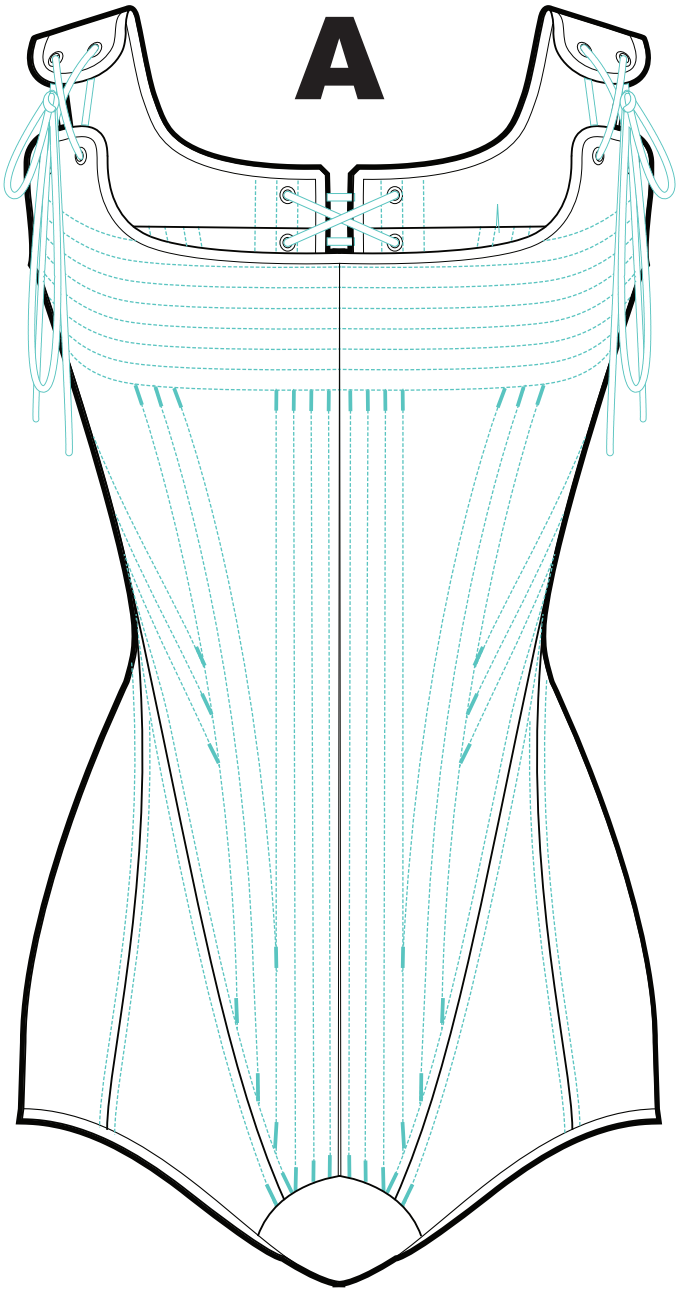
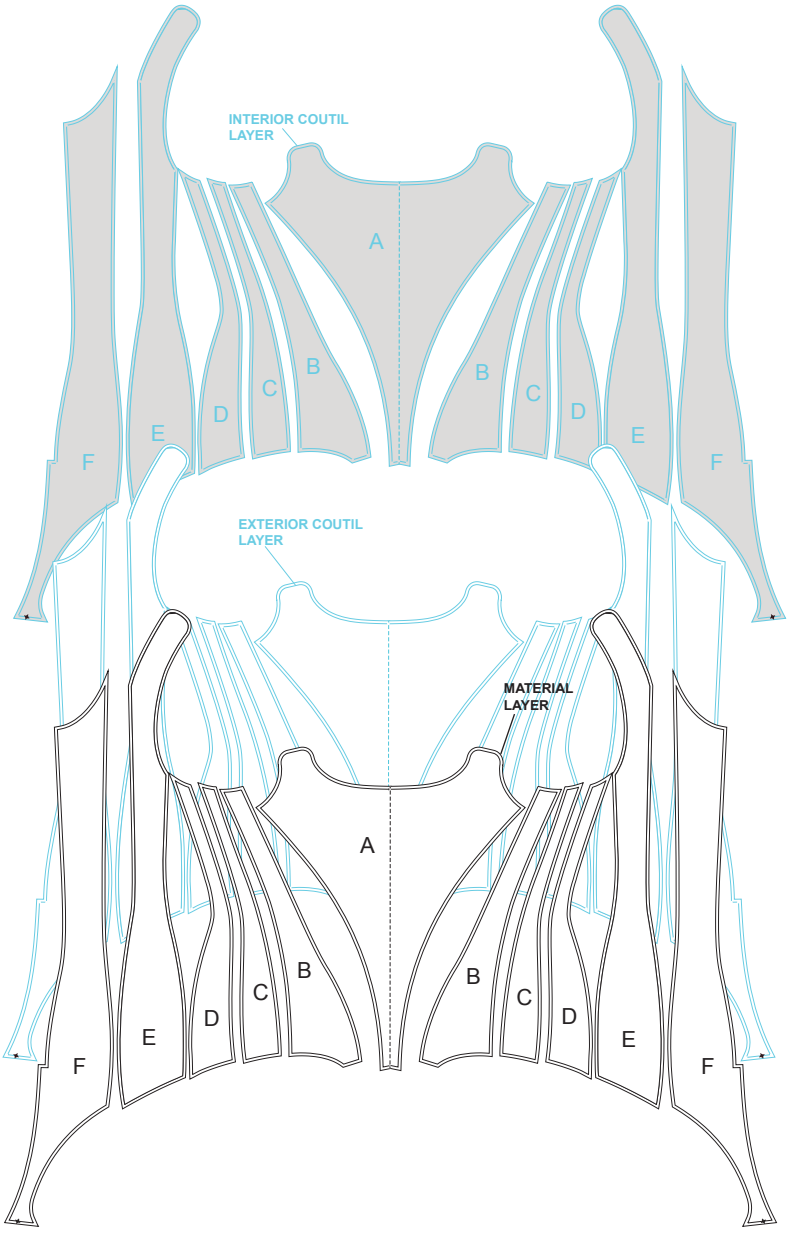
RP012: HYBRID VICTORIAN CORSET



CORSET OVERVIEW: This corset is a double layer corset and is the stronest form of corsetry used for tight lacing and waist training.
Although the corset technically has three layers, the material layer is not considered as a real layer. Instead, it is used to decorate the exterior surface of the corset (visible to the wandering eye) and sits directly on top of the exterior layer, hiding it from view.
Interior layer: This layer forms the inside surface of your corset and sits against the body, it is not seen when worn. It is made from coutil.
Exterior layer: This layer is formed of two seperate layers; one coutil, the other a decorative material of your choice. Coutil is not the nicest of materials when it comes to decoration. It is used primarily because of its strength and lack of stretch. However, corsets come in all kinds of different colours and material textures. So, to acheive a beautifull corset, you can choose your own material to cover the coutil. When combined, the two form the exterior layer.

The interior and exterior layers are then placed together (wrong sides facing) like a sandwich, securing the strips of boning that reinforce and structure the corset.



