

You will need the following supplies to create a single tabard or t-tunic that hangs approximately to mid-thigh on a person 'about' 6' tall.

- 2 1/2 yards material
- 1 Spool of thread that matches material color
- Sewing Machine (*Hint: If working with heavy fabrics such as denim, corduroy, vinyl or fur, you might wish to purchase a pack of needles for your machine rated for leather or denim.*)
- Scissors
- An Iron
- Fabric pencil or 'Map color' pencil (to trace pattern onto cloth)
- *Measuring tape (not strictly necessary, but recommended.)
- *Glass head push pins (not strictly necessary, but recommended.)

Substitutions can be made at your discretion, but for purposes of this 'how-to', we will assume you have the above materials and are making a very basic tabard with no sleeves. If you are making a t-tunic, follow the additional directions as noted to get that result. At the end of this document you will find some diagrams to assist you should you wish to add sleeves, shoulder rolls, or hanging 'arm flaps' and ideas for more elaborate tabards. This design can easily be adapted to create almost any style of period shirt, company tabard, or most any other torso garb.

First we'll go over the basic difference between a tabard and a t-tunic. A tabard is much like a thin poncho. It is intended to be worn over another garment or armor and serves to be an easy means of showing company or household membership without resorting to more elaborate garb. To the best of my knowledge, a tabard is the most basic element of 'period garb'. They are very simple to make and, at their most basic form can be as simple as a beach-towel sized piece of fabric with a hole torn in it for your head. I am, however, hoping this 'how-to' will inspire you to greater artistic results, and I have seen tabards that were so elaborate as to draw attention from any garb that might be worn under them!

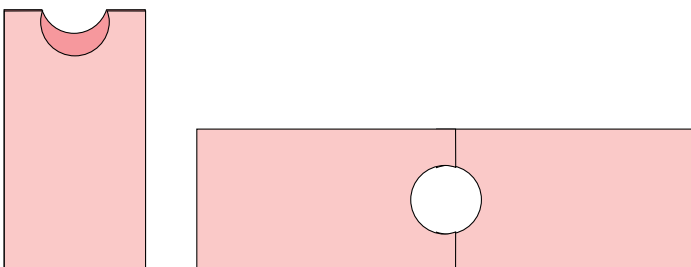
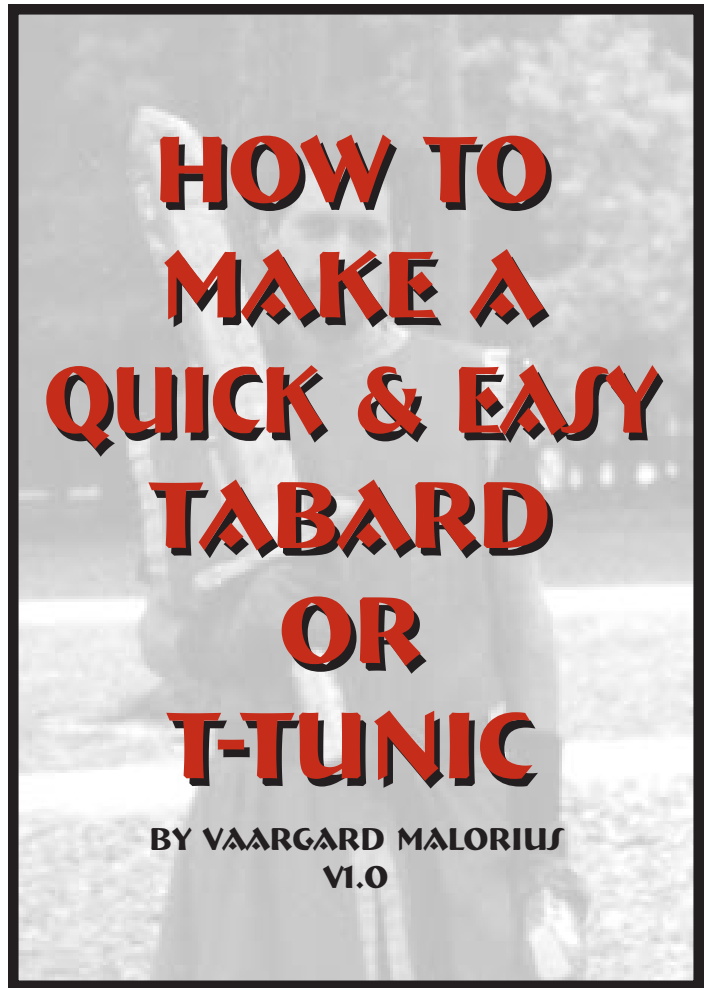


Figure 1: Basic tabard.



A t-tunic is not much more complicated, but the difference is that a t-tunic generally is sewn together at the sides, and has sleeves. When finished it forms a vague 'T', much like a conventional tee shirt.

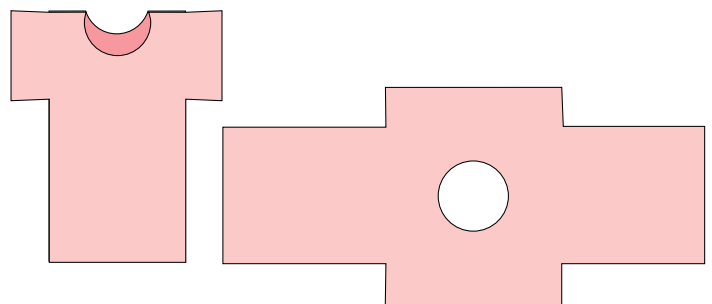


Figure 2: Basic t-tunic (shown at the right prior to sewing sides and sleeves and sides together).

