

vert



melides dress

knitting pattern – english version

The MELIDES dress is the perfect everyday summer dress with a twist:

It's a tailored piece. You will be able to easily put together the perfect fit for your unique body size and shape. Fear not if, like me, you have to get your bikini tops and bottoms as separates – this dress is here to hug all your curves and concerns!

It's two dresses in one. You get a deep V-neckline and button band on one side, that you can wear at the front for a cute day look, and a square neckline on the other side, which you can also wear at the front for a very elegant evening look with a sexy buttoned back.

It's flattering. I was inspired by sewn pieces while creating this dress. The use of darts, for example, serves both a functional and a formal purpose. Together with the button band, these darts elongate your figure and accentuate your curves. A similar detailing at the waist accentuates your waistline. The choice of needles and yarn makes for a light fabric with fluid drape, which feels like a second skin and is perfect for warm weather.

It's all about the details. A seamless construction in smooth stockinette stitch, only interrupted by the intentional accent lines. A delicate hem that doesn't roll or curl. Neat I-cord edges that blend with the main fabric while lending it some structure. And lastly, an elegant button band which will lend the dress its character: dress it up with mother-of-pearl or enamel buttons; choose corozo or wooden buttons for a more casual touch.

Construction

The dress is knit flat in stockinette stitch, using one strand of fingering weight yarn, ideally silk or a fiber with a similar behavior. It is worked in one piece.

The work starts at the waist with a provisional cast-on. First, the bodice is knit from the waist up, while working increases to accommodate the natural curves of your body along four dart lines. These darts end slightly below the fullest point of the bust. At the underarms, the work is divided to work the front and back pieces of the bodice separately. These are shaped through decreases and the straps are grafted at the top. Once the bodice is finished, the stitches at the waist are picked up to knit the skirt. Two rows of linen stitch are worked at this point to create the detailing which accentuates the waistline. From the waist down, increases to shape the skirt are worked along the same four darts, which continue to the bottom of the dress. The skirt is finished with a hem in linen stitch. The remaining edges of the dress are finished with I-cords; the button bands are worked differently than all other edges.

This dress follows a unique sizing system, make sure to read the following sections before you jump to the instructions.

Why Melides?

While designing and then knitting this dress, I couldn't help but let my mind wander to sunny days spent by the beautiful Alentejan coast, in Portugal. Rust-colored cliffs carved by the Atlantic, hidden beaches of grainy sand, wind carrying the sea mist in the evening, and a quiet, slower paced life under the bright sun. A beach, a lagoon, and a town in Alentejo all carry the name Melides – they have become known amongst artists looking for inspiration and for a secluded space to create. This dress has the effortlessness of those days, with the endless stockinette fabric, and the beautiful details that capture the mind, like the mother-of-pearl buttons, which remind me of the way salty water will shimmer under the sunrays.

Gauge 25 stitches x 31 rows = 10 x 10 cm (4 x 4") in stockinette stitch after washing and blocking.
(Row gauge will change to about 29 rows = 10 cm (4") after hanging/wearing the dress.
Above lower armhole shaping, stretching will put row gauge closer to 28 rows = 10 cm (4").)

Knit a swatch that is at least 15 x 15 cm (6 x 6") using your 3 mm (US 2½) or main needles. Finish your swatch with 6 linen stitch rows, as per the instructions for the hem, to confirm that you can achieve similar horizontal tension in linen and stockinette stitch. Bind off with a regular bind-off, as you would for the hem. Wash and block your swatch without pinning or stretching for accuracy. If you must go up or down in needle size to attain gauge, make sure to knit and block another swatch using new needles.

Attaining stitch gauge is **crucial** for this design. Make sure your stitch count is 25 stitches.

As we all knit with a different tension, it is likely that your row count won't match. If your row gauge is off by 1 row, simply knitting slightly shorter or longer straps might do the trick. No matter how off your row gauge is, I've got your back: the pattern comes with a calculator that does all the math for you!

If you are using the suggested yarn, or a similar one, be aware that the fabric will tend to grow with blocking, both in width and in length. You can expect a 5-10% increase in length after blocking according to pattern instructions. The dress will further weigh itself down with wear and grow about another 5% in length while worn. On a dress about 110-125 cm long (40-50"), wear related stretching can add about 3-5 cm (1¼-2") to the length of the blocked bodice, and another 3-5 cm (1¼-2") to the length of the blocked skirt. A longer dress (125 cm / 50") will stretch more than a shorter dress (100 cm / 40") both with blocking and wear.

Accordingly, when you try the dress on while knitting, it should feel snug and short. The pattern takes this stretching into account, helps you through length checks for each section, and gives you tips on what you can do to compensate for excessive strap stretching once worn. Your dress might stretch less if you: knit a dress shorter than 110 cm (40"), knit a dress with less ease than recommended, raise the position of any of your necklines, shorten your straps, or modify the straps to make them wider. Your dress might stretch more if you: knit a dress longer than 125 cm (50"), knit a dress with more ease than recommended, lengthen your straps, modify the skirt to give it more flare, modify the straps to make them narrower, or manually stretch the fabric while handling it.

Please note: different stretching applies when using a different yarn. Check the "Notes" section for a few tips on how to work with different yarns.

Save your swatch for later! Before you start working on the final touches of your dress, you will want to test them on your swatch. I will guide you through it in the corresponding sections.

Silk is a tricky fiber. Your gauge might change when you knit a big piece of fabric. I recommend you recheck your gauge on the garment after you've knit about 15 cm (6") and compare it with your unblocked gauge. If doubts arise, you can block the fabric before continuing knitting, just to be sure.

Write down your gauge for reference.

You can also already type it in the MELIDES calculator.

Before blocking: ___ sts x ___ rows.

After blocking: ___ sts x ___ rows.

Yarn and haberdashery

- 5-10 balls of Knitting for Olive Pure Silk, 250 m (273.5 yds) / 50 g
16-26 9 mm (3/8") mother-of-pearl buttons by Ma Fabrique de Boutons

Since this dress is tailored and the length will vary with your own height, I suggest you calculate the yardage for your own dress after tailoring your own size in the next pattern section. Make sure to always use the same system to measure and calculate, either metric or imperial.

As soon as you have your own measurements at hand, multiply your L5 (desired dress length) by your widest measurement, either bust (BB), waist (W), high hip (HH) or hip (H). This will give you an estimate of the area of your dress = _____ (cm² / sq in).

Now, if you are using the metric system, multiply that area by 0.137 to calculate your meterage = _____ (m). If you are using the imperial system, multiply that area by 0.939 to calculate your yardage = _____ (yards). Knowing that each ball of the suggested yarn is 250 m (approximately 273.5 yards), you can now use that meterage/yardage to calculate the number of balls you will need to knit your dress = _____ (m / yards). This estimate will give you enough yarn to swatch a couple of times and still have some leftovers.

To estimate of the number of buttons needed, subtract your L1 (shoulder top to bust point) from your L5 (desired dress length) and divide that by your desired space between buttons (up to 5 cm / 2") = _____. I suggest you get a couple more buttons just in case. You might want to wait until you are finished knitting/blocking to decide how many buttons you would like to have and how much space you would like to have between them.

You can opt to use any other fingering weight yarn, provided you achieve gauge. A light fingering silk yarn will give you the best results. Cotton, cotton-merino, Tencel and bamboo yarns might work well too, but you might have to make further adaptations to the length of each section of the dress on your own. You can use any other 9-11 mm (3/8-7/16") buttons of your choice.

Suggested needles and notions

- 3 mm (US 2.5) 80-150 cm (32-60") circular needles, for the main fabric (= main needles)
3 mm (US 2.5) x2 short or long DPNs, for extra comfort while knitting the straps
2.5 mm (US 1.5) 40-150 cm (16-60") circular needles, for the I-cords (= smallest needles)
3.5 mm (US 3) crochet hook, for reinforcing the button bands

8+ stitch markers, 20+ removable stitch markers, 5+ stitch holders for the waist stitches and the straps
1 tapestry needle, 1 sewing needle to attach the buttons, 1 measuring tape, blocking mat

Techniques

Stockinette stitch, linen stitch, M1R, M1L, M1RP, M1LP, S, SSK, K2tog, YO, provisional cast-on, regular bind-off, Italian bind-off, I-cord, grafting, blocking.

Before you start, make sure to read the pattern from the beginning to the end, including the sections "Notes", "Modifications" and "Techniques" at the end of the pattern. If you print your pattern, you might want to keep pages 1-10 and 34-39 separate for easy access.

First of all, let's tailor your own size!

MEASURING

Handmade pieces should offer you something that ready-to-wear cannot: tailoring! Standard sizes are useful, but each body is unique – so I had to create a unique sizing system for this dress too.

Before you start knitting, you will need to do a little setup work. This involves taking your measurements and doing a little math with me. I promise it won't be complicated.

Please take all measurements without any clothes on except for a bra (if you plan on wearing one underneath your dress). While measuring lengths, leave the bra on; you can also wear high waisted tights to help you find your natural waistline while measuring (the top will tend to slide or even roll down to it). Length measurements should be taken on the body (not by holding the tape vertically in front of it), from point to point (i.e.: don't measure along the curve under your breast, but in a straight line from bust point to waistline), along an imaginary vertical line going through your bust point. For accurate measurements, keep your body relaxed and avoid tightening the measuring tape too much, taking deep breaths or contracting your muscles. The high hip is measured at the level of the frontal tip of your hip bone – if you have trouble finding it, it should be halfway between waist and hip.

Remember to always use the same measuring system for the whole pattern. If you have the option, I recommend that you use the metric system for more accuracy and precision.

Take and write down the following measurements:

Width:

- (BB) Bust circumference with bra: _____ (cm/inch) measured at the fullest point
- (W) Waist circumference: _____ (cm/inch) measured at the narrowest point
- (HH) High hip circumference: _____ (cm/inch) measured as described above
- (H) Hip circumference: _____ (cm/inch) measured at the widest point

Approximate length:

- (L1) Shoulder top to bust point: _____ (cm/inch) measured with your bra on
- (L2) Bust point to waist: _____ (cm/inch) measured with your bra on
- (L3) Waist to high hip: _____ (cm/inch) should be similar to high hip to hip
- (L4) High hip to hip: _____ (cm/inch) should be similar to waist to high hip
- (L5) Desired overall dress length: _____ (cm/inch)
- (L6) Length from bust point (at the front) to bust point height at the back, measured over the shoulder: _____ (cm/inch) measured with your bra on
- (L7) Length from waist at the front to waist at the back, measured over the shoulder: _____ (cm/inch) measured with your bra on

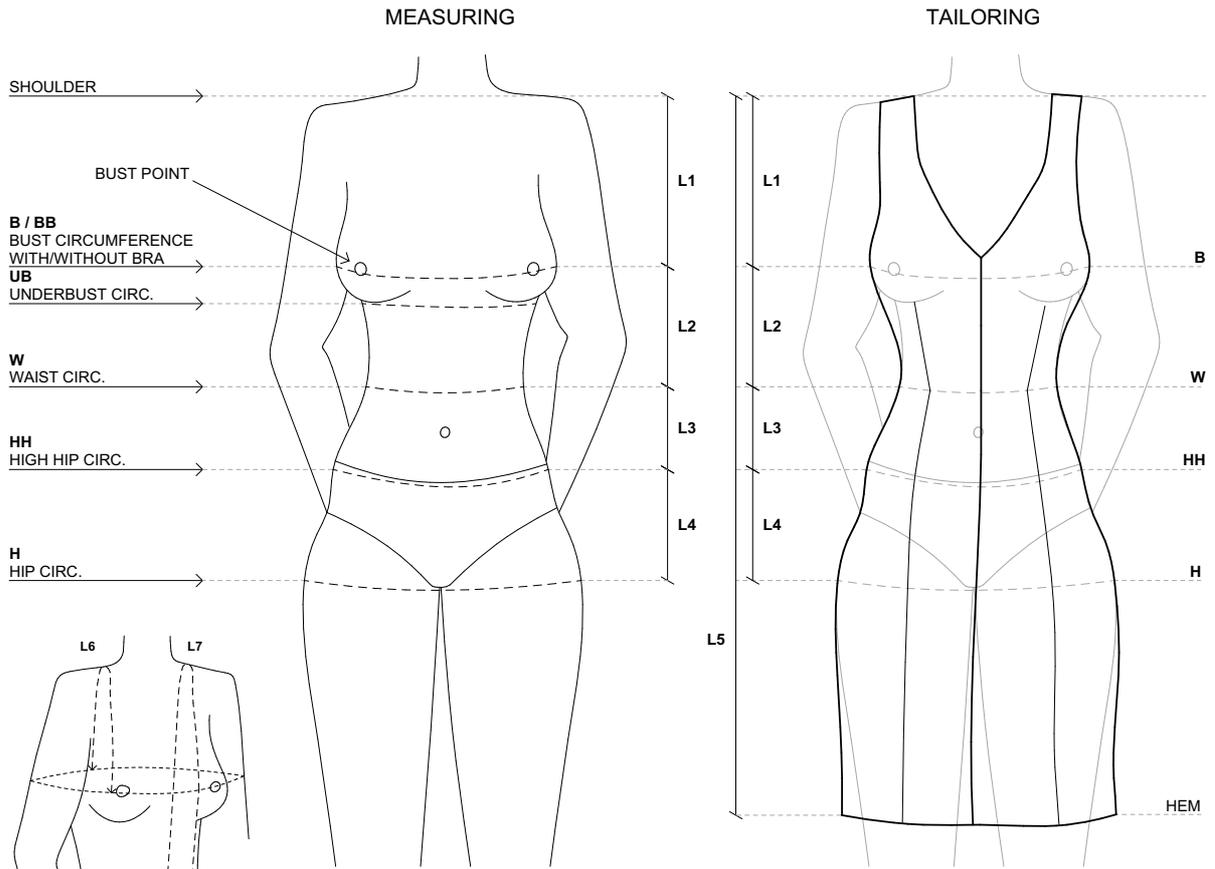
Compare $[L6 \div 2]$ with $[L1]$, and $[L7 \div 2]$ with $[L1 + L2]$:

If the difference is bigger than 3 cm (1¼") in any of either case, I suggest you use $[L6 \div 2] =$ _____ cm/inch whenever L1 is called for, and $[(L7 - L6) \div 2] =$ _____ cm/inch whenever L2 is called for.

