



Ballet Costume

These instructions tell you how to sew a leotard, tutu, and ballet slippers for American Girl® Mini dolls, Our Generation® mini dolls and Lori mini dolls from Target, and sherralynsdolls' Twinkle. The pattern may fit other 6½" mini dolls although I have not tried them. Patterns for the leotard and slippers are included.

An experienced sewer can work with a beginner to create the costume. I do not recommend that a beginner tackle this project alone. Any parts of the costume made by the beginner should be sewn with needle and thread. I suggest that the beginner work on the leotard after it has been cut out. Sewing with tulle may be too frustrating for a beginner, although it can be sewn with a needle and thread. If the experienced sewer uses a machine, I suggest using a zigzag stitch and a wash away stabilizer when sewing four way stretch knits.

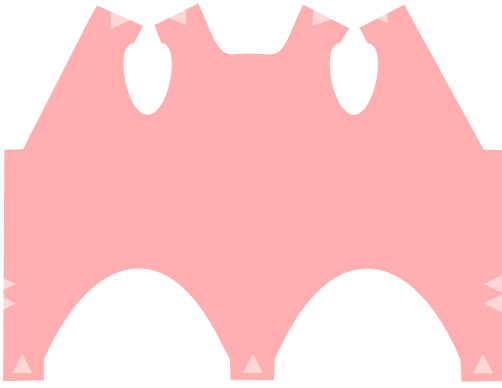
You will need four way stretch knit for the leotard and slippers. I cut up a pair of girls' leggings to make the pink leotard and slippers. I used cotton-spandex knit for the white leotard and slippers. You can also buy a swatch from [Spoonflower](#) with the leotard and slippers printed on it. You can find a link to Spoonflower at sherralynsdolls.com or go to Spoonflower and search for sherralynsdolls.

You will need a six inch high roll of tulle for the tutu. You will also need ⅛" (3 mm) elastic for the tutu. You will need ⅛" wide ribbon or 4 mm wide silk embroidery ribbon to lace the slippers. If you decide to add felt soles to the slippers, you will need a small piece of matching felt and glue to attach them.

To sew your project you will also need some basic sewing supplies: scissors, sewing pins, a ¾" (2 cm) safety pin, a needle (if sewing by hand), matching thread, and perhaps some glue if you want to add felt soles to the slippers or jewels to a leotard. If you plan to use a sewing machine, use a wash away stabilizer when sewing knits. You may want a pair of 4" (10 cm) scissors that cut fabric such as embroidery scissors to cut out the leotard. I glued three 7 mm craft store silver jewels to the white leotard and sewed a pink ribbon rose to the pink leotard.

And don't forget your mini doll! You will need her to try on your creations and to model them when your done.

Cutting and Sewing the Leotard

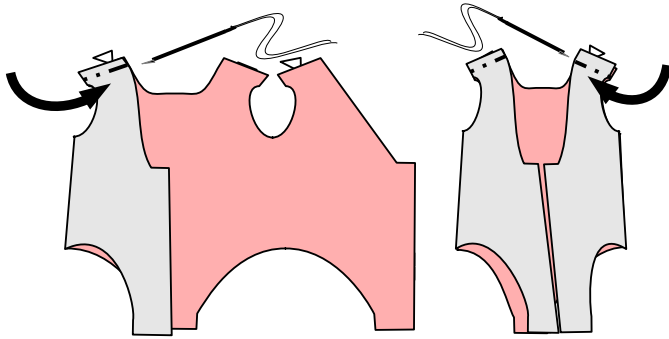


Cutting this delicate piece out is the hardest part of making the leotard. If this is a joint project between an experienced sewer and a beginner, the experienced sewer should cut it out.

