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## How to Read a Sewing Pattern with Liesl Gibson

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### Chapter 1 - Introduction

#### Overview

(peppy music) - Sewing patterns can be really intimidating. I want to demystify the sewing pattern for you today and show you what all those different components mean, explain the symbols, and help you to feel more confident selecting a pattern and sitting down to actually sew from it.

### Chapter 2 - Getting Started

#### Reading the envelope

- The pattern envelope itself has a lot of information, and that's the first place I always start when I'm selecting a sewing pattern. When you're looking at a pattern envelope, if you're sewing for yourself you want to pick something that is going to look good on you. So the first thing that most people look for, and I certainly look for, is the image on the cover of the envelope. So whether it's an illustration, like a lot of the vintage style patterns, or a photo like a lot of the newer patterns, really look at the style itself. Try to put aside any color or fabric issues you might have. If you don't like the fabric that particular design has been done in, don't look at that so much as the lines of the style itself and think about what looks good on your body, what you feel comfortable in, if you have trouble, if you're not sure what you look good in or what you prefer to wear it's always really helpful to go into a store and just try on a lot of different styles, or look in your closet and really think about what works well on your body, what you feel comfortable in. Ask your friends what looks good on you. And once you've sort of determined the style that you like then I think that it's also important, especially if you're a beginning sewer, to look for styles that are appropriate to your sewing level and a lot of patterns have actually been designed for beginning sewers. They'll give a pattern a difficulty rating, otherwise you'll find a pattern that's considered to be easy, it might say "easy to sew" or "sew in an hour" or something like that. Here's another little hint you can use when you're picking the right style for yourself. If you look at the back of the envelope, you'll see a technical illustration for each different item in that envelope. And that will help you to see not only the back of the garment, but it shows you all the different styles that you can make from that envelope and it will kind of help you to separate yourself from the fabric or the color that's shown on the cover as well, and help you to really think about the lines of that garment itself. For a lot of our patterns, we actually rank them according to difficulty. And so one scissors would be our easiest pattern, and then going up from there depending on the difficulty level of itself, how experienced you are, and how much time you have to sew. So, you can look at that and work your way up the pattern as well. Now the next thing I like to look at with a pattern envelope is to go over to the body measurement chart. And you can compare your own measurements to the measurements in the charts, and then I also like to, in addition to the body measurement chart which you can see here on the pattern as well, I like to look at the finished measurement chart which is this down here. The finished garment measurement chart indicates how much ease is in a garment and so your body measurements, obviously if you made something specifically to your body measurements, it would fit skin tight. It would be exactly the same size as you are, which doesn't allow any extra room for movement or any extra room. I'm wearing a fairly loose fitting tunic today. So, the finished measurement chart includes that ease in it, and we'll come back to that shortly. But first of all we want to determine what your actual size is. So we're going to look at that body measurement chart, and take some

