Draft and Sew a Knit Cardigan with Sanae Ishida

Chapter 1 - Draft and Sew a Knit Cardigan

Overview

- Looking to make something cozy for when the weather turns cooler. Look no further. I gotcha. My name is Aya Shida. I'm an author, illustrator, - And a maker of many things. - In this class, I'll show you how to draft and sew a knit cardigan using a torso and a sleeve sloper, which you can learn how to make. In my sloper classes. You'll learn how to modify the slopers to create a cardigan pattern, and I'll guide you through sewing with stretchy fabrics. This cardigan is a highly customizable and versatile garment that you'll want to wear all year round.

Materials

- To draft and sew a knit cardigan. These are the materials you'll need A sewing machine coordinating thread, an iron, an ironing surface. Large tracing paper. I like Swedish tracing paper or Pellen. Eight 30. You'll need your front torso, sloper, back torso, sloper, and sleeve sloper, which you can make from my torso and sleeve. Sloper classes, a pencil, scissors for paper, small scissors, fabric shears, a measuring tape, pens, or wonder clips, which are great for knits and for the pins. You want to make sure they're fine. Tipped pins, a grided ruler, a seam gauge tape pattern, weights, stretch, or ballpoint needles for your machine. Marking tools, I have several here. Chalk or sometimes marker Marking tools, work better on knits A seam ripper knit fabric. I used about two yards. I recommend Jersey tensile, bamboo knit, or any kind of knit that has a little bit of heft, maybe medium weight, and that tends to work better for the cardigan and a class P. D. F with illustrated instructions.

Modify front and back torso slopers

- To draft a cardigan pattern, start by tracing your front torso, sloper and back torso, sloper onto separate pieces of paper, leaving enough room to modify and add seam allowance. I've already traced the slopers here and we will start by modifying the front torso. Sloper. Let me switch this like so. Shift the neck line half an inch towards the outer shoulder and about half down the center vertical line. I'll make a marking oh about there. Draw a diagonal line, extend the outer shoulder by half an inch - And - Connect to the curve. Lower the bottom of the arm hole, half an inch. It's all half an inch for the next few steps. And then we are also going to extend it out horizontally, half an inch. - So - Like so. And then we want to lengthen the hem. I'm going to scooch this a bit. You can choose whatever length you like. I'm going to extend it about four inches and I want to keep this straight. So I use the grid line on the cutting mat to guide me. So four inches and then extend the width of the hem about an inch or so. So it's going to be a little past there. I'm going to sure it's straight. And draw a horizontal line and you know, you can make it as wide as you want. And then we're going to connect the bottom of the sleeve to the bottom of the hem and, and I like to curve it a little, gives it a nice cozy shape and I just freehand it. And then we're going to do what's called squaring, which ensures that when you sew the fabric pieces together, the end of the seams don't create strange V shapes. Let's start by squaring this and you just only need to make sure, maybe a quarter to half an inch are at a right angle. And I like to use the corner of a ruler to give me that right angle. And these are all pretty good already. Yep. And this one is good. Let's move on to the back piece. Modifying the back piece is pretty similar to the front piece. The main difference is we're going to raise the neck line back, neck neckline by half an inch, and we are shifting the neckline half an inch like the

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front - And - Creating that curve, extending the shoulder half an inch, lowering half an inch, the bottom of the arm hole, and then extending. And then we'll create a new curve there. And then we are lengthening the hem again. I'm using the grid underneath to help me keep things straight. Let's do four inches and then we'll extend this to about an inch or two. Sometimes I add a little bit more to the back piece for the width of the hem, and then connect the new bottom of the arm hole to the new hem. Again, I like to curve it a little bit. - Yep, looks pretty good. - And let's square those corners. It's looking good. This one I probably have to bring out a little bit like that. So it's creating that right angle there. That looks like a right angle that looks like I need to straighten this out a bit like that. It's pretty subtle. There we go. That's good. And that's good. Now we're done with the modifications for the front and back pieces.

