

## *Do It Yourself* by Jan Leśniak for JUKI

Subject: a dress with a yoke

Level of difficulty: ★ ★ ★ (medium)

Machine: JUKI MO-1000



### **Before you set about to sewing, please prepare:**

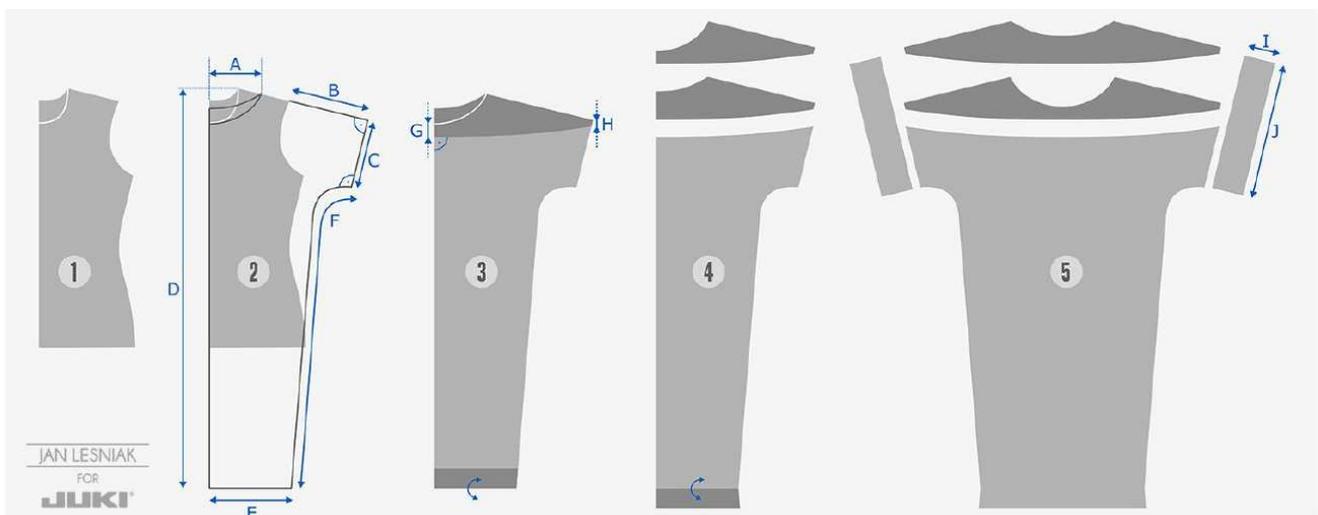
- 1.5 meters of a knitted material 1,5m wide
- 0.6 meter of a knit or a fabric for a yoke and a waistband – a material for a yoke should be lighter as it consists of two layers
- a tape-measure, a ruler, a pencil and a paper forms
- threads, tailor scissors, pins and tailor's chalk (French chalk)
- your T-shirt, choose the fitted one but not too tight-fitting; it will be used as a basis for a form.

### **A form:**

The work starts with preparing a form for half of a dress; in a final stage you will copy it as a mirror image in order to create a symmetrical shape.

1. Prepare a form for half of a T-shirt; press your T-shirt with an iron and fold it in half lengthwise; spread it down on a paper so that the material stays not tightened or not gathered; outline your T-shirt (sides, bottom, shoulder, neckline); a shape of an armhole and a front part of a neckline should be copied by densely spiking seams with pins so that there are holes in the paper that determine the shape (if you put a thick material under the paper, pins will be spiked deeper and the holes will be more visible); the width of a bottom of a T-shirt should be equal to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of your hip size – if it is not, widen a bottom.

