

# Wren ★ Feathers

## Shoe school 103: Mary Janes

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I assume you have basic sewing knowledge and the explanation should suffice, but if you need help please email me!



**To make these you will need:** wool felt, heavyweight fusible interfacing or fusible batting, lining fabric (quilting-weight cotton or light canvas) and some type of closure such as buttons, snaps, buckles, etc.

**Highly desirable:** walking foot for your sewing machine and quilting-weight thread for decorative topstitching



Cut uppers from felt and lining. Appliqué/embroider felt upper if desired. The bird shown above is a Sizzix die. Cut out an upper of fusible batting and trim ¼" off all around. Bond to wrong side of felt.



Cut a sole of felt, lining and batting, and trim off about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " around the batting. Make a sandwich starting with felt, then fusible batting then lining. Bond batting to felt and zigzag around all the edges. Using a walking foot will help tremendously.



**Using a  $\frac{3}{8}$ " seam allowance**, sew upper and lining together. Clip as shown, turn, press and topstitch **ONLY** between pins – not at the back edge yet. Use quilting thread and a larger-than-normal stitch (mine was 3mm) if possible.



Sew back (heel) seam with  $\frac{3}{8}$ " allowance, then press open flat, topstitch down and finish topstitching opening at the back where you didn't sew before.



Use a walking foot for best results here. Seam allowance is  $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Baste upper to sole, starting at back, moving toward front, leaving front unsewn, returning to back and sewing toward front again. You should be able to make 2-3 tiny tucks in the upper fabric that will allow you some toe room, and should steam out of the wool to be almost unnoticeable when turned. Try on and make any adjustments needed if your foot is narrower. Sew, clip, trim and turn. Press seam gently with iron and lots of steam.



Cut two straps main and two lining. Hem lining at bottom if needed and sew with  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seams all around. Clip, turn, press, topstitch.



Sew strap on inner side at point. (See pic) On the outside, you can use a snap covered by a button, a button with a buttonhole, or make the strap longer and use a buckle. Another option that's on a couple pairs of shoes I have is to use a loop of smooth, round elastic (like a ponytail holder) on the end of the strap and then sew a button with a shank to the shoe. This has the advantage of flexing when you walk.

Commercial insoles are your best bet for ensuring comfort and holding a nice shape and are readily available at drug and discount stores. Trim them to fit using the seam allowance line on the sole pattern as a guide, and then removing an extra 1/8-1/4". At this point, you have lovely slippers. Use squiggles of puffy fabric paint to make the bottoms grippy, or read on to turn them into REAL shoes.

The most readily available soling options include rubber flooring sold for gyms, etc. available at home improvement stores or buy a cheap pair of flip flops and cut off the straps. I used 3/16" flooring called "**elephant bark**" made from recycled tires and I absolutely love how light, flexible, and comfy it is. In fact, when I started this endeavor, I spent a lot of money to buy commercial soling (made by Soletech) from a cobbler supply place and was SO disappointed with the results! It was difficult to cut, and very hard and stiff once it was glued on, making the shoes unwearable. I've now made 3 pairs of shoes with the elephant bark and really like the feel you get from it. It's nice to stand on, but thin enough that you can feel the ground, like barefoot but better. Should you need more cushioning, for example, sandals that won't have insoles, you can cement two pieces of it together and make a thicker sole. If you have strong hands and sharp scissors, you may be able to cut rubber flooring like that. If not, use a VERY sharp knife. It can be hard to get the initial cut started, but after that it goes smoothly.

