

DRESS A GIRL DRESS GUIDELINES

At Dress A Girl Around the World, we are making “God’s best dress,” and we carefully screen every dress before it is sent. Please carefully read and follow the instructions below for your dress to be included. Thank you very much for following these guidelines!

FABRIC: ONLY 100% cotton or a cotton/poly blend (with mostly cotton) should be used.

- The dresses will be washed in rivers, creeks, watering holes and maybe scrubbed with rocks. Only cotton will stand up to this treatment.
- When choosing fabric, consider the size it will be. Use baby/nursery patterns for smaller sizes.
- ALL dresses should be 44” wide (the full width of standard fabric), with the finished length between 20” and 34”. (See the sizing chart, which matches typical girl’s sizes here in the States—2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14.)
- Most girls in these countries are malnourished so their bodies are smaller, so the 44” wide fabric is fine. If making a size 12 or 14, please put a small 3-4” ‘kick-pleat’ in the side or back seam.
- *PLEASE NOTE: WE ARE NO LONGER USING PILLOWCASES.*

TIES: Ties should be 42-44” each. 36 is acceptable on extra-small (size 0-2).

- Ties should also be made of double-wide, double fold bias tape.
- This is enough length to be tied into a bow; otherwise it’s only enough to tie in a knot, which the girls then might not be able to untie. Ties should also be in one length (not pieced together) with the ends either turned under or zig-zagged across.
- Please do not use thin bias tape or ribbon for the ties.

POCKETS:

- Placed slightly below the mid-point of the dress (slightly below the waist...think about putting your hands in your pockets and where you’d like them to be.)
- Measure approximately 6” wide x 4” high--any smaller won’t give much room, AND hands might not fit, any larger and the dress looks out of proportion.
- Pocket fabric should coordinate both in color and pattern, i.e., please don’t use a wild geometric pocket on fabric with a small, feminine floral print.
- We prefer 2 pockets (this might be the only place a girl has to herself for her ‘treasures,’ as many times several family members live in a very tiny house).
- Pockets maybe turned out or pinked with a straight or zig-zag stitch. Double thickness makes a better pocket.

SEAMS: Inside seams should be serged or zig-zagged in the seam allowance.

- This ensures that the seams will not break through. Think of little girls playing and running. If the seam opens, she has no way to repair it.

HEMS: should be very shallow and either serged on the raw edge or turned under.

- The girls have no way of letting down the hem in case of growth, so a shallow hem (1/2-3/4”) is plenty.

ELASTIC: 7” elastic for ALL sizes, both front and back.

- Elastic stretches and most of the girls are small across their chest area, so larger elastic isn’t needed.

AVOID:

- Avoid white fabric or thin fabric (gingham, for example, tends to be very thin). We are trying to give the girls dignity and their dark skin would show through. Hold fabric up to a light source. Is it see-through?

- Avoid using fabric that has: Americana/patriotic; Halloween (skulls, pumpkins, ghosts); obvious Christmas (Santa, snowmen; though red/green holly or pine/berry patterns ok); Disney or any character fabric (Cinderella, SpongeBob, Star Wars etc); or any printed English words.
- None of these things would be appropriate in a foreign country. Think about a little girl wearing a dress made out of the fabric chosen...is it appropriate?

EDGES: All edges should be either pinked or turned under, no raw edges exposed.

- (Pinked pockets are fine to be straight or zig-zagged stitch onto the dress, or they may be sewn all around and turned provided the finished size is still in the 4"x6" range.)
- Ensure that all the raw edges are enclosed in the bias tape ties and that the bias is securely fastened where it intersects with the elastic.

EMBELLISHMENTS:

- Should all be securely SEWN on
- Could include appliques, yo-yo's, buttons, braided or woven trims, ric rack, lace, or eyelet.
- Please do not use hot glue to attach decorations or embellishments.
- If using ribbon as decoration please ensure to use a FABRIC ribbon (ie grosgrain), not CRAFT ribbon (craft ribbon will eventually disintegrate in water, which would be problematic with washing!)

PLEASE CONSIDER:

- The dress each girl receives maybe the ONLY dress they EVER have. We want it to be a high-quality product in which they feel dignified and beautiful.
- These girls live in areas where they are easy targets for trafficking. Does the dress you are making add to their dignity?
- Girls in some of these countries are considered 'less than human' just by virtue of their sex, and they have no standing in their societies. We want them to know that they are loved by God and that they are indeed precious, with high standing in the eyes of God. We show them that by taking care to make the best dress possible.
- Some of these dresses will go to some of the poorest-of-the-poor, and the poor deserve nice things with good workmanship, not just leftovers or hand-me-downs. "The Lord hears the cry of the poor," we want to honor Him by honoring them.
- Is the dress that you are making a dress that you would be proud having your daughter or granddaughter wear? Is it "God's best dress"?

THANK YOU for serving God by helping Dress A Girl Around the World!

Dress Sizing & Measurements

AN IMPORTANT NOTE: All dresses should use the full width of the fabric (44"). This allows the girls room to run and play. (Sizes 12-14 should also have a 3-4-inch 'kick-pleat' in the side or back seam.) Please serge hem and casing OR turn under ¼" first before hemming approximately 1". (There is no need for a deep hem, as the girls usually don't have ability to let down a large hem.)

All raw edges should be finished with a French seam, serging, or a zigzag stitch in the seam allowance so that the seam is as reinforced as possible.

Size		Fabric Length x Full Width	Finished Length	Armhole Template
Extra Small	0	22" x 44"	19"	A
Small	1	24" x 44"	21"	B
	2	26" x 44"	23"	B
Medium	4	28" x 44"	25"	C
	6	30" x 44"	27"	C
	8	32" x 44"	29"	C
Large	10	34" x 44"	31"	D
	12	36" x 44"	33"	D
Extra Large	14	38" x 44"-48" (include slit/pleat in seam)	35"	E
	16	39-41" x 44"-48" (include slit/pleat in seam)	36-37"	E

*The finished lengths on this chart are approximate. Size 8, for example could be 28-30".

Bias Tape Measurements

Size	Bias length cut 2 Double Fold Extra Wide Bias Tape (1/2")
Size 0	27" - 36"
Size 1 - 2	36-44"
Size 4- 8	42-44"
Size 10 - 12	42"- 44"
Size 14 - 16	42 - 44"

Please backstitch where bias meets armhole and turn under and backstitch ends of bias.