

*All Dressed Up*

# Dressed to a Tee

Take your T-shirt from boring to bold with pretty sleeves and a brand-new neckline



**W**e've all got them—piles of so-so tees that are fine for throwing on to go to the grocery store but aren't living up to their full potential. One way to upgrade a basic tee is to restyle it for glamour. A little lace trim, beaded appliqué, and some sheer fabric are all you need. Or, better yet, look for a sheer curtain with a lace trim, and you've got all your materials in one item.

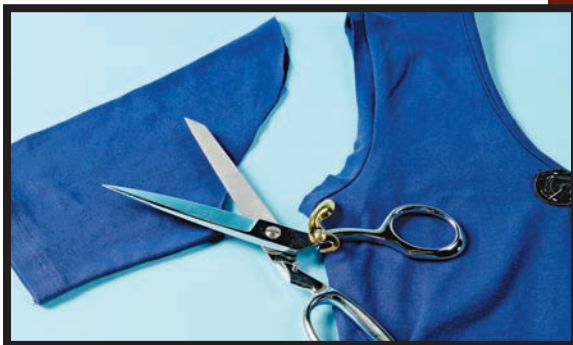
First, take scissors to your T-shirt sleeves, then put the sewing-machine pedal to floor as you trim out the neck, and add flowing sleeves to your soon-to-be fabulous tops. As fashion-friendly blouses, these tees are still comfy, but now, they're dressy, too.

**LORNA MISER** lives in Folsom, California, where she rides her bike along the American River bike trails and designs all sorts of fun creations with yarn, fabric, beads, and paper. In her beautiful, third-story-loft studio, she feels like she's playing in the clouds.

## Add a fancy, sheer sleeve

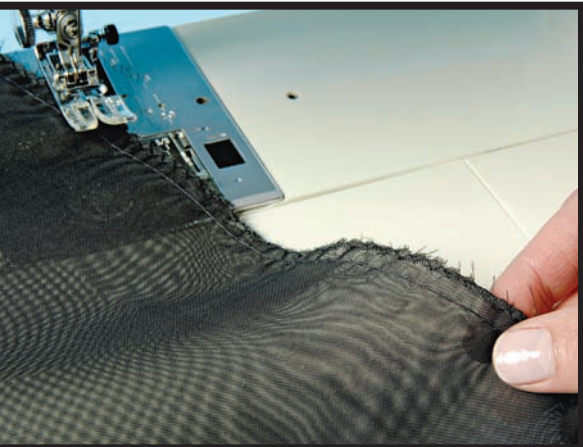
A great way to dress up a T-shirt is to give it a pair of fancy new sleeves. A soft, sheer fabric amplifies the look. You can use any sheer fabric and make the sleeve any length you wish. All seam allowances are  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch and should be zigzagged or overcast after straight stitching.

**{1} CUT OFF THE T-SHIRT SLEEVES.** Cut them from the T-shirt about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch away from the sleeve seam, leaving the original seam intact on the body of the shirt.



### **{2} CREATE A NEW SLEEVE.**

Use the sleeve pattern on p. 87 to cut a new sleeve from your sheer fabric. Adjust the length according to whether you want three-quarter length or full-length sleeves. For long sleeves, cut extra length to allow for gathers, elastic, and hemming. Sew the sleeve seam with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch seam allowance.

