

Wren ★ Feathers

Little Darling in Japan Week 3: Aikido Hakama

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I assume you have basic sewing knowledge and the explanation should suffice, but if you need help please email me!
Quarter inch seams allowed unless otherwise specified.



Little Darling prepares to practice Aikido 合気道

Instructions for this and larger doll pattern here:

<http://jenwrenne.wordpress.com/2012/08/05/doll-hakama-pattern/>

<http://jenwrenne.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/hakama.pdf>



Galina demonstrates the use of a bokken (木剣) or wooden sword to Little Darling. (It's really a chopstick, but she has a great imagination!) ☺ Incidentally, bokken have an oval, rather than round profile, to make them easier to grip, just like Japanese chopsticks!

Aikido was started by Morihei Ueshiba (now called O-sensei). He was proficient in jujitsu, and fighting with swords and spears, and combined these techniques with his own religious and ideological ideas to create aikido. Aikido differs from some other styles of fighting in that it tries to use your opponent's force against them, or redirecting an attacker's force so that both parties end up unharmed, making it a suitable way for a much weaker person to fight a larger, stronger one.

Practitioners of Aikido wear an outfit similar in construction to last week's karate gi, made of different fabric. The pants are natural (unbleached, undyed) twill, and the top has two separate special weave structures, thicker in the sleeves and chest, and thinner in the part from the waist down. This style of top is also worn for Judo, which involves some grabbing of your opponent's clothing, as the heavy fabric is not likely to rip.

Belt colors are not as important in Aikido as Karate. Men who achieve a black belt rank in Aikido wear the hakama, 袴 which is usually black or occasionally navy, but women of any rank may wear it. It's also worn for other sports, such as kendo (fencing). Side note: my husband used to practice aikido, and I took my niece to watch his practice when she was about 3. She wanted to know why Uncle Jim didn't get to wear "those pretty dresses" 😊

There are two kinds of hakama, divided like very wide pants, and undivided, like a skirt. The split version was historically worn by those that needed to do activities where a skirt would be impractical, such as samurai riding horseback. For the samurai, the hakama had 7 pleats, each representing a specific virtue. When I learned this, I wondered how it was possible to have an odd number of pleats on a symmetrical garment, but they were counting the center front as one box pleat, apparently. There is a lot of lore and ceremony that goes along with the tying of the cords and even folding it for storage.

On the subject of storage, Japanese clothes, which easily fold flat, were stored in a variety of chests called tansu. My favorites are the ones that look like steps. Japanese carpentry is renowned for being high quality, using very exact joinery, and these chests can be masterpieces of woodworking. Tansu look most traditional stained very dark, with black iron hardware. Should your carpentry skills be lacking, get a ready-made box at the craft store as I did, and decorate as desired. (an image search for "tansu" will give you great ideas) Black cardstock can be used to simulate decorative iron braces/designs, just glue on and finish with a light coat of acrylic paint sealant to make them shiny.



I had dreams of making the one on the left, but my tansu was ready-made from Hobby Lobby, stained dark and with the back plate of the handles removed. Drawers were lined with origami paper as a buffer, since it's not a good idea to have cheap wood in contact with fabric.

I cut out the rest of the pic, but more cute furniture projects are coming up!

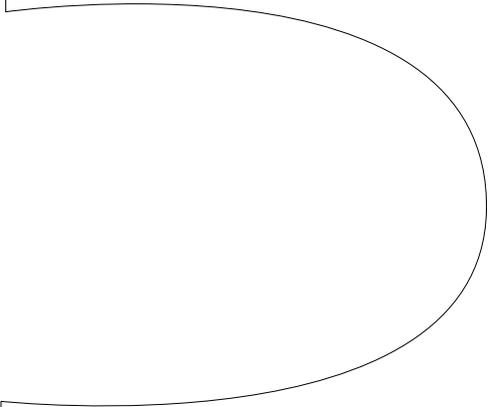
Wren★Feathers

Hakama

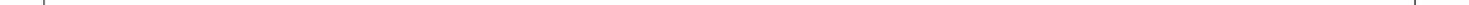
for 13" dolls like Little Darling

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Legs cut 2



line up pieces on this line before cutting



line up pieces on this line before cutting

