**Basic Shirt**
There’s nothing more classic than a woven collared shirt. Whether it’s a menswear-style button-down, a Western cowboy-inspired number, or a girly, ruffly blouse, woven shirts are infinitely versatile and wearable. Feel like making one? You’ve got lots of options for fabric: Cotton shirtings, quilting prints, eyelet, voile, chambray, pinwale cord, really almost any light- to medium-weight woven will do! The measurements you’ll need are the same ones you needed for the Basic T pattern on page 58, with the addition of functional ease (subsequently referred to as FE).

**Measurements**
- Bust circumference + FE* (at the fullest point)
- Waist circumference + FE* (at smallest point)
- Distance from HSP down to waist
- Hip circumference + FE* (where you want the bottom of the shirt to be)
- Length of shirt (HSP to hem)
- Shoulder width + 1/4" FE**
- Neck width** (see Determining Your Front Neck Drop and Neck Width, page 78)
- Front neck drop (see Determining Your Front Neck Drop and Neck Width, page 78)
- Sleeve length
- Bicep circumference + 1/4" FE**
- Wrist circumference + 1/4" FE**

*For each of these horizontal measurements, divide by four. These quarter measurements will be the ones you use for drafting the pattern. They will be referred to as quarter-bust, quarter-waist, and quarter-hip.

**Divide these measurements by two. These will be referred to as half-shoulder, half-neck, etc.

**Make the Front Shirt**
1. **Prepare your paper**

   Begin with a piece of paper, approximately 4" longer than the length of your shirt (HSP to hem), and at least 4" wider than your quarter-bust or -hip, whichever is bigger. Make sure at least one of the long sides of the paper is a perfectly straight, smooth edge. If it isn’t, draw a line with your ruler close to the edge, and cut on the line. All your drafting will begin from this edge, so it’s important that it is straight and clean. Orient your paper so that this edge is on the left side.

2. **Establish Center Front (CF)**

   Whereas in the Basic T pattern (page 60) the left edge of the paper automatically became CF, this shirt will have a fold-back button placket, so you will need extra room in the pattern to fold back and form the placket. We are going to make a 1"-wide placket, so you’ll need 2" extra beyond CF. Use this formula to determine how much you need for the placket: Placket width (1") + 1/2 placket width (1/2") + 1/2 SA = 2". So to make the placket and establish your CF line, draw a line, parallel to the left edge of your paper, 2" over from the edge. This line is CF, so you can begin drafting the rest of the pattern from here.
3. Plot the length
Along CF, make a small cross-mark about 1⁄2" down from the top edge of the paper. From this point, measure down the length of your shirt (HSP to hem) and make another mark there.

4. Plot the shoulder
At the top mark, align your clear ruler so that it intersects CF at 90°. Draw a horizontal line here that measures your half shoulder. This is your shoulder line. Make sure the endpoint of the line is clear; make a cross-mark or dot to define it.

5. Plot the hip
Draw another horizontal line at the marked point at the bottom of the paper, using your quarter-hip measurement. This will be your hip line, which in this context is the bottom edge of your shirt.

6. Plot the waist
From the shoulder line, along CF, measure down the distance from your high shoulder point to your waist. Make a mark, and from this point draft a line, perpendicular to CF, which measures your quarter-waist.

7. Plot the bust line
To determine the proper placement for the bust, we must first decide the size of our armhole. The bottom of the armhole will be the same very point as the top of the side seam, or in other words, the bust line. Now, let’s figure out what size your armhole should be. Find the measurement you used in the Basic T pattern. To begin the armhole, establish two armhole and neckline curves for the T-shirt pattern. To begin the armhole, establish two 90° angles right off the bat. Hold your ruler perpendicular to the shoulder seam line, at the outer end or shoulder point. Draw a line about 2⁄3" downward from that point. Now hold the ruler perpendicular to the side seam line, at the underarm point, and draw a line about 1⁄4" long, toward CF. These two short lines are the foundation of your armhole. The curve you draw must begin and end on these lines, so that the corners will be go. Using the roundest part of your hip curve, see if you can find a spot where it meets up with both marks. From this point you can plot out your quarter-bust measurement.

8. Plot the neck points
On the shoulder line, measuring from CF, mark your half neck width. On CF, measuring down from the shoulder line, mark your front neck drop.

