

18th Century Dress Construction

By LyddiDesign Costumes

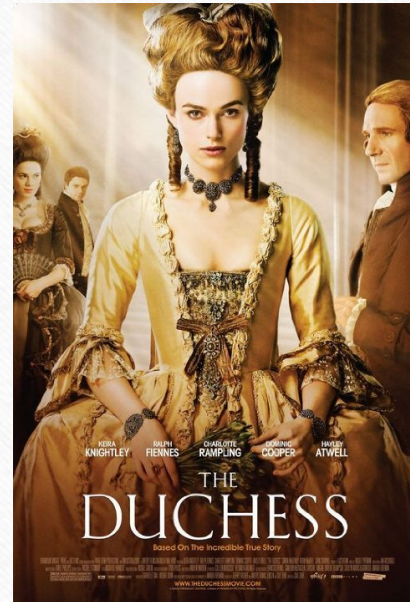
About Me

- Hello, my name is Lydia, and I'm obsessed with 18th century clothing.



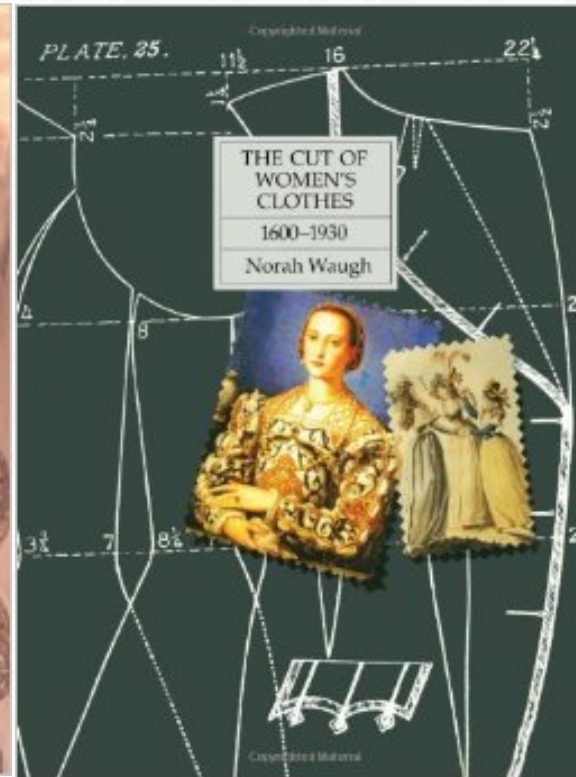
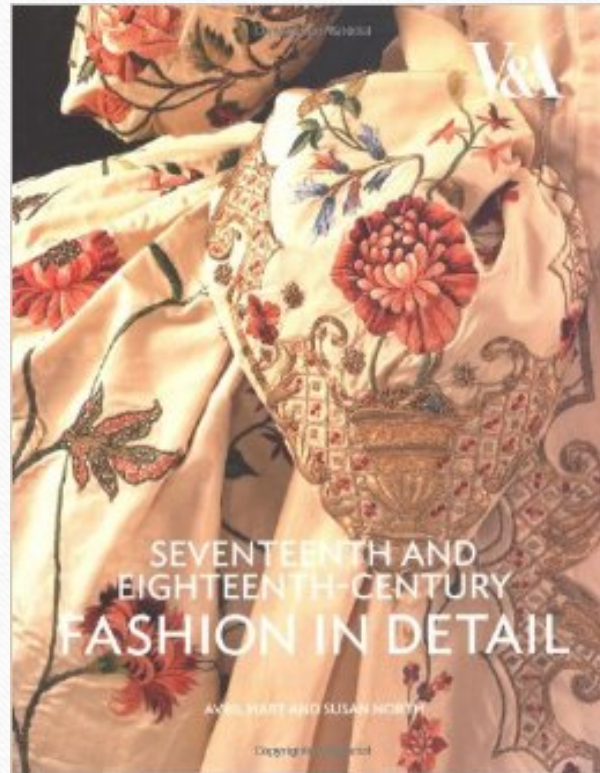
Inspiration