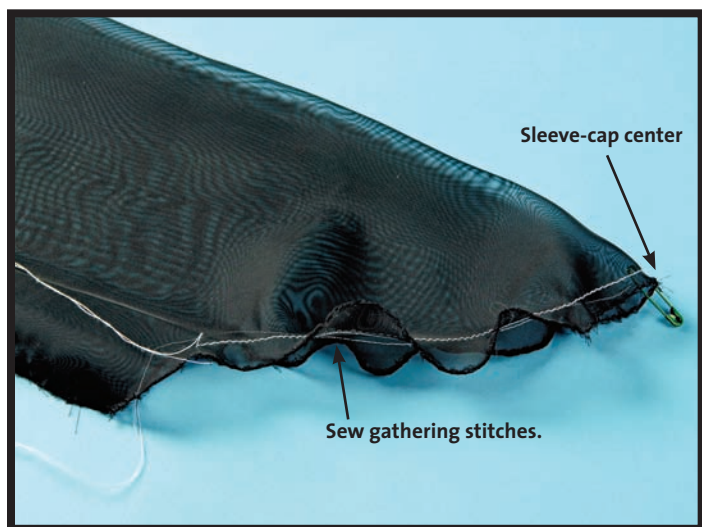


### **Supplies & sources**

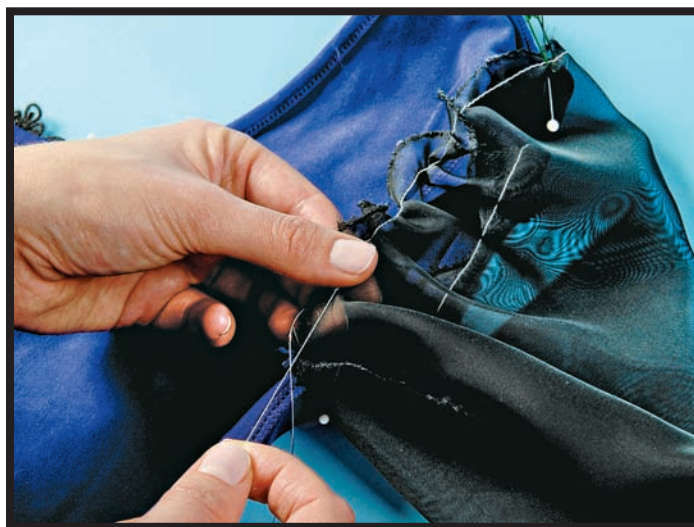
- Iron
- Iron-on, paper-backed adhesive such as HeatnBond Lite ([ThermoWebOnline.com](http://ThermoWebOnline.com))
- Lace trims or beaded appliqué
- Sewing machine or hand-sewing needles
- Sheer fabric or curtain sheers for sleeves ([WarehouseFabricsInc.com](http://WarehouseFabricsInc.com))
- Sleeve pattern
- T-shirt
- Thread







**{3} MARK THE CENTER OF THE SLEEVE CAP.** Then, zigzag stitch or serge around the edges to prevent raveling. With a long stitch length, sew gathering stitches  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch from the edge around the sleeve cap, beginning and ending about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch from the sleeve seam. Leave long thread tail ends for gathering.



**{4} ALIGN THE SLEEVE-CAP CENTER TO THE SHOULDER SEAM.** Pin in place. Gently pull the easing threads until the sleeve fits inside the armhole opening.



**{5} SEW IN PLACE WITH A  $\frac{1}{4}$ -INCH SEAM ALLOWANCE.** Try on the top. If the sleeve seems tight, remove the easing thread. Depending on the T-shirt used, the sleeve may have slight gathers. Zigzag over the edge of the sleeve-cap seam. Press the seam toward the body. Or, topstitch around the armhole to keep seams toward body so they don't show through the sleeve.



**{6} HEM THE SLEEVE.** Check the sleeve length. Fold a hem allowance to the length you desire. Trim the hem allowance, and stitch a double-fold hem  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch wide. For a ruffled cuff, leave enough hem allowance above the edge to allow for an elastic casing. Sew a pleat on the wrong side 2 inches above the hem edge for the casing. Insert the elastic, and stitch each end firmly in place. For a lace-edged sheer sleeve, use the lace bottom edge on a sheer curtain for the hem of the sleeve, as shown on p. 52.

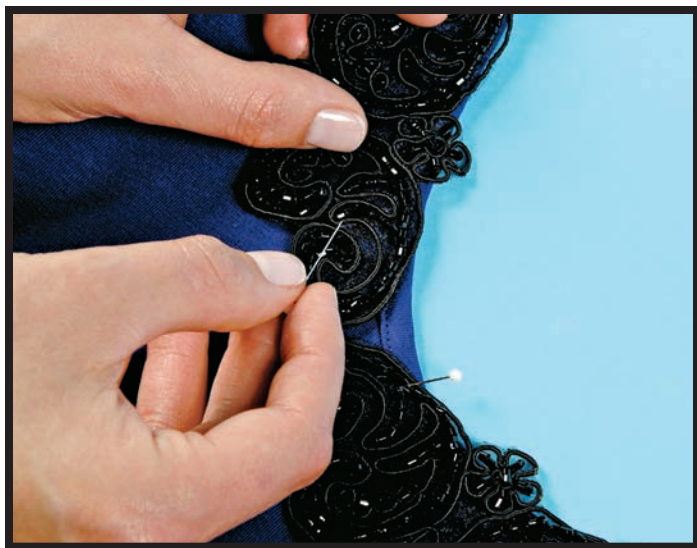




# Embellish the neckline

Another way to update a T-shirt is to give it a new neckline. You can fuse beaded lace appliqué to an existing neckline to dress it up or sew a lace trim below the existing neckline and cut the neckline to mimic the lace. Both methods beautifully add interest to an otherwise plain tee.

## FUSE ON AN APPLIQUÉ



**{1} EXPERIMENT WITH YOUR DESIGN.** Pin the appliqué around the neckline to determine their placement.



**{2} APPLY FUSIBLE ADHESIVE.** Once you've decided on a design, remove each appliqué one at a time, and trace the appliqué shape onto the paper side of a piece of fusible adhesive right-side down. Fuse the adhesive to the wrong side of the appliqué.



**{3} FUSE ONTO THE T-SHIRT.** Peel off the paper backing, and then fuse the appliqué to the T-shirt, following the fusible product's manufacturer's instructions. Press again from the inside of the T-shirt to secure the appliqué.



## SEW ON A ROW OF LACE TRIM



**{1} MARK THE NECKLINE PLACEMENT.** Use a purchased trim, or trim away the lace edge from a curtain sheer. Try on the shirt, and mark the approximate desired placement for the new neckline. On a flat surface, trace a plate or other symmetrical template to create the new neckline shape. Stitch along the marked line.



**{2} SEW THE TRIM.** Machine- or hand-sew the trim to the stitched line on the T-shirt. Finally, trim away the excess T-shirt fabric to mimic the lace trim design—voilà! You have a new neckline.

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Use the pattern template below to create your sleeve pattern according to your size. Copy the pattern below at 175 percent. At the wavy line, extend your pattern to the measurements indicated for long or three-quarter length sleeves. Cut two from your fabric.

