



Godet GLAMOUR

Create a custom dress
with extra flare

BY THE *THREADS* EDITORS

A godet is a triangular wedge of fabric sewn into a garment, either in an existing seam or within a cut opening. Its purpose is to add circumference, or flare, at a hemline. With godets, you can achieve a body-skimming fit through the bodice and hips and fullness around the hem. Godets create a pretty silhouette and enhance movement in a skirt or dress.

They require precise stitching, but there is a foolproof method that relies on fusible tape to install the in-seam variety. To learn the technique, try making the dress shown with six in-seam godets. A template for the design, in six sizes for bust measurements from 30 inches to 52 inches, is available at ThreadsMagazine.com. Once you know the godet insertion technique, you can easily apply the method to tunic, skirt, or dress projects.

*Fusible tape
simplifies sewing
godets in shifty fabrics
like burn-out velvet.*

FABRIC OPTIONS

Godets are shown to advantage in light-weight, drapery fabrics. In a flowing textile, a godet hangs beautifully when still, and swings out gracefully when the body is in motion. Stiff or crisp textiles create pronounced angular extensions. Chiffon, georgette, burn-out velvet, challis, charmeuse, or crepe are good fabric choices.

For design interest, try mixing fabrics when adding godets. Another option is to cut them on the bias or cross-grain, for spectacular results in striped or plaid material.

DESIGN PROPORTIONS

A godet is shaped like a slice of pizza, and depending on the project, you may decide on a different portion. How long a godet is, and its width at the hem, is up to you. It's generally flattering to keep bulk to a minimum around the waist, so consider placing the godet point at or below the high hip. The example dress has godets that begin about 20 inches below the shoulder seam, and the placement is adjustable when you work with the pattern template.

The godet width depends on the fabric you've chosen and the garment silhouette you wish to achieve. One way to get an idea of how much flare to add is to measure the hem circumference of a favorite dress or full skirt in your closet.

However you decide to customize the pattern, the construction process is easy, and the finished dress is versatile. Enjoy playing with godets.

This article was adapted from "Waiting For Godet," by Louise Cutting in Quick Stuff to Sew Winter 2011.

Add godets in the seams for greater circumference at the hem. This simple design is adaptable to any figure type.

Fabric: burn-out velvet, MoodFabrics.com.



web extra

For a pattern template you can adapt to your figure, visit [Threadsmagazine.com/GodetDressPattern](https://www.threadsmagazine.com/GodetDressPattern).

Personalize the design

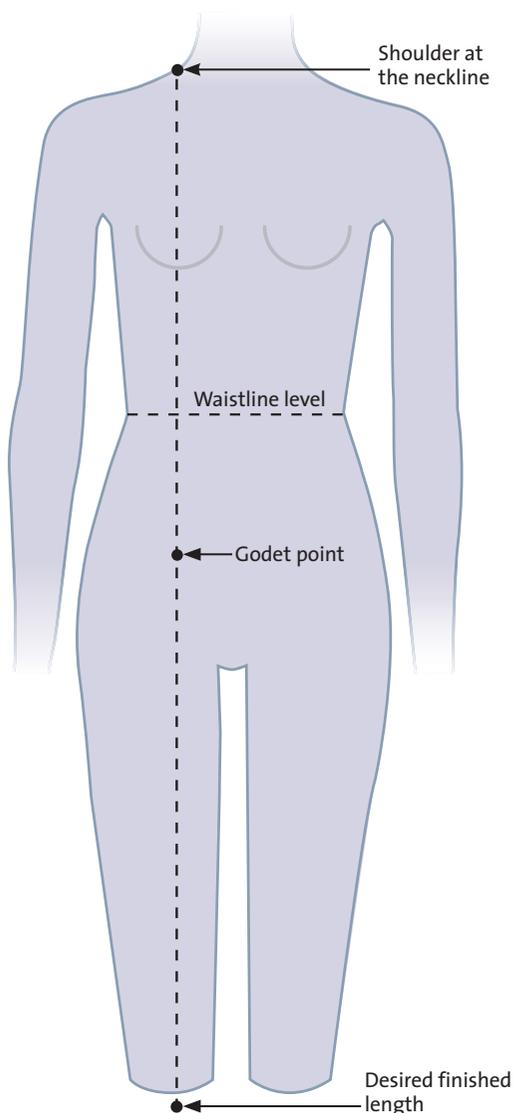
This dress has simple lines to show the godets to advantage. It has cut-on short sleeves, shoulder seams, and an oval neckline that is finished with a bias binding. Vertical seams and side seams provide trouble-free insertion places for the godets. The three-piece pattern is adaptable to your size and height.

