Simplicity Sewing: Cosplay Costumes with Michele Muska

Chapter 1 - Sewing Cosplay Costumes

Overview

(boppy music) - I'm Michelle from Simplicity. And I've sewing, crafting, and quilting since I was four years old. One of the most recent things that I've been working on that I really enjoy are cosplay costumes. We also publish Cosplay Culture magazine and I get to go to a lot of the cons. C2E2 in Chicago, Comic Con in New York. And we've really connected with you and our customers to find out exactly what you're interested in. So I'm gonna show you today some really basic items to make. So we're gonna do a bustier or a corset with boning, so there's a few tricks there I'm gonna be able to tell you about. And you'll be able to customize it and embellish it with all kinds of trims. And then we're also going to be doing some gauntlets that are lined. And then to top off your ensemble would be a cape. We'll be working with pattern number D0510. After you make your first piece, you'll also be able to make something like these three, A, B, or C. And really, truly customize your garment. I'll also be showing you some tricky techniques, but I have a lot to tips for inserting a separating zipper and boning. So once you learn the basic skills you can adapt the pattern to whatever character you want to be. (boppy music)

Materials

- We'll be making a size 14 today. Each pattern has a grouping of sizes. This one is six to 14. Once you choose your view, you're going to turn your pattern over and you're going to look at everything that you need. It will tell you the fabrics that you need, it will tell you the notions, and it will also tell you your measurements. At this point you want to look and make sure that you're using the appropriate size. It will have your bust, waist, and hip sizes and then it will tell you exactly what you need for each piece. For the corset we're going to be using this really cool textured vinyl. It has a little stretch to it. I've highlighted the pattern in the back to actually see what we'll need. I chose view A for the corset and I'm making a size 14. And if you follow down you'll be able to see the amounts that you need. For the interfacing, we'll need 7/8 of a yard and I chose black. And then we're going to go down here to corset and the lining which is a broad cloth which usually comes in a 45 inch wide fabric, I will need 1 5/8 yard. You'll need a yard and a quarter of interlining. It's a very heavy canvas. I chose gray so it's easier to see while I'm sewing. But I would normally choose black to match my corset. And I chose view B for the cape. I'll be using 1 1/2 yards of 60 inch wide fabric and then 3/8 of a yard of hook and loop tape and I chose this nice satin shiny fabric for the outside of the cape. The measurements for your corset fabric also includes enough to make your gauntlets but I've chosen to use some of this really cool studded vinyl and a lining. So you'll need about a half a yard of each to prepare those. And you'll also need some basic sewing tools and materials. You need a nice pair of fabric scissors. I have also chosen a small pair of curved scissors to cut out the interlining. This is a ham and this is really useful for ironing out the bust seams. A 12 inch separating zipper and then some rigilene. This is the boning you'll be using. Most boning comes in a case and is a little more difficult to work with. This is a really great boning that you can actually sew right through so I think that will be really helpful especially if this is your first time using it. Pens and needles, some clips, I use these little clips because we'll be working with vinyl which is a fairly difficult fabric to work with, you can't put pins through it so I think this is really helpful as well as some thread. I'm using lime green just to show you on camera so you can see exactly what I'm

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doing but I would of course choose a black and then you could also use some washi tape. I have a few tricks with that to help you with you seam allowance on your sewing machine and also to put in your separating zipper as well as a seam ripper which is always helpful, marking pens or chalk, some snaps, you'll need three snaps. And then I like to talk a little bit about the needles as well. Most machines will come with an 11 which should be sufficient for everything you're doing but if you find you're having a bit of difficulty sewing through all the layers I would choose a jeans or a leather needle so you can go up to a 12 or 14. And you also have some fun choices for your trims to customize your outfit. So one of the things I'm going to showing you is if you don't want to put a zipper in you can actually use this loop trim and you can lace up your corset and then you can really accentuate your costume with some really cool trim or fur. And of course you also need your sewing machine, an iron, and ironing board.

Cape

Prepare cape pattern pieces
- The first thing you want to do is take out your instruction sheet. That is your guide throughout your whole project. We're gonna start with the cape, view B, because that's really the easiest. So you want to look for the piece that you're working on. This says cape, and it's also going to show you what pieces to use: 25, 26, and also 27. This will show you the layout of your pattern pieces on your fabric. Then you want to come up here and locate your pattern pieces. I've highlighted them and you might want to do that as well, to make it a little bit easier. Look here to tell what the pattern pieces look like, and what you'll be cutting out. When you open up your pattern, the tissues are folded up. You want to open that up and you want to locate your pattern pieces. You want to cut around your pattern pieces before you lay it on to your fabric. You also would like to iron your pattern pieces on a low setting to iron out all the creases. This wouldn't matter as much with our cape because it's such a large piece, but if you're doing, say, set-in sleeves, or the yoke, or the collar, then you wanna make sure your pattern pieces are ironed, because it is a precise measurement. Also, all of our pattern instruction sheets have a help line. You can either call or you can email at info@simplicity.com. We also have some general directions. This will tell you what all the symbols are. I'll go through them as well with you, but this will tell you what the symbols are and what they mean, and you can refer back to this throughout your pattern. When you're laying out your pattern pieces for your cape, you want to put it right along the selvage edge, printed side up. The gray is printed side down, so you're using the first piece, so you cut out one piece at a time, flip the pattern over, pin, and cut the second piece. I now have my pattern piece roughly cut out, ironed, and pinned to my fabric. I want to make sure that it's face up. I also need to know what size I'm doing. I'm doing a 14, which is along the outside, but you really need to make sure to follow the lines. If it's confusing to you, cut your pattern piece out to the exact size. I'm gonna start cutting with my fabric scissors. Make sure you use your shears just for fabric. It'll really make a big difference. As I'm going around the corner, you're going to see these little notches, right here. I'm going to snip that. If you're afraid to do that, you can also just take a marking pencil and mark it. Continue along, down the straight edge. This is such a large piece of fabric that I've also pinned the interior of the pattern, just to give it a little more stability while I'm cutting. The capelet is universal size, so it's one length should fit all. Once you've cut out your first pattern piece. You want to take your pins out, flip it over, and cut the second piece out. Next, you'll have this area here of fabric left over This is where you're going to

