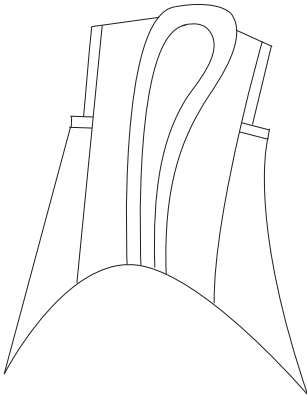


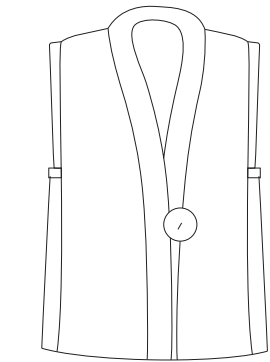
Make a Tabula Rasa Vest



A Tabula Rasa Vest is a great addition to your wardrobe and is quick and easy to make! Whether you don't have quite enough fabric for a complete jacket, think your bold print will be a bit too much as a jacket, or are a vest fanatic, you will love the TR Vest. These illustrations feature a Swing Side vest, but you can easily use a Straight or Flared Side from your core TRJ pattern.

You can also change up the front band or body of the vest with elements from other variation patterns for the TRJ. See our website Photo Gallery for inspiration of other styles to use with a TR Vest. Visit the archive of blog posts on our website to search for posts about sewing different vest styles. Here are a few links to get you started:

- ▶ <https://fitforartpatterns.com/2015/10/13/tabula-rasa-vests/>
- ▶ <https://fitforartpatterns.com/2017/05/02/batik-butik-vest/>
- ▶ <https://fitforartpatterns.com/2019/10/15/making-a-recycled-denim-vest/>
- ▶ <https://fitforartpatterns.com/2020/01/21/make-a-lined-tabula-rasa-vest/>



A vest side binding is attached to the upper edge of each side panel to bind the lower part of the armhole before inserting it into the body of the vest. Some wearers like to raise the upper edge of the side panel in order to reduce the underarm space. If you would like to try this, add no more than an inch to the top edge of your side panel pattern before cutting out the fabric.

For your first vest, we recommend you baste the side panel into the front and back to see if that placement will be comfortable for you before applying the side panel binding (in Step 3). Make adjustments as desired before proceeding.

You will need your instruction book for the core Tabula Rasa Jacket pattern handy. We will refer to it as the "TRJ Instructions" throughout these directions. All seam allowances are 5/8" unless otherwise indicated.

STEP 1. PREPARING TO SEW

You will need the Front, Back and Side pattern pieces for your core TRJ or Swing Variation.



Measure the width of the top edge of your Side pattern. Make a pattern for a Vest Side Binding that is a rectangle the measured width by 2½" deep. You will create the other armhole bindings during the construction process.

Cut one back, two fronts and two sides, as well as the band and two vest side bindings out of your fabric. As you cut and mark your vest pieces, be sure to mark the dots on each side of the Back where the middle HBL intersects the side seam and on the Sides. The dots indicate where the side panel will meet the back and the front darts.

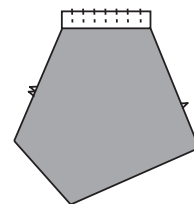
STEP 2. BEGIN CONSTRUCTION

Follow Steps 2 through 4 of the TRJ Instructions.

STEP 3. BIND SIDE PANEL

Pin and then stitch one long side of the vest side binding to the top of each side, right sides together. Press the vest side binding up away from the side panel. Press the remaining long raw edge under 5/8" or serge the raw edge.

Wrap the vest side binding around the seam allowance and against the inside of the side panel. Press into place. The binding will show on the garment. To secure the vest side binding, hand stitch the edge of the binding to the side panel or "stitch in the ditch" from the right side, catching the binding.



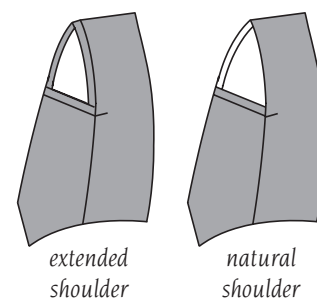
STEP 4. INSERT SIDE INTO BODY

To insert the side into the body of the vest, carefully pin the side to the front and back, matching notches and dots. The dots on the side panel will match up with the lowest dart in the front and the dot on the back. For the swing side, be careful not to stretch the fabric. Machine baste the side into place.

