

Wren ★ Feathers

Peasant blouse – people sized!

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

3/8" inch seams allowed unless otherwise specified



Tired of sewing at a small scale? Make something for yourself for a change!
Either quick and easy or a masterpiece of machine smocking and embroidery!

I wanted to make something similar to smocked Hungarian blouses like this:

<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/476677941780985232/>

<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/241364861255008219/>

So I hunted around for a while looking for a pattern. And then said, "Haven't I done a doll blouse kind of like that...?"

Yep! I did! It's free here: <http://jenwrenne.wordpress.com/2013/05/03/summer-sew-along-week-5-embroidered-toptunicdress/> (Go download it, there are more pix and instructions that also apply here!)

And then I thought, "How hard would it be to convert that to my size?" As it turned out, not that hard. The difficult part was getting it to print at the right size. Just follow the guidelines below, however, and it's easy-peasy! The embroidery and smocking...harder...but do-able if you're a confident machine embroiderer!

Full smocking instructions and designs were from this pattern:

https://www.etsy.com/listing/196456657/classic-smocked-dress-set-for?ref=shop_home_active_8

Embroidery designs were taken from the Hungarian doll outfits in my "Folk costumes of Europe" set here:

https://www.etsy.com/listing/156891170/folk-costumes-of-europe-pattern-for-16?ref=shop_home_active_21

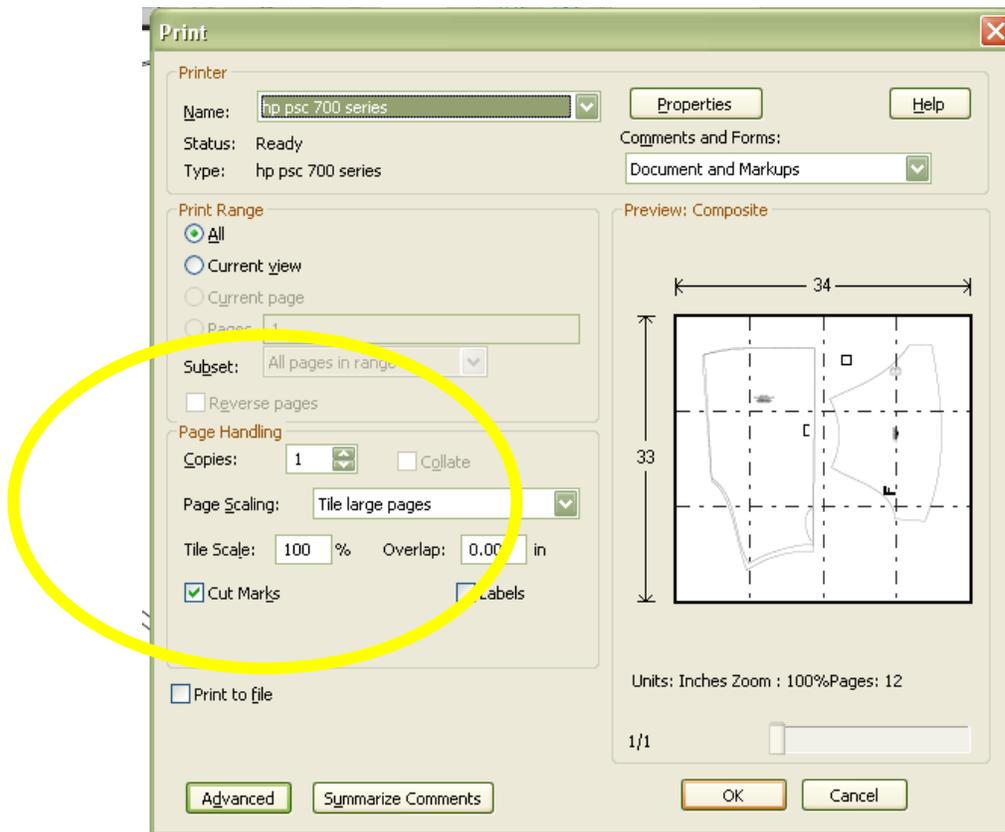


I used the smocking design on the right with the bottom rows deleted. The sleeve design on the Hungarian doll blouse was enlarged a little, and then I rearranged elements from her vest and apron to come up with a 5x7" design for the front of my blouse.

Printing Instructions

REALLY important!!!

Read this before you try to print!!



