WASTED THREADS

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Welcome to your PDF pattern!
Upcycle skinny jeans into a Maxi or Mini skirt

IMPORTANT!

Take a few minutes to read through everything on your device before starting and before printing anything.

Where to start - Notes and Tips

YOU DON'T NEED A SEWING MACHINE

These instructions focus on hand sewing - a needle and thread will do.
Of course, you can use a machine if you have one.

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN UPCYCLING JEANS

Since we're upcycling, each pair of jeans will be different. Style, fit, colour, leg width and stretchiness are just some of the ways that jeans can be unique.

These instructions are a guide - it's essential to use your judgement and try on your garment throughout the process.

Things to consider:

- Are you going to cut or unpick the seams?
- How does the waist fit once you have undone the inside leg seams?
- How wide your jeans are might affect the style you choose to make?

The instructions will guide you through some of these questions, and more, but since everyone's jeans are different, we can't be specific to your unique garments.

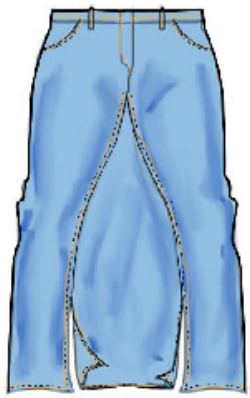
You as the sewer will need to consider these questions and maybe make different decisions.

Trying on the garment throughout the process makes this much easier, and allows you to make small adjustments.

Choose the style option that you want to make.
See options below along with the number of pairs of jeans you need to make each.
The make instructions are similar for all options. When you reach a step that is specific to your chosen style option, you will be instructed to go to the next required step.

OPTION A
MAXI Straight skirt with a one-piece front and back panels and slits.

Jeans needed:
1 pair for main section
+ 1 pair for panels.



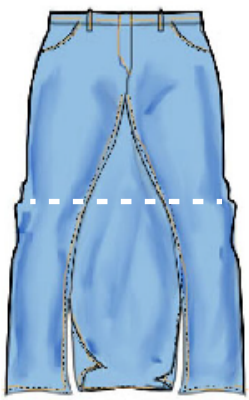
Front

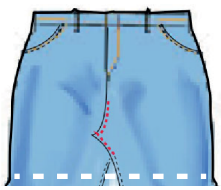


Back

MINI Straight skirt with a one-piece front and back panels.
You decide the mini length as required

Jeans needed:
1 pair for main section & panels.





Front



Back

OPTION B
This is an alternative back panel to use combined with option A fronts. It is triangle-shaped with centre-back slit instead of a one-piece panel. Follow the steps for A and we'll tell you when you need to do anything for Option B.

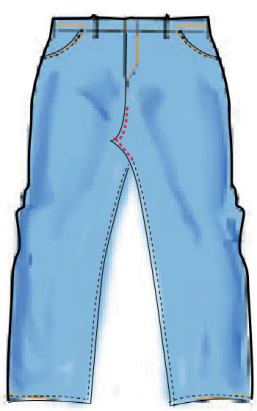
Jeans needed:
1 pair for main section
+1 pair for panels



Back

NOTE - If using wide jeans it may be possible to make the skirt without the front panel and instead have a deep front slit.
Use together with back options A or B.

Jeans needed:
1 pair for main section
+1/2 pair for the back panel



Front

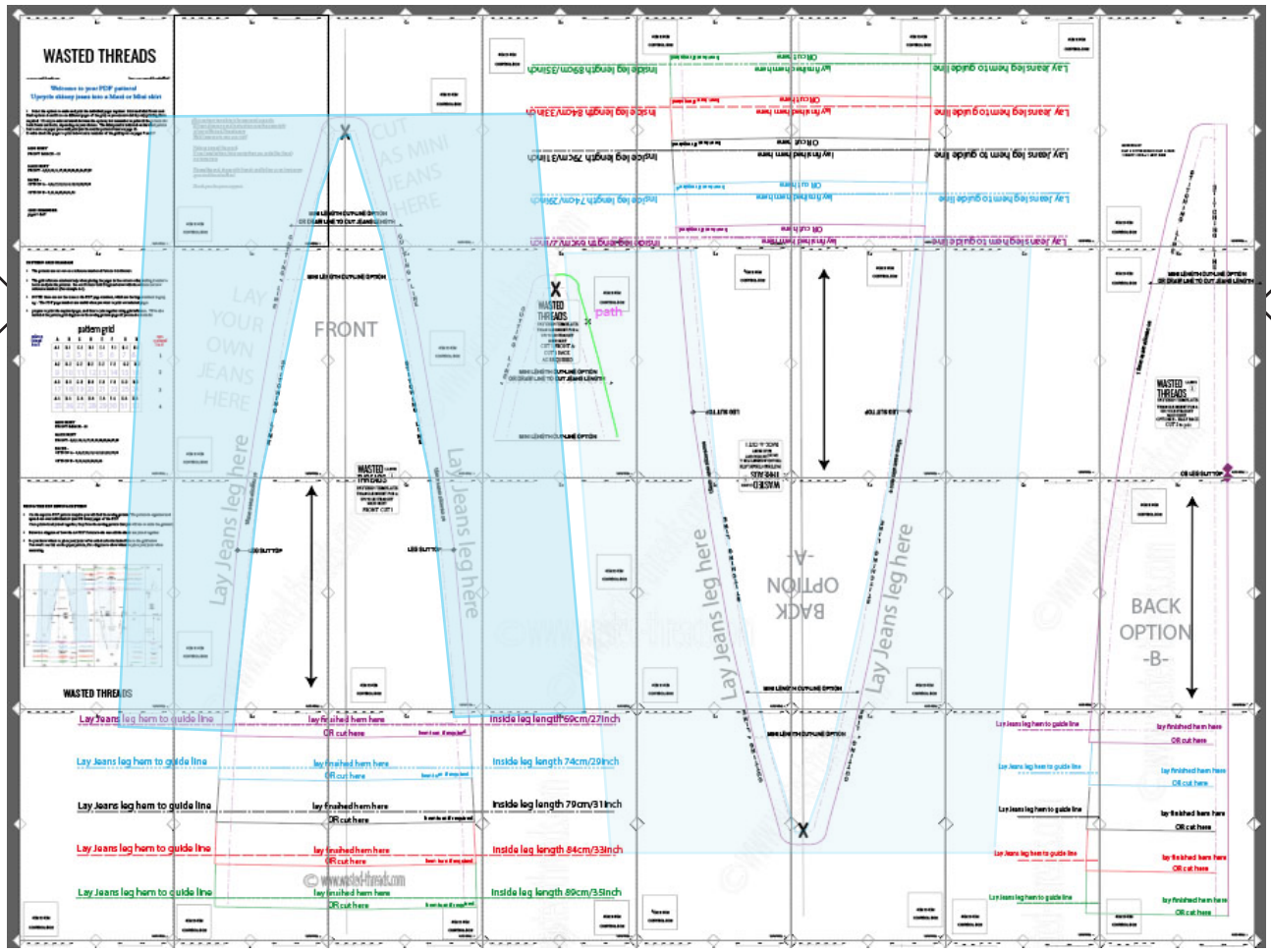
WASTED THREADS ©

USING THE PDF SEWING PATTERN

- On the separate PDF pattern template you will find the sewing pattern. The pattern is organised and spread out over individual A4 (and US letter) pages of the PDF.
  Once printed and joined together, they form the sewing pattern that you will use to make the garment.