DIFFICULTY

If you are new to www.ralphpink-patterns.com, have not yet printed your digital pattern and are unfamiliar with printing digital patterns, then please view the **PRINTING A PATTERN** instructions provided in the DOWNLOAD PACK. If the PRINTING A PATTERN instructions are missing or you have deleted them, please see **http://ralphpink-patterns.com/how-to-print-a-pattern/** to download a duplicate copy.
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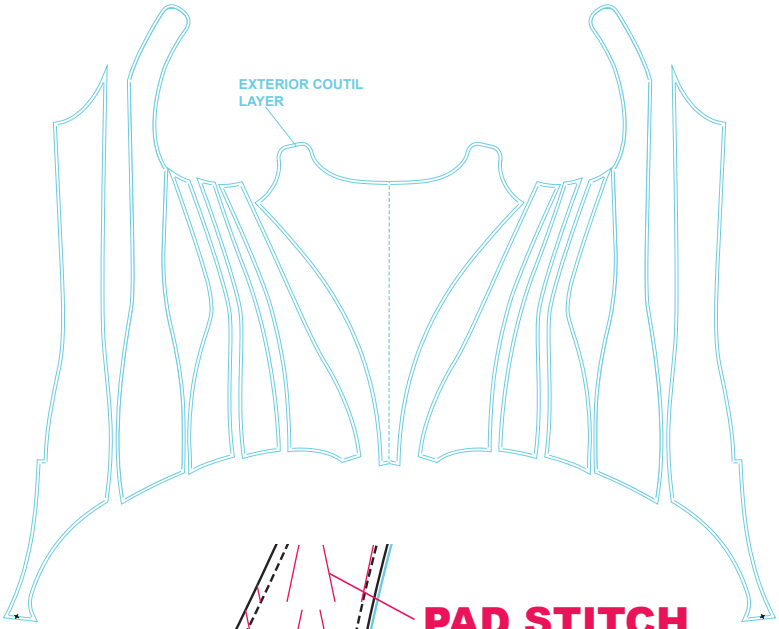
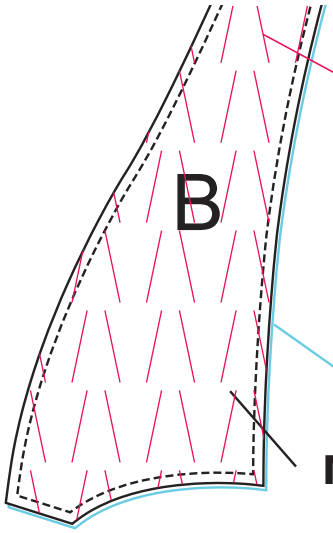
PREPPING THE EXTERNAL LAYER:

1.1 Lay out one layer of your coutil pattern pieces and place the corresponding material panels dirrectly on top. Using a pad stitch, baste the material and coutil panels together. This will become your exterior layer. **Tip:** *Use a thin material that will not add bulk to your corset and choose a material that is opaque and will not show the coutil underneath.*





PAD STITCH

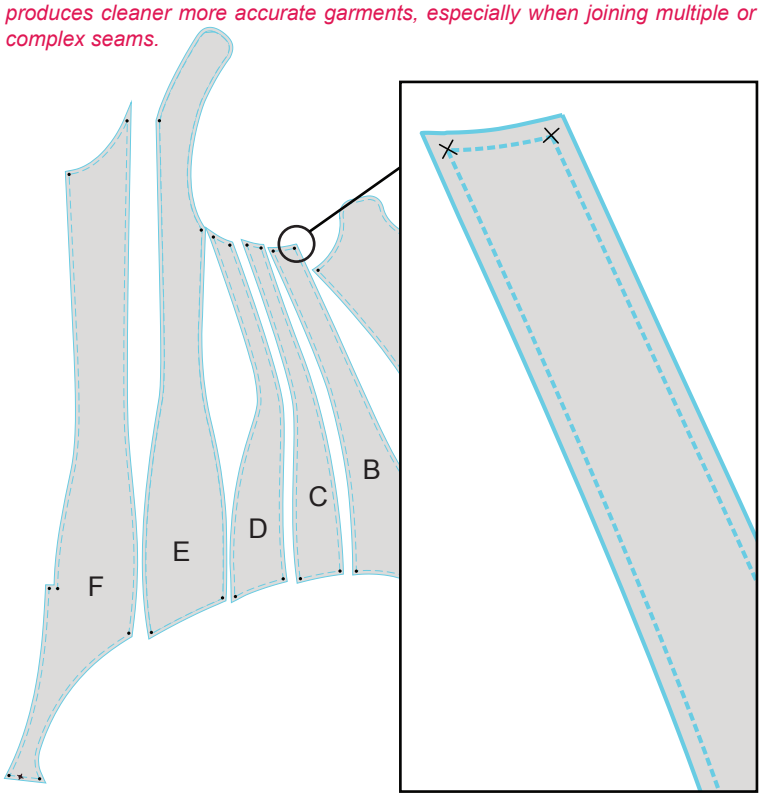
Pad stitchng material to coutil, firmly bonds the two together, making it easier to handle the exterior layer. Also, if your material is quite fine and fiddley, this will stop any puckering or rippling caused when top stiching later.

COUTIL LAYER

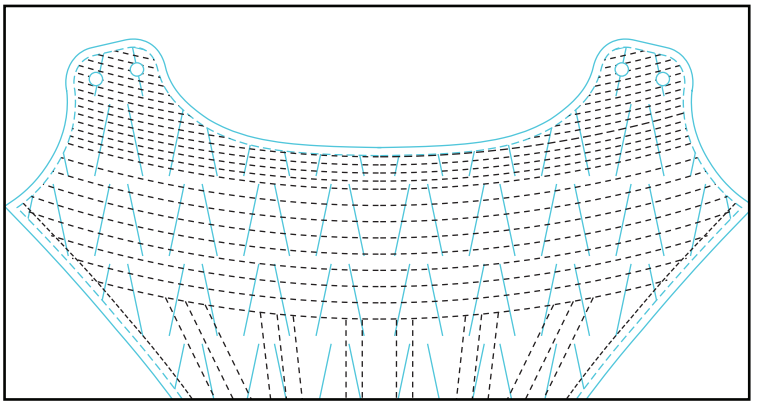
MATERIAL LAYER

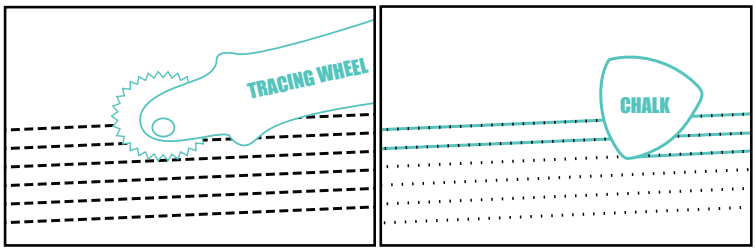
MARKING THE MATERIAL (corner points)

2.1 Mark each corner point of all the pattern pieces, both exterior and interior layers, with chalk on the WRONG SIDE of your material. **Tip:** *This will allow you to match up your material pattern pieces at a later date. It will also give you a point at which to stop sewing your seams when joining panels together. This produces cleaner more accurate garments, especially when joining multiple or complex seams.*



2.2 On the right side of your exterior layer (material side not coutil side), mark all top stitch lines using chalk. **Do not mark top stitch lines on the interior layer. Tip:** *You can make this process easier by using a TRACING WHEEL. You can do this by laying the paper pattern pieces on top of your material and then tracing the lines with the tracing wheel. Once you have removed the paper pattern, mark the material with chalk along the faint dotted lines left by the tracing wheel.*

