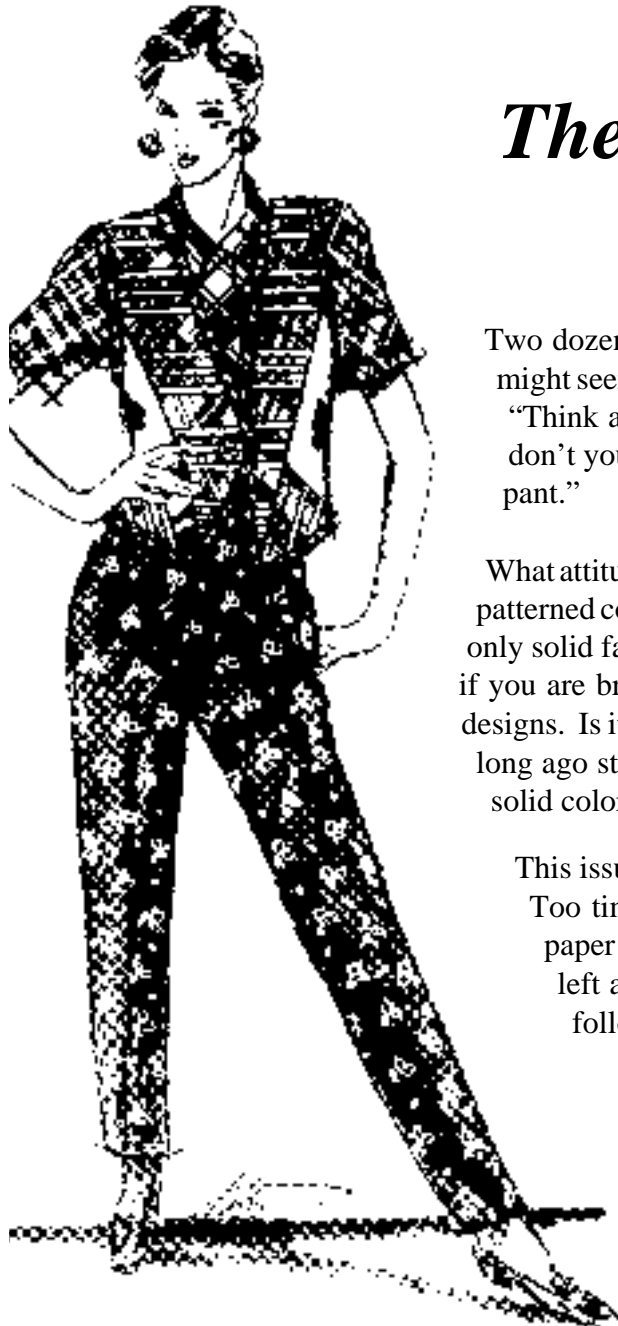
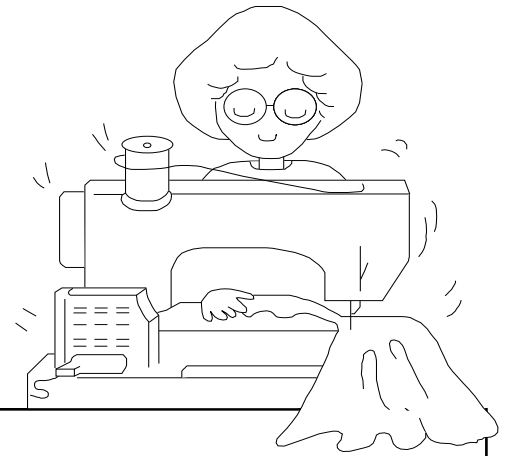


Sew 'n' Sew

THE NEWSLETTER FOR DESIGNING WOMEN



The Power of Pattern Is A Match

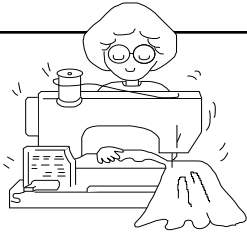
Two dozen cotton prints, woven silk plaids and satin stripes might seem a recipe for cutting chaos, but not to Sew 'n' Sew. "Think about it; you do it everyday when you get dressed, don't you? That blazer with that skirt, that blouse with that pant."

