

feeling a little (a lot) crafty

<http://thewinthropchronicles.blogspot.com/2011/10/feeling-little-lot-crafty.html>

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Ok, remember when I said I wanted to make a skirt because I couldn't find one I liked... well, I actually had found a skirt I liked and bought it from Banana Republic. But then I took it home and decided it was a little too short for me. So it's just been sitting in the bag in my closet. That's when I decided I wanted to recreate it, just make it a little longer. Well my friends, I made the skirt, and it actually fits, so now I can return the \$60 skirt because I have a \$10 homemade one.

I may have been a little too ambitious, because I had never done this before. But I am happy that I actually did it. You know, to tell my posterity... that I actually sewed my own clothes :) In the past, I have only made some pillows and curtains. I actually made two skirts, the first one was more of a practice.

skirt #1

{shirt: Forever 21, necklace:
Target, skirt: me! shoes: Target}

skirt #2

{blouse: Banana Republic outlet,
skirt: me!, shoes: Target}

I went to the fabric store and bought two fabrics because I liked the color, not because they are necessarily good skirt making material. As the lady was cutting my fabric, I mentioned I was going to make a skirt, and she said, "uh you know this is upholstery and curtain material?" I was like, "ok... and...?" I will probably have to wear a slip under the skirts so that the fabric moves easier... but remember I'm a newbie.

I remember seeing some cool skirts on [this](#) website, so I followed the tutorial for [this](#) skirt to make skirt #1. The good thing about this pattern is there is a lot of material so you don't have to worry about being perfect... but that can also be hard to work with so much fabric. This was definitely my practice skirt. There is a list of things that aren't perfect with the skirt, one of them being that the waist is too big so it sits lower on my waist than I prefer. But once I did the waistband and the invisible zipper and the invisible hemline, I felt pretty confident I could try to



make my own pattern and try another skirt.





The second skirt was more like the skirt I found at Banana Republic. I added pockets, a slit in the back and some pleats... all a new experience for me. At one point, I was working on this skirt at night and Danny was watching me and said, "So where's your pattern?" And I was like, "well... I'm not using a pattern, I just made this up." He said, "Well how are you measuring

everything?" And I basically made that up too. I did take what I learned from the first skirt to help me with some basic measurements. Danny was pretty skeptical that I could pull it off. I did have to make the back panels a second time because they were too small because I didn't take in to account the slits I would cut.





So here is what I did differently with the second skirt:

To Make Skirt #2:

first. Get about a yard and a half of fabric (you might be able to do it with less, but I needed some extra in case I messed up, since it was my first skirt... which I did, so I was glad to have the extra fabric). Also, get some matching thread, because you see some of the thread on the waistband, so it's important that it's the same color.

second. Measure the front panel how long and wide you need it (I measured mine 24 inches long and 20 inches wide at the bottom of the skirt) *make sure to leave the top of the skirt a few inches bigger to leave room for the pleats. So depending on how many pleats you want, just be sure to account for that extra fabric so that when the pleats are done, the top measures half of your waist measurement + and inch for seam allowance. Notice in the picture below there is extra fabric at the top of the skirt.