1 Determine the dress cutting length.

Measure from the shoulder at your neckline, over your bust, to the length you prefer for the finished dress. Add 2 inches for the hem allowance. Note: It is better to make the garment longer and trim to the desired length when completed.

2 Plan the placement of the godet point.

Still holding the measuring tape at your shoulder, note the level for the godet point. Place it below your waistline for a flattering silhouette. On the pattern pieces, this will be labeled the stitch termination point.

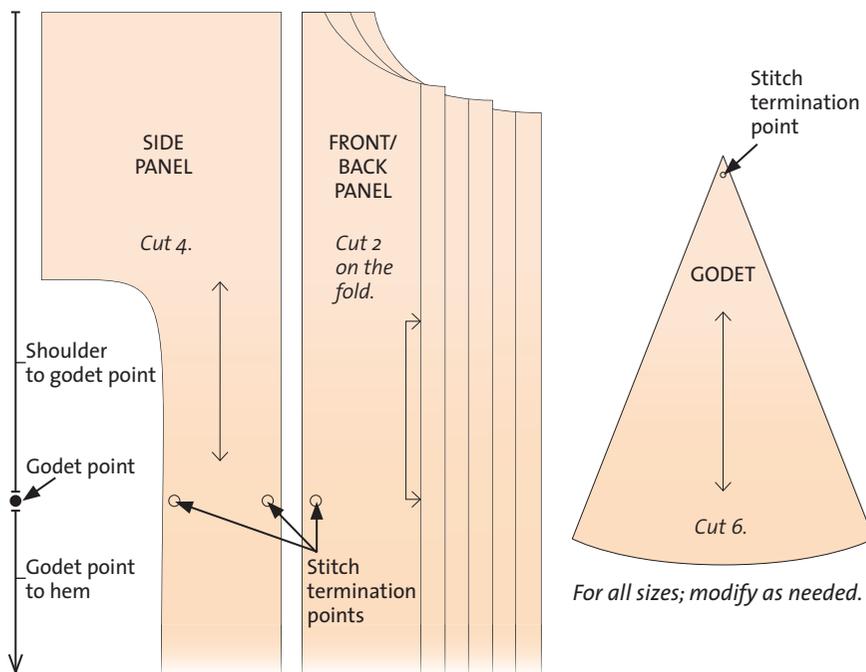


3 Find the template at [Threads Magazine.com/GodetDressPattern](https://www.threads.com/pattern/GodetDressPattern),

and select a size. Use the largest of your bust, waist, or hip circumference measurements to select the correct pattern size. Enlarge the pattern as directed. From the shoulder line, extend the front hem to the desired dress cutting length. The pattern includes 1/2-inch-wide seam allowances, except where noted.

4 Place the stitch termination points for the godets.

On the example pattern, the godets were planned to end about 20 inches below the shoulder seam. This is an average measurement, planned to hit at the high-hip level. If your measurements had the godets end at a higher or lower point, mark a new stitch termination point on the front/back pattern piece. Copy it to the side panel pattern piece.



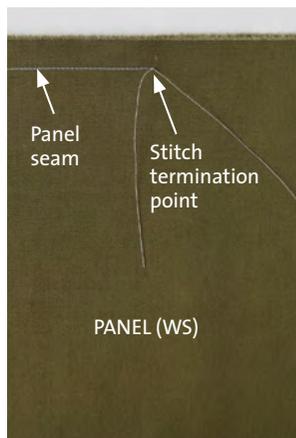
5 Adjust the godet pattern if necessary. Align the godet pattern piece to the dress front/back pattern piece, matching the stitch termination points. Lengthen or shorten the godet pattern piece to match the dress cutting length. You can narrow or widen the godet as well. The sample godets add up to nearly a full circle.

6 Cut out the dress. The fabric amount required depends on the size and length of your personalized design and the yardage width. A quick sketch on graph paper can give you an idea of the yardage your pattern pieces require. Be sure to include 3/8 yard to cut a bias strip for the neckline binding. Use a with-nap layout, and cut a center front, center back, four side panels, six godets, and a bias strip. For the bias strip's dimensions, refer to step 1 of "Finish the neckline," p. 40.

