

Yellow shoulder-tie bubble mini - sewing instructions

EU 36 . 9 pieces . seam allowance 10 mm

0. Paper first

Print the pack at 100% scale, then measure the square on page 3 of the A4 pattern with a ruler. If it is not 100 mm, DO NOT CUT. Trim the sheets along the LEFT and TOP edges, overlap them until the corner targets (a cross in a circle) of neighbouring sheets sit exactly on each other, and tape. The page map is on page 2 of the A4 pattern.

Body and finished garment measurements

EU 36: standard size-table body, not your personal measurements. All circumferences below are in cm; garment minus body is the constructed ease. Seam allowances are excluded.

Bust: body 84.0 / garment 90.0 / ease 6.0 cm.

Waist: body 66.0 / garment 68.5 / ease 2.5 cm.

Hip: body 90.0 / garment not measured / ease not measured cm.

Skirt join (the bodice's lower edge, a closed loop): garment 90.5 cm round; body hip 90.0 cm. The loop sits where the skirt is attached, not on one body level. Closed, it is too small to pass the hips: open the zip fully to put the dress on. The zip runs 215 mm below the loop and opens it to 133.5 cm (needed: 92.0 cm, body plus clearance); step in, or pull it over the head.

Finished length

EU 36, standard size-table body: centre front 75.5 cm from the neck edge to the hem, centre back 79.6 cm. The hem sits 43.9 cm below the waist, 14.1 cm above the knee. The hem position was read from the photograph, not measured.

To change the length, measure your own waist-to-hem length first. Add or take off the same amount at the hem of every piece: extend (or shorten) each seam line straight on in its own direction and redraw the hem parallel to the printed one, square to each seam.

Fabric and ease decisions

Fabric mechanics are unmeasured. The existing pattern uses its recorded default ease; this is not a fabric-specific fit approval. Sample evidence applies only to its stated load, direction, method and time. It does not establish seam elasticity, movement, pressure, comfort or physical fit. Test a toile and your actual cloth before final cutting.

Derived, not seen

The back is not visible in the photograph, so it was derived: a back with princess seams like the front and a centre-back seam, cut to match the front, with a centre-back closure; the front's decoration is not repeated.

1. Cutting

Cut along the OUTER line; the default 10 mm seam allowance is inside it, except where a different edge allowance is printed. The inner fine line is the stitching line. The arrow on each piece (grainline) must lie PARALLEL to the straight grain of the fabric - set it askew and the garment will twist on the body. A piece marked "ON FOLD" is placed against the folded edge and is never cut along it.

- #1 FRONT CENTRE: CUT 1X ON FOLD
- #2 FRONT SIDE: CUT 2X MIRRORED
- #3 BACK CENTRE: CUT 2X MIRRORED

- #4 BACK SIDE: CUT 2X MIRRORED
- #5 FRONT SKIRT: CUT 1X ON FOLD
- #6 BACK SKIRT: CUT 2X MIRRORED
- #7 FRONT SKIRT LINING: CUT 1X ON FOLD
- #8 BACK SKIRT LINING: CUT 2X MIRRORED
- #9 FRONT BOW: CUT 4X

2. Markings

Notches (the small ticks on an edge) tell you where two pieces meet. Cut each piece out on its solid line first; then, at every tick, snip 3 mm straight into the allowance from the cut edge, along the tick (a double tick is two snips). The tick is printed 7 mm long only so that you find it; it stops 3 mm short of the stitching line, so a 3 mm snip never reaches the seam. On a piece cut with no allowance (a binding strip) mark the tick with chalk instead of snipping. A single tick marks a FRONT edge, two ticks close together mark a BACK edge (Tilly: "two notches together usually indicates the back of a pattern piece"). A seam that joins a front piece to a back piece (a side seam) carries a single tick on BOTH pieces, so the two ticks you match always look the same. A tick that shows where a seam of the piece it is sewn to lands (a princess seam meeting the skirt's top edge) is single on front and back pieces alike: it has no partner tick, it goes to that seam line. Each seam step below names its notches piece by piece, with the distance along the edge.

This pattern also carries LINES DRAWN ON THE PIECE (not cut, not sewn): trace them onto the fabric with tailor's chalk before you unpin the paper. Each one is listed with the piece it belongs to and what it is for.