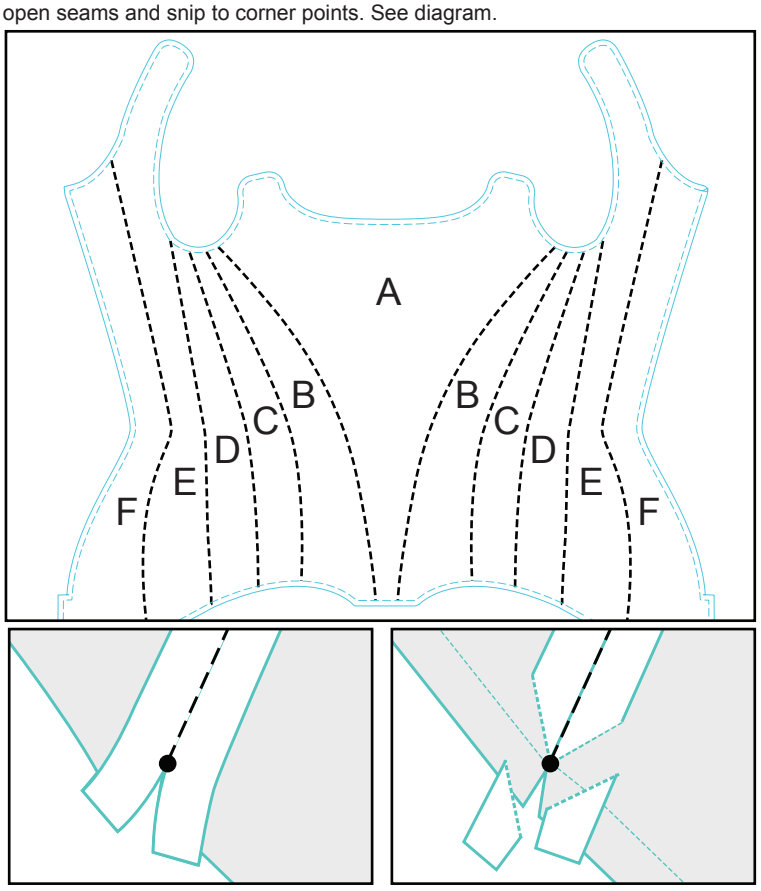




CORSET CONSTRUCTION

INTERIOR LAYER:

3.1 Attach Panels A,B,C,D,E and F together to form the entire interior layer. Make sure that your stitching does not go past each marked corner point. Press open seams and snip to corner points. See diagram.



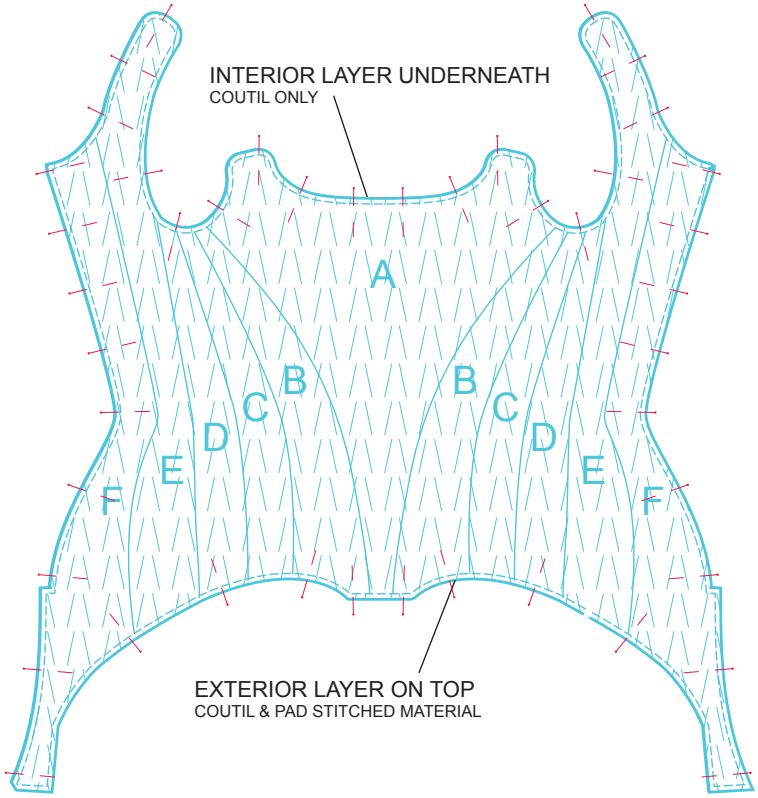
EXTERIOR LAYER:

3.2 Attach panels A,B,C,D,E and F in exactly the same way as the interior layer (above). Make sure that the material layer forms the right side, with all seam allowances visible on the wrong side (coutil layer).

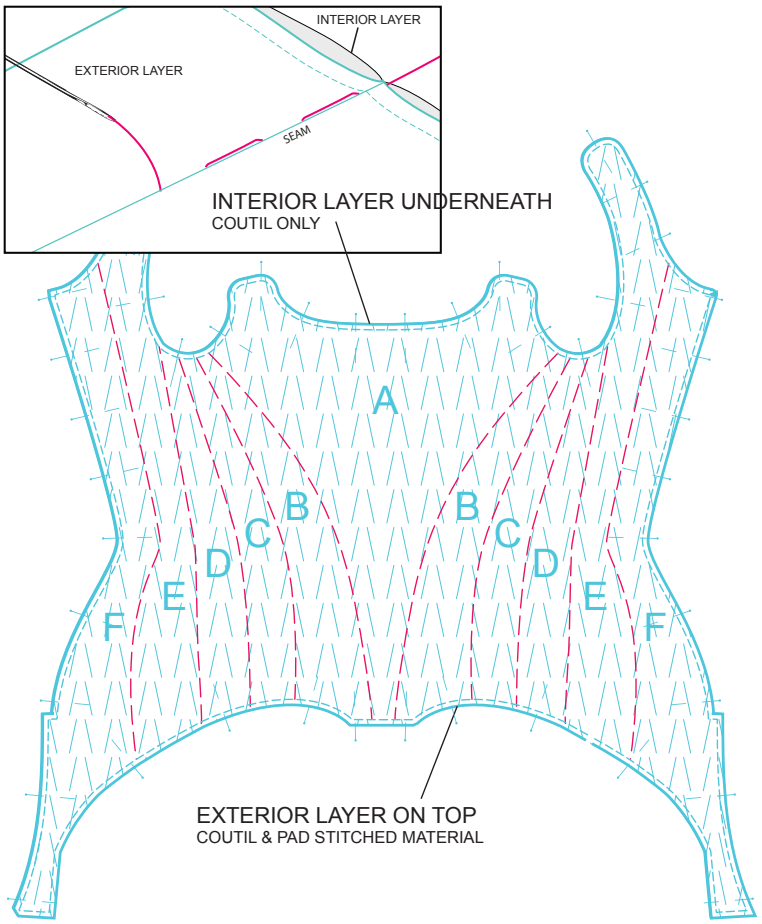
3.3 You should now have used all of your pattern pieces and have two seperate layers. Essentially, two single layer corsets. One with a decorative material pad stitched to its surface, the other plain coutil.

BASTING THE EXTERIOR LAYER TO THE INTERIOR LAYER

4.1 Lay the interior layer wrong side up (seam allowance visible). Place the exterior layer directly on top of the interior layer, matching centre fronts, centre backs and all seams and notches. Pin all edges together.



4.2 Using a needle and thread, tack the exterior and interior layers together up each seam. Push the needle through the middle of the exterior seam, turning the corset over to see where the needle exits on the matching interior seam. Make sure that it exits through the middle of the seam. Technically, you are not tacking through fabric, you are tacking through the stitched seam itself. Use stitches roughly an inch in length. This will temporarily hold your corset together.

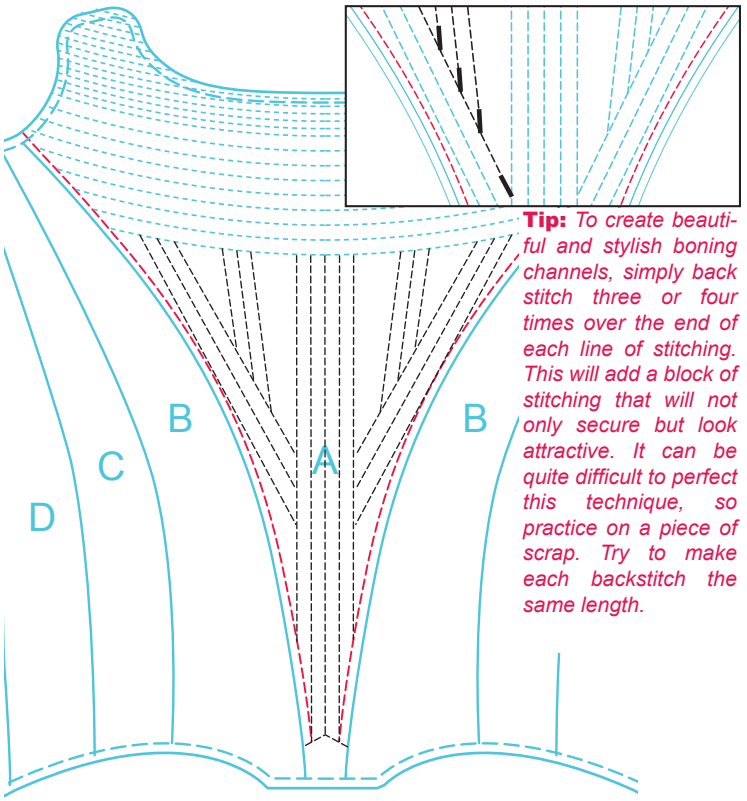


STITCHING THE BONING CHANNELS

5.1 Once you have temporarily secured your corset layers together, start top stitching your boning channels on panel A. These should have already been pre-marked with chalk.