- Below is a diagram of how the A4 PDF Pattern looks once all the sheets are joined together.

- So you know where to place your jeans we've added a sketch shaded blue to the grid below.
  You won't see this on the paper pattern, it's a diagram to show where to place your jeans when measuring.


WASTED THREADS
FRONT
BACK OPTION -A-
BACK OPTION -B-
Lay Jeans leg here
Lay Jeans leg here
Lay Jeans leg here

PATTERN GRID DIAGRAM

- The patterns are set out on a reference numbered Pattern Grid format.
- The grid reference numbers help when placing the pages in the correct order, making it easier to locate and join the patterns. See our Pattern Grid Diagram below with the column and row reference numbers (for example A-1).
- NOTE: these are not the same as the PDF page numbers, which are the large numbers in grey, eg 3. The PDF page numbers are useful when you want to print out selected pages.
- Prepare to print the required pages, and then join together using grid reference. We've also included the pattern grid diagram on the sewing pattern pages if you need a reminder.

pattern grid

columns lettered A to H

rows numbered 1 to 4

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
A-1 1	B-1 2	C-1 3	D-1 4	E-1 5	F-1 6	G-1 7	H-1 8
A-2 9	B-2 10	C-2 11	D-2 12	E-2 13	F-2 14	G-2 15	H-2 16
A-3 17	B-3 18	C-3 19	D-3 20	E-3 21	F-3 22	G-3 23	H-3 24
A-4 25	B-4 26	C-4 27	D-4 28	E-4 29	F-4 30	G-4 31	H-4 32

MINI SKIRT
FRONT & BACK - Page 12

MAXI SKIRT
FRONT - Pages 2,3,9,10,11,17,18,19,20,25,26,27,28

BACKS -
OPTION A - Pages 4,5,6,7,12,13,14,15,21,22,29,30

OPTION B - Pages 8,15,16,23,24,31,32

PRINTING AND SCALE

- Don't print anything until you've read through the instructions and reached the step where you are told to print the pattern.
- This PDF is for printing at home.
- The pattern will not work if you do not print the correct scale, so follow these instructions carefully
- When printing ensure the paper is loaded straight so the printed sheets will match together.
- Printable on either A4 or US letter, the print area will remain the same and the border sizes will vary.
- Each pattern sheet has a control box that measures exactly 4 x 4 cm when printed correctly, like the one below.
- Begin by printing one page of the pattern PDF as a test.
- On your printer preview option, select PRINT ACTUAL SIZE 100%.
- Customise by selecting the 'Pages to Print' box (not print All) and type in the number of any page containing pattern lines and a control box.
- Print the selected page and measure the control box to ensure it is exactly 4 x 4cm before printing the rest of the pattern.
- Follow the same process, this time selecting all necessary pattern pages for the garment option you have chosen.
- Once printed, take a moment to check each page is the right way up, the grid reference and measurement line should be at the top of each page.
- Trim off the borders and use the diamonds to help you match and join the patterns together, with tape or glue.

4CM X 4CM

CONTROL BOX

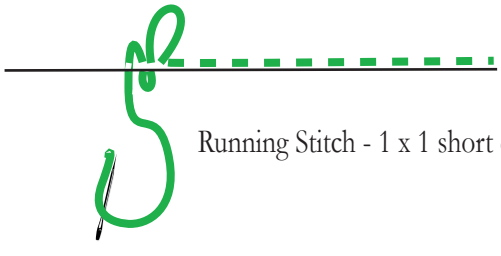
SEWING BY HAND - For those new to sewing

- See the guide and diagram below.
- Back stitching is a perfect stitch to use, it's a favourite with Paris couturiers as it is strong.
- Don't make the stitches too long, between 2.5 to 4 mm is good. The more stitches per centimetre the stronger the seam will be.
- Most important is to start a row of stitching securely. We recommend starting with a knot and then doing a few back-stitches one on top of the other as this will hold the thread in place and stop the seam unravelling and coming undone during wear!

- Check out our hand sewing video tips on our website HERE.
- https://wasted-threads.com/resources/how-to-hand-sew-for-beginners/

STITCHES TO USE.

A.



Running Stitch - 1 x 1 short equal length with a space between

B.



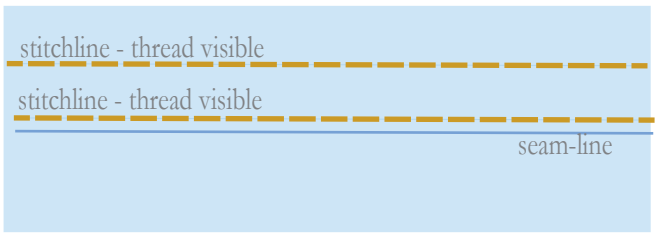
Back Stitch - stitch 1 short stitch backward, followed by a longer stitch forwards. work in and out of the same holes without leaving a space between stitches.

CHOOSING A SEAM TYPE TO USE.

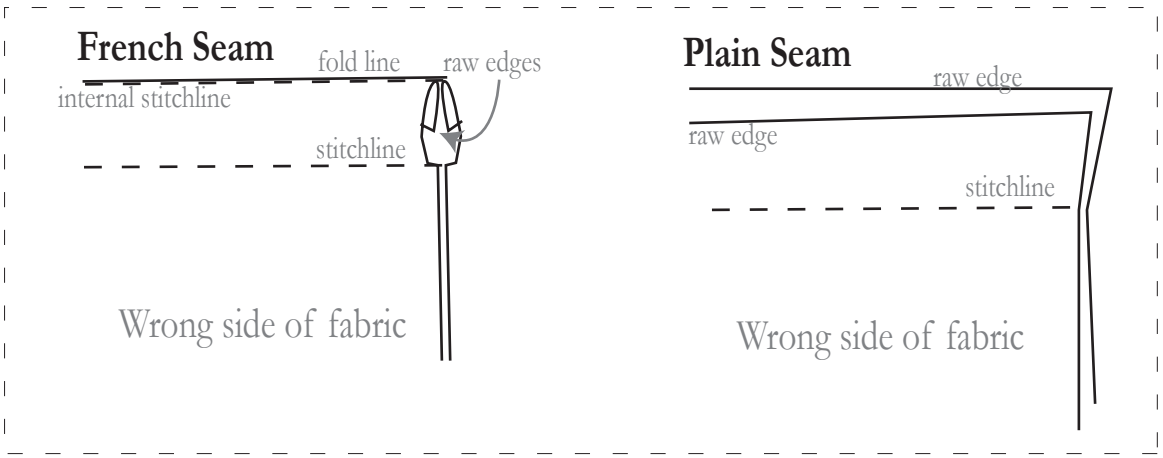
- Every upcycled garment will be uniquely crafted, ensuring no two pieces are alike. The decisions you make will depend on the pre-existing seam lines and fabric of the original garment being used. That's why we've included a number of options you can use as you work through your own upcycle project. With this in mind, we've included various seams you could use.

- There are many different types of seams to choose from, depending on a variety of things such as, the type of garment, where the seams are being used, as well as the type and weight of the fabric. Because this upcycle is intended for hand-sewing, we've suggested using the stitches we think will help create the most professional-finished appearance.
  As this is an upcycle, we've made use of the pre-existing double row of stitching most jeans have. The technical name for this seam, often used on denim jeans, is a Felled Seam (sometimes called a Double Felled, Run and Felled or a Lapped Seam). We're not going into all the technical detail in this upcycle as we're only really interested in making use of the double stitching, in the trade it's often referred to as twin-needle top-stitching so this is what we'll call it for this upcycle. It gets the name because the two rows of stitches sit on the outside of the fabric and are visible. It's often stitched on denim using a contrast orange thread.