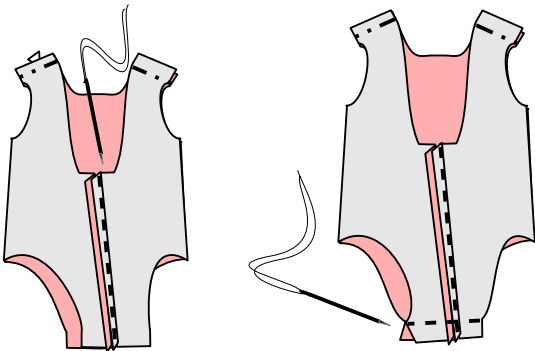
Cut out the leotard pattern from knit that you have selected. The small curves on this piece can be hard to cut so work carefully and use small, sharp scissors.

Sewing the leotard is easy enough for a beginner, if the beginner uses needle and thread.

Someone with more experience may choose to use a sewing machine, I suggest using a zigzag stitch and wash away stabilizer. The illustrations show needle and thread.



Begin by folding one side of the leotard to the back. With the right sides of the fabric touching, sew the front and back shoulder straps together using a $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3 mm) seam allowance. Do the same thing on the other side.



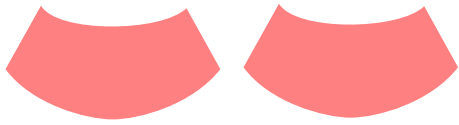
Next sew up the back of the leotard. Use the same $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3 mm) seam allowance as before.

And finally, sew the crotch.

Turn the leotard right side out and try it on your doll. The leotard in this picture was made from a Spoonflower swatch. You can see the pink tights which are also on the swatch.

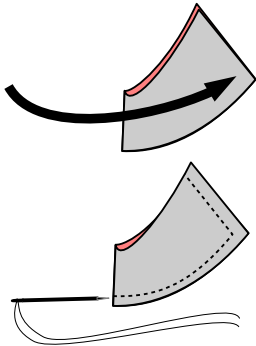


Making the Slippers

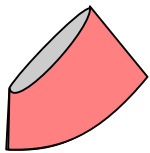


Cut out the slippers from your chosen knit.

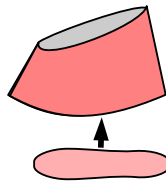
Right sides together, fold each slipper in half.



Set your machine to a narrow zigzag and place wash away stabilizer under the slipper. A beginning sewer should use needle and thread to sew each slipper together. Sew along the seam from toe to heel using a $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3 mm) seam allowance.

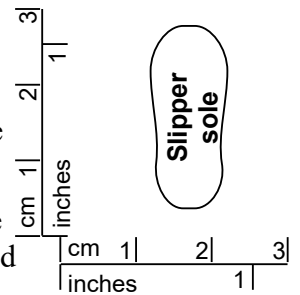


After sewing, turn the slippers right side out. Try them on your doll.



If you want to you, can. use this template to cut soles out of matching felt and glue them to the slippers

Check the scale to make sure the pattern is printed at the right size.



Use a 14" length of $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide ribbon or 4 mm wide silk embroidery ribbon for each slipper. Fold each length of ribbon in half and open it back out. Make sure that you can see the fold line. Attach each ribbon to the back seam of a slipper at the half way line that you have just marked.

Put the slippers on the doll and cross each ribbon on the doll's leg before tying a bow with each ribbon.

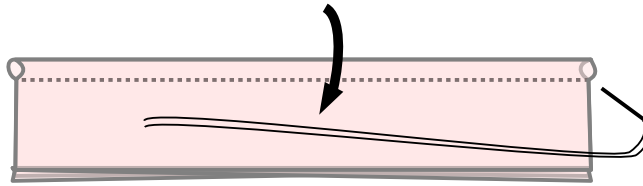


For active play, you might decide to use a shorter ribbon. Tie it in front without crossing the ribbon on the doll's leg.

Cutting and Sewing the Tutus



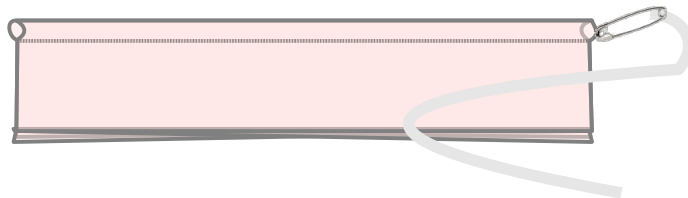
Cut 3 sixteen inch strips of tulle from a 6" tall spool.



