

Luxurious layered top

Try this hybrid of a couture jacket and comfy loungewear

Sumptuous bouclé and tweed fabrics are irresistible. Their luxurious texture and complex colorways appeal to the eye and the touch. We're used to seeing these expensive textiles made into chic little cardigan jackets and skirts, but there's no reason to limit them to classic suits.

Welcome this fabric into your wardrobe in a simple-to-sew and easy-to-wear pullover top.

Line it in silk (georgette and charmeuse are lovely) for extra indulgence. The lining's extended hem keeps the look relaxed but luxurious—it looks and feels like a silk camisole, and it finishes the garment's interior. You can wear it tucked in, or you can keep it untucked for a layered effect.

To enhance the designer vibe, add a self-fabric fringe trim or other embellishment.

One of the top's best features is that it can be made in an afternoon.

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Cut the fabric and lining

Opt for a boxy silhouette, and choose a size that provides 5 inches to 7 inches of ease at the bustline. We used a style with a set-in sleeve, but a raglan sleeve works well, too. You'll lengthen the pattern before cutting the lining.

1 Cut the bouclé. You need the front, back, and sleeves; omit neckbands or facings if included in your pattern. We left off the sleeve cuff that came with our pattern. With tailor's tacks, mark the centers front and back, and the sleeve notches.

2 Create the lining pattern. On the front pattern piece, draw a line perpendicular to the center front, across the pattern and about 2 inches below the armhole. Cut along this line, and spread the pattern apart by 2 inches. Fill the opening with tissue, and true the side seamline. Repeat for the back.

3 Cut the lining. Use the lengthened pattern to cut the lining. Transfer all marks to the fabric. Remember that the lining extends below the hem of the fashion fabric layer. Choose which lining side you want to be visible, and mark it "wrong side." Although it will show at the hem—for purposes of construction, it's the lining's "wrong" side.

4 Stabilize the edges. Staystitch around the front and back necklines $\frac{1}{8}$ inch from the seamline within the seam allowance. Serge or zigzag around all the bouclé edges now to prevent raveling as you construct the garment.

SUPPLIES

- *Pattern for a short-sleeve woven pullover top (we used Named Patterns Inari Crop Tee, NamedClothing.com)*
- *Bouclé fabric, as needed for your pattern (NYElegant.com)*
- *Silk georgette or charmeuse for lining as needed for your pattern (MoodFabrics.com)*
- *Threads to match the bouclé and lining*



This simple top has few pieces and is quick to sew. You'll make the outer and lining layers separately, then join them in a few easy steps.

Pattern: Named Patterns Inari Crop Tee. Fabrics: wool bouclé, New York Elegant Fabrics, New York; silk lining, Affordable Fabrics, Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

Construct the layers

Handle the bouclé fabric with care to prevent distortion and raveling. Vents at the lining side hems provide ease in wearing, but you need to reverse the seam allowances for a neat finish.

1 Assemble the bouclé top. With right sides together, join the shoulder and side seams, and sew the sleeve underarm seams. Set the sleeves. Turn up the $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-wide bodice hem allowance, and sew by hand or machine.

2 Begin to assemble the lining. Sew the shoulder seams. On the side seams, make a mark 6 inches above the hem. With right sides together, sew the side seams from this mark up to the armseye.

3 Complete the side seams. Make a horizontal clip at the bottom of the side-seam stitching and turn the allowances to the lining right side. Fold under twice and press. Topstitch up one vent edge, across the top, and down the other. Above the vent, finish the seam allowance edges by serging or zigzagging them together or separately.

TIPS FOR HANDLING BOUCLÉ

Stabilize as needed

If your bouclé fabric has a loose weave, stabilize the neck seamlines. Sew twill tape along the seamlines on the fabric pieces' wrong side. Alternatively, cut $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-wide strips of fusible knit interfacing, and fuse them to the fabric's wrong side over the seamlines. Measure the stabilized neckline to be sure its circumference matches the pattern circumference.

Finish the seam allowances

Depending on the fabric weave, a serged, bound, or Hong-Kong finish is appropriate for controlling the raw edges.

Cut wide seam allowances

Some bouclé textiles ravel excessively. In this case, cut seam allowances as wide as 2 inches, and hand- or machine-baste along all the seamlines to mark them. Stabilize as described above. After the seams have been sewn, you can trim and clean-finish the seam allowances.

4 Hem the lining. Press $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to the lining right side, then press another $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Topstitch near the inner fold.