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take number 26, and you'll place that on a fold. That is your yoke that goes in the back of your cape. Then, you're gonna take number 27, which will be the front piece, which attaches with snaps, and you're going to cut one of those out as well. In addition to your cape fabric for 26 and 27, you will also need for 26 some iron-on interfacing, and then you will also need for number 27 the canvas interlining, as well as your broadcloth lining. The last step before we start sewing is taking these two pieces and ironing them together. Make sure you have the backside of your yoke piece, and the iron-on side of your iron-on interfacing. Put those together and then iron 'em.

Sewing cape
- So now we're going to start assembling your cape. So you want to find the section on your instruction sheet that says cape and gauntlets, B and C, since we're doing view B. And you're going to start with number one, which is making the dart seams. So find your dart and pin right sides together like this. And put your pins to the side, your machine should go over the pins if you go slowly, but take them out if you don't feel comfortable with that. All the seam allowances, unless noted, will be 5/8 of an inch. So down with that. My machine has a great little scissor cutter, so I can just do that. I'd like you to remember to backstitch at the beginning and end of each seam, and then you repeat the dart in the other side, and then we're going to pin the back seam together. And if you remember, we had made those three little notches that the pattern piece showed you. We're gonna join those together. For me, I've been sewing a long time, so I don't necessarily pin a long, straight seam like this, but if you're not familiar, or it's something new for you, or it's a really slippery fabric, I definitely would suggest putting a few pins in there. If it's a very slippery fabric, then I would actually hand-baste it with just some really large, long stitches. Your darts are on the inside, so you have pinned right sides together, unless you're doing a French seam, which I'll show you how to do in a little bit. And then you want to sew a 5/8 inch seam all the way down. So make sure to go a little slower over your needles. 'Kay, we're almost done and then we'll press our seams out. Backstitch, and cut. So if you'd like a little more finished look on the inside of your cape, you can do a French seam, and I'll show you how to do that onto scrap pieces. So you're actually going to sew wrong side together, and you're going to do a very small seam, maybe a quarter of an inch down. Which kinda goes against the grain of how you normally sew. Cut. Here you have the seam out, wrong sides together, and then you fold it, and you're actually encasing that raw seam right into your seam allowance. Because I don't want to make my seam too large, I'm gonna take it down to maybe a half inch or a little bit under. If you feel like you need to press it, go ahead and do that, or you can finger press like this. This is similar to what you find on the side of your jeans as well. Any time that you want to have a more finished seam. And cut. And this is what it will look like from the inside. And let me show you the finished side. So the finished side is like this. You can clip off any stray threads that are sticking out. And if you want, you could actually fold this down and topstitch along there if you'd like it to lay flat. And that's pretty much what a seam looks like on the side of a pair of jeans. The next step is the cape back facing. I have already applied interfacing to it, and there's a couple different techniques that you can use at this point. You can roll under your seam edge twice and sew, or you can zigzag which I think is an easier technique to do, and that's what I'm going to do next. So I've already set my machine to zigzag. I'm gonna lower my needle. You might want to go a little bit slower, and you're gonna run right along the edge. And just go along the curve. You're not going to see this piece once your cape is finished. So, you know, don't fret too much over it. 'Kay. Now I'll notch the curve, you know, every inch or so, and make sure it's not deeper than 5/8 of an inch. So it will all be captured in your seam. Iron the center seam so you can

