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Pintucked Prairie Dress



Adding your own special touch to any dress pattern is especially easy when you turn to Baby Lock's assortment of feet and attachments for your serger! This darling dress boasts dimensional accents to the sleeves using the Belt Loop Binder, a touch of decorative thread at the top of the gathered hem and piping around the neckline and bodice for a truly custom touch. Look for fabrics that complement each other in color and scale of print to give it a homey feel.

Skill Level: Confident Intermediate

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Supplies:

- [BLSP8 - Baby Lock Splendor Machine](#)
- BLE8-RF - Ruffling Foot
- [BLE8-CF - Cording Foot](#)
- BLE8-PFG - Pintuck Foot with Guide
- [BLE8-S12 - Belt Loop Binder Foot](#)
- [BLE8-CCF - Cover Chain Foot](#)
- [Baby Lock Sewing Machine](#)
- ESG-ZF – Narrow Zipper Foot
- [McCall's M5793](#)
- Fabric per the instructions on the pattern
- 4 Cones Madeira Premium Serger Thread to match fabric for serging
- 2 Spools Madeira Decora No. 12wt. thread in a color to match or contrast with fabric
- 1 Package of Dritz Buttons to cover in size of your choice; 3 buttons were used in this project.

Getting Creative:

This project comes together easily for someone who has sewing experience and isn't afraid to try their hand at discovering new techniques on a serger. Traditionally made Pintucks require a twin needle and marking your fabric. Making Pintucks with a serger is easily done by setting up for a narrow cover hem and using the included guide with the BLE8-PFG Pintuck foot. For added ease, use the width of the foot to perfectly space your pintucks – no need for laborious marking of your fabric! Equally easy is using the BLE8-CF Cording Foot to make custom covered piping for accent areas. Be sure to look for cording that can glide easily under the foot. You will be amazed at the finished product as you will have clean finished edges that are ready for inserting in all the places you want to draw attention to.

The Instructions below will highlight all the custom touches that were done on the serger to create the dress. Read through each of the specialty techniques. Then, follow the instructions in pattern to cut out and sew the dress and add the touches when you get to that place in the pattern. Enjoy and have fun!

Instructions:

1. **Pintucked Bodice** – Using a piece of pattern tracing material, create a new full pattern piece for the entire bodice. Most patterns have the pattern in half and ask you to place the pattern on a folded piece of fabric. You will need to make a full template of the bodice. Place the bodice pattern piece over a piece of fabric and cut a rectangle large enough to exceed the pattern piece by 3” all around. Start by making pintucks on the right-hand side of the center. Find the center of the fabric and press lightly to create a center mark. Place your Cover Chain foot on the machine with C2 & C3 Needles

threaded and the Guide on the bed of the machine. Refer to the instructions that came with your Pintuck Foot to help. Stitch down the full length of the fabric while placing the left-hand side of the foot on the center pressed line. Continue to make rows of pintucks on the right-hand side by placing the left-hand side of the foot against the previously stitched tuck. The number of rows that you will stitch should be determined by the size of your pattern piece. It isn't necessary to tuck the entire piece as the area that is under the armhole will not be seen when the garment is worn. **Pro Tip:** Once the tucks have been completed on the right side of the center, turn the fabric and stitch on the left-hand side of the bodice but this time, begin at the bottom of the fabric. This will ensure that the tucks get pressed towards their sides of the center. If all the pintucks get stitched from the same direction on both sides, it won't look right.



2. **Sleeves** – Create several strips of narrow belt loops using the BLE8S12 Belt Loop Binder. **Pro Tip:** Cut the end of your fabric strip into a point for easy feeding into the track. Remember to always begin stitching on fabric when setting up for a Cover/Chain stitch. Use regular serger thread for the C1 & C3 Needles and the looper.

Lay the sleeve pattern pieces on a table, making sure that you have the right side of the fabric facing up. Most sleeve patterns will have a notch where the center of the sleeve cap is. Use that mark as a reference point and fold and lightly press the center mark on both sleeves. Take a strip of the belt loop and cut it to match the length of the sleeve, centering it over the pressed center line. Pin in place at the top and the bottom of the strip. Using a 1" wide ruler for spacing, place strips to the left and the right of the center strip until you have covered the sleeve pattern piece completely. You do not want to carry strips all the way to the edge of the sleeve pattern piece. Take the sleeve with the pinned strips to the sewing machine and baste the edges in place 1/2" from the edge. The strips will be stitched only at the top and the bottom and the rest of the strips will be free floating over the sleeve. As you can see in the photos below, this gives the sleeve a whimsical appearance as the strips float over the fabric below!

I did make one modification from the original pattern in that I created a cuff at the bottom of the sleeve rather than finishing it with elastic. Also, I added piping between the cuff and the sleeve to make it stand out more and add a bit of interest!



3. **Piping** – Stitching piping, or cording on a serger is so fast – why would you do it any other way? Thread your machine for a 4-thread overlock stitch, snap on the BLE8-CF and stitch, sandwiching your cording in the center of a 2” wide strip of fabric. The foot itself will guide the cording so that you have a tightly stitched piece of cording to place in all the areas you desire on your project. **Pro-Tip:** If you are placing piping on a straight piece of fabric, you can create the piping and stitch it to your fabric in one fell swoop. However, if you have curved edges you will have to resort to pulling out your sewing machine. I like to use the Narrow Zipper foot, part number ESG-ZF. It is perfect for getting piping around tiny collars, rounded necklines and just about anywhere else. For my project I placed piping around the neckline, bodice, and the cuff of the sleeve.



4. **Gathered Hem** – While the pattern didn't call for a gathered hem, I wanted one to show off some fun stitching and to draw attention to the bottom. 3” wide strips were cut of the small print, and I put a narrow-rolled hem on one side of the strip. Following the Quick Reference Threading Guide, set your Splendor up for a Narrow hem. Look for the stitch setting where the Stitch Selector is set to C. Place the Decora 12wt. thread in the Upper and Lower looper and set your stitch length to Rolled Hem setting and length at 1.5. You want to start at a little bit longer setting and then make it closer together once you have tested it on your fabric. Cut enough strips to have extra fabric. Whatever

does not get used at the bottom of the dress can be saved for another project – perhaps a matching pillow! After you’ve created your long strip, use the BLE8-RF Ruffling Foot to both gather and attach the ruffle all at the same time! Read the instructions that came with your foot or look for one of our videos on the SEWED site for those who learn best by watching a video! Here is a video where we show how to gather using the Baby Lock Accolade which is a very similar (retired) model, <https://babylock.com/gathered-together-serger-apron-on-the-baby-lock-accolade>

After the ruffle has been attached to the dress, stitch one row of a narrow cover hem using the same decorative thread. This time, we will be putting the Decora in the Chain looper and matching thread in the C2 & C3 Needles. Working from the back of the fabric, stitch right on top of the overlock stitches that were used to attach the gathered strip to the skirt. See the photo at the top of the project instructions for inspiration!



5. **Covered Buttons** – Not only are they easy to make, they create a cohesive look to your project that is truly custom. Follow the package instructions to make as many as you like. **Pro-Tip:** If your fabric is thin, you can often catch a hint of a shine from the metal button. To cut down on this, try painting the button with nail polish in a shade that is similar to your fabric to cut down on the shine.

Have fun playing with your Splendor and finding other ways to add texture and dimension to all of your projects!

For other exciting projects like this one, visit Baby Lock at www.babylock.com

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