



*Easy Breezy Shirred Tops & Dresses*



**Included versions:**

- Tops & dresses with shirring around chest
- Tops & dresses with shirring around chest AND waist
- Ruffles added
- Straps made from ribbon
- Straps made from fabric (optional, at the end of this tutorial)

**List of required materials:**

- Sewing machine
- Serger/overlock machine (optional but please check sizing chart f. note BEFORE cutting fabric)
- Fabric
- Thread
- Scissors
- Elastic thread
- Fabric pen/marker
- Ruler
- Pins
- Iron
- Ribbon (optional) – recommended with not slimmer than 0.5 inch – length up to preference

**Seam allowance:** 3/8 inch unless otherwise stated

**Sizing chart for EASY BREEZY SHIRRED TOPS & DRESSES:**

Prewashing will prevent shrinkage of cotton fabrics!

This style garment fits roomy and as a dress the length will be determined by the way the dress is sitting either at the waist or over the hips!

The following yardage measurements given are for a garment with only ONE print! If you are making a reverse dress as shown please divide the fabric yardage and purchase 2 different prints!

**NOTE no.1: If you are adding a ruffle or border please take this in consideration when cutting your fabric. The given measurements are for tops and dresses WITHOUT ruffle/border! For adding a ruffle or a border determine how long you want your ruffle/border to be and take this amount off of the fabric length given. Add about 0.5 inch for seam allowance!**

**NOTE no.2: If you don't have a serger to finish top and bottom edge and want to fold those edges down please add 1 inch to your fabric length to make up for the difference!!!**

**RUFFLES:** cut your fabric twice the width of your garment width. Example, if your garment measures 20 inches cut your ruffle strip 40 inches wide and the length that you prefer. There is no set measurement on how long a ruffle can be.

**BORDERS:** cut your fabric the same width as your garment and a little more than double the length that you want your border to be! The little extra amount is for seam allowance.

Cut 2 of the following:

<b>TOP</b> Size	length	x	width	fabric yardage
6-9m	11 "	x	15.5"	0.5 yd
12-18m	11.5"	x	18"	0.5 yd
24m/2t	12"	x	20"	0.5 yd
3t	12.5"	x	21"	0.5 yd
4t	13"	x	22"	0.5 yd
5t	13.5"	x	23"	$\frac{3}{4}$ yd
6	15"	x	24"	1 yd
7/8	16"	x	25"	1 yd
9/10	17"	x	26"	1 yd
11/12	18"	x	27"	1 yd

<b><u>DRESS</u></b>	Size	length	x	width	fabric yardage
6-9m		14"	x	15.5"	0.5 yd
12-18m		17"	x	18"	0.5 yd
24m/2t		21"	x	20"	$\frac{3}{4}$ yd
3t		22"	x	21"	$\frac{3}{4}$ yd
4t		23"	x	22"	$\frac{3}{4}$ yd
5t		25"	x	23"	1.5 yd
6		28 "	x	24.5"	1.5 yd
7/8		29"	x	25"	1.5 yd
9/10		30"	x	26"	2 yd
11/12		31"	x	27"	2 yd

**RIBBON ties:**

There is no set measurement on how long to cut the ribbon. Use your own judgment and cut the ribbon as long as you need them to be for easy tying them into a bow on the shoulders!

Preferably use no slimmer than 0.5 inch ribbon

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I am making a REVERSE dress which can be worn either way!

These are your fabric pieces to start out with. If you are using a directional fabric print your print should go vertically. My print direction is irrelevant.



**NOTE: if you making a garment with ruffles please go now to page 17! Then come back here once your ruffle is sewn on.**

Lay your right piece over the left piece with right sides together:



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Pin the RIGHT side and sew and serge/overcast (zigzag stitching raw edges) between arrows:



This should now be your right side (serged):



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This is your sewn together piece unfolded:



Serge the top and bottom edge with a rolled hem stitch from your overlock machine.