Neither form has a distinct advantage over the other save that the tabard is a bit easier to put on and take off. Decide which design most suits your personal tastes and move on to the 'how-to' part of this guide!

BASIC TABARD

- 1) Measure the distance between your left shoulder to your right shoulder. Add 1" to that measurement.
- 2) Cut 1/2 yard of fabric from the 2 1/2 yards you have. This will leave you with a 2 yard piece and a 1/2 yard piece. (If you have 2 1-yard lengths of fabric, you may sew them together to get a 2 yard piece.)
- 3) Set the 1/2 yard piece aside. We will be using that later for the neck facing.
- 4) Unfold the 2 yard piece. Cut it lengthwise the width that you measured in step one. When finished you should have a 2 yard long strip of cloth the width of your shoulders plus 1".
- 5) Fold the long edge back about 1/2" and sew the length of the rectangle to form a hem.
- 6) Repeat step 5 on the remaining three edges of the rectangle. Do the long edges first, then the short edges. When you are done, you should have a rectangle that is hemmed on all four sides.

*The next step will be sewing a head hole into your tabard. It involves the use of a **facing** which is a very counter-intuitive procedure. You may wish to practice this on a piece of scrap fabric before trying it on your tabard. While cutting a head-sized hole and hemming it may seem a simpler alternative, I beg you to try using a facing. The result you will achieve will be sturdier, much more appealing, and most importantly-easier.*

- 7) Measure the circumference around your head. Measure at the level of the tip of your nose and both ears to make sure you have adequate room to poke your head through the finished hole. (For comparison, almost every adult will have a 24"-26" measurement here).
- 8) Get the 1/2 yard piece of fabric you set aside. Cut off a piece about 18" square. Using a fabric pencil, draw a circle onto the center of the fabric the same size as (or slightly larger than) the measurement in step 7. You should now have a roughly square piece of fabric about 18" across with a circle drawn on the middle of it. This is your **facing**. (Fig.3) (If you are feeling adventurous or if you have a little more sewing experience, you might want to try an alternate neckline shape such as those in Fig. 4).
- 9) Pin the facing on the *good* side of the hemmed rectangle about 2" off center in the long direction. (The same side you want showing when finished). (Fig.3)



A basic red and black parti-colored tabard.

- 10) Sew along the circle drawn onto the square. After this step, you should have a Big hemmed rectangle with a smaller rectangle sewn to the middle of it with a circle of stitching. (Fig. 3)
- 12) Carefully cut out both the facing and tabard fabric inside of the stitched circle made when you sewed the facing to the good side of the tabard. (Fig.3) *If it looks horribly wrong at this stage, and appears as if you have a loose collar of fabric around a jagged neck hole, relax! You are doing it right!*
- 13) Push the loose edges of the facing into the hole made by cutting the center out. (Fig.3)
- 14) Iron the facing flat and pin into place on the wrong side of the tabard. (Fig.3)
- 15) Flip the tabard back over and try it on for size. If the neck hole is too small, unpin the facing and sew another larger circle around the previous one. Repeat steps 13-15 until you are satisfied with the neckline.
- 16) Stitch the facing into place about 1/2" from the hemmed edge of the neckline formed when you turned the facing. Use a standard stitch or, if your machine is capable of it and you so desire, feel free to use a decorative stitch. (Fig.3)
- 17) Trim off the excess of the facing. (Fig.3)
- 18) You have now finished your tabard! Belt it on and go fight the good fight in your brand new garb!

SHORT SLEEVED T-TUNIC

- 1) Measure the distance between your left shoulder to your right shoulder. Add 16" to that measurement.
- 2) Cut 1/2 yard of fabric from the 2 1/2 yards you have. This will leave you with a 2 yard piece and a 1/2 yard piece. (If you have 2 1-yard lengths of fabric, you may sew them together to get a 2 yard piece.)
- 3) Set the 1/2 yard piece aside. We will be using that later for the neck facing.
- 4) Unfold the 2 yard piece. Cut it lengthwise the width that you measured in step one. When finished you should have a 2 yard long strip of cloth the width of your shoulders plus 16". If your fabric is shorter than this measurement, do not worry overly much. A shorter fabric will just resort in shorter sleeves.
- 5) Fold your rectangle in half. With the fold on top, measure down 10". Mark a line 8" long (or 1/2 of whatever fabric is excess of your shoulder measurement) with a fabric pencil or map color. (Fig. 11)
- 6) Cut along the line & then down away from the folded edge. (Fig. 11)
- 6) Repeat step 4 and 5 on the opposite side of the folded cloth. (Fig. 11)
- 7) When finished, you should have a shape that greatly resembles that on the right side of Fig. 2 without a hole for the neck. (Fig. 11)
- 8) Hem the outside edge of both sleeves. (A on Fig. 11)
- 9) Measure the circumference around your head. Measure at the level of the tip of your nose and both ears to make sure you have adequate room to



Some very elaborate t-tunics with extensive applique work.