First stitch the bonning channels higlighted below in black. Make sure that your boning channels are stitched in the correct order. If you do not, you will not be able to insert the strips of boning.

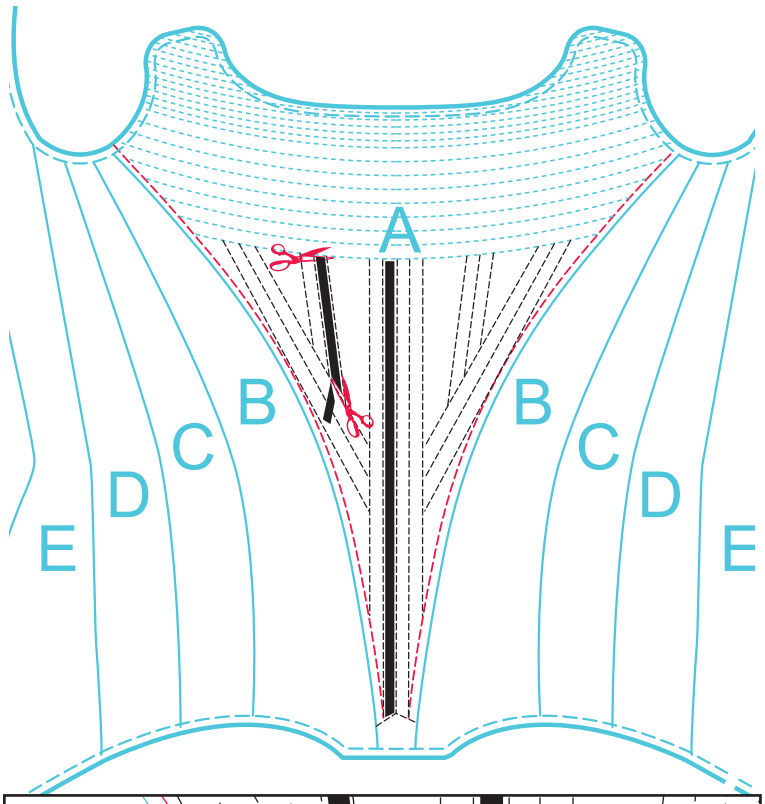
Be sure your top stitching does not cross over the pink lines, otherwise it will restrict the insertion of boning at the seams.

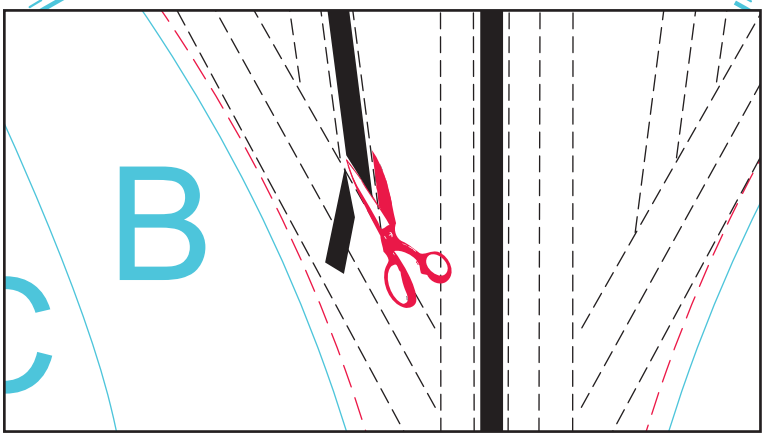


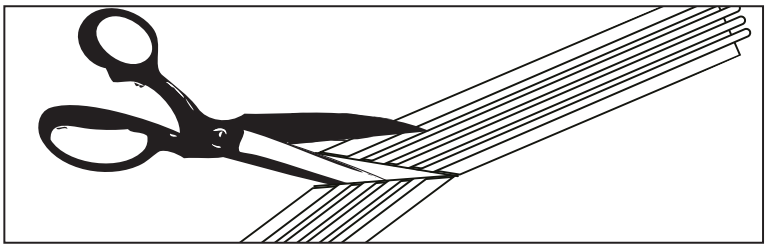
***Tip:** To create beautiful and stylish boning channels, simply back stitch three or four times over the end of each line of stitching. This will add a block of stitching that will not only secure but look attractive. It can be quite difficult to perfect this technique, so practice on a piece of scrap. Try to make each backstitch the same length.*

INSERTING BONING:

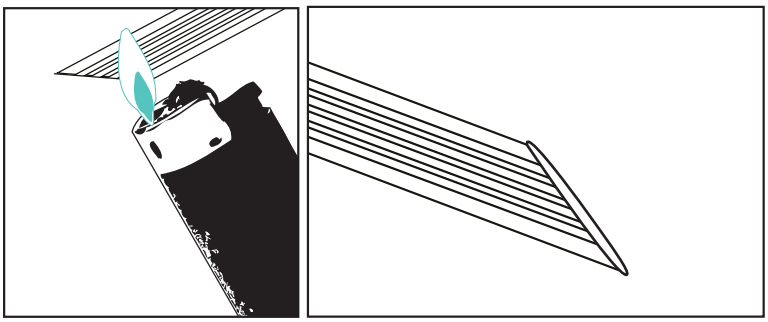
6.1 MEASURE BONING First lay your boning strips on top of your corset channel. Cut them with sharp scissors to the correct length and shape. Note that it is best to cut roughly 1-2mm shorter than the channel.