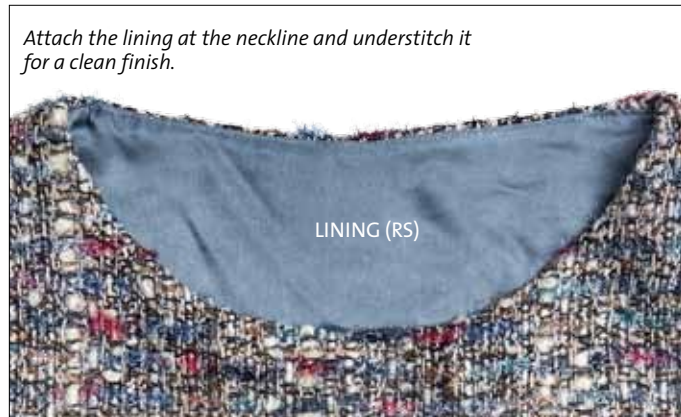
5 Attach the lining sleeves. With right sides together, sew the sleeve underarm seams. Set the sleeves. Finish the armseye seam allowances.



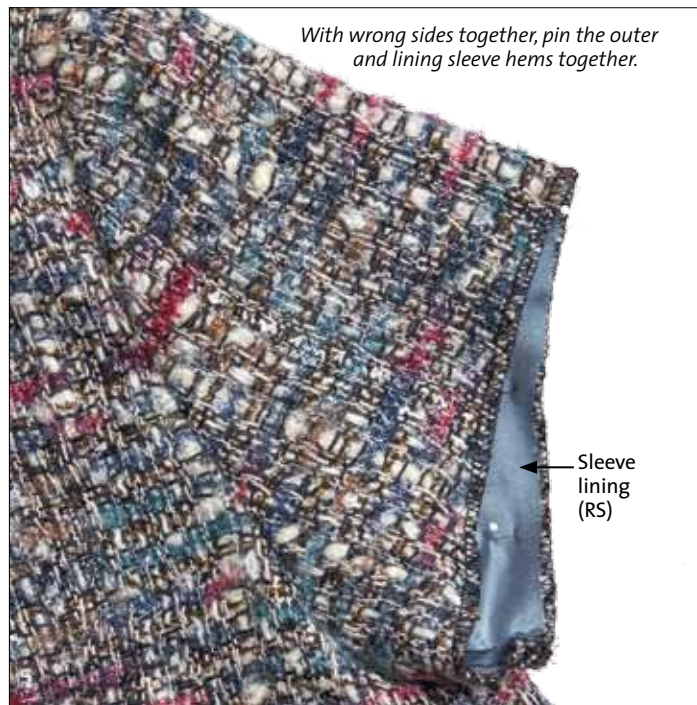
Attach the lining

A machine-sewn lining finishes the neckline and the sleeve hems quickly and efficiently. Once this step is complete, the top is finished and ready for embellishment.

1 Join the necklines. With right sides together, pin the lining to the fashion fabric around the neckline, matching the shoulder seams and centers front and back. Sew. Trim and clip the seam allowances as needed. Understitch the lining to the seam allowances so it rolls to the inside. Turn the lining to the inside and press.



2 Pin the sleeve hems. With wrong sides together, pin the sleeve lining inside the sleeves, aligning the hem edges and matching the underarm seams.

