

# Little Boy's Long Waisted Frock

**Designer:** Jamie Quick



During the 1860's, little boys remained in skirts for the first 2-6 years of life. The duration was most affected by social class. For members of upper class society it was fashionable to keep boys in skirts into the further age of the spectrum. Lower class families breached their sons sooner possibly as early as age 2 and most certainly by 4. The middle class shows much more variety and may have used actual toilet training as their deciding factor.

If you are a living history mother of a little boy, then you are used to the never ending, "What a cute little girl!" comment directed towards your son. Because of this, I wanted a more masculine looking dress.

This frock is both masculine and very middle class for the following reason: The dropped waistline creates a looser tunic like fit. Although the style was never high fashion it was common for little boys about 2-3 years of age. Additionally the bold, dark, and often wide trims are very masculine.



At our last event, we had only one person ask if Grant was a little girl! And then upon closer inspection, the individual realized themselves that Grant was indeed a little boy. Here was my trim inspiration.



## Materials

- 1 -2 Yards of Reproduction Cotton, Lightweight Wool Suiting, or Silk Taffeta
- Lining Fabric
- Cotton doily thread for piping
- Hook and Eye Tape or Buttons for closure
- Optional Trimmings – Velvet or braid work appear to be the most common

## Instructions

**Step 1 (Pattern and Fitting):** Print pattern to scale. Measure child and make necessary modifications. Mock up recommended. My dress was around 24 inches at the waist. My son is 2 1/2 and fitting into 2-3 T.

### Sizing Notes:

- This pattern is for up to a 23 inch waist.
- Add width – If you want the dress 2 inches wider, for example. Move the fold line on the bodice front and back pieces over 1/2 inch to cut the pieces larger respectively.
- Reduce width – Take the desired measurement, say you want the dress 2 inches narrower. Move the fold line on the bodice inward 1/2 inch. Move the back pieces inward 1/2 inch.
- Small Armscye – Cut around it to enlarge.
- Too long – Cut pattern shorter
- Too short – Add to the length of the bodice by drawing the bottom portion longer. You can also add to the appearance of a longer waistline, by adding a skirt waistband instead of sewing the skirt directly to the bodice.

**Step 2 (Cutting Bodice):** Cut bodice front and backs from fashion fabric. If lining, cut two fronts

and four backs.

**Step 3** (Bodice Assembly): Sew side seams and shoulder seams with 1/2 inch seam allowance.

**Step 4:** (Sleeve Assembly): Cut sleeves and sleeve band. Using a larger stitch, place two rows of gather stitching at the top and bottom of the sleeves. Gather each sleeve bottom into sleeve band and sew with a 1/2 inch seam allowance. Fold raw edge of cuff up 1/2 an inch and secure along the cuff seam-line with hand sewn whip stitch. Sew side seams.

**Step 5** (Sleeve Install): Gather sleeves to fit armhole. Secure with a 1/2 inch seam allowance.

**Step 6:** (Make Piping): Bias for piping is cut at a 45 degree angle in relationship to the fabric grain line. I made mine 1-2 inches wide, and inserted the cording in the center. Here is a video tutorial. Keep in mind this tutorial is showing upholstery pipping with a thicker cord! I use cotton doily thread as my cording,

**Step 7:** (Pipe Neckline and Waist) Pin piping onto right side of neckline corded edge facing down. Sew along piping stitching. Clip curved areas, turn piping down and press. Finish with machine top stitching 1/8 inch from the edge or tuck the raw edges and hand whip stitch on the inside.

You can also pipe the waist, if you are planning to sew the bodice directly to the skirt. If using a waistband, do not pipe waist.

**Step 8** (Closure Placket): Press center back under 1/2 an inch. Then fold 1 inch under and press again. Secure with topstitching. Repeat with other panel. This study 1 inch area will overlap for a hook and eye or button closure.