Twin-needle Topstitch Seam



- Along with the original twin-needle we've suggested using a French Seam or a Plain Seam. The difference is the French Seam, when finished. has all the raw edges hidden inside the seam. This helps when hand sewing as it resolves the problem of what to do with the fraying edges, but it can get a little thick due to the extra turnings. Our jeans were very soft and worn so we were able to use French Seams, if in doubt, you can use a Plain Seam and tuck the raw edges inwards to prevent them from fraying. We'll explain how to do these along the way.



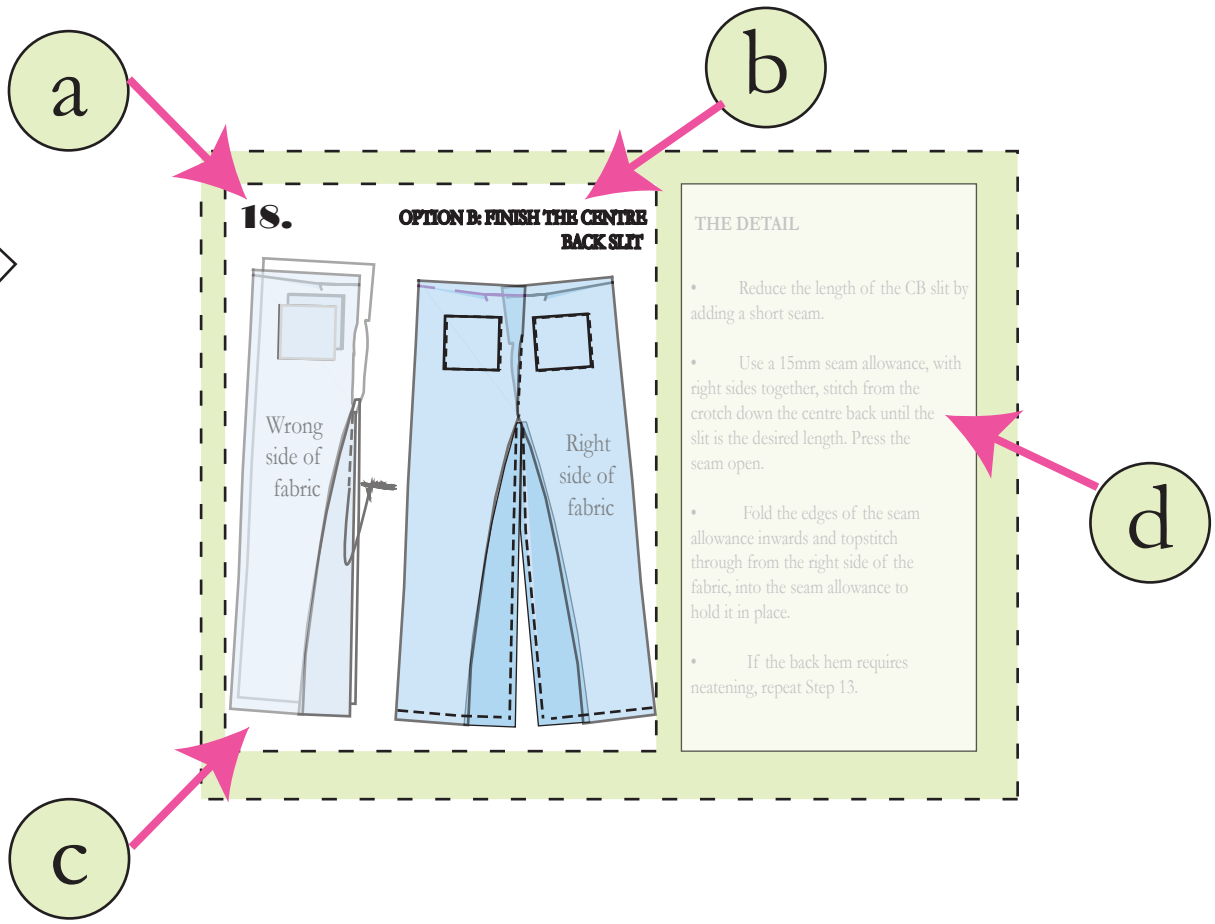
HOW TO READ our step-by-step instruction diagrams.

a. Each step is numbered. Start at step 1 and continue in order to follow along for all options. We'll tell you when you need to repeat or skip a step.

b. All steps have a heading to briefly describe what to do next.

c. We've added sketches to help explain the steps. Remember as this is an upcycle, all jeans will vary so your jeans leg shapes might vary slightly from the image shown.

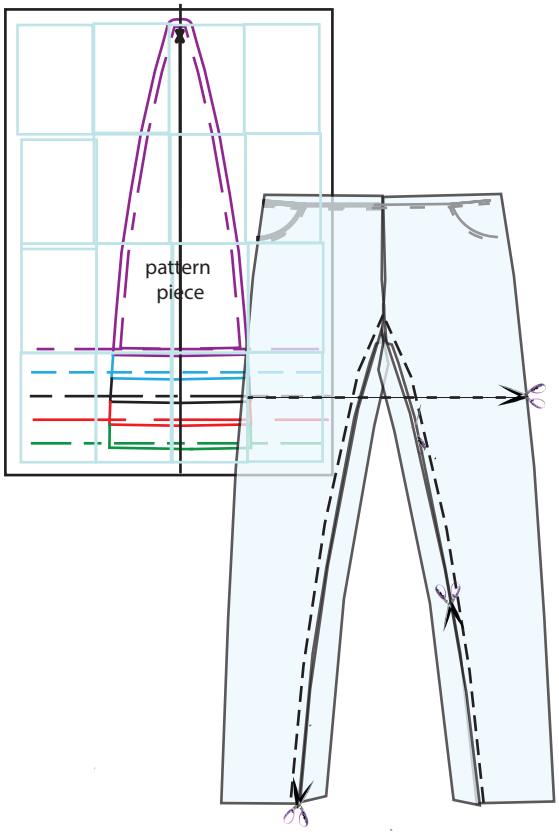
d. Under the heading The Detail we've given a more detailed explanation of the steps as some makers will prefer more information than others.



NOW YOU'RE READY TO START

We hope you enjoy upcycling your jeans into skirts. If you are keen to get making then go to step 1.

1. JOIN THE SHEETS TO CREATE THE TEMPLATE



THE DETAIL

- Now is the time to use the printing tips on page 5 of this PDF to print out the relevant pattern pages, and join them to create a template. The page numbers to print the different options can be found on page 4 of this document.

- Take the first pair of jeans. Cutthe front legs from the back legs, at the inside-leg seam. Keep the existing jeans stitching on the front leg - to make use of the twin-needle stitching that most jeans have.

- Note: If there is no twin-needlestitching on the inside legs, then better to be unpicked.

- Once the jeans legs are cut, try them on to assess where the waist is now sitting. as this may affect your choice of style to make.

- MINI : If making a mini skirt, decide on the length required. Add an extra +4cm to this amount for the hem allowance. If unsure what length to cut, add more at this point as it can be trimmed off later.

- Cut a line horizontally across the legs, for the length of the Mini, then follow the steps as the Maxi version.

