

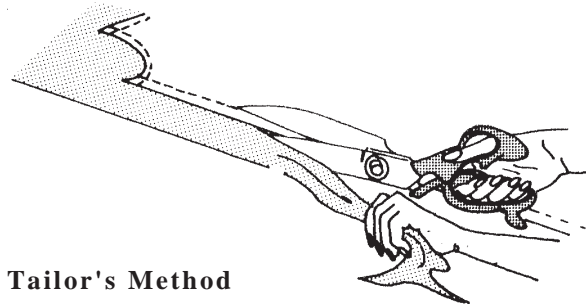
CUTTING THE PATTERN AND FABRIC

Cutting Methods

Tailors and dressmakers have styles of cutting that are specific to each trade. Each style is especially suited to the type of fabric and shears used.

TAILOR'S METHOD:

The tailor uses weights to hold the fabric in place. The fabric has been marked with chalk on the stitching lines, as well as the cutting line. As he cuts, his right hand holds large 10" to 12" shears. The fabric to be discarded is held in his left hand. By holding the discarded fabric in his left hand, a little tension is placed on the cutting line, keeping the fabric smooth as he cuts. The discarded fabric is simply dropped on the floor behind him.



Tailor's Method

DRESSMAKER'S METHOD:

Instead of holding the discarded fabric in the left hand, the dressmaker places a hand on the pattern. This hand is close to the cutting line and shears. This is especially good for curved areas. The fabric will not move with a hand pressing down on it and few pins are needed. If the fabric is vulnerable to pin marks, the dressmaker can use the tailor's weights as well as her hand.

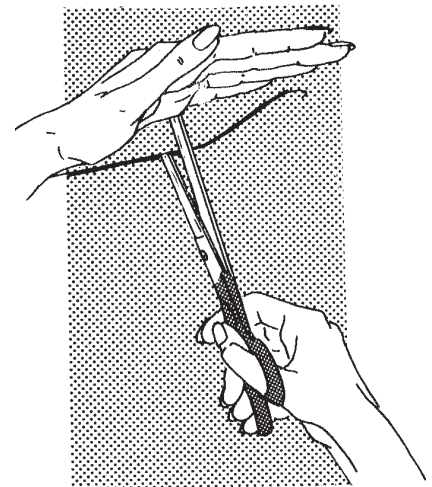


Dressmaker's Method

You may wish to combine both methods while cutting out your garment. Practice different techniques and use what's most comfortable for you.

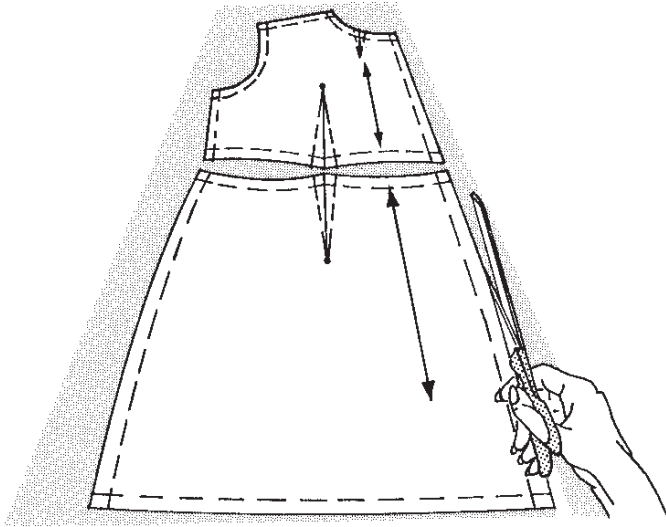
Cutting Difficult Areas

Instead of twisting about to reach a certain cutting area, simply start cutting there. Pinch two layers of fabric into a small wrinkle. Place the point of the shears on the wrinkle, as if to cut. Hit the point of the shears with the edge of your hand to make a "nip." Insert the point of the shears into the cut. You will be able to ease into the cutting area without difficulty.



Cutting into a Difficult Area

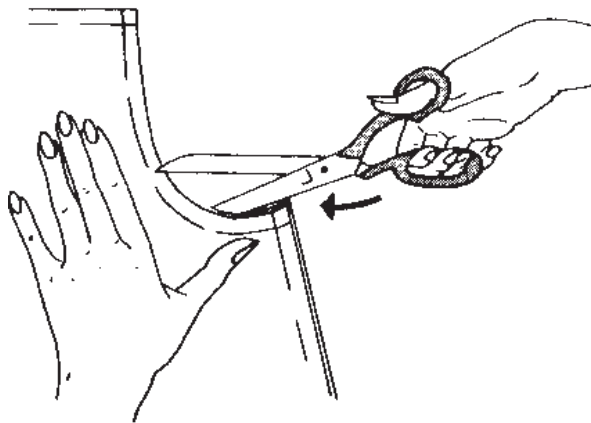
Cutting on Grain



Cutting on Grain

When you cut on grain, cut in order of the largest piece to the smallest. Patterns have arrows or small shears printed on the cutting line to indicate the correct cutting direction, which is always with the grain. When cutting, make a long, deep stroke, then slide the shears forward and make another deep stroke. Always keep the point of the shears on the table. Do not close them – cut within an inch of the points, then slide forward. This will keep your cuts smooth and consistent. Make sure you are not cutting with the shears upside-down in your hand.

Cutting Curved Edges



Cutting Curved Edges

To cut a curve correctly, you must always keep the shears moving while cutting. If you lift the fabric or move the shears to one side or the other, one layer will be cut shorter than the other on the curve.

RULE: Always keep the shears moving when cutting a curved line.

When cutting curves, the use of a rotary cutter can be an advantage. The fabric and pattern lie flat on a cutting mat and the pattern is held flat by weights, so your cut edges will be straight and smooth.