Pattern and Instructions for Sewing a Protective Gown – One Size Fits All

http://ableaustralia.org.au/gowns

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<th>Description</th>
<th>The Protective Gown you make will be worn by disability support workers. The gown is not worn in a medical setting – it will be worn by workers supporting people with disability in their homes. It should be bright and cheerful! The one-size-fits-all protective gown covers the body of the wearer to below the knee with a back opening. It has long sleeves with elastic at the wrist. It has a circular neckline finished with bias binding. It has ties at the back of the neck and ties which wrap around the waist. The width of the fabric (112 cm or 140cm fabric width) will determine how much coverage the gown provides to the back of the wearer.</th>
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<td>Pattern Difficulty</td>
<td>Suitable for sewers with basic garment making experience to experienced sewers.</td>
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| Paper Pattern | Three options are available to obtain a paper pattern:  
- A full-sized paper pattern can be ordered from Able Australia. Fabric is also available and can be ordered at the same time if required. See contact details at http://ableaustralia.org.au/gowns.  
- A pattern can be drafted from the measurements provided on the last two pages of these instructions. |
| Measurements | All measurements are metric in metres (m), centimetres (cm) or millimetres (mm). |
| General Requirements - Fabric | **Fabric:** Medium weight cotton that is thick enough to provide a barrier to droplets wetting through to clothes underneath and to withstand high wash temperatures. Options include: Homespun, patchwork cottons, dress-making cottons, batiks, gaberdine, cotton interlock (provided it is not lightweight) and cotton sheeting.  
The following fabrics should not be used for this pattern: Heavy weight fabrics such as duck and drill which are stiff or do not drape. Light weight fabrics such as voile or cheesecloth which have an open weave. Linen, Polysters, Rayon, Silk are not appropriate.  
**Fabric Width:** The pattern can be cut from either 112cm wide or 140cm wide fabric. Fabric wider than 112 cm will mean there is a more fabric covering the back of the wearer.  
**Warning:** Some fabrics may only be 106cm wide. If you already have a stash of fabric with this width then you will need to add a strip a minimum of 5cm along each side that forms the back of the gown. |
| General Requirements – Other Materials | **Thread:** Poly-cotton threads are preferred. Standard 50 weight dress-making thread.  
**Binding:** Bias binding can either be cotton or poly-cotton using 12mm wide pre-made bias. Binding can also be made from a 45 cm x 3.5 cm bias strip of cotton fabric.  
**Tapes/Straps:** 3.5 m of 12-20 mm wide cotton tape. This can be purchased in rolls - or straps can be made from the gown fabric or other cotton strips and turned into 2 cm wide straps with finished edges.  
**Elastic:** Use elastic 40 cm of 9-15 mm wide elastic to give the gathered sleeve a cuff. (Keep your 6mm wide elastic for making face-masks!) |
Seam Allowance | All seams have a 1.5 cm seam allowance with the exception of the neckline. The neckline is finished with bias binding and a 5 mm seam allowance. The 1.5cm seam allowance has been marked in the downloadable pattern.
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Tools | **Dress-making tools:** Iron, pins, sewing needles, measuring tape etc. Dressmaking pencil or chalk and long ruler may be required if a pattern is drafted. Sewing needles can be 80/12 or 70/10 – Universal, Jeans or Sharps needles. **Sewing Machine:** A sewing machine in good working order that can sew straight stitch and zig zag. Zig zag is only to finish raw edges and to attach tapes/straps. **Optional - Overlocker:** Overlocker in good working order to finish edges; or to sew the gown if made from interlock fabric.

### Instructions for Cutting and Sewing the Protective Gown

#### Sewing Requirements

**FABRIC:**
- For 112 cm wide fabric: 2.3 m of 100% cotton fabric. An extra metre is required if the pattern has a directional pattern e.g. patterns which run the length of the fabric.
- For 140 cm wide fabric: 2.0 m of 100% cotton fabric.

**BIAS BINDING:**
- 45 cm length of bias binding for neckline (80 cm for 120 cm wide fabric)- cotton or polycotton. Pre-made 12mm wide or larger.
- Alternatively to make a bias strip, cut a strip of fabric 45cm x 3.5 cm cut on the cross (this will take extra fabric which is not included in the fabric length).