- Google search 18th century gowns
- Watch movies (my favorites:)
 - Marie Antoinette
 - The Duchess
 - A Royal Affair
- Go to reenactment towns like Colonial Williamsburg



Research

- Suggested books:
 - The Cut of Women's Clothes – Norah Waugh
 - Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Fashion in Detail – Avril Hart, Susan North
 - Costume Close-Up: Clothing Construction and Pattern, 1750-1790 - Baumgarten, Watson, Carr
- Suggested Blogs:
 - American Duchess americanduchess.blogspot.com
 - The Aristocat the-aristocat.livejournal.com



Style Overview



Robe à l'anglaise
En fourreau



Robe à la française
(sack back)



Robe à la polonaise



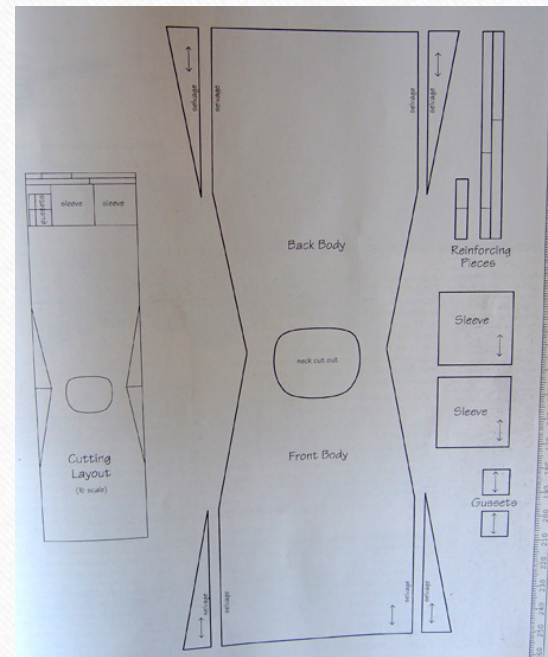
retroussée

Where to Start?

- Always underwear! Work your way from inner layers to outer layers.
 - Shift
 - Stays
 - Bumpads/pocket hoops/paniers
 - Petticoats
 - THEN your actual gown!

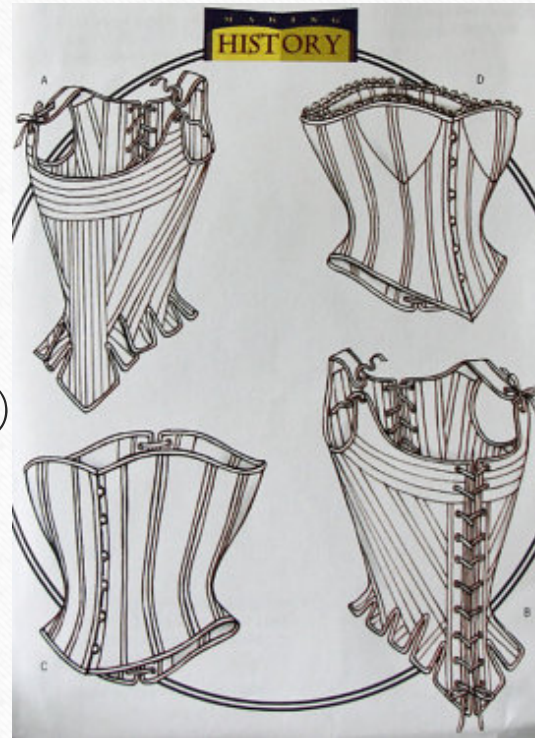
Shift

- Very simple to construct!
- Use very fine linen or muslin
- Use felled seams to prevent irritation
 - (It will be tight to your skin under the stays)