- poke your head through the finished hole. (For comparison, almost every adult will have a 24"-26" measurement here).
- 10) Get the 1/2 yard piece of fabric you set aside. Cut off a piece about 18" square. Using a fabric pencil, draw a circle onto the center of the fabric the same size as (or slightly larger than) the measurement in step 7. You should now have a roughly square piece of fabric about 18" across with a circle drawn on the middle of it. This is your **facing**. (Fig.3) (If you are feeling adventurous or if you have a little more sewing experience, you might want to try an alternate neckline shape such as those in Fig. 4).
 - 11) Pin the facing on the *good* side of the t-tunic about 2" off center in the long direction. (The same side you want showing when finished). (Fig.3)
 - 12) Sew along the circle drawn onto the square. After this step, you should have a Big hemmed rectangle with a smaller rectangle sewn to the middle of it with a circle of stitching. (Fig. 3)
 - 13) Carefully cut out both the facing and t-tunic fabric inside of the stitched circle made when you sewed the facing to the good side of the t-tunic. (Fig.3)
If it looks horribly wrong at this stage, and appears as if you have a loose collar of fabric around a jagged neck hole, relax! You are doing it right!
 - 14) Push the loose edges of the facing into the hole made by cutting the center out. (Fig.3)
 - 15) Iron the facing flat and pin into place on the wrong side of the t-tunic. (Fig.3)
 - 16) Flip the t-tunic back over and try it on for size. If the neck hole is too small, unpin the facing and sew another larger circle around the previous one. Repeat steps 13-15 until you are satisfied with the neckline.
 - 17) Stitch the facing into place about 1/2" from the hemmed edge of the neckline formed when you turned the facing. Use a standard stitch or, if your machine is capable of it and you so desire, feel free to use a decorative stitch. (Fig.3)
 - 18) Trim off the excess of the facing. (Fig.3)
 - 19) Turn the t-tunic wrong side out and pin at the base of the sleeves and along both sides.
 - 20) Stitch along the bottom of the sleeves and down both sides. (Similar to Fig. 9)
 - 21) Turn and hem the bottom edge. (Will be formed by edges marked B on Fig. 11)
 - 22) Turn t-tunic right side out and try it on for size. You have just finished your t-tunic!

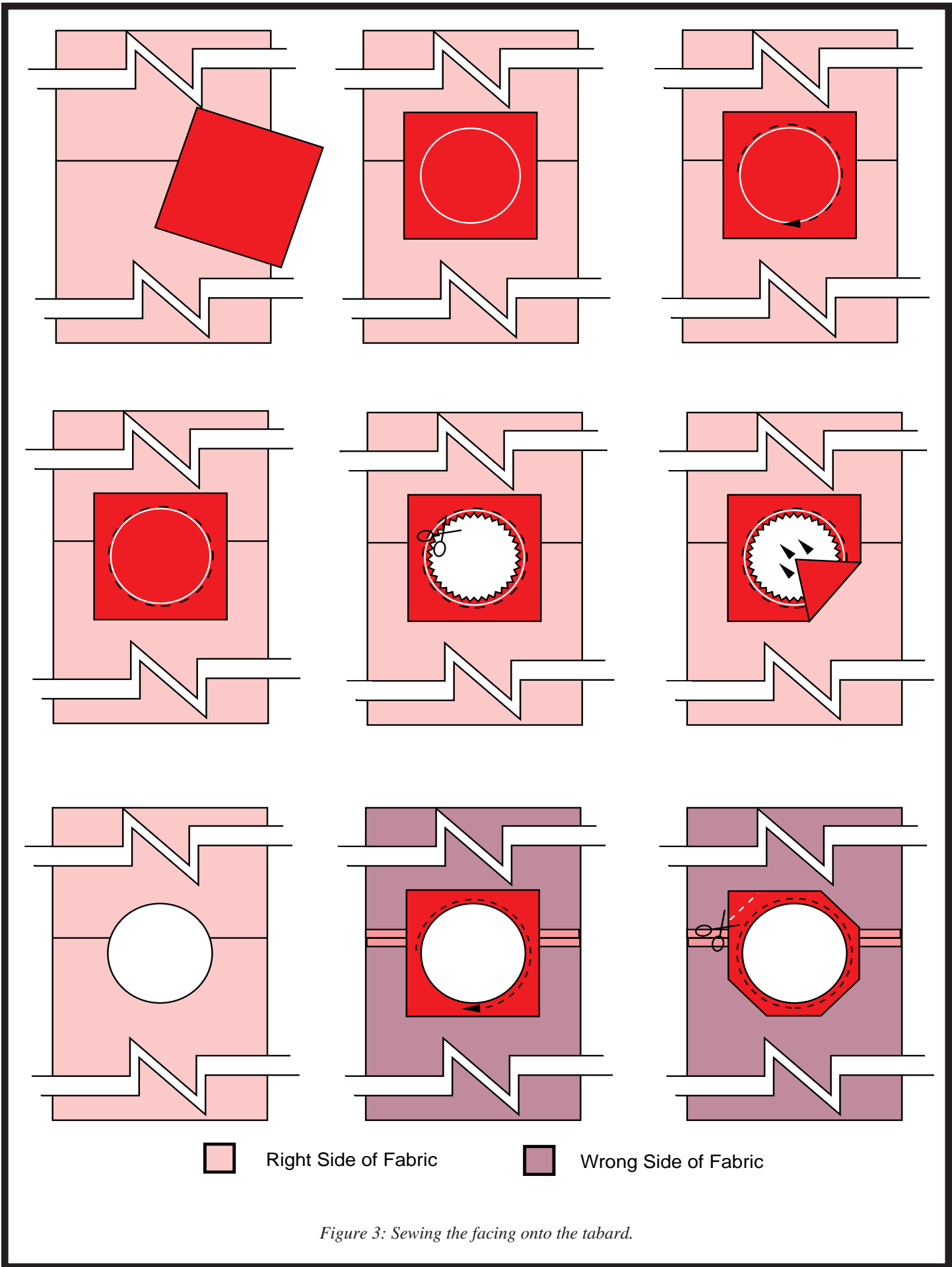


Figure 3: Sewing the facing onto the tabard.