- FRONT CENTRE / FRONT BOW ATTACHMENT (placement): tie-end position, chalked in the seam allowance 5 mm outside the stitching line. Baste the open ends of the FRONT BOW strips centred on it, raw ends level with the cut edge; the SHOULDER seam catches them (see that step).

2b. Staystitching

Before any seam is sewn, staystitch every edge that will be bound (NECK, ARMHOLE): a regular straight stitch 3 mm from the raw edge, inside the 5 mm the binding will cover, so the curve cannot stretch while it waits through the seams, the zip and the fitting. Sew in one direction on each side: a neck edge from the shoulder or strap corner towards the centre, an armhole from the shoulder or strap corner down to the underarm. Handle these edges as little as possible until they are finished.

3. Sewing order

This order is not invented: it is the topological order of the stitch graph. The seams that keep the work FLAT come first; the seams that close a ring and turn flat work into a tube come after them (flat construction).

Seam allowances: after stitching each seam, neaten each raw allowance edge on its own with an overlock (serger) or a narrow zigzag close to the edge, so the cloth cannot fray inside the garment; then press as the step says. Where a step says to finish the two allowances together, neaten them as one. Bound edges, hem turns and fold lines need nothing extra.

1. FRONT CENTRE <-> BACK CENTRE (SHOULDER) - plain seam, 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

TIES CAUGHT IN THIS SEAM: before stitching, baste the open ends of 2 FRONT BOW strips (stacked) on the right side of FRONT CENTRE, centred on the chalk mark in the allowance (section 2), on each side, raw ends level with the cut edge and the strips pointing away from the seam. Pin the rest of each strip to the middle of the piece so it stays clear of the stitching, then sew the seam through all layers; the ties come out of the finished seam. Make the strips before this step, as section 3b describes.

shoulder seam: shoulder edge <-> shoulder edge, neck <-> neck

2. FRONT CENTRE <-> FRONT SIDE (FRONT PRINCESS SEAM) - plain seam, 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

PRINCESS SEAM THROUGH THE DART: the bodice dart is sewn as part of this seam, there is no separate dart. On both pieces the stitching line is one smooth curve through the dart point and the waist; match the notches, do not straighten the curve.

BUST SHAPING IN THIS SEAM (armhole princess: the bust dart lives in the seam): FRONT CENTRE is cut 49 mm longer above the bust

line at the princess and armhole (the centre front keeps the body's length, so the neckline dips deeper at the centre front on the paper than when worn). The two edges curve differently over the bust: FRONT CENTRE's edge curves in (concave), FRONT SIDE's edge curves out over the bust (convex), notched on both pieces at the point nearest the bust point (39 mm from it). FRONT SIDE's outward curve is 3.2 mm longer (the ease below). On FRONT CENTRE, staystitch 2 mm inside the stitching line through the inward curve, then clip the allowance to the staystitching every 10-15 mm along the curve so it spreads. With FRONT CENTRE on top, pin the bust notches together first, then the armhole ends, then the lower ends and between, and sew slowly through the curve easing FRONT SIDE in between the notches. On FRONT SIDE, cut small V notches out of the allowance where it bunches on the outward curve. Press the allowances open over a tailor's ham (or a rolled towel), not flat on the board.

EASE, stretch by stretch (notches counted from the lower end): the FRONT SIDE is 1.8 mm longer between notches 2 and 3; the FRONT SIDE is 1.3 mm longer from notch 3 to the upper end; elsewhere the two edges are the same length (within 1 mm). Pin the notches together first, then ease the longer piece in within its stretch, with no tucks; sew with the FRONT SIDE underneath.

notches - FRONT CENTRE princess edge (442 mm seam): single notch at 142 mm, single notch at 299 mm, single notch at 381 mm from its lower end (300 mm, 143 mm, 61 mm from its upper end); FRONT SIDE princess edge (445 mm seam): single notch at 62 mm, single notch at 146 mm, single notch at 302 mm from its upper end (383 mm, 299 mm, 143 mm from its lower end). Match the ticks; the two sides line up there.