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finger press it a little bit as you go along, and iron all the way down. While you're at the ironing board, just don't forget to iron your darts to the center seam. So now we're going to sew the back facing onto the cape itself. I'm going to take that piece and right sides together. You'll pin it on. Got to make sure your seam, center seam, is open so it won't be as bulky. And make sure your dart is facing in. Sometimes it's a little hard to get your pins through the interfacing. And now, with a 5/8 inch seam, we're going to sew down the side of the back facing, and right around the neckline, and back down. So now we're sewing the 5/8 inch seam down the sides and we'll pivot our needle while it's still underneath, and gently feed the curve in. And this is where your notches come in handy, so it's actually letting you stretch the curve to match the neckline, all while you're watching your 5/8 inch seam allowance. So if you need to slow your machine down, you know, to help you out, go ahead and do that. And remember, this is totally on the inside, you know, you're not gonna see it when you finish your garment. Remember, this is your costume, so you need to do it how you want it. Okay, so we're gonna get to the end and pivot, so back down the side, backstitch, and cut. So now we're ready to go to the next step which would be turning our facing right side out. But first, there's a lot of bulk here in the corners, so we want to cut some of that off, and then we're gonna turn that right side out. You might need to poke that out with a pencil, and be careful if you use something sharp like your scissors because you might poke through your fabric. So, be really gentle with that. On each side. Okay. And for now, you can just finger press it and put some pins in it to hold it down because next, we're going to start hemming all sides, down the two fronts and along the bottom. Turn your cape to the inside, and you're gonna see this little piece here. You're gonna fold that under twice, and you're gonna pin that down. This is such a small hem, you might not really need to pin it, but, you know, really do whatever you feel comfortable with. So you can pin all the way around, or this is where you could use your clips. So now you will need to sew your hemline, from the neckline, all away around the perimeter of the cape, to the other neckline. So you want to backstitch, and then begin to sew your hem all the way around. If you feel more comfortable, like I said, you can pin, or just fold the hem over as you go. So we're finishing off the hem all the way up to the neckline, and with your needle left it, you're going to pivot, and now we're going to topstitch the neckline. So you can go to your ironing board and iron it down if you feel a little bit more comfortable, but because you have your interfacing in there, it makes it a little bit thicker and stiffer, and so you can actually just finger press. Just like this. And you want to go closer 'cause topstitching is usually closer to the edge. Make sure you're feeding in your curve, and remember, I'm using green, and unless you want a contrasting thread to go with your costume, I would be using black. And this is also why we had notched the inside of the seam, so we could get a nice, clean curve. Backstitch, cut. Now that we've finished the basic part of the cape, we can go on to the yoke, but before we do that, I'd like to show you a quick sew tip. I can take bias tape, gauge how much I would like for a tie, and I can sew it on to the ends of the neckline, and then just tie it off.

Cape yoke

- Now, we're going to work on the yoke. You need three pieces. We have the lining, which is broadcloth. We also have the interlining, which is a really heavy cotton canvas. And then, our cape fabric. If I have to do this again, I think I would change out my broadcloth to something a little bit more substantial. Broadcloth is cotton usually, but I found that working with it, especially when we get to the yoke, and then also when we do the corset with the boning, it was really difficult to work with. So, I would go with something a little bit thicker, like a quilting cotton. Place the canvas interlining on top of our lining. And I'm just going to pin in a few places to hold it in place before we

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start to sew. Once you have the two pieces pinned together, we're gonna take it to the machine, and sew five-eighths an inch seam all the way around. Like this. So I've sewn completely around, and I've already started to trim the interlining off of the seam. So, what you want to do is take small scissors and start cutting. I like to use these curved scissors. If you don't have 'em, that's okay, but I would definitely use a smaller pair. So, see, this is helping me go around the edge, and you wanna try to get as close as possible, and make sure you don't cut your fabric underneath. Maybe a 16th of an inch, to an eighth of an inch. And this is going to be in the interior, so you're never going to see that. Notch your curves. Now, take the piece that you've sewn the interlining on, and place it on the right side of the yoke fabric. Here's the backside. This will be your lining. You're gonna start here, five-eighths of an inch, and backstitch, and then go completely around, and backstitch here. So this is your opening, because you're gonna have to turn it inside out. You'll also have to notch your curves here, and then you wanna clip your corners. Just be careful not to cut your stitching. And this is a little bit curved, so it wouldn't hurt to notch that a little bit too, or clip it. And you could even cut the top off there, 'cause you wanna reduce the bulk, because this is gonna be turned inside out and it gets a little bit tight in the corners. Just be careful not to cut your stitching, but if you do, you can just run right back over it and come in a little bit. The other thing that I'd like to mention, since you've sewn the interlining onto your fabric, onto your lining itself, it will look like a staystitching. So if you turn it inside out, you might see some of that stitching. But if it's in black, you should be fine. So now we're going to turn this inside out, which is actually turning it to the right side, because we've been working on the inside the whole time. This is a little bit fussy because you have some really thick internal lining. And this is why you really need to cut those corners, and clip them, because there's so much bulk in there. You have three layers of fabric. And you're gonna do that to all corners. So basically, this is what it's going to look like. And now you can iron it, or either top stitch it. And then, you're also going to fold under the opening, the outside and inside, and just pin it. And you can either, as I said, top stitch the whole thing, or you can sew it with a blind stitch by hand. Now we're going to attach the yoke to the front of the cape. The first part is you're gonna lay it down, and you can pin it on, so we actually go kind of right along the edge here, and you would pin it, and then you're gonna start sewing. So, I would start from the bottom, and I would bring your needle in from here, so you don't see the knot. And then just catch each side, kind of in a blind stitch back and forth, to your reach, and come all the way around just to the end there. And then on the other side, it will be attached with three snaps. So, I've already attached two, and it's a little bit tricky because you, they kind of move on you, so, we're gonna try and give you a few tips on how to make that happen. So, here's the two snaps. So, you want 'em to look even, so you wanna make sure you have your hand stitching and your snap's place, so the yoke looks the same on each side. So, I'm gonna take my two snaps, put them together, and figure out where my placement will be, so... Let's start here. So, with my marking pencil, I'll try to draw just a little circle around, and that's gonna help me with my placement. And then I'll do the same on the other side as well. Give yourself a little bit of room. And of course you'll be using black, but I'm gonna start with the green. And they're these little holes right in the snap. I'm gonna do this rather quickly, but you know, you're gonna be pulling that snap on and off, so you wanna make sure you really secure it tightly. You can just use regular cotton or polyester thread, but if you'd like you could use some heavy duty hand-sewing thread as well. And just be, you know, aware when you're taking your snaps off, you know, just to pull each side at the same time so you don't tear your fabric. Okay, so we're gonna go around on all sides. So once you have the bottom snap on, place the second part on, and snap your other two snaps together, and make sure you have it placed well. Once it's there, this is the tricky

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part, you're gonna actually pull it out, like this, and try to keep it in that spot, and with your marking pencil, once again, go around your snap. Because believe me, I've tried it a few times, and just holding it just doesn't work, so... And to avoid seeing the knot, you can start your thread there, and thread it on several times around. And you wanna be careful not to go through this side, so you just only wanna hook the lining. And that should come right through like that. So this is a very basic piece to your cosplay outfit. So after you get it all finished, you could add trim, or studs or jewels to it to match your character.