Modify sleeve sloper and add seam allowance
- To modify the sleeve sloper, trace it onto a separate piece of paper, making sure to leave enough room for modifications and sea allowances. Here's the trace sleeve sloper. Take a ruler. We're going to measure three inches from, this is called the sleeve cap, and I'm going to use the grid again to keep it aligned in three inches. Okay, and we're going to draw a straight line across. Next, cut along the line and grab a separate piece of tracing paper. We are going to place it underneath and tape it. - So maybe around here, oh, I'm actually going to extend it here - And measure. It's easier just to draw a line but half an inch and position the other part of the sleeve along that line and then tape that into place. Now we're going to redraw the curve connected. It's going to be a little bit wider, and this is because if you remember, we added an extra half inch when we extended the shoulder and then added another half inch to widen that bottom of the sleeve. This creates a bigger sleeve, and then we're going to add a quarter inch on each side. Then connect the new bottom of the arm hole there to the hemp. Oops, same thing on this side. Okay, the modifications are done to the sleeve. Now we're going to align the pattern pieces to make sure they all fit together, and then we'll add seam allowances. So I start by checking the side seam. The handy part of tracing paper is that you can see through, so I'm noticing that the bottom of the back arm hole is a little bit higher, so I'm going to adjust that. - Let's see. No worries. Oh, it's actually pretty good. - So just make that slightly lower, which gives it a little more room in the sleeves, which is nice for cardigans. And let's check the shoulders. So I'm going to line it up like that. That's looking great. It's right there and right there. As long as I'm here, I'm going to measure the neck line so I can draft the neckand later. So you can see there, I'm going to use my measuring tape with the shoulders aligned, making sure they're right, flush against each other. That's where my new neck line is for the back. So I'm going to go along that diagonal line. Keep going, going, going, going, going, going, going, going like 33 and a half. And I like to record it somewhere. If you have a piece of paper handy or right on the front pattern piece with the shoulders aligned. Let's make sure the sleeve is going to fit. And I start with one corner of the curve. Now that I have multiple layers, it's a little harder to see, but the great thing about sleeves is that they do stretch, so they don't have to be completely, perfectly the same length you can. There's about an inch, even an inch and a half wiggle room. Whether it's too big or too small, it works either way. And so I just kind of, I'm really eyeballing it and it's looking. That's looking fine. The sleeve curve might be slightly larger, but that's okay. So it looks like the pieces will all fit. And now we can add seam allowances. I'll start with the front start with the front. Get MyCengage for the front of the cardigan opening, the seam allowance will be a quarter inch. So I'm going to make little dots following my modified lines. This is a straight line here, so I don't need as many dots. I'm just going to have a few points there and use my ruler to draw that straight line and then connect

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the dots. Okay. And then we want three quarter inch for the hem. - So three quarter inch, three quarter inch, - And three eighth inch for everything else. - Okay, - This is a straight line there. So that's two points will be enough. Okay, and then let's - Connect the dots. - And for the back piece, the seam allowance will be a quarter inch for the neck line, three quarter inch for the hem, three eighth inches for everything else, and no seam allowance for the fold line Done. Moving on to the sleeve for the sleeve, the seam allowance will be three quarter inch for the sleeve hen and three eighth inch. For everything else, just make sure your sleeve corners are squared. Cut out your pattern pieces, and I'll show you how I like to label my pattern pieces. I make sure to indicate what the pattern pieces are for. So in this case, the cardigan, and this is the front piece, which is the F. I'll be cutting two front pieces in the grain line. Same thing for the back piece. It's the cardigan back. We'll be cutting one on the fold. And I draw this little graphic to remind me that it's on the fold, along with the grain line for the sleeve cut to grain line, I also mark which side is the back of the sleeve. And that's usually enough for me. But you could mark the front if you want, and also the center of the sleeve cap.

Draft neckband and cut fabric

- Take your neck fabric and fold it in half. I like to fold it with the right sides facing and arrange your pattern pieces. I try to reduce fabric waste as much as possible, leaving enough room to draft the neckand directly onto the fabric. I've placed the front pattern piece here, the sleeve. I make sure to put the back pattern piece on the fold. I have just enough room here to draft the neck band directly onto the fabric, so I'll do that first and then trace the other pattern pieces. If you remember, my neckand length was 33 and a half inches, and I want the width to be two inches, which this ruler is two inches wide. So let's do that. And this is 18 inches, which means I'll have to add 15 and a half plus a quarter inch for sea allowance. And normally I would draft a neckand the other way crosswise, because the knit tends to be stretcher that way. But because this is a neckand going vertically and I don't want it to stretch too much, we're drafting it along the grain. So that's 18 there. And I'll need 15 and a half plus a quarter inch. So 15 and three quarters additional. Trying to keep it straight as possible. And I'm going to cut two of the neck band pieces, trace all the other pattern pieces and cut them out. These are the cut pieces. We have two sleeves. Notice the notches for the back and the center of the sleeve cap. Two neck band pieces, two front pieces, and one back piece cut on the fold.

Construct cardigan

- Now we're ready to put it all together. We'll start by sewing the shoulder seams, attaching the sleeves, sewing the side seams, hemming, and then finish it up with the neck band. Pin the shoulders here with fine tip pins. You can also use wonder clips and bear in mind make sure that the front pieces are faced the correct way with the opening facing inwards. And let's take it to the machine. I'm going to sew with a three eighth inch seam allowance and use a zigzag stitch, so it's two on this machine. I adjust my stitch length to be about two there and reduce the width to two. And that gives it a nice stretch, but also lays flat without getting wavy. Okay, so put it under the presser foot three inch. Make sure you've installed the stretch needle or ballpoint needle back stitch at the beginning. And at the end of each seam, I'm gonna make sure the fabric doesn't get bunched up. Clip your threads and repeat for the other shoulder. So this material doesn't fray at all, so I am not going to finish the raw edges. But if you wanted to, you could finish it with a ZEC stitch or a s. You may notice when you sew with sweater knits, particularly extra stretchy, so sweater knits or thicker

