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Freehand Fashion: Learn To Sew The Perfect Wardrobe - No Patterns Required!



Synopsis

Before appearing on the BBC's The Great British Sewing Bee, Chinelo Bally had never used a sewing pattern. She wowed the judges with her ability to create stylish, fitted garments using a freehand cutting method that was taught to her by an aunt. In Freehand Fashion, Chinelo lets us in to the secret of how she does it. Using a series of basic garment blocks, she explains how this innovative technique can be used to create a whole wardrobe of fashionable clothes that will fit every shape and size - with no patterns required. Based on a traditional Nigerian technique, Chinelo has developed her own freehand cutting method. The emphasis is on the individual's own body measurements, and getting the perfect fit. This is a surprisingly simple technique that anyone can learn. No fancy equipment is needed - just a sewing machine, measuring tape, chalk and of course a good pair of scissors. Using step-by-step illustrations, the book shows how to draft, cut and construct the five basic blocks that are used - either singly or in combination - to make every item of clothing in the wardrobe. Once you have your basic blocks, you are ready to tackle the projects - practical garments that are fashionable, modern, stylish and versatile. There are tops, skirts, day dresses and eveningwear. This is an exciting sewing technique that will be brand new to most people, even experienced dressmakers. There really are no limits - and the beauty of this technique is that it can be applied to any body shape.

Book Information

File Size: 27768 KB

Print Length: 192 pages

Publisher: Pavilion (October 15, 2015)

Publication Date: October 15, 2015

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B016IIUVN8

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Not Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #81,040 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #16 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Arts & Photography > Graphic Design > Commercial > Fashion Design

Customer Reviews

This book is excellent. It's apparent that the last reviewer made a mistake by giving this book only one star. I first heard of Chinelo Bally from watching recordings of the "Great British Sewing Bee" season 2 on YouTube. Unfortunately almost all of the episodes have been deleted but you can still find them online. Anyhow, this book teaches you how to design your own clothing without a pattern. She gives a number of projects to start you off with that are based on your own measurements and preferences. For instance, you get to select the fabric, how long or short it will be, etc. You do take a lot of measurements, but that's what helps you to get a good fit. But the real gem in the book is that it teaches you the principles of how to take a design that you have in your head and create it to fit your own body.

I'm an advanced sewer and I really wanted to give this book five stars. However, she's really showing you how to create a moulage and turn it into a garment, and while it's a great way to build a wardrobe, some of her instructions are exasperating. For example, I was looking to make the pencil skirt moulage, and while she tells you to cut on the side seam line, she doesn't tell you what she's using as a seam allowance. There's mention made of a sa in the actual skirt construction, but unless you know what you're doing it's confusing. She also doesn't tell you whether she's factoring ease in the moulage, or in the skirt. I love Chinelo. She was one of my favorite contestants out of all the GBSB series and I was really rooting for her to win. I just wish she'd been a little more clear in the way she lays this book out so someone trying her technique isn't sorting through pages for basic information or making a moulage that leaves out some important measurements.

This does show you that it is not only possible but satisfying to produce a garment you will love without a commercial pattern of any kind. In addition, once the fabric blocks are made you need to mark them and store them with your measurements at that time. We all change over time so those changes will have to be compensated for when sewing. As a sewer of many years learning new ways or new ideas always fascinated me and this book has revolutionized my whole process. IT is so easy to DIY with these methods. If I get stuck on creating NEW fashions after learning this method I simply look online to see how they used to do it or how someone else has done it. Once you feel comfortable with this method, the sky is the limit for your sewing fashions. If you struggle

with fittings or construction this book will change how you feel about all of that. Keep in mind that pants are not in this book at all. My only dislike comes from the fact that I need someone else to help me with the measurements. This can be frustrating if the helper is less enthusiastic thereby less careful than you need. It is best to pick another enthusiastic seamstress like yourself.

I really like this book. This technique is what I'd call a "trade" method of producing clothing - if you are a tailor or seamstress who has random customers walking in your shop and telling you they need a dress for tonight, this is how you get it done. Many places in the world get all their clothes done this way. I think this is a fantastic method to stretch an experienced sewist's skill set or an adventurous beginner to start out with. I only gave 4 stars because I think you will need other books as reference along with this one, like a flat pattern reference and a sewing reference.

Good work Chinelo! I'm really proud that you get to share Nigeria's unique sewing secret - cut the fabric without patterns and sew chic garments. I have enjoyed reading the book. My skills are intermediate and I use patterns a lot but I have also sewn without patterns. I will update this review as soon as I sew some of the styles in the book.

I just read it--didn't try this method yet. I was expecting more instruction in the actual drafting methods--not how to make specific garments that she selected for this book. The book is beautiful and very explicit in what is presented.

As a self-taught seamstress, I find this book very well written and easy to follow. Chinelo makes my sewing life easier because I am not a fan of using patterns as I sew. I love using my own freedom and creativity to create garments. This book helps me to improve my drafting/measuring skills.

Absolutely perfect for all levels. This book has a wealth of knowledge and I am excited to learn the Nigerian Freehand Method. I HATE patterns. I would love a follow up that expands on how to draft pants.

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