



Antique Huret doll and photos courtesy of François Theimer

# MAD ABOUT PLAID

## Silk Plaid Dress for 14-½ inch Huret

By Sheryl Williams



There can be nothing more inspiring to a costumer than a beautiful photo of an antique doll. The simplicity of the costume design, a hallmark of antique Huret clothing is highlighted by the use of the silk plaid fabric in several lovely antique costumes. Although appearing simple in style, replicating the Huret style employs some specific construction techniques. Madame Farge in Paris was known for designing some of the most fashionable clothing for the Huret. An entire industry of boutiques existed in Paris to provide items needed for the Huret trousseau. A proper doll's trousseau consisted of three dresses, a pair of shoes or two, stockings, hats, a purse and of course, gloves.

The scrumptious red plaid dress on an antique Huret doll from François and Danielle Theimer provided

the inspiration for the trousseau for my Huret. They generously offered a series of photographs for me to study for design of the dress. This one-piece dress has six double box pleats in the skirt, angled bodice darts in the front, rounded short sleeves pleated at the sleeve cap with trimmings of piping velvet ribbon and a bit of narrow lace.

Using many of the design elements of this marked Huret dress, I began the costume. I sourced some silk plaid fabric, but the color was not exactly what I had envisioned. A few attempts in the dye bath using small pieces of the fabric produced the changes I sought. I have included some of the samples of over-dyeing, but I found that I preferred just a slight yellowing and subduing of the plaid colors for the costume.



Original



Overdye Tan



Overdye Red



Overdye Brown



From the collection of Sheryl Williams

Working with plaids always has its challenges. This proved especially true in the Huret skirt. The style of the period required that the Huret skirt be slightly longer at the back than the front. This difference in skirt length is always taken from the waistline, as you will see in my pattern. This plays havoc with the horizontal stripes in the plaid. When you view the photos in the pattern, this will become obvious in the skirt pleating. Plaid was used for Huret dolls and when the dress is seen on the doll, these differences seem to disappear.

To determine the correct construction techniques I was fortunate to have access to a doll costume of the period. Although not a marked Huret costume, it contained many of the elements I had observed when studying marked Huret costumes:

- Close-fitting bodice – slightly high waisted
- Full skirt – box pleated or cartridge pleated in order to control the fullness of the skirt into a small waistline

- Skirt ending mid-calf in length as fitting for a child
- Rounded short sleeves – pleated at sleeve cap for fullness
- Bias piping employed

The unique application of the skirt to the bodice on this costume was found when closely examining the vintage dress. This is something that I would not have found through the study of photos.

This pattern was designed to fit the 14-½ inch tall reproduction Huret doll on the jointed Huret body sold by Dollspart Supply and porcelain head from the Doll Artisan Guild.

This pattern can also be used for the 18 inch antique Huret doll by increasing the patterns pieces and pattern measurements by 15%. Of course a fitting muslin is always a good idea. 🧑‍🧵

Reproduction  
Huret was made  
by Sheryl Williams.



# SILK PLAID DRESS

## For 14- $\frac{1}{2}$ " tall Reproduction Huret "Adelaide" To fit the Jointed 12.5" Huret body

Pattern by Sheryl Williams 2016

Photography by Ed and Sheryl Williams

This one-piece dress is constructed using fine, lightweight silk taffeta. It is trimmed with narrow black velvet ribbon with a bit a lace edging the neckline. Bias piping finishes the neckline and the waistline of the bodice.

The Huret costumes from the 1860s were generally sewn by hand. This is recommended as the fabric drapes better after construction, and it is easier to custom fit the costume to your doll. Fine 50-weight thread and sharp needles are recommended.

Always construct a muslin bodice from your pattern as bodies and seam allowances sewn can vary widely. Also measure your finished skirt length with under garments on the body before cutting the skirt pieces. The bodice is the important part of the garment for fitting but the skirt length can also vary.