measurements on our own bodies. And again, not every measurement is going to fit on you specifically, everyone's built a little bit differently, so if you're sewing a blouse or a dress or something that covers your upper body, the most important measurement to look at here is getting the right fit across your chest and across your shoulders. So when you're sewing a blouse or a dress or a jacket, anything like that, the measurement that you want to be focusing on is primarily your bust, which is also going to give you the right fit through the shoulders. So there's a couple things to keep in mind with regard to that. The measurement on an envelope like this, on a basic sewing pattern envelope, is going to actually indicate your bust measurement itself. And that is horizontal to the floor, so parallel to the floor, horizontal, you want the tape to go all the way across you and right across the fullest part of your bust. Now, the other measurement that I always advise taking is what's called your high bust. And that is actually above your bust, right under your arms, like pretty much at your armpits, and going right across your chest, a much narrower part of your chest. So once you have those two measurements, your high bust as well as your basic bust, compare the two. If there's more than a two inch difference, then go with the high bust measurement and compare that measurement to the chart and that will help determine the right size for you. That's important to keep in mind because if you're large-busted, if you're a C-cup or larger, and you actually use your bust measurement, you're going to end up with a garment that's much larger than it needs to be. Most pattern companies are developing, not all, but most are developing their patterns based on a B-cup, and so if you're larger than a B-cup and you go with that basic bust measurement, you're gonna end up with something that's too big across the shoulders and you're not gonna be happy with the fit. So keep that in mind, if you are C-cup or larger, just use that high bust measurement instead of your regular bust measurement, and that will help you get the right size. Anything from there, any other alterations that need to be made, that's the great thing about sewing. You can make all those changes relatively easy. The tough thing to get the right fit on is through the shoulders and through the chest. So just keep that in mind when you're sewing anything that's going to be on your upper body. When you're sewing pants or a skirt, then you're taking those hip and waist measurements. The waist measurement is always taken at your natural waist, which is not necessarily where you wear your skirts or your pants, typically down a little bit lower, your natural waist is actually right below your ribcage. It's the very narrowest part on most people's body. So, find that spot and take the measurement, comfortably, not too tight, not too loose, just sort of where it feels comfortable, and parallel again to the ground looking at a mirror to make sure you stay parallel, and then with your hip it's always the widest part of your hip. So on a lot of people I think it tends to be more like down at the hip bone, so take a look in the mirror, sort of feel and figure out what's the widest part, and then again that's going horizontal to the floor so try to keep that tape measure perfectly even as you're taking that measurement. Once you have all those measurements, then write them down, take them with you to the fabric store when you go to pick out your pattern and your fabric, and that will really help you when you're determining which pattern you're going to make.

### Fabric and Notions

- Once you've picked out your pattern, the fun begins. You get to go to the fabric store and make your choices and get started. So the first thing that I always look at when I've picked my pattern, is the fabric suggestions. And these are not set in stone. The fabrics that are generally suggested on the back of an envelop are sort of a guideline. They help you get in the right direction. When you sort of understand what some of the fabrics are, if you're able to identify a few basic fabrics, that

will help you to pick the right fabric because you'll sort of understand what's being looked for. So in order to get the look of the pattern cover you'll want to follow somewhat closely, the patterns that are suggested. So for example, on this pattern, this suggests laundered cottons, lightweight pique and poplin, twill, satin, etc. What that tells me is it's looking for a relatively lightweight woven fabric that's not tremendously drapery but it has a little bit of a drape. It's not going to be too stiff. It's not going to be so fluid that it is sort of just limp and doesn't really have any body to it. So it sort of gives me a little bit of direction for what fabrics to choose and what fabrics to look for when I'm in the fabric store. By the way, if you're not familiar with a lot of fabrics, don't be afraid to ask the people at the fabric store because they can certainly steer you in the right direction and if you're a beginning sewer, they can be especially helpful and sort of tell you what fabrics are going to be easiest to work with, what fabrics might be a little more challenging. So use your resources. Once you've sort of found the fabrics that you're interested in, then the next thing to look for is on the back of the envelope. It will tell you how much fabric to buy. So you'll want to look at the size obviously because different sizes are going to take different amounts of fabric. Also keep in mind that fabrics come in different widths and there are two sort of common fabric widths to look for. There's a 44 45 inch fabric which is all just sort of approximate but that's the narrower fabric and then you'll also have some fabric that's a wider fabric like in the 58 to 60 inch wide. A lot of patterns will actually give fabric yardage measurements for both of those widths. So pay attention to those. Let's say I'm making dress a. This will tell me, for example, let's say I'm making a 12 I'll either need two and a quarter yards for this fabric or two yards, depending on the width of the fabric. The other thing to keep in mind too is if you're using a larger pattern. Let's say you're sewing with a wide stripe or a plaid or something like that you might wanna buy a little bit more fabric than is actually called for on the pattern. That will help you to match up that pattern. So if you want stripes that run all the way across, you'll wanna be sure to match the stripes on your sleeve to the stripes that are on your body itself. Or if you have seams within the body, you'll want to match up the stripes within the seams as well. So buy a little bit extra just to be sure you have enough to work with. Once you've picked out your fabric and had that cut then the next thing to do is to look up at the notions list on the back of the envelope. It will always list thread first, of course, because everything you sew needs thread. But then you can also see, for example, if I'm making view a, it will list I need an 18 inch zipper as well as a hook and eye. And I like to pick all of those things at the same time when I'm at the fabric store simply because that way you can match them and you don't get home and realize you forgot something. Also so that you can coordinate them all. For example, if you have a zipper, you might- just let me turn this back over. Let's say I'm making this yellow outfit, then I would want to also pick a yellow zipper or something that coordinates nicely with it. If you have everything together at the fabric store, if you already have your fabric and your pattern, then you can get everything and be sure that it all goes together so that when you get home you're all set. That's about it. Once you've got all of your supplies, you're ready to get started.