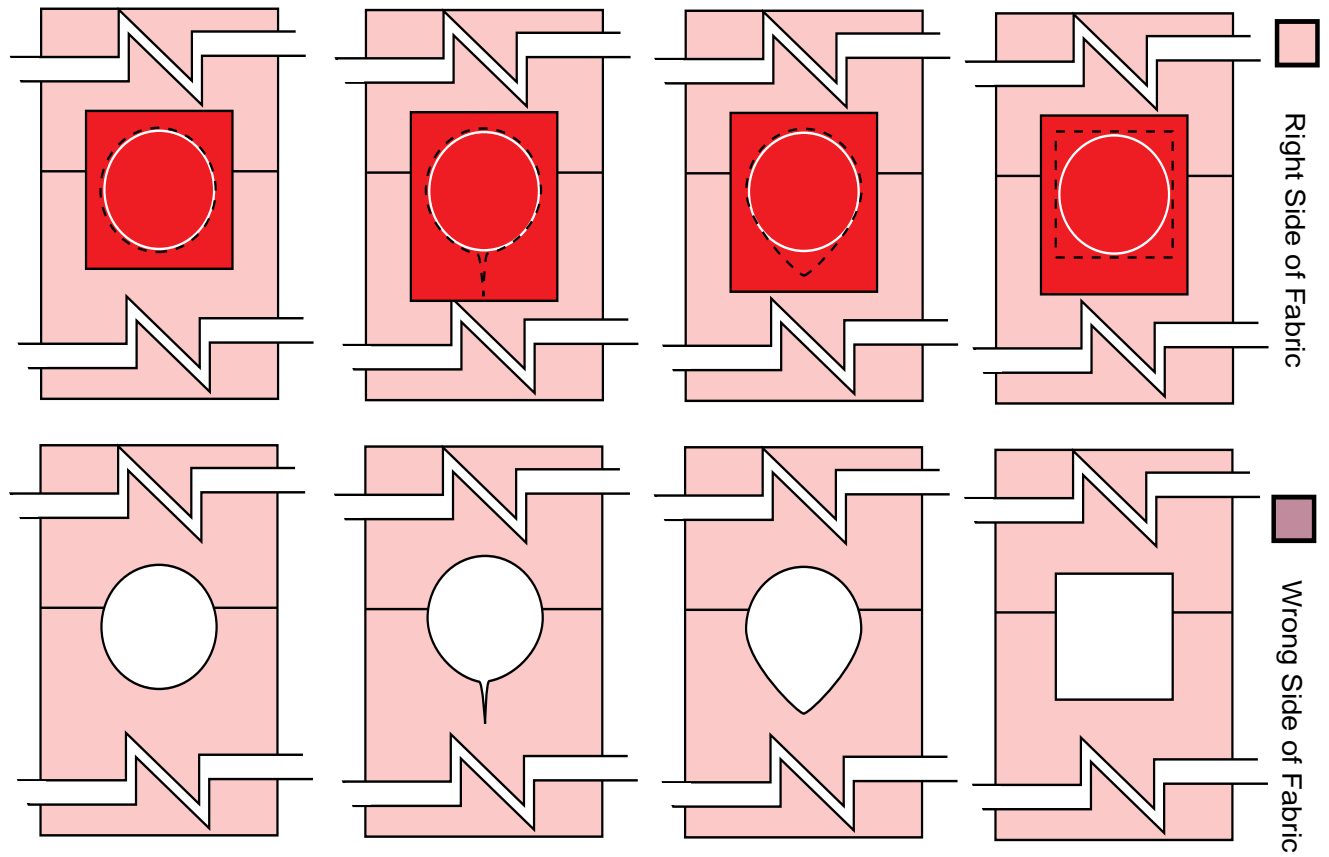


Figure 4: Alternate necklines that can be easily achieved by slightly modifying the facing.