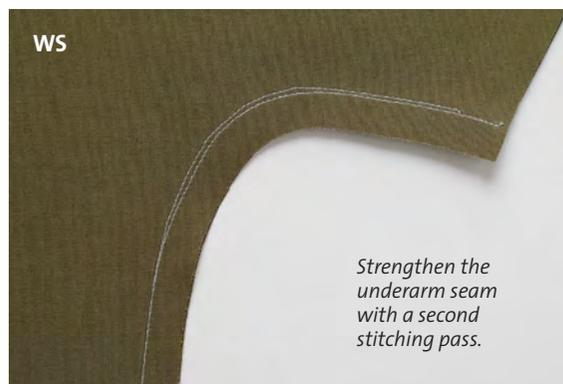
Assemble the dress

Sew together the panels that form the dress bodice. The lower portion of each panel seam is left open to install the godets.

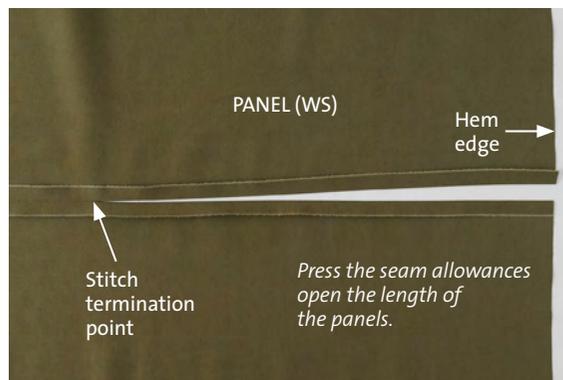
1 Pin and sew each center panel to its corresponding side panels. Sew with right sides together, and use a 1/2-inch-wide seam allowance. Stop stitching at the stitch termination points on each seam, leaving long thread tails. Pull the upper thread to the bobbin side and knot the tails together.



2 Sew the shoulder seams, then the side seams. Stitch from the sleeve edge to the stitch termination point. Tie the thread tails. Stitch the underarm a second time to reinforce the seam.



3 Press open the seam allowances along the seam. Then press them open all the way to the hem.

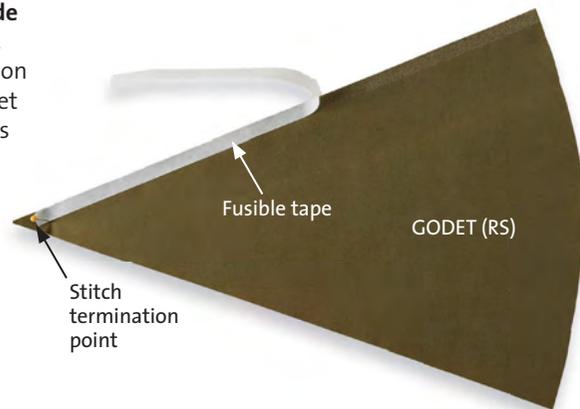


Install the godets the quick way

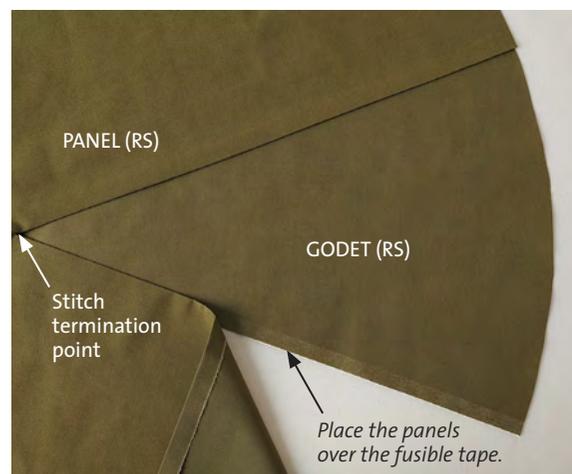
Fusible web tape is the secret to an easy, accurate insertion. Press each stitched godet before starting the next one.

1 Place one godet right side up on the ironing board.

Pin-mark a stitch termination point at the top of the godet so it is visible on the fabric's right side. Finger-press a strip of fusible tape along the godet's seam allowance. Press lightly with a steam iron; remove the paper backing.