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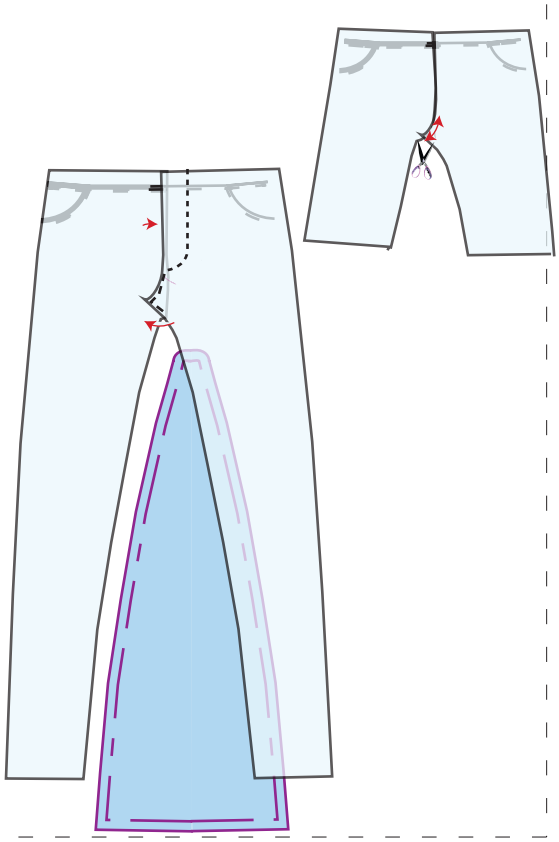
2. CREATE THE TRIANGLE-SHAPE AT THE FRONT CROTCH



THE DETAIL

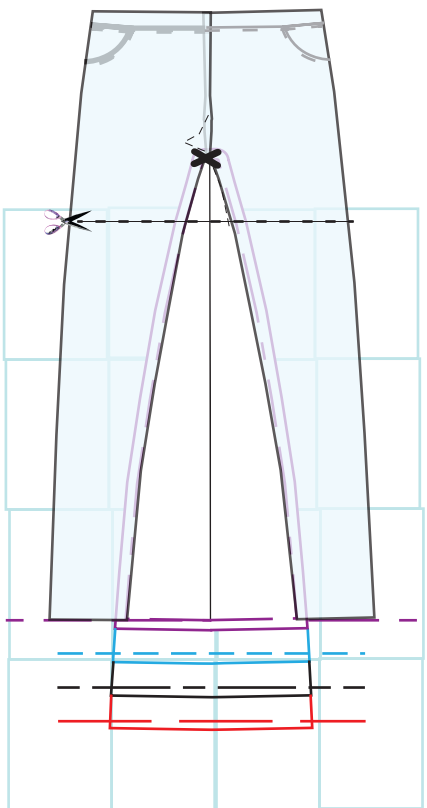
- The top of the legs, at the crotch, must be a pointed triangle-shape to mirror the top of the panel pattern. Lay the jeans flat, with the front and zip facing you. See the curved seam around the crotch below the zip, (this usually has twin-needle top stitching).

- If hand sewing keep the leg twin-needle stitching. Cut along the centre front seam, starting at the leg up towards the fly-opening edge of the zip, stopping a few centimetres away from the zip. (If machine sewing or an advanced sewer this seam could be unpicked to restitch later.)

- Overlap the leg with the twin-needle stitching on top of the other, so that the front sits flat in a triangle-shape, (that's compatible with the top of the front panel pattern). Pin into position. This must be stitched at a later stage in the making process, so leave pins in position.

- Turn the jeans to the back, note the seam shape is more curved, so there are 2 options to take, either repeat the above step or to make a more snug and fitted shape. To make it more fitted, see Step 12 to create a point that's compatible with the back panel pattern.

3. USING SKINNY JEANS



THE DETAIL

- MINI: As the length is shorter it may not be necessary to print out the whole pattern template and instead only print the page with the Mini panel pattern and follow along with the rest of the instructions.

- ALL STYLES: Working from the front, place the pinned jeans on to the paper template keeping sides legs vertical.

- Match the jeans at the centre-front crotch with the point marked **X** on the template. Make sure the jeans overlap the seam allowance at the top of the panel so the seam line of the legs is level with the seam line of the panel. Smooth the legs out flat.

- Place the leg hems parallel with whichever Hem Guide-Line is the same length or select the nearest longer one. Try to align the jeans inside leg with the dotted stitching line so it overlaps the seam allowance.

- If the jeans sit comfortably within the pattern shape with the edges to the dotted line, the pattern can be used as it is. Do not cut out the pattern piece until you check the back.

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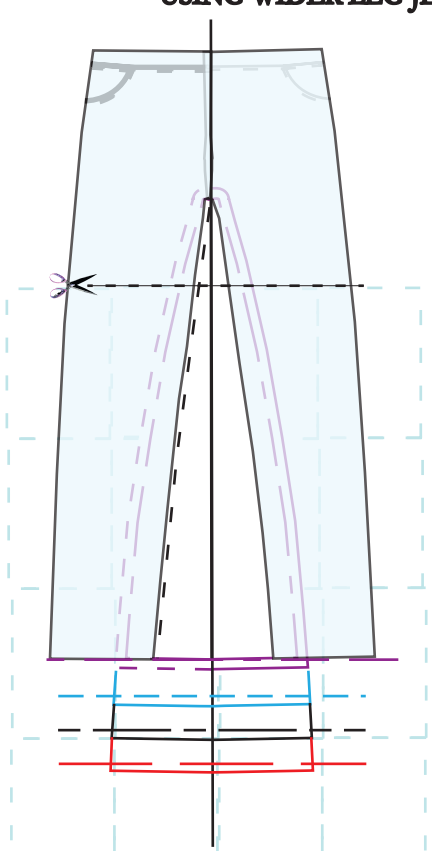
4. USING WIDER LEG JEANS



THE DETAIL

- ALL STYLES: For wider jeans it might be possible to make without a front panel and instead create a deep front slit.
Go to Step 9 or for Wider jeans using a panel, continue below.

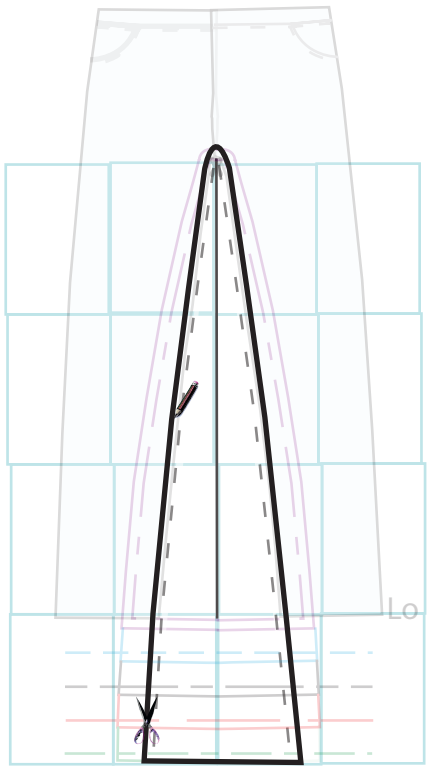
- As with Skinny jeans, match the jeans at the centre-front crotch with the point marked **X** on the template. Make sure the jeans overlap the seam allowance at the top of the panel so the seam-line of the legs is level with the seam-line of the panel. Smooth the legs out flat.

- Place the leg hems parallel with whichever Hem Guide-Line is the same length or select the nearest longer one.