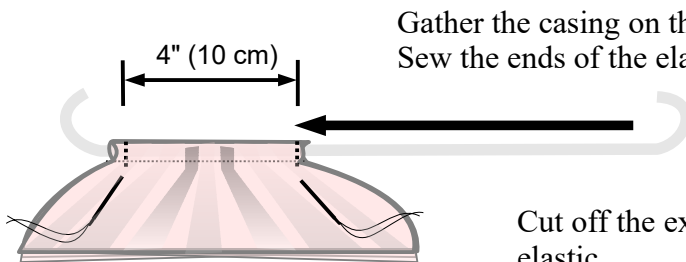
Stack the three strips.

Fold the strip stack in half lengthwise. The stack should measure 3"x16" (8x35 cm).

To make a casing, sew across the length of the tulle about 1/4" (6 mm) from the fold. If you are using a machine, you can use a straight stitch and skip the stabilizer while sewing tulle.

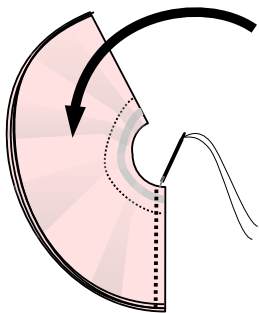
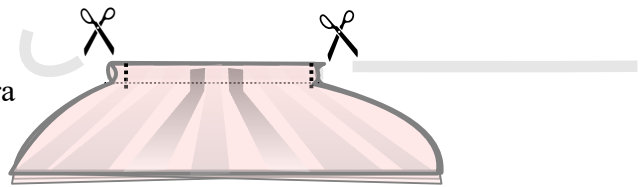


Attach the 1/8" (3mm) elastic to the safety pin and use it to push the elastic through the casing that you have just made.



Gather the casing on the elastic until the casing is about 4" (10 cm) long. Sew the ends of the elastic in place

Cut off the extra elastic.

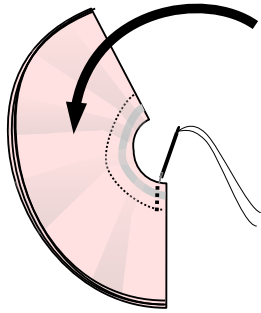


Skip to the next step if you plan to make the fluffy tutu.

For an easy tutu, fold the skirt in half and align the ends. Sew through all layers of tulle using a 1/4" (6 mm) seam.

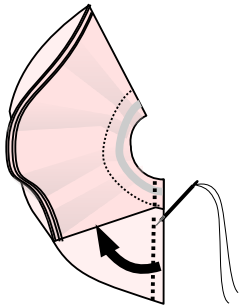
Turn the skirt right side out. This completes the easy tutu.

Fluffy Tutu

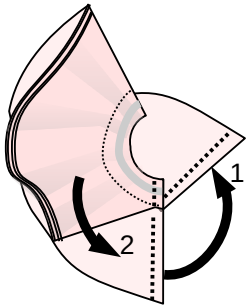


The fluffy tutu requires more sewing.

After you have adjusted the elastic in the casing and secured both ends, sew all the skirt layers together for $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6 mm). Start at the top of the tutu and stop at the casing seam.



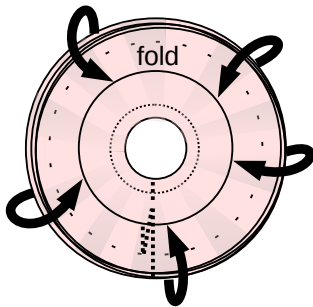
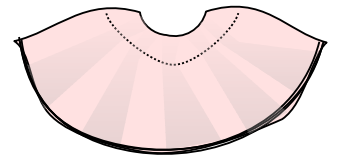
Separate the first left and right sides of the skirt from the other layers by pushing the other layers out of your way. Sew the first layers together.



Push the newly sewn layer up out of your way (arrow 1). Then separate the next left and right sides from the other layers (arrow 2). Sew these next layers together.

