19in zipper, but these are now difficult to find).
- One large press stud.

Fabrics:

The original dress was made from floral cotton, with white cotton lining on upper body.

You may want to be creative when you make your dress and choose a fabric that suits your own taste.

Fabric cutting lengths:

Main dress fabric:

For fabrics that are...

- 115cm (45in) wide 400cm length of fabric is required
- 150cm (60in) wide 350cm length of fabric is required

If you are using fabric with a pattern, you may need more fabric than the amounts given above.

Lining fabric:

For fabrics that are...

- 115cm (45in) wide 60cm length of fabric is required

Body Measurements (in cm)

The pattern has been made for modern day UK sizes 10, 12 (sizes are given in cm):

Size	10	12	14
Bust	84	88	92
Waist	64	68	72
Hips	89	93	97
Shoulder	12	12.25	12.5
Nape to waist	39.5	40	40.5
Waist to knee	58	58.5	59

About the pattern

The pattern is available to download from the V&A Golden Age of Couture website: www.vam.ac.uk/couture/

There are two versions of the pattern available for you to download:

1. **A4/Print at Home**
This version of the pattern has been arranged onto A4 sized pages, for you to print and assemble at home.
2. **Large paper size**
This version of the pattern appears in this pdf as a single, large page.

Each version of the pattern comprises of 2 documents, one for the pieces that form the body of the dress, the other for the skirt pieces.

How to assembling the A4/print at home pattern

1. Download the following files:
 - 1_top_va_dress_pattern_A4.doc
 - 2_skirt_va_dress_pattern_A4.doc
2. Open the files in Adobe Acrobat (or [Acrobat Reader](#)).
3. Print the files.
 - Do **not** select 'scale to fit' or 'crop'.
 - **Do** ensure that 'None' is selected the 'Page Scaling' option.
 - Print each pattern piece single sided; do **not** use duplex/double sided printing.
4. Each page of the pattern is numbered to help you assemble the pattern.
 - The number appears on the bottom right of each pattern page.
 - Page 1 appears is at the top left of the pattern, the numbering then proceeds across the top row, then down to the start of the next row (on the left side) and so on until the last piece, at the bottom right.
5. Use the **pattern diagram on page 4** of this document to help you assemble the pattern.
6. Each pattern piece has a small margin around it. You may wish to cut off the margin on one side of each join between two pieces to prevent overlap.
7. Use the dots and crosses on the pattern to help line up the pieces.