Set page scaling to TILE LARGE PAGES

TILE SCALE should be 100%

Make sure to check the box that says “Cut marks”. They are needed to line up the pages, you can also print labels if you want

It should print on 12 PAGES, there’s an inch box near the back of the sleeve, CHECK IT!
Masking tape (not the easily removable colored kind) is often stronger and preferable to scotch tape for assembling your puzzle...um, pattern.

You will need about 2 yards of 45” wide lightweight cotton or any thin fabric that drapes well.

But will it fit *me*?

Probably! I sized this to be very loose fitting on myself, since I wanted a lot of fullness for the smocking and am planning on wearing it over long-sleeved T's in the winter. I wear about a 6 in ready-to-wear and 10-ish in most commercial sewing pattern sizes. However, the fit is LOOSE. With a 3/8" seam allowance, the bust measurement of the finished garment is 46" and hip is 50". If you are much smaller, you can use a wider seam allowance.

As a comparison, check out Simplicity pattern 1315, which is similar in cut, but tighter fitting and with pleats instead of gathers to manage fullness at the front and back has a bust measurement for finished garment of 38.5" for size 10 and 46" for size 18.

In this pic on the first page, the dressform's measurements are set at 33-26-34. Widening them did not change the look very much, it just blouses out less over the waist.

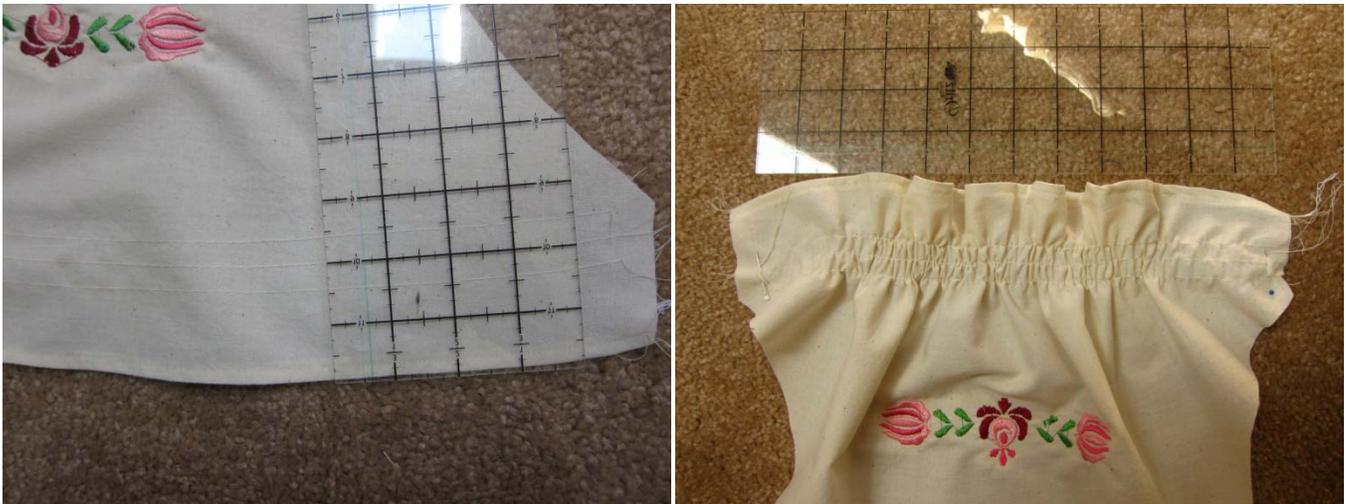
Speaking of fullness...even though it's quite loose, this still isn't full enough to gather with a smocking pleater. Instead, we can get a mock-smocked look even easier from widely spaced rows of regular machine gathering. If you know how to do it, you could also try mock-smock with elastic in the bobbin

Overview:

- Embroider florals
- Hem sleeves and smock bottoms if desired
- Gather and smock the top of each individual piece
- Sew pieces together
- Sew side seams
- Bind neck with bias
- Hem bottom
- Add waist casing if desired



Complete your front embroidery design. I used a 6"x8" rectangle of self fabric with light interfacing for front facing, sewing around in a "V". Leave the top edge open!