RST= right sides together

WST= wrong sides together

CB= center back

CF= center front

Flat line: baste the underlining and corresponding main fabric piece together so that they form a single unit.

Use  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowances unless otherwise indicated.

### Supplies

- 1/3 yard light weight silk taffeta 54" wide
- Skirt: 40" x 10  $\frac{1}{2}$ "
- Bodice: 5" x 30"
- Bias piping for neck edge: 1" x 11" long
- Bias piping for waistline: 1" x 9"
- Bias fabric strip for sleeve lower edge: 1  $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 8"
- Light weight fine batiste: 5" x 14" for bodice and 10" x 40" for skirt
- Hem facing 2" x 40"
- 3/8" twill tape: 9"
- 3/8" wide edging lace: 18" for neckline and 14" for sleeves
- 3/8" wide velvet ribbon: 11" for neck and 7" for sleeves
- Hooks or buttons: 3
- Thin cotton cording: 12" neck

### Bodice

1. Cut the bodice front and backs from silk.
2. Place bodice and sleeve silk pieces WST onto the batiste lining and baste together within the seam allowances. Next cut out exactly as the silk pieces and use as one piece. This is referred to as "flat lining."



3. Place bodice front and back RST and sew together at shoulder seams and side seams using an accurate  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam. Press shoulder seams toward the back and side seams open. Try bodice onto doll to check for fit adjusting as needed. Finish seams by overcasting.
4. Turn CB seams WST on the fold line to form a facing on the CB opening. **Try bodice onto doll** and adjust fit as needed so that the right bodice back laps over the left about  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Press flat. Note that the left side of bodice is  $\frac{1}{4}$ " wider than the right side. This is the overlap.

- Herringbone stitch the folded CB facings to the bodice lining on right back and left back.



- Neck cording: Cut a 1" wide x 11" long strip of bias silk fabric. Fold over ¼" on one long side and ¼" on one end. Lay cord in the fold beginning at the fold of the ¼" turn back at the end. Leave the other end open to adjust for neck edge. Baste through the fabric next to the cord to keep cord in place.



- Place the bias piping onto neck edge with RST and ¼" side even with the neck edge. Sew a tight running stitch next to cording as you apply the bias to the neck edge. Adjust the length of the bias to fit neck edge and turn back ¼" at unfinished end to exactly fit the neck edge.



- Clip neck edge as needed. Turn bias to the inside, fold under the raw edge ¼" and slip stitch to the lining.



- Make another corded bias piping using 1" wide fabric except keep the raw edges even so the cord is encased at the fold and raw edges are even. Turn in one short end ¼". Baste close to the cording to keep it in place.



- Turn up lower edge of bodice ¼" and baste in place.
- Place piping along the fold on the lower edge of the bodice and even with the CB. Slip stitch piping to the fold. When you get to the other end at CB turn back piping ¼" to fit bodice edge and continue attaching. The upper raw edge of piping should be trimmed to scant ¼" wide. This edge may be overcast if desired but will be hidden by the twill tape when the skirt is attached.



## Sleeves

12. Fold in pleating at upper and at lower sleeve edges. Baste in place. Lower edge of sleeve should measure 3-1/2" at the cuff edge.