Gauntlets and Corset

Gauntlets
- At the end of your cape instructions, they'll be two steps for your gauntlets. You can use the same fabric for your gauntlets that you use as your corset, but I'm going to use this faux studded vinyl. And you actually have to use a different technique on some of your vinyls. Some will take pins, this ones not too bad, and you always want to make sure its in your seam allowance, but I know when we do our corset, it's a little bit tougher, so we are actually going to use some washi tape, you can probably use masking tape as well. I would suggest, since you're going to need two pieces, I would do one layer at a time. Also remember this arrow on your pattern is for your nap, which is if you have a directional pattern, a plaid, or something that has a pile, like velvet, any kind of fuzzy fabric, fur. So you want to make sure that you gently pull your tissue off, because the washi tape might adhere a little bit and you don't want to rip your pattern, if possible. You can also fold the washi tape over a little bit, if it sticks out on the other side, like this. So you're going to cut out another piece of your vinyl in the exact same way we did with the washi tape and the pattern piece, and then you're going to need two piece of your interlining and two of your lining. And those you will just do as you regularly, pin it onto the fabric and cut. Your next step is to take your interlining and place it on the wrong side of your vinyl fabric. Then you're going to take and make a 5/8th inch seam along the top and the bottom, and trim it with your curved scissors, just like we did with your yoke pattern. So now you're going to turn your gauntlet over, and take your lining piece, so right sides together. Now we're going to sew a 5/8th inch seam across the top and the bottom of the gauntlet. And we're gonna backstitch a little bit, and as you notice, I've been using these little clips here. They're actually binding clips, for quilting. They work really great with faux fur and vinyl. And then we're gonna sew across this top. Before we turn it right side out, we're going to clip our curves. So that will make it a whole lot easier for you to turn it in. Remember, be really careful not to clip your seams. But it's not the end of the world if you do, just sew it up a little bit closer, okay? And you have to be a little bit careful when you're working with vinyl, patent leathers, and fabrics like that, because your iron could melt. So this is where, you know, you just want to finger press your seams down like this. And since this is a stretchy fabric, it might be a little bit difficult, but you can actually use your clips again just to hold it in place. And if you want, you can always top stitch across as well. It doesn't say that in the pattern, but remember, this is your garment, so you do whatever you want. We're going to fold it in half, right sides together. So this is really thick, there are a lot of layers, so it'd be great to use your little binding clips here. And now we're gonna sew right down the side. Because there are so many layers, you might even have to lift up your foot a little bit higher, lower your needle. And I would go a little bit slower on your machine. Oops. Backstitch. And just do your seam right down. If you have a thicker vinyl, you would definitely

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wanna switch to a jeans needle, like a 12 or a 14. And backstitch. And trim. We're gonna turn our gauntlet right side out. A really quick way to customize your gauntlets, buy some trim, and you can use fabric glue these around. Or you could actually put them around and even double sided tape them on, so you can take them on and off to use different trims. And then you can even put some faux fur around the top of one of 'em, like this. The faux fur trim has actually like a lip cord, a bias tape is attached to it. And since the inside of your gauntlet is a cotton lining, you can actually tack it on with a needle and thread.

Outer corset
- I haven't made a structured garment in a really long time. So I'm not going to kid you that the corset was super easy. But with patience and following the guides I think you can do it. If I can do it, you can do it. So we're going to be working with a textured vinyl. And I placed all the pattern pieces down with the washi tape like we did with the gauntlets. And we're doing two layers. If you don't feel comfortable with cutting the two layers out at once because they're not pinned together, it's almost impossible to put pins through most vinyls. A few of them you can, and make sure you put them near the edge so you don't have holes in the garment piece. So you can also put maybe a double sided tape in the middle in a couple spots, that will help you hold it together. Since I've been doing this for a long time I feel pretty comfortable with cutting them out at the same time. I want you to remember to cut your little notches. Once you have your vinyl pieces cut out, you want to cut the same pattern pieces out with your interlining as well as your lining. You will need two pieces of each pattern piece. Now you can turn over your vinyls to the wrong side and put the interlining on. And then you're going to sew a 5/8 inch seam all around the outside. I'm going to sew on the interlining side of this so it's a little bit easier. Sometimes the vinyl is really sticky along your foot. But one of the things you can do, some machines actually come with or you can order a Teflon foot, or you can place a piece of tissue paper over your vinyl. And that's helpful too. You don't really need to backstitch on this because this is going to be your interlining and you'll never see it. So you want to make sure you really follow the bust-line curve nicely. Clip. And now we're going to trim the interlining all the way around like we've done before. And here it is finished. Now you have to make sure you do it to all pieces for your corset. And next on your pattern, it's going to tell you to stay stitch the bottom band of your corset. Because we're working in vinyl you won't have to do that. You will however have to do that with your lining, and we'll talk about that a little bit later. Next we're going to sew the two center pieces together. So you're going to place right sides together. And you do have notches to line them up, right here. And that will be a 5/8 inch seam. And you'll definitely want to backstitch here. Now you can hear the machine sounds a little bit different. And that is because the interlining is really dense. So your stitches might not look really perfect but don't worry about it, you won't be able to see that in the end. It's just kind of the nature of that fabric. So now we have the center seam done right here. And these are your two side panels that are also in the front. And you can see they have a much bigger curve than this center piece. So you're really going to have to kind of be careful and work with your fabric. So right sides together. And since you really can't put pins through this, this is where your clips could come in again. You could also tape them together around the outside. So you've lined this up to the top, and you're just going to have to adjust as you sew. And since, you know, everything is cut out one at a time or double, it might be off a little bit but we can trim that up. So this is what it will be. So I'm going to lower my needle and foot. And do a backstitching. So this is where it gets a little tricky. So see the curve? You're going to stretch it a little bit, and just do a little bit at a time. And I would definitely go a little bit slower. My