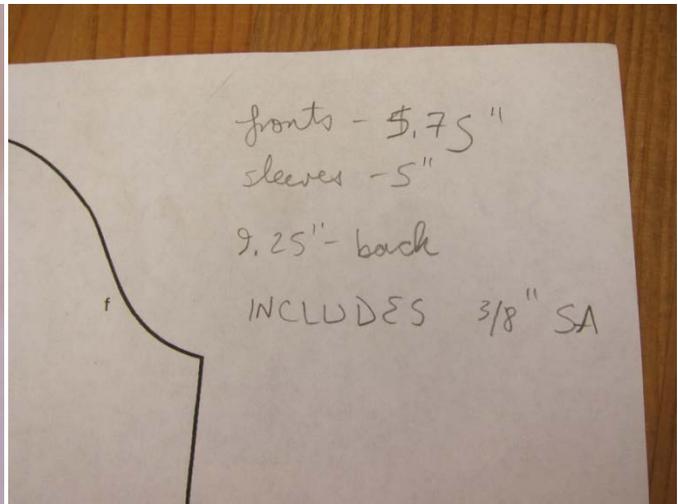
Embroider and hem your sleeves. *Note: you may prefer to leave the sleeve bottoms loose or gather with elastic instead of smocking!*

Hard to see in the photo (above left), but now sew 3 rows of gathering stitches, 3/8" apart starting 1.5" up from your hem. Gather fullness to the center only, so there's 7" of gathers and the total sleeve width is 13-14". You will need to tie knots in your gathers to hold them in place. Steam to set gathers.

If you have an enormous hoop, you could, of course, gather the whole thing, but I really like the extra puffiness you get from doing it this way.



Enlarge design a bit if needed to make it 7" wide. Follow pattern instructions to align and embroider your smocked design. For people clothes, dissolvable interfacing is a good idea. Ideally your smocking will fall right between gathers, making it easy to pull out. Pull out gathers and remove interfacing (or wait until you're all done and wash to remove)



Now comes the time when you need a dress form or a friend to help. We're going to figure out how wide each piece needs to be after gathering so it falls where you want on your shoulders. Pin or baste sleeves to fronts and backs with 3/8" seam allowances. Put it on and pin tucks in it until it sits where you want on your shoulders. Don't worry about SA at the top, since we're binding the neck with bias. Now measure how wide each piece needs to be, taking seam allowances into consideration. Write it down! My notes are above, in case you just want to follow that instead.

It's REALLY important to gather your pieces to exactly the right measurements! Any smaller and it will ride up higher than you'd like. Any bigger and it will be loose and slipping off your shoulders! When you are gathering, tie knots at one end, adjust to the proper measurement, steam in place, check measurement again, and then tie off knots at the other end.



Sew three rows of gathering along the top of sleeves and backs, starting your first row 3/8" from the edge and spacing the other two 3/8" in from the previous row of stitching. When you do the fronts, you want your gathering to only go a little bit (about 1") onto your facing, otherwise it will be thick and not gather nicely.



Unless you have a really huge hoop, your back design cannot all stitch out at once. And it's really difficult to line up both rows of stitching to match perfectly at the center. What to do? Mark the center point perfectly, and stitch out in two hoopings, making sure both designs end at the center back. (Let excess stitch onto stabilizer and trim later) Use another design, such as the flower from the sleeve as needed to cover any imperfectly matched smocking. Yes, you see pins in the pictures, and this is a case of do as I say, not as I do; it's dangerous to hold fabric to stabilizer with pins! Your embroidery machine can hit them and be seriously harmed. To avoid damaging your machine, don't even try using pins. Sticky stabilizer or hand basting fabric to stabilizer are safer options. You have been warned!



When doing the fronts, it should look like this. Just let the excess stitch onto the stabilizer and trim away later. You can see here how I left about an inch at the edge ungathered to avoid problems in my seam allowance later.



Hooray, you're past the hard parts! It's VITAL to line up the smocking stitches when sewing sleeves to fronts and backs. If you need to trim away some at the top later, do so.

Bind neckline with bias and run a few strands of perle cotton through at each side of the neck opening with a tapestry needle. Braid or twist into a cord.

Sew up side seams, hem bottom.

If you want to put in a casing for elastic or drawstring at the waist, there are guidelines on the pattern, but check it on yourself for a good fit - it's quite annoying to have to constantly adjust your clothes when they don't fit right. Casing should fall about 5" below your waist in order to puff out properly.

Use bias for the casing and insert elastic to fit your waist. If using a drawstring, make two buttonholes at the front, and start and stop your casing right at them.