13. Sew a piece of 1-1/4" wide bias to lower sleeve edge RST. Press seam allowance toward the bias band.



14. Join underarm seam of sleeves with 1/4" seam allowance. Press seam open and overcast seam allowances.

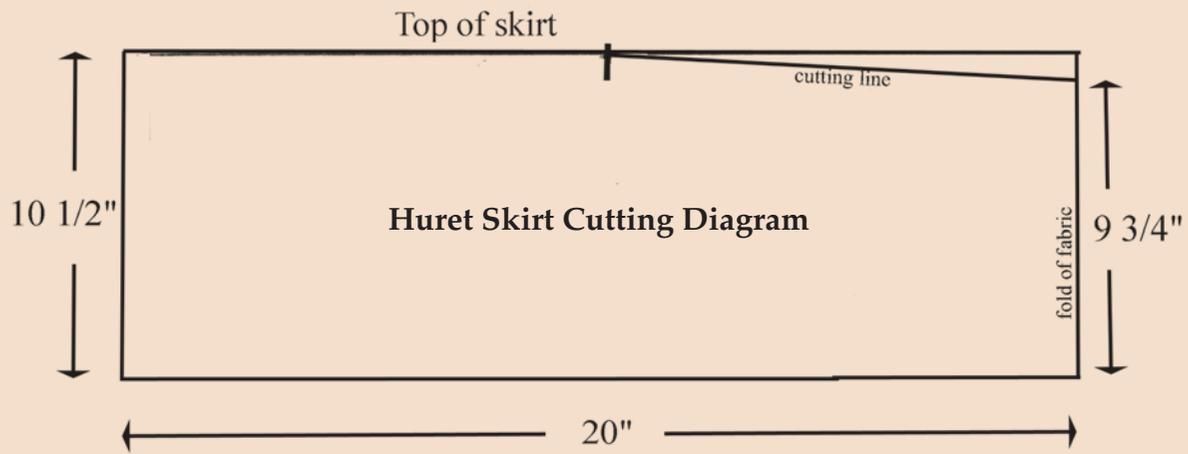


15. Turn under 1/4" on bias binding and turn again to incase the raw edge. Slip stitch in place on the wrong side.
16. Sew velvet ribbon over the bias cuff.
17. Gather 7" of 1/4" wide lace and add to lower edge of sleeve, whipping it in place on the inside of the sleeve.
18. Place sleeve into armscye, adjusting pleating as needed to fit. Clip armhole edge to help set in the sleeve more easily. Sew sleeve into armhole using a running back stitch. The sleeve fullness should be at the top. Check sleeve from the right side, smoothing out any extra puckers or tucks as needed.
19. Trim seam allowance to 1/8" inside armscye and tightly overcast.
20. Set aside.



## Double Box Pleated Skirt

21. Cutting the skirt to shape: Pin the skirt silk WST onto batiste skirt lining having the top long edge of silk even with batiste.
22. Fold skirt in half and place a pin at the CF. Place a mark 3/4" down from the top of CF along the fold. Measure to mark the side seams and place pins. Beginning at the center front, cut away 3/4" of fabric on the top edge, tapering this cut up to the pins marking the side seams. This will make the front of the skirt slightly shorter than the back.  
*See skirt cutting diagram # 26 right*
23. The skirt will be double box pleated flat before joining the center back seam. The pleats will only be pressed in at the waistline. They fall open at the lower edge of the skirt.
24. Turn in 1/4" at both center backs. Now turn down 3/4" at the upper edge of skirt and baste in place.
25. On the folded upper edge, divide the skirt into 6 equal parts and mark with vertical basting stitches. You will make 6 double box pleats that measure 1-1/4" wide at the waistline edge to fit the skirt waistband in



the area between the dots marked on the waistband pattern. These are double box pleats with the excess fabric folded overlapping at the back as needed to fit the waistband size. On the last pleat on the right edge as you view the fabric lying flat, an extra  $\frac{1}{4}$ " of fabric will be flat. This extension matches the extra  $\frac{1}{4}$ " on the left bodice back to allow for overlapping the dress. Sew the pleats in place when they exactly fit the waistband. Use the pleating template pattern for assistance, working in the pleats. The completed

skirt along the pleated edge should measure approximately  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " long from finished upper edge to opposite edge (remember the seam allowances have already been turned back).

26. Measure the skirt waistline edge along the turned upper edge. It should measure approximately  $8\frac{1}{4}$ ".
27. Cut twill tape to  $8\frac{3}{4}$ ".
28. Turn in  $\frac{1}{4}$ " on both ends of twill tape and stitch down. Place twill tape WST onto top of right side of skirt pleating.



