I've been losing weight recently (yay!) and as my sizing is at the moment in fluctuation, and many of my blouses now look like big, baggy, daggy night-shirts on me (and funds are a bit tight at the moment) I needed to make myself some cheap tops/blouses, (that also suited me and looked nice). I decided to make myself a couple of peasant tops.

I couldn't find a commercial pattern that I liked (they all seemed to have really low cut necks), and I found a wonderful tutorial by Vegbee on how to make a peasant blouse for little 'uns. It really showed me how to construct a peasant blouse. You rock, Vegbee!

I needed to find a way to measure myself to make an adult-size peasant blouse (I kind of muddled along at this, I'm terrible at mathematics!). This has taken me about a week of measuring, sewing 5 toils - the neck-line and arm-holes were tricky... I over estimated my size on one of them... you could have fit two of me in it! Yes, I do suck that much at measurements! Lucky I sewed using the largest stitch on my machine!

I prefer a slightly higher neckline, so I make my armscye (the armhole) deeper. Adjust the depth of the armscye to suit yourself, to be shallower, if you prefer ‘an off the shoulder’ or lower (wider) neckline.

Just for your information:
Step One – Find your measurements:

Find your ‘width’ (measurement 1)

- You need to find where your widest measurement is.
- To do this, measure yourself around your bust and your hips.
- (I say to measure your bust and hips because some are bigger in the bust than their hips and vice-versa)
- My widest measurement was around my hips, which was 124 cm or 49".
- Divide this amount in half – for me, it was 62 cm or 24 ½"
- Divide this in half again – for me, it was 31 cm or 12 ¼"
- Whatever your measurement, add 4.5 cm or 1 ¾"
- For me, this measurement (Measurement 1) was 35.56 cm or 14".

![Diagram showing measurement on a human figure](image-url)
Find your ‘length’ (measurement 2)

- Measure from the top of your shoulder, over the point of your bust, to however long you want your top
- For me, this measurement (Measurement 2) was 74cm or 29”

Find your armhole ‘depth’ (measurement 3)

- Measure your armscye (arm-hole) by measuring from the top of your shoulder to how deep you want your armhole, to approximately the seam-line under your arm.
- For me, this measurement (Measurement 3) is 31.1cm or 12 ¼".
Step Two – Draw up your pattern pieces:

Ruling up the bodice paper

- On a large piece of paper* draw up a rectangle with the dimensions from Measurement 1 and Measurement 2 – for me that was a rectangle with a dimension of 35.56 cm × 74 cm or 14" × 29".
- This will be the bodice section.

Ruling up the armhole:

- On the rectangular piece of paper, at the upper right corner, measure down 25.4 cm or 10", make a small mark.
- From the upper right corner, measure across (to the left) 15.24 cm or 6", make a small mark.
- Rule a light line between both points.
Ruling up the neckhole:

- On the same rectangular piece of paper, at the *upper left corner*, measure **down 3.8 cm or 1 ½"**, make a small mark.
- Rule a light line from this point to the point previously shown.
**Drawing both the arm- and neck-holes:**

- Use a curved ruler / flexible ruler to draw a curved line from one point to another (as shown in illustration).

- If you haven’t got a curved ruler, just sketch it very lightly with a pencil until you are happy with the curve. Then go over with a darker pencil line.

- If you take a piece of string, and lay it over the harm-hole and measure it (green line in illustration below), it should be about 31.1cm or 12 ¼”, which is Measurement 3. You may have to adjust the angle of your curved ruler / sketching to get to be the right depth for you.

- I haven't really mentioned the **neck-hole depth and measurements**, because it is elasticized/drawstring and you can adjust the elastic (or drawstring) to suit your sizing requirements.
You will end up with the arm- and neck-holes drawn as shown in the picture below.

Now for the sleeves:

- I am having a ‘puff’ sleeve, so I need a bit of space in my sleeve.
- I want a slightly longer sleeve to make it puffy, but not too puffy.
- My sleeve will need to be about **45.72 cm or 18” long, by 27.94 cm or 11”**, on the fold (opened up it would be **45.72 cm or 18” 55.88 cm or 22”**).
- This can be made shorter, the choice is yours.
- The sleeve pattern is easy to make, take a rectangle, and use the neck- and arm-holes of the bodice section as a template. An explanation follows.
• Take another piece of rectangular paper, 45.72 cm or 18" long, by 27.94 cm or 11", place it beneath your bodice section.

• Hold the smaller piece of paper in place by paper clips or some other non-permanent adhesive (such as blu-tac or low-stick tape).
• Cut around the neck-hole and arm-hole guidelines (the parts discarded are represented by the grey bits).

• These are the paper templates that you should end up with.
Mark your pattern pieces so you know which part is what.

**Bodice**
Cut 2 on Fold
1.5cm seam allowed

**Sleeve**
Cut 2 on Fold
1.5cm seam allowed

Adjust length by shortening
Step Three – Cut out your fabric:

Laying out and cutting the fabric:

- Layout the fabric, place the bodice section on the fold, and the sleeve section on the fold.
- Cut out.
- I cheat a bit and cut two layers on the fold – **be careful**, though, some fabrics are naturally a bit ‘slippy’, and this can cause issues when cutting out (such as one part being misaligned).
Step Four – Sewing your blouse:

Sew the sleeves to the armholes:
- Place a sleeve piece on a bodice piece, sew around arm-hole (shown by red line).
- Place the second sleeve piece on the other arm-hole. Sew (shown by red line).
• Fold over the sleeves (as shown), so that the armholes meet

• Lay second bodice piece on top, sew where shown in the diagram (indicated by red lines).
- Pull sleeves out, lining up edges.

**Sew the side seams:**
- Sew from sleeve end down side to bottom hem (as indicated by blue line).
Sew the neck casing:
- Fold over **neck-hole** to make the casing for your drawstring or elastic, sew down, leaving a hole for you to thread the drawstring or elastic through.

- Thread the elastic through, fasten ends of elastic, sew down opening.
Sew the sleeve casings:
- Fold over *sleeve ends* to make the casing for your drawstring or elastic, sew down, leaving a hole for you to thread the draw-string or elastic through.

The finished blouse:
Ideas for finishing:

- Hem around bottom, maybe add lace, ric-rac, ribbon or Broderie Anglais
- Add elastic around waist (at bottom).
- Add elastic under bust and hem around bottom (like in the picture below). If you do this, use bias binding or tape and sew it to inside of blouse under bust-line. Thread elastic through and secure. Length of elastic is measurement under bust minus 5 cm or 2".
My measurements (they may be handy for you for layout):

Bodice
Cut 2 on Fold
1.5cm seam allowed

Sleeve
Cut 2 on Fold
1.5cm seam allowed
Adjust length by shortening

* I got an end-roll of unprinted on white newsprint paper from our local newspaper for AUD$4.00. It is about 80 cm (32") wide and can have anywhere between 30 meters (approximately 32 yards) and 100 or more meters (approximately 109 yards) of paper on it.