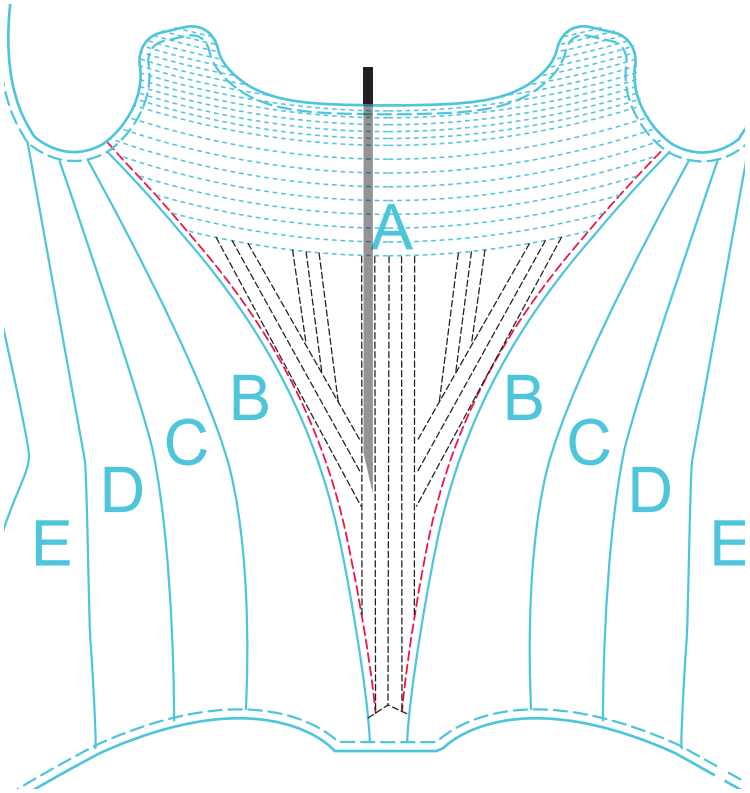




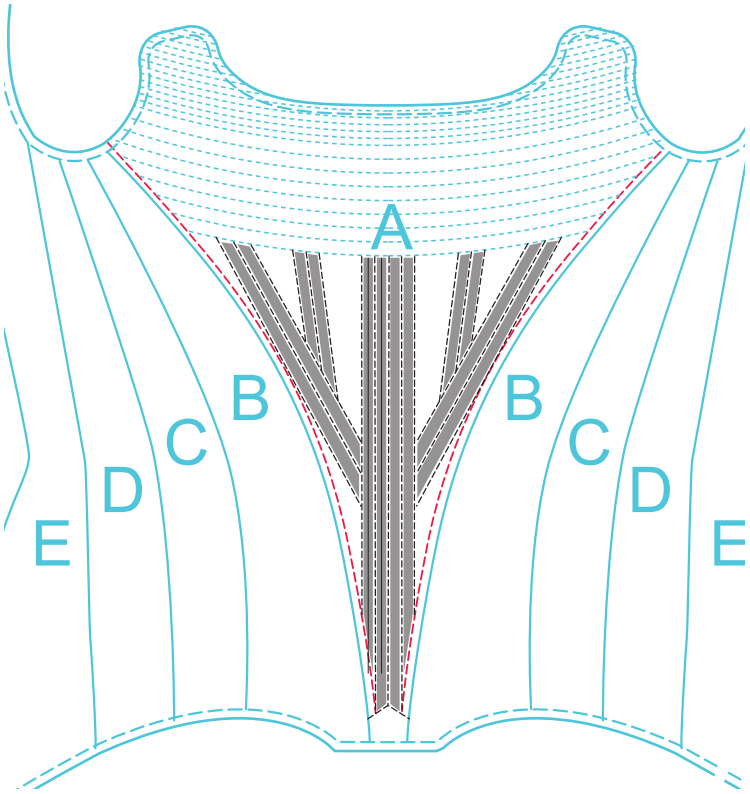
6.2 Melt each end of the Rigelene boning. This will create a smooth edge that will prevent premature wear of the boning channels. If you do not melt the ends, the boning itself will fray producing sharp edges that will tear your coutil after prolonged use.



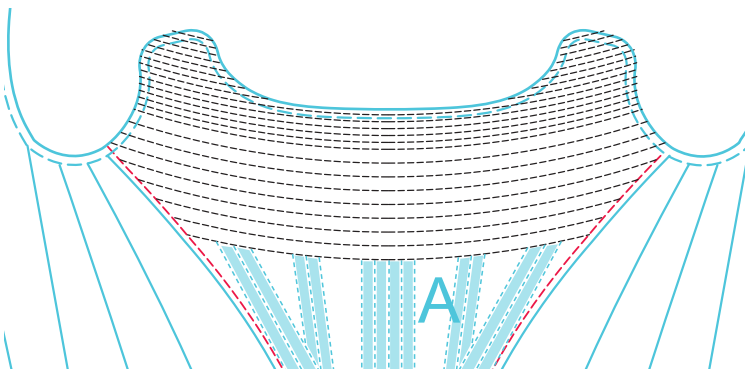
6.3 Insert the boning into the recently stitched channels. Do this by opening the top of the corset and sliding boning between the two layers (exterior and interior layers).



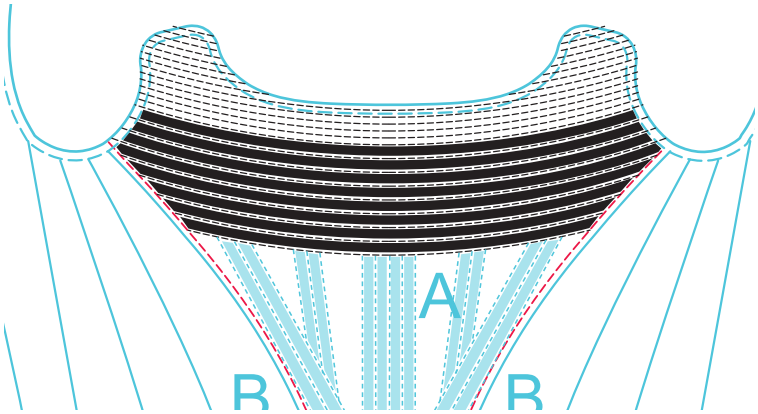
6.4 Insert boning into all previously stitched channels **(marked in black)**



6.5 Once all bones have been inserted, top stitch the upper section of panel A. marked in black. Do not stitch into the pink topstitch lines.

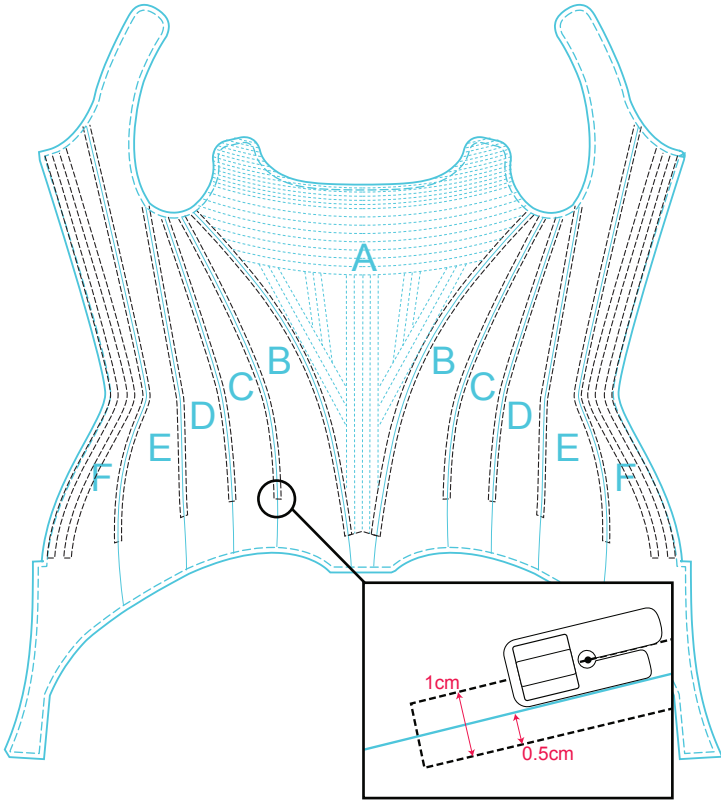


6.6 Insert bones as before by cutting, melting and inserting. Once again, make sure that your bones are 1-2mm shorter than the channels themselves.

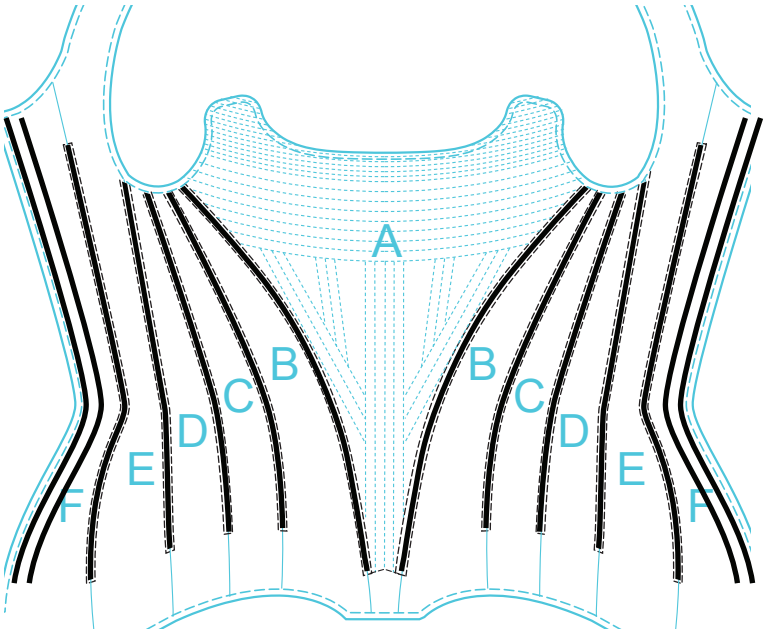


SEAM BONING

7.1 You can now stitch channels along either side of each seam. This can be done by using the edge of your machine foot as a guide or simply by using the lines that you originally marked in chalk.