- Unlike the Skinny jeans, the wider leg width means the jean's inside leg might not align with the dotted stitching line. Using a pen trace around the inside-leg edge. Work from the crotch making sure the X on the pattern is at the centre of the legs.

- Once you have traced around the jeans, remove them to reveal the new stitch line created on the paper template. (Continue to step 5)

5. USING WIDER LEG JEANS



THE DETAIL

- On the paper template, check the new stitch line position and prepare to add seam allowance. Measure 15mm outside the new stitchline and draw another line parallel to it. Follow the line from crotch to hem on both sides. This new outer line is the new cutting line.

- These steps can be followed for any jeans that do not fit within the template. The pattern piece can also be increased in size in the same way, extending the lines beyond those on the template.

- It's a good idea to make a copy of this new pattern piece, so you can check the length against the jeans ensuring the pattern fits, before you cut it out in fabric. Trace the lines onto new sheets of paper and cut it out.
This is the front panel pattern.

- Repeat the steps for the back panel to create the paper patterns for either the 1 or 2 piece back panel. Do not cut the back patterns in the fabric yet. Return to these steps later, after step 12.

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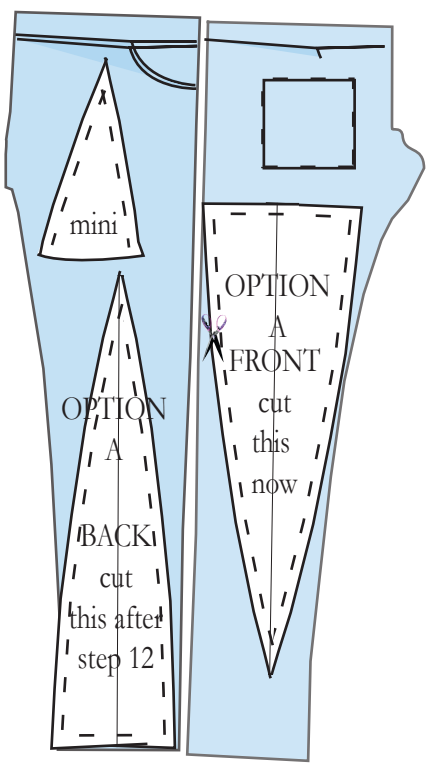
6. MARK OUT PANEL POSITIONS - BUT AT THIS STAGE ONLY CUT OUT THE FRONT PANELS



THE DETAIL

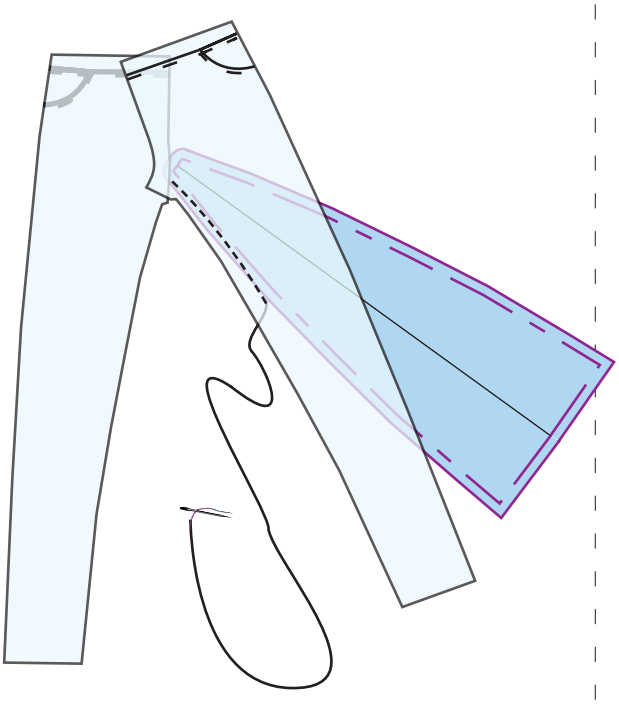
- The **MINI** panels will be a lot smaller! First check the triangle paper pattern is the correct length and reaches the mini hemline. Cut out the panels from the legs of the jeans. Tip: If you are new to sewing or unsure in any way, you can always add to the panel length and trim off the excess once the panel has been attached. (we suggest adding +3 to +5cms)

- For the **MINI**
Cut 1 x front panel and 1 x back panel

- For the **MAXI**
Undo the 2nd pair of jean's inside leg seams. Mark the position of the front panel and cut it out. The BACK should be cut later in the make process to allow time to assess the fit (after Step 12).
A = cut 1 front panel (plus 1 back cut later).
B = cut 1 front panel (plus 2 smaller triangle back panels later).

- Tip: Don't forget you can also cut these panels from other fabrics if you do not have spare pairs of jeans.

7. STITCH THE FRONT PANEL TO THE FRONT INSIDE LEGS



THE DETAIL

- The following steps are for hand sewing a 'French Seam' method, where the raw edges are hidden within the finished seam. It's perfect for hand sewing where neatening the seam allowance is difficult to do. Also here, the inside legs are cut, (rather than unpicked). This allows the original twin-needle stitching of the jeans to be incorporated into the finished seam.

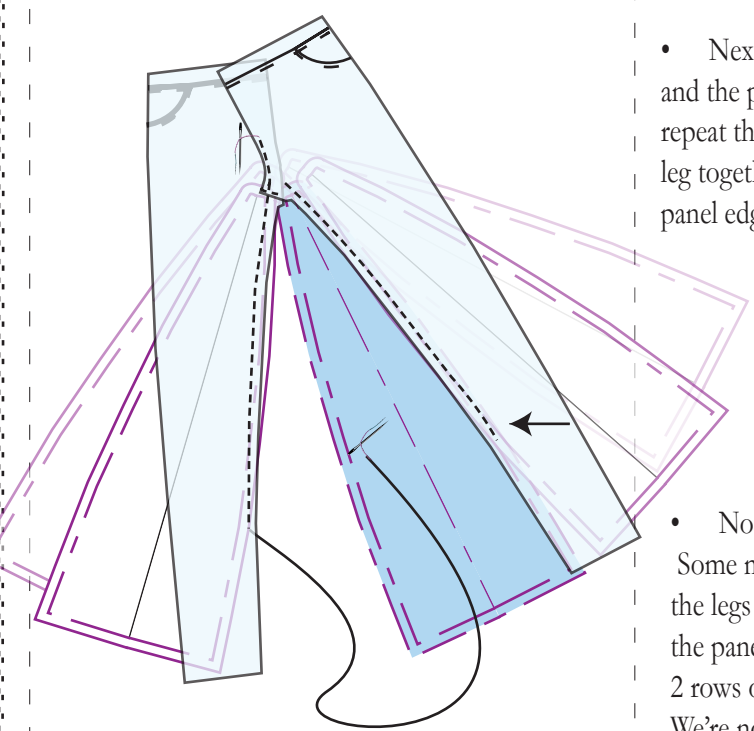
- Hold the jeans and the panel with the right sides facing you. Then, with the wrong sides together, place the edge of the jean's inside-legs to the edge of the panel.

- Lower the edge of the panel slightly (3mm) away from the edge of the jean's legs. (so the edges are not level).

- Starting at the crotch, sew a row of running stitches to join the panel to the first leg. (Adjust the pins at the crotch as necessary whilst sewing, then reposition them after sewing).

- If no slits are required, continue stitching down towards the hem. Or if introducing slits at the front, stop stitching 30 cm from the hem.