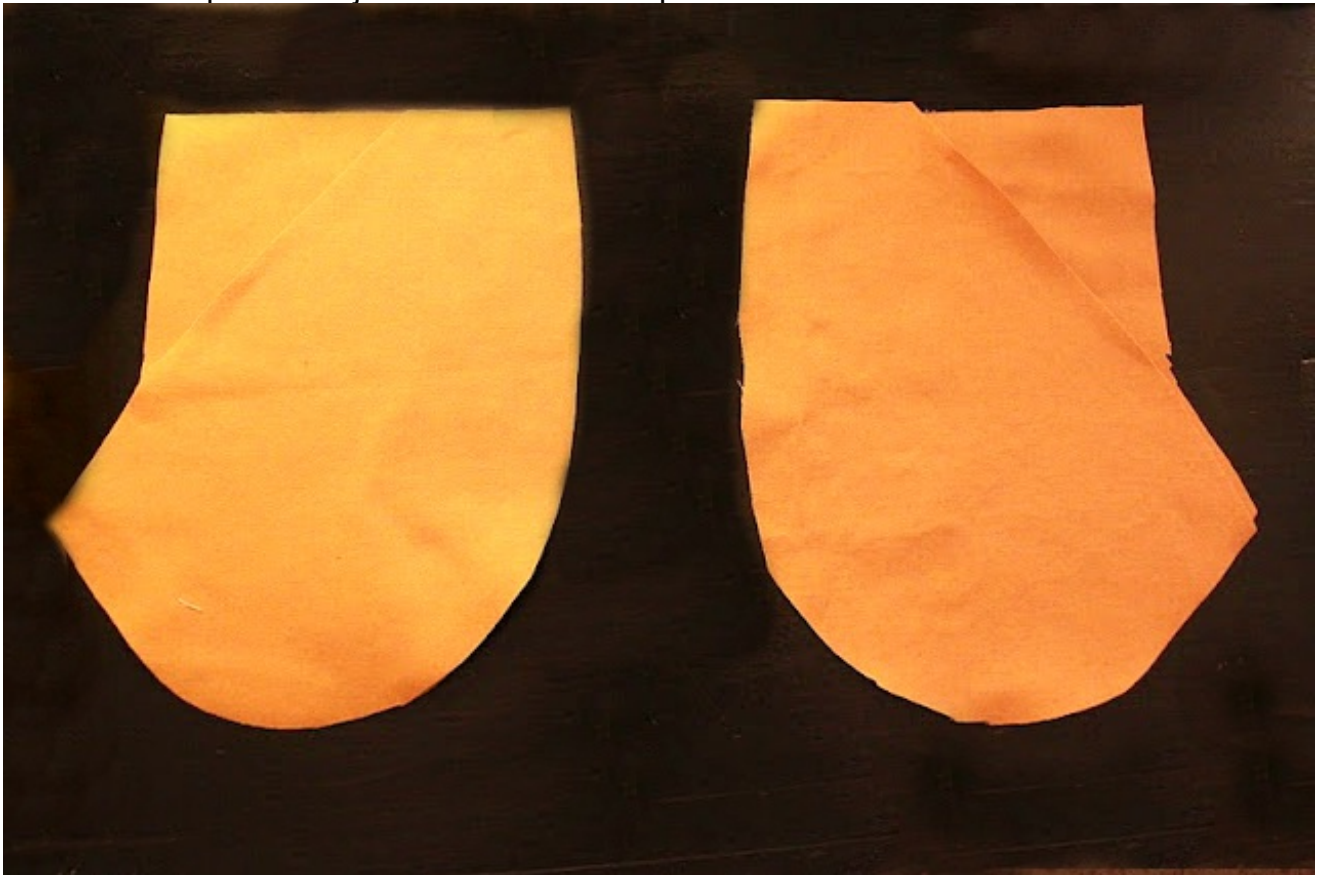
third. Create the pleats by gathering fabric and pinning it. It doesn't matter how far apart they are, just as long as it's symmetrical. And you want to make sure that with the pleats, the top is half your waistline.