What attitude do you have when it comes to choosing and using patterned colors in your sewing? It's easy to be timid and select only solid fabrics, but it makes things more fun and interesting if you are brave and go for plaids, stripes, checks and figured designs. Is it because every day cutting techniques - things you long ago stopped thinking about - are easy to come by when solid colored fabrics are chosen to sew?

This issue, decide to have some fun with patterned fabrics. Too timid? Too expensive? That's why we designed a paper yardage of an expensive silk print and provided a left and right front blouse pattern to be used when you follow our "match-up analogy" steps to **CUT YOU**

Volume 8 • Number 5

EDITOR *Peggy Fondren*
COPY EDITOR *Gloria Mason*
FASHION ILLUSTRATOR *Johnnie Gipson*
LINE ART ILLUSTRATOR *Peggy Fondren*
MARKETING COORDINATOR *Leslye Fondren*



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SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

P.O. Box 53655, Lubbock, TX 79453-3655
 Phone: 806.793.9840
 Toll Free: 800.220.8323
 FAX: 806.791.0727
 E-Mail sewnsew@lubbockmetro.com
 Website: <http://www.lubbockmetro.com/sewnsew>

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OWNMATCHEDFRONTS. Now when a cutting mistake is made, just trash it, make another copy of “our expensive paper yardage” (page 8) and start again. If you learn anything sewing with Sew ‘n’ Sew, it’s that cutting a match on patterned fabrics is an essential sewing skill and oh, so easy. All you are out is maybe a sheet of paper. Take the time to learn the “matchy, matchy tricks” and your sewing is never quite the same again.

ALL THE POSSIBILITIES

Used in an artful manner, patterned fabrics can do more than simply add color to your closet. They can spice up an old, tired wardrobe or enhance a beautiful vest as we did when we dressed our cover model. There’s one for every taste and age, but selecting the right one for the mood you want to create, your personality, fashion taste, and size is not easy. Perhaps these tips will get you started in the right direction. *FIRST AND FOREMOST: WE MUST LOVE THE FABRIC.*

TO CAMOUFLAGE YOUR SIZE

◆ Select medium weight, lightly crisp or lightly textured patterned fabrics. Avoid thin, shiny, clingy or deeply textured fabrics.

◆ To minimize the figure, select patterned fabrics with small shapes that are close together, but not touching.

◆ To camouflage figure flaws, select print motifs that touch or overlap another motif.

◆ Avoid patterned fabrics with large spaces between the motifs, especially when the designs are large which encourage the eye to move across the body “to connect the dots” and enlarge the body.

◆ Choose a narrow, or thick and thin stripe.

TO ENHANCE SMALL FRAMES

◆ Select patterned fabrics of medium to heavy weight and crisp, and/or thick. Avoid, thin, sheer, shiny, and clingy fabrics.

- ◆ Choose prints with medium or large designs and space between the shapes because they enlarge the figure. Also flattering are fabrics with motifs that touch or overlap because they camouflage figure flaws.

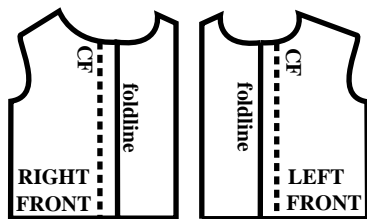
- ◆ Avoid patterned fabrics with small shapes that are close together, but not touching because they minimize.

- ◆ Choose wide stripes over thin ones.

MATCHING FRONT CLOSURES

Before beginning the layout, take a few minutes to analyze your patterned fabric. Look at our “paper yardage” page 8. Identify the dominant pattern. You must now decide where to position the prominent fabric motifs. Study the nature of the print and the different effects which are possible when the major print elements are placed in different figure areas. You will notice the flower design of “our paper yardage” is staggered fashion. For patterned fabrics such as this one, be sure to lay out the pattern pieces so like rows of flowers line up in the crosswise direction. If there is a center front seam or closing, such as our pattern, be sure the print motifs match precisely so there is an uninterrupted visual flow of print. Follow our step-by-step analogy to cut a perfect match.