3. BACK CENTRE <-> BACK SIDE (BACK PRINCESS SEAM) - plain seam, 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

PRINCESS SEAM THROUGH THE DART: the bodice dart is sewn as part of this seam, there is no separate dart. On both pieces the stitching line is one smooth curve through the dart point and the waist; match the notches, do not straighten the curve.

EASE, stretch by stretch (notches counted from the lower end): the BACK SIDE is 2.5 mm longer from the lower end to notch 1; elsewhere the two edges are the same length (within 1 mm). Pin the notches together first, then ease the longer piece in within its stretch, with no tucks; sew with the BACK SIDE underneath.

notches - BACK CENTRE princess edge (331 mm seam): double notch at 55 mm, double notch at 277 mm from its lower end (276 mm, 54 mm from its upper end); BACK SIDE princess edge (333 mm seam): double notch at 54 mm, double notch at 276 mm from its upper end (279 mm, 58 mm from its lower end). Match the single ticks to the single ticks and the double ticks to the double ticks; the two sides line up there.

4. FRONT SKIRT <-> FRONT SKIRT LINING (FRONT BUBBLE HEM) - gathered seam, 10 mm allowance: do not press it open. Finish the two allowances together; pressed toward the FRONT SKIRT the gathers stand up, pressed toward the FRONT SKIRT LINING they lie in flatter folds.

BUBBLE HEM (Material Grrrlz, Bubble Skirt: "Gather the bottom of the outer skirt until it matches the bottom of the lining"): with the pieces still flat, lay the skirt hem on the lining hem right sides together, gather the skirt hem to fit and stitch; then fold the lining up behind the skirt, wrong sides together, and baste the two top edges together before the skirt join. The seam sits inside the fold and the skirt balloons over it; the lining is shorter, so it holds the fold in.

GATHER, ratio 1.44: the longer side is cut 44% longer than the side it is sewn to. Run two rows of long stitches along it, pull the threads until it matches the shorter side, spread the fullness evenly between the notches, then sew. These gathers end up inside the bubble fold.

notches - FRONT SKIRT hem edge (453 mm seam): single notch at 227 mm from its outer end (227 mm from its centre-line end); FRONT SKIRT LINING hem edge (315 mm seam): single notch at 158 mm from its outer end (158 mm from its centre-line end). Match the ticks; the two sides line up there.

5. BACK SKIRT <-> BACK SKIRT LINING (BACK BUBBLE HEM) - gathered seam, 10 mm allowance: do not press it open. Finish the two allowances together; pressed toward the BACK SKIRT the gathers stand up, pressed toward the BACK SKIRT LINING they lie in flatter folds.

BUBBLE HEM (Material Grrrlz, Bubble Skirt: "Gather the bottom of the outer skirt until it matches the bottom of the lining"): with the pieces still flat, lay the skirt hem on the lining hem right sides together, gather the skirt hem to fit and stitch; then fold the lining up behind the skirt, wrong sides together, and baste the two top edges together before the skirt join. The seam sits inside the fold and the skirt balloons over it; the lining is shorter, so it holds the fold in.

GATHER, ratio 1.33: the longer side is cut 33% longer than the side it is sewn to. Run two rows of long stitches along it, pull the threads until it matches the shorter side, spread the fullness evenly between the notches, then sew. These gathers end up inside the bubble fold.

notches - BACK SKIRT hem edge (323 mm seam): double notch at 161 mm from its outer end (161 mm from its centre-line end); BACK SKIRT LINING hem edge (242 mm seam): double notch at 121 mm from its outer end (121 mm from its centre-line end). Match the single ticks to the single ticks and the double ticks to the double ticks; the two sides line up there.

6. FRONT SKIRT <-> FRONT CENTRE + FRONT SIDE + FRONT SKIRT LINING (FRONT SKIRT JOIN) - layered seam, 10 mm allowance; prepare each layer separately and join at one stitch line.