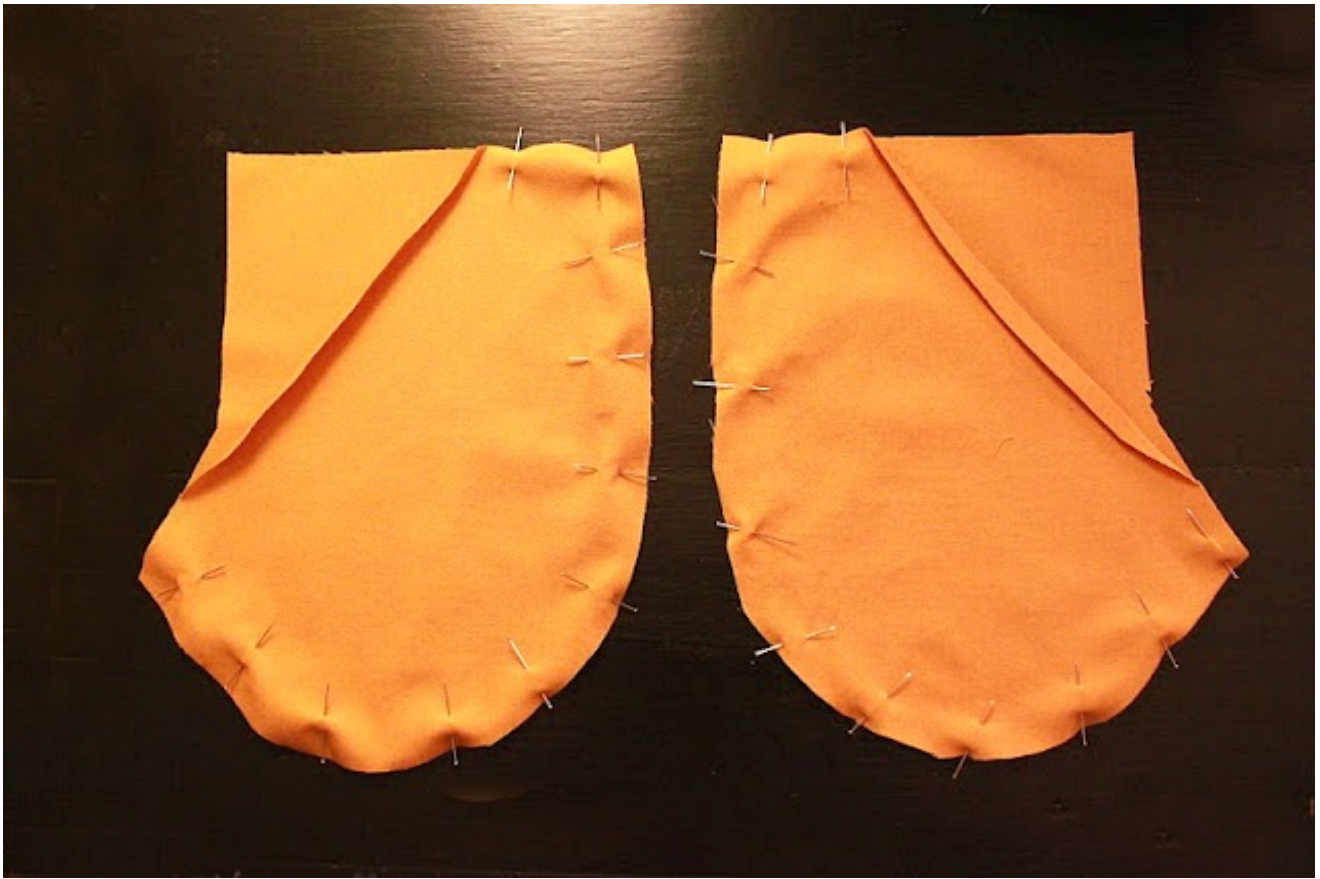
fourth. Fold over the edges to make the pocket line.



fifth. I cut some pockets. I just measured some pockets on a different dress I have.



sixth. Pin the pockets together and sew them, right side fabric to right side. Then iron over the edge that will attach to the skirt.

