

Are you
ready?



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Little Girl's Sweet Serger Dress

Supply List:

- Ready-made white T-shirt to coordinate with your chosen skirt fabric.

*I prefer to use a premium quality undershirt from the boy's department, purchasing one size larger than the little girl's normal size. These are generally a little on the long side and perfect for the body of the dress to be 2/3 the length, with the skirt taking up the remaining 1/3. **Example:** Girl's size 5 = purchase a T-shirt boy's size 6-8 undershirt. Of course you can use a girl's t-shirt as well but it is best if it is slightly oversized.*



- **Thread:** Four spools of serger thread to match T-shirt and three spools of colored serger thread for contrasting rolled hem.
- **Fabric:** Lightweight cotton or cotton blend fabric for attached skirt. Gingham check is a really cute option and coordinates well with the white T-shirt. To figure yardage you will need two measurements described below. Note: To make your calculations easier, round off fractions to whole numbers.

Optional:

- 1/4 yard of narrow ribbon to trim center of neckline.
- Optional sleeve ruffles: Add approximately 1/8 yd. to your required yardage for optional sleeve ruffles.
- Embroider front of T-shirt to coordinate with fabric color or print for skirt. You can embroider at the beginning or at the end.

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Measure and record numbers as follows:

- Measure the length of the T-shirt from shoulder to hemline. Divide this measurement by one-half. Record this as your skirt length.
- Measure the circumference of the T-shirt at the hemline. Multiply this measurement times 1.75. When you have calculated this number divide it by two. Record this as the skirt width for the front and back piece.

Example:

T-shirt length equals 16-inches. (16 divided by 2 equals 8). Skirt length needed is 8".

T-shirt circumference measures 24". (24" x 1.75 = 42") (42" divided by 2 = 21"). Skirt width for front and back piece should equal 21".

Using these measurements I needed one skirt front 8" long by 21" wide and one skirt back 8" long by 21" wide.

Cutting Instructions:

Using your custom measurements cut one skirt piece for front and one skirt piece for back. You can cut your fabric on the lengthwise or crosswise grain, but note that the lengthwise grain generally forms a better rolled edge.

Optional sleeve ruffles: Add 1/8 yd. to your required yardage for optional sleeve ruffles.

Instructions for Serging the Dress:

- 1) Set up your serger for a three thread rolled hem using your contrasting colored thread. Be sure to adjust the stitch width and length for a rolled hem setting on your machine.

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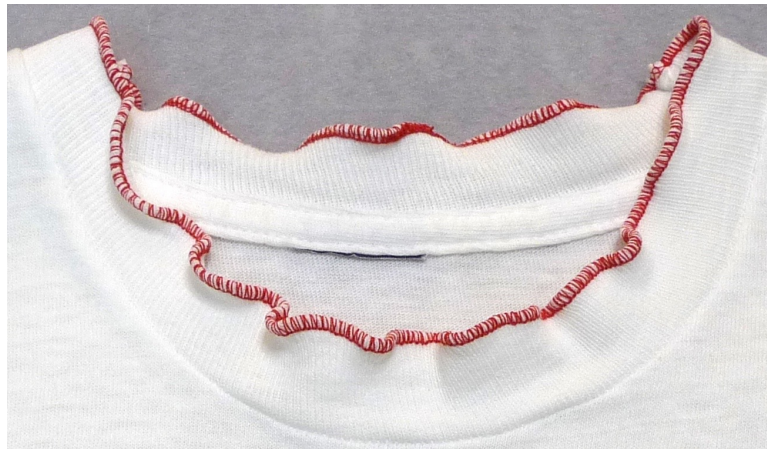
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- 2) Finish the lower edge of skirt front and back pieces with a rolled hem, trimming fabric 1/8" as you serge.
- 3) Using the rolled hem setting, "Lettuce" edge the ribbed neckline in the following manner: Disengage your upper knife blade to avoid cutting the neck edge. Run a test on a scrap of stretchy rib knit fabric, you may want a longer stitch length than the standard rolled hem setting. Stitch a rolled hem all along the folded edge of the ribbing, stretching just the very edge of the ribbing as you go. When you are satisfied with the look of the stitch on your test piece, start at the center back of the neck and serge the edge of the neckline ribbing, stretching the folded edge of the ribbing as much as possible as you stitch. Stretch only the very edge of the ribbing or you will stretch the whole neckline out of shape. Overlap your stitches 1/2" at the back and serge off. Anchor the thread tails by weaving them under the existing stitches using a tapestry needle. Lettuce edge the hemmed edge of the sleeve in the same manner if desired or finish sleeves with optional ruffles.



- 4) Next, set up the serger for a four-thread seam using thread to blend with fabric and T-shirt. Serge both side seams of skirt, stitching from the raw edge to the rolled hemline.



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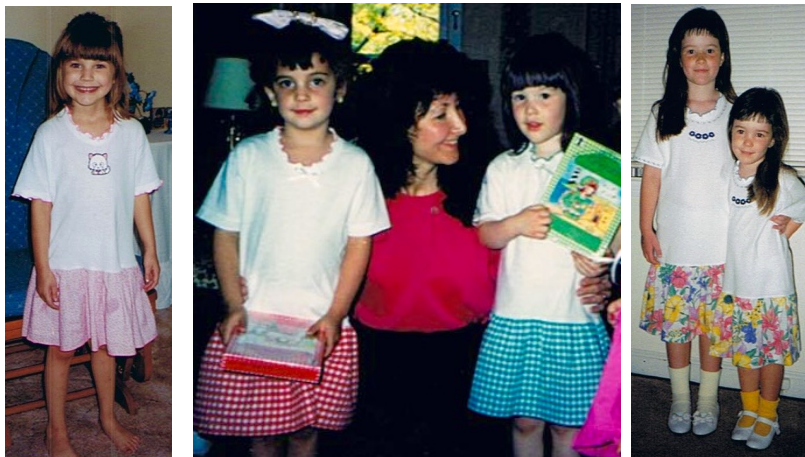
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- 5) Remove the left needle so you have a three-thread narrow serger stitch. Set up the serger for gentle gathers by setting the differential feed to the highest number and then set the stitch length to the longest number. You can also increase the needle tension for more gathers. Gather the upper edge of the skirt. Be sure to leave a long thread tail in case you have to ease off some of the gathers. If you wish, you can serge finish the edge and then gather the skirt on your conventional machine.

Optional sleeve ruffles - measure around bottom hem of sleeve. For each sleeve cut a strip of fabric twice this measurement X 4 1/2" wide. Serge each piece into a circle. Fold wrong sides together and gather upper edge as in step #5. Trim the hem off T-shirt sleeves. Pin ruffles to sleeves with right sides together and raw edges even. Adjust the gathers and serge or sew the ruffles to the sleeves.

- 6) Use scissors or a rotary cutter and ruler to neatly trim the bottom hem off the T-shirt forming a straight, even edge. Pin the gathered skirt to the T-shirt, having right sides together. Place the side seams at the sides of the T-shirt and adjust the gathers to fit. Pin skirt to T-shirt, pinning a good distance from the edge so you do not risk contacting pins as you serge the final seam. Place the left needle back in the serger so you have a wide four-thread stitch. Set tensions and all settings back to a standard serger seam. Serge the skirt to the T-shirt removing pins before you reach them. Re-enforce this seam on your conventional machine if desired.

Decorate the front with ribbon, trims, or embroidery. Present this dress to your little girl and tell her you made it with **TLC!**



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