**Step 9** (Cutting Skirt): Cut 2 (30-36 inch) wide skirt panels x desired length plus 4 inches for finishing.



**Step 10 (Skirt Seams and Placket):** Fold one panel in half and cut a 3 1/2 – 4 1/2 inch slit from the top of the fold downward. Finish placket with a tiny rolled hem secured with hand whip stitching or machine top-stitching.

Secure base of the cut edge with machine back-stitching or a hand sewn bar tack. Sew side seams with 1/2 inch seam allowance.

If you've never made a bar tack this video tutorial will show you how. I prefer the second or third methods (time stamp 3:20) or (time stamp 6:05), with the stitching over the bar instead of just like wrapping it as shown in method one.

**Step 11 (Skirt Hem):** Press bottom edge under 1/2 inch and then press under three inches to form a wide rolled hem. Secure with machine top-stitching or hand whip stitch in place.

**Step 12 (Waist Treatment):** Chose a waist treatment: gathered, directional pleating, or box pleating. The one I made features directional knife pleating. Note: Wider pleats are a very masculine choice.

Pin treated skirt and bodice right sides together and secure with a 1/2 inch seam allowance. Turn inside out, press downward. Turn right side out and top-stitch 1/8 inch below the seam to keep everything crisp and secure.

**Step 13:** Install hook and eye closure and trim as desired.

As always, my patterns are copywrite@2022. You are welcome to make and sell any items made with my patterns. Pattern may not be sold or published without my permission.



Pattern with long sleeves.