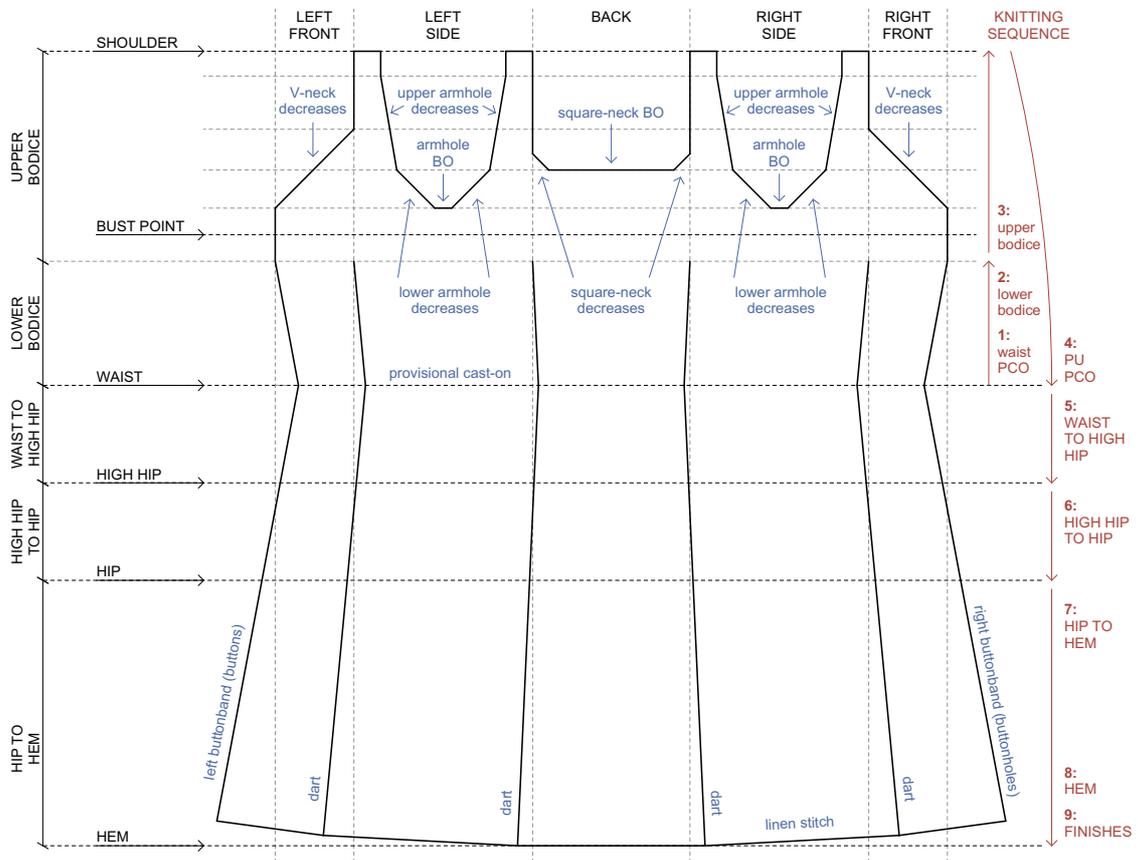
Type your length measurements in the MELIDES calculator.

YOUR MEASUREMENTS ARE HERE

SCHEMATICS FOR MEASURING AND TAILORING



FINISHED DRESS LAYING FLAT, RS FACING UP



SCHEMATICS FOR MEASURING AND TAILORING

TAILORING

The size chart below is based on standard measurements used for sewing and shows you the sizes that will serve as the base for our tailored knitting.

Finished dress circumferences / metric (cm):

SIZE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
BUST	78	82	85	88	91	94	98	101	104	107	110	114	117	120	123	126
WAIST	62	66	69	72	75	78	82	85	88	91	94	98	101	104	107	110
HIGH HIP	78	82	85	88	91	94	98	101	104	107	110	114	117	120	123	126
HIP	88	91	94	98	101	104	107	110	114	117	120	123	126	130	133	136

Finished dress circumferences / imperial (inches):

SIZE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
BUST	31¼	32¾	34	35¼	36½	37¾	39	40¼	41½	43	44¼	45½	46¾	48	49¼	50½
WAIST	25	26¼	27½	28¾	30	31¼	32¾	34	35¼	36½	37¾	39	40¼	41½	43	44¼
HIGH HIP	31¼	32¾	34	35¼	36½	37¾	39	40¼	41½	43	44¼	45½	46¾	48	49¼	50½
HIP	35¼	36½	37¾	39	40¼	41½	43	44¼	45½	46¾	48	49¼	50½	51¾	53	54½

Refer to the table that corresponds to the measuring system you are using. For each of the four measurement rows, mark the measurement closest to your own. If you are exactly between two sizes, size up. Doing this will give you the intended ease of approximately 0 cm / 0" (± 1.6 cm / $\frac{3}{4}$ ").

For example, if your measurements are:

Bust: 90 cm / Waist: 75 cm / High Hip: 93 cm / Hip: 105.5 cm

you will mark the standard measurements: 91 / 75 / 94 / 107 in the metric system table, which correspond to sizes: Bust: B5 / Waist: W5 / High Hip: HH6 / Hip: H7.

This sequence of sizes **B5 / W5 / HH6 / H7** is your "tailored size".

To help you during the knitting process, we will now complete your tailored size by writing down the deviation from standard sizing you will work at each step. We will call it "tailoring factor", or TF.

Let's start from the waist up, with your tailored size and the size chart at hand.

In the example above, the **bust size** is the same as the waist size. Our bust tailoring factor is (0) and we will write a (0) next to the bust size:

B5 (0) / W5 / HH6 / H7

Next, we will work our way from the waist down in steps. In this example, the **high hip size** is 1 size larger than the waist size, so our high hip tailoring factor is (+1).

B5 (0) / W5 / HH6 (+1) / H7

Finally, we will go from the high hip to the hip. In this example, the **hip size** is 1 size larger than the high hip size, so our hip tailoring factor is +1.

B5 (0) / W5 / HH6 (+1) / H7 (+1)

If you go down in size at any of those steps, the tailoring factor will be a negative number. For instance, if your bust size is a B11 and your waist size a W13, your tailoring factor for the bust is (-2).

You will need your waist size, your bust size and all three tailoring factors (bust, high hip and hip) to knit the dress. The size/factor used is mentioned at the beginning of each section.

Write down your tailored size with tailoring factors before you start.

You can also already type it in the MELIDES calculator.

B ___ (___) / W ___ / HH ___ (___) / H ___ (___)

TAILORING TROUBLESHOOT:

Be careful not to mix up sizes and tailoring factors while knitting!

The reference used changes as you work through the sections and is specified at the beginning of each section.

Your bust, waist, high hip and hip sizes all are the same number?

All your tailoring factors will be "0".

You can find a bust size match in the chart, but not a match for one or more of your other measurements?

You can expand the table (except the bust row) by using the following rule: difference between sizes = 3.2 cm (about 1¼") = 8 sts. Work as described below:

If your measurement is **larger** than the last value for a row on the table:

Add 3.2 cm (about 1¼") at a time to that value, adding a column on the right of the table, until you get a measurement that works for you at the suggested gauge. Calculate your tailoring factor as you normally would, considering all added columns. If you expand the table to get your waist size: for each added column, add to the initial cast-on counts indicated for size W16: +1 st to each front panel, +2 sts to the back panel and +2 sts to each side panel (in total 8 sts).

If your measurement is **smaller** than the first value of the row on the table:

Subtract 3.2 cm (about 1¼") at a time from that value, adding a column on the left of the table, until you get a measurement that works for you at the suggested gauge. Calculate your tailoring factor as you normally would, considering all added columns. If you expand the table to get your waist size: for each added column, subtract from the initial cast-on counts indicated for size W1: -1 st from each front panel, -2 sts from the back panel and -2 sts from each side panel (in total 8 sts).

Your bust tailoring factor is (-5)?

You won't need/work any increases on the bodice.

Your breasts are bell shaped? (or are you planning on raising your armholes by working more rows of bust?)

(thinner on the top and fuller/rounder on the bottom; likely hang slightly lower on your chest than the average boob.)

If they are, and your bra follows their shape, I suggest you work a modification to the "Bust" section of the "Upper bodice".

1 - Once you have worked half of the rows in the "Bust" section (and reached your bust point height), you will want to start working decrease rows. Set this up by marking the middle of each side panel with a removable stitch marker (= "spM").

2 - A decrease row is worked on the RS as follows: K to M, K1, K to 6 before spM, SSK, K12, K2tog, K to M, K1, K to M, K1, K to 6 before spM, SSK, K12, K2tog, K to M, K1, K to EOR (-4 sts).

3 - Calculate how many decreases you will want to have. To do so, take half of the length of your "Bust" section (please check the next section and refer to the MELIDES calculator, cell S65). Then measure your chest circumference at that distance (or height) above your bust point: ____ (cm/inch). Now subtract that from your BB circumference = ____ (cm/inch). For each 1.6 cm (¾") difference work a decrease row = ____ decrease rows. Space them evenly along the upper half of the "Bust" section rows. If you need more decrease rows than the remaining "Bust" RS rows, you can keep decreasing after you BO for the armhole.

4 - For each decrease row worked, work one less decrease at a 3-row spacing at the top of the upper armhole, to keep strap width as per pattern.

Your waist is wider than your bust (bust tailoring factor is -6 or smaller)?

I suggest you work the following alterations to the pattern for best fit:

If your high hip and hip are not wider than your waist:

1 - At the waist, cast on the number of stitches for your waist size using a provisional cast-on. As you place your stitch markers for the darts at the waist, mark also the middle of the side panels. Use different markers than the markers for the darts.

2 - In the bodice section, work the dart lines with the slipped stitches every RS row, as per pattern, and don't work any increases alongside them.

3 - To work a decrease row, work according to the pattern, and when you get to 3 stitches before a stitch marker indicating the middle of a side panel, [K2tog, K1, slip the marker, K1, SSK] if the row is a RS row, [SSP, P2, slip the marker, P1 and P2tog] if it is a WS row. If you are a (-6), work as many decreases as the (-4) has increases for the bodice, on the same rows. If you are a (-7), work as many decreases as the (-3) has increases, on the same rows, and so on.

4 - When you get to the bust, you should have the indicated number of stitches for your bust size. Knit the top of the bodice as per instructions.

5 - After picking up the stitches from your provisional cast-on at the waist to knit the skirt, knit the waist detailing and then skip the sections "skirt: waist to high hip" and "skirt: high hip to hip" and go straight to the "skirt: hip to hem" section. Knit the rest of the dress per pattern.

If your high hip and/or hip are/is wider than your waist:

1 - Work the bodice as described above. After picking up the stitches from your provisional cast-on, knit the rest of the dress per pattern with no alterations.

Your high hip tailoring factor is (-5) or smaller (-6, -7,...)?

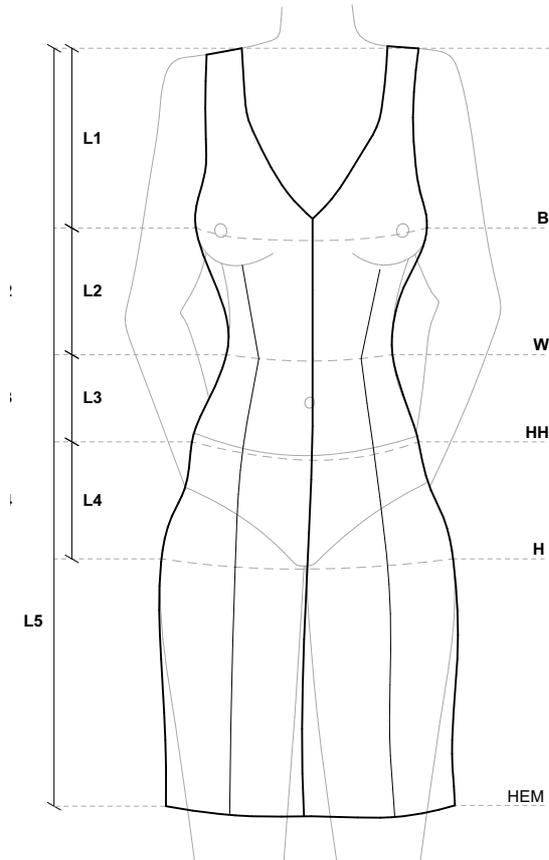
You won't need any increases between waist and high hip. Work the instructions for high hip TF (-5).

Your hip tailoring factor is (-3) or smaller (-4, -5...)?

You won't need any increases between high hip and hip. In this case, I recommend you skip the high hip to hip section and start the hip to hem section. If your last increase row is over 18 rows away, start the section by working an increase row.