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machine has this adjustment, and all machines do so you should be okay. And see my clips are actually, my notches are lining up. And just keep peeking underneath to make sure that they're lined up. Backstitch. The seam that we've just sewn is probably one of the most important of your corset. So if we look this side, we did this nice curve. And this is going to create the fullness of the cup for the corset. And you know I'm feeling that this is a little bit pointy even though I was like, really careful. So what you can do is find that point and put a little pin there in the side, or a piece of tape to mark. And we take it to the sewing machine, and we're going to try to just gently curve it a little bit more. So the pin is where the pointy-ness is. So we're going to start maybe a couple inches above that. And you'll want to backstitch. Then as you get close to the pin, just come out maybe 1/16 of an inch. And just try to smooth that out a little bit. And you may need to do that a few times actually. So we'll take it out a take a look and see if it's helped a little bit. I think that's much better. Repeat that on the other side and we'll attach our side panels next. So this is the first side panel in the back. And we're going to attach it the same way. 5/8 inch seam. When we turn this right side out you may be able to see a few of these stitches because I did them in a different color. But since you'll be doing it in black I don't think it will be a problem. And so at the end they flare out a little bit. So you're going to want to force that over a little bit. This vinyl happens to be stretchy in one direction. So when I cut it out I made the stretch go across the body instead of up and down so it would help me do this. Now we're sewing the final two pieces onto the back of the corset. Now that you've sewn all of your pieces to your bodice together, it should look something like this. And you've gotten through the hardest part, beside the boning. And now that you can sew on vinyl, you can really sew on any fabric.

Corset lining, boning, and band

- Now you're going to construct your lining the exact same way that you did your bodice. You're gonna start from the center seam and work your way out. It's really important at this time that you iron your seams appropriately. It will be really important when you work with your boning and I'll show you a few tips with that. This is also a great tool to use for fitting and if you're really concerned about that you might want to make this lining first and use it as a fitting tool. We're going to iron out the seams and even though the last two seams for the center back is a little bit curved, and you might want to take your scissors and clip as you go along. Sometimes it's easier to do that after you iron it out, but if you're having a little bit of trouble you can do it before. So, I've done all of them except the one that's the bust line. This is actually the most important one to work with. It will take you a little bit but I think it's really worth it to take your time. The bottom part, we can just iron out as we normally do and then we get to the curved part for the cup. We can use either a pressing ham, and not everybody has one of these, so you can also, I'm gonna show you how to also use the corner of your ironing board. So, we're gonna put that on here and you can see how it forms. You might need to use the side and you're gonna really kind of pull that down. You're gonna use the tip of your iron, so be careful, and you want to start ironing down like this and then you're also going to see how when you fold out these seams like this, one lays a little bit better than the other. So, this is a lot of extra fabric in here so I will clip this side like you normally would, but on this side, you could actually cut like a little triangular notch and that helps get rid of some of the bulk of the fabric, and then you can see how it's so much easier to press. It is a little fussy. So, if you don't have a pressing ham I actually don't at home, but I use the corner of my ironing board and I can just put that seam right like this and that's gonna do the same thing for you. Now we're going to approach the most difficult probably part of your corset. We're going to apply the boning to the

