

Foot of the Month > Little Girl's Ruffled Dress

This month we are featuring the Brother gathering foot for your Brother serger. The gathering foot for the serger makes quick work of ruffled trimming for a pretty warm weather dress. Create the ruffle and stitch to a contrasting strip all in one step. For parties or for every day wear, your little girl will love her ruffled dream dress!

Materials and Supplies

- [Brother Sewing Machine](#)
- [Brother Serger](#), Model 1034D Featured in this example.
- [SA213](#) Brother Serger Gathering Foot
- [Brother Embroidery Thread](#) for decorative stitching.
- [Brother Stabilizer](#), Lightweight Water Soluble or Medium Weight Tear Away.
- Basic sewing notions including sewing thread to match fabrics and bias trim.
- Girl's A-line dress pattern, we used Kwik Sew® K3862, view A.
Note: We choose to modify the pattern, see instructions below.
- Yardage and notions as per pattern requirements for view A, plus approximately 3/4 yard of contrasting batiste fabric for ruffles.
- Batiste fabric for lining the dress. Use front and back dress pattern pieces to determine required yardage.
- 4 cones of serger thread to match or blend with fabric.
- Matching or contrasting serger thread for optional rolled hem on ruffles.
- One package of Double Fold Bias Tape Quilt Binding for trimming ruffle. *See **Figure #1a**.
- One package of 1/4-inch wide Double Fold Bias for trimming neckline and armholes. *See **Figure #1b**.



Close-up of Ruffle



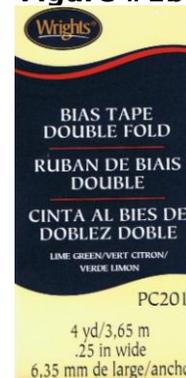
Instructions for Modifying Dress Pattern and Cutting Pieces for Dress

1. We chose a flat construction method to streamline the sewing process and make it easier to attach the ruffle. In addition, we lined the dress and trimmed the neckline and armholes with narrow bias in place of facings. To follow this method of construction make the following pattern modifications and cut pieces listed below:
 - Eliminate front and back facings.
 - Disregard the zipper closure, substituting with a slotted opening and bias ties at the center back neck.
 - Trim all seam allowance from neckline and armhole edges on dress pattern pieces.
 - Using the modified patterns, cut dress front and back from dress fabric.
 - Cut lining from batiste, using the modified dress front and back patterns and trimming 1/2-inch from hemline.

Figure #1a



Figure #1b



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Instructions for Cutting Ruffle Pieces

For the ruffles we used three layers with three different widths. Layer No.1 , 5-inches, No.2, 4-inches, and No.3, 3-inches. To cut fabric for ruffles begin by measuring the circumference at the hemline on front and back pattern pieces. Double the measurement and record this as the length for your ruffle strips. Using this measurement cut 5, 4, and 3-inch wide ruffle strips from contrasting batiste. Depending on your dress size, you may need to piece the strips for the required length. If this is the case, be sure to roll hem the bottom edge of each strip prior to piecing. This will result in a smooth finish for the rolled hem edge. As an alternative, you can choose to narrow hem the ruffles with your sewing machine or apply lace to cover raw edge of each ruffle.

Instructions for Preparing Ruffle

1. Hem the ruffle pieces using a three thread rolled hem or using one of the alternative options listed above.
2. Sew the seams for piecing the ruffles as necessary.
3. Set up the sewing machine for decorative stitching. Sew a row of decorative stitches along each hemmed edge on the three ruffles. Add a layer of stabilizer to the underside to keep the fabric smooth and flat when sewing decorative stitches. Trim or tear away excess stabilizer when finished with decorative stitching. When using water soluble type stabilizer, the remaining stabilizer can be completely removed by laundering the finished dress. *See **Figure #2**.
4. Stack the three ruffles together, beginning with the widest piece. Machine stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch from the top raw edge to secure the layers together. Set aside for later use. *See **Figure #3**.