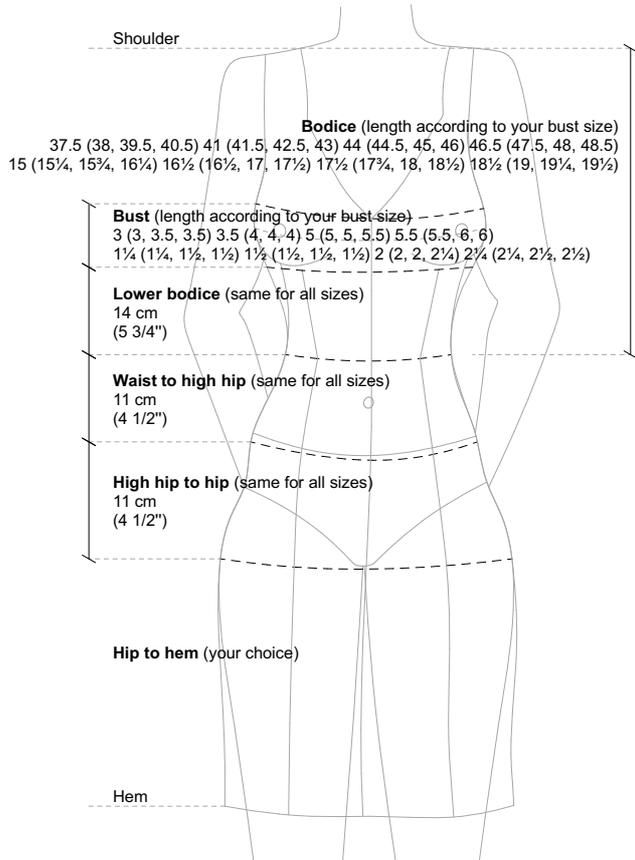
LENGTH TAILORING

TAILORING



STANDARD PATTERN LENGTHS

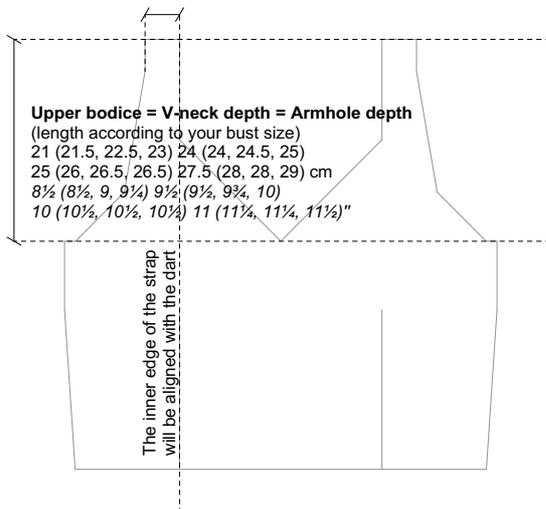
(estimated measurements after blocking, while worn)



OTHER STANDARD PATTERN MEASUREMENTS

(estimated measurements after blocking, while worn)

Strap width (according to your bust size)
 3 (3, 3, 3.5) 3.5 (3.5, 3.5, 4)
 4 (4, 4, 5) 5 (5, 5.5, 5.5) cm
 1¼ (1¼, 1½, 1½) 1½ (1½, 1½, 1½)
 1½ (1½, 1½, 2) 2 (2, 2¼, 2¼)"



The last step of the tailoring process is planning the perfect length for each section of your dress.

The pattern will give you suggestions on length based on standard sizing, so if your measurements fall within the standard lengths shown in the sketch above (page 9) and your row gauge was a match for mine, you might be able to skip this part.

MELIDES CALCULATOR 101:

Download: https://www.dropbox.com/s/koda9tmj8nx154k/MELIDES_dress_calculator_EN.xlsx?dl=0

If your row gauge was off, and/or your measurements are different, I have set up the MELIDES calculator to do the math for you.

The calculator will provide you with:

- Adapted row counts and row numbers according to your own gauge and length measurements, which you can use in each section of the pattern,
- Estimates on how long you can expect each section to be before and after blocking, so that you can work on your dress with more confidence.
- Your tailoring factors (TF), once you've input your B, W, H and HH sizes.

It will work best if your (unblocked) dress gauge matches your (unblocked) swatch gauge. Make sure you have read all the previous sections before you start working with the calculator.

Open the spreadsheet using either [Microsoft Excel](#) or [Google Spreadsheets](#). Unfortunately, this spreadsheet won't work with Apple Numbers. Other apps haven't been tested – if the software can't compute the formulas, the calculator won't work as expected.

Read the instructions at the top of the calculator before you start. Set up the spreadsheet accordingly, by inputting your gauge, sizes, and desired final lengths in the corresponding blue cells. Make sure you replace all the blue text with your own data. Once you're ready, hold your pattern text next to your spreadsheet.

Each pattern section has one (or more) corresponding spreadsheet section(s). These are clearly indicated in the beginning of each pattern section, and are underlined with a dashed line. I.e.: to customize the "Lower bodice" section, refer to the spreadsheet section "Waist to bust modding".

In the step-by-step instructions of a section, you will find text blocks underlined with a dashed line. I.e.: "or [# increase rows: ...]" in the "Lower bodice" section. These always appear after a row count/number and are meant to be filled out with your own calculated row count/number from the spreadsheet, and to be used in place of the former while knitting.

You will find the value you're looking for on column U (cells with a thick outline), under the corresponding spreadsheet section(s), next to the corresponding text. I.e.: U58 gives you the "# increase rows" for the "Waist to bust modding". Before you start knitting, make sure you have located all those text blocks and written down all the values you need.

Please note: If the number of rows calculated for a given section does not allow you to finish on the side suggested by the pattern (WS/RS), add an extra row to that section. If the pattern tells you to work a specific row on a specific side (RS/WS), and the calculator gives you a row on the other side, work the instructions on the next row.

I suggest you keep these first 10 pages separate for easier reference.

LET'S GET KNITTING!

To simplify the knitting process, the V-neck side of the dress will be referred to as the “front side” and the side with the square neckline will be referred to as the “back side”.

Before you start, make sure you've read all sections of the pattern from the beginning to the end, in particular the setup pages 1-10 and the sections “Notes”, “Modifications” and “Techniques” at the end.

WAIST

Mark the **waist size** [W1 (W2, W3, W4) W5 (W6, W7, W8) W9 (W10, W11, W12) W13 (W14, W15, W16)] you are making. You can find it in your tailored size, e.g.: B0 (0) / **W0** / HH0 (0) / H0 (0).

Start with your 3 mm (US 2.5) or main long circular needles. Change cable length when needed.

Using a provisional cast-on method, cast on [156 (164, 172, 180) 188 (196, 204, 212) 220 (228, 236, 244) 252 (260, 268, 276)] stitches.

No matter which method you use, make sure that the stitches on your needles are now from your working yarn, not from your waste yarn. If you are using a method which involves casting on stitches using waste yarn, make sure to work 1 RS row (K to EOR) with your working yarn before starting. These same stitches will be picked up later to knit the skirt.

The next row is a WS row. Work this setup row as follows:

(WS) P [16 (17, 18, 19) 20 (21, 22, 23) 24 (25, 26, 27) 28 (29, 30, 31)] (left front),
place M, **P1**, place M,
P [44 (46, 48, 50) 52 (54, 56, 58) 60 (62, 64, 66) 68 (70, 72, 74)] (left side),
place M, **P1**, place M,
P [32 (34, 36, 38) 40 (42, 44, 46) 48 (50, 52, 54) 56 (58, 60, 62)] (back),
place M, **P1**, place M,
P [44 (46, 48, 50) 52 (54, 56, 58) 60 (62, 64, 66) 68 (70, 72, 74)] (right side),
place M, **P1**, place M,
P [16 (17, 18, 19) 20 (21, 22, 23) 24 (25, 26, 27) 28 (29, 30, 31)] (right front).

LOWER BODICE: WAIST TO BUST

Mark your **bust tailoring factor** before you start: [-5 (-4, -3, -2, -1) 0, (+1, +2, +3 +4) +5]. You can find it next to your bust size in your tailored size, e.g.: B0 (**0**) / W0 / HH0 (0) / H0 (0). In this section, the stitch/row/increase counts for the corresponding tailoring factor will be presented this way. If only one count is indicated, it means that the count is the same for all sizes.

The lower bodice section will be about 13 cm (5¼”) after blocking and about 14 cm (5¾”) when worn and will fit you best if your L2 is about 16-18 cm (6½-7¼”). If your own L2 is shorter or longer than that length, and/or your row gauge was off, I recommend you adapt the total row count and the number of rows between increases accordingly. Use the MELIDES calculator to do this, specifically the section “Waist to bust modding”. Substitute pattern row numbers and counts with the matching calculator value whenever indicated. Provided with your gauge before blocking, the MELIDES calculator will also estimate how long your unblocked lower bodice should be (cell K57). For the most flattering fit, keep the following in mind: when worn after blocking, the top of this section (end of the darts), should fall about: 1 cm (½”) below your bust point for bust sizes B1-B5, 2 cm (¾”) for bust sizes B6-B11 and 3 cm (1¼”) for bust sizes B12-B16.

The lower bodice is worked in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P) from the waist up to the bust.

Inspired by sewn pieces, the shaping of the fabric is done along 4 darts, 2 at the front and 2 at the back of the dress. The dart stitches are now 4 single stitches between stitch markers and are singled out in **bold** in the instructions. A dart stitch is slipped purlwise with the yarn in the back on all RS rows except for the increase rows, where it is knit, and it is purled on all WS rows. The stitch markers (M) are always kept on each side of the dart stitch, which means they are always slipped just before and right after this stitch is worked. This is omitted in the instructions.

The increase rows are worked at a different row count for each tailoring factor. Increases are always worked alongside the darts, one before and one after each dart stitch, which means each increase row will add 8 stitches to the stitch count on your needles. If your tailoring factor is -5, no increases are worked (as indicated by the -). If your tailoring factor is lower than -5, make sure you read the "Tailoring troubleshoot" section at the beginning of the pattern before starting.

The next row is the 1st row (RS) and is worked without increases.

Work in pattern as follows:

RS: K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to EOR

WS: P to EOR

On the [- (19th, 19th, 12th, 9th) 7th (5th, 4th, 4th, 3rd) 3rd] or [first increase row:.....]th row, work one increase row instead, as follows:

If the increase row is a RS row:

K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M,
M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to EOR (+8 sts)

If the increase row is a WS row:

P to M, M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to M, M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to M, M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to M,
M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to EOR (+8 sts)

Keep working in pattern, working an increase row every [- (-, 20th, 13th, 10th) 8th (6th, 5th, 5th, 4th) 4th] or [increase spacing:.....]th row, until you have:

worked a total of [0 (1, 2, 3, 4) 5 (6, 7, 8, 9) 10] increase row(s),
increased a total of [0 (8, 16, 24, 32) 40 (48, 56, 64, 72) 80] stitches,
and worked [- (21, 1, 2, 1) 1 (5, 6, 1, 5) 1] or [# rows after last inc row:.....] rows after your last increase row.

End with a WS row. You will have worked a total of 40 rows or [section row count:.....] for all sizes and now have the exact number of stitches you need to knit the top of the bodice for your bust size (check the next section) on your needles.

UPPER BODICE: BUST TO SHOULDER

Mark the **bust size** [B1 (B2, B3, B4) B5 (B6, B7, B8) B9 (B10, B11, B12) B13 (B14, B15, B16)] you are making. You can find it in your tailored size, e.g.: **B0** (0) / W0 / HH0 (0) / H0 (0). In this section, the stitch/row/decrease counts for the corresponding size will be presented this way.

The upper bodice section will be about [19.5 (20, 20.5, 21.5) 22 (22, 22.5, 23.5) 23.5 (24, 24.5, 25) 25 (26, 26, 26.5)] cm / [7¾ (8, 8¼, 8½) 8¾ (8¾, 9, 9½) 9½ (9½, 9½, 10) 10 (10½, 10½, 10½)]” after blocking and about [21 (21.5, 22.5, 23) 24 (24, 24.5, 25) 25 (26, 26.5, 26.5) 27.5 (28, 28, 29)] cm / [8½ (8½, 9, 9¼) 9½ (9½, 9¾, 10) 10 (10½, 10½, 10½) 11 (11¼, 11¼, 11½)]” while worn after blocking. If your own L1 is over 3 cm / 1¼” different from the latter indicated measurement, and/or your row gauge was off by more than 2 rows every 10 cm / 4”, I recommend you adapt the total row count and the number of rows between decreases accordingly. Use the MELIDES calculator to do this, specifically the sections “Upper bodice modding” and “Upper bodice decreases”. Substitute pattern row numbers and counts with the matching calculator value whenever indicated. Provided with your gauge before blocking, the MELIDES calculator will also estimate how long your unblocked upper bodice should be (= [K51-K57]).

Keep the following in mind while knitting and trying on the bodice: the fabric above the first set of armhole shaping decreases will stretch more in length than the rest of the dress; for that fabric, row gauge after blocking when worn will be closer to 28 rows = 10 cm / 4”. This is accounted for in the MELIDES calculator. When tried on while knitting (unblocked), the bottom of the V-neck and the bottom of the square neck should fall considerably higher than intended (check row 43 of the MELIDES calculator for L1 lengths before and after blocking). If you wish to move your V-neck and/or your armholes up, please check the customization options at the end of the pattern. Since this is a reversible design, you should check the fit of the dress by trying it on both with the V-neck and the square-neck at the front. Try the dress on as you go and check strap length before finishing knitting and sewing.

The upper bodice is worked in stockinette stitch from the bust up to the top of the shoulders, in sections.

First, the section of fabric that falls around the fullest part of the bust is worked without increases/decreases. The decreases for the V-neck start on a RS row, two rows before casting off at the armholes, where top right front, top back, and top left front are separated. The top left front is knit while shaping the V-neck and the armhole through decreases. The top right front is knit the same way, just mirrored. The back section is then shaped by working similar armhole decreases up to the square neckline, where stitches are bind off and the back straps are separated on a RS row. Finally, each back strap is knit separately, while continuing to shape the armhole and the neckline. The front and back straps are grafted at the top to achieve a seamless join.

BUST

Keep using the same 3 mm (US 2.5) or main long circular needles.