**NOTE: if you don't have a serger/overlock machine you may fold down the top edge to about ¼ inch and press. Then fold down once more to about ¼ inch and press again. Then sew with a straight stitch along the inner folded edge. Repeat with bottom edge.**

***In order to make up for the hem allowances please add 1 inch to your entire fabric length when you are cutting your fabric!***



Position your ruler about 1 inch below your top edge and draw a line across the entire width:



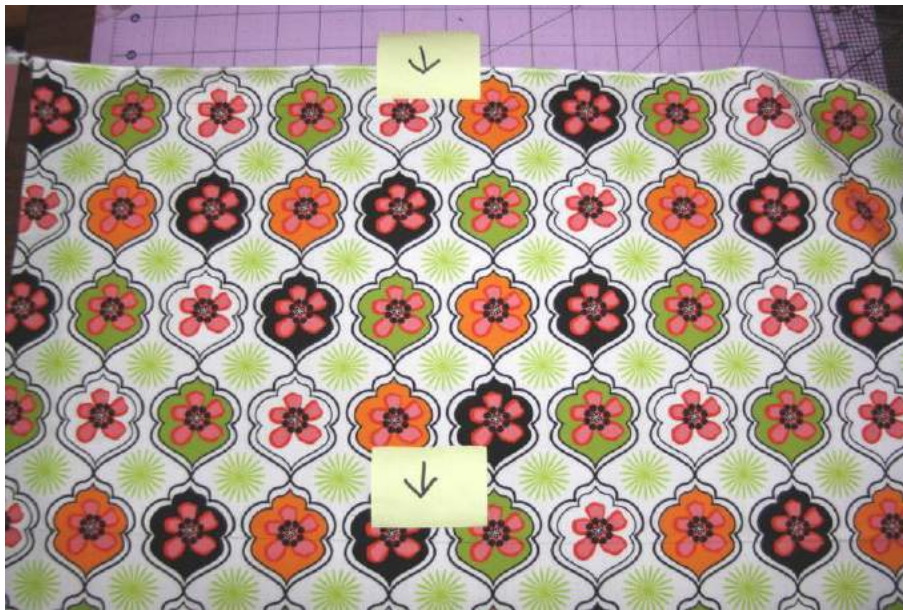
NOTE: if you plan to make a dress with elastic in the waist area then also draw a line where you want your waist elastic to be. There is not really a set measurement where to sew your waist elastic but a good recommendation is to draw your line at a little bit higher than half way up your dress! This dress can sit AT the waist or below depending on the little girls waist size.





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This should now be your dress piece with both lines drawn:



To sew in the elastic:

Wind some elastic manually onto your bobbin. I use the shown brand but any brand available at craft/fabric stores will be fine! Wind the thread tight but not too tight. You can pull slightly on your elastic thread while you are winding it up.



Insert the bobbin with the elastic thread into your lower part of your machine and thread the upper with regular thread. Insert your fabric into your sewing machine with right sides up and start sewing right at the edge with a good 4 inches of elastic thread hanging out. Set your machine to the longest stitch length and the tension to 2-3. Sew right along the drawn line. Be sure to check while you are sewing if your elastic thread has not jumped out from over the bobbin. That sometimes happens and will make your elastic not being gathered. If that happens rewind your elastic thread!



Once you have finished the first row of elastic you may raise your presser foot and turn your fabric around while both threads are still in.

Position your fabric as you would while first starting but leave all threads in as shown.



Insert your needle again right at about half your presser foot's width so you can sew right next to the first row of elastic.



Once you reach the end repeat the same thing as you did with the first and second row. Your fabric should now start to gather up. If not please check your elastic thread in your lower machine compartment as it can happen that the elastic thread snaps away from going over the bobbin!



Sew at least 5 rows of elastic thread to make your bodice nicely gathered. Once you are done shirring leave about 4 inches of elastic thread hanging out!