INSIDE CORNER AT THE CENTRE FRONT FOLD (the point of the V): FRONT SKIRT + FRONT SKIRT LINING turn an inside corner (226°, 243°) there; they are cut on the fold, so the corner is in the middle of each piece. Reinforce it first: staystitch each of these layers on

the stitching line with a short stitch (1.5 mm) for 25 mm either side of the point, then clip into the point up to the staystitching, not through it (Grainline Studio, Alder sew-along: "Clip from the corner to, but not through, the pivot point"). Gather each half on its own and stop the gathering 10 mm short of the point, so the corner stays flat (Grainline: leave the allowance at the corner un-gathered); baste the layers together at the point first, so all gathered layers meet it at the same place. Sew with the bodice on top, from one side to the point: stop exactly at the point with the needle down, lift the foot, pivot, spread the clipped layers so the next edge lies along the bodice, and sew on to the other side.

GATHER, ratio 1.80: the longer side is cut 80% longer than the side it is sewn to. Run two rows of long stitches along it, pull the threads until it matches the shorter side, spread the fullness evenly between the notches, then sew. The gathers stay visible - that is the point. Additional layer FRONT SKIRT LINING: Gather this layer independently to the host length (cut/sewn ratio 1.35). Baste to FRONT SKIRT, matching the notches; all layers share this single stitch line. Its lower edge is joined to the outer layer's hem in its own step below. notches - FRONT SKIRT top edge (492 mm seam): single notch at 280 mm from its centre-line end (212 mm from its outer end); the notch at 280 mm goes to the FRONT PRINCESS SEAM seam line (no partner tick). Match the ticks; the two sides line up there.

7. BACK SKIRT <-> BACK CENTRE + BACK SIDE + BACK SKIRT LINING (BACK SKIRT JOIN) - layered seam, 10 mm allowance; prepare each layer separately and join at one stitch line.

GATHER, ratio 1.80: the longer side is cut 80% longer than the side it is sewn to. Run two rows of long stitches along it, pull the threads until it matches the shorter side, spread the fullness evenly between the notches, then sew. The gathers stay visible - that is the point. Additional layer BACK SKIRT LINING: Gather this layer independently to the host length (cut/sewn ratio 1.35). Baste to BACK SKIRT, matching the notches; all layers share this single stitch line. Its lower edge is joined to the outer layer's hem in its own step below. notches - BACK SKIRT top edge (323 mm seam): single notch at 184 mm from its centre-line end (139 mm from its outer end); the notch at 184 mm goes to the BACK PRINCESS SEAM seam line (no partner tick). Match the ticks; the two sides line up there.

The remaining 9 seams each close a ring - sew them after the flat work above, in this order.

8. BACK CENTRE <-> BACK CENTRE (BACK CENTRE BODICE) - CLOSING SEAM: this one closes a ring, so flat work becomes a tube. 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

back centre zip (bodice): the garment opens here

ZIP OPENING: along the whole seam (358 mm); machine-baste the opening shut on the seam line, neaten both allowances and press the seam open. Prepare the remaining zip openings before inserting the single zip in the final zip step.

BACK CENTRE: stop this seam at the small tick on its centre back edge, where the CENTRE BACK, LOWER BODICE seam takes over (the next 48 mm of this piece's edge are the CENTRE BACK, LOWER BODICE seam); the edge runs on straight past it, so the tick is the only mark.

9. BACK CENTRE <-> BACK CENTRE (CENTRE BACK, LOWER BODICE) - CLOSING SEAM: this one closes a ring, so flat work becomes a tube. 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

ZIP OPENING: along the whole seam (48 mm); machine-baste the opening shut on the seam line, neaten both allowances and press the seam open. Prepare the remaining zip openings before inserting the single zip in the final zip step.

BACK CENTRE: this seam starts at the small tick on its centre back edge, where the BACK CENTRE BODICE seam ends; the edge runs on straight past it, so the tick is the only mark. Match the other piece's start of this seam to the tick.

10. BACK SKIRT <-> BACK SKIRT (SKIRT CENTRE BACK) - CLOSING SEAM: this one closes a ring, so flat work becomes a tube. 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

ZIP OPENING: from 45% to 100% of its length (215 mm); sew the other 176 mm of this seam with a normal stitch, backstitching at the zip stop, machine-baste the opening shut on the seam line, neaten both allowances and press the seam open. Put the zip in over the basting now, as section 3b describes, before the side seams are closed.

notches - BACK SKIRT centre back edge (391 mm seam): double notch at 176 mm from its lower end (215 mm from its upper end). Match the single ticks to the single ticks and the double ticks to the double ticks; the two sides line up there.