You will now work the section of fabric that will fit around the fullest part of your bust, which starts at the top of the bodice darts (as explained before, these should fall a little under your bust point) and ends at the bottom of your V-neck and armholes. *This dress has a deep-plunge V-neck. If you prefer more coverage, you can opt to start the decreases for the V-neck after working the separation under the arms, at your preferred height, instead.*

You should now have the following stitches and markers on your needles:

[21 (22, 23, 24) 25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32) 33 (34, 35, 36)] right front stitches,
1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,
[54 (56, 58, 60) 62 (64, 66, 68) 70 (72, 74, 76) 78 (80, 82, 84)] right side stitches,
1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,
[42 (44, 46, 48) 50 (52, 54, 56) 58 (60, 62, 64) 66 (68, 70, 72)] back stitches,
1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,
[54 (56, 58, 60) 62 (64, 66, 68) 70 (72, 74, 76) 78 (80, 82, 84)] left side stitches,
1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,
[21 (22, 23, 24) 25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32) 33 (34, 35, 36)] left front stitches,
In total: [196 (204, 212, 220) 228 (236, 244, 252) 260 (268, 276, 284) 292 (300, 308, 316)] stitches.

The next row is a RS row. Work in stockinette stitch as follows:

RS: K to EOR

WS: P to EOR

Leave the stitch markers in place, slipping them as they come. The dart stitches are now worked just like any other stitch.

Work a total of [8 (8, 10, 10) 10 (12, 12, 12) 14 (14, 14, 16) 16 (16, 18, 18)] or [# bust rows:] rows, finishing with a WS row.

On the 9th (9th, 11th, 11th) 11th (13th, 13th, 13th) 15th (15th, 15th, 17th) 17th (17th, 19th, 19th) or [underarm BO on row:]th row (RS), you will bind off at the underarms and you will start shaping the V-neck, by working one decrease at the beginning and one at the end of the row. Work this row as follows:

(RS) K1, K2tog, K to M (right front), K1 (dart stitch),
K [25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32) 33 (34, 35, 36) 37 (38, 39, 40)], BO4, K to M,
K1 (dart stitch), K to M (back), K1 (dart stitch),
K [25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32) 33 (34, 35, 36) 37 (38, 39, 40)], BO4, K to M,
K1 (dart stitch), K to 3 before EOR (left front), SSK, K1 (-10 sts)

You should now have the following stitches and markers on your needles:

Top right front:

[20 (21, 22, 23) 24 (25, 26, 27) 28 (29, 30, 31) 32 (33, 34, 35)] right front center stitches
1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,
[25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32) 33 (34, 35, 36) 37 (38, 39, 40)] right front side stitches,

Top back:

[25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32) 33 (34, 35, 36) 37 (38, 39, 40)] right back side stitches,
1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,
[42 (44, 46, 48) 50 (52, 54, 56) 58 (60, 62, 64) 66 (68, 70, 72)] back center stitches,
1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,
[25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32) 33 (34, 35, 36) 37 (38, 39, 40)] left back side stitches,

Top left front:

[25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32) 33 (34, 35, 36) 37 (38, 39, 40)] left front side stitches,
1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,
[20 (21, 22, 23) 24 (25, 26, 27) 28 (29, 30, 31) 32 (33, 34, 35)] left front center stitches.

Mark the start of the V-neck on both sides with a removable stitch marker for later. Place the top right front and top back stitches on hold on a stitch holder or a piece of leftover yarn. Don't cut the yarn.

TOP LEFT FRONT

Slip the [46 (48, 50, 52) 54 (56, 58, 60) 62 (64, 66, 68) 70 (72, 74, 76)] top left front stitches onto a shorter 3 mm (US 2.5) or main circular needles (or DPNs) for more comfort.

You will now work the top left front in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P). At the same time, you will work decreases to shape the armhole at the beginning of every RS row and decreases to shape the V-neck at the end of every RS row.

The work now starts with the 10th (10th, 12th, 12th) 12th (14th, 14th, 14th) 16th (16th, 16th, 18th) 18th (18th, 20th, 20th) or [# bust rows + 1:.....]th row of the top of the bodice, which is a WS row. Work as follows:

WS: P to EOR

RS: K1, K2tog, K to 3 before EOR, SSK, K1 (-2 sts)

Always slip the stitch markers and work the dart stitches like any other stitch.

Work these two rows a total of [7 (7, 8, 8) 8 (8, 8, 9) 9 (9, 9, 9) 10 (10, 10, 10)] times, ending with a RS row.

You have now worked a total of:

[7 (7, 8, 8) 8 (8, 8, 9) 9 (9, 9, 9) 10 (10, 10, 10)] decreases for the armhole,

[7 (7, 8, 8) 8 (8, 8, 9) 9 (9, 9, 9) 10 (10, 10, 10)] *additional* decreases for the V-neck
(the first decrease in the bind-off row is not included in this count!)

worked over:

[14 (14, 16, 16) 16 (16, 16, 18) 18 (18, 18, 18) 20 (20, 20, 20)] rows,

and have:

[32 (34, 34, 36) 38 (40, 42, 42) 44 (46, 48, 50) 50 (52, 54, 56)] stitches on your needles.

The lower armhole shaping is done. It is worked the same no matter your gauge or L1. You will continue working the decreases for the V-neck at the end of every RS row as you've done so far. The decreases used to shape the armhole will now be worked every 3rd row alternating between the beginning of a RS row and the end of a WS row, or every [upper armhole decrease spacing:.....]th row.

The work now starts with the [24th (24th, 28th, 28th) 28th (30th, 30th, 32nd) 34th (34th, 34th, 36th) 38th (38th, 40th, 40th)] or [# bust rows + 1 + # lower armhole rows:.....]th row, which is a WS row. Work as follows:

WS: P to EOR

RS: K to 3 before EOR, SSK, K1 (-1 st)

Starting on the [27th (27th, 31st, 31st) 31st (33rd, 33rd, 35th) 37th (37th, 37th, 39th) 41st (41st, 43rd, 43rd)] or [# bust rows + 1 + # lower armhole rows + upper armhole decrease spacing:.....]th row, and then every 3rd or [upper armhole decrease spacing:.....]th row, additionally work the following decrease for the armhole:

If the decrease row is a WS row:

P to 3 before EOR, P2tog, P1 (-1 st)

If the decrease row is a RS row:

K1, K2tog, K to 3 before EOR, SSK, K1 (-2 sts)

On the [47th (49th, 53rd, 55th) 57th (61st, 63rd, 65th) 69th (71st, 73rd, 77th) 79th (81st, 85th, 87th)] or [last V-neck dec on row:.....]th row, you will work the last decrease for the V-neck as follows:

(RS) Work as you normally would (depending on whether you have to decrease at the beginning of the row or not) to 3 sts before EOR, remove M. The next stitch is the dart stitch.

SSK, removing the M in the middle of those stitches before working them, K1.

You have now finished the [20 (21, 22, 23) 24 (25, 26, 27) 28 (29, 30, 31) 32 (33, 34, 35)] decreases for the V-neck, including the first decrease in the bind-off row. You now have [13 (13, 13, 13) 14 (14, 14, 14) 15 (15, 15, 16) 16 (16, 16, 17)] stitches on your needles.

Keep working in stockinette stitch, no longer working decreases for the V-neck at the end of the RS rows, but still working the decreases for the armhole every 3rd row, continuing counting from your last decrease, as follows:

If the decrease row is a WS row:

P to 3 before EOR, P2tog, P1 (-1 st)

If the decrease row is a RS row:

K1, K2tog, K to EOR. (-1 st)

Continue working this way until you have worked:

[12 (13, 13, 12) 13 (14, 15, 13) 14 (15, 16, 15) 15 (16, 15, 16)] decreases at a 3-row or [upper armhole decrease spacing: ...]-row spacing on the armhole side in total,

worked over:

[36 (39, 39, 36) 39 (42, 45, 39) 42 (45, 48, 45) 45 (48, 45, 48)] or [# upper armhole rows: ...] rows.

You now have:

[8 (8, 8, 10) 10 (10, 10, 12) 12 (12, 12, 14) 14 (14, 16, 16)] stitches on your needles.

You will now knit the strap in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P) without decreases, working about another [9 (8, 8, 13) 12 (9, 8, 14) 11 (10, 9, 12) 12 (11, 14, 13)] rows, ending with a WS row. I suggest you use short DPNs for more comfort. Write down how many strap rows you have knit: _____.

Check strap fit before cutting the yarn. Slip the stitches onto a stitch holder or a piece of leftover yarn. Cut the yarn, leaving a tail long enough to work a few more rows if necessary.

TOP RIGHT FRONT

Slip the [46 (48, 50, 52) 54 (56, 58, 60) 62 (64, 66, 68) 70 (72, 74, 76)] top right front stitches onto your short 3 mm (US 2.5) or main circular needles (or DPNs) for more comfort.

You will now work the top right front the same way as the top left front, just mirrored. Work in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P). At the same time, you will work decreases to shape the V-neck at the beginning of every RS row and decreases to shape the armhole at the end of every RS row.

The work now starts with the 10th (10th, 12th, 12th) 12th (14th, 14th, 14th) 16th (16th, 16th, 18th) 18th (18th, 20th, 20th) or [# bust rows + 1: ...]th row of the top of the bodice, which is a WS row. Work as follows:

WS: P to EOR

RS: K1, K2tog, K to 3 before EOR, SSK, K1 (-2 sts)

Always slip the stitch markers and work the dart stitches like any other stitch.

Work these two rows a total of [7 (7, 8, 8) 8 (8, 8, 9) 9 (9, 9, 9) 10 (10, 10, 10)] times, ending with a RS row.

You have now worked a total of:

[7 (7, 8, 8) 8 (8, 8, 9) 9 (9, 9, 9) 10 (10, 10, 10)] *additional* decreases for the V-neck, (*again, the first decrease in the bind-off row is not included in this count!*)

[7 (7, 8, 8) 8 (8, 8, 9) 9 (9, 9, 9) 10 (10, 10, 10)] decreases for the armhole,

worked over:

[14 (14, 16, 16) 16 (16, 16, 18) 18 (18, 18, 18) 20 (20, 20, 20)] rows,

and have:

[32 (34, 34, 36) 38 (40, 42, 42) 44 (46, 48, 50) 50 (52, 54, 56)] stitches on your needles.

The lower armhole shaping is done. It is worked the same no matter your gauge or L1. You will continue working the decreases for the V-neck at the beginning of every RS row as you did so far. The decreases to shape the armhole will now be worked every 3rd row, alternating between the end of a RS row and the beginning of a WS row, or every [upper armhole decrease spacing: ...]th row.

The work now starts with the [24th (24th, 28th, 28th) 28th (30th, 30th, 32nd) 34th (34th, 34th, 36th) 38th (38th, 40th, 40th)] or [# bust rows + 1 + # lower armhole rows: ...]th row, which is a WS row. Work as follows:

WS: P to EOR

RS: K1, K2tog, K to EOR (-1 st)

Starting on the [27th (27th, 31st, 31st) 31st (33rd, 33rd, 35th) 37th (37th, 37th, 39th) 41st (41st, 43rd, 43rd)] or [# bust rows + 1 + # lower armhole rows + upper armhole decrease spacing: ...]th row, and then every 3rd or [upper armhole decrease spacing: ...]th row, additionally work the following decrease for the armhole:

If the decrease row is a WS row:

P1, SSP, P to EOR (-1 st)

If the decrease row is a RS row:

K1, K2tog, K to 3 before EOR, **SSK, K1** (-2 sts)

On the [47th (49th, 53rd, 55th) 57th (61st, 63rd, 65th) 69th (71st, 73rd, 77th) 79th (81st, 85th, 87th)] or [last V-neck dec on row: ...]th row, you will work the last decrease for the V-neck as follows:

(RS) K1. The 2nd stitch on the left needle is now the dart stitch. K2tog, removing the M in the middle of those stitches before working them. Remove the remaining M, then work as you normally would (depending on whether you must decrease at the end of the row or not).

You have now finished the [20 (21, 22, 23) 24 (25, 26, 27) 28 (29, 30, 31) 32 (33, 34, 35)] decreases for the V-neck, including the first decrease in the bind-off row. You now have [13 (13, 13, 13) 14 (14, 14, 14) 15 (15, 15, 16) 16 (16, 16, 17)] stitches on your needles.

Keep working in stockinette stitch, now working no more decreases for the V-neck at the beginning of the RS rows, but still working the decreases for the armhole every 3rd row, continuing counting from your last decrease, as follows:

If the decrease row is a WS row:

P1, SSP, P to EOR (-1 st)

If the decrease row is a RS row:

K to 3 before EOR, **SSK, K1** (-1 st)

Continue working this way until you have worked:

[12 (13, 13, 12) 13 (14, 15, 13) 14 (15, 16, 15) 15 (16, 15, 16)] decreases at a 3-row or [upper armhole decrease spacing: ...]-row spacing on the armhole side in total,

worked over:

[36 (39, 39, 36) 39 (42, 45, 39) 42 (45, 48, 45) 45 (48, 45, 48)] or [# upper armhole rows: ...] rows.

You now have:

[8 (8, 8, 10) 10 (10, 10, 12) 12 (12, 12, 14) 14 (14, 16, 16)] stitches on your needles.

You will now knit the strap in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P) without decreases, working about another [9 (8, 8, 13) 12 (9, 8, 14) 11 (10, 9, 12) 12 (11, 14, 13)] rows, ending with a WS row. I suggest you use short DPNs for more comfort.

If you have knit a different length of strap on the left side, make sure to knit the same number of rows on the right side.

Check strap fit before cutting the yarn. Slip the stitches onto a stitch holder or a piece of leftover yarn. Cut the yarn, leaving a tail long enough to work a few more rows if necessary.

TOP BACK: FROM UNDERARM BIND-OFF TO SQUARE NECKLINE BIND-OFF

Slip the [94 (98, 102, 106) 110 (114, 118, 122) 126 (130, 134, 138) 142 (146, 150, 154)] top back stitches onto your 3 mm (US 2.5) or main circular needles.