Instructions for Creating Ruffle with Bias Trim

1. Set up your serger for a four thread stitch. Set the machine for gathering as follows:
 - Set the differential feet to the maximum amount.
 - Increase the stitch length to the maximum amount.
 - Increase both needle tensions approximately 3 numbers higher than a standard balanced tension.Test gathering on scraps of fabric using the standard serger foot. If you desire more gathers you can increase the needle tension slightly. When you are satisfied with the amount of gathers attach the gathering foot to the machine. *See **Figure #4**.
2. Select the quilt binding. Press the bias binding flat, and then fold in half, having right sides together. Trim the folded bias to measure 1-inch wide.
3. To gather the ruffle and serge it to the bias strip all in one step, place the ruffle right side up positioning it under the separating plate on the gathering foot. Next, slip the bias into the slot above the plate. *See **Figure #5**.

Figure #2



Figure #3



Figure #4



Place fabric designated for gathering under the plate and against the feed dogs on the machine.

Place the bias trim in the slot on top of the separating plate to keep this fabric layer flat and free from gathers.

Figure #5



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4. Take a few stitches by hand, turning the wheel until the needles grab the fabric and the stitch begins to form. Proceed to feed the ruffle under the plate and the bias in the slot above the plate. Serge until you reach the end of the ruffle, taking care to keep the bias edge against the guide on the foot. *See **Figure #6** for all steps. *See **Figure #7** for finished ruffle.

Instructions for Sewing the Dress

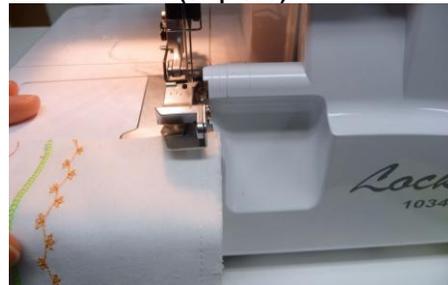
1. Construct the dress following the order below:
 - Sew front to back shoulder seams on dress and lining.
 - Sew side seams on dress and lining.
 - Finish seams using a three thread stitch on your serger.
 - Serge the raw edges of center back seam on dress and lining pieces, leaving the center back seams open for final construction.
 - Hem lower edge of dress as per pattern. Hem lining using the same hem allowance as the dress.
 - Layer the dress and the lining, having wrong sides together and raw edges matching at the neckline and armholes. Keep the lining and the dress separated along the center back seam and along the hemline.
 - Select a narrow three step zig zag stitch. Sew close to the raw edge of the neckline and armholes to secure the edges together.

Instructions for Finishing the Dress

1. Place the finished ruffle just above the hemline on the dress, beginning at the center front and working out towards the center back seams. Pin the ruffle in place, keeping the lining free from the pinned layer. Topstitch along the bias, near the center and at the top edge to attach the ruffle to the dress. Trim excess ruffle at the center back seam.
2. Sew the center back seam, leaving four inches open at the neck. Set matching for a narrow zig zag, (width 1.5, length 1.4). Apply narrow bias to armholes and neckline, extending the bias 10-inches at each end to allow for a back tie closure.
3. Create a bow tie from the remaining narrow bias and attach to the center front as a decorative accent.

Figure #6

(Step One)



(Step Two)



(Step Three)



(Step Four)



Figure #7



BACK



FRONT



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Options and Ideas:

- Make a matching hanger cover. Here's How: Purchase a child size hanger. Place hanger on a double layer of fabric. Trace around the shape, adding $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch around the outer edge and 2-inches at the bottom. Sew with right sides together using a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch seam allowance, leaving 1-inch open area at the top. Turn right side out. Hem the bottom edge and press the finished cover. Slip over the hanger through the opening and tie a bow at the top. *See **Figure #8**.
- Use your Brother Serger and the gathering foot to make ruffles for more garments and home décor items.
- Select coordinating printed fabrics for the ruffles and eliminate the decorative stitching.
- Add a layer of eyelet trim to the tiered ruffles.

Figure #8

