Every year, Dresses for Haiti donates unique, handcrafted dresses to victims of the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti. This tutorial is for those who would like to help our mission and make dresses for young girls in Haiti. While you make yourself or a loved one a gorgeous new dress, consider making one or a few for young girls in Haiti.

This ruffle sleeved dress is extremely easy to make, and it can be styled in many different ways. Make a bold statement with bright polka dots, go girly with pink floral print, or stay classy-chic with breezy white cotton.

We’d love for you to join our effort and follow us in this simple tutorial as you create a stunning, ruffle-sleeved sundress for a Haitian girl!
1) **Fabric**: Lightweight, non-stretch cotton
   ◦ Do not use stretch fabric.
   ◦ I don’t recommend silk, satin, brocade, or anything slippery unless you feel comfortable working with these fabrics.
   ◦ Matching seams can be difficult with certain prints (plaid, stripes, etc.) so take this into consideration when choosing your fabric.

2) **Sewing Machine**
   ◦ All sewing machines are not created equal. Our settings simply serve as guidelines; please experiment with your own machine.

3) **Serger (optional)**
   ◦ If you do not have a serger, no problem! You will replace marrowed seams and edges with French seams (Figure A) and double folded hems (Figure B).

4) **Thread to match your fabric**

5) **1/4 inch elastic**

6) **Fabric Scissors**

7) **Seam gauge/ruler**
**Step 2: Sizing**

The following chart gives a rough guide for fabric dimensions and sizing. It’s okay if your measurements aren’t exact. We don’t know who we will be giving the dresses to yet, so we can utilize any sizes.

### Measurements for babies 3-24 months old

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages (months)</th>
<th>3-6</th>
<th>6-9</th>
<th>9-12</th>
<th>12-18</th>
<th>18-24</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Height (inches)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chest (inches)</td>
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<td>19.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended skirt length</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
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<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended top width</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Top Length</td>
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<td>6-7</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>8-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended elastic length</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended Ruffle width</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended Ruffle length (shoulder straps: cut 2)</td>
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<td>13.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended Ruffle length (for the skirt-hem)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>83</td>
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</table>

**SKIRT: recommended fabric dimensions**

**Measurements for girls 2-16 years old**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>3-4</th>
<th>4-5</th>
<th>5-6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>12</th>
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<th>16</th>
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<td>55 - 57</td>
<td>58 - 59</td>
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<td>63 - 64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chest (Inches)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended Skirt Fabric Length</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<tr>
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<td>57</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended Top Fabric Width</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
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<td>41</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9-10</td>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>12-13</td>
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<td>27.5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Ruffle width (shoulder straps: cut 2)</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Ruffle length (for the skirt-hem)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SKIRT: recommended fabric dimensions**

- **20 “ 17 in. Cut five 4-inch strips.**
- **25 “ 18 in. Cut five 5-inch strips.**
Step 3: Let’s Start!

1) Overcast or zigzag stitch around the fabric edges. (Or use a serger.)
   ◦ On the sewing machine: set both your stitch length and zigzag width at about 4.
   ◦ Adjust this according to your machine and/or your preferred stitch widths and lengths.

⇒ If your machine cannot zigzag stitch and you do not have a serger, do a double folded hem **on the bottom only** (See figure below.)
Step 4: Sewing the back!

- Note: this is a one seam dress. There are multiple ways to sew the back together, depending on your machine’s capabilities.

1) Fold the skirt-fabric in half (along the width, hamburger style) with the right sides of your fabric together and the wrong side facing you.

2) Fold the top-fabric in half (along the width, hamburger style) with the right sides of your fabric together and the wrong side facing you.

3) Press the seams open with an iron.

4) At this point, you should have two separate ‘tubes’ of fabric. Do not sew them together yet.
**Step 5: Skirt Gathering!**

Now, we are going to baste and gather the skirt.

1) Set your machine’s stitch-length on the highest possible setting. (I use a stitch length of 5 on mine.)

2) Sew with a 5/8 inch seam allowance along the top edge of the skirt-fabric.
   - Do NOT backstitch.
   - Leave a “tail” of thread after you baste the edge.

3) Find the “top” thread on both ends of the fabric. Lightly pull on both threads to gather the skirt.
4) With right sides together, match the **top-edge of the skirt** with the **bottom-edge of the top.** You may need to adjust some of the gathers to make the edges “fit” with each other.
5) Stitch in place with a 5/8 seam allowance.
Step 6: Make the top.

A) Fold the top edge of the top fabric over 3/4 inches and pin in place. Stitch all the way around, with a 1/4 inch seam allowance. Leave a 1 inch hole at the back seam.

B) Put a safety pin on one end of the elastic. Put a regular pin on the other end of the elastic.
   ◊ Pin the end that doesn’t have the safety pin to the fabric.
   ◊ Thread the safety pin through the hole. Keep pulling it through until the elastic comes back to the starting point.

C) Carefully pull the two pieces of elastic together. Stitch them together back and forth several times to ensure their security.

D) Sew the casing hole shut.
Step 7: Skirt Ruffles

1. Hem the bottom-edge of the ruffle with a 1/4 inch hem.
   ◦ If you used a serger to overcast the fabric, you can skip this step.

2. Gather the top edge of the ruffle.
   ◦ Refer to step 5 if for instructions on gathering.

3. With the right sides together, stitch the ruffle to the skirt hem.
**Step 8: Shoulder Straps**

At this point, you should have two pieces of fabric for the shoulder straps.

1. **Hem all 4 edges** of the shoulder strap pieces with a 1/4 inch hem.
   ♦ If you used a serger to overcast the fabric, you can skip this step.

2. Gather the top edges of the ruffle.
   ♦ Refer to step 5 if for instructions on gathering.
   ♦ Gather the straps until they are half as long as they originally were.
   ♦ Example: Original dimensions = 14 “ 3 in...After gathers = 7 “ 3 in.

3. With the right sides of the fabric together, stitch the ruffle to the skirt hem.

4) **Measure the top edge of the front of the dress, and divide this number by 4.** Divide the dress vertically into fourths, and mark the edge.
   ♦ Example: Width = 16...draw dots on the top edge of the fabric at the 4 in. mark and the 12 in. mark.
   ♦ These dots indicate where the straps will go. Hand stitch them in place.

5) **Repeat step 4 with the back of the dress.**
You’re done! Finished!

◊ If desired, add extra trims and embellishments.

◊ Go to dresses-for-haiti.tumblr.com and submit a picture of the dress you made. We will feature some of your amazing outfits on our Tumblr! We also will promote any blogs that will do the same for us in return.

◊ If you would like to donate the dresses you sewed to a young girl in Haiti, send an email to info@dressesforhaiti.org detailing how many dresses you will be donating. We will email you some information, regarding the next steps.

Congratulations!

You’ve just completed your ruffle-sleeved sundress! Stay tuned for more tutorials. Email ericalin.dressesforhaiti@gmail.com if you have any questions regarding sewing or styling.