STEP 5. TEST FIT AND ADJUST

Try on the vest to observe the fit in the armhole. If you feel that the armhole is too wide or gapes, you can take in the side panel near its top edge to make it narrower. Once you are satisfied with the fit, stitch the side panel into place with a standard stitch length and then finish the seam allowances by your chosen method. Remember to make a note of any adjustments on your Side pattern or draft a new Vest Side pattern to use the next time you sew a vest.

While you have the vest on, look at the armhole to decide how you want to finish the binding. You have two choices. The armhole binding can sit on top of the shoulder, so that the seam allowance creates a slightly extended profile, or the binding can be turned to the inside along the shoulder line of the original jacket.



STEP 6. OPTIONAL LINING

If you are lining the vest, prepare and insert the lining before binding the armhole or attaching the band.

Cut one back, two fronts and two sides out of the lining fabric. Do not apply a vest side binding to the side panels. Instead, turn the top edge of each side panel under by 1/2" and press firmly. Assemble the vest lining as directed above.

Lay the assembled lining into the vest, wrong sides together. Pin and then baste the layers together along the neckline and center front and around the armholes.

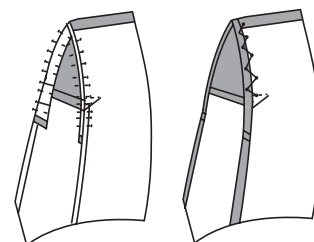
Hand stitch the top edge of the side panel lining to the vest side binding after attaching the armhole binding in Step 8.

STEP 7. PREPARE ARMHOLE BINDING

Measure the raw edge of the unfinished armhole from front to back and add 4 inches. Cut two bias strips the length you have calculated by 2½" wide. Turn under the short raw ends of the binding strips ½" and press in place. If you are choosing the "extended shoulder" finish, press under 5/8" along one of the long raw edges of the binding. If you plan to turn the binding to the inside, fold the binding in half along the long side, wrong sides together, and press.

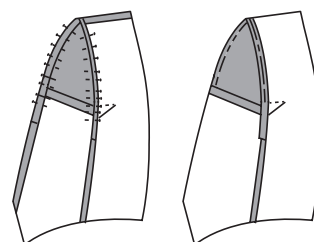
STEP 8. ATTACH ARMHOLE BINDING

To attach the extended shoulder style of binding, pin the remaining long raw edge of the binding to the raw edge of front and back along the shoulder opening, right sides together. Stitch in place. Press the binding out away from the vest, as you did with the vest side binding, then fold the binding around the seam to the inside of the vest. Press and hand or machine stitch into place. Tack the armhole binding to the vest side binding by hand or machine to secure the finishes.



extended shoulder

To attach the binding inside the basic shoulder line, pin and then sew the long raw edges of the folded binding along the raw edge of front and back shoulder opening, right sides together. Grade the seam allowances and clip curves if needed. Press the binding away from the vest and then press the entire binding strip to the inside of the vest. Machine topstitch or hand stitch the binding securely into place.



natural shoulder

STEP 9. HEM VEST

Try on the vest once more to assess the length. Mark the desired length.

- If using a Swing Side panel, it is best to finish the swing vest with a baby hem or serger rolled edge. Refer to the hemming instructions in Swing Variations for the Tabula Rasa Jacket.
- If using a Straight or Flared Side panel, refer to the hemming directions in Step 9 of the TRJ Instructions.
- If you are lining the vest, refer to Step 10 of the TRJ Instructions to hem the lining.

STEP 10. ATTACH BAND

If using the original kimono style band, finish constructing your vest according to Steps 11-12 of the original Tabula Rasa Jacket instructions. If using a bias or other band from Swing Variations or Band Variations for the TRJ, please consult the directions included with those patterns.

When constructing a vest made without a front band, such as a Shirt, Jean Jacket, or Rain or Shine Variation for the TRJ, the order for finishing the hems and fronts may be different. It may also affect the order and method of inserting a lining. Please consult the applicable variation pattern instructions.