

SEWING MEN'S CLOTHING

The Manly Side of Cosplay

♪ Let's get down to business
And we'll talk some clothes
We'll discuss some garments that you likely know
You're the greatest bunch we've ever met
And you can bet before we're through
We'll make a~ well-dressed man~ out of you!

Who Are These People?



- Samaru
 - Cosplaying since 2010
 - Have won multiple awards over the years



- rajamitsu
 - Cosplaying since 2010, too
 - Crossplaying nearly as long
 - Makes Samaru's stuff look AWESOME

What This Panel Covers

- Differences Between Men's and Women's Clothing
- Challenges with Men's Clothing
- Men's Garment Overview
- Crossplay Tips

Men's and Women's Clothing Differences

- Shaping
- Seam Locations
- Cut
- Button Locations

Shaping

- Women's clothing makes extensive use of darts and seams to shape around the bust area. Men's clothing is simpler with flat shapes
- Darts are used to eliminate excess fabric to fit patterns around curved shapes

Seam Locations

- **MENS CLOTHING**

- Shirts: Back & Side seams
- Coats: Back, side-back, side front

- **WOMENS CLOTHING**

- Princess Seams
- Darts (front and back)
- Curved seams/Many Pieces
- Can expand on more types of seams here

Men's vs. Womens Shirt/Blouse



Button Locations

- Traditionally men's clothing buttons are on the right and women's buttons are on the left.
- WHY?
- Tradition states this is because most people are right handed and men would typically dress themselves while women would have others assist them in dressing (at least those that could afford fancy clothes!)

Challenges with Men's Clothing

- **Lack of patterns**

- Most of the major companies have very few men's patterns available (costume pattern selections getting better, though)
- Look to Burda or Independent companies for more variety
- Beware historical patterns!
- There are also a wide variety of out of print patterns available from places like eBay and Etsy but you may end up paying considerably more per pattern.

Challenges with Men's Clothing

- **Lack of Reference Materials**
 - Most sewing literature is geared towards women's clothing
 - There are men's materials available but some of it is out of print

Challenges with Men's Clothing

- **Dressforms**

- Most men's clothing forms are fixed size and intended for professional use (read: expensive)
- Duct tape doubles are very useful as forms for men's clothing
- There is a company in the UK still making adjustable dressforms for men. You may be able to find them in online stores as the Dritz Mr. Ardis form

Men's Clothing Materials

- There are three major materials used in constructing clothing: fashion fabric, interfacing and interlining, and lining
- The fashion fabric is the outer layer of the garment. It is the part of the garment that everyone can see.
- The interfacing is used to provide body and structure to the various parts of the garment.
- The interlining can be used to add body and warmth to the fashion fabric. It can also be used to make a sheer fabric less transparent.
- The lining layer covers the inside of the garment and allows the garment to slide easily over the other layers of clothing.

Men's Clothing Fashion Fabrics

- **Cotton Shirting**

- Lightweight cotton fabric used for dress shirts

- **Cotton Twill**

- Heavier weight fabric useful for dress pants and vests

- **Wool**

- Heavy fabric required for traditional tailoring methods

- **Wool Blend**

- Wool blended with another fabric to reduce cost.

BASIC MEN'S GARMENTS

An Overview

Main Types of Men's Garments

- Dress Shirt
- Vest
- Suit Jacket/Overcoat
- Pants

Dress Shirts

- Dress shirts are simple garments that usually have a button front, collar, and cuffs
- Typical fabric is cotton shirting of some sort. Fabric is usually lightweight.
- Avoid bottomweights

Dress Shirts

- Sleeves are one-piece and are often flat sewn along with the side seam of the shirt
- Collar, cuffs, and front are **interfaced** to provide stiffness. One of my favorites is **Pellon ShirTailor** for cuffs and collars.
- Good shirt patterns that I have used include Simplicity 4760 and 9469 (which is out of print but can be found on eBay or Etsy)

Example Dress Shirt



Vests

- Vests are designed to go between the dress shirt and jacket.
- Historically, vests were also worn as the outer layer with just a dress shirt.
- Vests are made with a lightweight wool or medium weight twill.

Vests

- Modern vests have backs made of lining fabrics while historical vests have backs made of fashion fabric
- I have used Vogue 8048 for vests although it uses fancy double welt pockets that can be confusing. You can leave them off if you want!

Example Vest



Pants

- Pants are normally made of a bottomweight poplin or cotton twill for more casual pants or wool for pants intended to go with a suit jacket
- Men's pants are made much the same as women's pants. The main differences are the addition of back pockets and the cut of the pants.
- Cuffs may be added to the bottom of the legs depending on the look desired.
- I like Simplicity 9469. I have friends who like Burda's pants patterns as well.