**Tip: if you happen to run out of elastic thread in the middle of sewing just rewind some more elastic thread onto your bobbin and start sewing just about 1/8 inch BEFORE the spot where you ran out. Then when you are all done with shirring double knot the elastic thread on the inside. Then take a sewing needle and feed the regular threads from the outside in and insert the needle into your garment and pull it through to the wrong side. Then double knot the threads and trim off with leaving about ¼ inch on.**

This should now be your finished top shirring:

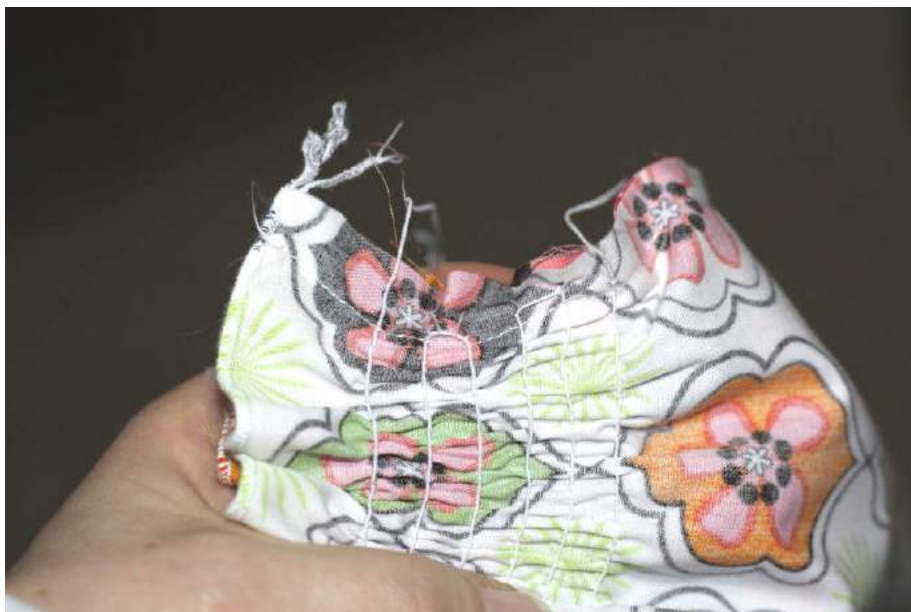


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Fold your garment with right sides together and pin the open side and sew between arrows.  
Serge/overcast raw edges:



This pictures shows you how the shirring part looks like when you have sewn the side seam. Always double check that you have sewn OVER the elastic thread and that none of the elastic thread is pulling out:



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This is your finished top part:



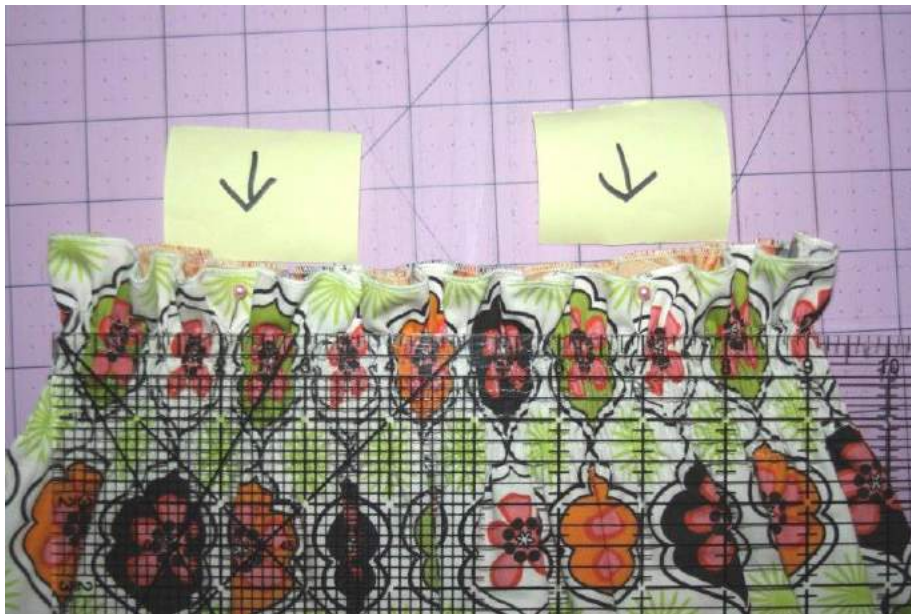
Turn with right sides out and top stitch the area of the shirring to make sure the elastic thread is not pulling out anywhere:



To sew on the ribbon straps lay your garment in front of you and place your ruler on top of the shirred top area. Measure about 2 inches away from the sides and mark this area with pins.

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I placed my arrows to show you where my pins are:



Cut your ribbon:

Cut 4 equally long ribbon strips of at least 0.5 inch width and if you prefer cut one set of ends diagonally. Seal ALL ends either with a ribbon or fray stop sealer or with a lighter. Hold the lighter very briefly against the ends.



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Turn your garment with right sides in and pin your ribbon with right sides down onto the FIRST row of elastic:



Sew the ribbon strip in place by using a tight stitch and sew several times across:



NOTE: there are several ways to affix straps either made from ribbon or made from fabric. Experiment to find your preferred way.



**DRESS WITH SEWN IN WAIST ELASTIC:**

If you are sewing waist elastic do the same steps as for the top/chest elastic! You may want to sew in at least 3 rows of elastic. You may sew the waist elastic in while the dress has not been sewn together on the sides .You always want to double knot the elastic thread ends AND top stitch to prevent the elastic thread from pulling out anywhere!



This picture shows you the waist elastic being top stitched:



This dress is made with just shirring around the chest area – This dress has shirring around waist as well:



This top is made with shirring around chest and around waist (backside is made with sewing on a garment tag or alternatively a piece of ribbon to loop the straps through):



## **INSTRUCTION of ADDING ruffles:**

If you like to add a ruffle to your top or dress please do that **BEFORE** you sew front and back sides together!

Cut a fabric strip of the width you want your ruffle to be. Take in consideration if you like to serge the hemline or fold it over and sew it. Cut your ruffle strip twice the length of the width of your dress. Easier said, if your dress pieces measure 16 inches in width cut a strip of 32 inches in length times two.

Then set your sewing machine to the longest stitch length and the highest number tension. This way your machine should automatically gather your fabric! (If your machine doesn't allow this setting you may set your tension to 2-3 and to the longest stitch length and sew. Then manually pull the upper thread to gather your ruffle. )

Sew along the raw edge with a seam allowance of about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch very slowly.

This should now be your gathered ruffle piece:



Repeat with second strip of fabric. Then pin your ruffle onto the bottom of each dress piece. Make sure to put right sides together.

Adjust ruffle according to width to cover the entire garment pieces.

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While removing pins one after one (some sewing machines don't like sewing over pins) sew along the edge and make sure to sew over the gathering thread leaving just a little space. That way it won't show on the right side of the dress.

Serge/overcast edges, topstitch if desired and continue with finishing the dress.



Finish the garment by tucking in loose hanging threads on chest and bottom hem sides, then stitch those down. All done!

**To make fabric ties:**

Size	Neck ties cut 4
6-9m	2.5" x22"
12-18m	2.5" x22.5"
24m/2t	2.5" x23"
3t	2.5" x23.5"
4t	2.5" x24"
5t	2.5" x24.5"
6	2.5" x25"
7/8	2.5" x25.5"
9/10	3" x26"
11/12	3" x26.5"
Fabric yardage	1/4 yd fabric needed for all sizes

Fold your tie strip's top and bottom edge towards the middle as shown:



Fold in the side edges 0.5" and pin:



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Fold entire strip in half so that all edges meet. Remove the pin:



Either pin strip in place or go straight to sewing along the dashed line. Backstitch the beginning and end:



Repeat with all remaining tie strips.

Continue with sewing the ties on, starting at page 21.

Design examples:



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