9. Add shoulder slope
Because our shoulders have a slight angle to them, we’ll give our pattern a bit of shoulder slope. At the point where you marked your neck width, measure up 1⁄4" and make a mark. Connect this point to your shoulder point. This new line is now your shoulder seam line, and replaces the old horizontal one. Cross out or erase the old one so you don’t get confused later.

10. Connect the dots
Now we can begin connecting the dots, so we’ll have a semblance of our pattern. Leaving the neck and armhole spaces empty for now, draw a line from the bust/underarm point to the waist point, and from there to the hip point. This will be the side seam. Your shirt is starting to take shape!

11. Plot the armhole
You should remember how we created the armhole and neckline curves for the T-shirt pattern. To begin the armhole, establish two 90° angles right off the bat. Hold your ruler perpendicular to the shoulder seam line, at the outer end or shoulder point. Draw a line about 2⁄3" downward from that point. Now hold the ruler perpendicular to the side seam line, at the underarm point, and draw a line about 1⁄4" long, toward CF. These two short lines are the foundation of your armhole. The curve you draw must begin and end on these lines, so that the corners will be go. Using the roundest part of your hip curve, see if you can find a spot where it meets up with both lines, so that they are connected into one smooth, continuous curved line. The top two-thirds of your armhole will be fairly straight, starting out as the 2⁄3" straight line that runs perpendicular from the shoulder point, curving very slightly to the right in the middle, and then sharply bending toward the right to meet the 1⁄4” line that is perpendicular to the side seam.

12. Plot the neckline
At the high shoulder point, hold your ruler perpendicular to the shoulder line, and draw a 1⁄4” line. Do the same at your front neck drop point, from CF. Now either use your hip curve or French curve, or just draw freehand, a nice smoothly curved neckline connecting the two 1⁄4” lines. It should approximate a quarter-circle or quarter-oval, depending on the measurements you chose for your neck width and drop.

13. Square the corners
As always, we need to make any remaining un-squared corners into right angles. If you’ve done everything correctly thus far, the only one should be at the bottom, where the side seam meets the hem. Hold your ruler perpendicular to the side seam, and slide it up and down until the ruler intersects the hemline two-thirds of the way over from CF (closer to the side seam). Draw a line, and erase or cross out the old one.

14. Smooth the points
All we’ve got left is to smooth out those obtuse angles and make them into curves. There’s one at your waist point, and the one you just made in the previous step. Take your curve tool and lay it down alongside one of those pesky angles. Slide the curve around until you find a section of it that fits nicely into the angle. The edge of the hip curve should be touching your line at points a few inches (or less) to each side of the angle. Following the curve, draw a line between the two points. Be generous; you want your seam line to be one smooth, continuous curve, not two straight lines connected with a tiny bend. Erase or mark out the old line. Repeat for the other angles.

15. Add seam allowance
The last step is to add your 1⁄2” (or 1⁄4”) SA. You know how it’s done!

**Tip:** I like to add a full inch of SA along the bottom hip line, so I can do a 1⁄2” double-turned hem. Think about how you plan to hem your shirt, and add your SA accordingly. Another part of the pattern where a different size of SA is generally used is the neckline. Because it is such a small curved area, we usually use only a 1⁄4” SA to minimize distortion.

16. Check your work
Your first piece of the shirt pattern is now nearly finished, but before you cut it out, let’s do a quick once-over:

1. Did you double-check that all six corners (CF neck, high shoulder point, shoulder point, top of side seam, bottom of side seam, CF hip) are right angles?
2. Did you check that there aren’t any other points left aside from those six corners?
3. Does the basic shape of the shirt look right to you?

17. Cut it out
We still have the 1⁄2” of blank space we added in step 2, and now we will define the top and bottom edges on it. Draw a line, the full length of your shirt, 1⁄2” to the left of CF and parallel to it. Place notches at the top and bottom of this line to indicate where the
1. Prepare your paper
Get a piece of paper at least as big as your front pattern piece, placed still folded back. Lay your front pattern on top of it, lining up CF (not the fold) with the left side edge of the new piece, which will be CB (there obvi-ously will be no need for a placket on the back of your shirt). Trace around the shirt front to establish most of the back pattern. The only area that will be different is the neckline. After tracing the outer edges, you can also trace your shoulder line and HSP onto the back pattern piece. If you like, you can also trace the other seam lines from the front, but this is optional.

