

April's Hack: 40's Charm Tee



April's Hack is inspired by design details from a couple of 1940's dress patterns. The distinctive Y-shaped neckline is a riff on Advance XXXX and the faux-ler is a feature found on many dresses from the era. Enjoy 40's charm translated into a modern knit tee pattern!

You will need:

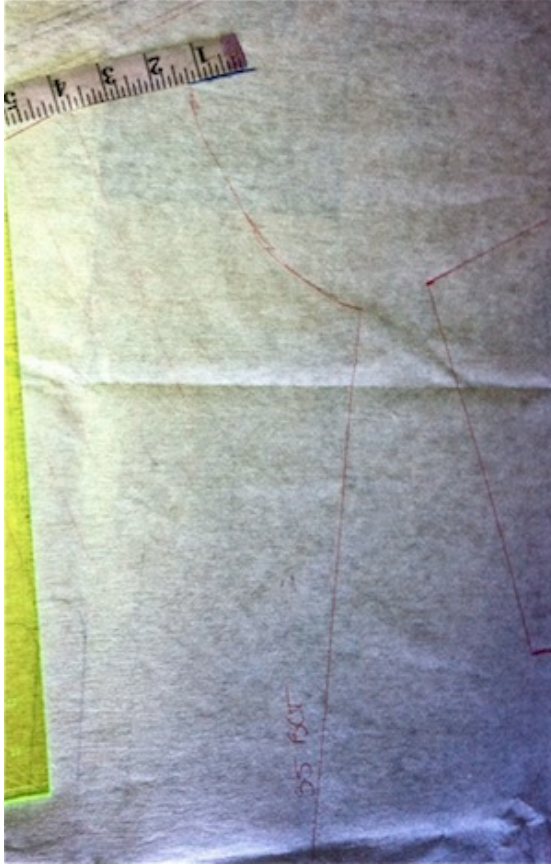
- *Blank Canvas Tee pattern- customized to your body shape (or your favorite TNT pattern)*
- *Semi-transparent drafting medium (polytrace or drafter's paper)*
- *Long ruler- I prefer a transparent 24" quilter's ruler*
- *Smaller ruler/flexible tape measure*

Before you begin- Trace off a fresh copy of both the front and the back pieces of your Blank Canvas Tee (or other TNT pattern- this draft is intended for cut-on sleeves)

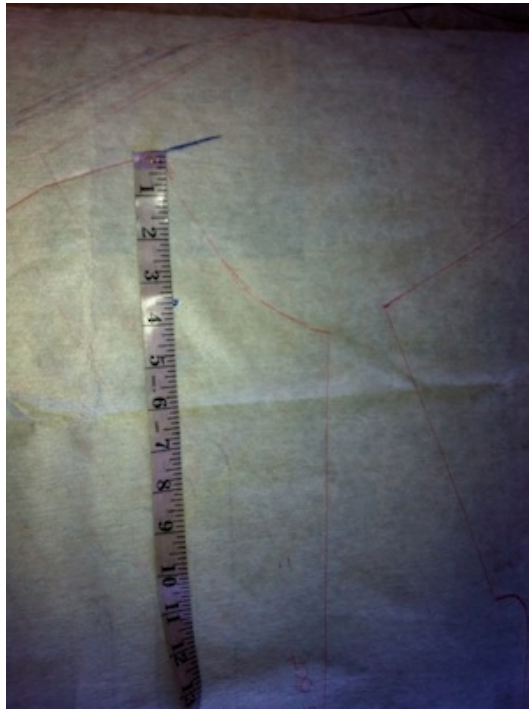
Back:

Raise the back neckline at the CB and the shoulder by $\frac{3}{4}$ " (18mm). This is a stylistic effect giving a more "closed in" vintage style neckline seen on many older patterns.

Front:



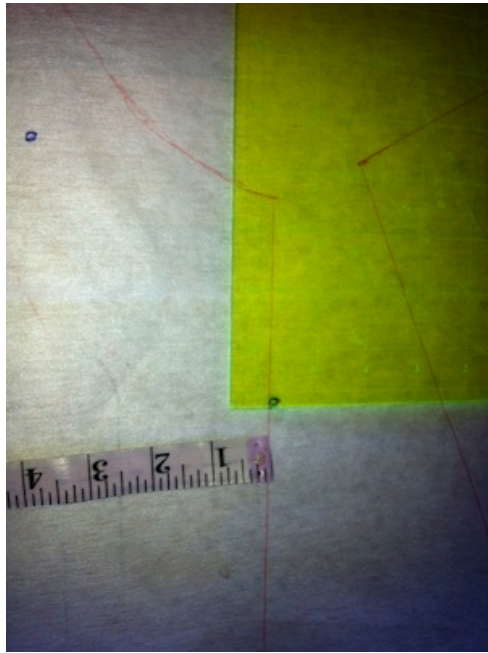
Extend the front shoulder line by $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.8mm) so the front shoulder seam will match up with the back shoulder seam. Just draw the line for now.