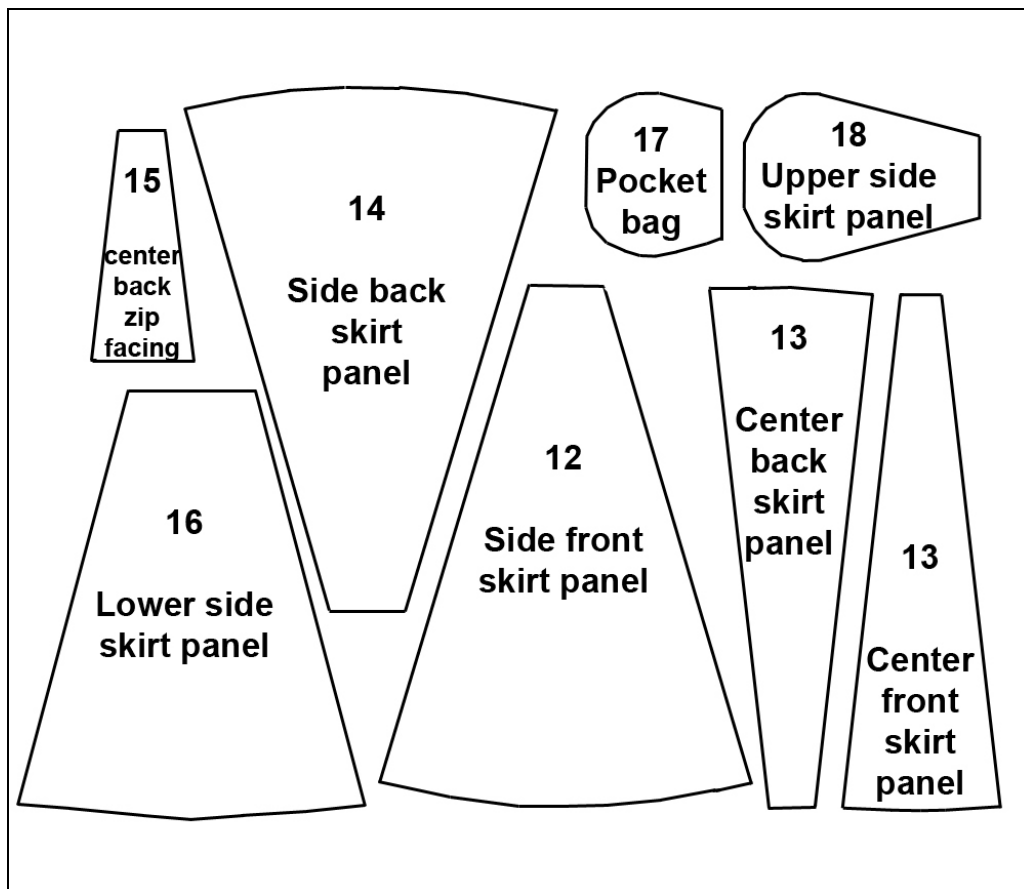
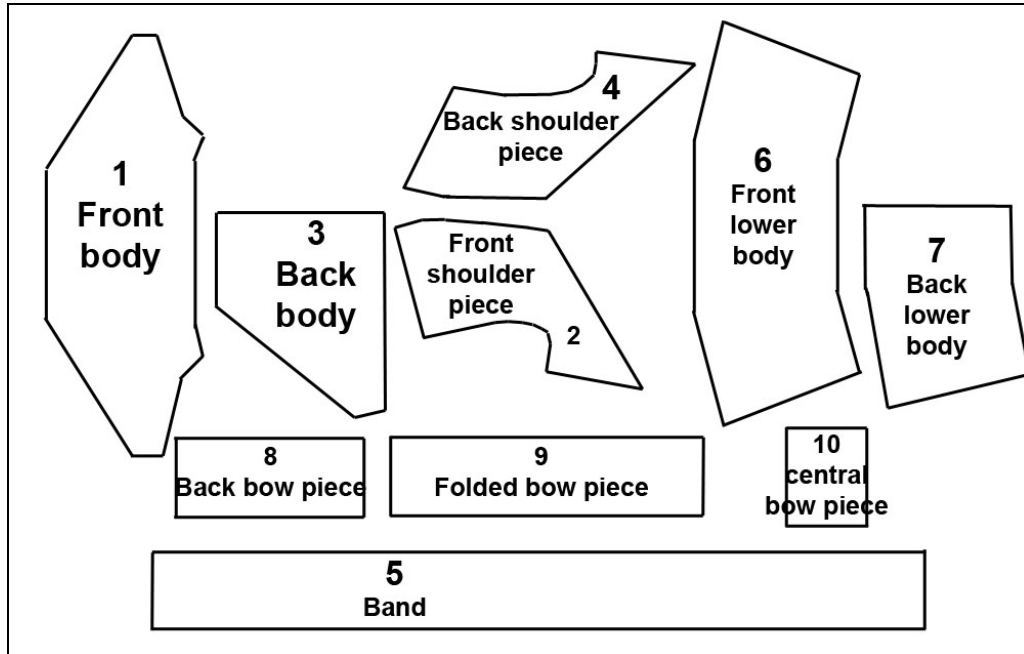
Notes for printing the large file

If you decide to print the large file at a printer's, please ensure that they do **not** 'scale to fit', that they use the least expensive paper available for printing the pattern and they use paper of a suitable width for the pattern.