2. Plot the back neckline
Using the front neckline as reference, draw a 1⁄8” line from HSP down, perpendicular to the shoulder seam. Back neck drops, especially when a collar is involved, are pretty small, generally from 1⁄2” to 1”. I would recommend using 1⁄2” for now; you can always adjust it later, if necessary. Draw a line from HSP over to the shoulder line, and measure your back neck drop down from these. Then draw the back neckline, making sure it also hits CB at a 90° angle, and that it meets the shoulder seam (also at a right angle) at the exact same point as the front neckline.

3. Add seam allowance and cut
Add 1⁄4” SA to your new back neckline. You can now cut out your back pattern piece.

Make the Collar
1. Prepare your paper
Start with a piece of paper that measures 6” wide and twice your full neck width in length. Fold the paper in half crosswise (so the shorter ends meet). Orient the fold to your left, this is CB.

2. Plot the points
To determine the length of your collar, you’ll need to measure the exact length of your combined front and back neck seam lines from your pattern pieces, from CF to CB. Use your tape measure, as it will allow you to measure along the curves of your neck seam lines. Do not include any seam allowances in your measurement. Use this measurement to plot a perpendicular line out from CB, about an inch down from the top edge of your paper. Draw a parallel line 1⁄2” down from the first line. Connect the two lines with a 45° perpendicular line. Now we can add a bit of shape to the collar points. Extend the bottom line 1⁄4” past the end, and connect this point to the top line. This gives a slightly less square look to the collar. We can play more with collar shapes later on, but for now you’ve got a basic collar pattern.

3. Add seam allowance and cut
Add 1⁄4” SA to the three drawn sides of the pattern. Along the top line of the collar, which will be the neck seam, mark the length of your back neck seam line with a notch, measuring out from CB. This notch indicates where the collar will match up with the intersecting shoulder seam. Also notch CB. Cut out your collar, still folded, and open it up for the full pattern piece.

Make the Sleeve
1. Prepare your paper
Get a piece of paper that is 4” longer than your sleeve length measurement and 4” wider than your full bicep circumference. Fold the paper in half lengthwise, and keep the folded edge on your left. We’ll be drafting half of the sleeve and then unfolding the paper to get a whole sleeve pattern.

2. Plot the length and wrist
Along the fold, make a mark about 5” down from the top of your paper. From this point, measure down the length of your sleeve, minus 1” for the cuff, and make another mark from here, hold your ruler perpendicular to the fold and draw a line that measures your half-wrist circumference, plus 1⁄2” for the cuff overlap.

3. Make the cap
The sleeve cap is the curve at the top of your sleeve, which is shaped like a bell. Before we can draft the cap, we’ll need to determine our cap height. I use a formula of two-thirds (.67) times armhole height. So if you used an armhole height of 8”, your cap height will be 5⅛” rounded to the nearest eight of an inch). Measure down this height from the top mark on your paper. From this point, draw a line, perpendicular to the fold, that measures your half-bicep circumference. Connect this bicep point with your wrist point; this is the underarm seam line. OK, now we’re ready to draft that bell-shaped cap! Start by establishing a 90° angle (from the fold) at the top point of your sleeve. Just draw a short 1⁄4” line or so. Then hold the ruler perpendicular to the underarm seam line, and draw another 1⁄4” line toward the fold. Now connect these two short lines by curv-ing downward from the top one and curving upward from the lower one, meeting in a very smooth curve. Make sure that where the two opposing curves meet, the transition is seamless (see diagram). It should almost be a straight line for about an inch or two.

4. Check the sleeve cap
The sleeve line you just created for your sleeve cap will be sewn to the armhole of your shirt, so we must make sure the two lines fit to-gether. Measure the exact length of your sleeve cap seam line, and measure the length along your armhole curve (not the straight armhole height), excluding SA. Compare the two measurements. If they are equal, or if the sleeve cap seam is up to 1⁄2” bigger than the armhole, you’re in good shape. But if the sleeve cap is smaller than the armhole, you’ll have to adjust it until they are at least equal. You can increase the cap seam length by lowering your bicep line, increasing your bicep width, or beeping up the upper part of the curve (see diagram). Play around with it until the two measurements match, or the sleeve cap is slightly bigger (this bit of ease will give the cap some shaping to cup your shoulder).

5. Square the wrist corner
Down at the wrist point, extend the under-arm seam line by 1”, then hold your ruler perpendicular to it. Slide the ruler up and down, until it intersects the wrist line about two-thirds of the way over from the fold. Draw a line from the extended under-arm seam line to the wrist line. This is the angle of your sleeve cap.