You will now work the top back from the underarm bind-off to the bind-off for the square neckline in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P). At the same time, you will work decreases to shape the two armholes at the beginning and at the end of every RS row.

The work now starts with the 10th (10th, 12th, 12th) 12th (14th, 14th, 14th) 16th (16th, 16th, 18th) 18th (18th, 20th, 20th) or [# bust rows ± 1:.....]th row of the top of the bodice, which is a WS row. Work as follows:

WS: P to EOR

RS: K1, K2tog, K to 3 before EOR, SSK, K1 (-2 sts)

Always slip the stitch markers and work the dart stitches like any other stitch.

Work these two rows a total of [7 (7, 8, 8) 8 (8, 8, 9) 9 (9, 9, 9) 10 (10, 10, 10)] times, ending with a RS row.

You have now worked:

[7 (7, 8, 8) 8 (8, 8, 9) 9 (9, 9, 9) 10 (10, 10, 10)] decreases for the armhole on the right side,

[7 (7, 8, 8) 8 (8, 8, 9) 9 (9, 9, 9) 10 (10, 10, 10)] decreases for the armhole on the left side,

worked over:

[14 (14, 16, 16) 16 (16, 16, 18) 18 (18, 18, 18) 20 (20, 20, 20)] rows,

and have:

[80 (84, 86, 90) 94 (98, 102, 104) 108 (112, 116, 120) 122 (126, 130, 134)] stitches on your needles.

The next row is a WS row. Purl all stitches. The lower armhole shaping is done. It is worked the same no matter your gauge or L1.

The following row is a RS row. You will work the bind-off for the square neckline on this row as follows:

K to M, K1, K3, BO [36 (38, 40, 42) 44 (46, 48, 50) 52 (54, 56, 58) 60 (62, 64, 66)], K to M, K1, K to EOR

You now have the following stitches and markers on your needles:

Right back strap:

[18 (19, 19, 20) 21 (22, 23, 23) 24 (25, 26, 27) 27 (28, 29, 30)] right back side stitches,

1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,

3 right back center stitches,

Left back strap:

3 left back center stitches,
1 M, 1 dart stitch, 1 M,
[18 (19, 19, 20) 21 (22, 23, 23) 24 (25, 26, 27) 27 (28, 29, 30)] left back side stitches

Place the right strap on hold on a stitch holder or a piece of leftover yarn. Don't cut the yarn.

TOP BACK: LEFT STRAP

Slip your left back strap onto shorter 3 mm (US 2.5) or main circular needles (or DPNs) for more comfort.

Continue knitting the left back strap in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P), while at the same time working a decrease to shape the armhole every 3rd row, alternating between the beginning of a WS row and the end of a RS row, and starting with the next row (or at your own spacing: [upper armhole decrease spacing:]th – please read the note below!). In the first 4 rows, you will additionally work decreases to shape the square neckline at the beginning of every RS row. Work the first 4 rows as follows:

(WS)	P1, SSP , P to EOR	(-1 st)
(RS)	K1, K2tog , K to EOR	(-1 st)
(WS)	P to EOR	
(RS)	K1 . The 2 nd stitch on your left needle is the dart stitch. K2tog , removing the M in the middle of those stitches before working them. Remove the remaining M. K to 3 before EOR, SSK, K1	(-2 sts)

You have now worked 2 decreases on the side of the square neckline, at a 2-row spacing, and 2 decreases on the side of the armhole, now at a 3-row spacing.

NOTE: If your [upper armhole decrease spacing:] is not 3, work the decreases every [upper armhole decrease spacing:]th row, starting as you would above (WS), but then working the second decrease at your own spacing, and working the 4th row (RS) as you have knit the 2nd (except you'll still remove the stitch marker as you K2tog).

Continue working the strap in stockinette stitch, working a decrease to shape the armhole every 3rd or [upper armhole decrease spacing:]th row, alternating between the beginning of a WS row and the end of a RS row, as follows:

If the decrease row is a WS row:

P1, SSP, P to EOR (-1 st)

If the decrease row is a RS row:

K to 3 before EOR, **SSK, K1** (-1 st)

until you have worked a total of:

[12 (13, 13, 12) 13 (14, 15, 13) 14 (15, 16, 15) 15 (16, 15, 16)] decreases at a 3-row or [upper armhole decrease spacing:]-row spacing on the armhole side in total, including the first 2 decreases at the beginning of the strap,

worked over:

[36 (39, 39, 36) 39 (42, 45, 39) 42 (45, 48, 45) 45 (48, 45, 48)] or [# upper armhole rows:] rows.

You now have:

[8 (8, 8, 10) 10 (10, 10, 12) 12 (12, 12, 14) 14 (14, 16, 16)] stitches on your needles.

You will now knit the strap in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P) without decreases, working about another [9 (8, 8, 13) 12 (9, 8, 14) 11 (10, 9, 12) 12 (11, 14, 13)] rows, ending with a WS row. I suggest you use short DPNs for more comfort.

If you have knit a different length of strap for the front straps, make sure to knit the same number of rows for the back.

Check strap fit before cutting the yarn. Slip the stitches onto a stitch holder or a piece of leftover yarn. Cut the yarn, leaving a tail long enough to work a few more rows if necessary.

TOP BACK: RIGHT STRAP

Slip your right back strap onto shorter 3 mm (US 2.5) or main circular needles (or DPNs).

You will now knit the right back strap the same way you knit the left back strap, just mirrored. Work in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P), while at the same time working a decrease to shape the armhole every 3rd row, alternating between the end of a WS row and the beginning of a RS row, starting with the next row, (or at your own spacing: [upper armhole decrease spacing: ...]th row – please read the note below!). In the first 4 rows, you will additionally work decreases to shape the square neckline at the end of every RS row. Work the first 4 rows as follows:

(WS)	P to 3 before EOR, P2tog, P1	(-1 st)
(RS)	K to 3 before EOR, SSK, K1	(-1 st)
(WS)	P to EOR	
(RS)	K1, K2tog , K to 3 before EOR. Remove M. The next stitch on your left needle is the Dart stitch. SSK , removing the stitch marker in the middle of those stitches before working them, K1 .	(-2 sts)

You have now worked 2 decreases on the side of the square neckline, at a 2-row spacing, and 2 decreases on the side of the armhole, now at a 3-row spacing.

NOTE: If your [upper armhole decrease spacing: ...] is not 3, work the decreases every [upper armhole decrease spacing: ...]th row, starting as you would above (WS), but then working the second decrease at your own spacing, and working the 4th row (RS) as you have knit the 2nd (except you'll still remove the stitch marker as you K2tog).

Continue working the strap in stockinette stitch, working a decrease to shape the armhole every 3rd or [upper armhole decrease spacing: ...]th row, alternating between the end of a WS row and the beginning of a RS row, as follows:

If the decrease row is a WS row:

P to 3 before EOR, P2tog, P1	(-1 st)
-------------------------------------	---------

If the decrease row is a RS row:

K1, K2tog , K to EOR	(-1 st)
-----------------------------	---------

until you have worked:

[12 (13, 13, 12) 13 (14, 15, 13) 14 (15, 16, 15) 15 (16, 15, 16)] decreases at a 3-row or [upper armhole decrease spacing: ...]-row spacing on the armhole side in total, including the first 2 decreases at the beginning of the strap,

worked over:

[36 (39, 39, 36) 39 (42, 45, 39) 42 (45, 48, 45) 45 (48, 45, 48)] or [# upper armhole rows: ...] rows.

You now have:

[8 (8, 8, 10) 10 (10, 10, 12) 12 (12, 12, 14) 14 (14, 16, 16)] stitches on your needles.

You will now knit the strap in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P) without decreases, working about another [9 (8, 8, 13) 12 (9, 8, 14) 11 (10, 9, 12) 12 (11, 14, 13)] rows, ending with a WS row. I suggest you use short DPNs for more comfort.

If you have knit a different length of strap for the other straps, make sure to knit the same number of rows for this one.

Check strap fit before cutting the yarn. Slip the stitches onto a stitch holder or a piece of leftover yarn. Cut the yarn, leaving a tail long enough to work a few more rows if necessary.

Knit according to pattern instructions, the complete bodice will measure about [37.5 (38, 39.5, 40.5) 41 (41.5, 42.5, 43) 44 (44.5, 45, 46) 46.5 (47.5, 48, 48.5)] cm / [15 (15¼, 15¾, 16¼) 16½ (16½, 17, 17½) 17½ (17¾, 18, 18½) 18½ (19, 19¼, 19½)]" when worn. Provided with your own measurements, size, and gauge, the MELIDES calculator will estimate how long your finished unblocked bodice should be by now (cell K51), how long it will become after blocking (cell Q51) and how long it will be when worn after blocking (cell S51). This works best if your unblocked gauge hasn't changed much from your swatch to the dress.

Once you have knit all the straps, and before grafting, try on the bodice, strap ends held together with pins or clips. The bodice should now end at least about 2-3 cm (1") above your waistline (before blocking).

The calculator will give you an estimate. Please consider this too: the smaller your HH and/or H tailoring factors are, the least stretching can you expect on your straps and bodice. The larger these tailoring factors are, the more stretching can you expect on your straps and bodice.

Because stretching depends on a lot of factors, I strongly recommend you knit the skirt before sewing the straps together. If you wish, you can also block the bodice before continuing. Mind the shaping of the bodice when blocking to avoid stretching the waist (if you lay it flat, the waist should not be a horizontal line!). Remember that your (unblocked) I-cords will feel very slightly tight once you work them along an already blocked edge - don't skip trying them out on your gauge swatch.

If you still feel unsure, I recommend you rather risk your bodice being a bit too short than a bit too long. The waist will still be very flattering if it sits a little too high, but it won't look as good if it ends up too low. Silk is easy to stretch and has little bounciness, making a slightly shorter bodice a lot easier to fix (by force during blocking, as a last resource) than a bodice that has stretched too much.

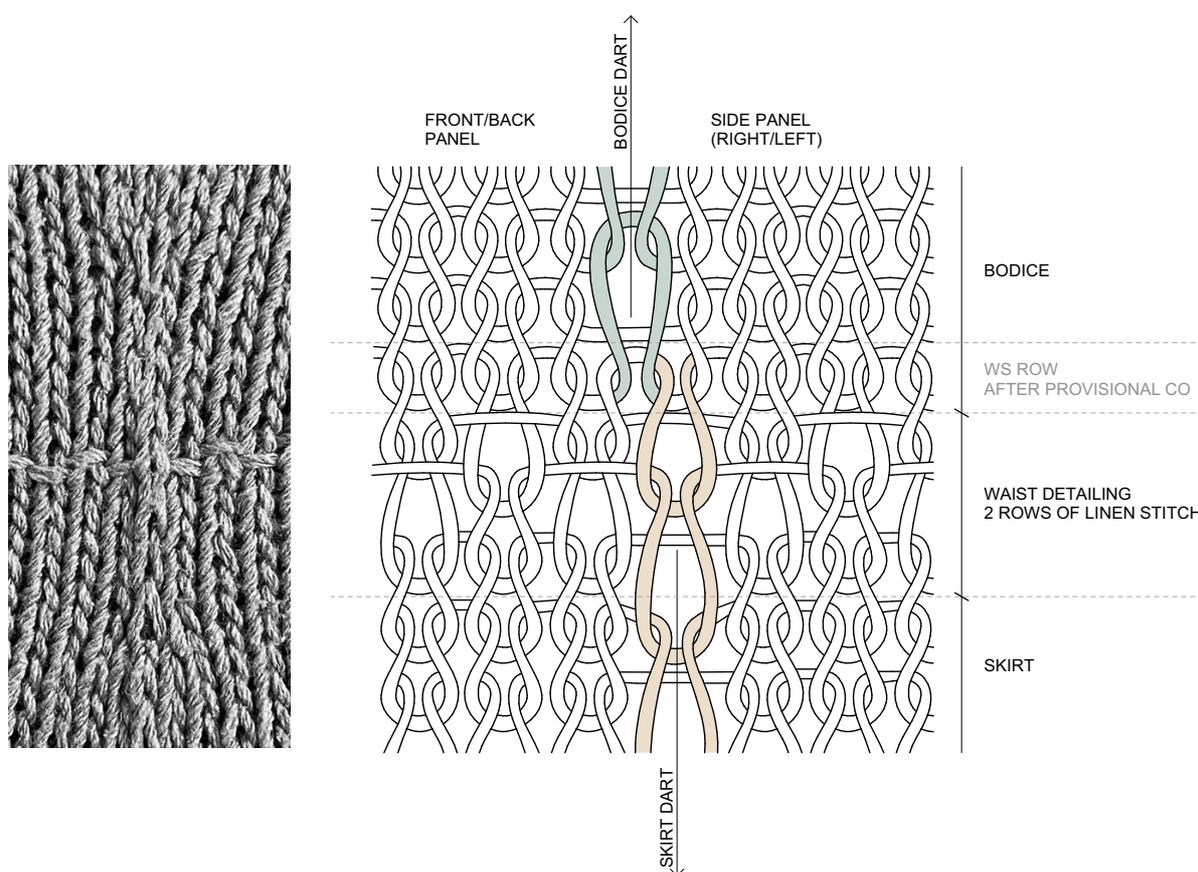
Once you are happy with the length of your straps, graft the left back strap and the left front strap together with an invisible join using the Kitchener stitch. Be careful to match the correct side of the fabric (RS-RS) and not to twist the strap. Do the same with the right back strap and right front strap. These instructions will appear again after the hem section.

WAIST DETAILING

Mark the **waist size** [W1 (W2, W3, W4) W5 (W6, W7, W8) W9 (W10, W11, W12) W13 (W14, W15, W16)] you are making. You can find it in your tailored size, e.g.: B0 (0) / **W0** / HH0 (0) / H0 (0).