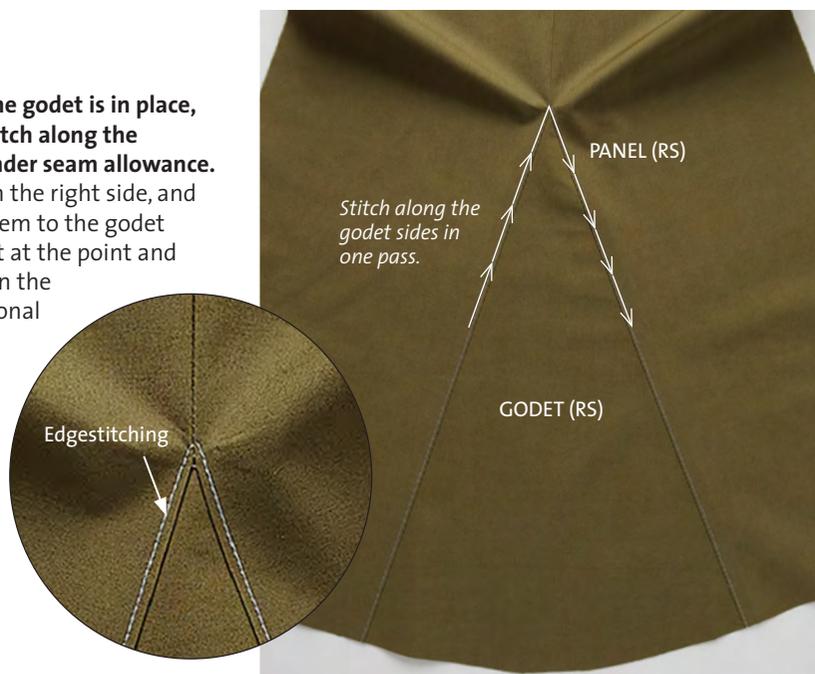


2 Place a dress seam over the godet. Match the stitch termination points on the dress and godet. Align the dress seam allowances with the seamlines of the godet, just covering the fusible tape.



3 Press to fuse the godet to the dress. Take care that the fabric does not shift. Work with a press cloth in a sheer material, such as silk organza.

4 Once the godet is in place, edgestitch along the pressed-under seam allowance. Stitch from the right side, and from the hem to the godet point. Pivot at the point and stitch down the other diagonal side to the hem.



Finish the neckline

A double-layer, or French, bias binding conforms to the curved neckline. It is easy to sew with the aid of fusible tape.

1 Cut a bias strip the length of the neckline circumference. You'll stretch the strip slightly as you sew. Make it seven times the desired finished width. In this case, for a $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch wide finished binding, the strip is $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches wide.

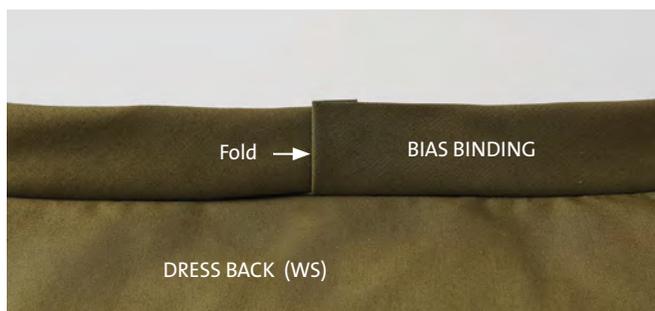


2 Fold the strip in half lengthwise, wrong sides together, but don't press it. Starting at the center back, align the strip's raw edges to the neckline on the wrong side and pin it in place.



3 Start sewing $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from an end of the strip. Use a seam allowance $\frac{1}{8}$ inch narrower than the desired finished binding width. Stretch the strip as you sew.

4 When you are close to the ends meeting, fold in the free $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the first strip end. Lap the second end over the first to finish. Trim the strip if needed.



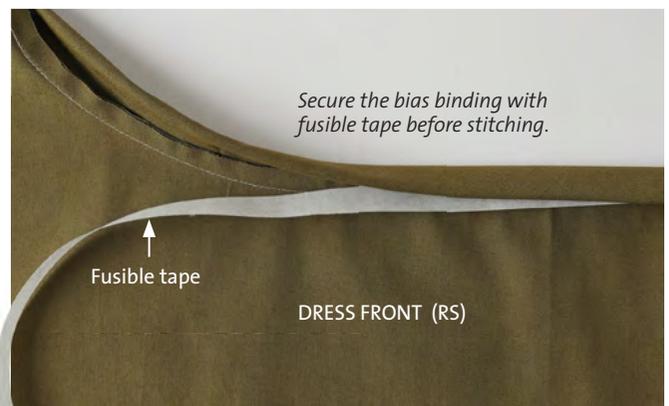
5 Press the bias strip away from the dress. Press the seamline only, and make sure the iron never touches the fold.