### **Chapter 3 - Reading the Pattern**

#### Understanding the guide sheet

- When you open your pattern envelope, you're going to find two things. First you're going to find the tissue paper pattern pieces themselves, and we'll talk about those more later. You'll also find a guide sheet, which is the instructions for making that sewing pattern, and that's what I wanna show you first. There are few key elements included in every guide sheet. One is the technical illustrations for that garment itself, and that really shows you all the different pieces that are included, not only

in the pattern itself, but what each of those items are going to look like up close. So you might not be able to tell from the envelope itself that there's a seam down the side, and that there's a little pocket on the side. But you can really tell that by looking at the technical illustrations themselves. So that's a really nice item to look at initially, to help you sort of understand how this is going to go together and what it's going to look like when it's finished. Another item that you're going to find in the guide sheet is the pattern symbol key, and we'll come back to this more later when we actually start laying out our pattern pieces. But all of these little symbols that look a little bit like hieroglyphics, these all help us to put the pattern together and to make sure that it's all laid out properly. So we'll come back to that shortly. Another item you'll see in the guide sheet is a little illustration that shows all the different pattern pieces that you're going to find on the tissue. And if there's more than one view to a pattern, you'll also be able to tell by looking at the identifying marks down here, which items you're going to need, which pattern pieces you're going to need for each item. So for example, my dress with bloomers, I can tell here that I'm going to need pieces 10, 11, and 12 to make the bloomers, and I'll need pieces one through nine in order to make the dress. That's especially helpful if there's more than one view in your pattern envelope, if you have say a dress and a blouse or something like that. You won't need all the pattern pieces for all the different views that you're sewing, so it helps to know which pattern pieces are necessary for which items. Another thing you'll see in the guide sheet is just general instructions, and if you read that, you'll see that it suggests, for example, that you should prewash your fabrics to make sure to shrink them down any, so that they don't shrink after you've sewn them, which would be a shame. Other things like, always remember to press your seams as you're sewing, sort of the basic rules of sewing. And those are just helpful to know and to be conscious of as you're working through a pattern. Then you'll also see, and again we'll come back to this more later, the fabric and cutting layouts. This also gives you a little extra information about when you lay out your pattern pieces on your fabric, and get ready to cut them, how do you do it? So for example, fold your fabric right sides together. If you're doing a single layer, you're only sewing one thickness, then the fabric should be right side up. Just sort of basic information again. How to transfer your pattern markings, things like that. So it's also just really helpful to familiarize yourself with these instructions, and then keep them in mind when you're actually laying out your pattern. Now we also in our patterns include a glossary, and this just helps, within the instructions, if we refer to say a backstitch, you don't have to think back oh what was a backstitch? You can actually lookback to the glossary and say oh that's right, so it just means that I sew backwards for a couple of stitches. So we just find that this helps our sewists to sort of follow along and not get lost as they're sewing. The rest of the guide sheet will be primarily sewing instructions, along with illustrations to help guide you along, so that you know what you're doing as you sew each step of the process. Let me also show you, on one of the larger pattern companies, they do it a little bit differently, but for the most part most of the pieces are the same. With some patterns, you'll find the cutting layout for the fabric and for the patterns right on the guide sheet, and this helps you to know where to position the pattern pieces to fit everything onto the fabric so you can cut it out. What we typically do with a lot of our patterns is we put that guide sheet right on with the pattern pieces themselves, but either way look for that cutting layout. And we'll come back to that again when we get to actually cutting out our pattern pieces. Other than that, the elements are pretty much the same. Again, we have those same symbols, we have the diagram of all the different pieces that are included, we have those basic cutting and sewing instructions, and we have our technical illustration as well. Beyond that, most guide sheets are going to include pretty much the same basic information. So once you've familiarized yourself with that,

then we can move on to the tissue itself, to looking at those pattern pieces and to getting those cut out of our fabric.

