

KreenZart's Ruched Tank / Swim Top instructions

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This is a pattern you will make according to your own dimensions. It is most suited to swim fabrics and cotton/lycra fabrics. My bust fluctuates with Sawyer's needs, but is about 95cm. I'm using metric as the math is easier for me and I'm a Canuck. 😊

All you need to do is cut rectangles. I used about 3/4 of a yard of fabric but you will need more or less - have about a yard on hand to be sure. The only other notion you need is some light 2.5cm/1 inch wide elastic- I used FOE, about 2m. I didn't add seam allowances so the top would fit snugly.

First take your bust measurement. Divide it in half for your front and back pieces, and measure just below your armpit to wherever you want it to land on your hips for the side measurement...

then you will deduct about 8 cms from the front panel and from the back to account for the side panels.

I went with:

a 40cm x 50cm front piece

a 40cm x 50cm back piece

two strips 8 cm x 50cm for the sides

and 4 pieces for shoulder straps: 7 x 30cms

for the shelf bra I used my measurement from a Ready-To-Wear (RTW) tank with shelf bra. The pieces will be slightly smaller than your front and back pieces in width.

I went with a 38cm x 15cm front

and a 38cm x 10cm back.

Larger busted women will add to the second number, smaller women will decrease.



Here are my pieces laid out above.

1) First you will construct the bodice. When sewing the narrow side panels to the front and back pieces you will pull the side pieces taut to create the ruching. First get the two pieces started normally to get your needles into the work about an inch. Then pull the side piece and serge. You will have about 15-20 cms of the side panel left over which can be serged and cut off before hemming.



Here the side panel is on top and the front panel is on the bottom.



Here the side panel is on the bottom and I'm serging it to the back.

Serge the side panels to the front piece, then serge the back piece on in the same way to create a tube. Press seam allowances to the front and back panels and topstitch.



You can try it on at this point to determine where you want your straps to be: (wow am I lookin' busty!)

2) Mark your strap placement on the front panel, making it equal on each side. Do the same for the back, setting the straps 5 cms or so farther to the middle (so they don't slip off the shoulders).

Construct your straps by sewing them in pairs, right sides together, turn and topstitch close to edge.

3) Prepare the shelf bra. Serge the front and back panels right sides together to make a tube. (The front will be longer than the back.)

You could sew your elastic into a loop, then mark into quarters and sew it on, but I just serge it straight on pulling gently and overlapping it a ways onto the wrong side. I know this isn't too scientific but it works for me! If you do this the first way, you'll need to take the measurement of your shelf bra's circumference and subtract a few cms so it eases the top in.

When doing the bottom, I serge the elastic straight on starting in the middle of the back panel. When I get to the longer front part I draw the elastic over and just cut off the excess to make a curve. Same when I got front to back, if that makes sense.



Here's where I'm creating the curve.

Turn the elastic once and stitch it up so it won't be against your skin on the bottom of the shelf bra.

Now to join it all together:


place shelf and bodice right sides together with straps in between. I only pin the strap to the front to start. You can serge, but to create less bulk I sew these two together. Once the front has been sewn, I then pin the straps to the spots on the back, and continue sewing. Turn the top right side out and topstitch around the bodice top.



Keep your sewing buddy happy during this step so your stitching is nice and even.



Hem and it's done!

Please lmk if there are any glaring errors. And please post your creation (and the modifications you make) in the runway. But if you just want to be picky and nitnat at me, welllllllll....

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