Separate and sew each layer of the tutu together.

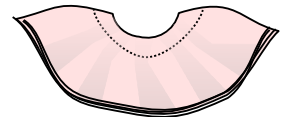
When you have sewn them all, turn the tutu right side out.



One at a time, turn a 1" (2 cm) hem in each layer of the tutu. This will make the tutu look smaller but fluffier.

No sewing is necessary for this step.

When you have finished, the doll will be ready to dance in the Nutcracker or her favorite ballet.





This doll is wearing the simple tutu over a leotard cut from a pair of girls' leggings. I added a store bought ribbon rose to the top of her leotard.



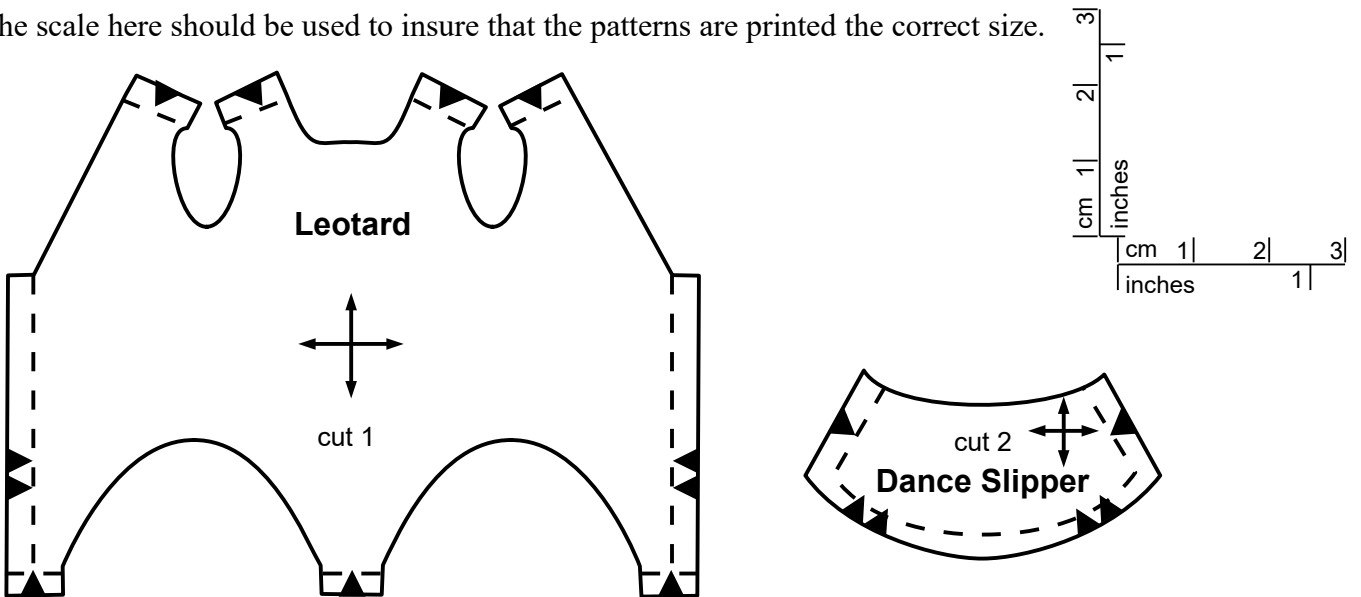
This doll is wearing a fluffy tutu over a leotard made from a Spoonflower swatch. The tights, slippers, and tiara were also printed on the swatch.



This doll is wearing a fluffy tutu over a leotard made from cotton spandex. I glued three 7 mm craft store jewels to the leotard.

Patterns

The scale here should be used to insure that the patterns are printed the correct size.



You can buy a swatch from [Spoonflower](https://www.spoonflower.com) with the leotard and slippers printed on it. You can find a link to Spoonflower at [sherralynsdolls.com](https://www.sherralynsdolls.com) or go to Spoonflower and search for sherralynsdolls. [Detailed instructions](#) for sewing up all the patterns on the swatch are available on the sherralynsdolls web site.