A

Long Waisted Body  
3 T

Back  
cut 2

Fold line



B

↑ tape ↑

cut here for Back

Sleeve Band for Short Sleeve

1 Inch

Back Bottom ↑ tape ↑

Fold Line

Cut here





A

Long Waisted Body  
3 T

Front

cut 1 on fold



FOLD LINE



↓ tape ↓

B

↑ tape ↑

Bottom to front

↑ tape  
to sleeve

End of top of the sleeve →

gather

C

short sleeve

↑  
tape end of sleeve

gather

1 inch

A

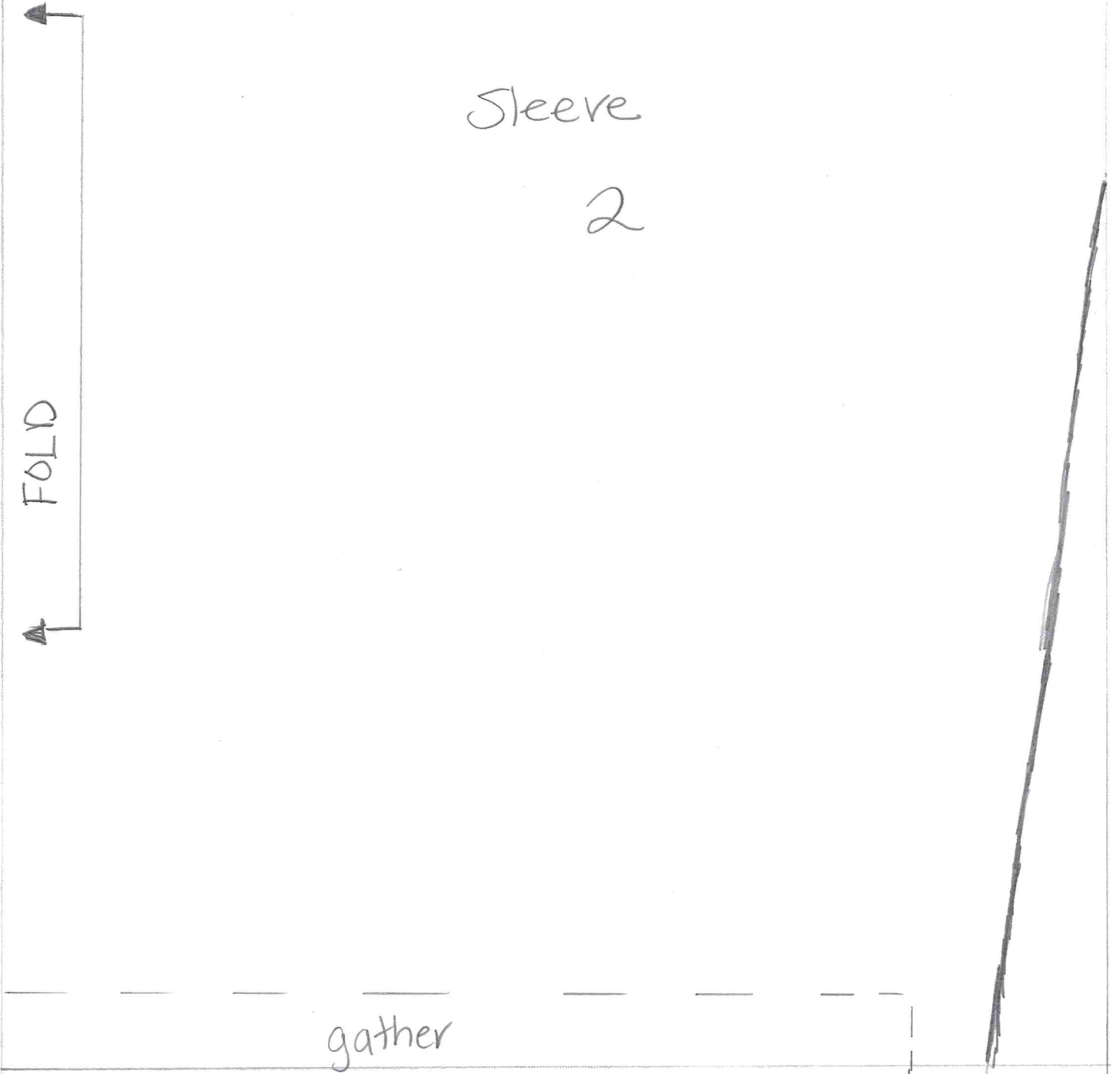
1 inch

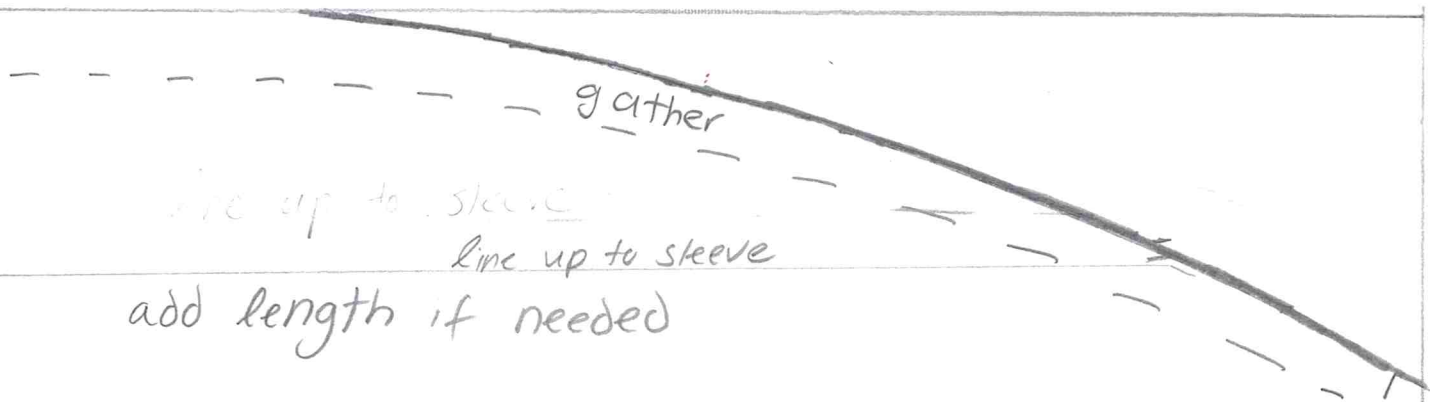
Sleeve

2

FOLD

gather





B

C

This piece only  
adds the tip area

But you can make the  
sleeve wider if wanted

