



Taking in the Waistband of a Skirt

How to shorten the waistband of a skirt to fit you and adjust the body of the skirt to match.

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INTRODUCTION

This guide will teach you how to take in the waistband of a skirt that is too large. The instructions work best for skirts that are loose, like rectangle skirts or pleated skirts, and that have a separate waistband and a lining. You will need basic sewing skills, including the ability to sew using a sewing machine.

The guide uses these terms:

- *seam*: a line of stitching that joins two or more pieces of cloth
- *seam ripper*: a tool used to remove stitches
- *seam allowance*: the distance between the stitch line and the edge of the cloth
- *right side*: the “front” of the fabric; the printed side
- *wrong side*: the “back” of the fabric

TOOLS:

- [Sewing Machine](#) (1)
- [Sewing Pins](#) (1)
- [Seam Ripper](#) (1)
- [Measuring Tape](#) (1)
- [Thread](#) (1)

Step 1 — Waistband



- Try on the skirt to see how big it is.
- Gather the excess fabric at one of the side seams.

Step 2



- Use a measuring tape to measure the excess fabric.
- With straight pins, mark the length of your measurement on either side of the side seam.

Step 3

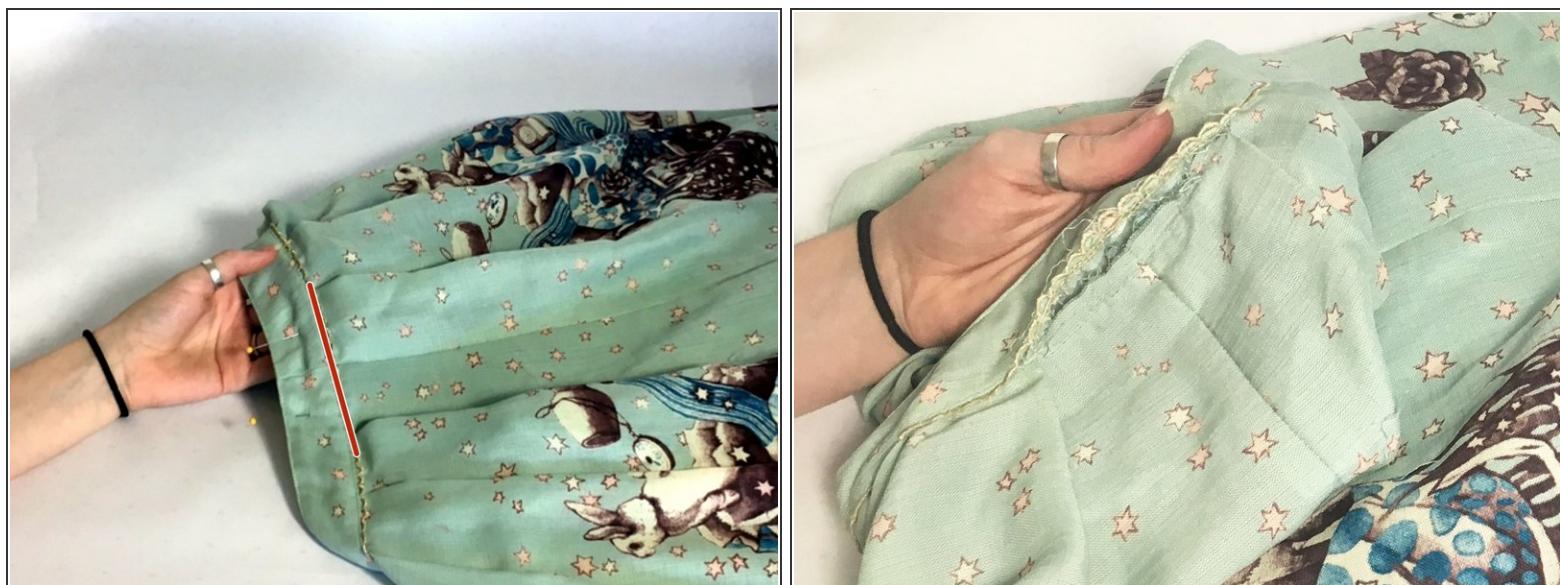


- Use a seam ripper to separate the waistband from the lining in the area between your straight pins. You should also remove the seam an inch past the pins on either side.

(i) If you've never used a seam ripper before, read [this guide](#).

(i) Red arrows indicate the length of the measurement. Orange arrows indicate the length of seam ripped.

Step 4



- Use your seam ripper to separate the waistband from the skirt.
- As before, stop approximately one inch past your straight pins.

Step 5



- Remove the stitches from the top of the waistband, about one inch past your measurement on either side.

Step 6



- Flip the outer waistband inside out.
- Pinch the waistband at the side seam with the right sides of the fabric facing together.

Step 7



- On the waistband, use a straight pin to mark the length of your original measurement from the side seam.
- Sew across the waistband at the location you pinned.

⚠ Make sure to remove the pin before sewing and back stitch at the beginning and end so the stitches don't unravel.

- Trim the excess fabric with fabric scissors or a rotary cutter.

Step 8



- Repeat steps 6 and 7 on the inner waistband.

⚠ Make sure the two waistbands are the same length before you sew the inner one shorter.

Step 9



- Press the *seam allowance* on the new side seam flat and fold the top and bottom down.
- Align the top edges of the inner and outer waistbands with the wrong sides facing together. Use straight pins to hold the fabric in place.
- Stitch across the top of the waistband, right next to the edge. Make sure to begin where the original stitching ends to avoid leaving holes in the waistband.

Step 10



- Turn the skirt inside out.
- Pin the pleats of the skirt to the waistband so the skirt and the waistband are the same length.
- Try to follow the location of the original pleats, but make them deeper to account for the excess fabric.
- Stitch the skirt and waistband together.

Step 11



- Mark where the new side seam on the waistband matches up with the side seam of the lining.
- Stitch from that point to the seam line on the lining, forming a slight curve.
- Trim the excess fabric.

Step 12



- With right sides together, match the side seam of the lining to the side seam of the waistband and secure with straight pins.
- Stitch the lining to the inner waistband.
- Turn the skirt right side out.
- Top stitch along the bottom edge of the outer waistband to secure it to the inner waistband.

⚠ Make sure the seam allowance between the lining and the inner waistband is on the waistband side of the seam so the top stitching will secure it.

Step 13



- Stitch both waistbands together, following the side seam from the outside.

Your skirt is now finished! Wear it with pride.