- ◆ To cut a pattern match on a center front opening on fabrics, such as florals, dots, prints, plaids, stripes, checks, and diagonals, “matching up” requires thinking **center front line** rather than cutting line or foldline on any required matching



sequence. This is the only line to be matched, and regardless of style, it’s clearly marked on all patterns.

All that might be required of you is to **EXTEND** the center front line (marked near the neckline) to the lower hem on the front pattern. While it is not necessary, it may be helpful to make a separate left front by tracing the right front pattern. Just be certain that the left front pattern is opposite the right front (or reversed). Label each pattern.

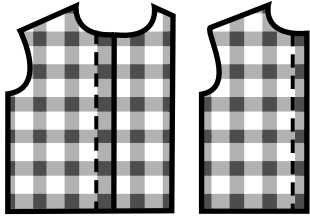
- ◆ The most beautiful patterned garment is one where the motif is attractively positioned on the body and the colored patterns match at the center front openings and seamlines so the design of the fabric appears continuous. Choose an easy pattern with few pattern pieces. Fewer pattern pieces means fewer seams to be matched. Intricate details confuse the design of patterned fabrics.

- ◆ The process of matching the pattern of the fabric (plaids, stripes, florals) requires extra fabric. Analyze the fabric to determine the repeat of the motif. Measure the length of the repeat. For even placed motifs use the “without nap” yardage requirements; for uneven placed motifs, use the “with nap” yardage requirements. To this basic yardage requirement, add one extra motif repeat for each major pattern piece. Major pattern pieces include bodice front and back, sleeve and skirt front and back.

- ◆ Part of the secret to obtaining a pleasing match on the center front of a garment is “be brave.” One front must first be cut before matching can begin. So begin by pressing the fabric yardage. Pin the right front pattern piece, print side up, on the single layer of fabric in the chosen location and cut.



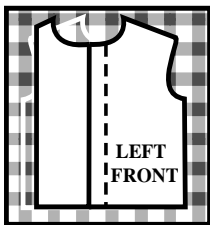
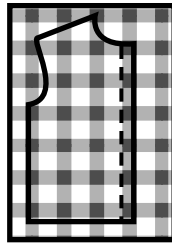
- ◆ On the cut right front, mark the center front and foldline on the fabric by clipping at each line on the top and bottom of the right bodice. Remove



the pattern. On the right front, fold along the foldline and press the cut-on facing to the wrong side. Mark the center front on the cut

right bodice by placing pins vertically every 3 inches along the center front line. Hand baste the entire center front line from top to bottom.

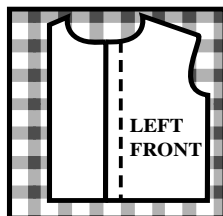
◆ To cut the left front, position the cut right front over the pressed fabric. Juggle it until the design in the cut piece lines up perfectly with the uncut yardage. This is critical. Pretend you are darning a hole and must match up every bit of fabric. When the cut right front “disappears” into the fabric. Pin it to the yardage.



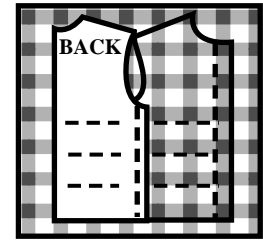
◆ Super impose the left paper bodice pattern (print side down, if using original bodice pattern) over the uncut fabric along side the pinned right front. **Match the CENTER**

FRONT of the *left* bodice pattern to the *center front* BASTING LINE on the **right** cut bodice. The two center front lines of the right and left fronts should be positioned on top of one another and the left bodice armhole should be opposite the right cut bodice armhole. Pin left front tissue in place at the armhole, shoulder and hem. **Note:** White lines indicate right front.

◆ Un-pin and gently remove the cut right bodice from the fabric yardage. Pin left front pattern tissue to fabric yardage along the center front and facing area. Cut out the left bodice.