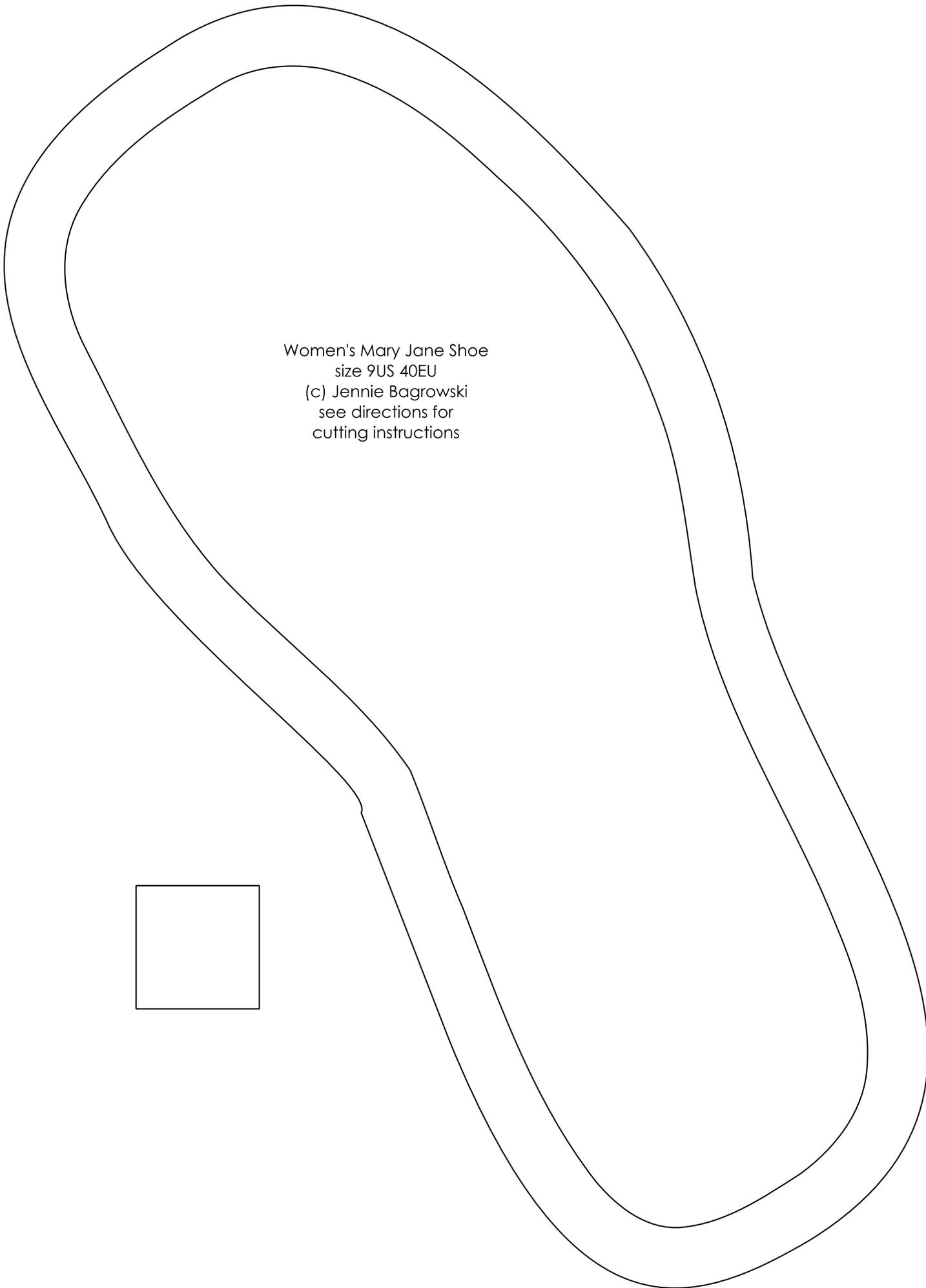


Cut soles using the seam allowance line on the sole pattern as a guide and attach with contact (AKA Barge) cement following package directions. Mine said to use a paintbrush, but a plastic butter knife worked better. You'll need more than you think; one little tube of Barge from the craft store is barely enough for one shoe, but you can get a 32 oz. tin of it at a home improvement store. Some brands are extremely flammable and toxic, so make sure to wear gloves, follow appropriate precautions, and use it outside. The felt part will probably need two coats; let dry in between. After it's stuck together and has cured a while, trim your sole to fit better if needed.

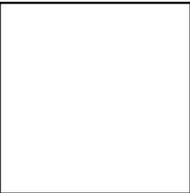


If you find part of your sole was a little small or didn't adhere to the fabric sole, you can get black silicone (it's like bathtub caulk) at an auto parts store to cover and protect that part. I went all the way around, even onto the green part a little for more protection.