Stays

- Very not simple to construct!
 - NOT the same as a corset, has conical shape instead of hourglass
 - Pattern suggestion: Butterick B4254
 - Boning: baleen, reed, tip ties (debatable)
 - Eyelets were hand sewn, no grommets



Stays Construction

- Construction is different than modern corsets:
 - Outer layer and interlining are sewn together with boning channels, keeping pattern pieces separate
 - Then they are pieced together, often with bias/twill tape covering seams
 - Bound on top and bottom with silk, cotton, leather
 - Hand sew eyelets
 - Hand sew lining last



Structure

- Mid century – volume on the sides, very extreme. Big panniers
- Late – less volume on sides, pocket hoops are more casual solution. Eventually volume moves behind, bumrolls are used.
- Reed, steel hooping (corsetmaking.com)
- Suggested patterns:
 - Simplicity 3635 (panniers, out of print)
 - Simplicity 4092 (pocket hoops, ignore dress)

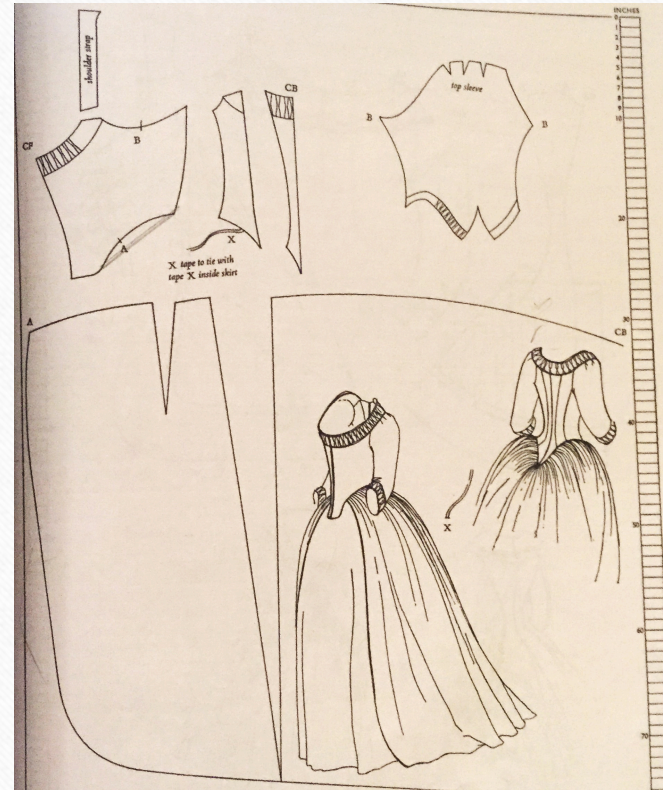


Petticoats

- Pile them on!
- The ugly petti – use whatever you have to build volume
- Final layer is fashion petticoat that is visible
- On gowns not worn polonaise, the back is often a cheaper fabric, and only the front is embellished