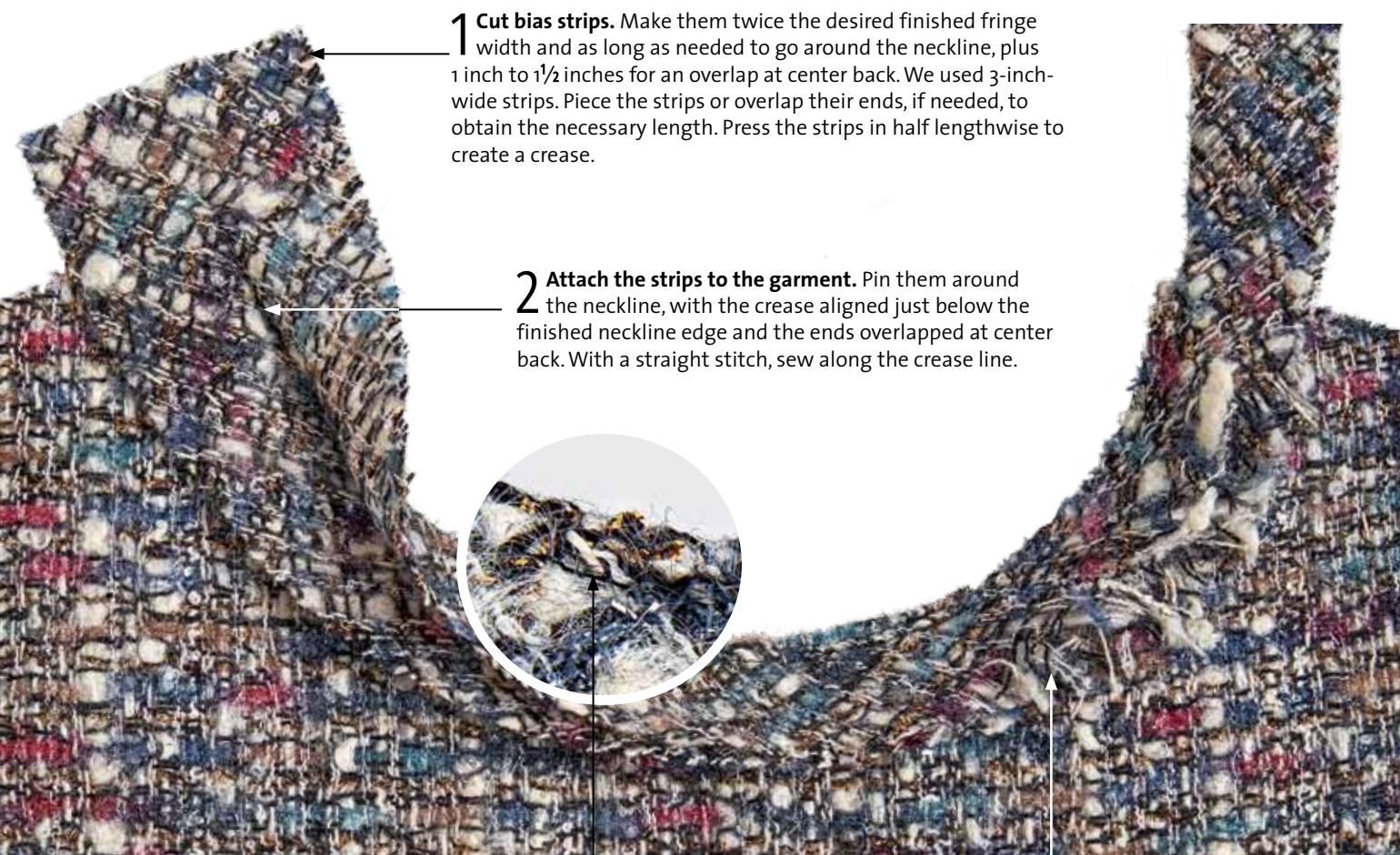


3 Sew the sleeve hems. Reach between the garment and lining layers through the hem and into one sleeve. Grasp the pinned sleeve hems and pull them out through the bottom of the garment. Reposition the sleeve hems, aligning the raw edges with right sides together and underarm seams matched. Pin, then sew the sleeve hems together. Trim the seam allowances, and push the sleeve back to its finished position. Repeat for the other sleeve. Press the sleeve hem edges and understitch the lining by hand.



Embellish with fringe

Bouclé lends itself beautifully to fringing, so a self-fabric trim is easy to make and complementary. This bias-strip version is full and fluffy, and it matches the garment perfectly because the bias-cut strip retains all the textile's fibers. You can experiment with all kinds of fringed trims, by adding braid, beads, ribbons, or yarns harvested from the fabric.



1 Cut bias strips. Make them twice the desired finished fringe width and as long as needed to go around the neckline, plus 1 inch to 1½ inches for an overlap at center back. We used 3-inch-wide strips. Piece the strips or overlap their ends, if needed, to obtain the necessary length. Press the strips in half lengthwise to create a crease.

2 Attach the strips to the garment. Pin them around the neckline, with the crease aligned just below the finished neckline edge and the ends overlapped at center back. With a straight stitch, sew along the crease line.

3 Fold and topstitch the trim. Fold both layers away from the neckline and topstitch close to the strips' folded edge. If desired, add a second row of topstitching.

4 Fringe the strips. Carefully unravel the fabric's raw edges. Unravel it all the way to the topstitching, or only partway.

tip

Tack the shoulders. Secure the lining in place with a few hand stitches through both layers at the shoulder and underarm.

Photos: p. 1, p. 4, top right; p. 5, top; Jack Deutsch; all others, Mike Yamin. Stylist: Jessica Saal. Hair and makeup: AgataHelena.com. Styling credits: earrings—Tahari (Macy's.com), bracelets—Anthropologie.com, dress—American Apparel.