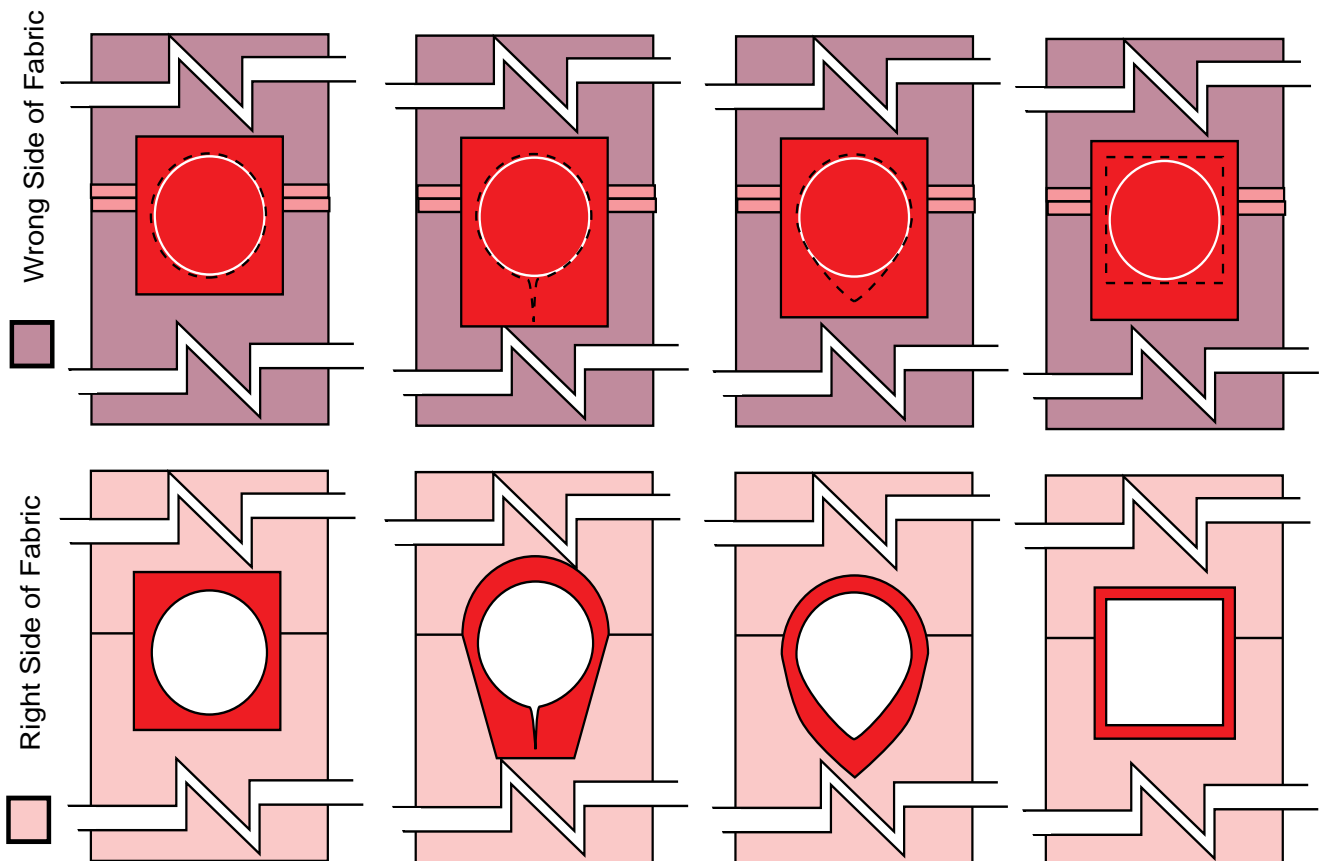


Figure 5: Alternate necklines that can be achieved by sewing facings to the WRONG side of a tabard.

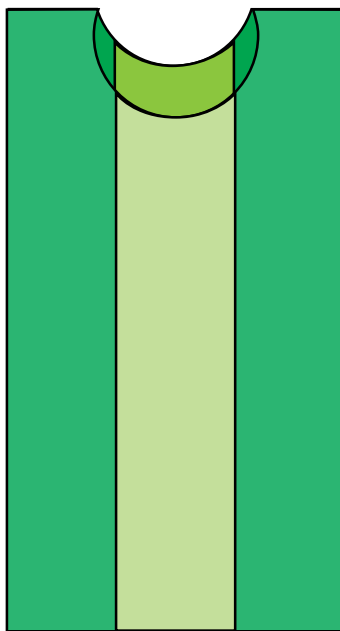
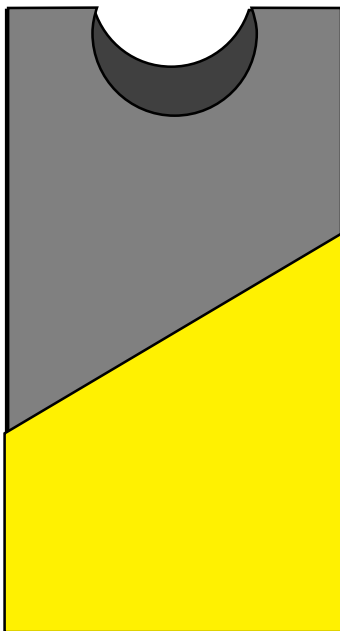
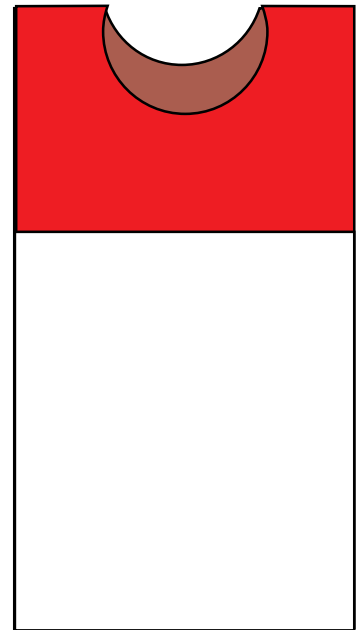
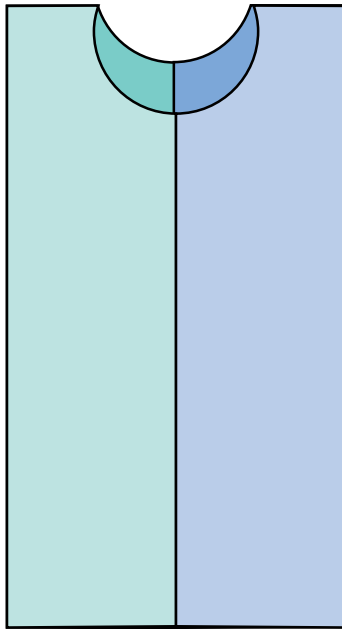
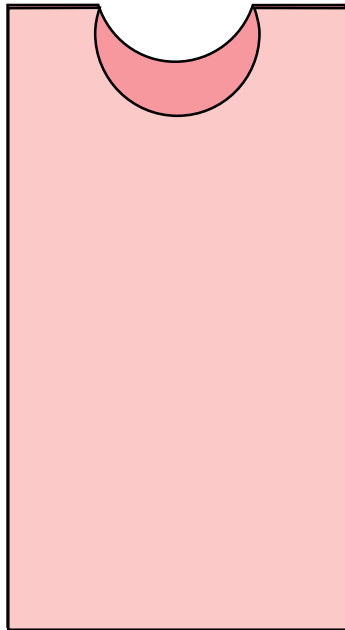


Figure 6: The finished single-color tabard should look like the one on the upper left. The remaining examples should give you some ideas for the results that can be achieved by combining two or more fabrics when making your tabards. Multicolored/multifabric designs are really no more difficult to make than single color designs and are generally more striking than their single colored counterparts. Just sew the fabrics together, trim to the rectangular size you need, hem , and follow the instructions for making a single colored tabard!

