



Taking in the Waistband of a Skirt

How to shorten the waistband of a skirt to fit you and adjust the body of the skirt to match.

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INTRODUCTION

This guide will teach you how to take in the waistband of a skirt that is too large. The instructions work best for skirts that are loose, like rectangle skirts or pleated skirts, and that have a separate waistband and a lining. You will need basic sewing skills, including the ability to sew using a sewing machine.

The guide uses these terms:

- *seam*: a line of stitching that joins two or more pieces of cloth
- *seam ripper*: a tool used to remove stitches
- *seam allowance*: the distance between the stitch line and the edge of the cloth
- *right side*: the “front” of the fabric; the printed side
- *wrong side*: the “back” of the fabric

TOOLS:

- [Sewing Machine](#) (1)
 - [Sewing Pins](#) (1)
 - [Seam Ripper](#) (1)
 - [Measuring Tape](#) (1)
 - [Thread](#) (1)
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Step 1 — Waistband



- Try on the skirt to see how big it is.
- Gather the excess fabric at one of the side seams.

Step 2



- Use a measuring tape to measure the excess fabric.
- With straight pins, mark the length of your measurement on either side of the side seam.

Step 3



- Use a seam ripper to separate the waistband from the lining in the area between your straight pins. You should also remove the seam an inch past the pins on either side.
- ⓘ If you've never used a seam ripper before, read [this guide](#).
- ⓘ Red arrows indicate the length of the measurement. Orange arrows indicate the length of seam ripped.

Step 4



- Use your seam ripper to separate the waistband from the skirt.
- As before, stop approximately one inch past your straight pins.

Step 5



- Remove the stitches from the top of the waistband, about one inch past your measurement on either side.

Step 6



- Flip the outer waistband inside out.
- Pinch the waistband at the side seam with the right sides of the fabric facing together.

Step 7



- On the waistband, use a straight pin to mark the length of your original measurement from the side seam.
- Sew across the waistband at the location you pinned.
- ⚠ Make sure to remove the pin before sewing and back stitch at the beginning and end so the stitches don't unravel.
- Trim the excess fabric with fabric scissors or a rotary cutter.

Step 8



- Repeat steps 6 and 7 on the inner waistband.
- ⚠ Make sure the two waistbands are the same length before you sew the inner one shorter.

Step 9

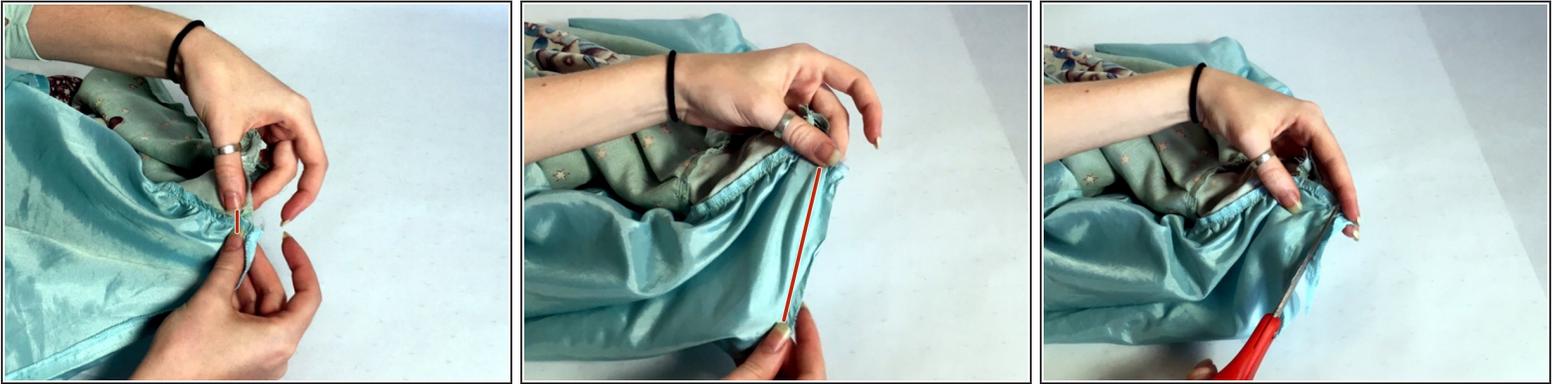


- Press the *seam allowance* on the new side seam flat and fold the top and bottom down.
- Align the top edges of the inner and outer waistbands with the wrong sides facing together. Use straight pins to hold the fabric in place.
- Stitch across the top of the waistband, right next to the edge. Make sure to begin where the original stitching ends to avoid leaving holes in the waistband.

Step 10

- Turn the skirt inside out.
- Pin the pleats of the skirt to the waistband so the skirt and the waistband are the same length.
- ⓘ Try to follow the location of the original pleats, but make them deeper to account for the excess fabric.
- Stitch the skirt and waistband together.

Step 11



- Mark where the new side seam on the waistband matches up with the side seam of the lining.
- Stitch from that point to the seam line on the lining, forming a slight curve.
- Trim the excess fabric.

Step 12



- With right sides together, match the side seam of the lining to the side seam of the waistband and secure with straight pins.
- Stitch the lining to the inner waistband.
- Turn the skirt right side out.
- Top stitch along the bottom edge of the outer waistband to secure it to the inner waistband.

⚠ Make sure the seam allowance between the lining and the inner waistband is on the waistband side of the seam so the top stitching will secure it.

Step 13

- Stitch both waistbands together, following the side seam from the outside.

Your skirt is now finished! Wear it with pride.