**ELASTIC:** 40 cm elastic: 9 - 12 mm wide

**TAPE/STRAPS:**
- 3.5 metres of cotton tape for waist tie: 12-20mm wide.
- Alternatively, make 2 cm wide straps with finished edges (this will take extra fabric which is not included in the fabric length)

**NOTIONS:** Matching thread. Small safety pin.

#### Steps

1. **Cut out the main body of the gown**
   a) Fold the cotton fabric **length-ways** in half so the selvedges are aligned. Lay out flat.
   b) Lay the paper pattern on fabric with centre front of the pattern along the fold line of the fabric.
   c) Pin the pattern to the fabric and cut out along the solid line.
### 2. Cut out the sleeves

a) Open out the remaining fabric. Cut the two sleeves one at a time, along the same grain line as the gown. If the fabric has a directional pattern (i.e. grain, pictures or motifs that you want to all run in the same direction) ensure the pattern runs in the same direction on each sleeve. An extra metre is required if the fabric has a pattern that runs in one direction.

![Diagram of sleeve cutout]

### 3. Stay stitch the neck and arm holes

a) Stay stitch around the neckline by sewing 5 mm from the edge to reinforce the neckline.

b) Stay stitch the bottom curve of the sleeve hole by sewing just less than 1.5 cm from the edge.

c) Clip the bottom curve of the sleeve hole to enable the sleeve to be set in easily. Clip to about 2 mm away from the stitching, not all the way.

![Images of stay stitching]

### 4. Sew the main body of the gown

a) If the selvedges that form the back opening of the gown are raw or rough then iron the selvedges over 1 cm and stitch 0.5 cm from the fold to ensure the back of the gown will not fray along the edge.

b) Pin and sew the shoulder seams together matching the seams at the shoulders. The seams may not exactly match at the neckline for 112 cm wide fabric.

c) Zig zag or overlock the sleeve seams to finish the edges.

d) Open out the shoulder seams and iron the seam to the back.

e) For 140 cm wide fabric shape the back of the neckline with a curve to continue the flow of the neckline.

f) Hem the gown either by overlocking or zig zagging the bottom edge, turning the edge up by 3 cm and stitching 2.5 cm from the bottom edge, OR folding the hem 0.5 cm and then 2.5 cm and straight stitching (see image).

![Images of neckline hemming]

Edges don’t quite match at neckline due to fabric width – this is OK. Angle the neckline to remove the gap. Optionally add in a strip of fabric down the back.

Shoulder and neck seams match and selvedges are sewn over.

Ironed hem ready to sew.
5. Make the sleeves
   a) Fold the sleeves in half length-wise. Pin, sew and finish the seams.
   b) Open out the sleeve seams and iron flat.
   c) Make the casing for the wrist elastic. Fold the bottom edge of the sleeve on the fold line to make a casing for the elastic. Turn bottom edge of the sleeve under 5 mm.
   d) Stitch 1-2 mm away around the bottom of the sleeve bottom. Stitch 1-2mm away from the casing edge, leaving a 2 cm opening through which to thread the elastic.
   e) Cut 2 x 20 cm lengths of elastic for the wrist and using a small safety pin thread the elastic into the casing of each sleeve.
   f) Join the elastic by overlapping it by 1 cm and sewing the elastic ends together – either by hand or by machine. Allow the elastic to return into the casing and close the opening by stitching.

6. Set in the sleeves
   a) With right sides together match the sleeve seam of the sleeve to the bottom of the armhole in the gown. Match the top of the sleeve to the shoulder seam on the gown. Pin and ease in the sleeve joining it to the gown.
   b) Sew the sleeve with two rows of stitching slightly apart (2 mm apart) to ensure the sleeve seam will not come undone.
   c) Trim the sleeve seam to less than 1 cm to remove fabric bulk from the armhole and overlock or zig zag the edge to finish it.