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inside of your lining. It's a challenge and I can give you a lot of tips. I made it through it and I think you can, too. This is a great way to work with boning because usually boning is very rigid and it's encased in a lining, and this is like a flexible, stiff paper almost with a little bit of plastic and that you can cut it and you can mold it. The pattern will tell you to cut seven all at once, but I think that it's easier to cut as you go along because actually, you want to measure from the top. The pattern's gonna tell you to go three quarters of an inch down, and especially with the bust line, I'm gonna show you that one in particular because it really is the most difficult, but just remember the boning is part of the lining and regardless of what it looks like from the inside, no one is gonna see it except you when you get dressed. So, I'm gonna cut that and you might want to take your small scissors and you're going to cut a curved top like this, and basically you're cutting this curved top to avoid any sharp corners and it doesn't dig into your skin. Okay, so place it about three quarters of the way down. I'm going to use some tape, it's called Maker's tape, because it's really difficult to pin. You can pin this, but we're gonna do this and it can stay on and you can sew right through it, and the one thing about the boning since it is flexible, you can push the bust line out like this here and then you can place another piece of tape, and if you want to secure it with an extra pin that's all right, too, and I would just go underneath it like this and then you just lay it as you go down. So, you can see why it was really important to spend a little bit of time ironing out your seams. Now we're ready to go to the sewing machine. Slip this right underneath my needle, and as you can see there's a small part, the edge of the boning that's flat, and your aim is to get your needle into that. If you go off a little bit, don't worry, as long as the majority of it is there you'll be all set. So, this is the part in the front that's really difficult. You're going to pull a little bit to the side like this. It's the cup so you want to make sure you get the curve in there, and really don't worry about what the other side looks like especially if this is your first time doing it. You don't have to backstitch and I'm gonna start slow and I'm gonna actually move this a little bit, so regardless if I get a little anxious or nervous and I press down on my foot, my pedal, I'm not gonna worry about going too fast. So here, you're gonna take your fingers and really pull that out to the side and push that down, and we're gonna hope for the best. You might want to be by yourself when you're doing this. And I really like using the tape. I think it's really helpful. You don't have to worry about the needles. Also, remember it goes a little bit at the end, a little flair, so you're gonna want to push that fabric out, too. You can stop, pivot, turn your needle, and make sure you're back on that little ledge at the edge of your boning. You'll know if you're hitting the boning 'cause you'll be able to tell by the sound of your sewing machine that it's hitting a little bit of this paper plastic. Okay, and now we're getting back to the top so you still want to make sure that you're pulling the bust line out as you go along. We're almost done with our first piece. Okay, cut, and now we're ready to remove the tape and take a look at the other side. If it doesn't come off the middle of your boning, that's okay, it's really not gonna matter. It's gonna be on the inside and you're gonna do that all the way down, and now the big reveal. As you can see here, I did get a little pucker right here so I probably would take my seam ripper and release these stitches and I would probably go all the way up to the top. I've had to do this before. It's nothing that horrible, and it actually comes out pretty easy 'cause this is a plastic substance, so I would definitely do maybe this little part but I think that the rest of it's fine. As you can see, it might be a little bit crooked here because it's in green, but if I used black no one would ever notice. You're going to repeat this with the boning in all seven seams, and let me show you want that looks like. It's a beast, there's no two ways about it, but just stick with it and I think you can get through it fine, and just a reminder that the seam that I actually showed you on the bust line seam that forms the cup is really the most difficult, so if I were you I would start with the center seam and then maybe

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do the side seams, then attempt that last. If you really feel a little bit more uncomfortable, cut a couple extra pieces out and do a sample piece first, and then when you get to your actual lining, you'll feel better about it. Also, I mentioned earlier that this is a broad cloth and I would really, if I had to do it again, I would switch to 100% cotton, a quilting weight fabric. If you go to your fabric store, they'll be able to direct you to that. I think that it will be easier putting the boning in with something that's a little bit more substantial. The curve of the Rigilene boning is really wonderful because you'll notice that this part of the lining is the part that goes onto your body and the natural curve of the Rigilene boning will conform to your body and really will help give you a lot of structure. So, here we are at step nine in the pattern. We're going to be putting the right sides together of the bodice, as well as the lining, and we'll be pinning or clipping the top together. This step is also a beast, so just take your time and really concentrate on connecting the seams together with the notches and the front seams to the bust line and to the boning. You want to make sure that you're opening your seams on the opposite side here. Remember, we cannot iron these seams open because it's vinyl so you're just gonna have to make sure you hold that with your hands. Line up your boning right to the middle and this is where you're going to either use a clip or a pin. Now, remember to keep your pins very close to the edge and that any holes that occur in your vinyl or your patent leather will not be seen on the outside. Your seam should line up very close. If they're a little bit off, don't worry about. It will work. Your pattern will tell you to start from one edge and go to the center seam, pivot, and all the way to the end because you're really creating a sweetheart neckline. I think it's a little bit easier to start in the middle and then go to one side, turn it around, and do the other side. I'm on my last seam. Just gently push that in. Make sure you have some really nice, sharp pins and oh, luckily it all matched up really nice. Look across the top. Here I have a little bit of overage here, taking my shears and gently shave that off so it doesn't mess me up when I'm sewing my seam. I prefer to complete this side, sewing from the middle all the way to the end and then I'll pin and clip this side and do the same. So, when you remove the pin, take a minute and really look at the other side and make sure that that's flat, because if this seam comes up it's gonna be really too much bulk and it'll cause a lot of problems to make the neckline look nice, so we're gonna get that under there and lower our needle right in the seam and then we can pivot it around. The pattern will also tell you, you actually, when you finish the complete top, you're gonna do another seam line over the top just to make sure it's really nice and secure. Go forward and then back stitch, 'cause you want to make sure you have a really nice V. Okay, and I'm gonna prepare the next seam before I get to it, and I'm gonna pull my lining up and I'm gonna follow the outside, and this is a 5/8 inch seam but if you feel more comfortable you can actually follow the edge close with your foot and then you can go back in and do your 5/8 inseam, whatever makes you feel more comfortable. You want to make sure you don't capture the boning in your seam, because you won't be able to flip it inside out and cause a lot of problems. You'll have to take it apart. This is going pretty good. It's not that it's really difficult, it's just a little fussy and kind of tedious. And we're almost at the end. Always make sure that your seam is open. So, this one kind of came together. There we go. Then backstitch and cut. I've completed sewing the lining to the front of the bodice and before I turn it right side out I need to clip my curved areas. Of course, I did this in green so might not look so pretty but like I said you'll be doing it in a matching thread and you won't see it in the long run anyways so should be good. Clip that side. Now, it will be impossible to iron this seam out, so our next step will be to under stitch the lining to the seams. I find the easiest way to do this is to take your seams and bring it underneath to the lining and then we're gonna sew directly along the edge here and you can back stitch. You can pin this or also just make sure as you go along all