2. Convert a form for a dress – the dimensions given are pretty universal, but you can modify them to your expectations and needs:
  - determine the width of the neckline and divide it in two, a bateau neck fits best when it begins roughly in the middle of an arm (**A=13cm**); draw a front neckline so as not to deepen the original neckline of a T-shirt, and so as to make it contact with a center line of a dress at a right angle; a back neckline should be slightly shallower than a front neckline (2-3cm)
  - extend an angle of an arm to the length at which you want to make a cut on a sleeve, lengthen this line to the desired length of a sleeve (**B=20cm**)
  - make a cut on a sleeve, perpendicular to the angle of a shoulder, a width (**C=17cm**) should equal a sleeve in a biceps, that is half of a circumference of your biceps increased by 4-8cm
  - determine the length of a dress – the best fits a below-the-knee skirt because you can then pull a material up, gather and ease into the waistband; measure the length from the highest point of a shoulder – in the picture, it is the highest point of a neckline in a T-shirt and on a silhouette, it is a curve between a neck and an arm (**D=90-100cm**)
  - determine (at a right angle to its center – a line **D**) the width at a bottom of a dress – it should be 2-3cm narrower than the width of a bottom of a T-shirt so it tapers down and fits tightly around the hips after being pulled up (**E=21cm**)
  - draw a side line of a dress (**F**): start at a right angle to a line **C**, then turn downward with a fluid arc and connect an arc with a width at the bottom with a straight line (**E**); If you want to fit a dress at the hips and pull it up to gather a material and ease it into the waistband, a side line should cut (decrease) the width of a bottom of a T-shirt (see a picture below); If you want to wear a dress loose at the hips, add 1-2cm to the width of a bottom of a T-shirt; an angle at which you lead a side line, can be adjusted by changing the width of a dress at the bottom (**E**) and across the chest (just below an armhole).
3. Draw a shape of a yoke (dark gray outline); a yoke should start several centimeters below a neckline (**G=3cm**), at a right angle to a center line, and then gradually, with a gentle curve, taper just by the edge of a sleeve (**H=1.5 cm**); draw the width of a strip at a bottom of a dress (dark gray outline).
4. Cut a yoke and separate it from a dress; copy separately a front (a deeper neckline) and a back (a shallower neckline); draw a mirror image at a bottom of a strip.
5. Copy all elements in a mirror image; draw cuffs to size equals twice a width of a cuff (**I=6cm**) and a circumference of a sleeve (**J=Cx2=34cm**); a form is ready.



**A cut and a sewing:**

Cut all elements adding 1cm seam allowance around each one.

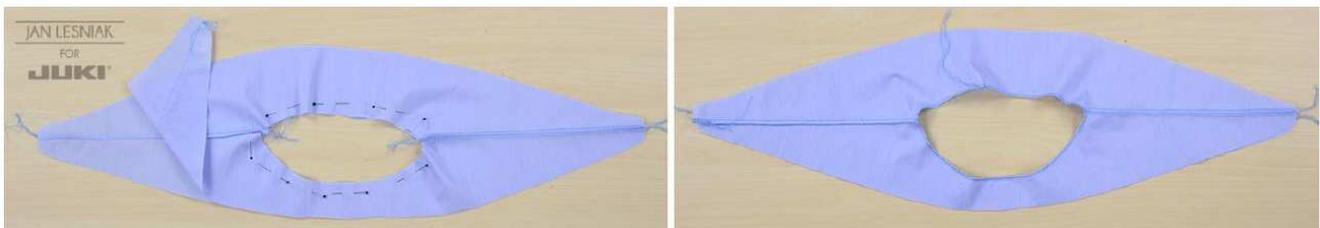
Cut out: 2 bottom parts of a dress so that a knitted material stretches in a form wide – a front and a back have exactly the same shape, and 2 cuffs – in their case, a knitted material should change its size in length.

Cut a yoke twice (2 fronts and 2 backs) from a fabric or a knit so that a material stretches in a form wide.

You must start work by sewing up a yoke. Put a front and a back of a form on top of the other so that their right sides are in contact and sew up shoulders' part. This way, prepare two symmetrical elements. Press seams with an iron.



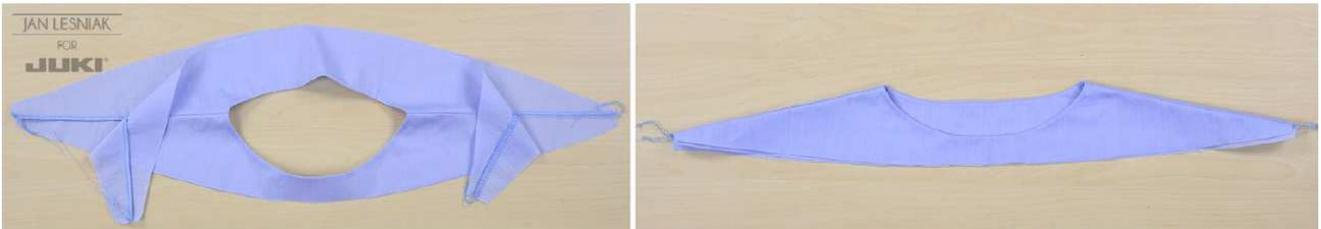
Put the two elements one on top of the other so that their right sides are in contact. Pin necklines together so that the edges of necklines and shoulder seams in both elements coincide. Sew up the edges of necklines. Pay special attention at a curve between a front and a back so as not to cut a material with a knife – gently straighten the edge of a neckline in front of a knife, taking care to hold a material under a presser foot. When sewing try not to stretch a material forcibly.