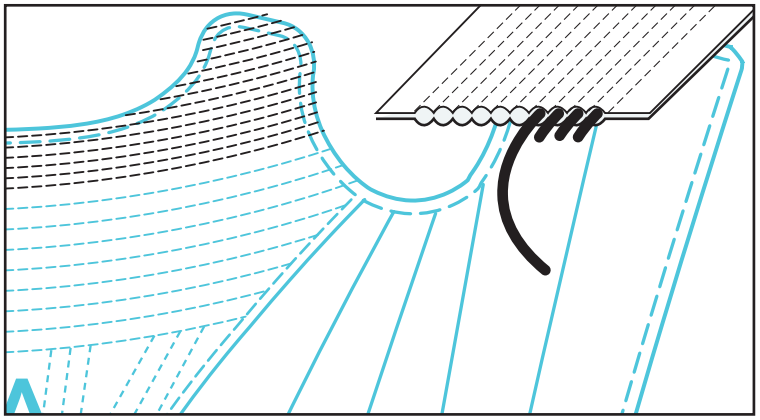


7.2 Once again cut, melt and insert your boning into each seam channel and both centre backs. See image. Please note that you will need to remove the large tacking stitch along each seam joining the interior and exterior layers together.

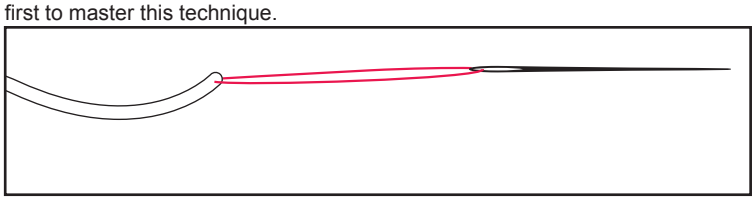


INSERTING PIPING:

8.1 We now need to insert piping into the remaining channels at the top of panel A.



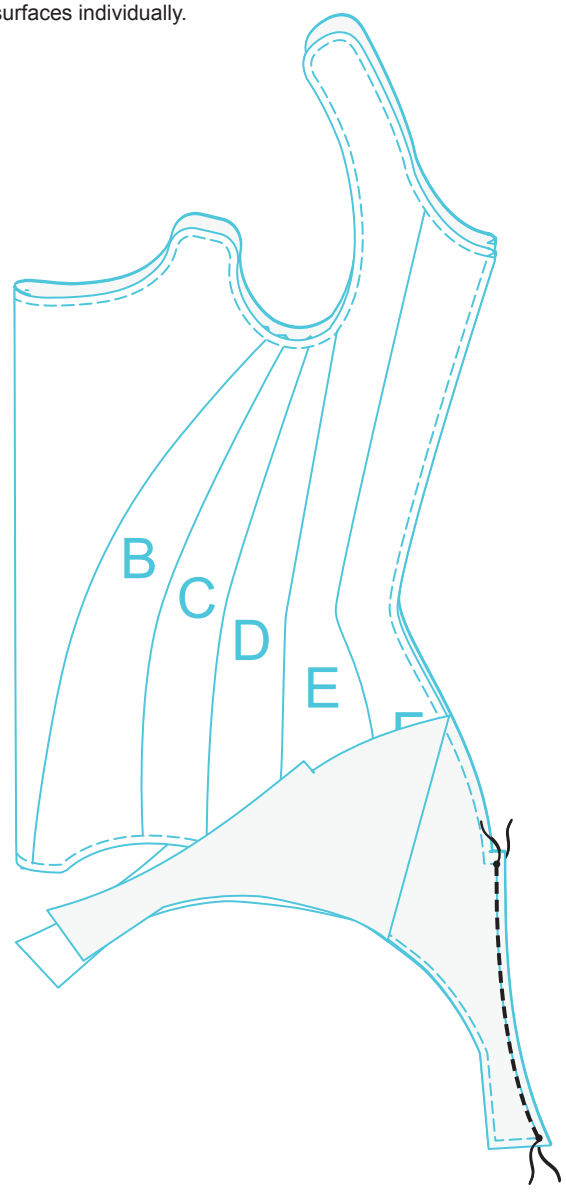
To thread your piping through the interior and exterior layers, simply attach your piping to a needle and thread. Make sure the thread is a very strong twine, otherwise it will break. Slide your needle through the two layers eye first and pull the piping/ cord through as you go. This might take some time. Make sure that you do not catch the inside of the channel or your piping will get stuck. Practise first to master this technique.



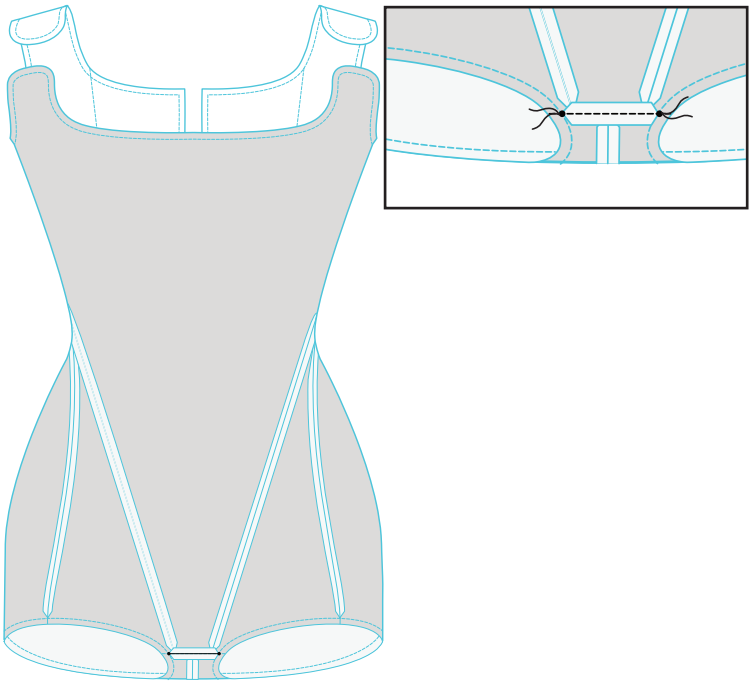
VIDEO TUTORIAL ON PIPING: http://www.ralphpink.com/archives/1881

JOINING THE CENTRE BACK

9.1 Attach both centre back seams of panel F. Start with the EXTERIOR SURFACE. Press open seams and snip to corner points. Then attach the centre backs of panel F for the INTERIOR SURFACE. Attach the interior and exterior surfaces individually.



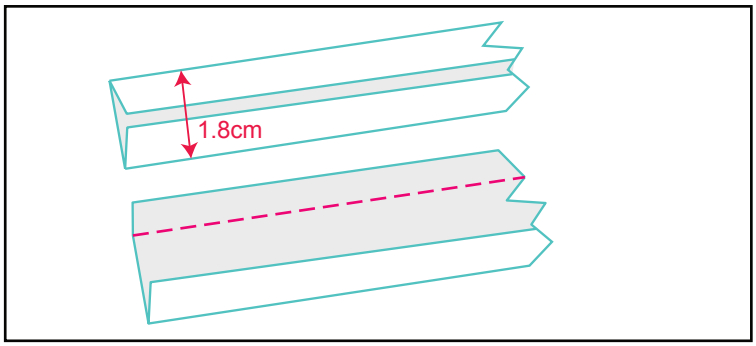
9.2 Attach the recently joined EXTERIOR back panel F to the EXTERIOR front panel A&B. Do the same for the INTERIOR surfaces to finish the crotch. Match notches, press open seams and snip to corner points.