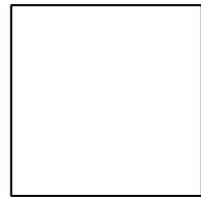
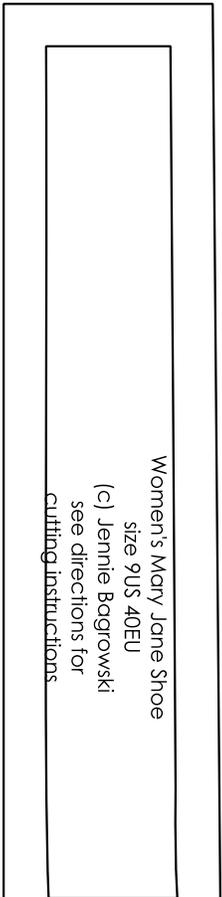
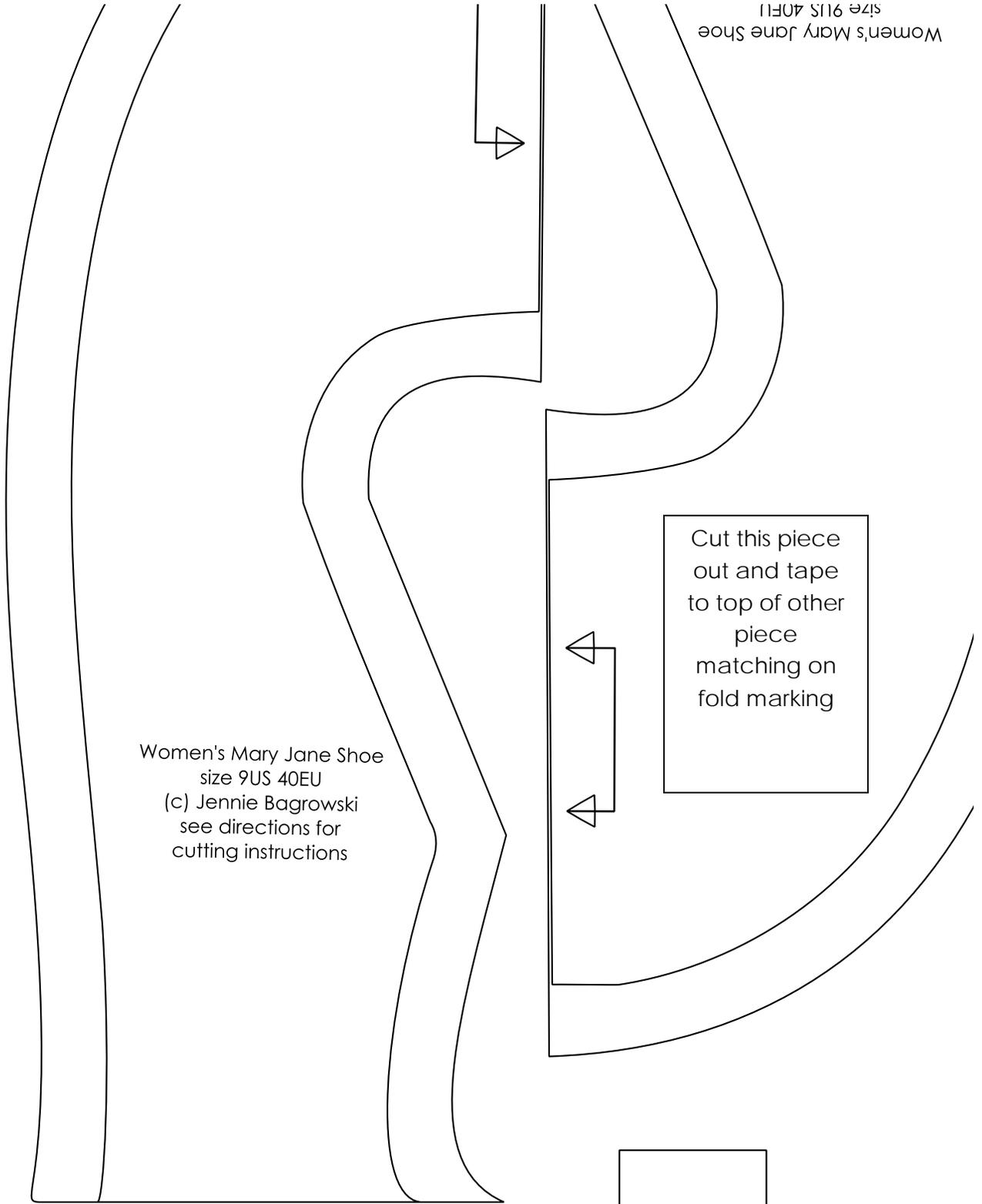
Spray your shoes with a fabric/upholstery protector if they are a light color and you're worried about soiling.