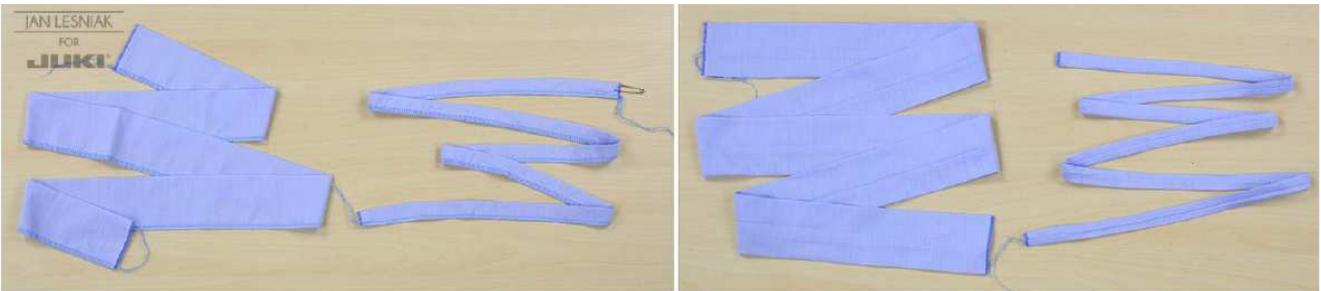
Turn one of elements underneath in front of a neckline so that seams are inside – between the two elements.



Press the edge of a neckline and pin unhemmed edges of a material together – a yoke is ready.



Now, when the machine is still threaded with threads of a yoke color, prepare a belt. Cut a strip from the rest of a material. It should be as long as possible (preferably across the entire width of a material) whereas its width is at your own discretion – add 1cm seam allowance around. Fold a strip in two so that its right side is inside and sew long edges up using an overlock machine. With a use of a safety pin, drag a strip to a right side, wrap its ends to the inside and sew manually or using a regular machine. Press a strip with an iron so that a seam is in the middle of the width.



Before you set about sewing a dress, you must change a color of threads. Fortunately, JUKI overlock machine MO-1000 has a great solution – owing to a special system of tubes and compressed air, a machine threads automatically (all 4 threads). You just have to put the end of a thread in a right tube and press a switch. Compressed air will do the rest. When threads are changed, pin a lower edge of a yoke (both layers of a material) with an upper edge of a dress. Start pinning from the center in order to sew both elements up symmetrically. Do the same with the other part of dress.



Sew a yoke with a bottom of a dress joining both layers of a yoke and a bottom of a dress. Press seams with an iron.



It is time for cuffs. Press them lengthwise in half with an iron and pin on the left side of a dress, so that unhemmed edges of cuffs come in contact with edges of sleeves.



Sew the edges up. Then press them off a dress. Turn a dress to a right side and press cuffs with an iron on a right side of a dress so that an overlock seam is hidden under a cuff.



Fold a dress in two so that its front coincides with a back – their right sides should be in contact inside. Leave a cuff pressed on a right side (that is now to the inside of a dress). Fasten sleeves and sides of a dress. Sew them up using an overlock machine, cutting down all roughness and unnecessary threads. At a curve next to an armhole, the same as in case of a neckline, you have to straighten an edge of a material in front of a knife, taking care to hold a material under a presser foot.

Before you start sewing, remember to pull about 10cm thread from under a presser foot in order to secure a seam by a cuff. Turn these 10cm of a seam hanging from a cuff, on a left side of a dress and fasten it to the allowance by sewing manually in order to prevent threads from protruding on the outside.



Now prepare a binding on a bottom of a dress. Leave a dress on a left side. Turn a width of a binding up, on a left side. Pin an unhemmed top edge to a dress. The whole binding (two layers of a material) turn to the inside of a dress so as an unhemmed edge is flush with a folded edge of a material. Using the same pins, fasten all 3 layers of a material together.



Using an overlock machine, sew a bottom edge (3 layers of a material) by cutting only a small fragment so as not to decrease a binding. Tie the end of an overlock seam and attach manually to the allowance. Turn a binding back down and press the allowance with an iron.



A dress is ready! You can wear it loose as an oversize tunic or tied with a belt at the waist. You can also fit it at the hips – pull it up to gather a material and ease it into the waistband.



**Sewing instructions prepared by:**

Janek Leśniak – fashion designer who, together with JUKI, conducts dressmaking courses in Warsaw. He infects others with a passion for making your own clothes on his blog: [janlesniak.wordpress.com](http://janlesniak.wordpress.com), where he reveals the arcana of his trade. Combining craftsmanship and design, he builds an awareness of the quality and the fashion industry among people non-related with the business. He has acquired fifteen years' experience working with such brands as Reserved, House and Big Star. He has independently created original collections and conducted lectures on fashion business at the Cracow School of Art and Fashion Design. He has rejected massive fashion in favour of passion and work under his own name. His official website is: [janlesniak.pl](http://janlesniak.pl)

**PRACOWNIA**

JAN LEŚNIAK