You will now pick up the stitches from your provisional cast-on and work the detailing at the waist in two rows.

Hold the bodice bottom up and locate the 4 dart stitches in one of the rows closest to your provisional cast on. Insert a removable stitch marker right in the middle of each of these stitches, so that you can clearly see them. The skirt darts will start directly next to your bodice darts, half a stitch offset to the closest (right or left) side piece of the dress (e.g.: the dart stitch between the back and the left side will be offset to the left side). Because we are knitting in a different direction now, you might need to cast-on a new stitch at the beginning and/or at the end of the first row to obtain the stitch count for the front pieces of the dress. Follow the instructions closely to make sure you get a symmetrical dress.



Pick up the [156 (164, 172, 180) 188 (196, 204, 212) 220 (228, 236, 244) 252 (260, 268, 276)] stitches from your provisional cast-on onto your 3 mm (US 2.5) or main long circular needles and move each of the 4 removable markers up to the corresponding space between stitches on your needles.

You might get 1 stitch less or 1 stitch more than indicated while picking up – no worries! To obtain a symmetrical dress with correctly placed darts, it is important to adjust the stitches and markers on your needles, so that you have:

- [17 (18, 19, 20) 21 (22, 23, 24) 25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32)] left front stitches, counted from the left front edge to the closest removable marker on the needles; and
- [17 (18, 19, 20) 21 (22, 23, 24) 25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32)] right front stitches, counted from the right front edge to the closest removable marker on the needles.

If one of the sides is missing a stitch, cast on the missing stitch using the backwards loop cast-on at the edge of the fabric or M1 next to the selvedge stitch in the first row. *You should not have more stitches than indicated and you should not be missing more than 1 stitch on each side.*

After making the necessary adjustments, you will have [157 (165, 173, 181) 189 (197, 205, 213) 221 (229, 237, 245) 253 (261, 269, 277)] stitches on your needles. Place the 4 missing stitch markers as mentioned below:

[17 (18, 19, 20) 21 (22, 23, 24) 25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32)] left front stitches,
1 M, **1 dart stitch**, place 1 M,
[43 (45, 47, 49) 51 (53, 55, 57) 59 (61, 63, 65) 67 (69, 71, 73)] left side stitches,
place 1 M, **1 dart stitch**, 1 M,
[33 (35, 37, 39) 41 (43, 45, 47) 49 (51, 53, 55) 57 (59, 61, 63)] back stitches,
1 M, **1 dart stitch**, place 1 M,
[43 (45, 47, 49) 51 (53, 55, 57) 59 (61, 63, 65) 67 (69, 71, 73)] right side stitches,
place 1 M, **1 dart stitch**, 1 M,
[17 (18, 19, 20) 21 (22, 23, 24) 25 (26, 27, 28) 29 (30, 31, 32)] right front stitches.

The dart stitches are now the 4 single stitches between the stitch markers and are singled out in **bold** in the instructions. You can now swap the removable markers with normal markers.

You will now start by working the detailing at the waist in two rows of linen stitch, starting with a RS row.

Be careful not to tug on these stitches and not to knit them too loose either. If needed, according to your swatch, you might want to use different needles to work these two rows.

Work as follows:

- 1 (RS) Knit the first stitch. Now: alternate S1PYF and K1, always **slipping** the dart stitches **purlwise with the yarn in the back** when you get to one. Work like this to 1 before EOR. Knit the last stitch.
- 2 (WS) Purl the first stitch. Now: P the stitches you have slipped in the last row, and S1PYB the stitches you have knit, always **purling** the dart stitches when you get to one. Work like this to 1 before EOR. Purl the last stitch.

The waist detailing is now complete, and you will start knitting the skirt of the dress.

SKIRT: WAIST TO HIGH HIP

Mark your **high hip tailoring factor** before you start: [-5 (-4, -3, -2, -1) 0, (+1, +2, +3 +4) +5]. You can find it in your tailored size, e.g.: B0 (0) / W0 / HH0 (**0**) / H0 (0). From now on, the stitch/row/increase counts for the corresponding tailoring factor will be presented this way.

This section will be about 10.5 cm (4") after blocking and 11 cm (4½") when worn and will fit you best if your L3 is about 10-13 cm (4-5¼"). If your own L3 is shorter or longer than that length, and/or your row gauge was off, I recommend you adapt the total row count and the number of rows between increases accordingly. Use the MELIDES calculator to do this, specifically the section "Waist to high hip modding". Substitute pattern row numbers and counts with the matching calculator value whenever indicated. Provided with your gauge before blocking, the MELIDES calculator will also estimate how long your unblocked waist to high hip section should be (cell K100). For the most flattering fit, the end of this section should fall at your high hip or slightly under it when worn after blocking. If you try on the dress once you have finished knitting this section (before blocking), it should still end above your high hip.

This first section of the skirt is worked in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P) from the waist down to the high hip. As it happens on the lower part of the bodice, increases are worked along 4 darts, which now start at the side of the darts of the bodice. The dart stitches are now the 4 single stitches between stitch markers and are singled out in **bold** in the instructions. A dart stitch is slipped purlwise with the yarn in the back in all RS rows except for the increase rows, where it is knit, and it is purled in all WS rows. The stitch markers are always kept on each side of the dart stitch, which means they are always slipped just before and right after this stitch is worked.

The increase rows are worked at a different row count for each tailoring factor. Increases are always worked alongside the darts, one before and one after each dart stitch, which means each increase row will add 8 stitches to the stitch count on your needles. If your tailoring factor is a -5, no increases are worked. If your tailoring factor is lower than -5, please read the “Tailoring troubleshoot” section before starting.

Keep using your 3 mm (US 2½) or main long circular needles.

The next row is the 1st row (RS) and is worked without increases.

Work in pattern as follows:

RS: K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to EOR

WS: P to EOR

On the [- (31st, 15th, 11th, 7th) 7th (6th, 7th, 3rd, 7th) 4th] or [first increase row:.....]th row, work one increase row instead as follows:

If the increase row is a RS row:

K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M,
M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to EOR (+8 sts)

If the increase row is a WS row:

P to M, M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to M, M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to M, M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to M,
M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to EOR (+8 sts)

Keep working in pattern, working an increase row every [- (-, 16th, 10th, 8th) 6th (5th, 4th, 4th, 3rd) 3rd] or [increase spacing:.....]th row, until you have:

worked a total of [0 (1, 2, 3, 4) 5 (6, 7, 8, 9) 10] increase rows,
increased a total of [0 (8, 16, 24, 32) 40 (48, 56, 64, 72) 80] stitches,
and worked [- (1, 1, 1, 1) 1 (1, 1, 1, 1) 1] or [# rows after last inc row:.....] rows after your last increase row.

End with a WS row. You will have worked a total of 32 rows or [section row count:.....] for all sizes.

SKIRT: HIGH HIP TO HIP

Mark your **hip tailoring factor** before you start: [-3 (-2, -1) 0, (+1, +2, +3 +4) +5]. You can find it in your tailored size, e.g.: B0 (0) / W0 / HH0 (0) / H0 (0). From now on, the stitch/row/increase counts for the corresponding tailoring factor will be presented this way.

This section will be about 10.5 cm (4”) after blocking and 11 cm (4½”) when worn and will fit you best if your L4 is about 10-13 cm (4-5¼”). If your own L4 is shorter or longer than that length, and/or your row gauge was off, I recommend you adapt the total row count and the number of rows between increases accordingly. Use the MELIDES calculator to do this, specifically the section “High hip to hip modding”. Substitute pattern row numbers and counts with the matching calculator value whenever

indicated. Provided with your gauge before blocking, the MELIDES calculator will also estimate how long your unblocked high hip to hip section should be (cell K109). For the most flattering fit, the end of this section should fall at your hip or slightly under it when worn after blocking. If you try on the dress once you have finished knitting this section (before blocking), it should still end above your high hip.

This second section of the skirt, from the high hip down to the hip, is worked similarly to the previous section. You will continue working in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P) and you will continue working your increases along the 4 darts singled out in **bold** in the instructions. Like before, a dart stitch is slipped purlwise with the yarn in the back in all RS rows except for the increase rows, where it is knit, and it is purled in all WS rows. The stitch markers are always kept by its side.

As before, the increase rows are worked at a different row count for each tailoring factor. Increases are always worked alongside the darts, one before and one after each dart stitch, which means each increase row will add 8 stitches to the stitch count on your needles. If your tailoring factor is a -3, no increases are worked. If your tailoring factor is lower than -3, please read the “Tailoring troubleshoot” section before starting.

Keep using the same 3 mm (US 2.5) or main long circular needles.

The next row is the 1st row (RS) and is worked without increases.

Work in pattern as follows:

RS: K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to EOR

WS: P to EOR

On the [- (31st, 15th) 9th (7th, 5th, 4th, 3rd) 3rd] or [first increase row:.....]th row, work one increase row instead, as follows:

If the increase row is a RS row:

K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M,
M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to EOR (+8 sts)

If the increase row is a WS row:

P to M, M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to M, M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to M, M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to M,
M1LP, **P1**, M1RP, P to EOR (+8 sts)

Keep working in pattern, working an increase row every [- (-, 16th) 10th (8th, 6th, 5th, 4th) 4th] or [increase spacing:.....]th row, until you have:

worked a total of [0 (1, 2) 3 (4, 5, 6, 7) 8] increase row(s),
increased a total of [0 (8, 16) 24 (32, 40, 48, 56) 64] stitches,
and worked [- (1, 1) 3 (1, 3, 3, 5) 1] or [# rows after last inc row:.....] rows after your last increase row.

End with a WS row. You will have worked a total of 32 rows or [section row count:.....] for all sizes.

SKIRT: HIP TO HEM

The third section of the skirt, from the hip down to the hem, is now worked similarly to the previous sections. You will continue working in stockinette stitch (RS = K, WS = P) and you will continue working increases along the 4 darts singled out in **bold** in the instructions. Like before, a dart stitch is slipped purlwise with the yarn in the back in all RS rows except for the increase rows, where it is knit, and it is purled in all WS rows; the stitch markers are always kept on each side. Increase rows are now worked

at the same row count for all sizes, always on RS rows, every 18th row. If your row gauge was off, check the MELIDES calculator section “Hip to hem modding” for your ideal spacing between increase rows.

Keep using the same 3 mm (US 2.5) or main long circular needles.

The next row is the 1st row (RS) and is worked without increases.

Work as follows:

RS: K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to M, **S1**, K to EOR

WS: P to EOR

Starting 18 rows or [increase spacing:.....] rows after your last increase row, and then every 18th row or [increase spacing:.....]th row, work one increase row as follows:

K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M, M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to M,
M1R, **K1**, M1L, K to EOR (+8 sts)

Knit the dress until you reach the desired length, finishing this section with a WS row. The hem will add a bit over 1 cm (1/2”) to the overall length.

Don't forget that the overall length of the dress will increase after blocking and wearing. I recommend you stop knitting about 8-15 cm (3-6”) before you reach your intended length (for a final dress length of 110-125 cm).

You can now test your dress for stretching too. You can do this by wearing or hanging the dress, and gently pulling the fabric down from the hem until it offers resistance – ask someone for help if you need to. This should give you an idea of how much the dress might stretch. While the I-cords will add some more stretch-resistance to the straps, the overall fabric will grow and be stretchier after blocking. You can also use the MELIDES calculator to check how long your dress should be by now when laying flat (cell K47), approximately.

If you haven't grafted your straps yet, and you're happy with the length of your dress, you can now graft the left back strap and the left front strap together with an invisible join using the Kitchener stitch. Be careful to match the correct side of the fabric (RS-RS) and not to twist the strap. Do the same with the right back strap and right front strap.

SKIRT: HEM

You will now finish your dress with 6 rows of linen stitch.

Keep using the same 3 mm (US 2.5) or main long circular needles.

The first row is a RS row. Work as follows for 6 rows:

RS: *K1, S1PYF* to 1 before EOR, K1

WS: Purl the first stitch. Now: P the stitches you have slipped in the last row, and S1PYB the stitches you have knit in the last row. Work to 1 before EOR, then purl the last stitch.

Bind off using a regular bind-off. Mind your tension, so that the bind-off stitches are neither too loose nor too tight – you might need to use a different needle than the one you used to work in linen stitch. *Optional: If you want, you can cut your yarn to separate main fabric and button band.*

The main fabric of the dress is now finished! Congratulations on making it through all those long rows of skirt, it will all be worth it very soon!

BEFORE YOU START WORKING ON YOUR FINISHES

These finishes take time, but they will really elevate the look of your dress.

It's easy to make or break a garment with ill-fitting I-cords. This dress has a very long I-cord button band, so it is very important that your I-cord has the right tension.

To help you figure out whether your I-cord will match your fabric, I suggest you start by testing two I-cords on your swatch at this point. You can use your already washed and blocked swatch to do so.

Use the smallest size needles. Follow the instructions for the button bands to work along one of the sides of your swatch. Work a third I-cord edge along the cast-on edge, according to the instructions given in the neckline section for the stitches that were bound-off along the square neckline. Wash and block your swatch again, without pinning or stretching.

The stitches of the I-cord should look about the same size and shape as your fabric stitches, or just very slightly larger. If your I-cord stitches are noticeably larger than those of the fabric, consider using a smaller size needle; if your I-cord stitches are smaller, choose a larger size needle instead.

Once your stitches look right, you'll want your I-cords to be the same length as the edge of the fabric. If your I-cord feels longer than the edge of the fabric (stretching it), you should try knitting it again by slightly decreasing the number of picked-up-and-knit stitches along the edge. If it feels shorter than the edge of the fabric (puckering it), you should try knitting it again by slightly increasing the number of picked-up-and-knit stitches.

Since gauge might vary while working on a large piece of knit, check your I-cord lengths along the way. It is very important that the button band isn't too short, or it will pull the fabric of your dress.