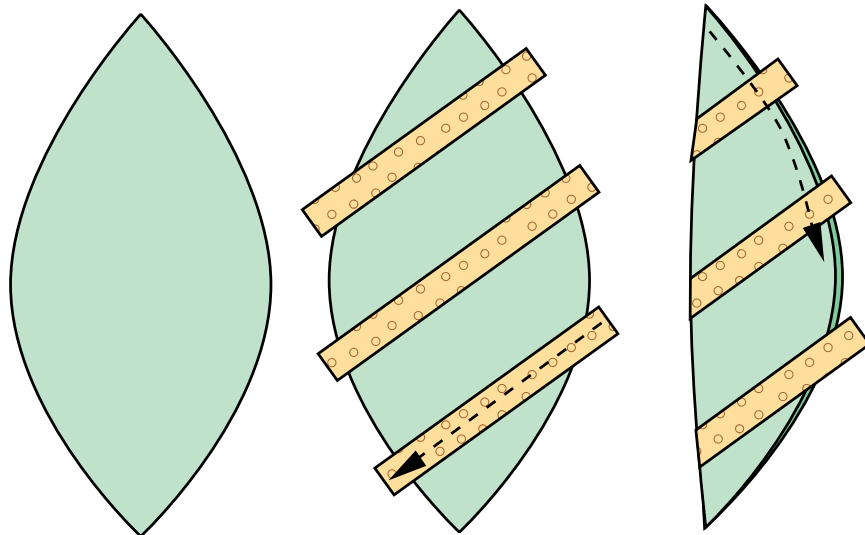


Figure 7: Sewing a 'shoulder roll'..

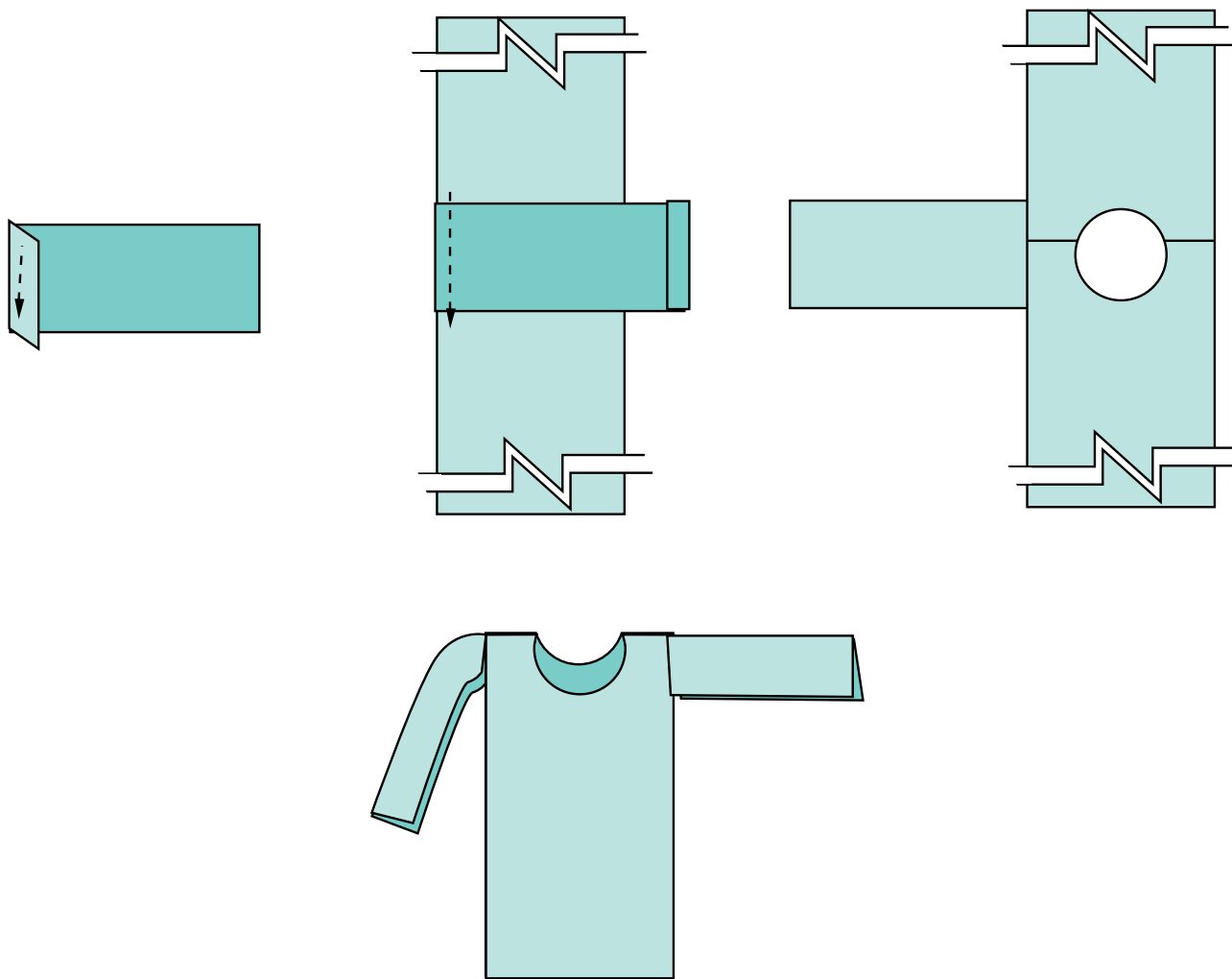


Figure 8: Adding 'arm flaps' to a basic tabard. May be worn free-hanging or with tie closures for flaps.