6 Wrap the binding around the raw edge of the neckline. Fold it toward the right side, just covering the row of stitching.



7 Place fusible tape under the bias fold, then press to adhere it to the dress neckline. Press in place first, then remove the paper, fold the binding into position, and press a second time. Edgestitch the bias strip to secure. Sew from the right side, without pins.

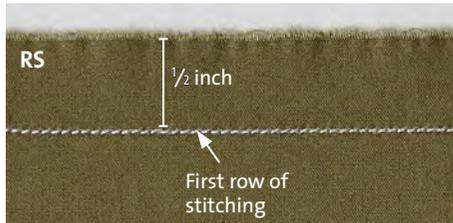


Photos: (pp. 36-37; p. 41; right) Jack Deutsch; all others, Mike Yamin. Illustrations: (p. 38, left) Melanie Mencarelli; all others, Steven Fleck. Stylist: Jessica Saal. Hair and makeup: Agata+Helen.com. Styling credits: earrings—Shashi (Shopbop.com), belt—Ada (Nordstrom.com), bracelets—Universal Thread (Target.com), shoes—Sarto by Franco Sarto (Nordstrom.com).

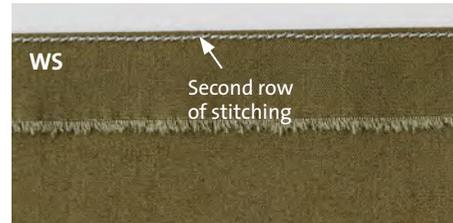
Sew a delicate hem

Hang the dress on a padded hanger for two to three days, as the godets' bias seams may stretch and settle. Try on the dress and mark the hem evenly. Trim the hem edge $\frac{1}{2}$ inch below the marked hemline. Use this same hem technique for the sleeve edges.

1 Sew the first stitching row. Set a 1.5-mm stitch length, and stitch $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the raw hem edge.

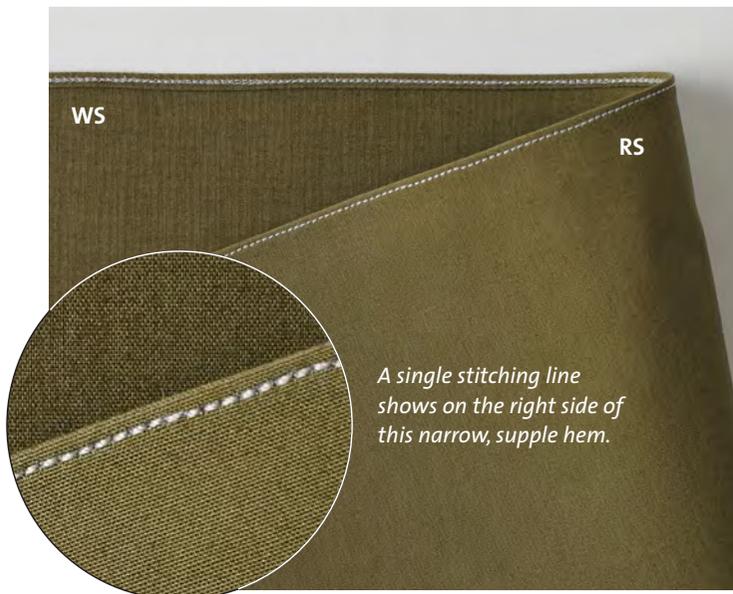


2 Press up the hem allowance, favoring the stitching to the wrong side. Sew from the garment's wrong side through both layers, over the first stitching row.



3 With appliqué scissors, trim the hem allowance. Cut off anything extending past the two rows of stitching.

4 Turn under and press the raw edge one more time. Sew the final row of stitching as close to the edge as possible.



Apply a fine hem treatment for maximum movement and drape in the completed godet dress.

web extra

See how to use these techniques for a skirt in a video at ThreadsMagazine.com.