### Understanding the pattern tissue

- Let's look at the pattern pieces themselves now. The first thing I'm gonna do, I've opened up my tissue paper and I'm looking at the legend. This tells me which style I've selected, which sizes are included in that style. It also includes a few basic symbols that correspond with the pattern. The other thing that I always like to look at on this legend is that each size is given a different style of dotted or dashed line. And this will be really helpful when you start looking for the right size that you're going to be sewing. I'm gonna be making a 3T, so I'm gonna be looking for that particular line that has the dot and dash, and that will help me to be sure I'm cutting out the right size when I actually cut out my pattern pieces. One other thing to keep in mind is that some patterns require that you add a seam allowance. In this particular pattern, it says in the legend that the seam allowances are included. So I know I don't need to add anything on. The pattern piece is ready to go as it is. I'm gonna move on and just look at one of the pattern pieces here. This is the side panel for my dress. And because there are multiple sizes here, I can either choose to cut out one size and use the pattern as it is. Or if I wanna preserve those sizes, and especially with kids clothing, I feel like you probably wanna preserve the original pattern so that as the child grows older, you can make additional sizes. So if you wanna do that, then you can simply trace the pattern pieces onto another piece of paper and save this tissue for later on. So if you wanna trace your pattern, I like to pick up... This is just tracing paper that I buy at the art store, and it works fine. There are lots of other things you can use as well, but this is my preference. So I'm just gonna trace one of the pattern pieces here. And since I'm doing a size three, one thing that helps, I think, is I like to highlight the size that I'm making before I actually put the tracing paper on top of it simply because it makes it a little bit easier for me to follow the lines, especially if the lines start crossing each other and things like that. So I'm gonna take a highlighter, and I'm just gonna go along that line and just trace the size that I'm making. And you can do as much or as little of this as you need. You know, you probably don't need it if the line is pretty far away from the others like this one is. But again, if it gets into areas that are really close, then you might need to, for example, over here, you might just want a little help making sure that you're tracing along the same line. So now that I've traced that line, and it does give me an extra guide, then I can tape down my tracing paper on top of the pattern piece. And usually when I'm tracing, I just use a pencil or something like that. But so that you can see it, I'm gonna use a heavier felt tip pen today. You can do a lot of this freehand. If you feel like you need a little extra help and you have say a straight edge, go ahead and use a ruler to guide. You can even use a French curve if you want, something like that. But generally if you're just sort of careful, just follow along as much as you can. So I'm looking right through that tracing paper and I can see the line very clearly. So I'm just going to as carefully as possible just follow right along that line. And then come back down. And you'll do this all the way around the pattern piece. So just use as steady a hand as possible. If you make a mistake, just go back and trace it again. Cross out the line that was the mistake and draw in a new one, it's not a big deal. So I'm just tracing that line as closely as possible. And then another thing that is pretty important when you're tracing a pattern piece like this is you wanna get all the other identifying marks within that pattern piece. So for example, there's a notch over here. Notches are important for sewing patterns. They're actually used within the industry, so if you buy something that was made in a factory, they're also used with home sewing. They help you to indicate what pieces are going together so that you can be sure that everything matches up. And



typically, a single notch, this is just a little aside for you, a single notch is often used on the front of something, and then a double notch usually indicates the back, although sometimes it can be used a little bit differently. But if you have a double notch, it often means that it's a back piece or two back pieces coming together. So look for the notches. Also look for the grain line, that's this nice arrow that's running down the pattern piece. Sometimes you'll have, and we'll come to this more when we get to cutting out the fabric itself, you'll also have pattern pieces that are indicated that they need to be cut in a fold. And so you'll have an arrow that goes more like this along a pattern piece. So trace either your straight grain arrow or your fold arrow like that. Obviously we don't need that here. Be sure to copy all the information from your pattern onto your trace pattern as well. You'll need that information later on. Here's the piece number, number five. This is gonna help when I look at my cutting layout so I'm sure I get all the pieces in order and I have all the pieces. Then I'm actually gonna copy the name of what I'm making. So this is the Seashore sundress. I'll just copy it as Seashore dress. This is the side panel, that will be important to know later on. And it says cut four, and that's very important. And then since I'm also making a size three, I'm gonna mark that on my pattern piece as well so that coming back to it later, I know what size I've actually copied here and I don't make any mistakes later on. And that, I think, is all the information we need. If you're tracing your pattern, be sure to trace all the pieces that you're going to need. And then at that point, you can get your scissors and cut out all your pattern pieces, either your trace pattern pieces or your original tissue, whichever you're using. And then we can move on to cutting out the fabric.