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your seams are flat and laying underneath and you still should have a little bit of space above your boning that you can slip right through, but if you capture your boning in there you should be fine, you just might hear a funny noise with your machine, so be aware of that. You won't see the seam. It will be on the interior of your corset so don't worry too much about how it looks, and you're gonna continue that all the way to the end. Because there's so many layers and they're thick, the under stitching allows you to hold all those layers together and when you fold it over it lays nice and flat. Regardless of what fabric you're using you will under stitch, so that really is a key part of the bodice that will help lay flat. We're now ready to add our corset band to the bodice. So, I've constructed this already as you have done your top corset pieces with your interlining and you've actually trimmed it away. Your pattern will tell you to stay stitch this piece, but because it's vinyl you don't need to do that but you do need to do it on your lining which I have already done here, which is a single line of stitching 5/8 of an inch in, and then we're going to fold this down. You can use that as your guideline and we're gonna head over to the ironing board and iron this down. So, using your stay stitching as a guide you can fold it right over and you can iron it down. You'll probably need to, once you get it ironed you might want to clip it a little bit just to make sure it lays nice and flat and you're gonna continue this all the way to the end. Right sides together, which means the fold side facing you, you're going to put the lining onto your corset band and I'm gonna use clips to make it a little easier and I'm gonna clip all around the curve and you're gonna back stitch. Take your clips out along the way. This is a really nice, gentle curve so it would be really easy for you to do and you're gonna continue that all the way to the other end. Even though this is a gentle curve I would still suggest to clip every few inches all the way down, and then we'll also be under stitching the corset band and the lining as well, just like we did to the bodice part of the corset. So, we're gonna fold this out like this and we're gonna sew right along the edge, just like we did before. And you can back stitch and just make sure as you go along, you really don't need to pin this, just make sure you have your seams right underneath the lining. Now that we have the stay stitching done we're going to attach the corset band, right sides together to the bodice. We want to make sure that when you're lining it up, really pull the seams taut on your corset. That will allow to make sure that you have the band fully expanded. If you have a little bit extra at each end you can trim it up. I would actually test it out, clip it, and then trim a little bit off of each side. You may have a half an inch or an inch extra but it shouldn't be an issue. Here we have right sides together and I'm going to line that up and I'm going to be clipping. So, this is where I was talking about you're gonna have to open up the seams, 'cause remember vinyl we cannot iron, but manually open up the seams like this and clip. So, you're gonna be following the curve and you also might see a little bit of overlap there and I think you can just shave a little bit off of that so it's nice and even, and this is on the inside so no one's gonna see that. You're the only one that's gonna know that part. Okay, and open up your seam, and you're gonna continue all the way down to the other end and I'm gonna sew that together. I like to do it on this side because even though it might be easier to fold open the seams, the vinyl really creates a drag on your foot and it's just a little bit easier to go this way and you want your 5/8 inch seam. And back stitch. And I clipped right at the seam line so you can make sure that you're gonna double check that your seam is open and you're gonna go right along and force the curve. That boning still is causing a little bit of a problem. It has a mind of its own. And you're gonna continue that all the way to the other end. Before we go on to our next step, all three curved seams need to be notched every few inches. Our next step is to fold up the band and you're going to use your top stitching as a guide. That will be helpful. So, the boning causes a little bit of problems. It's a little unwieldy but just make sure you lay everything flat and fold it down and then you can also take clips and put

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them at the bottom to hold that in place if you'd like, and then you can take your pins and you can just pin it to the lining. You don't have to pin it all the way through to the bottom lining of the bodice, and you're going to do this all the way down. This step will then be hand stitched together and you can do that before or after you put your zipper in. Now that I have it pinned, the bottom lining band to the top bodice lining, I'm going to hand sew and you can just do a whip stitch or a blind stitch, whatever you feel more comfortable with and you'll be able to tell if you're gonna capture the interlining, which is really hard to sew through because it's that dense canvas, and you really only need to pick up the lining on the top bodice. It's easier said than done because my needle keeps trying to pick up that interlining, so you might want to kind of make sure you pull and I used clips on the bottom to make sure that you have this pulled up far enough so your band will lay flat, so you may need to check and adjust that as you go along. Continue sewing 'til your entire band is sewn down.

