

We Dress Bleurette

High Fashion Cape – 1919

The latest style cape, which *Tante Jacqueline* says resembles a chemise, is meant to be made of satin or supple wool. Alternatives today might be rayon velvet, panné velvet, wool challis, or crepe-back satin—any fabric like these that would drape well. You will also need two suitable buttons, such as satin-covered (which were recommended) or buttons covered with the fabric you are using. (These are easy to make yourself with a kit, and have the advantage of looking timeless.) Two button-loops are made with ribbon.

Lined Shawl Collar:

Cut 2 on the fold, and with right sides together, stitch the two together along the straight sides, leaving the curved, neckline side open. Clip the corners. Turn the collar right side out and finger press the seam to push it out. Press flat. Baste the two raw edges together. Set aside while you make the cape.

Cape:

Make two tucks or narrow pleats in the back, one on either side of the fold-line marking the center back. The tucks fold over toward the center back. Pin or baste them. They hang loose, and are secured by the collar seam.

The original pattern says only to slit the fronts and hem them. The front of the cape is turned back to create a lapel effect, so if you wish to hide the wrong side of the fabric for this lapel, cut two facing strips of the cape fabric 1¼” by 6”. Prepare two strips of ribbon to use for button-loops (making sure they are big enough for your buttons to pass through) and insert them between the facing and the cape so that both ends of the ribbon are caught by the seam. Position them according to the drawing. Make sure the loop end is inside, the loose ends sticking out of the seam you are about to sew. With right sides together, sew the facings to the fronts of the cape, sewing over the two button loops, as well. Turn the facings to the inside of the cape, press, but do not stitch them yet, until the collar is added.

With the facings out of the way, pin the collar to the neck of the cape, matching “B” on the collar to “B” on the cape. Clip the collar and the neckline seam allowances, so they will both stretch. Stitch the collar to the cape.

Fold the facings toward the inside of the cape, pin the raw edges of the facings under at the neck, enclosing the first part of the collar seam (which is the part that will show when the lapel effect is made), and also turn under the raw edges of the long side of the facing, and stitch all of the edges down invisibly, to the inside of the cape.

Turn cape inside out and sew the side seams, which also creates the sleeves. Clip the curve of the underarm. Press the seam open or to the back.

Hem the bottom of the cape and the sleeves. Fold the fronts back to create the lapel effect, as shown in the picture. Steam them in position, but do not press them flat.

Sew on the two buttons to align with the button loops you have made, or if you are following the original plan, sew the loops and the buttons on now, as shown in the picture.