11. BACK SKIRT LINING <-> BACK SKIRT LINING (LINING CENTRE BACK) - CLOSING SEAM: this one closes a ring, so flat work becomes a tube. 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

OPEN SECTION: the top 227 mm (the end at the skirt join) stays open: sew only the rest and backstitch where the opening begins (the notch on this edge). After the zip is in, turn the open allowances under along the seam line and slipstitch them to the zip tape, clear of the teeth.

ONE LINE WITH STEP 10: the skirt and its lining are already joined at the hem, so this seam and the SKIRT CENTRE BACK are one stitching line - sew down the skirt, across the hem seam and up the lining in a single pass, stopping at each opening.

notches - BACK SKIRT LINING centre back edge (291 mm seam): double notch at 64 mm from its lower end (227 mm from its upper end). Match the single ticks to the single ticks and the double ticks to the double ticks; the two sides line up there.

Steps 12-14 are ONE continuous seam joining the same two pieces: sew them in a single pass, without stopping at the hand-over ticks; the ticks only show where one part of the seam ends and the next begins.

12. BACK SIDE <-> FRONT SIDE (SIDE SEAM BELOW THE WAIST) - CLOSING SEAM: this one closes a ring, so flat work becomes a tube. 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open (the ease shrinks out under the iron).

BACK SIDE is 1% longer than FRONT SIDE here (ratio 1.01): ease it in evenly between the notches, with no gathers showing.

FRONT SIDE: the small tick on its side edge is where the SIDE SEAM BELOW THE WAIST hands over to the BODICE SIDE SEAM (the next 194 mm); sew on through it.

BACK SIDE: the small tick on its side edge is where the SIDE SEAM BELOW THE WAIST hands over to the BODICE SIDE SEAM (the next 194 mm); sew on through it.

notches - BACK SIDE side edge (48 mm seam): single notch at 24 mm from its lower end (24 mm from its upper end); FRONT SIDE side edge (49 mm seam): single notch at 24 mm from its lower end (24 mm from its upper end). Match the ticks; the two sides line up there.

13. FRONT SIDE <-> BACK SIDE (BODICE SIDE SEAM) - continues the step above in the same pass. 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

bodice side seam: waist <-> waist, underarm <-> underarm

FRONT SIDE: the small tick on its side edge is where the BODICE SIDE SEAM hands over to the UNDERARM SIDE SEAM (the next 14 mm); sew on through it.

BACK SIDE: the small tick on its side edge is where the BODICE SIDE SEAM hands over to the UNDERARM SIDE SEAM (the next 14 mm); sew on through it.

notches - FRONT SIDE side edge (194 mm seam): single notch at 97 mm from its lower end (97 mm from its upper end); BACK SIDE side edge (194 mm seam): single notch at 97 mm from its lower end (97 mm from its upper end). Match the ticks; the two sides line up there.

14. FRONT SIDE <-> BACK SIDE (UNDERARM SIDE SEAM) - continues the step above in the same pass. 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

the top of the side seam: carry the BODICE SIDE SEAM straight through this short edge in the same pass, then stop where the armhole curve begins

15. FRONT SKIRT <-> BACK SKIRT (SKIRT SIDE SEAM) - CLOSING SEAM: this one closes a ring, so flat work becomes a tube. 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

16. FRONT SKIRT LINING <-> BACK SKIRT LINING (LINING SIDE SEAM) - CLOSING SEAM: this one closes a ring, so flat work becomes a tube. 10 mm allowance, press the allowances open.

ONE LINE WITH STEP 15: the skirt and its lining are already joined at the hem, so this seam and the SKIRT SIDE SEAM are one stitching line - sew down the skirt, across the hem seam and up the lining in a single pass.