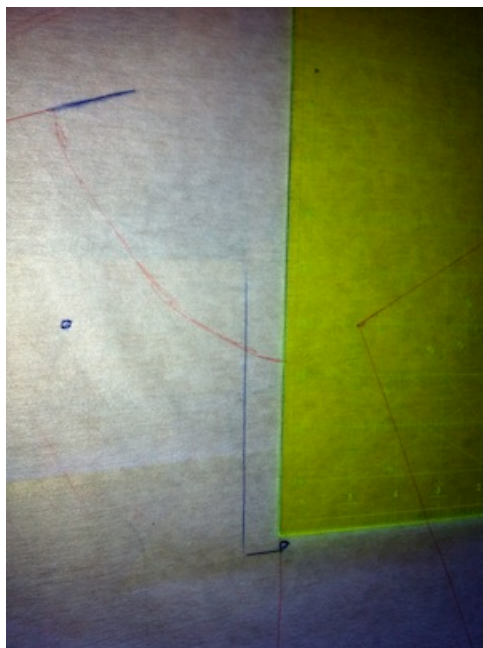
Measure straight down from the end of the original shoulder seam- 3.5” (8.75cm) and make a dot. This is Dot A. This will become an important pattern marking as well as a reference point.



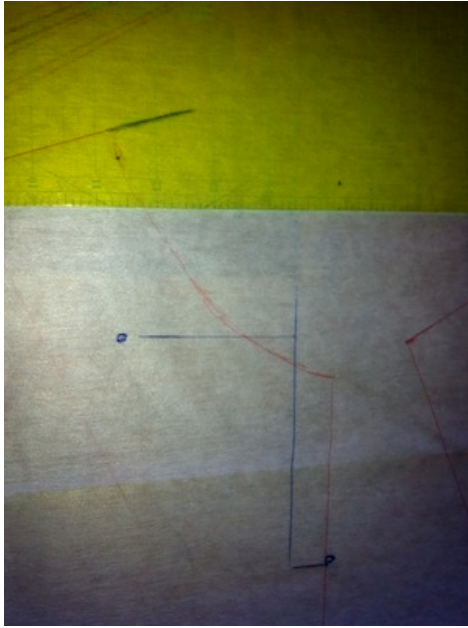
Measure straight down from the CF neckline- 3.5” (8.75cm) and mark another dot. This is Dot B.



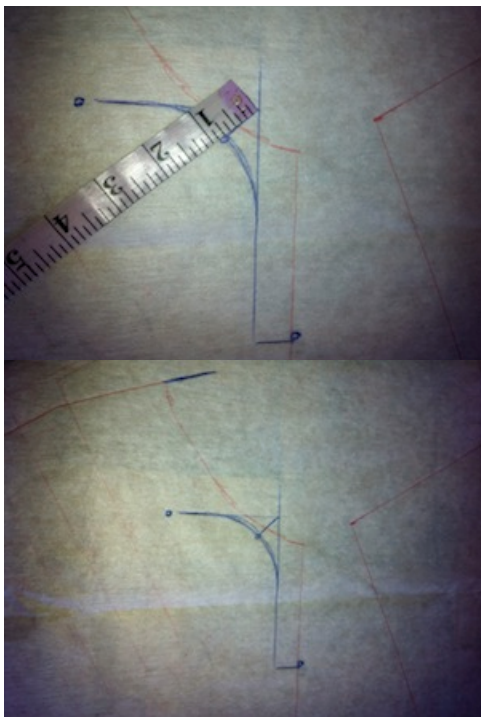
Square off a line from Dot B- $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.8cm) long. This is Line 1.