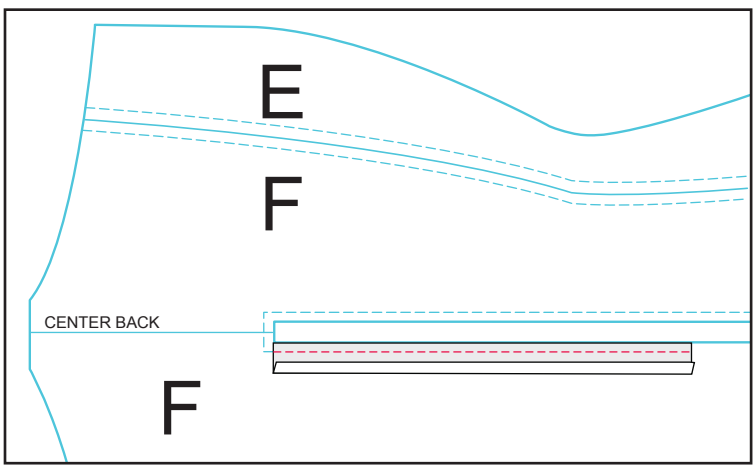
SEALING WITH BIAS BINDING

10.1 You will now need to finish the outside edge of your corset with bias binding. This will create a beautiful finish and hold your boning and piping in place. **Tip:** *There are plenty of haberdashers that supply pre-made widths of bias binding in a range of colours and finishes. We suggest you find one that matches the material of your corset, as it is far easier to use than homemade bias binding. If you would like to make your own bias binding, you will need a BIAS BINDING MAKER. These can also be found at most haberdashers or are available to buy online.*

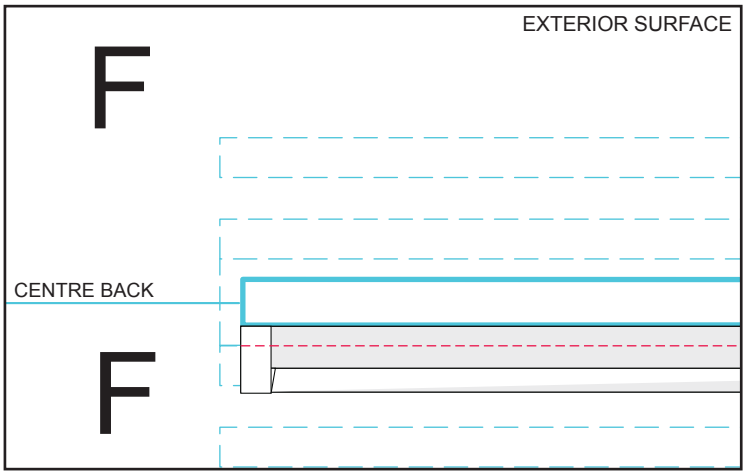
We recommend using a 1.8mm bias binding. Please note that this is the width of the bias binding when folded. The bias binding should measure double this when unfolded. This will give you a bias binding finish of just under 1cm on either side of your corset. Although, you can use any size you wish.



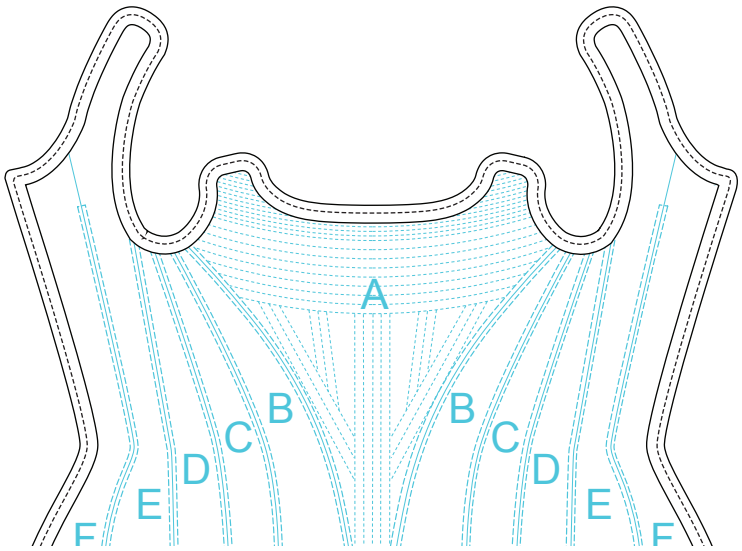
10.2 At the centre back, unfold and place your bias binding wrong side up against the edge of your seam allowance (on the EXTERIOR surface of the corset). Make sure that the fold or groove matches up with the seam allowance. The pink dashed line indicates the line you will sew when attaching your bias binding to the corset.



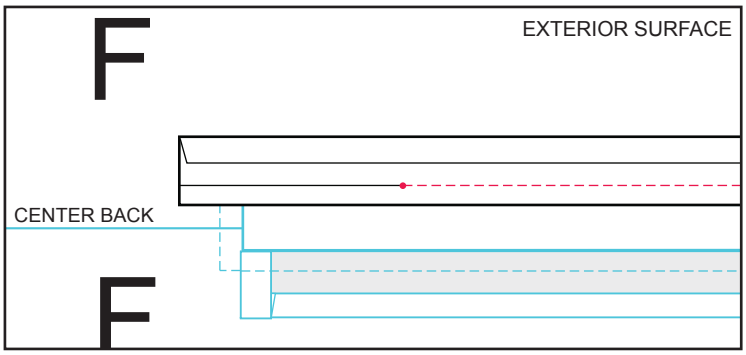
10.3 Before attaching your bias binding to your corset, fold over a 1cm section at the starting point. The folded edge should line up with the bottom edge of the centre back.



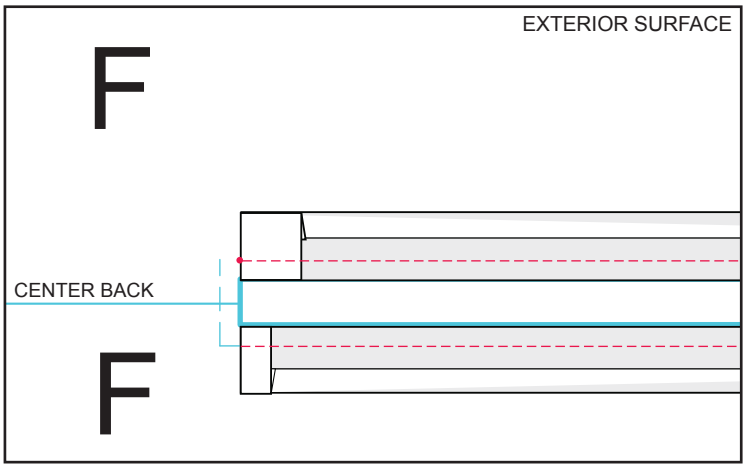
10.4 Gradually placing the bias binding as you go, stitch all the way around the raw edge of the corset.



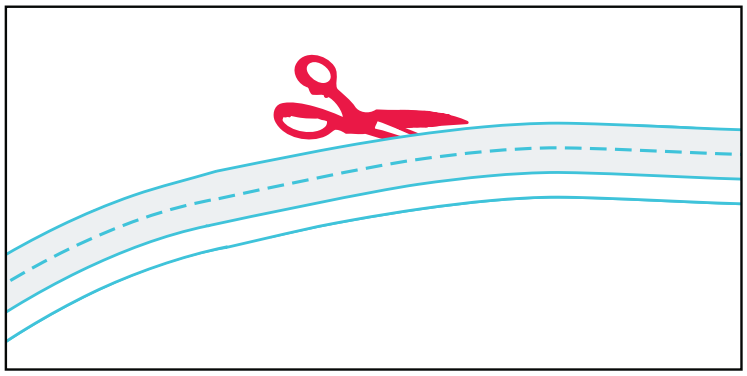
10.5 When you reach roughly 5cm away from the centre back on the opposite side, stop and trim excess bias binding to roughly 1.5cm past the finish point.