Corset zipper and variations
- The final step is putting in the separating zipper, which is a little tricky, but I have a lot of tips and techniques to show you that will help you along. So I'm hoping everyone knows what a separating zipper is, it actually separates at the bottom so you can put on your corset and zip it back up. You want to stitch all the way down from the top to the bottom of each end of the corset, and this holds all layers together. So it'll be a little bit easier to insert your zipper. There's a couple different methods you can use for putting the zipper in. Your directions will tell you one way, but I've come up with a few techniques. One of 'em would be to fold this over and actually stitch this down, so it gives you a little bit more control putting the zipper in. Actually gonna try using this Makers craft tape, 'cause you can pull this off after, and if a little bit stays inside the seams of your zipper, it won't make a difference, because it's very thin. This part was a little scary for me, but I just kinda did it nice and slow to make sure that my zipper went in really well, and it all worked out. You're also going to be replacing your presser foot with a zipper foot on your machine. So now that I have the side folded over and taped down, I'm going to do the same method with the separating zipper. So leave the bottom together, you want to make sure you have the bottom part where your band is, and you're going to put your separating zipper right at the bottom. Because everyone sews a little bit differently, this is a 12 inch. The first time I made this, it went all the way to the top. Now, my zipper has a little bit extra length, but that will fold right underneath here, like this, and you'll never know the difference. So I'm going to take a length of this tape and apply it all the way down. Some people might think this is cheating, but I think it's, like, being smart, so, anyways. And you wanna place that right next to your edge and then look at your other side. So, see, you want this really close here, like this. And you're going to have a lot of thickness in here, so you might want to start off really slow, and you might need to change your needle to a jeans needle, like maybe a 14 or something. Alright, well, we're gonna try it with this. And we're ready to go to the machine to sew down. This is a little tricky, getting that to stay in there. And you might not want to back stitch even though you need to. What I would do is take a tail extra-long and just maybe tie a knot afterwards so you don't have to worry about going back and forth. I already have my zipper foot installed. It's a little thick. So, let's see. We're gonna go really slow, really slow, and see. Maybe a little faster (laughs). So the reason that I'm also going really slow, besides trying to really pay attention where my zipper is, that there is a drag on the zipper foot because of the vinyl. And not all vinyl is like that, but a lot of them are. And, often, you can put a piece of tissue paper underneath your foot, and that will help it move it along if you don't have a Teflon presser foot or zipper foot. Not all machines

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come with those, so they're, may be a special order. So I might be able to speed that up a little bit. Okay, now we're gonna come to some really, a big thick part here, with the band, so you can go really slow, and depending on your machine, you might want to do it by hand. And we can try to back stitch here. Alright. We have half of the zipper done, and it's looking pretty good, so I'm pretty excited that we're almost finished with our last step. So I want to leave the separating zipper fully zipped up when I'm doing the other side, just taping it down. I just want to make sure that I have this lined up, and this looks like I can pull the lining up a little bit on that, so, to get it more even. So this is where you can make the last few adjustments. So the bottom of the zipper is there, and it looks like it's going to match up pretty well. So I had moved that lining up a little bit, fraction of an inch, and that is going to allow me to make sure that my ends match up so it looks great. You might have your cape over it, but, mmm, if you take your cape off, you want it to look good. I'm gonna just put that down there, on the back side of the zipper, like this, and fold that under here. And now, that matches pretty good, so that's exciting. Sometimes you get these little surprises when you're sewing. And then, remember, we're gonna fold that under like this, so that hides the top of the zipper, okay? And now that I have it in place, I'm going to take it apart, and that way I can sew it a whole lot easier. We're going to sew this side the exact same way we sewed the other side. Okay, we're almost near the top. Be really careful near the top, you don't want to capture your metal zipper in here, and I would definitely use a metal zipper with the vinyl, because it's such a, you know, sturdy fabric. Okay, and we can try to back-- mmm, I think it'll work, okay? Oh my gosh, we're done, yay. We've finished your basic cosplay ensemble, and we've done it all in black, so it's really simple, but you can now customize it to your character by possibly trim or appliques. Instead of putting a zipper in, I have a really cute alternative with Simplicity trims. I've chosen to use the fabric that we made the gauntlets out of. It's a little bit thinner and really easy to work with. So instead of the zipper, I've put this loop trim in down the side. It's done the exact same way, you fold under the end, and then you would just sew the loop trim in, and then I've chosen some cording, and you just lace it up. But you really do need to have a friend help you get this on. One of the things that you could do is take the fur trim that we talked about with the gauntlet, and you can also put it around your sweetheart neckline of your bustier, like this, which is really fun, and you can also put it around the bottom of your capelet, if you want. And then you could really do more of the steampunk-type trim, and you could wrap that around to bring it to the back, you could cut it and just put some peel-and-stick hook-and-loop tape, and put that on so you can take it on and off and have, you know, a different look. And then we also have some trim that you can either sew right on to your cape, like this, go all the way down the front and around the bottom. So, look where you can go from your basic cosplay ensemble that you just made. Here are some really great alternatives, some of the pieces that are on the views of your front pattern cover. Let's start over here, this is actually a patent leather faux vinyl that we've used, and we actually followed the pattern and sewn on the bias tape across the bust line. And then down here, it just has some craft foam that we glued on, and then this is where the yoke comes into play with some really great trim and contrasting colors with the red and the black. Next, we have this really cool piece. It's made with twill and some camo twill on top of it. It's referred to in your pattern instructions as the patches, and those are just cut out and sewn on. You can also use some iron-on to put them in place if that helps you out a little bit. And here are the gauntlets that go with it, and I think my favorite's this belt. This is made with a very thin faux vinyl. It's actually more like a cotton, it's super-thin and easy to work with. And it has a Velcro section, and we just stuff some foam in there so it looks like it's totally filled up. And then this one also is made with, like, a faux patent leather, and it's constructed with the thick craft foam that you

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just get in the kids' craft department, and we have all the shapes for you and the pattern pieces to cut out, and then there's different trim and gems glued onto that. So you can see, by customization, you can be whoever you want.

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