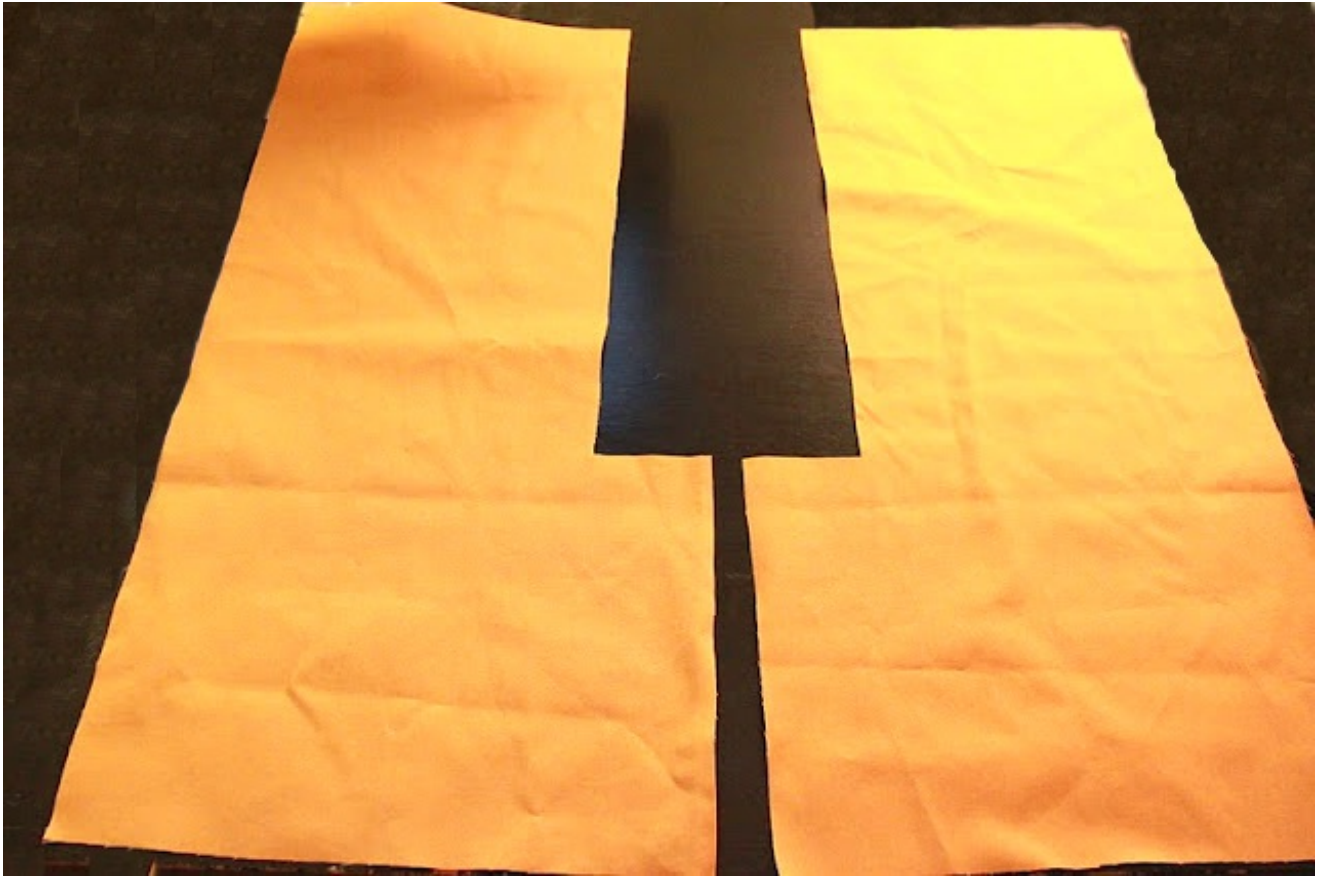


seventh. Attach the pockets by pinning the ironed fold of the pocket to the right side of the fabric of the front of the skirt. In the picture below, this is the back of the front panel of the skirt, so you can see how the little fold of the pockets is being sewn to the skirt.



eighth. Ok for the back, get ready for some math. You will need to cut two panels that look like the picture below. Just make sure that the back panel ends up being the same length and height as the front. And when measuring to get the length of the top of the two panels, here is the math: your waist size (divided) by two + 2 inches for the slits/pleats you will cut at the top +

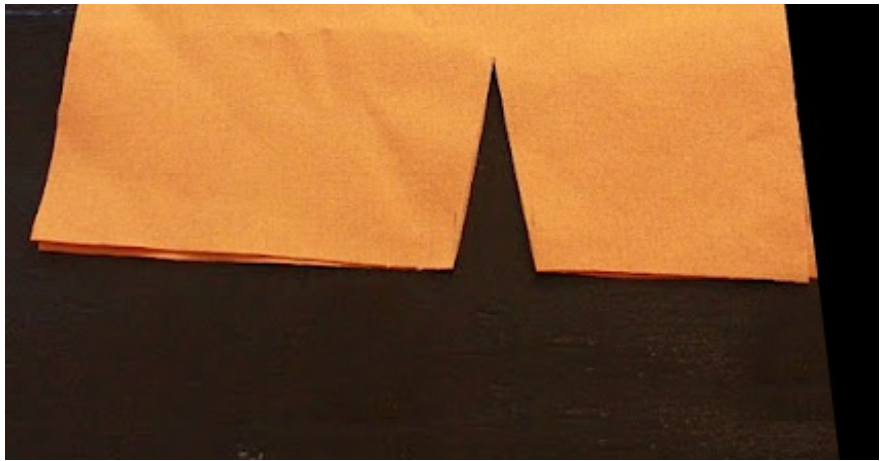
1 inch seam allowance on the side seams + 1 inch seam allowance for the zipper = what the top panels should equal, so you would have to divide that in half to get the size for each panel. The bottom of the panels together should equal the same as the front of the skirt, which in this case is 20 inches. As you can see in the picture, there are a few inches of extra fabric there for the slit at the bottom.