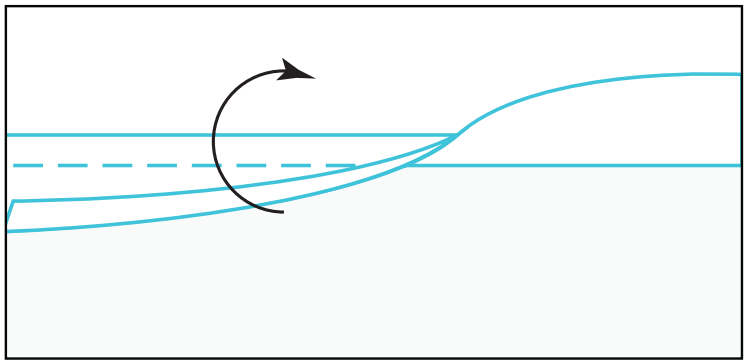
10.6 Fold the excess bias binding back and continue stitching until the finish point.



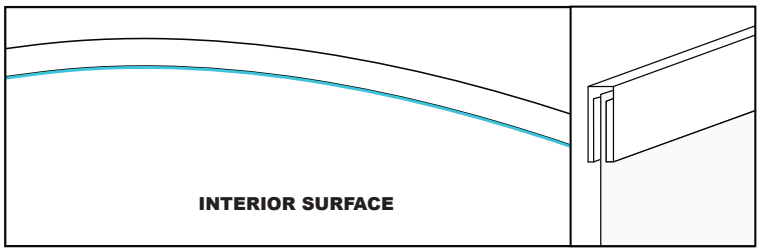
10.7 Once you have finished attaching the bias binding, you must make sure that the edge of your corset is smooth with no sharp or rough edges. It also needs to be trimmed to match the edge of your bias binding. Do this with sharp scissors. Try not to cut the corset edge shorter than the edge of the bias binding.



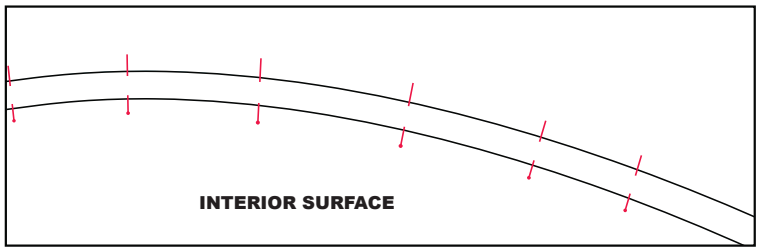
10.8 Now fold the unattached edge of the bias binding towards the seam allowance and press lightly with an iron (no steam). This will help when folding your bias binding over to the INTERIOR surface of your corset.



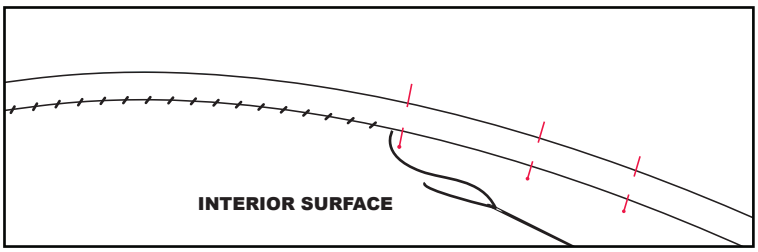
10.9 Fold the bias binding over the seam allowance so that it is visible on the INTERIOR surface.



10.11 Using pins, temporarily secure the folded bias binding to the INTERIOR surface of your corset.

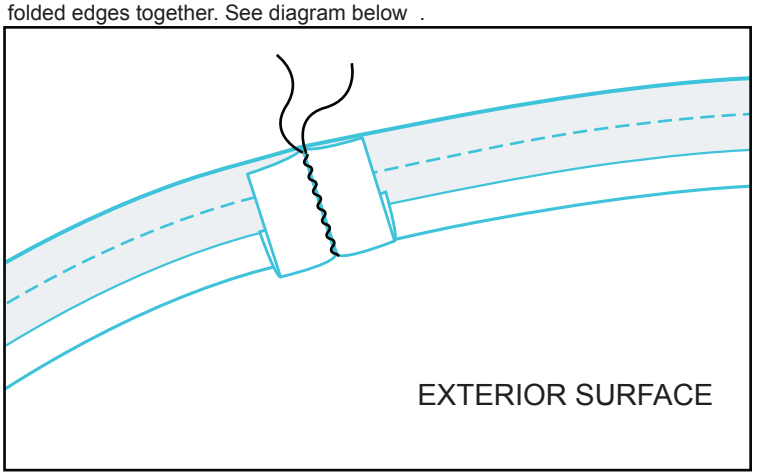


10.12 To finish, fell stitch the pinned edge of your bias binding to the interior surface of your corset all the way round from start point to finish point.

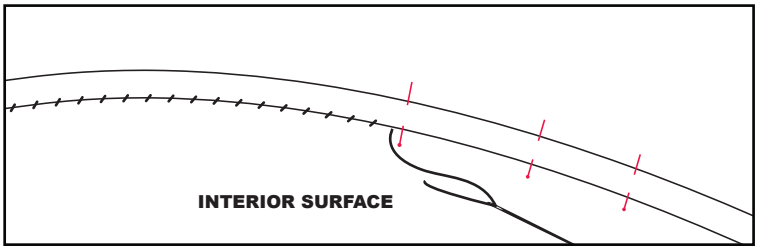


LEG HOLES:

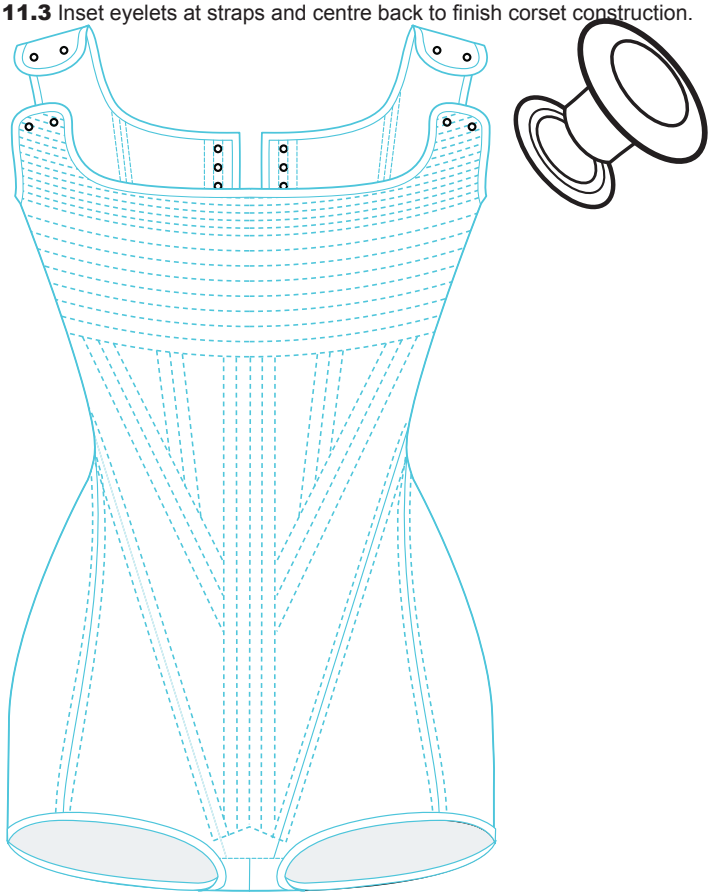
11.1 Attach bias binding as before, placing the bias binding edge against the leg hole edge (exterior surface). Fold the edge of the bias binding and stitch the bias binding all round the leg hole, stoping 5cm from the end point. Match up the folded edges of the bias binding. Using a needle and thread stitch the folded edges together. See diagram below .



11.2 Fold the unattached edge of the bias binding to the interior surface, press and pin. Then, using a fell stitch, secure the bias binding to the interior surface as before.



11.3 Inset eyelets at straps and centre back to finish corset construction.



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