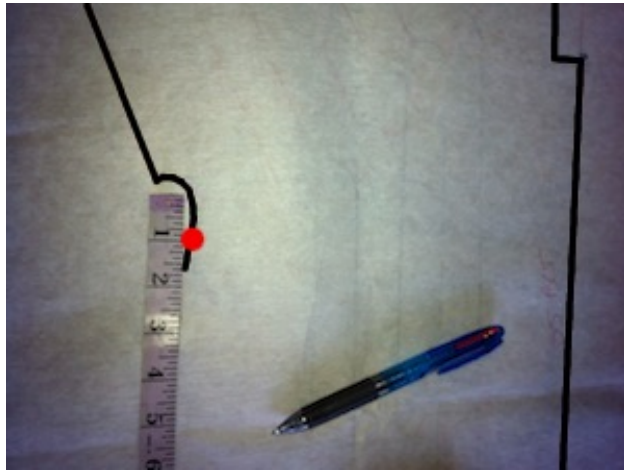
Square off another line from the end of the line you just drew. It should extend as far up the neckline as Dot A. This is Line 2.



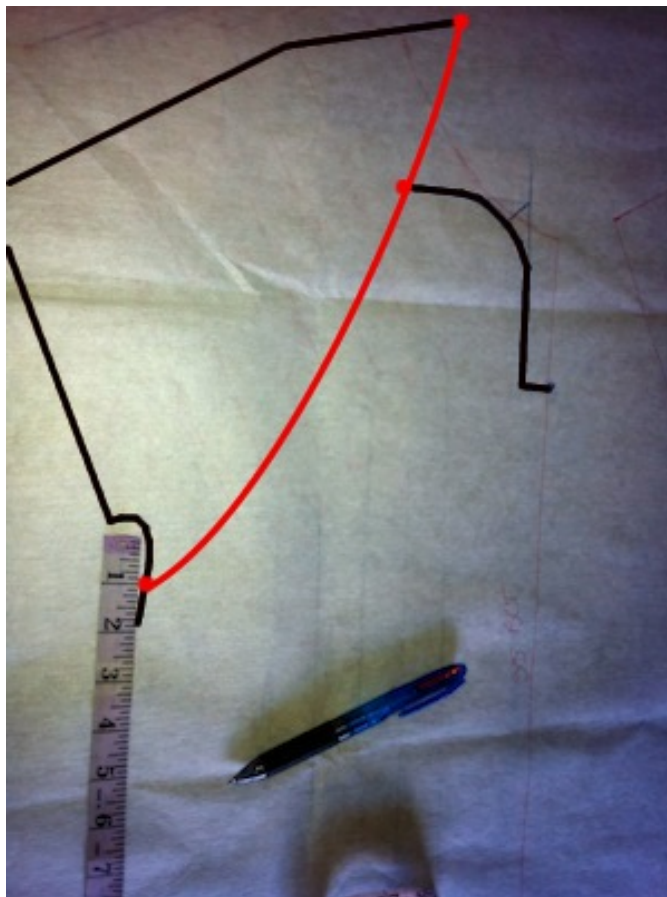
Square off a line from that line, to meet Dot A. This is Line 3.



Draw a curved line from Dot A, along Line 3 into Line 2. It may help to mark a line at a 45 degree angle to the intersection of Lines 2 and 3. Measure $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.8cm) along that line, and use that as a guide for drawing the curve.



Switch focus to the underarm area. Measure down the side seam approximately 1" and make a mark.



This part is somewhat artful and there's not really a right or wrong way to do it. You're determining the shape of the fauxler. Make sure to connect the dots- the underarm dot, Dot 1, and the end of your shoulder seam. The line does not need to be extremely curved, this shape is fine.

Do not obsess over this line. If it looks more or less like mine, you'll be fine.

Now it's time to make the actual pattern pieces. Get out a few fresh pieces of drafting medium.

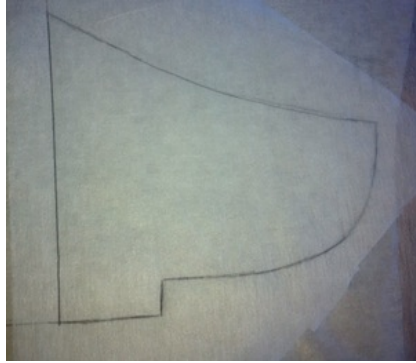


Lay one of the fresh pieces of tracing medium on top of the draft you just created. Trace the lower front section. Add seam allowances ($\frac{1}{4}$ " / 6mm recommended) on the fauxlro seam and on the neckline seam. The side seam already has a seam allowance. This will help you later- mark a little dot on the seamline at the neckline's inner corner. Label this piece Lower Front. Set this piece aside, leaving the original draft on the table.