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sweater knits that the fabric will start to stretch out. So if that's the case and you've tested it, you may want to put stay tape to prevent that stretching. To attach the sleeve, grab your sleeve pieces and your sewn front and back pieces. I want to line up the notches so that the back notches will be on the backside. So in this case, it's this pattern piece and I start pinning from the bottom of the sleeve there. And I may have to adjust this, but I will go ahead and pin the center. Normally I would place the seam allowances towards the back, but this is a little thick. So I'm going to open the allowance pin there. Going to gauge how this is lining up and start pinning. This leaf curve is slightly bigger than the arm hole opening, so I'm stretching the arm hole opening fabric side. Just a touch to get it to line up nicely. Then match up this corner. Start pinning. Okay, that looks good. Sometimes I will rein a bit. It looks like that part's a bit buncher than I'd like, so I'm going to redo that a bit. This curve down here is usually stretchier, so that regardless of whether it's knit or woven, so it'll lie more flat by stretching this part. Okay, that looks good. We're ready to sew. Okay. Three eighth inch seam allowance. And I am always checking to make sure that the fabrics are flat - And lined up, - Starting to a bunch of it. So I lift it up, flatten it. I also want this seam allowance to be open. So position it to be open, trim, and again, no need to finish the raw edges. Next, we'll pin and sew the bottom of the sleeve down the side. Start where the sleeve meets the side. I like to alternate the seam allowance to reduce the bulk and then pin that looks good. So with the three eighth inch seam allowance, as always, back stitch, beginning and end got bunched up again there. When we get to the part where the sleeve meets the side, we're going to keep the needle in and then pivot right around here. Then pivot, make sure to align the edges. Okay, we're getting close to the end here. Great. Then repeat for the other side. It's looking like a cardigan. Now's a good time to try it on and see how the fit is and make any adjustments that you need to.

Hem cardigan and neckband

- To hem the sleeves and the bottom of the cardigan fold. Three quarters of an inch press and then we'll sew. I'm going to open the same allowance using my same gauge. Measure the three quarter inch and press some steam there. Other sleeve, I am using a heat setting that's shy of linen. It really depends on the knit. Some synthetic fibers will melt if the iron is too hot. So it's a good idea to always test your fabric with some scrap. Moving on to the bottom hem, three quarters open. The seam allowance. I really end up eyeballing for the most part. I'm not super exact, but you can be if you want to. Okay, let's sew. I don't bother pinning with hands, and I like to start where the bottom of the sleeve, where that seam is and align the raw edge in that inner corner of the presser foot. It's one sleeve. Let's move on to the next one. Okay, and then the bottom hem. Okay, the hemming is complete. Get your neck band pieces with right sides facing. I'm going to pin one of the short edges. And so with a quarter inch seam allowance, go a little bit slow. It's a short edge and it's a very small seam allowance so the fabric can get a little fiddly. Sometimes I have to pull the fabric on the underside just to keep it aligned. Okay, now we're going to go to the other end and fold it right side together. And I'm just gonna put a pen just in case. And again. So with a quarter inch seam, remember to back stitch the beginning and end are all your seams repeat for the other end. So right side's facing, I'm going to pin quarter inch sal loss. All right, turn this right side out and give it a press. I'm going to press the center same open and then fold the neck band in half, wrong sides facing and press all the way across to make sure the corners are completely pushed out. Now it's ready to be pinned and sewn onto the cardigan pin, the neck band to the cardigan. Starting at the center back, I tend to do this little trick here where I fold the back neck line so I know where the center of that is and we're pinning to the right side. And then I take that center seam of the neck

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band, align it to approximately where the center of the back neck line is pin, and then work all the way down towards the hem. And then I secure the end too. I want to make sure that it's completely flushed there. So I'm sort of working from both directions, making sure that the neck band isn't bunching up. Open the seam allowance. Sometimes it helps to put two pins there to keep those seam allowances open. I keep checking to make sure that the neckband is distributed evenly. We're going to sew with a quarter inch seam allowance, so right at the edge of the presser foot. And it's a lot of layers, so you may have to do a little bit of pushing and pulling as you sew. - Oops. And the other side - Almost finished. Let's give this a good press and then top stitch. Okay, I am going to give it one more press from the right side. Okay. Top stitching time. I'm switching the stitch to a straight stitch and increasing the length to about four. You can stick with your zigzag stitch, but since this is a loose opening of the cardigan, I don't have to worry about thread breakage. And so I am going to use a straight stitch about one eighth inch from the seam top stitch to secure the seam allowance away from the neck band. Make sure it's a back stitch at the beginning and end of seam as always. And because there are lots of layers still, we need to potentially push and pull a bit to keep it going. There we go. And I also like to slightly pull the fabric apart at the seam so it doesn't bunch up. I can feel the seam allowance shifting over towards the neck band, so I'm moving it back. - There we go. - Voila. Here is the finished cardigan. Great job now that you've drafted and sewn your very own cardigan to fit your unique body. You can have so much fun adjusting the sleeve length or width. You can change the neck band, you can change the length of the hem, even add patch pockets. You can design a cardigan to fit your aesthetic.

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