## **Chapter 4 - Cutting Layout and Pattern Markings**

### Laying out pattern pieces

- The cutting layout is kind of like a roadmap that helps you to determine what pieces are going to go where when you actually get to cutting out your fabric. I've got my fabric laid out here, and it's more or less ready to lay the pattern pieces on and pin them down before I cut it. But I want to talk to you a little bit first about the grain on a fabric. If we look at this pattern piece, we can see that there's a grain arrow that runs along the pattern piece here. This indicates that we want to position the pattern piece so that this arrow is parallel to the edge of the fabric. That's one type of grain line. Now if we go down to this pattern piece over here you can see that again, we also have this fold arrow line. So this is a different type of a grain line, but if we have a fold in the fabric, the fold will also be parallel to the edge of the fabric, and if we position the pattern piece along the fold like we're told to, then this will also be on grain with the fabric. So that helps when you're getting the fabric actually laid out and getting it ready to pin. The grain for the fabric, like I said, will run parallel to the edge of the fabric, and so these are the edges of my fabric. This is also referred to as the selvage. This is a tightly woven edge. The fabric, as it comes off the bolt, or off of the roll, will have two edges to it, and those edges are not cut, they're not torn, they're a tightly woven edge, and those edges are parallel to the grain. So any thread within the fabric that's running the same direction as those two parallel edges is your straight grain. You'll also have a cross grain, all fabrics are made with a series of threads that are running lengthwise and then you'll also have threads that are running crosswise. That can also be the grain, but generally when you're doing a cutting layout, or when you're laying out your fabric, you're going to be looking at those lengthwise grains that are parallel to those edges or selvages. So I folded my fabric in half with the two selvages together. I referred to my cutting layout which indicates right here that my two selvages are together, and I have a fold, so the fabric is folded in half and the two edges are along this side. Then again, this is my map, I can refer to where all of these pattern pieces belong. Most of them are actually aligning

