

sack it to me

Welcome spring in a sunny dress that's really just a tube of fabric

Volume dresses are the name of the game these past few years. They flatter all sorts of body types and are the easy, comfy style choice when the weather starts to steam up. For this *Quick Stuff to Sew* project, you'll learn how to build a versatile sundress—inspired by sack dresses of yore—by starting with just a tube of fabric. A few well-placed pleats, tucks, and wide straps later, you'll be front-row ready.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- ◆ Measuring tape
- ◆ Fitting buddy or dressform
- ◆ Pattern paper, ruler, and pencil
- ◆ 1½ yards of fabric
- ◆ Interfacing
- ◆ Sewing machine, scissors, and thread

FABRIC CHOICES

Here, we used a cute printed cotton with some body, which gives the garment stand-out volume. The pattern also looks great in softer, drapery fabrics. For those, you may want to cut the dress a little wider and use

more pleats to create volume. And, by all means, take your cue from the runways and try this style in a fancier fabrication, like satin. Also experiment with the strap placement and widths. You're the designer, after all.

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start with a tube

Before you commit to sewing the dress in your final fabric, sew up a test garment in muslin fabric. Ask a fitting buddy to help you with the below process. When the fit is perfected, mark any existing seamlines, rip out the stitches in your muslin, and press it flat. Use this as your pattern, adding seam allowances as necessary.

1 Measure bust, waist, and hips.

With a measuring tape, measure your bust, waist, and hips. Note the largest of these measurements, and cut a rectangle of fabric approximately 20 inches more than that measurement. Piece your fabric as necessary to get this final width.



2 Sew a tube.

Also measure from right above your bust to the dress length desired, and trim the muslin to this length, plus a little extra (so you can tweak the hem later, if needed). Sew the fabric into a tube, as shown.



3 Pleat on a dressform or body.

Try the tube on or place it on a dressform that is your size. Pleat out the fabric at the front and back of the tube until it fits snug against your body or form, as shown. The dress at left sports a wide box pleat, but you can pleat any way you like. Mark the edges of the pleats with pins.



4 Add a top band and straps.

Measure along the top edge of the pleated dress. Cut two strips of fabric that length plus seam allowances by 6 inches deep. These are the bands. Cut two 5-inch wide straps, sew into tubes, and turn. Sandwich the straps between the bands on the front and back, and sew through all layers. Align raw edges with pleated edge and sew, wrong sides together.



5 Sew on a wide hem band.

Cut one 6- to 8-inch-wide hem band the length of the hem circumference plus seam allowances. Sew the short ends of the band, right sides together, forming a ring. Fold in half lengthwise and press. Stitch to the dress hem edge, then press the band down.

{COOLTIP}

Add a zipper for easier dressing. This sack dress can be slipped on over your head, so there is no need for a zipper. However, if you prefer to step into your dresses, add an invisible zipper at center back or at one side seam.