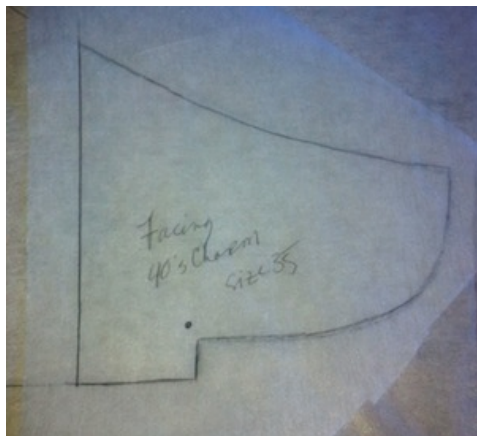
Repeat this step to make a pattern piece for the Upper Front section. Remember to add the seam allowance to the fauxlro seam and be sure to label all pieces. Do not forget to transfer Dot 1. This is very important.

Facing:

The facing is for the shaped front neckline only.



Lay a fresh piece of interfacing on top of the pattern piece you made for the Lower Front. Trace the front neckline area, about 2" down from the CF neckline and square it off to meet the fauxler seam. This shape is essential to create the distinctive neckline, nothing else works.



Make sure to label your facing and transfer the dot. The dot makes your sewing much simpler, be sure to transfer it.

Measure the neckline + fauxler seam on the pattern, front and back and cut a 1 1/2" strip that is that length + 1.2". That will be your neckband piece.

Measure sleeve openings and cut two strips this length and 1.5" wide. This is your sleeve binding.

Sewing Notes:

Transfer all dots. I am so not kidding.

- You will need a scrap of lightweight woven or non-woven (I prefer woven because it is an actual piece of fabric) fusible interfacing for the front facing piece. Also you will need two ½” (1.2cm) wide strips of fusible interfacing to stabilize the shoulder seams. If you skip this, your shoulder seams will ripple in a very intermediate manner.
- “Finish”: This is a triple stitch zig-zag or an overlocked/serged edge. This is not strictly necessary for a knit because the fabric does not ravel, but it is recommended for durability and for lending structure to the seam.
- Stitching: Use a “lightning bolt” stitch or a very narrow but long zig-zag stitch to sew the seams. 4 thread overlockers/sergers do not as a rule include a proper seaming stitch. A regular straight stitch will “pop” when stressed.
- For top-stitching, if desired, use a 3.0 long regular stitch. These don’t tend to have much stress on them so they don’t “pop.”

Use ballpoint needles for sewing all seams on knit fabric. Do not skip this or your pretty top will have runs or “ladders” along the seamline after a few washes. Most unsightly.

1. Stabilize the shoulder seams.
2. Stitch Upper Front piece Back at shoulder seams. Finish, press seam to back, topstitch along seam if desired.



3. Fold all binding pieces in half lengthwise. Press.
4. Stitch binding to fauxler seam edge/ back neck edge. Finish.
Don't press yet.



5. Stitch binding to sleeve edges. Finish. Press seam towards body of the garment.



6. Pick up Front Facing piece. Interface it.
7. Finish lower edge of front facing- overlock/serge, triple-stitch zig-zag, or turn the edge under and straight stitch it. Or leave it raw if you're that way...



8. Stitch front facing to Lower Front piece. Stop at the dot at the inner corner of the neckline with the needle down in the fabric, pick up the foot, turn, stitch across the CF, stop with the needle down in the second dot, pick up the foot, turn, stitch along the other side of the neckline.



9. Trim out the inner corners. The $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowances are narrow enough that they should curve smoothly when turned. However, if the seam looks ridged or bulky when you turn it, then do clip the curves as well.
10. Turn the facing to the wrong side of the fabric, making sure you turn it completely. Press. Under stitch if desired.



11. Use a few pins (or baste) to keep the facing flush against the Lower Front piece.





12. Align the top edge of the Lower Front piece with Dot 1. Pin. Pin all of Lower Front to Upper Front- right sides together with binding sandwiched in between them. (Don't worry, the binding will just be there anyway.)
13. Stitch the Upper Front to Lower Front along each fauxler seam. Finish. Press seam away from the CF and neckline. Top-stitch if desired.
14. Stitch side seams. Finish. Press.
15. Hem the bottom using your favorite method.

Enjoy!

