



## Save your pattern!

You've found the perfect pattern. You may want to rush through the cutting and get right into sewing. While it may be tempting (yes, I've done it myself), get the most from your pattern and perhaps spare yourself some sweat and tears, take the time to follow some basic tips.

- ✂ Item 1 - Before you purchase the pattern, carefully check out the garment lines illustrated on the back of the envelope. You may love the style pictured on the front but be sure the cut is right for you. If it's not, keep looking!
- ✂ Item 2 - Be sure to purchase the correct size range of pattern. Take your measurements and compare them to the measurements on the pattern envelope. Just like in retail stores, sizes can vary between brands.
- ✂ Item 3 - Read all of the instructions before you begin. Oh, the heartaches I could have saved myself in the past if I'd always done this!
- ✂ Item 4 - Use paper scissors to cut out pattern pieces—do *not* use your fabric cutting shears—it will dull them. I also cut out the pattern pieces I'm not using as I find it makes it easier to re-fold and store for future use.
- ✂ Item 5 - Before pinning to your fabric, iron the pattern pieces using low heat with no steam to ensure they lie flat.
- ✂ Item 6 - Mark notches and other pattern markings well. I keep brightly colored thread for this purpose. If there are multiple markings, I use a different colored thread for each set; it doesn't take much longer and makes matching up pieces a cinch.
- ✂ Item 7 - Use a large clear plastic freezer bag to keep everything together. Less hide-and-peek, more sewing!

I find that the more I sew, the more opportunities I have to learn from my mistakes. What sewing lessons have you learned the hard way? Please share—we can all benefit from them.