

THIS MONTH'S MERIT BADGE:  
SWIMWEAR TECHNIQUES



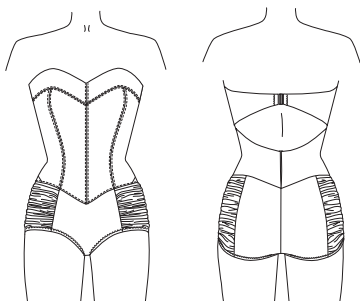
# Ruched Swimsuit Bottom

AN ESTHER SWIMSUIT EXPANSION PATTERN



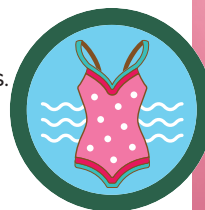
Meet Esther! This fabulous swimsuit pattern is new from Charm Patterns, and to celebrate we're making this month at Camp Gertie all about sewing swimwear. We've designed an exclusive pattern expansion for you: a ruched design that captures everything I love about vintage bathing suit designs—a full coverage silhouette and seamlines to flatter your curves. And don't forget that you'll be earning your merit badge in swimwear techniques with this month's video. Learn to sew the entire Esther Swimsuit from start to finish with all my favorite tips and tricks. We hope you'll love diving into sewing your own swimwear!

xoxo, *Gertie*



**This month:** If you're in a merit badge tier, your swimsuit badge is coming soon! Congrats on building up your skills. In this month's video, you'll learn:

- sewing the Esther Swimsuit from start to finish
- underlining for structure
- techniques for bust support
- and much more!

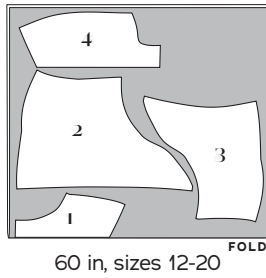
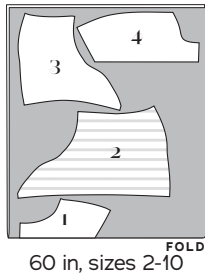


# REQUIRED YARDAGE & CUTTING LAYOUTS

**Note:** All pattern pieces are shown in a “without nap” layout. You may need additional yardage for directional prints, stripes, plaids, and other prints that need to be matched across seamlines.

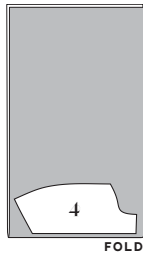
## Main Fabric (1, 2, 3, 4)

	Sizes 2-10	Sizes 12-20
60 in	¾ yd 0.7 m	1 yd 0.9 m



## Lining (4)

	Sizes 2-10	Sizes 12-20
60 in	5/8 yd 0.6 m	5/8 yd 0.6 m



## Power mesh (1)

	Sizes 2-10	Sizes 12-20
60 in	3/8 yd 0.4 m	1/2 yd 0.5 m



# SEWING INSTRUCTIONS

## BEFORE SEWING

**Transferring marks:** Use dressmaker’s tracing paper and a tracing wheel to transfer all pattern markings to the wrong side (WS) of your fabric. Mark pattern notches by snipping into the seam allowance with the tip of your scissors.

**Seam Finishing:** Swimwear fabric doesn’t fray, so seam finishing isn’t necessary.

## NOTES

- 5/8-in (1.5 cm) seam allowances are included on all pattern pieces unless otherwise noted.
- If you prefer to finish your seams and don’t have a serger, consider using a zigzag or overlock stitch on your sewing machine.
- Use a stretch or jersey/ball point needle to avoid skipped stitches.
- Use a zigzag stitch on seams (2.5 mm wide by 2.5 mm long) and slightly stretch the fabric as you are sewing it (this will help retain stretch in the fabric).
- Be cautious when pressing swimwear fabrics. Irons can burn spandex/Lycra easily. Keep your iron on a synthetic setting.
- To reduce bulk, consider trimming away the power mesh from your seam allowances after underlining your fabric.

