



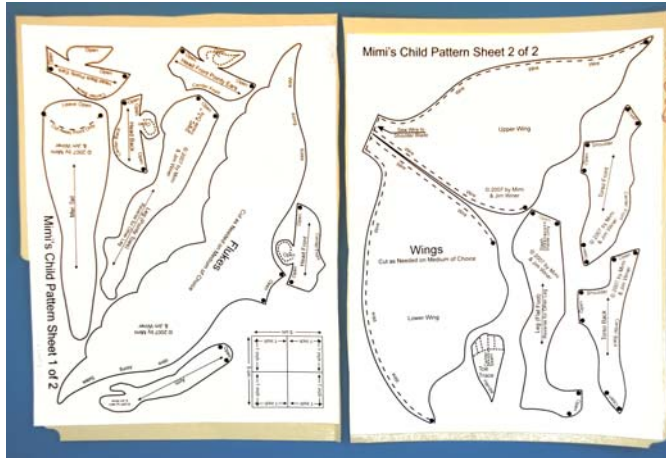
Mimi's Handbook for Dollmakers

# Making and Using Templates

by Gloria J. "Mimi" Winer

## Making Templates

- Glue the pattern sheet onto a used file folder.



- Cut the pieces out on the black lines.

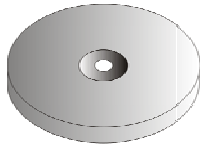


## Using Templates

- To use the templates draw around the pattern pieces directly onto the fabric with the purple air soluble pen. This first purple line is the stitching line.

**Do not use the blue fabric pen.** Use the one with the purple top. The blue marks have been known to come back and your doll will look bruised.

- Trace a full quarter-inch (6mm) seam allowance on all pieces. A one-holed button called a **Dream Seamer** is an easy way to do this.



A Dream Seamer is a small brass button with a hole in the center. Dream Seamer is a brand name owned by Special Products, Inc. Dritz also makes a small brass button with a center hole. Dritz can often be found in the notions department of your fabric or craft shop. Dream Seamer can be found in most quilt shops. When you put your marking pen in the button's hole and draw around your template you are drawing a perfect quarter-inch seam allowance.

- If the tip of your marking pen does not fit the hole well enough to mark the fabric, use a pencil instead — since the outer line is a cutting line, it will be cut off anyway when you trim the seams.
- **Sew before you cut.**
- Several pieces can be stitched before cutting. Since this is often easier than stitching after cutting, read the instructions carefully to see when you can do this.
- Stitch *exactly* on the stitching lines. If you make the pattern smaller, precision is more critical. If you make the pattern larger, you can afford a little bit of sloppiness.
- **Be sure to start and end stitching by going all the way across the seam allowances. There is only one exception and it is mentioned specifically when you need to know about it.**
- Change your machine needle. They wear out in 6 to 8 hours of use. Polyester fabric is made from the same plastic as Mylar and is even harder on needles and scissors than paper. Change to either a ball-point needle or a Universal needle.

Use a number 8, 9 or 11 ballpoint needle for lightweight to medium fabric. Or use a (same sized) universal needle. (International size 60, 70 or 80.)

- **If your machine needle hits a pin, CHANGE IT at once. Hitting a pin will put a scratch or burr on the point of the needle. It will leave torn threads along both sides of the seam. The holes won't be visible until the doll is stuffed, and then it's too late.**
- Set your machine for 2mm stitches. Use this longer stitch (2mm) for heavy knits (12-13 stitches per inch) and a shorter stitch (1 to 1.5mm) for woven fabrics (17-25 stitches per inch). If your machine does not have an obvious setting, here's how to do it for heavy knits:
  - Set your machine for a smaller stitch than you regularly use.
  - Stitch and count to 12-13 stitches on a scrap of fabric.
  - Measure the length of the counted stitches. Change the size of the stitch length until the desired number of stitches measures one inch (2.5cm).
  - Use a spot of nail polish or White-Out to mark this setting on your machine so that you can find it the next time you stitch a doll skin.
- Clean all the fuzzies out of the machine and give it a drop of oil if it sounds noisy.

## Changing the Size of Patterns

- Cut the seam allowance off of the pattern pieces. (Or make a template.)
- Enlarge or reduce the pattern pieces on a copying machine.
- Make a template from the resized pattern pieces by pasting them onto file folders.
- Trace around the templates on the fabric and then add the seam allowance with the Dream Seamer.

This technique keeps the seam allowances constant size instead of getting bigger or smaller with the pattern piece.

### ❖ Hint

When you change the size of some patterns, you may have to make proportional adjustments to make the doll look right. For example, the head is proportionately larger on my smaller Universal Toddler patterns than it is on the larger Universal Toddler patterns.