7. Bias trim the neckline
   a) Open out flat the 12mm pre-made bias binding to form a 3.5 cm x 45 cm strip. Fold it in half to form a long strip about 18 mm wide.
   b) Pin the bias around the neckline folding back the ends and removing any excess.
   c) For 120 cm wide fabric stitch bias binding to the front of the neckline and also the back neckline.
   d) Stitch around the neck 5 mm from the edge.
   e) Clip the around the main fabric neckline every 2 cm.
   f) Iron open and fold the binding to the inside of the gown. Pin and iron.
   g) Stitch 5-7mm around the neck edge to finish it.
8. **Make and sew on the tapes**
   
a) Note: If you do not have tape, make straps from cotton fabric which have finished edges and are approximately 1.5 – 2 cm wide.

b) Cut 2 x 40-50cm cm tapes for the neck. Fold one end of each tape by 1 cm and attach it to the back of the gown just near the shoulder seam using a close zig zag stitch to ensure it is secure.

c) Cut 1 x 2.5 m tape for the waist tie. Fold in half to find the midpoint of the tape and attach that point to the centre front of the gown on the waist line – approximately 40 cm below the centre of the neckline. Stitch firmly in place, such as in a small square (see image) going across the tape.

d) Fold the waist tape ends over and zig zag them so they do not fray. An easy option is to make a simple knot in each tape end.

| Tape attached at top of the shoulder on the back of the gown. |
| Tape attached at the waistline. |

9. **Celebrate completion!**
   
a) While the end result is not “Haute Couture” remember to admire your efforts. A photo of your creation emailed to Able Australia would be appreciated. Email Neyani.dudley@ableaustralia.org.au with your photos!

b) You are welcome to embroider or embellish with the name of the creator or a message to the wearer. Ensure any embellishment can tolerate regular washing and hot water.

AND thank you from everyone at Able Australia.

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**Get the Gown to Where it is Needed!**

Once you have finished making the gown(s) please contact Neyani at Able Australia via Neyani.dudley@ableaustralia.org.au or mail the completed gowns to 413 Canterbury Road, Surrey Hills, 3127.

Able Australia will distribute the completed downs to the frontline disability service workers.

All protective gowns will be thoroughly washed by Able Australia before use.

**Instructions for Making a Protective Gown Pattern**

There are three options for creating a paper pattern:

1. **Mail Delivery**
   
   - Request a full-sized pattern to be sent out to you from Able Australia. Details are on the website link or email Neyani.dudley@ableaustralia.org.au
2. **Drafting**
   - Using large sheets of tissue paper available from Spotlight, local fabric shop or haberdashery and using the measurements on the following pages draft out the pattern – adding in the 1.5 cm seam allowance where specified.

3. **Downloadable Pattern**
   - Download the pattern for the sleeve and the body of the gown from the Able Australia website: [http://ableaustralia.org.au/gowns](http://ableaustralia.org.au/gowns)
   - Print out the 40 A4 pages (30 for gown and 10 for sleeve)
   - Lay out pages in sequence. Pages are numbered and have matching triangular notches on the side of each page. which identify which page it attaches to.
   - For the sleeve the page number layout is: Row 1: Pages 1,2,3,4. Row 2: Pages 5, 6, 7, 8. Row 3: Pages 9,10.
   - Trim the same two sides of each two pages to the light dotted line.
   - Line up the pages matching the dotted lines and the triangular notches on the sides of each page.
   - Tape the pages together keeping them lined up.
   - Trim the excess paper away from the pattern.
   - This pattern is quite stiff and durable which makes it easy to lay over the fabric. It can be used multiple times.

*Downloadable pattern – A4 pages laid out and taped together*
Protective Gown - Sleeve Pattern

Measurements are for the finished sleeve i.e. the stitch line. Trace out the measurements and add 1.5 cm to the sides and top of the drafted sleeve and 3 cm to the sleeve bottom.

- 62 cm armhole – top of sleeve (finished width)
- 61 cm sleeve length (finished length)
- 1.5 cm seam allowance
- 27 cm bottom of sleeve (finished width)
- 3 cm for elastic casing

Grain Line
Protective Gown – Gown Body Pattern

5 mm seam allowance around neck

1.5 cm seam allowance

"Bottom of the egg-shaped" curve

Shape the back of the neck after joining the shoulders and bind as part of the neckline

3 cm hem allowance included

112 cm

140 cm

132 cm

121 cm

12 cm

32.5 cm

4 cm

21 cm

21 cm

10 cm