## BUY THE ESTHER SWIMSUIT PATTERN

[Charm Patterns.com/shop/esther-swimsuit](https://CharmPatterns.com/shop/esther-swimsuit)



## MATERIALS & NOTIONS

- Swimwear fabric
- Swimwear lining fabric
- Heavy power mesh
- Thread to match fabric
- 3/8-in swimwear elastic

## RESOURCES

Here are some of the fabrics and supplies I used for the samples and in the video tutorial. There are lots of places to purchase fabric, so this is solely a guide you can use as a reference. See the Charm Patterns blog for our full list of swimwear resources!

[Pink Swimwear Fabric](#)

[Aqua Seersucker](#)

[Pink Polka Dot Fabric](#)

[Power Mesh](#)

[3/8-in Swimwear Elastic for Legs](#)

[Lining Fabric](#)

[Charm Scout Flower Patches](#)

[Greenlee 722 Boning Cutters](#)

[Pink Protective Eyewear](#)



## FABRIC NOTES

This swimsuit was designed for swimwear fabrics combined with a layer of heavy power mesh. We recommend using swimwear fabric with 80% nylon/polyester and 20% spandex/Lycra. It is also important to use the recommended heavy power mesh as an underlining where recommended to achieve the intended fit. Your two fabrics layered together should have a stretch percentage of 35–50%. You will also need specialty swimwear lining. This pattern is not recommended for woven fabrics. This pattern is for spandex knits only.

## PATTERN PIECES

### 1. Ruched Bottom Front

Cut 1 fabric on fold, 1 power mesh on fold

### 2. Ruched Bottom Side

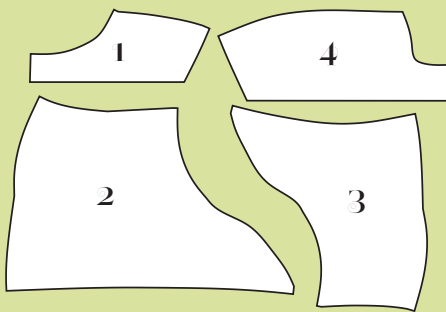
Cut 2 fabric

### 3. Ruched Bottom Side Stay

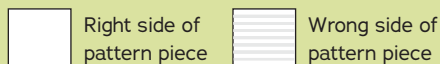
Cut 2 fabric

### 4. Ruched Bottom Back

Cut 2 fabric, 2 lining



## KEY TO LAYOUTS



Be sure to note whether the pieces are cut on a double or single layer of fabric. For a double layer, there will be a note indicating FOLD on the layout.



## SEWING INSTRUCTIONS

Using the Esther Swimsuit pattern, sew your bodice following the Esther instructions. Next, construct your ruched-side bottom following the steps below.

**1. Underline Ruched Bottom Front (1) with power mesh and Ruched Bottom Back (4) with lining fabric:** pin the power mesh/lining pieces to the outer fabric pieces, WS together. Baste at ½-in (1.3 cm) seam allowance, using a machine zigzag stitch.

**2. Gather Ruched Bottom Side (2):** using a 4-mm to 5-mm-long gathering stitch, sew two lines of stitching within seam allowance on the side seams, ending at circle mark on long side. Sew the first line of gathering stitches ½ in (1.3 cm) from the raw edge and the second line ¼ in (6 mm) from the raw edge. Pull up bobbin threads to gather so that the Ruched Bottom Side is the same length as the Ruched Side Stay (3) pieces. Gathers will be concentrated between circle marks.

**3. Pin Ruched Bottom Side pieces to each Ruched Side Stay pieces, WS together.** Baste.

**4. Pin each ruched side panel to the Ruched Bottom Front (1) at the side-front seams, right sides (RS) together.** Stitch. Press seam allowances open.

**5. Pin Ruched Bottom Back (4) pieces RS together at center back.** Stitch. Press seam allowances open.

**6. Pin ruched front bottom unit to back bottom unit at side seams, RS together.** Stitch. Press seam allowances open.

**7. Sew crotch seam:** pin crotch seam RS together. Stitch. Topstitch seam allowances ¼ in from the seamline. Trim away excess.

