

Choosing The Right Underlining Fabric

AN UNDERLINING of firm, lightweight, pre-shrunk fabric is used to back a section of a garment, or the complete garment, depending on design and fabric. Most fabrics, such as soft silks, matt jersey, wool jersey, woolens, lace, fine cottons, linen and knit fabrics, should be underlined for good fit and shape retention. This is very important in garments where the styling depends on close fitting. Voile, batiste, organza, soft lightweight taffeta, and China silk are suitable fabrics for underlining. There are also many new fabrics created especially for underlinings. Some are appropriate for a crisp, bouffant effect while others are more suitable for the smoothly fitted look. For dresses made of fine laces use tulle, net, marquissette, or organza for underlining to retain the sheerness and pattern of the lace. Baste the underlining to the lace before stitching darts, or tucks, or putting in gathers. Keeping the underlining and lace together, pin and baste darts or tucks. After stitching, underlining of dart may be cut away close to line of stitching. For underlining over-all or eyelet embroidery, use a very sheer fabric, such as voile, batiste or organza. For underlining very sheer wools, particularly those used for a sheath type dress or a dress with a fitted bodice, organza, light Siri, or Formite would be a good choice. Cutting Underlining is cut from the same pattern as the garment. All markings, notches and tailor's tacks are made in the underlining. Darts are stitched in underlining before joining to matching sections. Baste underlining to its matching section before stitching. Lace and very sheer fabrics are exceptions. In each case the underlining and outer fabric are treated as one. Jackets When making a jacket of wool jersey, sheer wool, or loosely woven or knit fabrics, underline the jacket with a soft fabric such as batiste, China silk, or fine muslin. Make darts in under linings. Then pin and baste to matching sections of jacket before joining at shoulder and underarm seams. Skirts Slim skirts, made of lightweight wool, crepe, jersey, linen, or of soft, spongy or loosely woven fabrics, are usually underlined with a firmly woven fabric. Underlining supports fabric and helps retain shape and good fit of skirt. Underlining may be half or full length. The half length underlining should extend well below fullest part of hip and should measure 15" to 18" in length. This fabric should be pre-shrunk and pressed before cutting. Cut underlining the same as the skirt. Put in all markings indicating darts, tucks, or pleats. Stitch and press as in the skirt. Place underlining on skirt back and front sections, matching center front and back lines, and seam edges at the waistline. Smooth underlining from center toward side seams. Pin and baste at side seams. Next, stitch skirt and underlining sections together at the waistline. Pin lower edge of underlining or turn under and stitch. Pin side seams together. Baste and stitch. A full length underlining may extend to top of hem, hang free between seams, or extend to turn of hem. If extended to turn of hem, be sure there is some ease in the length of the under lining at front and back. Smooth underlining from waist to hemline. Pin scant 1/8" tuck in underlining just above hem to supply the ease. Remove pins when hem is turned and hand stitched. Underlining upper half of skirt. Slim skirts with front gathers or pleats, or skirts with side draping should be underlined at front and back. Use plain skirt pattern with darts at waistline for underlining. The underlining should extend below the hipline. Fit underlining as you would fit a plain skirt before joining it to skirt at waistline and side seams. For best results, you should underline many of the garments you make.

About the Author

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