29. Pin in place and ease fullness as needed. Whipstitch twill tape onto skirt using small close stitches that only just catch the edge of both pleating on skirt and the twill tape.



30. Place piped waistline edge of bodice over the skirt so that the twill tape is hidden under the bodice lower edge. Pin in place matching the CB edges.
31. From the right side, stab-stitch bodice to the skirt between the bodice and the bodice piping to secure the two together. Be sure to just catch the upper edge of the pleating on the wrong side so that the stab stitching goes from bodice front inside to the upper edge of the pleating and back out to the bodice again. Place stitches accurately and close together.



32. Press the twill tape up on the inside of the dress. Tack down tape at side seams and CB using 2 cross stitches securing the tape to the side seams and back edge.



33. Join skirt CB seam of skirt using a running back stitch. Leave a 3 1/2" opening at the top. Press seam open and overcast edges.



34. Add 3 hooks and thread loops at the bodice back. The right side should overlap the left side by 1/4".

35. Try the dress on the doll with her undergarments in place including the hoop petticoat if you have one. The dress should fit like a glove and is now ready for the hem. Turn up the lower edge of the skirt to the desired length. It should be below the knees and the undergarments should not show below the hemline. Skirt should be approximately 8" long at CF and 8-3/4" at CB.

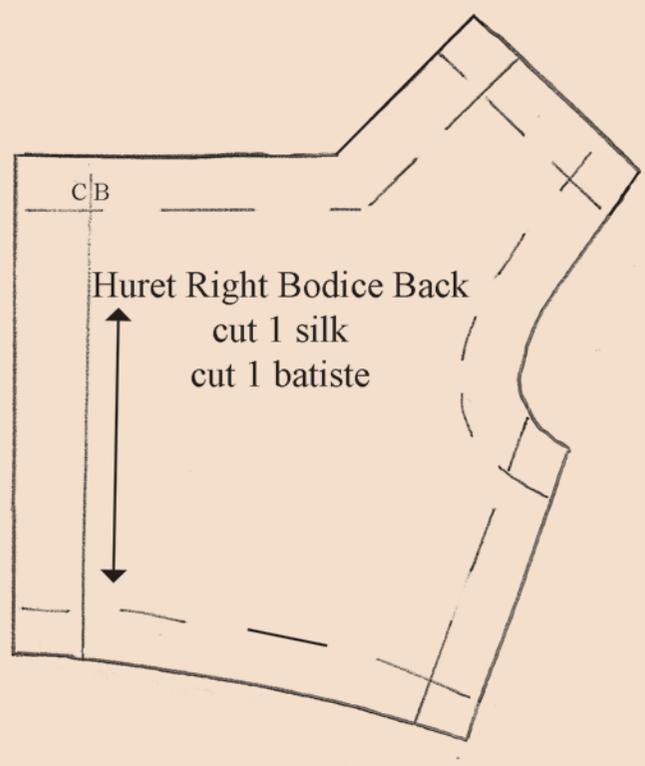
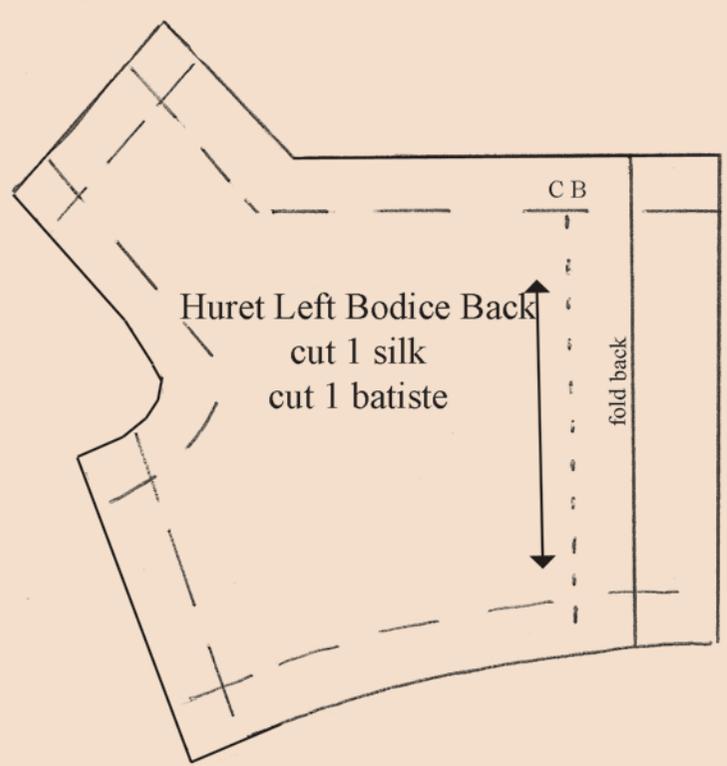
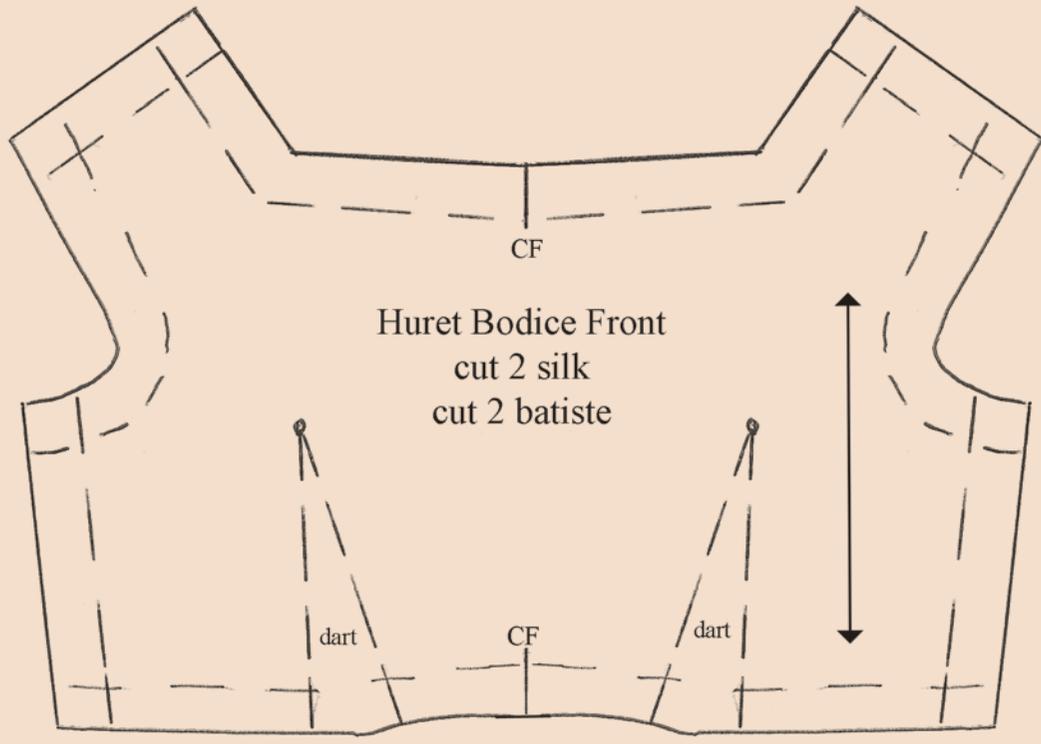


