

Wren ★ Feathers

Shoe school 104: Chukka boots

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



This week we're finally getting to the "outies," that is, shoes whose seam to attach the sole and upper is on the outside. They are also referred to as "stitchdown" or occasionally "outflanged" shoes.

There are a few advantages to this type of shoe:

- They can be more easily fitted and there's no need to worry about turning, which allows you to use thicker fabric
- There's no excess fabric on the inside, making them a better fit for tiny feet
- It's much easier to measure and attach the outsole than it was with a turned shoe like the Tom's/espadrilles or last week's MJs, and you shouldn't need to cover the join in any way, because it's a decorative part of your shoe

The only disadvantage I have found is they can be a little harder to make "professional looking", since you have to be more precise with your sewing. We're going to explore a variety of this kind of shoe this week, including how to use some of the patterns you already have in a different way:

- Slippers
- Mary Janes
- Chukka boots

Slippers

This is a great one to do with kids. Get out your espadrille pattern from two weeks ago, or print it now if you didn't then. (<http://jenwrenne.wordpress.com/2014/05/09/shoe-school-102-espadrilles-and-toms/>)

For each slipper, cut two soles and one upper out of felt (line the upper with cotton if the felt is thin) and stitch them together. Buttonhole stitching all around would add a nice decorative touch, but a running stitch either by hand or on the sewing machine would look nice too. These can be decorated with whatever your imagination can come up with, like embroidery or even animal faces with little ears (bunny/bear/etc.)

Mary Janes

The Mary Janes from last week can be made as "outies" too in both doll and human size. It is vastly easier to attach soles to this type at human scale, but I found them slightly less comfortable, since they had less "give" at the front edge. Here are last week's (people-size) Mary Janes made that way:





Remember the tucks at human scale? You'll need to steam and press these flat. Wad up some scrap fabric in the toes and press the puckers with your iron using lots of steam until they're smoothed out. (L)=unpresented (R)=presented. If you have puckers or a tight fit at doll size, cover the doll's foot with plastic in case the fabric dyes run, dampen the shoe a little with a spray bottle, ease it on, adjust and hand-press/rub out the puckers, then let dry on the doll.

If you are making these for small dolls or dolls with narrow heels (like Hearts for Hearts) you will get best results by sewing these together by hand.



These are the Cheries size MJs from last week. (Yes, you and your doll can now have matching shoes ☺)

Bond thin interfacing to the inside and topstitch instead of lining them. I sewed them to the soles by hand using two strands of thread to replicate the thicker stitching found on human-size stitchdown shoes, but haven't yet trimmed that seam or attached straps. Note that you can eliminate the scant $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance originally provided for lining and they will look less "bootie" like, but I wanted these to come up higher. They're going to tie with a ribbon at the ankle.

Chukka Boots

These chukka boots are based on AG Josefina's. I bought one secondhand and her boots (from back when Pleasant Company made them from real leather) were rotting and falling apart, so I ripped the seams open with a seam ripper and flattened them out to make a pattern. Josefina's were sewn on a machine with regular thread and very narrow seam allowances, but most modern-looking boots like this have wider edges and are sewn with thicker, waxed thread which you can replicate at doll scale with thread slightly thicker than normal like quilting thread. I've tried the thick 100% polyester stuff labeled "button and craft" and it doesn't work well in a sewing machine, but may be OK if you're doing this by hand.

Real chukka boots often have thick soles. Your leftover elephant bark from last week would be perfect, or layer multiple soles made of craft foam glued together, and sand the edges with fine sandpaper or an emery board. I tried these in everything from felt to fake to real leather. Felt is by far my favorite, and fake leather my least favorite, since it shed fibers and scuffed badly while I was sanding the soles. A supple suede-type fake leather is preferable, check resale shops for old purses to cut up. Many times the fake leather used there is higher quality than what you can get at the fabric store.



Topstitch your pieces if desired. Layering them on tear-away stabilizer will make it easier



As you did for the espadrilles, start front and center, sew to the side, return to the front and repeat for other side.