◆ When the two fronts match at center front, you must then turn your cutting attention to the garment’s side seams. To cut a match for these seams, “think stitching lines, not cutting lines.” Lap the corresponding cut front piece to the back pattern piece at the side seams. Trace the placement of the color bars or motifs onto the back pattern piece. Use colored pencils or label according to color. Pin the back pattern to the fabric and cut.



The cheapest way to learn how to cut a front opening match is to make several photocopies of our paper fabric yardage, page 8. Cut out the two fronts and begin. Use our illustrations as your placement guides. When we say snip to mark and fold along the foldline, do the same on your “paper” fabric piece. Remember to think seamline instead of the cutting line when you plan to cut the side seams on the back! Also, cut a paper back pattern and try side seam matching.

TWO NEW SEWING TIPS

Once the match is made on the cutting table, you’ll want to preserve it during the construction process. In addition to the usual sewing notions, such as basting tape, glue sticks and special feet for your conventional sewing machine, the following two sewing aids will make it easy to hold that match until stitched.

If you own an overlock, you’ll love this. Because the fabric will not shift or crawl as you serge, an alternate pinning method will hold your match.

◆ Pin the two layers of fabric together along the seamlines, matching the design and alternating the direction of the pins. Insert the first one right to left, the second one left to right, and so on.


◆ Serge the seam slowly, removing the pins as you go. **Fusible Thread** offers one of the newest and most accurate methods of matching patterned fabrics.

◆ Press one seam allowance under along the seamline, then open out the fold.

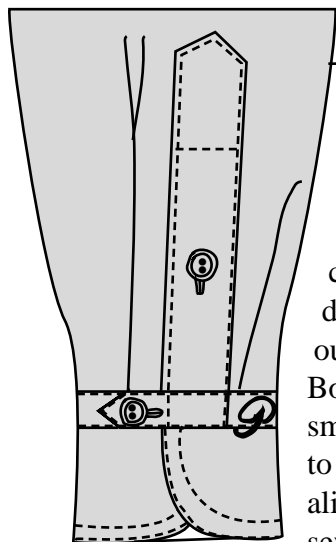
◆ With fusible thread in the top of your conventional machine and regular thread in the bobbin, stitch on the right side of the fabric, just inside the seam allowance.

◆ Fold the seam allowance back to the wrong side, then lap the pressed edge over the corresponding garment section, matching the stitching lines and pattern. Press.

◆ Open out the fabric, then stitch or serge along the seamline with regular thread.

◆ Enclosed in the fusible thread packaging, you will find easy-to-follow directions for matching seams, and many other uses for this unique sewing aid. 

A CUFF CLOSURE YOU'LL LOVE



You and *Sew 'n' Sew* make an impressive team. While both of us have our own style, you could say there's a definite resemblance in our approach to sewing. Both of us like to work small, both pay attention to detail, and both are alive to the wonders of sewing. This issue, you

and I are teaming up. Our unique extraordinary cuff closure is a true collaboration. I've come up with the idea and pattern. You make the blouse. It's that camaraderie that creates so many top-notch details.

When used alone, the small tab is not the extraordinary feature of our cuff closure. After all, we've made epaulets (big and small) many times. The extraordinary comes into play by placing the cuff tab at the top of a barrel cuff and using it to button the cuff, instead of its usual closure. Here's our guide for constructing this closure.

SHIRT SLEEVE And PLACKET ADJUSTMENT

■ **You will notice** that I have added a button and buttonhole on the sleeve placket. If you like the relaxed, casual look of turning up your cuffs, this is a nice feature to have on shirt sleeve plackets. The button on the placket prevents the opened cuff from dangling and allows the sleeve/cuff to slide up the arm for a closer fit.

Measure your sleeve placket pattern and if necessary, adjust its length to accommodate a buttoned placket. The length of my buttoned sleeve placket pattern (unfinished) is between 6 and 7 inches long. Mark the buttonhole placement about midway on the placket between the lower and top edge of the pattern. On the lower edge of the sleeve pattern, mark and adjust the slash/placket line to accommodate any length adjustment made on the sleeve placket.

