



How To Sew a Professional-Looking Vest

With Carla Macklin of Clever Charlotte

Sewing a professionally finished garment is a snap using this quick and easy technique to finish off the neckline and armholes of a sleeveless, lined bodice. I have used our [Clever Charley Versatile Vest](#) to demonstrate this technique, but it works wonderfully for many other types of garments. On It's Sew Easy, I displayed patterns such as our [Olivine Dress](#), [Peony Boys Vest](#) and [Finch Top](#) using this same technique. Also try the technique with a Men's vest or a woman's sleeveless dress when you want to make your garment look amazing inside and out!



Step 1: Choosing the Pattern and Fabric

When choosing a pattern for this technique, look for a pattern that is (1) sleeveless, (2) fully lined and (3) has a wide shoulder width (no skinny straps!). The shoulder width must be wide enough to accommodate the garment being pulled through it, show in STEP 5. For most mid-weight fabrics and quilter's cotton, a shoulder width of >2.5 inches works well. If you are making a garment out of a heavier fabric, such as wool or denim, a shoulder width of >4 inches is preferable.

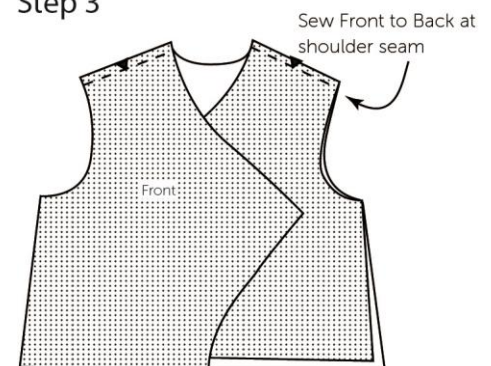
Step 2: Cutting the Fabric

Cut out the pattern pieces as per the instructions.

Step 3: Sewing Shoulder Seams

Begin assembling the garment by sewing the Front pattern piece to the Back pattern piece of the Main Fabric at the shoulder seams. Repeat these seams on the Lining Front and Back pieces. Press all seams open.

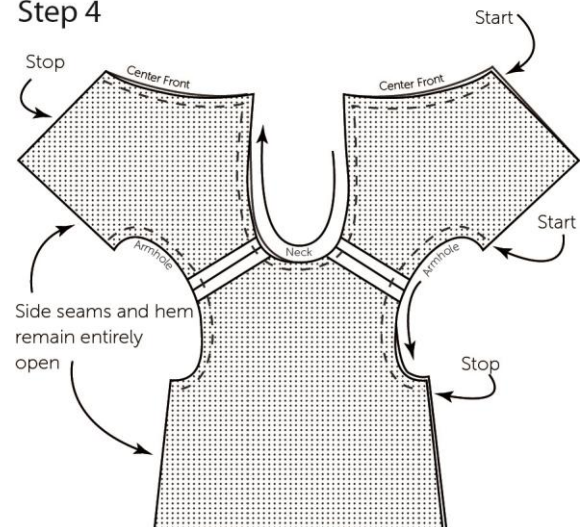
Step 3



Step 4: Attaching Main to Lining

Open both the Main and the Lining pieces and stack the Main Front/Back on top of the Lining Front/Back, placing right sides of each fabric together. It helps to first align the Main shoulder seams to the corresponding shoulder seams of the Lining Fabric, then pin around the curves. Sew around both armholes. Sew around the center front and neckline of the garment. Clip all curves to the stitchline (but not beyond!) at neckline and armholes.

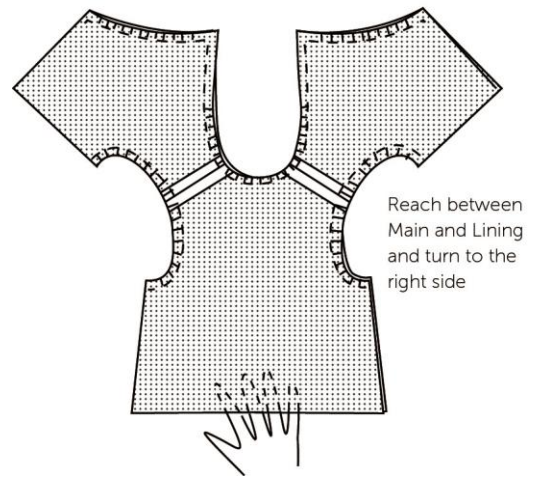
Step 4



Step 5

Step 5: Turning to Right Side

Once armholes and neckline/center front are sewn and clipped, reach between the Main and Lining fabrics and turn the garment to the right side. Use a point turner or chopstick to push out corners. Finger press around all sewn edges, then set edges by pressing them with an iron.

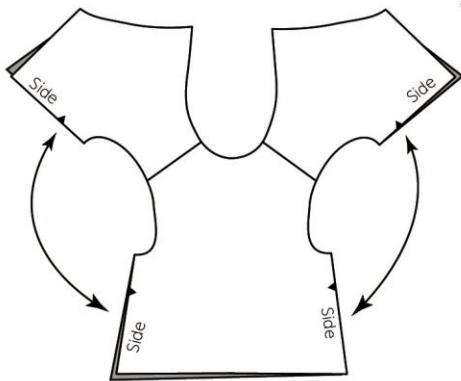


Step 6: Sewing Side Seams

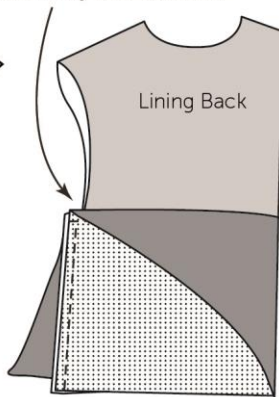
Open up the Front and Back pieces at the side seams. With right sides together, match the Main Front to the Main Back at one side seam of the Vest. Pin in place. Match the underarm point where it connects the Main Fabric to the Lining Fabric, and continue pinning the Lining Front to the Lining Back along the side seam. Sew this seam from Lining hem to Main hem in one seam, pivoting with your needle in the down position when it intersects with the underarm point. Repeat with other side of the Vest. Press all side seams open and press underarm points.

Step 6

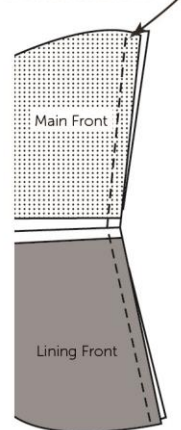
Open the Vest at the side seams, exposing the wrong sides of the Main and Lining



Match Main Front side seam to Main Back side seam and pin; repeat with Lining Front side seam and Lining Back side seam



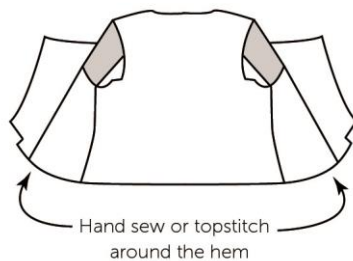
Sew side seam in one continuous seam



Step 7: Finish Hem

Finish the hem by pressing under the seam allowance of both the Main and the Lining fabric and pinning the folded edges together. Either hand-stitch this opening closed or use your sewing machine to topstitch it closed.

Step 7



For more fun sewing patterns and helpful tips, visit <http://www.clevercharlotte.com>!