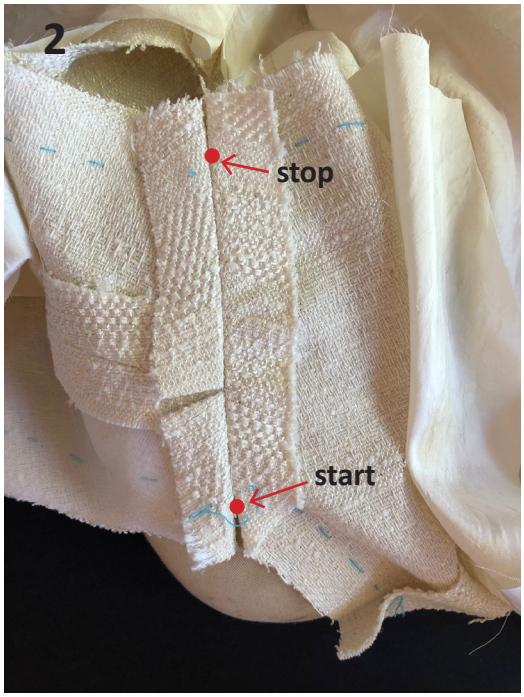
AUSSEW Along

Couture Cardigan Jacket - Part 9

Shoulder seams

1. Trim away the excess fabric at the neckline, shoulders and front and back armscye, leaving a 1 inch (2.5 cm) seam allowance. If your fashion fabric does not fray badly, the seam allowances can be a bit narrower.



2. With right sides together, pin the front shoulder to the back shoulder, easing the back to fit the front. Keep the lining out of the way. Be careful to match the neck point and the shoulder point precisely.

Start stitching at the neck point and stitch to 1/4 inch (6 mm) past the shoulder point.

3. Place over a tailor's ham and press the seam open. Be careful to press only the seam line to avoid leaving an impression of the seam allowance edges on the right side of the jacket.

Trim the seam allowance at the ends of the seams, if necessary, to reduce bulk.

NOTE: It is not customary to add shoulder pads to the cardigan jacket which has an unstructured design. If you feel you need them, choose small ones that are no more than 1/4 inch (6 mm) thick. Attach these now before continuing with Step 4.

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4. Leave the shoulder on the tailor's ham to finish the lining shoulder seam. Smooth the front lining over the shoulder seam and pin in place. Use running stitches, in matching thread, to sew the front lining to the back shoulder seam allowance (red dashed line in illustration). Leave about 2 inches (5 cm) unstitched at both neck and shoulder edges. These will be finished later, after you insert the sleeves and attach the trim at the neck edge.

5. Fold under the back lining and pin in place along the seamline. Sew in place with fell stitches, again leaving about 2 inches (5 cm) unstitched at both neck and shoulder edges.

Finishing the hem

The jacket hem is interfaced to give the lower edge body and create a smooth hem. If you have not already cut hem interfacing, do so now.

From lightweight, crisp woven interfacing, cut a bias strip about 3 inches (7.5 cm) wide and long enough for the hem edge.

1. Pin the interfacing to the lower edge, overlapping the thread-traced hemline by about 1/2 inch (1.2 cm). Fold the lower edge of the interfacing at the hemline and pin.

2. Place catch-stitches at the top of the interfacing, at the jacket seams. If necessary, catch-stitch between the seams as well.

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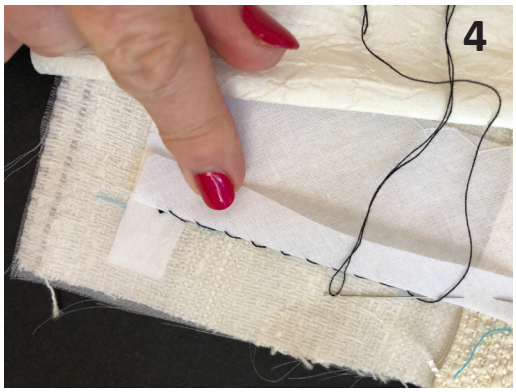
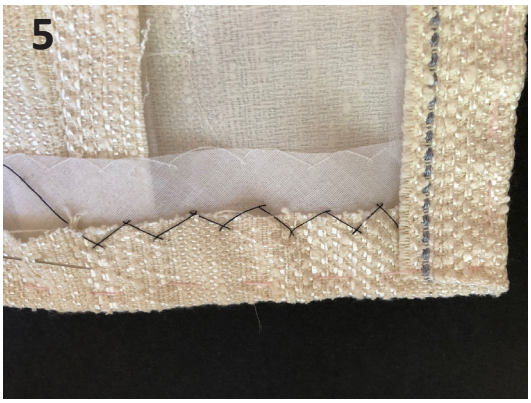
3. Trim the seams in the hem allowance, as illustrated, to reduce bulk.

4. Sew the folded edge of the interfacting to the hemline with slip stitches, taking care the stitches do not show on the right side of the jacket.



5. Fold the hem allowance over the interfacing and baste in place 1/4 inch (6 mm) from the edge. Sew the hem to the interfacing with catch-stitches



Neck edge and front edges

1. Using the thread-tracing as a guide, fold the neck edge to the wrong side, clipping around the curves as necessary. Pin in place

2. Fold the front edges to the wrong side along the thread-tracing. Mitre the corners at the neck edge and hemline to reduce bulk (refer to Part 7 for instructions on mitred corner). Pin in place

3. Baste 1/4 inch (6 mm) from the folded edges.

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Add trim

At this stage, the lining is not attached around the edges of the jacket. It is much easier to add trim before you sew the lining in place. You will attach the trim in the same manner as for the sleeves.

1. Begin at the centre back neck and work in each direction. Depending on the trim you are using, some shaping with steam may be required around the neck.

In this example, the fringed trim is very easy to shape in a curve; the grosgrain ribbon less easy. I began by pinning the ribbon in place, making sure the outer edge (furthest away from the neck edge) was lying flat against the jacket. I worked with the jacket draped over a tailor's ham.

2. Next, I attached the ribbon with a running stitch through the middle of the ribbon. Then I applied plenty of steam and gentle pressure with the tip of the iron to 'persuade' the ribbon to curve and lie flat, all the while working over a tailor's ham. Patience and persistance is the key!

Of course, if you are using a gimp or other flexible trim there will be no problem curving it around the neck.

3. Finish the ends of the trim at the hemline by wrapping them over the edge to the wrong side. These raw ends will later be covered by the lining.

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