**8. Cut elastic for leg openings:** cut two pieces of elastic using the chart below as a guide.

	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
Elastic (Cut 2)	17 in 432 cm	18.5 in 47 cm	20 in 50.8 cm	21.5 in 54.6 cm	23 in 58.4 cm	24.5 in 62.2 cm	26 in 66 cm	27.5 in 70 cm	29 in 73.7 cm	30.5 in 77.5 cm

**9. Apply elastic to leg openings:** fold elastic in half lengthwise to find midway point and mark with a pin. Fold swimsuit leg opening in half lengthwise to find midway point and mark with a pin. Match midway points on elastic and swimsuit and pin together with elastic on WS of leg opening. Place ends of elastic so they are 5/8 in (1.5 cm) from swimsuit crotch opening (this prevents sewing elastic into the seam allowances). Using a wide zigzag (4–5 mm), stitch down the center of the elastic, while stretching it to fit the swimsuit leg, matching the edge of the elastic with the raw edge of the swimsuit. Fold the leg opening edge and elastic to the WS of the swimsuit so the elastic is hidden. Stitch again using a 2.5-mm-wide zigzag, centering your stitches on the inner edge of the elastic.

**10. Staystitch waist on ruched bottom:** using a narrow zigzag and 1/2-in (1.3 cm) seam allowance, stitch center front and center back area, pivoting at v-point. Clip to point on center front and center back.

**11. Pin ruched bottom to bodice,** spreading clips to match opposing v shape on bodice and matching notches and seams. Stitch.

Finish sewing your swimsuit by following the Esther instructions for attaching the inner bra to the bodice front.

*Enjoy your cute new Esther Swimsuit!*



## PATTERN PIECE LOCATION GUIDE

Here is a list to help you locate the pattern pieces on the letter-size tiled pages and A0 pattern sheets.

The tiled pieces and A0 sheets are included as separate pdf files as part of this digital pattern.

PC#	Piece Name	Tiled	A0
1	Ruched Bottom Front	11-12	1
2	Ruched Bottom Side	1-3, 6-9	1
3	Ruched Bottom Side Stay	3-5, 9-10	1
4	Ruched Bottom Back	13-15	1

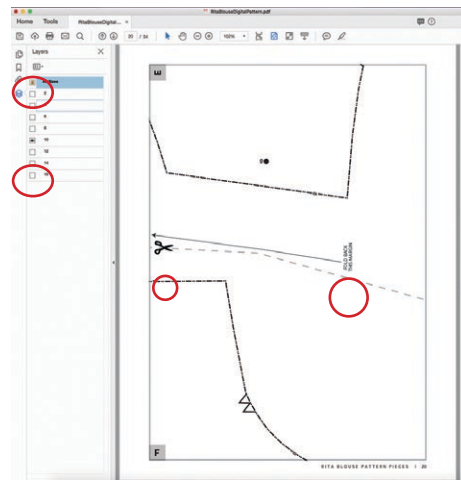
## HOW TO USE THIS PATTERN

The pattern pieces are tiled so you can print them on Letter (8 1/2" x 11") or A4 size paper. You can also send the A0 pattern sheet PDF to a local or online printer (like [www.pdfplotting.com](http://www.pdfplotting.com)) to print on large sheets (36" x 48" for U.S. or A0 for international).

This pattern includes size layers. To get the best results, open either the Tiled or A0 pattern pieces PDF in Acrobat Reader.

Open the Layers Palette (View>Show/Hide>Navigation Panes>Layers) and hide all of the layer(s) except for the ones you want to print by clicking on the eye icon.

The All Sizes layer has general pattern information and will always print.



## WORKING WITH THE TILED PIECES

Go to File>Print and change the page range to the pages you need for the pieces you've chosen (see Pattern Pieces Printing Index). Make sure the Page Sizing settings to 100% or Actual Size. Test this after printing by measuring the 1" test box on the first page of the bodice pattern pieces.

Cut apart any pattern pieces that share a page by cutting on the gray long dashed lines. Then fold back the page margins on each page as directed.

Tape the pages together, butting up the folded page edges with the gray margin lines, matching up the letters in gray boxes.

## MORE FROM GERTIE

[On Instagram:](#) Stay in the loop and get inspired.

[On YouTube:](#) Learn beginner and advanced sewing skills and techniques through my tutorials, watch episodes of my Gertie's World series, and join regular live streams.

[On Patreon:](#) Access monthly patterns and tutorial videos.

[At CharmPatterns.com:](#) Shop my sewing patterns and accessories.