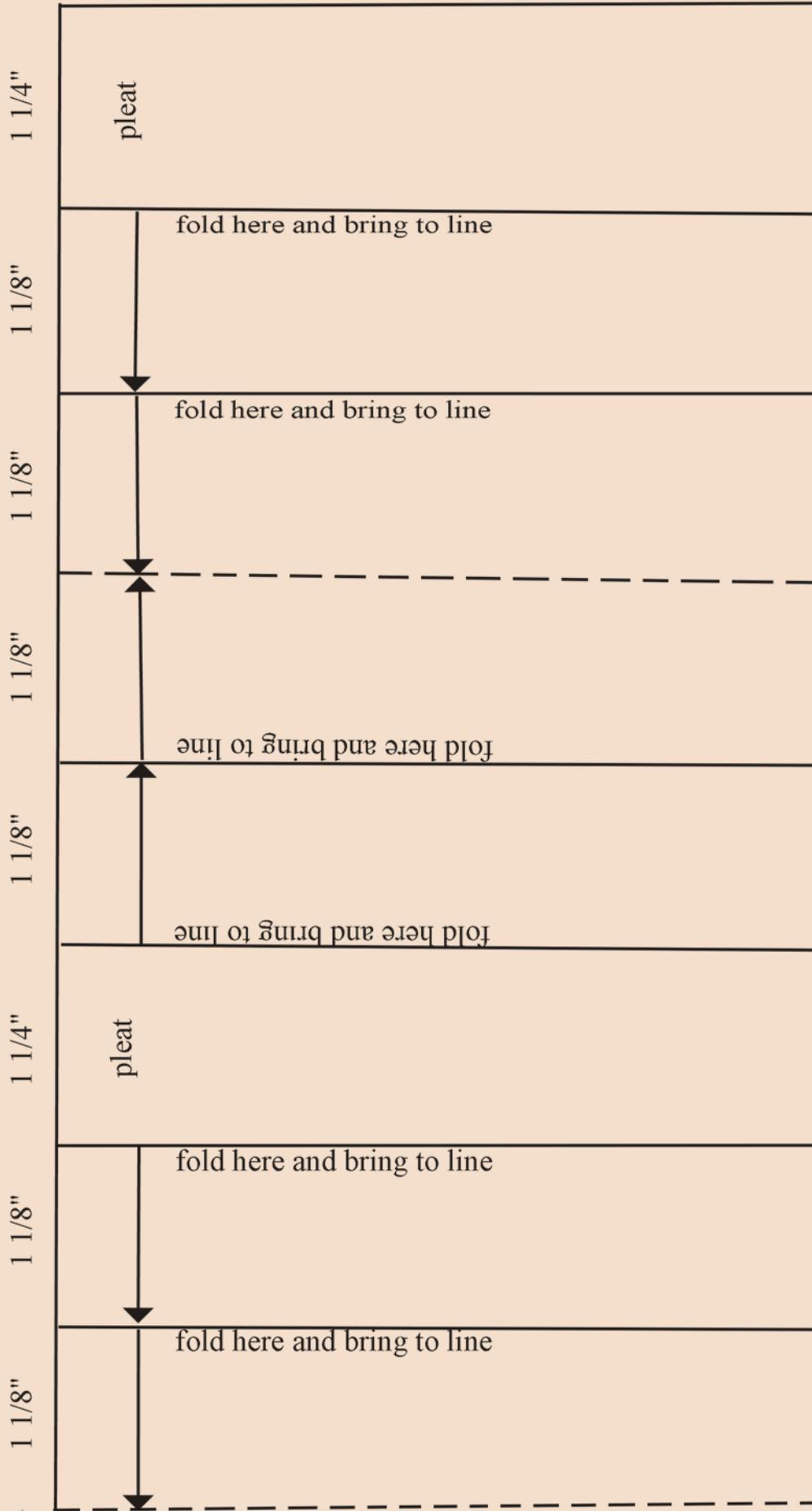
36. Make a hem facing by pressing under 1/4" on the two long sides of the 2" x 40" batiste cut on the straight grain. Sew the hem facing to the skirt 1/4" below the marked hem. Trim skirt silk so that 1/2" is pressed up for the hem. Turn up hem and facing then slipstitch the upper edge of the hem facing to the batiste.



37. Press the dress well. Press the lower edge of the skirt flat. The pleating is only pressed at the upper part of the skirt.







Template for Double Box Pleating