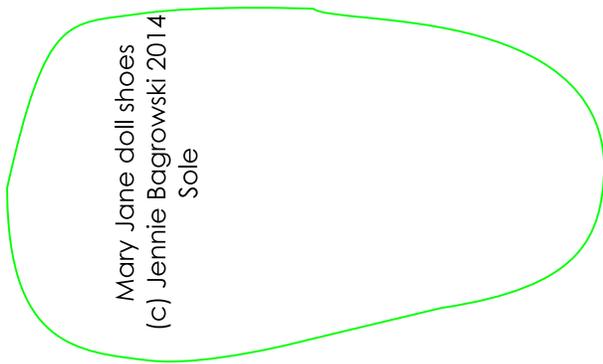
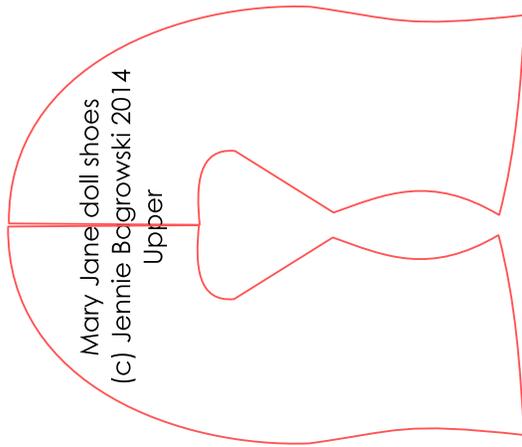


Women's Mary Jane Shoe  
size 9US 40EU  
(c) Jennie Bagrowski  
see directions for  
cutting instructions

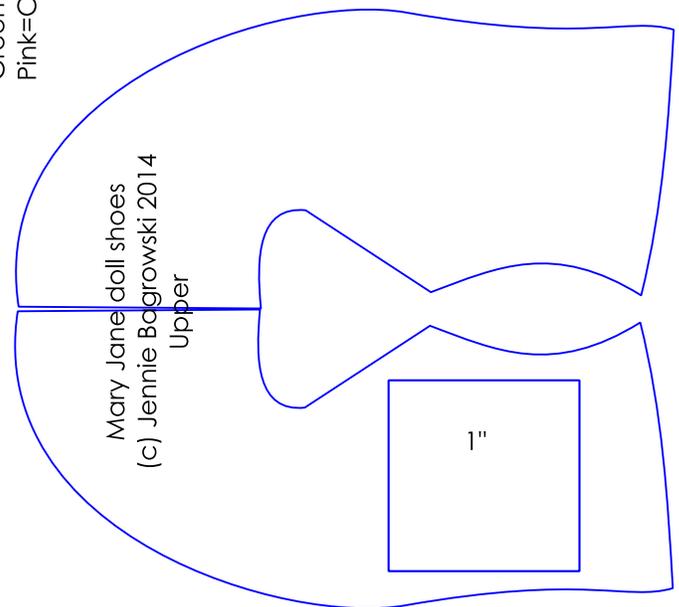
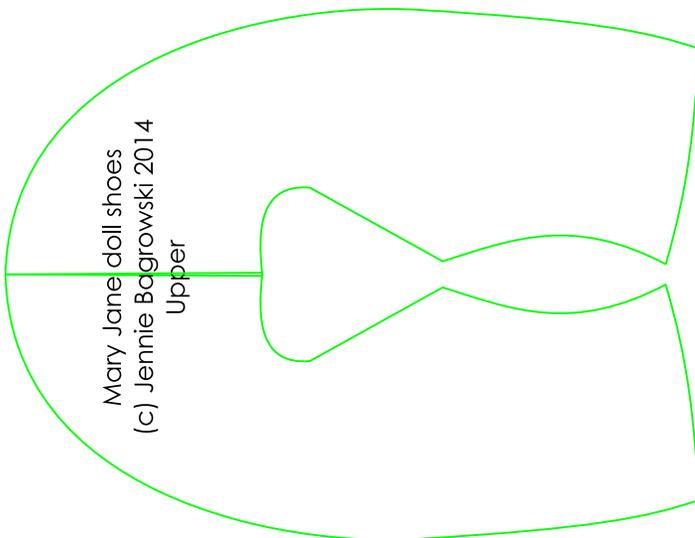


Women's Mary Jane Shoe  
size 9US 40EU





Blue=AG  
Green=Kidz n Cats  
Pink=Cherries/hearts for hearts



Modifications to the above instructions to adapt for dolls:

- Use light- to medium-weight fabric and medium weight fusible interfacing, line with quilting-weight cotton.
- The tucks at the toes are omitted
- No need to line the soles
- Outsoles are optional and can be made with craft foam or several layers of felt glued together
- If not using separately glued-on outsoles, use felt for the soles
- ¼" seams allowed on blue and green, use slightly narrower than that for the pink size