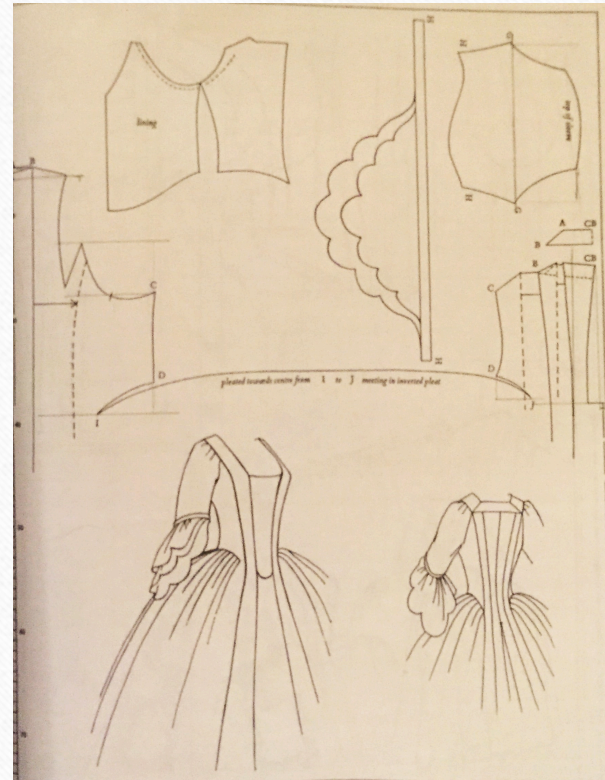
Robe à l'anglaise



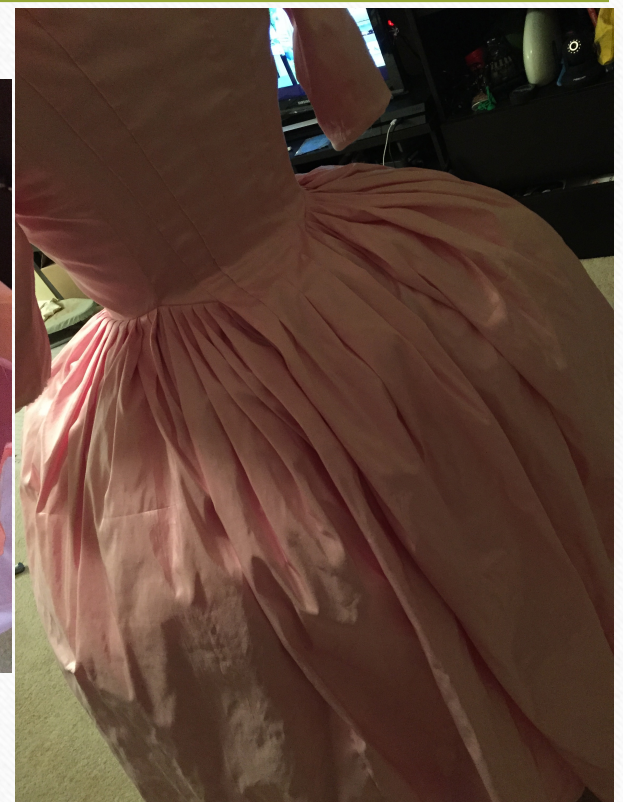
Robe à l'anglaise



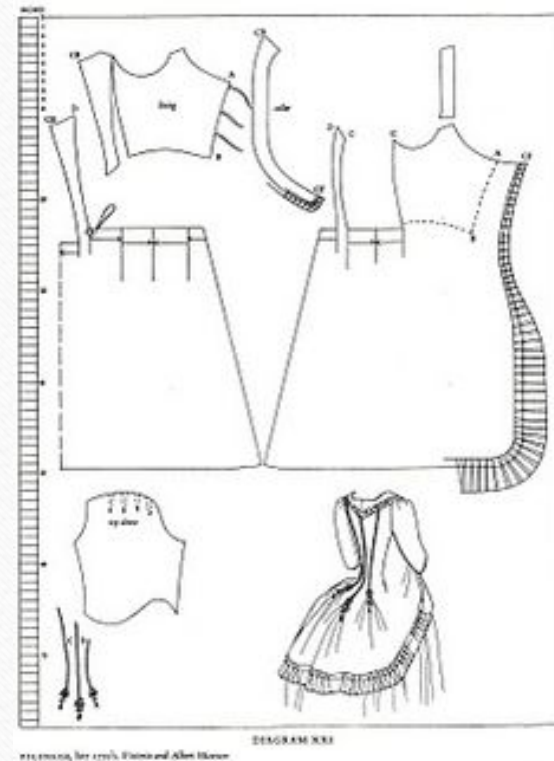
Robe à l'anglaise (en fourreau)



Robe à l'anglaise (en fourreau)



Polonaise



Polonaise



Sleeves



Questions!

