

# Jacket Linings

By Martyn Smith



Being a true lover of tailoring always makes Martyn think twice before making an unlined garment. Over the last couple of months he's done a quick survey of his class participants and was surprised to learn how many people preferred to make an unlined jacket! "It's quicker and easier" was the general response to the question. In the past it wouldn't have occurred to Martyn for one minute to make an unlined jacket and he only ever did so upon a client's specific request. This set him thinking as to why this is and he has come up with some ideas.

A lot of the jackets that are available in the retail market these days are also unlined but the 'high end' market is still traditional in having completely lined examples on their racks. Also none of the patternmaking and construction books he's read and owned have ever shown any examples of cutting linings? There must be some that do, it's just Martyn hasn't come across them yet. Just adding a 2.5cm (1in) pleat down the back of a jacket isn't really sufficient to give the right amount of movement in the garment and the lining will eventually rip its way out of the jacket and come to grief!

So, why do we line garments? It is technically quicker to add a lining to a garment rather than to bind or overlock all the seams, and the cost of adding a lining is only a few dollars. Linings hide all the workings inside a garment such as shoulder pads, pockets, interfacings and embellishments. The time taken to cover shoulder pads or completely finish pocket bags with binding or overlocking, is greatly increased in an unlined garment. Outer garments that are lined tend to last longer and keep their shape due to the lining giving 'slip ability' which, of course, takes the duress out of putting on and taking off the garment.

Some fabrics with a loose construction can really do with another fabric layer to give some support and a lining can do this very well without changing the physical handle/drape or appearance of the chosen fabric. Extra warmth doesn't really come into it as linings are not that thick and add very little weight (generally). On saying this, there does have to be a little extra ease allowance in the garment to allow the lining to sit well. One must be aware when using a silk lining, no matter how lightweight it is, there will definitely be an increase of heat for the wearer. Many a purist has cooked in their summer jacket as they just HAD to use silk for the lining!



lay the original outer fabric pieces directly onto the lining and cut around them giving the appropriate amount of ease in all the areas requiring it. I have always done this in one fashion or another but do recommend that if you are going to make a few garments off the same pattern, it may be wise to cut a separate paper or tissue pattern to make it easier and quicker for you.

Cutting a lining is simple and the main objective is to add some ease to the original foundation pattern pieces. Linings have a job to do and they should neither 'bind' or hinder the outside shell of the garment. A lining should ideally represent the same design features such as panel lines, seam shaping and flare of the original outer shell, but should not be visible from the outside of the garment at all (some designers may beg to differ, with some of the more 'de-constructed' garment finishes still being highly popular on the High St.

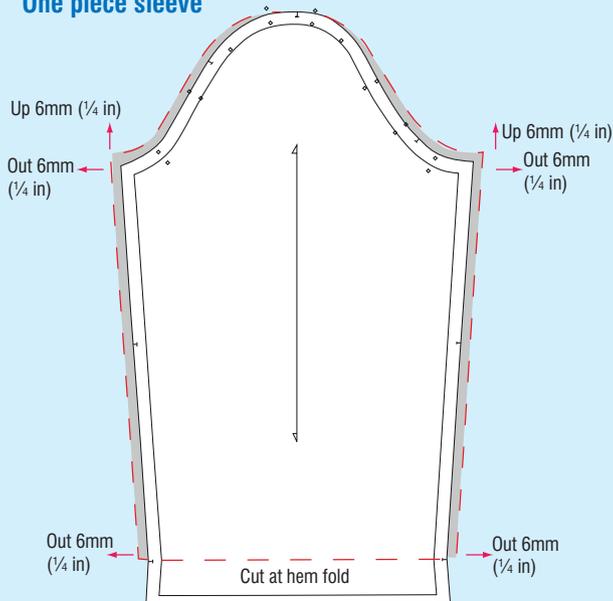
First, make sure all your hem turn-ups are clearly marked on your outside shell pattern pieces as a lining is generally cut to this line. As an indicator for what to add for girth, work on 6mm (1/4in) for each quarter of the body, eg. 6mm on each front and 6mm on each back, making 2.4cm (1in) in total, which is about half a total garment size. For length it's a matter of how long the garment is ... a standard hip length jacket only required 6mm (1/4in) of extra length through the body and if the garment is longer perhaps another 6mm (1/4in) if to the knee and a further 6mm (1/4in) if to the ankle. When sewing a section of lining to the matching section of fabric (as in a front facing) it is important to ensure that the lining is eased on when doing so. I like to add 6mm (1/4in) per 30cm (12in) in this seam to ensure the front facing doesn't get tight and pull up the front of the jacket once finished. I have seen far too many garments do this. You will see on the diagrams that the front lining pieces has been extended 6mm (1/4in) at the shoulder area and then dropped down at least 1cm (3/8in) past the hem turn-up line. Hard to believe that this will be soaked up during construction and pressing ... however it definitely will be!