8. STITCH THE FRONT PANEL TO THE FRONT INSIDE LEGS



THE DETAIL

- Next, pull the panel towards the 2nd leg. Take the jeans and the panel and hold with the right sides facing you. Then, repeat the first leg method, by placing the wrong sides of each leg together. Align the panel to the edge of the jeans, with the panel edge sitting 3mm lower down (as the first leg).

- From the crotch sew a row of running stitches to join the panel to the inside-leg. Continue down towards the hem, stopping 30cm away if adding slits to the front.

- Note: ADVANCED SEWERS
Some more experienced sewers might prefer to unpick the legs and the crotch seam. You could consider neatening the panel and single needle attaching the panel followed by 2 rows of twin needle top stitch.
We're not going to cover that here, as instead we're showing how to make use of the pre-existing twin-needle stitching on the seams that most jeans have.

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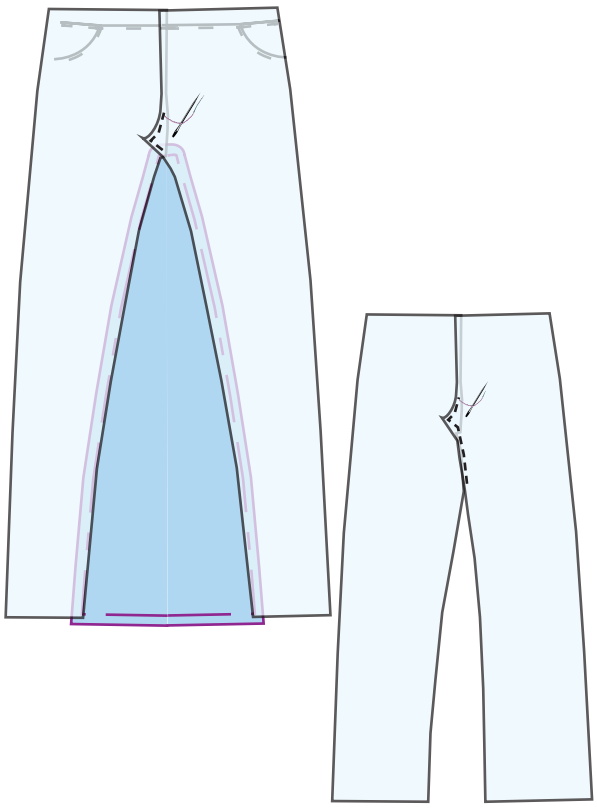
9. STITCH THE FRONT CROTCH FLAT



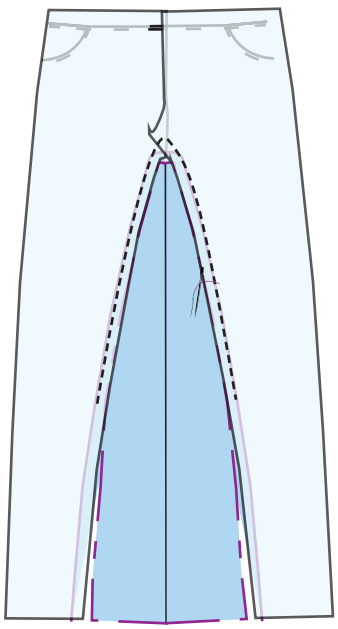
THE DETAIL

- Now it's time to stitch the front crotch into position.
- Push the inside-legs with the twin-needle stitching down over the panel, covering the seam allowance's raw edge.
- Ensure the shape and position of the crotch seam is still flat. If necessary, revisit Step 2 to double check the position. The crotch should be pushed to one side to hold it flat on to the leg. Overlap one leg over the other, ensuring there are no pleats directly under the zip and the seam-line runs smoothly.
- Stitch around the shape of the curve of the crotch seam to hold it flat against the other leg.
- Continue stitching to the point at the top of the legs, then turn the stitch-line down the legs a few centimetres to maintain a pointed triangle shape of the crotch area.

USING WIDER LEG JEANS?

- Tip: if jeans are sufficiently wide, then it's possible to make without a front panel. Just extend the stitching further down the leg to hold the fronts together and create a deep slit.

10. STITCHING THE FRONT PANEL TO THE FRONT INSIDE LEGS



THE DETAIL

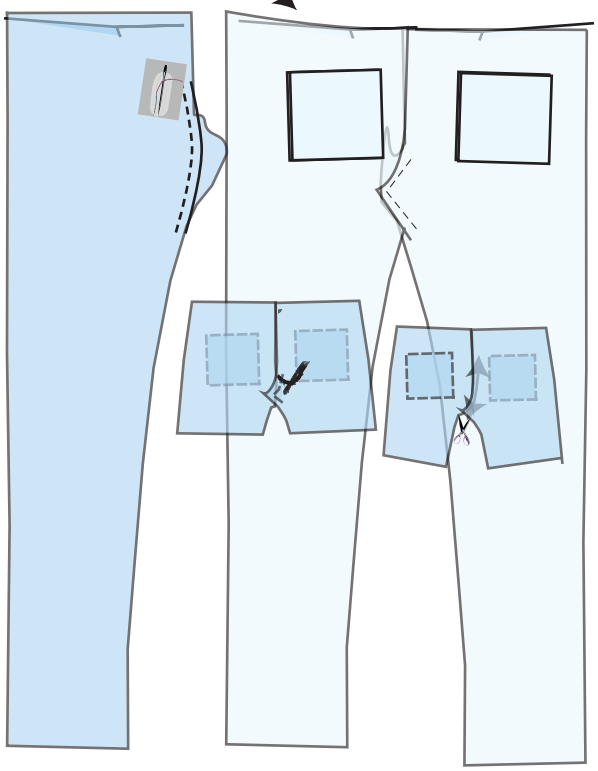
NOTE: Before completing the front legs with a second row of stitches you must make final decisions about the skirt back and attach the back panels.

- Try on the skirt to assess how you want the back to fit. Either with a stitched flat curved crotch seam as the front or with a more snug fitting centre-back seam. Next confirm the choice of back panel shape, either options A or B shown in the next steps. Go to Step 11.
- RETURN TO THIS STEP TO COMPLETE THE FRONT ONCE THE BACK IS ATTACHED. Try the skirt on and check the slits are the correct length for walking, so not to impede your step, adjust the length of the slits as required.
- Next, hold the front with the right sides facing you. Make sure the inside-leg seams are flipped down over the panel, so the leg-edge covers the raw edges of the seam allowance.
- To hold the edge of the legs flat to the panel, stitch a row of small back-stitches along the leg-edge keeping the raw edges hidden within the seam.

WASTED THREADS ©

11. CHOOSE OPTION TO STITCH THE BACK CROTCH

OR



THE DETAIL

- First, turn the jeans inside out, and lay the legs together. Note the back-rise seam is more curved than the front. Reduce the curve either by adding a seam for a snug fit (Step 12) or by overlapping, as the front. See below. Try on the skirt to assess the fit and decide which option to take. The method below is recommended for the MINI skirt, but is ok to use for all.

- To Overlap: Cut or unpick the centre-back seam far enough along to ensure the back lays flat once over-lapped.

- With right sides facing, at the opened seam, pull the side with the twin-needle over the other so the curve is reduced and the back lays flat. Turn in the seam allowance on both leg-edges, press the fold. Tack into position so the back lays flat.

- Return to Steps 3 to 6 to cut out the paper pattern, and the panels from the jeans. As the edges will be raw without any twin-needle go to Step 13 to choose a method to stitch together.