Example Pants



Jackets/Overcoats

- Perhaps the most complicated type of men's garment to create.
- Suits vary in complexity and cost from simple fused coats made from synthetic fabrics to traditionally tailored wool suits
- Burda has a wide variety of men's suit patterns. I have used 7046. McCalls also had a sports coat pattern that you may be able to find from eBay or Etsy

Coat Tailoring Methods

- **Traditional**

- Uses wool fabric with a variety of different interfacings and paddings to create the shape of the coat
- This method requires a large amount of hand stitching
- Interfacing materials used include hair canvas, and french fabrics
- This method is the most expensive
- **VOCABULARY NOTE: hair canvas, “french fabrics”**

Coat Tailoring Methods

- **Machine**

- This method uses less expensive and easier to sew in interfacings
- Machine stitching is substituted for hand stitching during some of the steps

Coat Tailoring Methods

- **Fused**
 - Jacket is interfaced using iron in fusible interfacings
 - Simplest and quickest of the three methods

Coat Fabrics

- **Wool Suiting**

- Traditional fabric of choice for jackets and coats
- Takes folds crisply and natural stretch and shrinkage of fabric is used to fit the various parts together
- Fabric usually runs >\$20 per yard with over \$90 per yard for the most expensive wools
- **Must be dry cleaned!**

Coat Fabrics

- **Wool Blends**

- Blend of wool and a synthetic fabric (usually polyester)

- **Linen**

- Good warm weather or tropical weight suit material

- **Synthetics**

- Usually made of polyester, polyester/rayon, or polyester/rayon/spandex blend
- Harder to work with
- Does not breathe! (you WILL sweat!)

Jacket Features



- **Lapel**

- The lapel is usually folded over in the front to create the distinctive suit look
- Lapels are either formed from fusing interfacing to the facing fabric to stiffen the fabric and create the fold or by padstitching sew-in interfacing to the top fabric and using twill tape to define the fold
- Lapels should not be a hard crease but more of a gentle fold

Jacket Features



- **Pockets**

- The breast pocket is usually a single welt pocket
- Welt pockets are made up of an opening that is bound by strips of fabric.
- Waist pockets are usually single welt pockets with flaps.

Jacket Features



- **Collar**

- An interfaced collar is made by fusing interfacing to the undercollar to provide stiffness.
- The undercollar is then attached to the fashion fabric while the overcollar is attached to the lining
- Traditional collars use a special collar fabric which is sewn to the interfacing to create the undercollar

Jacket Features



- **Sleeves**

- Sleeves are usually made up of two-pieces and are eased into the armhole.
- Easing gathers a larger amount of fabric into a smaller opening.
- Modern jackets usually do not have sleeve cuffs
- Historical jackets may have cuffs and vents

Jacket Example



Other Things of Note

- Bodysuits
 - Form-fitting, typically seen on superheroes
 - Usually made of spandex or other stretchy materials
 - Wear. A. Dance. Belt. Underneath.
- Hats
 - ...nothing really much to say here. Raj just really likes hats and thinks more people should wear them.
 - And vests.
 - Make this happen, people.

FEMALE TO MALE CROSSPLAY TIPS

Crossplay in General

- Crossplay refers to cosplaying a character of the opposite physical sex from yourself.
- The process may involve binding the chest to flatten the chest and create a male figure line for females
- Remember to measure yourself for garments **AFTER** you have completed the binding process!

Binding Options

- Sports bra
- Chest binders/compression shirts
- Wide apparel elastic

- **DO NOT USE:**
 - ACE bandages

 - Tape (Such as duct tape, packing tape, pretty much anything that's NOT stretchy medical tape)

 - Any non-stretchy fabric

Alterations

- Shoulder Pads-May be necessary to alter shoulder appearance to make you appear more masculine
- Pattern Alterations-May need to loosen the fit to hide curves and create a more masculine appearance. Don't forget seam locations may need to be moved as well if altering female patterns!
- Be sure your buttons are on the correct side!

Other Tips

- **Posture**

- Keep feet squarely planted and apart
- Shoulders back, hips forward

- **Open Shirt Binding**

- Used to create a semi-bare chest.
- Do a Google search or look in the Crossplay section of the Cosplay.com forums for tutorials.



Useful Men's Fashion Resources

- **Classic Tailoring Techniques**
 - Geared toward traditional methods of constructing a men's suit.
 - If you want to make a truly tailored suit this is your book!
- **Tailoring: The Classic Guide to Sewing the Perfect Jacket**
 - Step by step process of sewing a suit jacket. Uses women's suit as an example but useful for men's as well

General Resources

- **Sanddiverstudios.com**
- Find a copy of all the panels I have presented on the site along with a sew-a-long blog where I am posting costumes as I work on them.

Questions/Comments?

SamaruCosplay on
Facebook

- In-Progress Pictures

SanddiverStudios.com

- In-Progress Pictures
- Costume Summaries
- Panel PDF Files
- Panel Feedback Form