with that fold, because I'm actually cutting the whole piece, when I open that out it will be a full piece. And then I have a few pieces in here where I'm cutting them out away from the fold. These will have that standard grain arrow, and then when I'm done cutting I'll obviously have two pieces there. Now let me show you another cutting layout with a slightly different format. This cutting layout, instead of doing a single fold with the selvages meeting on one edge, we have two folds, and our selvages are meeting in the center. And the reason for that, is that because pretty much all of these pieces need to be cut on a fold, we actually get better use of the fabric by having two folds and we can use the full width of the fabric that way. One thing I want to point out to you is that a cutting guide is always done starting with the largest sizes for that pattern, and then as we work down, less fabric, obviously, will be used. So this particular cutting guide, when we were on the largest sizes, and this goes all the way up to kid's size 12. When we were on the largest sizes here, this was using up a lot of the fabric. But as you can see when I get down to a size three, there's a lot of extra fabric not being used here. So when I refer to the cutting guide as being sort of a road map, that also indicates that you don't need to use that cutting guide exactly as it's being shown here, you can use that and be much more efficient with your fabric. So, for example, with this particular one, I might choose, aside from this piece way over here that's quite large, I might choose to move these pieces around a little bit. So there's really no particular reason why this piece needs to be here. As long as it's on grain and as long as I'm cutting two of them, I can move it anywhere. I could bring it up here by this pattern piece. I could bring piece five over here, I could really be a lot more efficient with how I'm using this fabric, with these pieces down here, I might fold my fabric so I have those two fold lines with the selvage meeting in the middle, and then I could actually lay on out on this side, and I could flip this pattern piece over, and lay it out on this side as long as I'm getting these pattern pieces cut on the fold or on grain it doesn't really matter where I'm positioning them. So look at that cutting layout as a roadmap, and then refer to it as needed, but as long as you're cutting out the pieces as indicated you can put them wherever you want to on your fabric, and you can fold your fabric however you want. Here are a few more pointers for you. Let's start out by pinning this pattern piece down. I'm going to start by matching that fold line right along the fold of my fabric, and then I'm going to start pinning it. I'll start way up at the top, over here. I've got everything more or less where I want it to be, so I know I've got enough room around this pattern piece and I can start pinning it. I'm always going to position my pins well inside that cutting edge of my pattern piece, so that when I'm cutting it I'm not accidentally trying to cut through pins or cut over pins, so I want to keep those pins well out of the way. And generally when you pin a pattern piece down, you want the pin itself to be sort of perpendicular to the cutting line. So there's a pin, here's another one, over here I'm going through all the layers of fabric as well as the pattern piece itself. And you can use as many pins as you need. You can also use weights if you prefer. I've used just cans from the kitchen or I have jars that I keep a lot of buttons in, so I'll just grab whatever is handy, whatever I feel comfortable with. I'll just put a few pins in, making sure again that I'm matching that grain line or that fold line up against the fold of the fabric. And then my pattern piece is pinned in position. Another thing to keep in mind is some fabrics have a direction, for example the fabric that I have here has little birds and they're all facing the same, they all have an up and a down. I want to be sure those birds are facing the right direction on my finished dress as well, and the easiest way to do that is to make sure that all of my arrows are pointing the same direction. All the arrows should be pointing down towards the bottom of your fabric. If you've that and all the text is reading from the same direction, then you know that when your fabric is cut out it will all be facing the right direction as well. So keep an eye on those arrows, make sure they're all headed

down towards the bottom of your fabric. For the pattern pieces that have a grain line, like that arrow, I want to be sure that that grain is also parallel to either my selvage or my fold, same thing. An easy way to do that is to use a ruler and to measure, I'll measure starting at the top of the arrow. And it doesn't really matter what the measurement is but I'm gonna mark it with my finger and then I'll check that down here as well, and make sure that the arrow is the same distance. And you know that saying measure twice, cut once? Same thing with patterns. So check that distance, confirm it at the top edge of the arrow just to make sure that the arrow is going the same direction as that grain and then you can pin it into position. One other thing that I want to point out is usually if you refer back to that guide sheet, generally it says that you should fold your fabric with the right side on the inside of the fold. I'm not doing that. I don't always do that, and there's a couple reasons. Once is so that you can see what's happening better here. But the other reason is that in the next step, once we've got all these pattern pieces cut out, we have to transfer some markings onto the fabric. And I like to transfer all the markings in one go. The markings are generally transferred to the wrong side of the fabric, so it's easier to transfer in one marking when the two wrong sides of the fabric are together. So just another little aside for you. I'm going to continue to lay all these pattern pieces out and get them all pinned down, and then I can go ahead and do the cutting. When I cut out a pattern, I kind of alternate between a rotary cutter and my sewing shears and it just kind of depends on the mood. I use both of them really. I've got a self healing cutting mat here, so I could technically be using the rotary cutter, but I just got these new scissors, so we're gonna use these today. When you're cutting out a pattern, you really just want to be cutting right along that edge of your pattern piece. And I really like to get sewing shears that have that flat bottom to them because you can get right underneath the fabric, you don't have to be lifting up the fabric a lot. You know if you use standard shears that have this handle on both sides. It forces you to lift up the fabric further and it can distort your cutting line a little bit. So look for sewing shears that have that flat edge and that allows you to get right next to the table or whatever you're cutting on. If you need to use more pins, feel free. And I'm just going to cut as smoothly, and as closely to that line as I can. If that makes you nervous, you can always sort of roughly cut out a pattern piece and then cut more closely to the cutting line once it's separated from the rest of the fabric. Sometimes I do that if it's sort of a tricky angle and I don't want to walk around. But otherwise you're really just cutting right along that edge, just as smoothly and as closely as you can. You can cut out all your pattern pieces just like this and then be sure to leave them pinned together for the time being.