Tweezers or forceps help to adjust while you're sewing

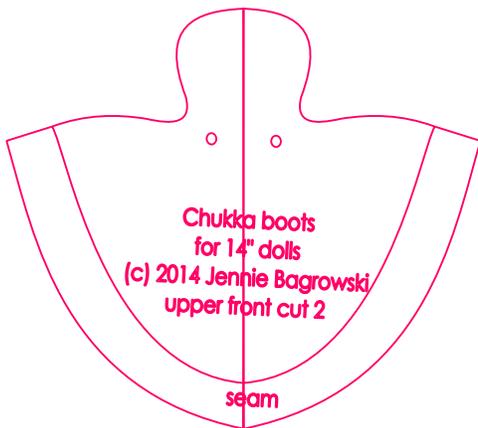
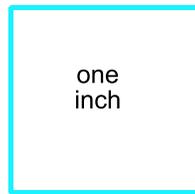
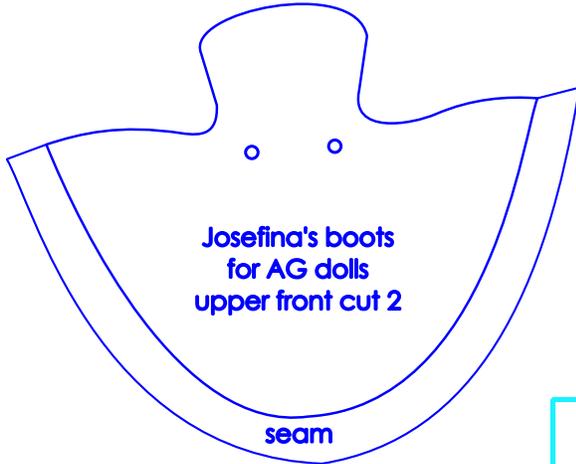
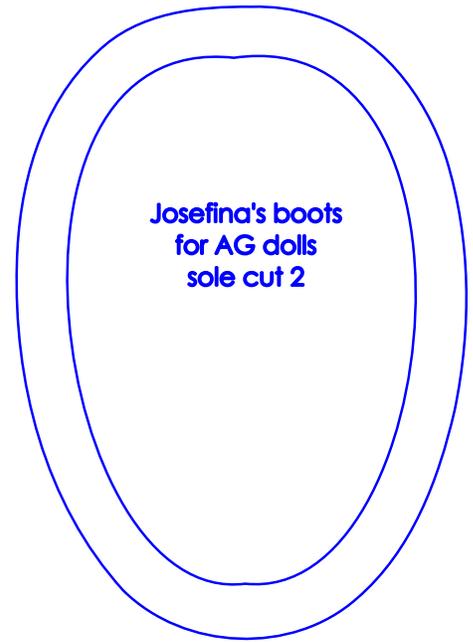
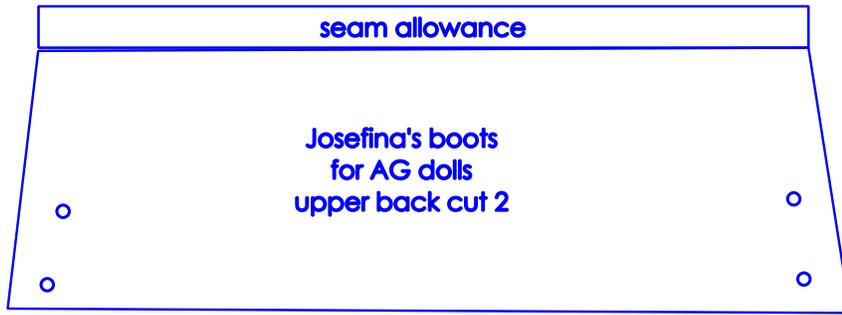


Trim all around the edges. If you're gluing on soles, wait to trim and sand until the glue is dry.

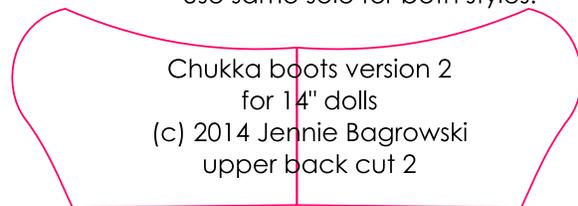
I recommend NOT using metal eyelets, since they can scratch your doll, and the metal could also rust/discolor and stain her. Punch holes with a leather or craft punch, reinforce with hand-worked eyelets or some kind of fabric sealant if needed.



The two on the left are the straight-sided (Josefina) version. I also included a rounded top one (third from left) for the small dolls that looks a little more like a moccasin. Once you make a mock-up, you can easily see where to trim and make changes to alter the style. Squaring off the rounded part as I did in the last one makes it look more like a "real" chukka boot, and making that style but lower around the ankle would look more like an oxford or maybe Doc Marten type shoe.



use same sole for both styles!



These have scant 1/4" seams allowed at the toe and back edge

