

Esme Top

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This fun project is a classy shift top with a standard and serger sewing machines. The pattern is by Lotta Jansdotter, the Esme top from the book Lotta Jansdotter Everyday Style. Two sewing machines are recommended, the Air Thread 2000D and the Skyline S7. Supplementary notes and tips are included to be used in parallel with the pattern directions.

Time: Three classes each at 3 hour sessions

Skill Level: Advanced Beginner

Janome Supplies Required:

- Sewing machine needles (matching selected fabric)
- Air Thread 2000D
- Standard sewing machine (sample was made with the Skyline S7)
- A Knee lifter is recommended for the shoulder seam

Fabric and Notions Required:

- Book, Lotta Jansdotter Everyday Style (Esme top, pg.139)
- 2 ¼ yard, 44" wide fabric (for all sizes) / Lightweight garment fabrics: double gauze, linen, lightweight cottons.
- Matching or contrasting thread
- 12" x 16" SF101 Woven Shape Flex Interfacing (optional)
- Marking pen/chalk/French curve ruler
- Tailor's ham/Iron
- Rotary cutter/ruler/mat/paper scissors/pinking shears
- Washi or painter's tape
- Pattern tracing paper (Swedish tracing paper, medical exam paper, etc.)

Sample Notes:

- Shirting fabric, black and white gingham
- Inside seams, Gutermann col. 20 white thread
- Hem seams, Gutermann col. 10 black thread

Pattern Prep Tips:

1. Copy the instructions on pages 139 - 141. Multiple versions are included in this pattern (cap sleeve, short sleeve, ¾ sleeve, shirt, tunic, dress). Use a Highlighter to highlight the following headings for a quick reference to the Esme Top instructions: Variation 2.
2. Copy the Size Chart on pg 127. Each sewist can circle their body dimensions to note pattern sizing and grading across across multiple sizes, if needed.
3. Note pg 154 for the pattern sheet guideline. For the Esme top, 3 pattern sheets are taped together and then the pattern pieces are traced off from there. Painter's tape or washi tape can be used to tape pattern sheets 2, 3, 4 together for this process.

Machine Preparation Tips:

- Prior to starting sewing, use scraps of the selected garment fabric with contrasting thread to adjust and set the stitch tensions on the standard sewing machine and on the serger.

Cutting Instructions:

- When tracing the pattern pieces, note if the sewist needs to grade across multiple sizes. A French curve ruler is handy to utilize for smoothly grading transitions across sizes.
- The following pattern pieces are referenced for this project: E1 Top Front/E2 Top Back/E1 front facing/E2 back facing/E3 sleeve

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Pattern Mods:

- The pattern does not mention interfacing the neckline facings but I prefer this finishing detail. I traced the neckline facing front and back pattern pieces onto interfacing and applied prior to sewing. If a delicate fabric base is used for this project, I would recommend staystitching the neckline as well.

Sewing Instruction Notes (referencing the directions on page 139 in the book):

Prior to starting the sewing, finish the bottom edges of the neck facings with the Air Thread 2000D. Finish the bottom edges of the sleeves and bottom edges of the front and back bodice pieces with the serger. The following directions are supplemental references and tips to be used in parallel with the direction on pg 139.

Step 5: After sewing the shoulder seams, use the Air Thread 2000D to finish the edges of the fabric.

Step 7: Understitch the neck facing to the seam. After sewing the facing to the neckline, I trimmed the neckline/facing seam with pinking shears to $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Then I ironed the seam flat (toward the facing). Finally I understitched this seam to the facing and ironed the neckline flat to finish this seam (omitting the topstitching as recommended).

Step 10: Utilize the Ease stitch pre-set for a quick shoulder gathering stitch at this step. Utilize the knee lifter tool to quickly adjust fabric around the curves at the shoulder seam as you sew, preventing wrinkled seams. A tailor's ham is also recommended to use when ironing the shoulder and neckline seams.

Pre-set Stitch - Ease

1. Select the Garment Icon:



2. Select the Gathering Icon:



3. Select the Ease Stitching Icon:



Knee Lifter

Insert the Knee Lifter into the front of the machine. As you sew around the shoulder seam, raise and lower the presser foot as needed (with the knee lift bar). Adjust the fabric frequently around the shoulder curves to prevent wrinkled stitches. The Knee Lifter allows you to keep both hands on the fabric and raise and lower the presser foot simultaneously, to save time.

Step 11: After sewing the sleeve/side seams, finish the seams with the serger.

Step 12: For this step I did not sew a double folded hem. The edges are finished with a serger so I did a single fold hem at the sleeves and the bottom hems. With the project sample, I referenced the length of the hem by matching the spacing of the gingham squares. The pattern recommends hem lengths, but I referenced a visual length with the pattern print in mind.