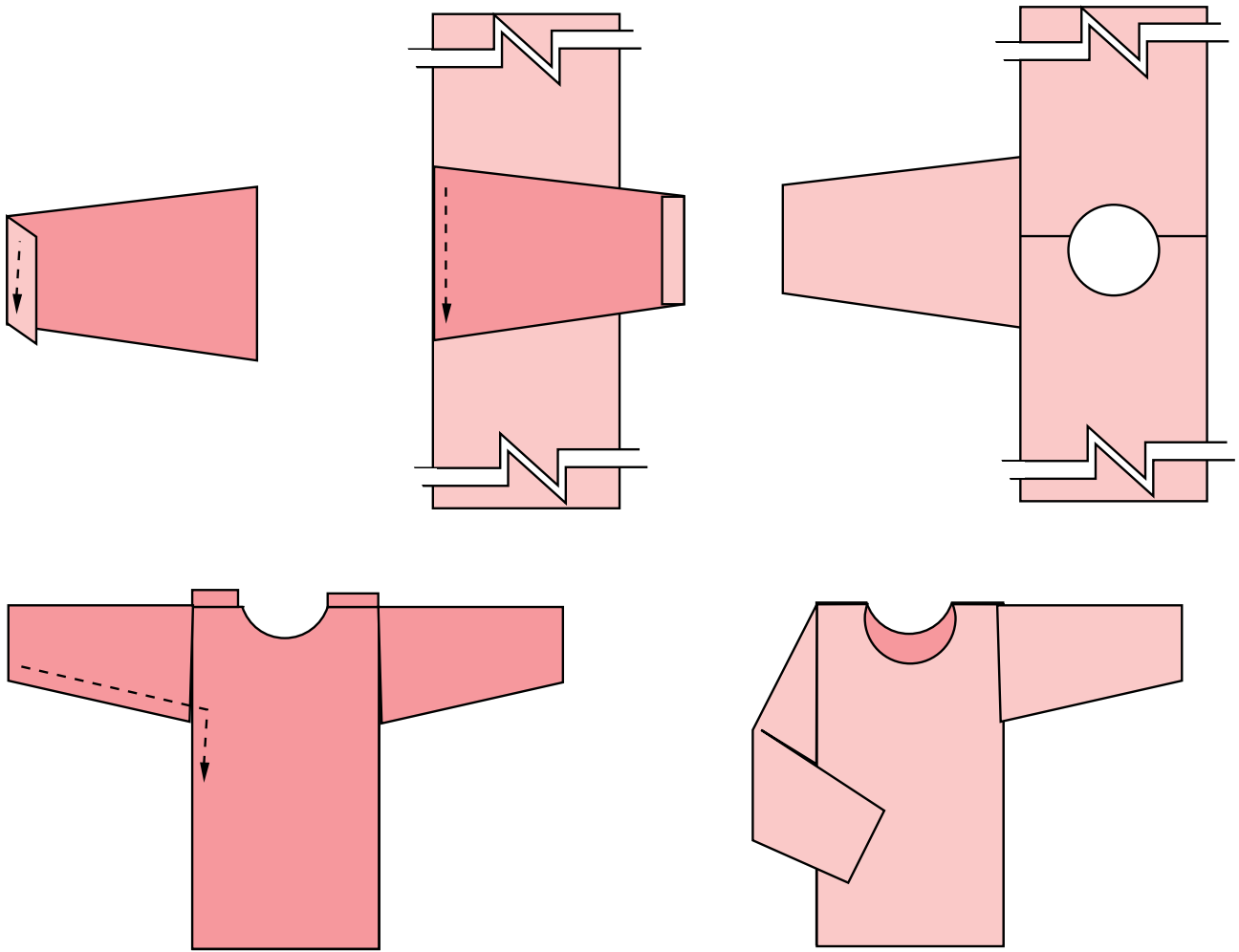


Figure 9: Adding sleeves to a basic tabard. This differs from a shirt in that the sides are usually not attached much past the armpits.