Please note: The armholes will be particularly challenging; it's not as easy to knit an I-cord along a rounded edge. Having the finished neckline I-cord to compare should help. If, once you knit your armhole I-cord, the edge feels too loose, you may want to try again by picking up less stitches; if it feels too tight, you might want to try again by picking up more stitches.

While working your finishes, make sure to check my video tutorials – links in the “Techniques” section.

RIGHT BUTTON BAND

You will now work the right button band, where the buttonholes will be.

If you are using 9-10 mm buttons, you can knit the button band without buttonholes and simply stick the buttons through it once you're finished. It will be tight, but they will fit and stay buttoned. You can also opt to work the buttonholes, but you might have to reinforce or close them with sewing once you're finished. If you are using 10-12 mm buttons, you will definitely want to work the buttonholes.

You will start by marking the spots where you would like to have your buttonholes with removable stitch markers or safety pins. You will then pick up and knit stitches along the right front edge of the dress, from the bottom of the hem to 1 row below the first V-neck decrease, which you have marked. Afterwards, you will work one WS row, where you will also work the buttonholes at the designated spots. You will finish the button band with a 3-stitch I-cord.

To decide where to place your buttons, first mark the following spots:

- (1) the row 4 rows below your first V-neck decrease
- (2) the row 1 row below your waist detailing
- (3) the 3rd row of the hem counting from the top (or where you'd like your last button to be)

You will want your buttons to be evenly spaced between 1 and 2 (bodice), and between 2 and 3 (skirt); but this spacing can be different for the bodice and for the skirt sections. For best coverage, the spacing between buttons shouldn't be bigger than 5 cm or 2". Choose the best spacing and count of buttons for your bodice and for your skirt and mark the spots where you will work the buttonholes. Once you are finished placing your markers, you can start working the button band.

I recommend you use both a measuring tape and count your rows to double check spacing while placing the markers for the remaining buttons. The same goes for the left button band, when sewing your buttons.

Use your 2.5 mm (US 1.5) or smallest long circular needles, and join your working yarn.

(RS) Starting from the last row of hem, pick up and knit 3 stitches every 4 rows. Pick up and knit the last stitch from the row that is below your first V-neck decrease, even if that falls on a 4th row. Turn the work.

(WS) If you are working buttonholes:

P1. Work a buttonhole: P2tog, YO. P until you get to 2 stitches before the designated spot for your next buttonhole. Work a buttonhole: P2tog, YO. Repeat until you have worked your last buttonhole at the hem, then P to EOR. Turn the work.

If you aren't working buttonholes:

P to EOR. Turn the work.

(RS) You will now work the 3-stitch I-cord. Using the knitted cast-on, cast on 3 stitches, then keep working as follows:

K2, K2togTBL, slip the 3 stitches on the right needle to the left needle purlwise.

Only if you worked buttonholes: Whenever the second stitch to be worked in a K2togTBL is a YO from the previous row work an additional step as follows:

K2, S1PYB, S1KYB (the YO), S these two stitches from the right

needle back to the left needle purlwise, K2togTBL, slip the three stitches on the right needle to the left needle purlwise.

Keep working the I-cord until you only have 3 stitches on your needle. Don't cut your yarn. Continue with the neckline.

NECKLINE

Keep using your 2.5 mm (US 1.5) or smallest long circular needles. The 3 remaining right button band stitches are on your needles. Be careful not to twist the work.

- (RS) Pick up and knit the following stitches:
- 1 stitch for each V-neck row,
 - 3 stitches every 4 rows all the way to the back of the dress until you get to a decrease row
(4 rows before reaching the square neckline bind-off),
 - 1 stitch for each of the next 4 rows,
 - 7 stitches every 8 bind-off stitches,
 - 1 stitch for each of the following 4 rows (till the last decrease row),
 - 3 stitches every 4 rows all the way to the front of the dress until you get to the V-neck
(last V-neck decrease),
 - 1 stitch for each V-neck row.

Pick up and knit the last stitch from the row below your first V-neck decrease.

Cut your yarn, leaving an end long enough to weave in. Don't turn the work. The next row is a RS row.

- (RS) You will now work the 3-stitch I-cord. There is no need to cast on 3 extra stitches as you start your I-cord, because you will be using the remaining stitches from the button band in their place. Keep working as follows:
- K2, K2togTBL, slip the three stitches on the right needle to the left needle purlwise

Keep working the I-cord until you only have 3 stitches on your needle. Don't cut your yarn. Continue with the left button band.

LEFT BUTTON BAND

You will now work the left button band, where the buttons will be sewn later.

Keep using your 2.5 mm (US 1.5) or smallest long circular needles. The 3 remaining neckline stitches are on your needles. Be careful not to twist the work.

- (RS) Starting from the row below your first V-neck decrease, pick up and knit 3 stitches every 4 rows, until you reach the bottom of the hem. Pick up the last stitch from the last hem row, even if that falls on a 4th row. Turn the work.
- (WS) P to last 3 sts before EOR (neckline stitches). Turn the work.
- (RS) You will now work the 3-stitch I-cord. There is no need to cast on 3 extra stitches as you start your I-cord, because you will be using the remaining stitches from the neckline instead. Slip the 3 neckline stitches from the right needle to the left needle and keep working as follows:
- K2, K2togTBL, slip the 3 stitches on the right needle to the left needle purlwise.

Keep working the I-cord until you only have 3 stitches on your needles. Bind-off using the Italian bind-off (without setup rows!) or your preferred bind-off method. Cut the yarn, leaving a tail long enough to weave in.

ARMHOLES

You will now work an I-cord edge along the edge of each armhole. Both the left and right armholes are worked the same way. Start with one of the armholes.

Use your 2.5 mm (US 1.5) or smallest short circular needles, and join your working yarn. The stitches for the armhole will be picked up and knit in the round. Afterwards, you might opt to use a short DPN in your right hand for more comfort while knitting the I-cord.

(RS) Starting in the middle of the BO stitches at the underarm, pick up and knit the following stitches:

1 stitch for each of the 2 first BO stitches under the arm

1 stitch every row until you reach the last decrease row worked at a 2-row spacing

5 stitches every 6 rows until you reach the equivalent decrease row on the other side,

1 stitch every row until you reach the BO stitches

1 stitch for each of the 2 last BO stitches under the arm.

(RS) You will now work the 3-stitch I-cord. Using the knitted cast-on, cast on 3 stitches, then keep working as follows:

K2, K2togTBL, slip the three stitches on the right needle to the left needle purlwise

Keep working the I-cord until you only have 3 stitches on your needle. Graft these stitches with the stitches you cast on at the beginning of the I-cord. Check the “Techniques” section for a video on how to do this with live stitches. Cut the yarn, leaving a tail long enough to weave in.

REINFORCING THE BUTTON BANDS

This has been a long journey, and you are almost done! I can imagine you want to skip this section and go straight to sewing the buttons. However, this is a very important step to ensure your button band stays closed and one can't see your skin in between buttons.

You have two options.

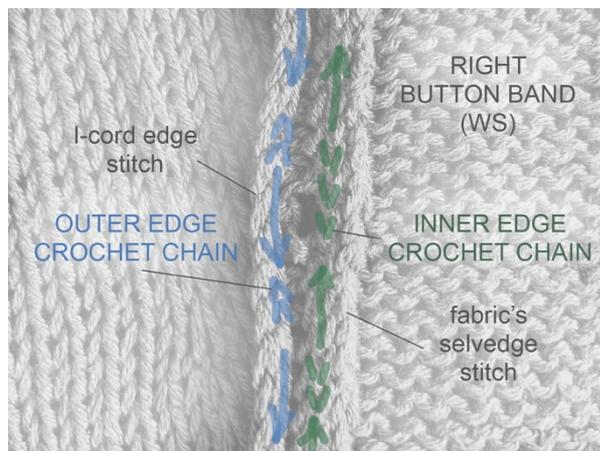
If you like sewing and maybe even own a sewing machine, you can reinforce each button band with a ribbon of fabric in a color that matches your dress. You will need to work buttonholes in one of the ribbons. If you have the knowledge and the skill, this will give you a very professional-looking finish. I suggest you do this after blocking, keeping the gauge when worn in mind, to avoid ill-fitting button bands.

Since this is a knitting pattern, however, I developed an alternative that doesn't involve tools and skills that are alien to the craft, so that you can achieve a professional-looking finish with things you most likely already have at hand: yarn, a crochet hook, and a tapestry needle. It does involve a bit of sewing though!

Check the “Techniques” section for my video tutorial guiding you through this section.

To reinforce a button band with yarn, you will work a crochet chain along the side of each of its edges, on the WS. These will be worked within the button band space (not along the outer face of these edges). Finally, you will work a seam along the edge between fabric and button band.

Mind your tension while working the crochet chains. Test them on your swatch before you start; don't forget to block it. Adjust hook size if necessary. You will also want to re-check your tension once you've worked about 20 cm (8") of crochet chain along your dress edge.



This picture shows you a reinforced right button band. Different colors show you where each crochet chain was worked. The direction in which each crochet chain is worked is also pictured with arrows.

Both the inner and the outer crochet chain are worked on the button band side of the edge.

To see me working these reinforcements in more detail, check my video tutorials at the end of the pattern.

Pick up your 3.5 mm crochet hook. You will work both button bands the same way.

Start with the inner edge of the left button band (between main fabric and button band).

You will work this edge from the V-neck to the hem. Hold the dress so that the WS of the fabric is facing up, the V-neck is at the right and the hem at the left.

Crochet chain (inner edge):

1 - Pick up the first stitch of the top row of the button band by inserting your crochet hook in the space between the selvedge stitch of the main fabric and the button band (these are the same spaces where you picked up and knit stitches for the button band), wrapping the yarn around the hook and pulling the strand through the hole to create a stitch.

2 - Pick up the next stitch in the next row the same way as the first.

3 - Pull the new stitch through the stitch you already had on your hook.

Repeat steps 2 and 3 until you reach the end of the button band. Pull that last stitch as you would do with the last stitch when binding off. Cut the yarn, leaving a tail long enough to weave in.

Seaming along the inner edge:

1 - Thread a strand of yarn that is at least 1.5 times the length of your dress through a tapestry needle.

2 - Hold the dress the same way you did to work the crochet chain along the inner edge (WS up).

3 - Insert the tapestry needle into the loop of the stitch of the crochet chain, right under the V-neck, and then through the edge until you reach its other side (closer to the main fabric).

4 - Insert the needle through the nearest bump of a picked-up stitch for either the button band or the crochet chain, from front to back.

5 - Insert the needle through the next bump on the left from back to front, then through the edge, coming out in the middle of the nearest crochet chain stitch.

6 - Insert the tapestry needle in the middle of the next stitch of the crochet chain on the left, then pass it through until you reach the other side of the edge seam.

Repeat steps 4 through 6 until you reach the end of the button band. Your yarn and needle should never be visible from the RS. Cut the yarn, leaving a tail long enough to weave in.

You will now work the crochet chain along the WS of the outer edge of the button band from the hem to the V-neck. Hold the dress so that the WS of the fabric is facing up, the hem is at the right and the V-neck at the left.

Crochet chain (outer edge):

1 - Pick up the first stitch at the bottom row of the button band, by inserting your crochet hook in the space between the two stitches of the I-cord closest to the edge (from WS to RS), wrapping the yarn around the hook and pulling the strand through the hole to create a stitch.

2 - Pick up the next stitch in the next row the same way as the first.

3 - Pull the new stitch through the stitch you already had on your hook.

Repeat steps 2 and 3 until you reach the end of the button band. Pull that last stitch as you would do with the last stitch when binding off. Cut the yarn, leaving a tail long enough to weave in.

The left button band is finished. Work the right button band the same way, only mirrored. So the crochet chain on the inner edge and its seam will start at the hem and the crochet chain on the outer edge will start at the V-neck.

BUTTONS

Using a strand of yarn (or a thread) threaded on a tapestry needle, sew your buttons along the left button band, so that they match the buttonholes you have worked along the right button band. The buttons should be placed exactly along the purl row that was worked before the I-cord edge (that creates a “ridge” in the RS of the garment). Because the fabric of the button band will have quite a bit of give, when sewing the buttons, attach them to the reinforced edge between fabric and button band too. Check the “Notes” section for a picture.

I recommend you both use a measuring tape and count your rows to double check spacing while placing the markers for the remaining buttons.

If you prefer, you can choose to sew your buttons after blocking.

If you haven't, remember to weave in your ends at this point.



Buttons are sewn along the ridge of the button band, created by the WS row (picture on the left) and attached to the inner crochet chain reinforcement (picture on the right)

BLOCKING

Yes! I know this is usually just a line at the end of the pattern, but this is so important for this design, that I decided to make a section out of it. Even if you are familiar with the blocking process, I suggest you quickly read my recommendations for blocking this specific dress.

Soak your dress in cold water with a quarter teaspoon of gentle silk wash, in your sink. To make it easier to take the dress out, I suggest buttoning up the dress before starting (if you have your buttons already) and laying it down instead of throwing it in all crumpled. Submerge it completely and gently agitate the water with your hands to evenly distribute soap and water. Soak for up to 30 minutes. If needed (read the instructions on your silk wash), rinse to remove the soap. Whatever you do, do not wring or pull the fabric. Drain the water out of the sink while holding the dress and then gently press the water out by holding it between your hands or against the sink.

Next, lay a towel of a similar color (yes, the yarn might bleed) over hard, waterproof flooring (such as tiles) and then lay your dress flat on the towel, buttons side up, again being very careful not to stretch the fabric while moving it onto the towel. Pat the fabric to straighten it and remove any wrinkles. Roll it up in the towel and then step on top of it to squeeze some more water out.