Pattern Pieces:

1. Front body	(cut 1 main fabric & 1 lining)
2. Front shoulder piece	(cut 2 main fabric & 2 lining)
3. Back body	(cut 2 main fabric & 2 lining)
4. Back shoulder piece	(cut 2 main fabric & 2 lining)
5. Band	(cut 1)
6. Front lower body	(cut 1)
7. Back lower body	(cut 1)
8. Back bow piece	(cut 1)
9. Folded bow piece	(cut 1)
10. Central bow piece	(cut 1)
11. Centre front skirt panel	(cut 1)
12. Side front skirt panel	(cut 2)
13. Centre back skirt panel	(cut 1)
14. Side back skirt panel	(cut 2)
15. Centre back zip fastening	(cut 1)
16. Lower side skirt	(cut 2)
17. Pocket bag	(cut 2)
18. Upper side skirt panel	(cut 2)

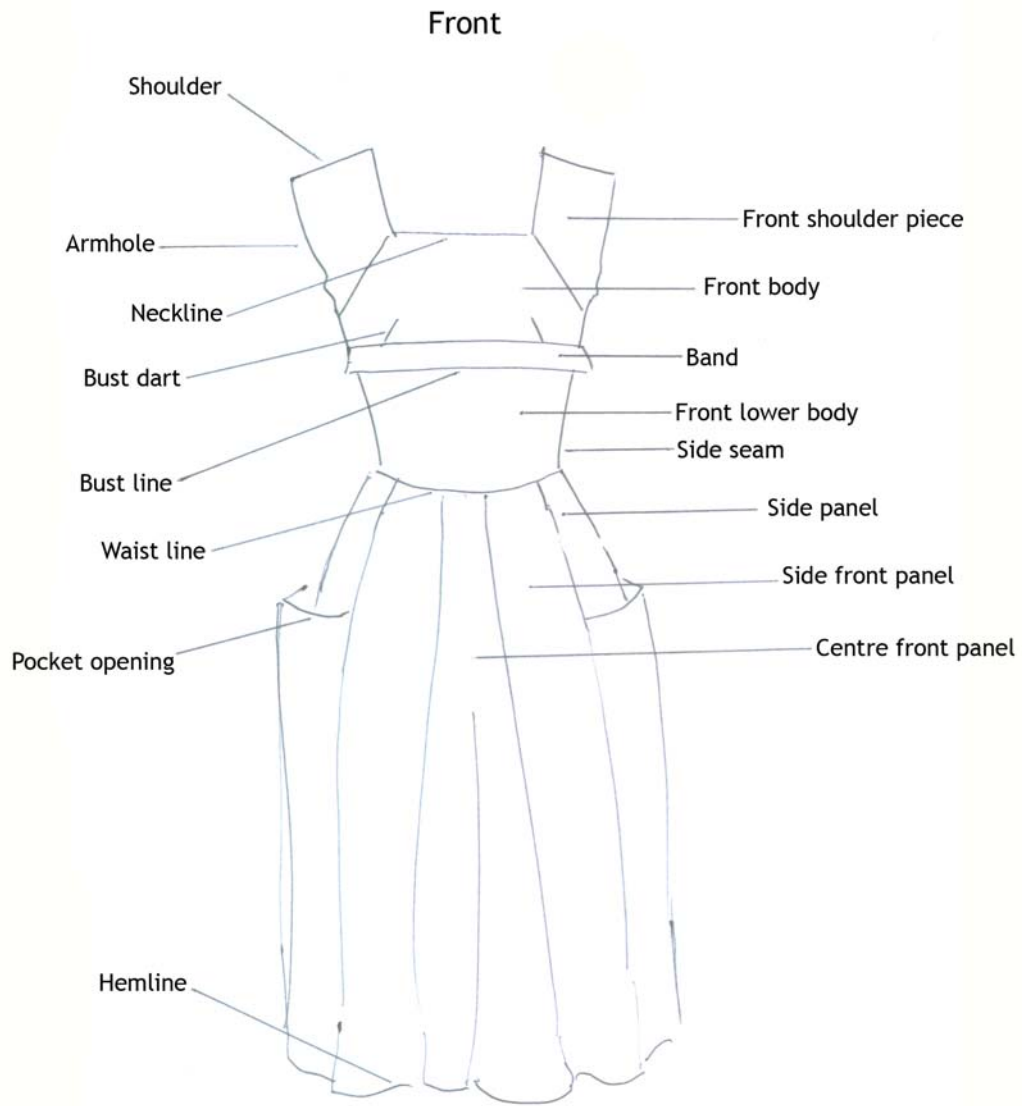
Pattern Diagram

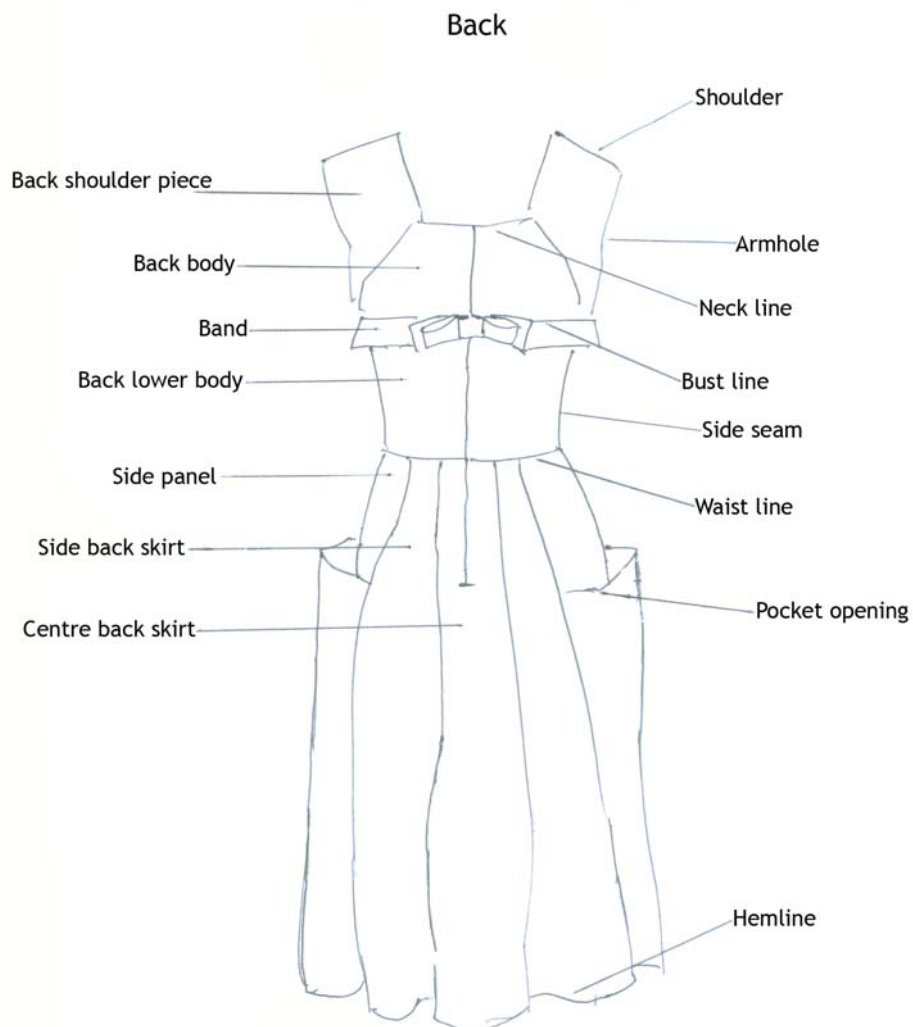


Understanding the pattern

Diagrams:

These diagrams show the names used for each part of the dress in the pattern:





Notes

- 1.5cm seam allowances included (this is shown on the pattern pieces for size 12 only, for all other sizes you will need to measure the correct allowance)
- A 4cm hem allowance included
- 2cm ease is given in the waist fit
- All sizes are shown on the same pattern. You will need to ensure you cut the right size. To help you do this, the pattern lines are colour coded:
 - Size 10 Red
 - Size 12 Black
 - Size 14 Blue

Pattern Instructions

Body part:

1. Stitch darts on front body piece (1)
2. Stitch the two front shoulder pieces (2) to the front body piece (1) matching the notches.
3. Stitch the two back shoulder pieces (4) to the two back body pieces (3) matching notches.
4. Stitch the front side seams to the back side seams
5. Stitch the front shoulder seams to the back shoulder seams
6. Press all seams open and trim corners
7. Repeat stages 1-6 with the lining pieces
8. Place the two body pieces right sides together and sew around the neck edges and down the centre backs
9. Trim back the seams of the lining and snip the corners (to aid turning body through to the right side)
10. Turn body through, so that the right sides of the fabric are on the outside.
11. Stitch around arm holes (on body to lining). From inside, with right sides together, pin and stitch from side seam to shoulder point, then stitch one side of arm hole at a time.
12. Snip into curved armhole seams (to aid turning armholes through to right side).
13. Stitch both ends of band (5), turn through to right side and press on fold line.
14. Stitch to body at under bust line.
15. Stitch side seams of the front lower body piece (6) to the two back lower body pieces (7).
16. Press side seams open and stitch lower body to top body (with band in-between)
17. Press all seams up: inside top body lining.
18. Hand sew lining to band

Skirt part:

19. Make up central front panels: Stitch centre front panel (11) to the two side front panels (12).
20. Press seams to outside.
21. Place zip facing (15) right sides together with centre back panel (13) matching the notches.

22. Pin and stitch (0.5cm) either side of the zip opening, then cut down zip opening (and turn facing through to right side).
23. Press into place
24. Make up central back panels: stitch centre back panel (13) to the two side back panels (14), (catching the zip facing into seams).
25. Press seams to outside.
26. Make up side pocket panels: Stitch under pocket bag (17) to side panel (16) at pocket opening matching the notches.
27. Press pocket seam open and fold back on its-self.
28. Stitch pocket bag (17) to upper side panel (18) around the pocket seam, matching the notches.
29. Repeat stages 26, 27, 28 with other 'side pocket panel'.
30. Stitch both 'side pocket panels' to front (12) and back (14) 'central panels'. When doing so, catch top of pocket into seams, matching notches.
31. Press seams to outside
32. Press skirt hem up, and sew.

Completing dress:

33. Stitch body to skirt at waistline, matching notches.
34. Sew zipper in by hand (as original dress).
35. Make up bow: (see photos below). Stitch both sides of 'back bow piece' (8) together to make a tube. Trim seam inside, turn through to right side.
36. Press with seam running along centre back of tube.
37. Tuck in ends to enclose and hand-sew into place.
38. Stitch both sides of folded bow piece (9) together to make a tube. Trim seam inside, turn through to right side.
39. Press with seam running along centre back of the tube.
40. Sew ends together with seam to make a loop (and trim seam).
41. Place 'folded bow piece' (9) on top of 'back bow piece' (8) and stitch down centre of bow to hold in place.
42. Stitch both sides of central bow piece (10) together to make a tube. Trim seam inside, turn through to right side.
43. Press with seam running along centre back of tube.
44. Sew ends together with seam to make a loop (and trim seam).
45. Place central bow piece (10) loop around the layers of bow.
46. Hand sew bow to left side of band on dress.

47. Hand sew press stud to bow and right side of band on dress.