■ **Although not necessary**, I added an extra $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to my regular shirt sleeve length. This extension of the sleeve length, drops the sleeve/cuff onto the upper part of the hand. Because the regular closure on the barrel cuff (button and buttonhole) is omitted, the fit of the barrel cuff

gently fans over the upper hand for a soft, yet tailored effect

YOU WILL NEED:

■ **A barrel cuff pattern.** A barrel cuff is made to button with one cuff end tucked under the other, matching the placket construction. This cuff can be made with a built-in curve around the wrist and can have rounded, square or diagonal corners. The depth of a standard cuff is $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches with $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches the minimum. Before you rush out to buy, I wager you can find this cuff style among your old patterns. When you find the barrel cuff pattern, be sure to adjust its size in length and width, to the current cuff pattern you are using.

■ As we did and if desired, use your **embroidery machine to decorate the barrel cuffs.** Because the cuffs are small pieces, trace the outline of the cuff pattern onto your fabric. Check to make certain these tracing lines are on-grain of the fabric, then machine embroidery. Press the uncut, embroidered fabric. Position the barrel cuff pattern over embroidery design and cut two top cuffs. Cut two plain fabric barrel cuffs. Cut four **Cuff Tabs** using tab pattern, page 7 this issue.

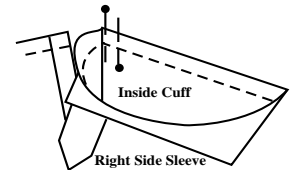
CONSTRUCTION TIPS

■ **Construct sleeve placket** as directed by the guidesheet or refer to *Sew 'n' Sew's*, January/February 1993 issue, page 4 for sewing tips to sew easier sleeve plackets. Also, follow the guide to sew cuffs.

■ **The matching of outer seam edges of two connecting seam edges**, such as a cuff to a sleeve placket, must be precise: Outer edge to outer edge. To successfully join any outside, enclosed seam edge to the garment's outer edge, place the direction of the two beginning pins opposite each

other along the seamline and whipstitch the ends. Here's how.

Open the cuff, exposing the enclosed, trimmed edge seam. Pin in the open seam of the cuff, exactly in the seamline, to the outside edge of the sleeve placket. Catch only a tiny amount of fabric in the seamline of both pieces, matching the seam edge exactly to the other edge of the garment. Now, turn the garment to the right side to check how the pieces align.

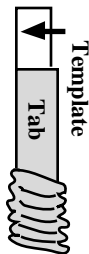


To help hold the two outside edges of the garment firmly in place during the stitching process, whipstitch the two sections together. Whipstitch several tiny stitches with matching thread on the right side of the garment exactly in the seamline of both sections.

With the first pin in place and whipstitching securing the two ends, pull the cuff seam allowance taut behind the first pin. Place the second pin in the seam allowance $\frac{1}{4}$ inch away from the enclosed seam and in the opposite direction of the first pin. Pins placed close together and in opposite directions hold the two outside edges firmly in place when the machine's presser foot moves toward the pinned bulky edges. Stitch the cuff to the sleeve and press. Turn seam allowance of under cuff to match top cuff seam and pin. Edgestitch, then, topstitch $\frac{1}{2}$ inch away from edgestitching along the top edge of cuff and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch away from edgestitching on the lower cuff, as shown on page 5.

■ **Interface the cuff tab.** Cut a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide by 1 inch long piece of a lightweight, fusible interfacing. Place, then fuse, the interfacing on the wrong side of two tabs near the lower point of each cuff where each buttonhole will be made.

■ **A Phillip's screwdriver.** With right sides together, pin the two interfaced Cuff Tabs to their matching Cuff Tabs. Stitch the Cuff Tabs, using short stitches and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam allowances. **Note:** For prettier points on a narrow tab, hand-turn one stitch straight across the point, instead of turning the tab at the usual "needle down at point" technique. Trim seams of tabs to a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ inch, clipping close across the point of the tab. To turn the narrow tab, use the end of a small Phillip's screwdriver to gently poke the point of the tab back into the strip. Then continue to push the strip over the screwdriver.