Finally, carefully move your dress onto your blocking mat (I like to use a towel between mat and fabric, but I leave that up to you!). First, adjust the bodice in place, so that the front and back of straps and waistline match, the neckline looks neat, and the darts are aligned and symmetrical. Move to the skirt. Open the buttons from the waist down to help you straighten the back darts and position them symmetrically (avoid pulling the fabric while doing this, try patting instead). Now fold the front sides of the skirt over and do the same thing with the front darts and button bands. There is no need to pin anything down, I suggest you check on the dress when it's almost dry for a final pat ;) Let the dress dry completely before wearing.

Woohoo!! You are done :) Awesome job in completing such a large handmade piece of knitwear!

I hope you enjoy it as much as I do!

NOTES / PATTERN TROUBLESHOOT

On conversions: all measurements were calculated in cm and converted to inches according to the simplified rule 10 cm = 4" to match gauge measuring, apart from the recommended spacing between buttons, because using that conversion method would have allowed you to have a larger spacing which might not work well.

On choosing a different yarn: this pattern can be worked using any light fingering weight yarn, yet you will have to be prepared to improvise, since stretching was calculated considering the pattern's yarn suggestion. If you are using a bouncier yarn with more memory (less permanent stretch) and less give, like a cotton blend, you might wish to opt to always round up in the size chart and to knit slightly longer sections as you would with the silk. It might be difficult to achieve gauge with a 100% linen yarn and the fabric might end up quite transparent.

On measuring yourself: our bodies will naturally change over the course of the day, the week, the month. If you are feeling unsure about your measurements, I recommend you take them at least 4 times: once in the morning and once the evening, then repeat it 2 days to 2 weeks later. For each measured body section, calculate the average between all 4 measurements, and use it to work the pattern.

On gauge: you might have to go up or down in needle size to achieve gauge. Do not forget to proportionally go up or down in needle size for the button bands and other I-cord edgings. You might also need to use a different needle to work the linen stitch and/or bind off, and/or a different crochet hook to reinforce the button bands. Don't skip knitting and blocking a second, or even a third swatch. Swatch each and every step of the project: stockinette, linen stitch, I-cords and button bands, buttonholes, button band reinforcement. In a project of this scale, better be safe than sorry! Keep checking your gauge as you go. Your gauge might change once you start knitting a big piece of fabric, because your tension will tend to relax – in this case, before you start ripping and change needles, knit a new swatch using the same needle size. Curiously, it will now likely match your dress gauge – and you will be able to take a chance on different needles feeling more secure and confident.

On row gauge, specifically: it is very likely that, once you've hit stitch gauge, your row gauge won't match the pattern's. This might depend on a variety of factors, such as your knitting style, your knitting tension, or your needle choice. To help you in case you don't meet row gauge, I have created the MELIDES calculator – please check the instructions in the "MELIDES calculator 101 section" at the beginning of the pattern.

On increases and decreases: if the spacing between increases/decreases is an odd number of rows, you will have them on both RS and WS rows. If the spacing between increases/decreases is an even number of rows, you will have them on only either RS or WS rows. If you have a preference to work your increase rows on the RS or on the WS, you can opt to move them one row up or down as they come, so that they fall on your preferred side.

On picking up stitches for the I-cords: always pick up your stitches between the last two stitches of a row. The last stitch (selvedge stitch) will stay hidden behind the new fabric.

MODIFICATIONS

SIZE:

if you choose to work with a different ease and size up/down 2 or more sizes, you might need to make further alterations to the length and width of each section, especially to the length of the “Bust” section, to the way the armholes are shaped and to strap placement and width.

COMPENSATE STRETCHING AT THE STRAPS:

If your straps have stretched too much after blocking and/or with wear, you can opt to reinforce them too. Work a crochet chain along the edges of your neckline and armholes, like you did for the button bands. As an alternative, you can introduce a thin elastic band along the seam between your I-cord and your main fabric on the WS. This will make your edges slightly thicker yet more resistant and might also help if the fabric around the armholes is a bit too loose.

COMPENSATE STRETCHING AT THE WAIST:

If your waist is a bit too loose after blocking and/or with wear, you can reinforce it by either weaving a thread of your yarn along each of the two rows of linen stitch, hiding it on the RS by following the “yarns in the front” of the S1PYFs. As an alternative, you can work a crochet chain along the back, picking up stitches in between those rows, or you can attach a thin elastic band in the color of your yarn to the WS of the dress.

YOUR ARMHOLE IS JUST A LITTLE TOO LOOSE AT THE BOTTOM:

A quick fix for this fit issue is working a tighter I-cord along the lower armhole. Pick up and knit a few less stitches than you normally would in the lower half of the armhole; work the rest of the I-cord per pattern.

RAISING YOUR ARMHOLES:

In this pattern, the armholes are designed to sit about [1 (1, 1, 1) 1 (2, 2, 2) 2 (2, 2, 3) 3 (3, 3, 3)] cm / [$\frac{1}{2}$ ($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$) $\frac{1}{2}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$) $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $1\frac{1}{4}$) $1\frac{1}{4}$ ($1\frac{1}{4}$, $1\frac{1}{4}$, $1\frac{1}{4}$)]” above your bust point. Rather than just working shorter straps, I recommend you raise your armhole by working your armhole BO in a later RS row than indicated. *Check whether you will also want to work the modification for bell shaped breasts (page 8 / “Tailoring troubleshoot”).* Make sure to still work the same total count of decreases needed to achieve the recommended strap width (decrease/row counts are indicated before the “Strap” instructions). Refer to the schematics on page 9 while working this modification.

RAISING YOUR V-NECK:

In this pattern, the V-neck is designed to sit about [1 (1, 1, 1) 1 (2, 2, 2) 2 (2, 2, 3) 3 (3, 3, 3)] cm / [$\frac{1}{2}$ ($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$) $\frac{1}{2}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$) $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $1\frac{1}{4}$) $1\frac{1}{4}$ ($1\frac{1}{4}$, $1\frac{1}{4}$, $1\frac{1}{4}$)]” above your bust point. Rather than just working shorter straps, I recommend you raise your V-neck by starting its decreases in a later RS row than indicated. To calculate how many rows you can raise your V-neck without having to work wider straps or work more decreases for the V-neck, you can use data from your MELIDES calculator (= [# LOWER ARMHOLE ROWS] + [# LOWER ARMHOLE ROWS] + [# STRAP ROWS] - [# LOWER ARMHOLE ROWS] + 1).

STRAP MODIFICATION:

Refer to the schematics on page 9. The inner edge of the strap will be vertically aligned with your bust point. Strap width will depend on the bust size you choose to knit. Using the information provided by the pattern, check where the outer edge of the strap will fall on you. I don’t recommend changing the width of the strap too much, as they provide support for all the fabric of the dress. But if you would prefer to have your straps closer together, you can slightly move them inwards:

- 1 - Measure how much you would like to move your straps = ____ (cm/inch) and convert that measurement into stitches using your stitch gauge = ____ # offset stitches. If you got an odd number, either add or subtract 1.
- 2 - Knit per pattern until you reach the “Bust” section. As soon as you start knitting the “Bust” (the bodice darts will be done by then), move each dart stitch marker [# offset stitches] inwards (closer together at the front and at the back). *Check whether you want to work the modification for bell shaped breasts (page 8 / “Tailoring troubleshoot”),*
- 3 - When binding off for the square neckline, subtract [2 x # offset stitches] from the BO count indicated for your size, make sure to reduce the count symmetrically at the beginning and at the end of the BO. You will also work [# offset stitches] less V-neck decreases at the top of the V-neck shaping for each front panel.
- 4 - On the other hand, you will need to work more decreases on the side of the armholes. Bind off extra [# offset stitches] at each armhole BO. To work the BO symmetrically, start binding off [# offset stitches” ÷ 2] before the pattern instructs you to. Then check the total amount of 3-row spacing decreases your size asks for and the total row count for those decreases (counts are indicated before the “Strap” instructions), add [# offset stitches” ÷ 2] decreases and distribute them evenly by the same row count.

WAIST DETAILING MODIFICATION:

If you would like to have a more visible waistband, you can knit more rows of linen stitch, for example as many as the hem. Work the dart stitches as any other stitch of those rows instead.

ABBREVIATIONS

RS = Right Side; **WS** = Wrong Side;

P = Purl; **K** = Knit; **S** = Slip; **st(s)** = stitch(es);

CO = Cast-On; **BO** = Bind-Off;

M = stitch Marker; **EOR** = End of Row;

M1R = Make 1 Right; **M1L** = Make 1 Left; **M1RP** = Make 1 Right Purl; **M1LP** = Make 1 Left Purl;

S1KYB = Slip one stitch knitwise with the yarn in the back;

S1PYB = Slip one stitch purlwise with the yarn in the back;

S1PYF = Slip one stitch purlwise with the yarn in the front;

SSK = Slip-Slip-Knit; **SSP** = Slip-Slip-Purl;

K2tog = Knit 2 together; **K2togTBL** = Knit 2 together through the back loop;

P2tog = Purl 2 together;

YO = yarn over;

Note on S (slip): all stitches are slipped purlwise except for SSK, SSP and S1KYB. Except if indicated otherwise, on RS rows, the stitches are slipped holding the yarn in the back of the work; on WS rows, the stitches are slipped holding the yarn in front.

TECHNIQUES

INCREASES

M1R: Insert the left needle under the strand between stitches from back to front and pick up this yarn. Knit through the front loop.

M1RP: Insert the left needle under the strand between stitches from back to front and pick up this yarn. Purl through the front loop.

M1L: Insert the left needle under the strand between stitches from front to back and pick up this yarn. Knit through the back loop.

M1LP: Insert the left needle under the strand between stitches from front to back and pick up this yarn. Purl through the back loop.

DECREASES

K2tog

Start with the yarn at the back of your work. Insert the right needle into the first two stitches of the left needle from left to right (knitwise), then knit them together, pulling the working yarn through both stitches at the same time. You will obtain a decrease that will slightly slant to the right.

K2togTBL

Start with the yarn at the back of your work. Insert the right needle into the first two stitches of the left needle from right to left (purlwise), then knit them together through the back loop, pulling the working yarn through both stitches at the same time.

P2tog

Start with the yarn at the front of your work. Insert the right needle into the first two stitches of the left needle from right to left (purlwise), then purl them together, pulling the working yarn through both stitches at the same time. You will obtain a decrease that will slightly slant to the right on the right side of the work.

SSK

Start with the yarn at the back of your work. Slip the next two stitches knitwise, individually. Slip them back onto the left needle, this time without changing their orientation (purlwise), then knit them together. You will obtain a decrease that will slightly slant to the left.

SSP

Start with the yarn at the front of your work. Slip the next two stitches knitwise, individually. Slip them back onto the left needle, this time without changing their orientation (purlwise), then purl them together through the back loop. You will obtain a decrease that will slightly slant to the left on the right side of the work.

OTHER TECHNIQUES

My video tutorials on how to work the button band, neckline, and armhole I-cords:

Pick up and knit: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CgU15Pto2EO>

WS row (+ buttonholes): <https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cgbx5cSowNa>

Knitted cast-on: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CgbsNe9iile>

I-cord (+ buttonholes): <https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cgb9tE9lnr1>

My video tutorials on how to reinforce the button bands:

Part I, inner crochet chain: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CghOGWZoYu2>

Part II, outer crochet chain: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/CghRP8rlhhz>

Part III, seam: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cghn3YYI1s5>

I also recommend the following links for more techniques:

Provisional cast-on: <https://www.purlsoho.com/create/provisional-cast-on>

Backward loop cast-on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDfrvqQBGbE>

Grafting (Kitchener stitch): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vya0DD1zKDC>

I-cord grafting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8r-T5Tbcqs>

Regular bind-off: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UY0xEX7A6RQ>

Italian bind-off: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UY0xEX7A6RQ>

(Please notice: these last videos are third-party. I am not responsible for their content neither was I paid to mention them.)

There are different ways to approach each of these techniques, you might find a different method works best for you!

If you have any questions, you can write me anytime at vertknit@outlook.com.

If you liked this design and would like to share pictures of the WIP or the finished garment on social media, don't forget to tag me or reference my page:

@vertknit #vertknit #melidesdress #melidescollection

Thank you! <3

I put a lot of love and hard work into this design,
hope you enjoy wearing your MELIDES dress :)

MELIDES dress | English version

© 2022 Inês Santana de Oliveira | vertknit

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Abby
2/2/2/3 – H: 165 cm
IG: /studio.fjell



Alex
5/6/6/7 – H: 175 cm
IG: /alexg.knits



Antonia
6/6/6/6 – H: 171 cm
IG: /knits.by.antonina



Céline
3/3/2/1 – H: 167 cm
IG: /celine.knits



Christy
0/1/0/0 – H: 157 cm
IG: /faunmakes



Ebba
3/5/7/9 – H: 182 cm
IG: /pastickorna



Erika
7/8/9/9 – H: 167 cm
IG: /loareknits



Hana
6/9/5/2 – H: 150 cm
IG: /mydigitimade



Jasmine
3/4/5/6 – H: 162 cm
IG: /craftedforicarus



Jenny
3/3/1/1 – H: 155 cm
IG: /theknittingnerd27



Katarina
15/14/16/14 – H: 166 cm
IG: /kcirnski



Kristin
7/8/10/11 – H: 150 cm
IG: /macro_mika



Mo
5/3/5/6 – H: 170 cm
IG: /teacakeknit



Matilda
9/10/8/9 – H: 175 cm
IG: /mafilders



Natalie
11/9/9/7 – H: 168 cm
IG: /natalie.knits



Rachel
1/1/1/1 – H: 165 cm
IG: /rachelannjacobs



Sam
13/12/9/8 – H: 172 cm
IG: /boundlesstree



Sandra
11/10/11/12 – H: 169 cm
IG: /strickschnegge



Savannah
13/12/9/8 – H: 172 cm
IG: /sanna.grace



Tiphaine
2/1/2/2 – H: 172 cm
IG: /fiddlestickscottage

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