6. Smooth the wrist line
Using your curve tool, blend the obtuse angle you just made in the wrist line so that it is a nice smooth curve. Be careful not to affect either of the two right angles at the ends of the wrist.

7. Add seam allowance
Add 1⁄4” (or 5⁄8”) SA to the cap curve, underarm seam, and wrist line.

8. Cut it out
With the paper still folded, cut out the sleeve, being careful not to let the underside slide around while you’re cutting. Once your sleeve is cut out, make a mark along the wrist seam line, halfway between the center line of the sleeve and the underarm seam line on the right side. From this mark, draw a perpendicular line extending 1⁄4” up from the wrist line (see diagram). This will be the slit at the cuff opening.
Make the Cuff

1. Plot the length and width
   Get a small piece of paper, at least 6” by (your wrist measurement plus ½”), and fold it lengthwise. Place the fold at the bottom. Along the fold, plot your wrist length, plus 1” for overlap. We’ll be making a 2” cuff, so draw a line 2” up and parallel to the fold. Draw two lines from the wrist points up to the line, at 90°, so you have a rectangle.

2. Add seam allowance
   Ignoring the fold, add SA to the three drawn lines. Notch at the fold points, and there’s your cuff!

3. Label and true your pieces
   All that’s left is to label all of your pieces with CF/CB, grain line, name of the garment, name of the pattern piece (front and back shirt, sleeve, cuff, and collar) and cutting instructions (front shirt is “cut 2,” back is “cut 1 on fold,” sleeve is “cut 2,” cuff is “cut 2,” and collar is “cut 2”). Check that all corresponding pieces match along seam lines.

Sewing instructions: Sew fronts to back at shoulder and side seams, using French seams. Stitch the two collar pieces together (right sides facing) along the three outer edges, turn right-side out, press, and edgestitch from the right side. Sew the collar to neckline, matching CB and CF, and finish the neck seam with a bias-tape (or ½” self-bias) binding. Press ⅛” under at placket edge, and fold the placket, so right sides are facing, at notches. Stitch across neck edge for ⅛” extension. Turn the placket right-side out and press. From inside, edgestitch along the inner folded placket edge. Sew the underarm seams of sleeves with French seams. Finish the slit with a ⅛” self-bias binding (see Insider Sewing Techniques, page 148). Fold cuffs lengthwise, with right sides facing, and stitch the two short ends. Turn right side out and press. Lay the cuff on the right side of sleeve, with raw edges together, and seam one long side of the cuff to the sleeve. Flip the cuff and tack ⅛” of the cuff facing and all SA inside of cuff seam; press Edgestitch around all four sides of the cuff, from the right side. Hem your shirt with a double-turned ⅛” hem. Stitch buttonholes onto CF placket and cuffs, and sew on your buttons.

Shirt Variation 1: Betsy Jacket

We can use our Basic Shirt pattern (page 58) as the basis for a cute, lightweight spring jacket, with big buttons and a gathered waistline. Try it in denim, canvas, corduroy, or any jacket-weight fabric.

(Note: If you made your shirt pattern with a snug fit, you may want to grade it up a size or two to make the jacket; see Throw a Fit, page 134). Decide in advance the length you want your jacket, and how far down from HSP the waist seam will be. You’ll need several medium-sized pieces of paper for this pattern.

1. Make the upper front
   Trace the top half of your shirt front from page 60, from the waist line up, onto a new piece of paper, and transfer the CF line. Draw a line where you want the gathered waist seam, perpendicular to CF (⅛” put mine ¾” down from HSP). Add SA to the waist seam line. Lower and/or widen the neckline as desired, including ⅛” SA before you trim anything away from the neck. I made my neck width 9” (so the half-neck width is 4½”) and my drop 4⅛”. We are going to put a wider, separate 2” placket on this jacket, so we’ll also need to trim away the original fold-back placket and a little more. Draw a parallel line, ⅛” to the right of CF, and cut on this line.

2. Make the upper back
   Follow the same steps to make the back pattern, except for the placket adjustment (you’ll just stick with good ol’ CB). Be sure the back neckline matches up with the front at the shoulder seams. True the back to the front at the shoulder and side seams.

3. Make the ruffle
   Measure the width of the waist seam line (including SA), and multiply this number by ½. Draft a rectangle this wide by however long you want the ruffle part of the jacket (⅛” under it), plus ⅛” for SA. This piece can be the front and back ruffle, though the back one will be cut on the fold.