The following diagrams are a visual to show what needs to be added where when cutting a lining. Examples are given for the

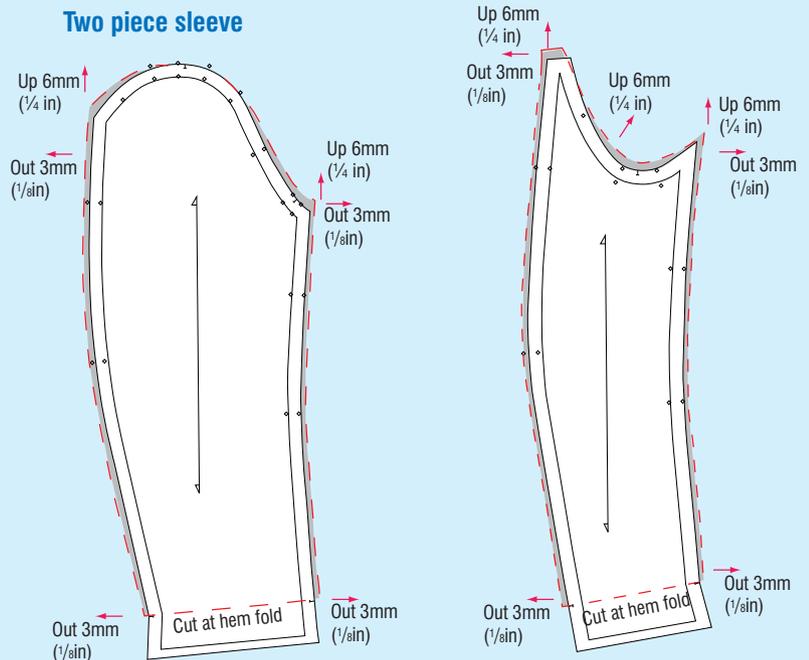
Jackets, unlike other fashion garments are generally multi-seasonal in their outlook and fabric suggestions range from heavy to lightweight. This allows a more trans-seasonal approach to making them and also justifies the extra time required for its construction, finishing and cost. All wardrobes should have at least one jacket per season and preferably two or three, but this really does depend on the climate and the amount of occasions to wear such items.

When doing my bespoke tailoring trade, we were never expected to make a lining pattern for a garment. We would

### One piece sleeve



### Two piece sleeve



different scenarios for jackets with a side-body (side panel) and for those that consist of just a back and a front. Some jacket patterns will only have a 'one-piece sleeve' with a dart in the elbow for shaping, as opposed to the more traditional 'two-piece sleeve'; this is also catered for. To cut your front facing ... use the original front of the jacket for this and work a gently curved line somewhere between 5 – 6cm (2in - 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>in) in width at the shoulder area and finishes back from the curved shaping of the front hem. A good facing width from the centre front is about 11 or 12cm (4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> or 4<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>in). These are just guidelines as is the original front facing pattern piece that came with the pattern. Just change the shoulder area if necessary and transfer the design line to the pattern to create the front lining shape.