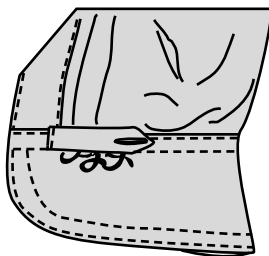


■ **A pressing aid.** Carefully trace the stitching line of the tab pattern (page 7) and glue the drawing onto poster board. Cut the pressing template a scant smaller than the fabric tab by using the inside stitching lines as a cutting guide.

■ **Slide the pressing template** inside the finished cuff tab. You may have to bow the template just a little to get it to slide into the narrow strip. Keep working and pushing until the template is to the point of the tab. Press. Remove pressing template.

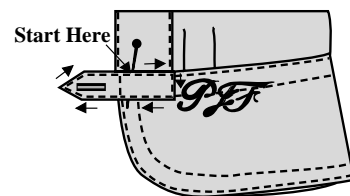
■ Measure the buttons you have chosen for the blouse and make Cuff Tab buttonholes. See pattern for placement. The Cuff Tab is not topstitched at this point in construction.

■ **Turn and press tab** on its fold (see pattern). Pin cuff tab along the top edge of the cuff, matching the fold of the tab to the end of the sleeve placket. **Note:** The width of your sleeve placket may be more or less than mine. Adjust fold of Cuff Tab, if necessary. When folded over and in its correct position, the Cuff Tab should extend past the edge of the cuff 1 to $1\frac{1}{4}$ ".



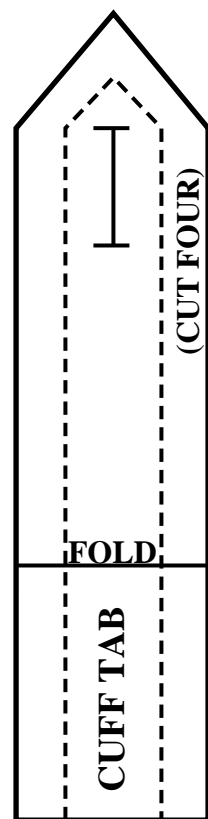
■ **Attaching the tab.** For the first sewing, the point of the tab is turned toward the center of the cuff and its raw edge near the end of the cuff. The Cuff Tab will be longer than needed. Use short stitches to sew tab to cuff. This line of stitching should be aligned to the stitching line on the placket's edge just above the cuff tab. Stitch another line $\frac{1}{8}$ inch away from the first line of stitching. Trim away the excess tab close to the second line of stitching. Now, fold and pin the tab over the two rows of stitching. The point of the tab should now be extending over the edge of the cuff.

■ **To stitch the tab onto the cuff in one continuous line,** begin at the top of the tab near the pin placement and stitch to the edge of the cuff. Turn and stitch across the end of the cuff/tab; turn into and stitch to the point and around the tab. Continue stitching to and across the beginning stitches to the fold of the tab; turn to stitch along the fold; turn again and stitch to connect to the line of stitches at the edge of the cuff/tab. Pull threads to the wrong side. Use a hand needle to secure these threads by stitching several small stitches into the machine stitching. Clip threads. Mark button placement; sew buttons to sleeve placket and top of cuff.



CUFF TAB PATTERN

Use a straight edge ruler to aid tracing the lines of the tab pattern onto any pattern making material or make a photocopy. ☺



Paper Yardage

Who would expect a paper doll cutting experience at this time in your life? Think about it, “What cheaper way is there to learn how to cut a match on a front opening of a blouse?” Certainly our way far exceeds ruining an expensive cut of silk yardage.

TO PRACTICE CUTTING A MATCH ON A FRONT OPENING, follow the steps below:

- Make several photocopies our paper pattern and fabric.
- Cut out both paper fronts. To position the right front onto the paper fabric, lightly glue it to the fabric. Cut right front. Mark and fold the cut right front on its foldline.
- Lightly glue the cut right front onto the paper yardage, finding the exact match on all edges.
- Lay the left front over the right front, matching center front markings. Lightly glue left front to the paper yardage. Remove cut right front and cut left front.
- Mark and fold left front on its foldline. Place right front’s center front over left front’s center front. ☺