### Transferring markings

- Remember those marks that we talked about on the pattern pieces when we were looking at the pattern sheet? Now that we've got the pattern pieces cut out, it's time to actually transfer those markings onto our fabric. When we look back at that pattern symbol key that was on a tissue and on our instructions, we've already talked about the grain line as we were cutting out the fabric and getting it ready to cut out. Now let's look at the notches. And we mentioned earlier that the notches show where pattern pieces are going to be fitting together. In order to mark those notches there are a few different ways you can do it. I generally like to just take a little clip into the fabric with the tip of my scissors. So, we'll just take a little nip like that. Some people actually prefer to make those notches a little bit more visible, and so they'll actually come in and clip the fabric like that and cut a little triangle out of it. This does weaken the fabric a little bit, so I don't always like to do that. But, if you're concerned about seeing them you can certainly follow that process and take a little nip out. If you're sewing a knit fabric, if you've actually cut out a knit, a lot of times knit patterns will have a



much smaller seam allowance. They'll call for, say, a 1/4 inch seam allowance. If that's the case you don't wanna be cutting into your fabric, because you've pretty much eliminated the seam allowance there, and you're gonna be weakening your seam quite a bit if you're cutting into it that far. You might even cut into the seam line itself. If you're concerned about that, another way to mark a notch would be to take, say, a water-soluble fabric pen like this one or some tailors chalk and you can actually mark the notch with just a little line like that, or even do a triangle if you really want to. So, you can mark it instead of cutting it. Generally, I prefer to cut it. So, just keep that in mind. One other way you could approach a knit fabric is when you're cutting it you could actually cut out a notch that extends from the fabric. But you'd obviously wanna be aware of that before you're cutting your fabric. So, keep that in mind as you're marking your notches. Now, another marking that we need to refer to are any of these internal markings. So, we have button holes, we have buttons or snap placements. We might have a pivot point, you'll see a lot of those on pattern pieces. So, anything like this is more of an internal marking. It's not something that's going to be on the edge of the pattern piece, it will be inside the pattern piece like, here's a button position, this little X. So, since I'm making the 3, that's where my size 3 button position is. In order to position that I'm going to sink a pin right in where that marking is, and then I'll unpin the fabric. And this is where I really like to have the wrong sides of my fabric together, because if I separate the two layers, I can again with my fabric marking pen, I can mark where that pin comes out on both sides, and I'm marking both edges of the fabric at the same time, or both sides of the fabric at the same time. So, I'm sorta killing two birds with one stone. And you can do that with pretty much any marking. If you were doing a button hole, a button hole might be like this, then what I would typically do is put a pin in right here, and put a pin in here, and then again if I separate those two layers of fabric, I can mark both of those spots, and when I take the pins out and separate the fabric, then I could actually take a ruler and connect that line, make the little ends, and so that would be a nice button hole. And you can do that with any internal marking like this, so the same thing with that drill hole that we had. That would be the same as one of our button markings. We would simply sink a pin right through the drill hole, separate the two layers of fabric, and mark it just like we did with the button. So, I have just one more marking that I need to make on this pattern piece, and then I'll be finished with this one. I'll do the same thing with all the other pattern pieces. I'm just going to mark this other notch, and then this pattern piece is ready. Now, typically I leave a pattern piece pinned to the fabric until it's time for me to use that pattern piece. And that just helps me to know which pattern piece is which, and I don't get anything confused, or lost, or anything like that. So, when it comes time to use that pattern piece, then you'll unpin it. And all of these markings will be referred to, and they'll be helpful as you're sewing your pieces together. So, for example when you have notches, these notches will correspond to the notches on the piece that it gets sewn to. So, once you get those two pieces pinned together you'll see that the notches match, and that helps you to confirm that you've got it pinned correctly and it's ready for you to sew. The same thing is true with that drill hole, or with that pivot point. That will always be referred to in your instructions. So, for example, a step might say, sew up to that pivot point and then you'll stop and sew a different direction, or it will give other directions that will tell you how to use that point. So, as long as you have all of those markings transferred to your fabric, you'll know exactly what to do as you're sewing along. Now that you understand all the components of a sewing pattern, hopefully you'll feel less intimidated and be ready to tackle a project on your own.