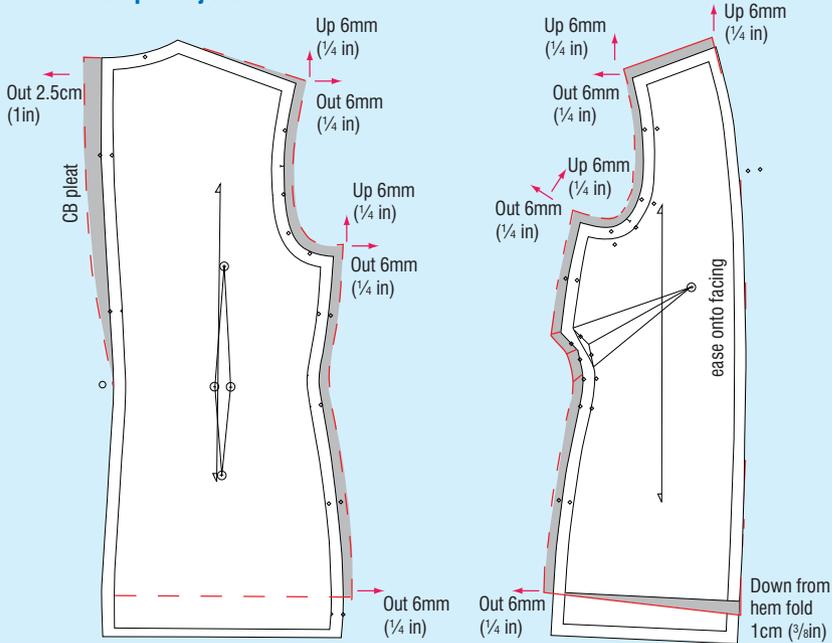
**Be aware of two things:**

1. A lining is cut to the hem fold of the jacket only if the hem allowance is 5cm (2in), otherwise if the hem allowance is only 4cm (1<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>in) there will need to be one more seam allowance added to the bottom of the lining to ensure there is enough 'purse' (the pleat at the bottom of the hem on both the sleeves and the hip). There is nothing worse than a lining pulling up the sleeves or the hem of a finished jacket, especially after pressing.

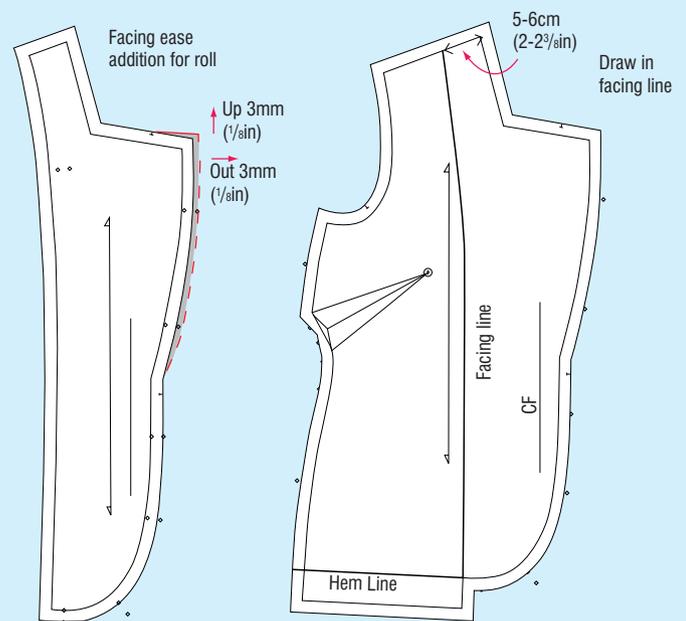
2. Preshrink a lining before cutting. Usually a steam iron is sufficient. Most linings have a shrink factor in them and if this is not done it means the additions you have added while cutting out will be in vain!

To contact Martyn email him at [martyn.smith@kwiksew.com](mailto:martyn.smith@kwiksew.com)

**Two piece jacket**



**Front and Facing**



**Three piece jacket**

