

SLEEVES

This month's clothing topic is sleeves—those tubes of all sizes and styles that fit around your arms.

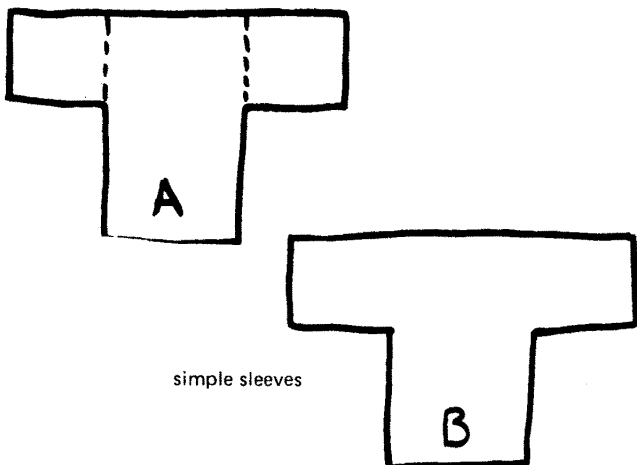
The sleeve is one of the most difficult parts of a garment to design and make fit. For handweavers, the traditional tailored sleeve with the shaped cap that fits into an equally shaped arm scythe is not practical unless the garment is to be cut and sewn from woven yardage. Because you most likely will be using a commercial pattern for this type of project we will not address the problems of this sleeve style.

For the weaver who is doing clothing that is loom-shaped without any cutting, the challenge of sleeves is approached very differently. Most loom-shaped clothing is rectangular in nature and this is also true for loom-shaped sleeves.

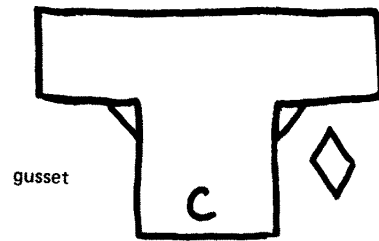
When designing a sleeve for your garment you must consider fit over the shoulder area, the strain that your bendable elbows put on the sleeve seams, and the lengthwise fit. Short, above the elbow sleeves pose far fewer problems than sleeves which extend to the wrist. The wider and looser a sleeve is, the fewer fitting problems you will encounter.

The most basic sleeve is a rectangle which extends at a right angle from the shoulder area of a garment. This may be a separate piece which is added to each side of the garment (see dotted lines in fig. A), or may be all in one with the body of the garment (fig. B). This type of sleeve should be designed to be fairly loose fitting and quite wide.

If you desire a bit closer fit, a gusset may be applied in the seam junction where the side seam meets the underarm seam of the sleeve (fig. C). A gusset is a square piece of cloth in varying sizes—3" or so is average—which is placed in the seam junction at an angle so it looks like a diamond. This creates a piece of bias fabric at a point where a great deal of strain is exerted on the seams. I would suggest needleweaving a gusset on a piece of notched cardboard so that all the edges become selvages. Gussets may be applied in all the sleeves described here.

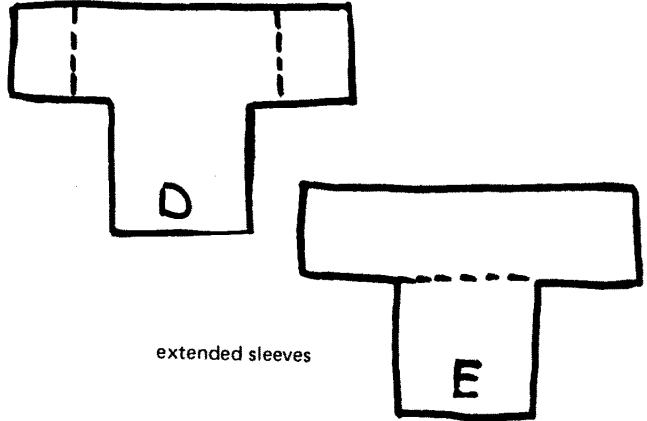


simple sleeves



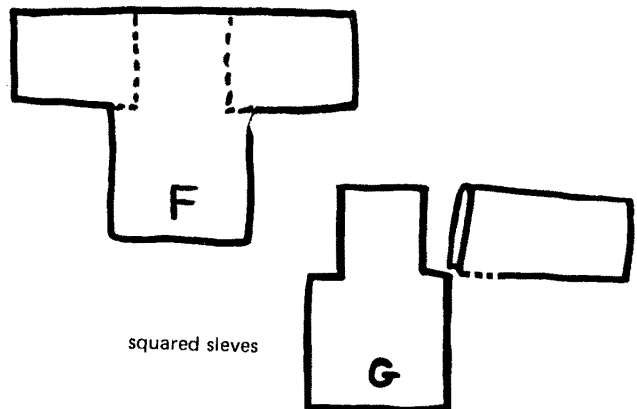
gusset

A second type of sleeve is what I call the extended sleeve. This is shown in figure D as a tube added to a T-shaped body piece. Figure E is another version of the extended sleeve—with the sleeve piece extending across the shoulders to form the yoke as well. The fit of this sleeve is the same as the simple rectangular sleeve, however, the design possibilities are greater when using this sleeve as you may play with stripes, seam joining and loom controlled patterns.



extended sleeves

The third sleeve we shall look at is the squared sleeve. This sleeve is a tubular piece attached to a garment body that comes in at the arm section similar to tailored clothes. This is easy for the weaver to achieve as it is completely rectangular. The sleeve rectangle is seamed part way up. The amount of seam left open should correspond to the amount the body decreases in size horizontally at the underarm. The sleeve width is sewn to the lengthwise section—over from front angle, over the shoulder, and down to the back angle. The unseamed sleeve section is sewn to the horizontal area from the front angle, across the side seam to the back angle (see fig. G).



squared sleeves

The squared sleeve is the best sleeve for giving a close fit with the feeling of an actual shoulder line. There is a point of stress at the junction of the sleeve seam and the side seam, but extra reinforcement or use of a gusset will take care of that problem.

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