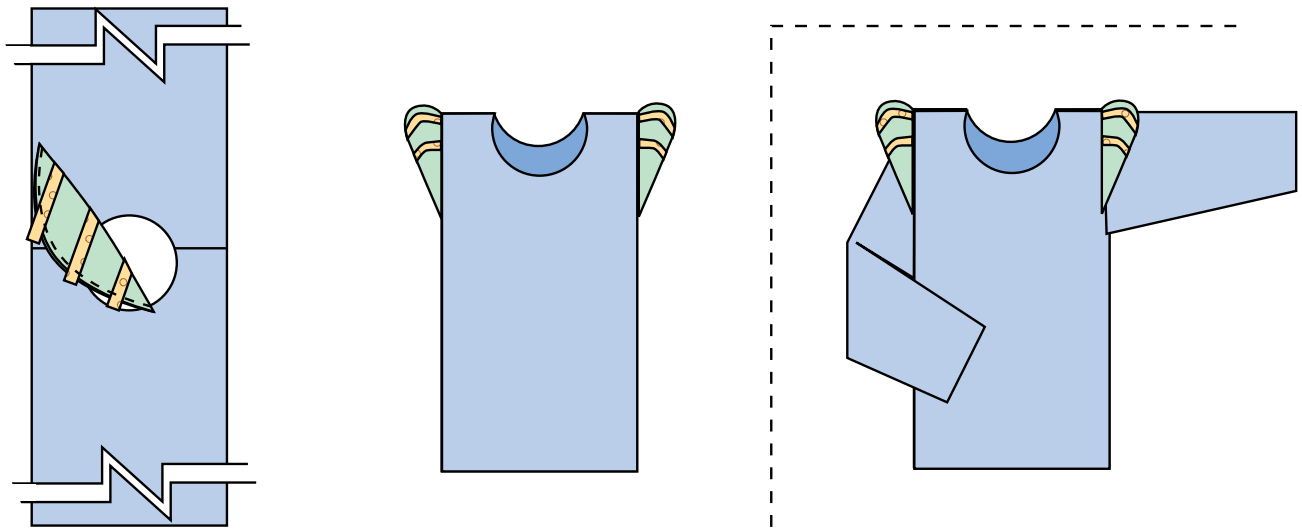


Figure 10: Adding shoulder rolls to a basic tabard. The picture on the right should give you an idea of what a tabard would look like with **both** shoulder rolls and sleeves.

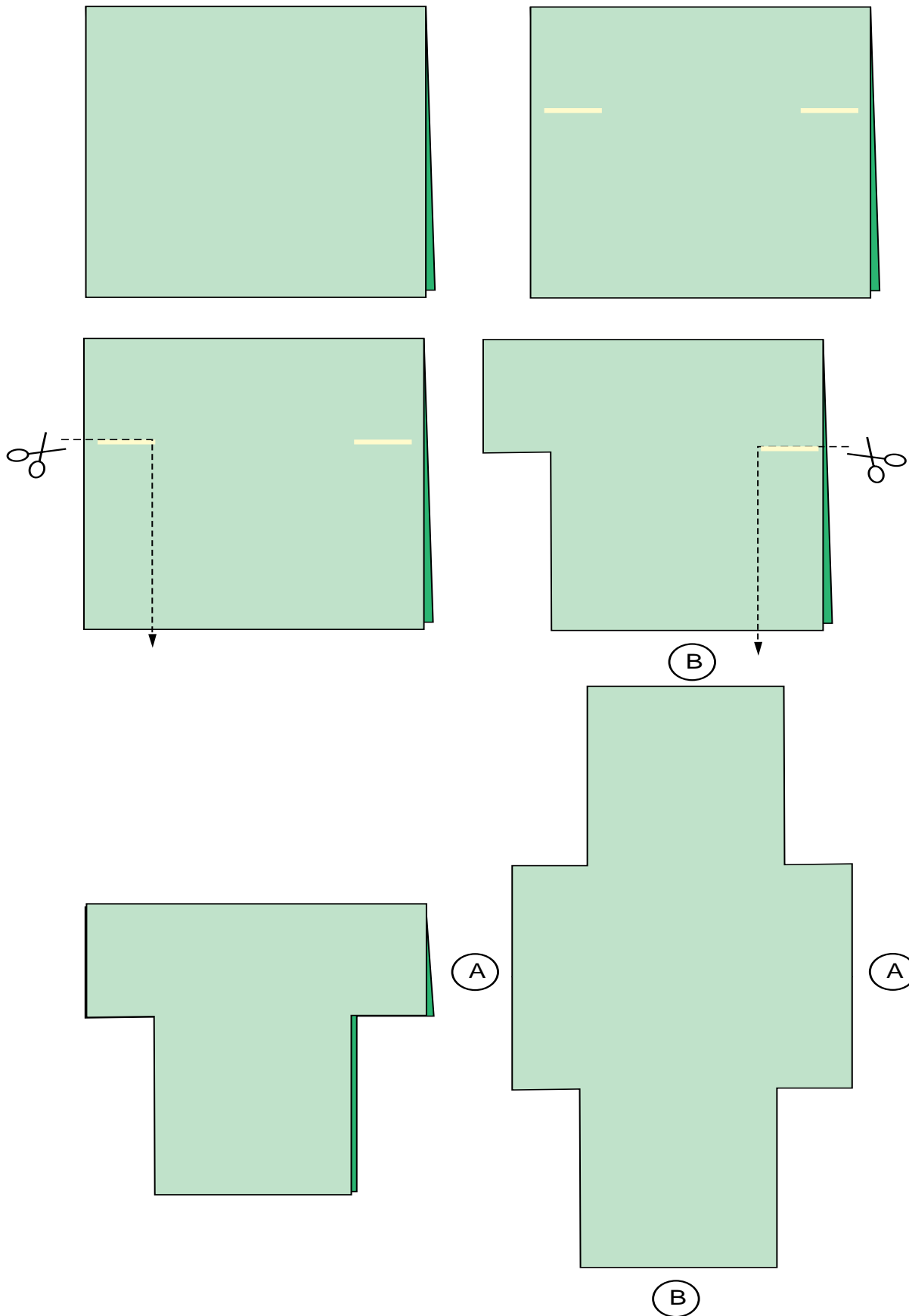


Figure 11: Cutting fabric for a basic single-color t-tunic.