3b. Zip and pieces sewn onto the surface

Zip: a centred zip, as the views show - the opening is 620 mm; buy a 65 cm zip. It is longer than the opening: put it in with its top stop at the neck as below; at the opening's lower end whip-stitch a new stop by hand across the teeth (8-10 stitches) and cut the zip 20 mm below it. With the zip opening machine-basted shut on the seam line, neaten and pressed open (steps above), lay the zip face down on the allowances, teeth centred on the seam, top stop 6 mm below the raw neck edge so it clears the 5 mm binding. From the right side stitch 6.5 mm either side of the seam and straight across just below the stop, then unpick the basting. Put it in before the seams that cross its lower end are closed, then bind the neck edge, ending the binding at each zip edge with its ends turned in (section 3c). Keep any lining layer folded out of the way while you stitch the zip; its open centre back is slipstitched to the tape afterwards. Where the zip crosses a layered join (bodice + gathered BACK SKIRT + gathered BACK SKIRT LINING), grade the allowances first: trim BACK SKIRT LINING's to 5 mm and BACK SKIRT's to 7 mm across the zip, press them toward the bodice, and stitch slowly over the bulk.

- FRONT BOW (caught in the SHOULDER seam of FRONT CENTRE): fold each strip in half lengthwise, right sides together, and stitch the long edge and one short end at 10 mm. Trim, turn right side out and press. Make them before step 1: that step bastes the open ends into the seam allowance and sews them in. Tie the bow when the garment is finished.

3c. Complete edge finishes

NECK: one, finished edge 517 mm. Design assumption, not a measured source detail.

Use ready-made double-fold bias binding, 5 mm finished width (unfolded width 20 mm). Cut 538 mm for one edge: measured length + two 10 mm end turns. This is a purchased notion, not included in the cloth layout.

ZERO allowance is added to this bound edge: do not trim another seam allowance off it. Enclose the raw edge in the binding's

centre fold; fold each short end under 10 mm. Baste, then stitch close to the inner folded edge, catching both sides. Round an inward curve (the underarm, a neckline corner) stretch the binding gently as you go so it lies flat without ripples; do not ease extra binding in, trim any surplus at the join. At a zip, install the zip first, end the binding at each zip edge and keep tape ends and teeth clear.

ARMHOLE: each of 2, finished edge 391 mm. Design assumption, not a measured source detail.

Assumption to check on the toile: the front armhole is 203 mm and the back 188 mm (front 15 mm longer; in commercial patterns the front is usually the shorter one). If the front armhole stands away from the body at the toile, pinch the excess at the armhole edge and pin it out toward the bust point; then on the paper pattern fold out the same wedge from the armhole to the bust point, and let it open into the princess seam: redraw the side piece's princess edge smoothly through the opened point and walk it against the centre piece so both are the same length again, before cutting the cloth.

Use ready-made double-fold bias binding, 5 mm finished width (unfolded width 20 mm). Cut 412 mm for each of 2 edges: measured length + 20 mm overlap where the ends meet. This is a purchased notion, not included in the cloth layout.

ZERO allowance is added to this bound edge: do not trim another seam allowance off it. Enclose the raw edge in the binding's centre fold; join the binding ends with the declared 20 mm overlap. Baste, then stitch close to the inner folded edge, catching both sides. Round an inward curve (the underarm, a neckline corner) stretch the binding gently as you go so it lies flat without ripples; do not ease extra binding in, trim any surplus at the join. Start and end the ring at the side seam, where the overlap is least visible.

4. Machine, needle and thread

Fabric mechanics have not been verified for this pattern. These are general examples. Pick your fabric first, then read your row from the table below.

For a light cotton: Universal needle 80/12, all-purpose polyester thread, stitch length 2.5 mm.

Choose the row for your actual cloth and test on a scrap:

- cotton and other light wovens (lawn, poplin, gingham, voile): Universal 70/10 - 90/14
- fine and sheer (chiffon, organza, silk): Microtex (or Universal) 60/8 - 70/10
- linen: Universal 70/10 - 90/14
- woven wool and tweed: Universal 80/12 - 90/14
- cotton twill / denim: Jeans 70/10 - 110/18
- jersey and knits: Jersey (ball point) 60/8 - 80/12
- very stretchy knits: Stretch 75/11 or 90/14
- satin, silk, microfibre: Microtex 60/8 - 90/14

Interfacing: choose a type compatible with your actual cloth and test a scrap first. Follow its manufacturer instructions for temperature, moisture, pressing time and cooling. The printed appearance does not identify the fabric or its interfacing requirements.

Needle and stitch-length figures: Schmetz "Needles by Fabric Type"; thread: Gutermann Sew-all No. 100; stitch length: Deer & Doe; interfacing: Vlieseline.