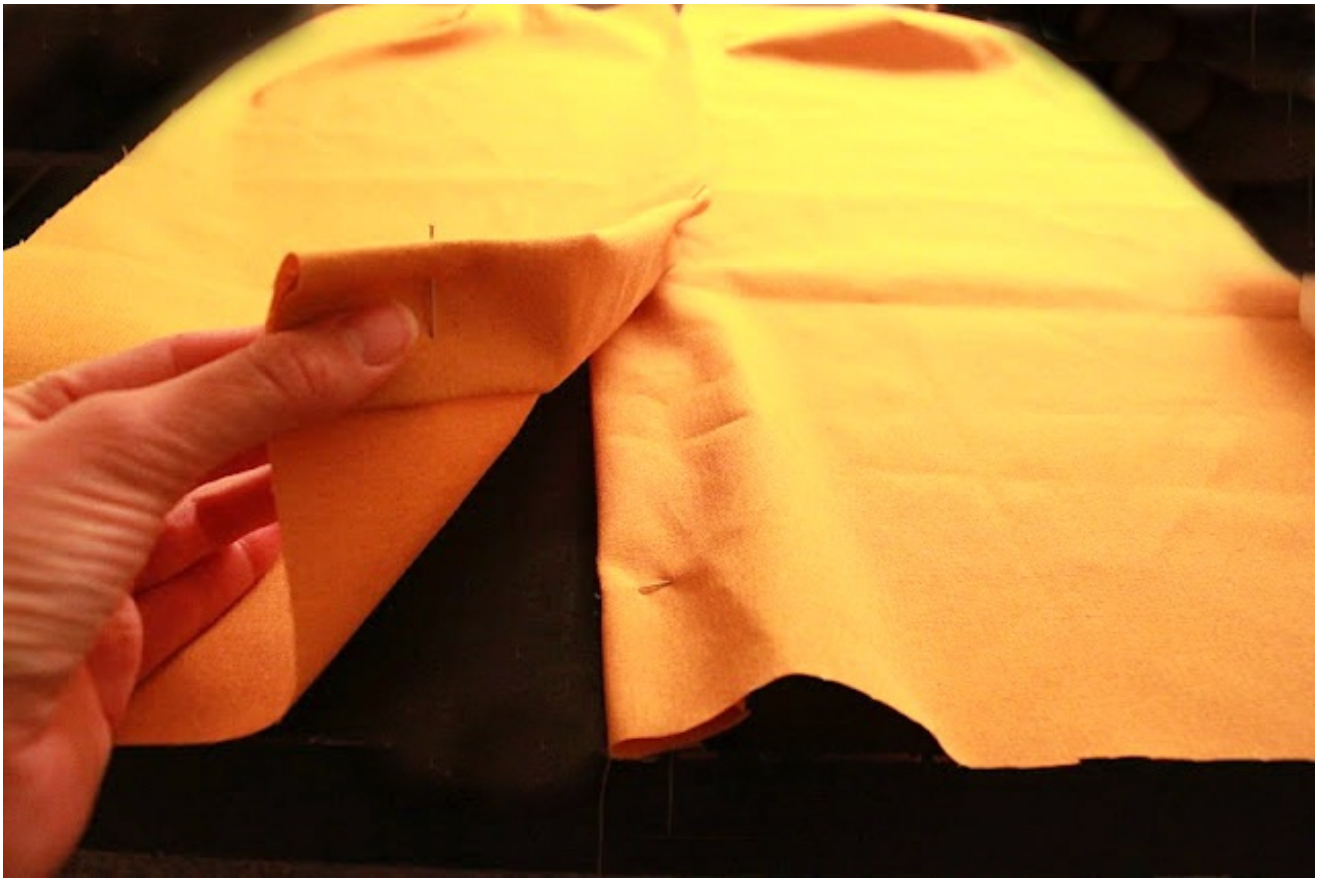
ninth. Cut a slit at the top of each panel (make sure they are in the same spot on both panels, equal distance away from the center). I cut mine 2 1/2 inches long and 1 inch across at the top in this triangle shape. Then sew the slit by folding over the panel on to itself, the right side of the fabric in.

This is what it looks like when the pleats on the back are done.





tenth. For the slit at the bottom, just fold over the fabric on to itself and you may need to do some hand stitching. I just looked at another skirt I have and did my best to re-create the slit.



For the waistband, invisible zipper, invisible hem, and how to attach the front and back panels together, follow [this](#) tutorial that I used to make skirt number 1.

Even though this was my first attempt at a skirt, I somehow managed to just "make it work." I think it's because I have been watching so much Project Runway lately and am inspired by it. But seriously, remember in math class in high school when your teachers try to convince you that what you are learning is important because you will use it later in life? Well this was one of those moments. I was amazed at how much geometry I used in making these.