Name: Date:

The Pattern Envelope

Gathering Information

The pattern envelope is an important source of sewing information. It offers guidelines for selecting and purchasing all the materials you will need to construct your project. Making use of this information will get your sewing project off to a good start.

Pattern Classifications

Pattern companies have attempted to make sewing easier for beginners by labeling patterns to indicate the level of difficulty. The level of difficulty may be based partly on the number of pattern pieces included in the envelope. The estimated amount of time needed to complete the pattern may be another factor that determines difficulty.

Patterns for beginners require few detailed sewing skills, such as applying zippers and constructing collars. Most beginner patterns call for easy-to –handle fabrics. Some include how-to-lessons on fashion, fabric, and sewing techniques.

Photographs and Fashion Sketches

The front of the pattern envelope shows photographs or fashion sketches of finished garments. This allows you to see what each garment will look like. Some patterns allow you to vary design details, such as sleeve length or collar treatment. In this case, different views of the garment will appear to show each variation.

Figure Type and Size

The pattern size and, in most cases, figure type will appear on the front of a pattern envelope. Most patterns are multisized. *Multisized patterns* include cutting lines for several sizes. For instance, size 8, 10, and 12 may all appear on the same pattern tissue. Multisized patterns are helpful when different areas of the body require different sized patterns. Some multisized patterns even include different cup sizes for patterns requiring fit through the bustline.

Back View Illustrations

The back of the pattern envelope shows a line drawing of the back of each garment. This allows you to see design details such as darts and zippers that cannot be seen on the front illustrations.

Garment Descriptions

The pattern envelope may (but likely will not) give a brief description of each of the garments that can be made with the pattern. This information will make you aware of the design details that may be hard to see in the illustrations.

Suggested Fabrics

Fabric weight, design, and hand (the way a fabric feels and drapes) affect the way a garment looks and fits. For instance, sporty shorts would not look or fit right if they were made from a sheer fabric. The pattern envelope tells what fabrics are appropriate for the garment being made. Using this information will help you select fabric for a finished garment that you will enjoy wearing.

Knit Gauges

When a pattern envelope suggests knit fabrics, you must be careful to select the right type of knit. There are basically two classifications of knit fabrics- *Stable knits* and stretch knits. Stable knits have a limited degree of stretch. They generally require the same sewing techniques as woven fabrics. *Stretch knits* have greater stretch and require special sewing techniques.

With stable knit fabrics, you may use and pattern except one labeled for stretch knits. If you use a stretch knit pattern, your garment will be too small.

Stretch knit fabrics should be used only with patterns stating that they have been sized for stretch knits. Such a label indicates that, because the fabric will stretch, the pattern has been sized with less ease. If you do not use a stretch knit pattern with stretch knit fabric, your garment will be too large.

Most stretch knit patterns includes a knit gauge on the envelope. This gauge allows consumers to measure the amount of stretch in the knit fabrics. In this way, consumers can tell if the fabric they select has enough stretch for a given pattern design.

Body Measurements

The pattern envelope lists some basic body measurements for the different pattern sizes. This is to help you make sure you have selected the right size pattern for your body. You will notice that these measurements are given in centimeters as well as inches. This is because many American pattern companies sell their patterns in countries where metric measurements are commonly used.

Yardage Requirements

A chart on the pattern envelope tells you how much fabric is needed to make the garment. This is known as the yardage requirement. To read the chart, start by finding the garment view you wish to make. Under this heading, find the row labeled with the width of the fabric you are purchasing. Follow this row across to the column labeled with your size. This number is the number of yards of fabric you need to buy to make the garment.

Napped fabrics are those fabrics that have short fibers brushed up on the surface. Corduroy, velvet, and velveteen are examples of fabrics that have napped surfaces.

When using napped fabrics, all pattern pieces must be laid in the same direction. Otherwise, a variation in color will appear on the finished garment. This variation is due to the way light reflects off the brushed surface. For this reason, many pattern designs are inappropriate for napped fabrics. Generally, patterns with little detail are best. The pattern envelope will usually indicate if a napped fabric is suitable for the pattern selected.

Because all pattern pieces must be cut out in the same direction, more yardage is required when using napped fabrics. The envelope will usually use asterisks (*) to indicate which yardage requirements are for napped fabrics. These yardage requirements should also be followed when buying fabrics with a one-way design.

The envelope also gives the yardage required for interfacing. Always purchase your interfacing at the same time you purchase your fashion fabric. Interfacing is a necessity. You will not want to stop sewing to buy interfacing at a later time. Interfacing will be discussed further in Lesson 20, "Interfacing."

Like the body measurements, yardage requirements are given in metric measurements as well as in inches and yards. For instance, most fabric is sold in widths of 44/45 and 58/60 inches. In metric units, these same measurements would be 115 and 150 centimeters, respectively. You may wish to familiarize yourself with metric measurements. You will find them on patterns and some sewing equipment as well as pattern envelopes. **Notions**

The word **notion** refers to all the supplies that will be needed to complete a project. Elastic, thread, buttons, bias tape, zippers, and trims are all notions. All of the notions you will need are listed on the back of the pattern envelope.

Purchase all of the notions for your garment when you buy the fabric. In this way, you can make sure your thread, buttons, and other notions match your fashion fabric. You can also avoid making extra trips to the store.

Finished Garment Measurements

The pattern envelope will often list finished measurements for important areas of a garment. This information will tell you how much ease is provided in the bust, waist, or hips. It will also tell you the length of the garment or the bottom width. This information can be very helpful in determining how your garment will look and fit. It will also help you decide if you need to alter the pattern to achieve a better fit. Follow the directions on the instruction sheet for using this information when selecting the best cutting lines on a multisized pattern.

Show me what you've learned!

1-Does this pattern require a zipper?
2-What size pattern should someone with a 22" waist select?
3-How much 60" wide fabric should someone making the above size purchase for the bodice with shoulder ruffle?
4-List four types of fabrics recommended for this pattern.
5-What notions are required for the sleeveless dress?
6-How much 45" wide fabric should be purchased to make the skirt in size 8?
7-What will the finished chest measurement be for the dress with raglan sleeves in a size 3?
8-What type of fabric is not suitable for this pattern?
9-When would you need to purchase extra fabric when sewing this pattern?
10-Why are metric measures listed on pattern envelopes?
11-What are some extra options that could be added to these designs for some extra flare? (See pattern)
12-What is the pattern number of this package?
13-What figure type does this pattern fall into?
14-How many pieces are included in this envelope?
15-What brand of pattern is this? (Project Runway is a version of this particular brand, not the actual brand)

Fabrics: Cotton and Cotton Bier Liphtweight Damssk, Liphtweight Soft Lipitweight Linen and Line sleepwear. Extra fabric needed to	Pique, Seers n Blends, Er	ucker, Eyele mbreidered	t, Laundere Fabrics, No	d Silks-Ray welty Secui	ons, Gauze, nod Fabric.	Double Georg	ette	Tissus: Coton et Cotonnades, Vichy, Cot Seersucker, Broderie anglaise, Soies-Ra de lin souples et légers, Tissus brodé vétements de nuit. Prévoyez davantage	ayonnes p Is, Tissu	rélavées, G fantaisie à	aze, Grépe I paillettes,	Georgette da Ces modè	ouble, Toile les ne conv	de lin et m viennent p	elange es pou
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