- Return to this step once the panel is attached, to check the over-lapped section is laying flat. Backstitch around the edge of the crotch to hold everything together.

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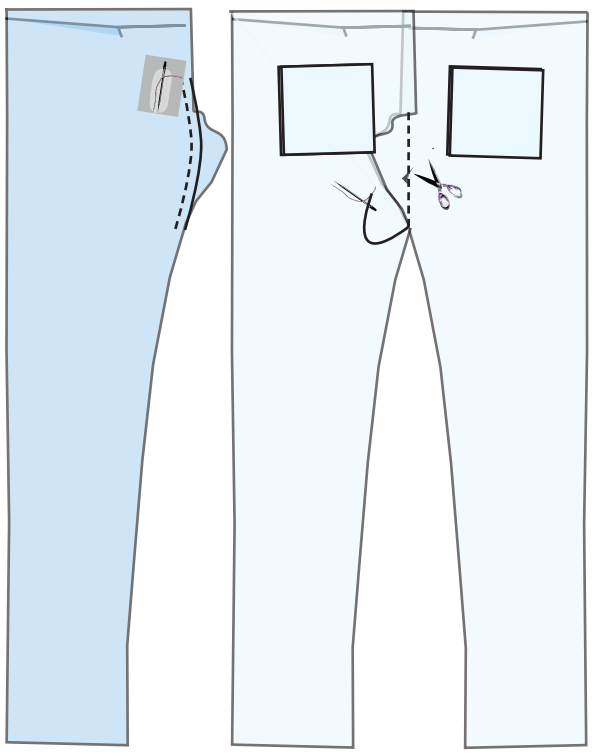
12. STITCH A SEAM AT THE CENTRE BACK



THE DETAIL

Step 12 is for a more fitted snug back fit.

- Unpick the centre-back rise seam from the leg to midway. (Tip: Keep the orange contrast thread to maybe re-use it later). Turn inside-out and hold with the back legs placed together. From the middle of the centre-back seam, pin a line to the leg.

- Try the skirt on to check the fit. Adjust pins as required then follow the pins to stitch a row of back-stitching.

- Push the inside shaped section to one side and press.

- After the panels are attached in Step 17, return to this step to finish the back, and do the following;
From the right side, stitch 2 rows of backstitch. Stitch the first row close to the seam line and the second row 4mm from the first to create a twin-needle appearance. Use contrast thread, or the orange thread previously unpicked (if it was salvageable).

- Tip: If you are an experienced sewer you could trim and neaten the seam if bulky.

- Continue to Step 13.

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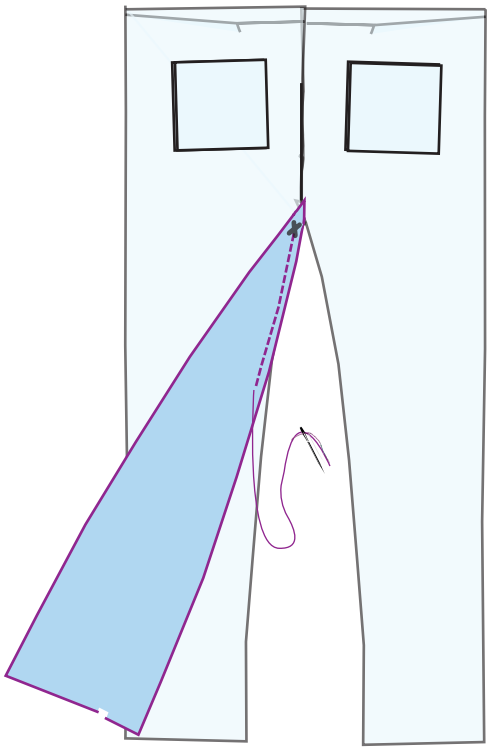
13. STITCH THE BACK PANEL TO THE INSIDE LEGS



THE DETAIL

OPTION A - ONE PIECE PANEL

- If you've followed step 12 return to Steps 3 to 6 to cut the panel option selected to the correct size, afterwards, return to this step.

- Unlike the front, the back legs and panel will have raw edges. There are many different types of seams to choose from to join the panels, but here we've suggested using either a French Seam or a Plain Seam.
The difference is the French Seam, when finished has all the raw edges hidden inside the seam. This helps when hand sewing as it's a way to neaten the fraying edges, but can be a little thick due to the extra turnings. Our jeans were very soft and worn so we were able to use French Seams, if in doubt, use the Plain Seam. Below we explain the Plain Seam with a one-piece-back-panel and the French Seam in Steps 15-16 with 2-piece-back-panels.

- First, make sure the cut panels fit with the seam line of the jeans. Pin them into position to double check. The hem of the jean's legs and panel should meet and the seam allowance should match together up to the top.

- For a Plain Seam place the panel to the inside-leg with right-sides of the fabric together, wrong sides facing you.

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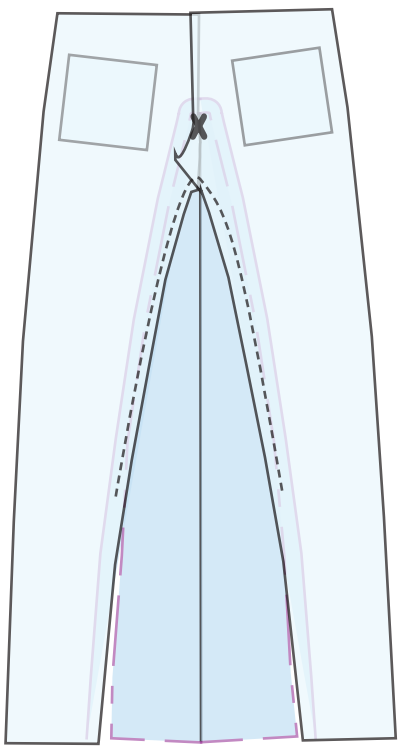
14. STITCH THE BACK PANEL WITH CURVED BACK CROTCH



THE DETAIL

- Using a 15mm seam allowance, stitch a row of back-stitch from the crotch to the hem (or top of the slit). Repeaton the other leg. With the panel on top, and the seam allowances together, press them to one side.

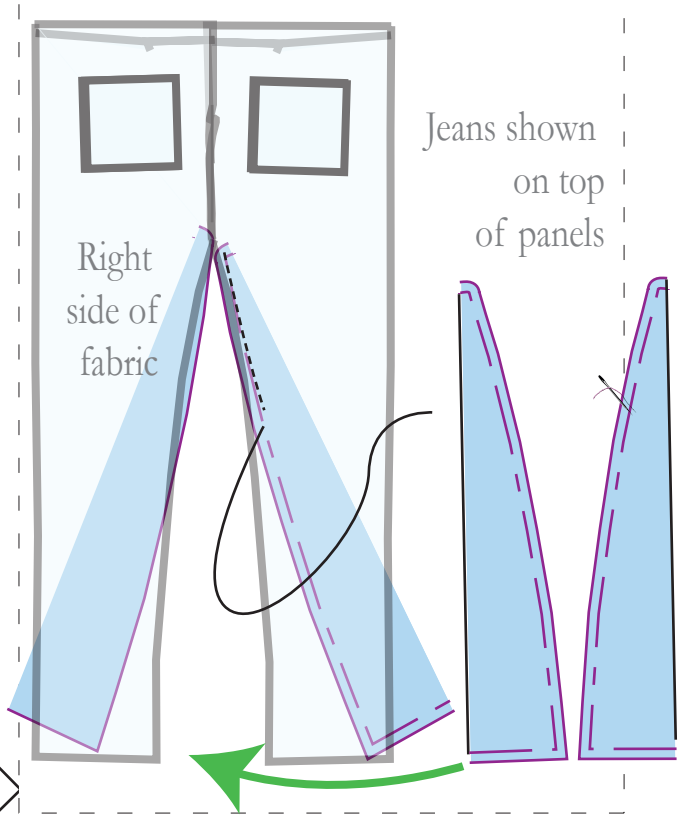
- Neaten the raw edges of the seam allowance by tucking the edges down into the seam allowance and add a row of running stitching to hold the raw ends together. Press the seam flat.

- There is also the added option to continue the original denim jeans contrasting thread twin-needle theme. Stitch a double row of top-stitching (twin-needle) which will also help hold the seams flat. Stitch the first row close to the edge with the second row 4mm from the first.

- Alternatively, if the back overlap is particularly wide, making it difficult to attach the panel to the inside-legs, then lay the panel under the legs to stitch them together. Align the panel's hem-edge with the legs. At the top of the panel locate the centre and line it up to the centre-back seam. Add a few stitches to secure the point, then attach both together by using a double row of top-stitching as described in thepoint immediately above this text.

- Neaten the hem as Step 17.

15. OPTIONS FOR THE BACK: OPTION B



THE DETAIL

OPTION B - TWO-PIECE-BACK-PANELS

- Option B has a centre-back slit detail.

This styling can be used with both wide or skinny leg jeans.

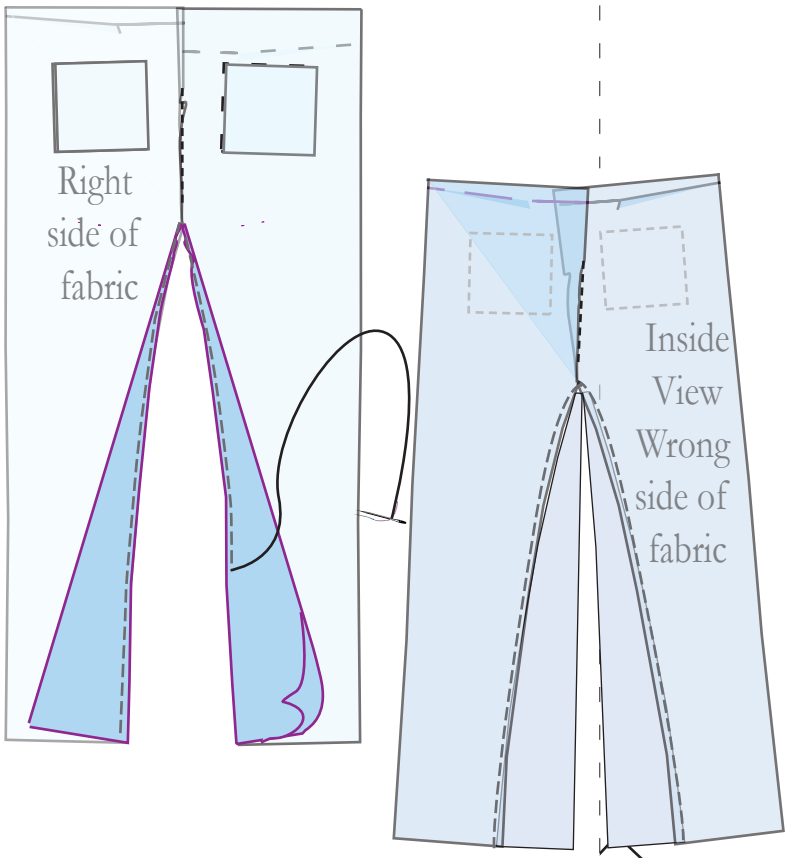
- Take the panels and attach to the back legs using a French Seam. This type of seam hides the raw edges within the turnings.

- The straight vertical edge of the panel is the centre-back. Place the wrong sides of the fabric together and match the opposite diagonal side of the panels to the legs, (so you see the seam allowance facing you).

- Sew a row of stitches 5mm from the edge.

- Note: If you are using a sewing machine rather than hand sewing you could use a traditional seam and neaten. Or if the denim is particularly thick use a Plain Seam as described in Steps 13 - 14

16. OPTION B: CONTINUE TO ATTACH THE BACK PANELS



THE DETAIL

- Lay the skirt with the right sides of the leg fabric facing you and pull the panels through. Flip the back panels so the right sides of the both the jeans and panels are touching each other.

- Press along the fold line of the seam for a crisp edge. The raw edges of the seam allowances will now be hidden.

- Stitch a 2nd row, using a strong back-stitch seam, 1cm from the 1st stitch line, enclosing the raw edges.

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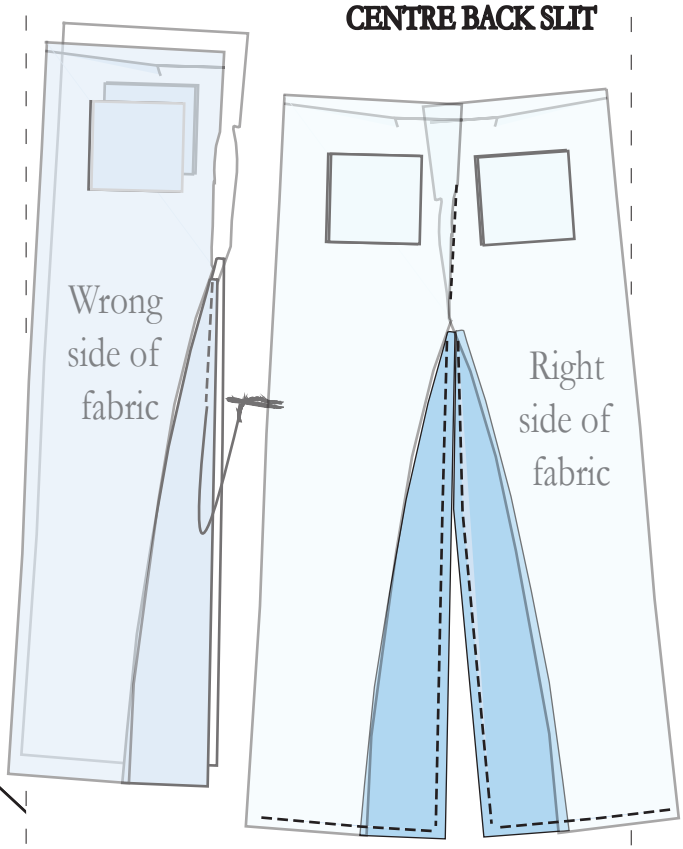
17.

OPTION B: FINISH THE CENTRE BACK SLIT



THE DETAIL

- Reduce the length of the centre-back slit by adding a short seam. Fold along the centre-back with the wrong sides facing.

- Using a 15mm seam allowance, stitch downwards from the crotch, until the slit is the desired length. Press the seam open.

- Tuck the raw edges of the seam allowance in so they are hidden. Then stitch through from the right side, to the seam allowance to hold it in place. Note; This is called top-stitching, where the thread is visible on the outside of the fabric.

- Return to step 12 to top-stitch the centre-back

- Neaten the hem with top-stitching, by folding the raw edge turning twice and stitch through.

- Trim off any stray threads, and the skirt upcycle is completed.

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