

# Shirring/Smocking Jersey

By: elegantmusings

<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/shirring-smocking-jersey>

---



Learn how to shirr jersey like I used on my variation of the Lydia pattern!

---

## Step 1



Many people asked about how I shirred the jersey along the neckline of my take on the Lydia pattern. Hopefully this tutorial will explain it a bit!!

Before you cut out your jersey, if your pattern does not have the extra fabric for the shirring, you

need to add it in. For my dress, I added 3½" along the center front fold (which meant there was 7" of ease added to the CF). For more fullness, or a wider section of gathering, just add more. I ended up with about 5" of shirring. I guessed and just got lucky on my first try! But I'd definitely recommend experimenting with a scrap of your knit material to see what the length to gathers ratio is.

[Note: you can see my Lydia variation here: <http://www.burdastyle.com/creations/show/3065>]

---

## Step 2



[Note: I am using white thread for the tutorial only; you'll want to match the thread to your fabric so it just disappears into the shirring!]

With your machine set up to stitch knits, insert your needle about ¼" from the raw edge (on my machine it's about the width of the presser foot; which I used as my guide). Stitch a line of basting stitches along the length of the area you want to gather. Leave a long tail at the end. Do not backtack!!

---

## Step 3



Using the edge of your presser foot as a guide, continue sewing lines of basting stitches parallel to the first line of stitches. I did about 6 rows of basting on my dress (one of which was eaten up in the seam allowance of the neckline binding).

---

#### Step 4



You'll have a ton of thread ends hanging out after you're done! But don't panic... we're going to secure those!

---

#### Step 5



One one end of the basting stitches, pull all the top threads to the backside. Begin knotting each set of bobbin and spool threads. Be sure to knot a couple times on each so they're nice and secure. (If you want another layer of protection against popped knots, just dab a small bead of Fray Check on each knot.) Continue until you have all the thread ends knotted on the wrong side of that end of the bastings ONLY.

---

#### Step 6



On the opposite end of basting (the one that still has threads on the front and back), gather all the top threads up and being pulling the basting. Be careful to just ease the fullness up as you gather all the fabric. Keep the threads as even as possible. Gather to the width desired.

---

### Step 7



Pull the top stitches to the back, and knot as you did at the other end.

---

### Step 8



Youâre done!!! While this shirring is pretty just by itself, did you know that this is the first step in English Smocking? So conceivably, if you wanted, you could add some decorative smocking stitches in coordinating embroidery thread!! Give it a try (there are a ton of stitches here: <http://www.geocities.com/Wellesley/3351/smkstch.html>)!!

The variations of using shirring on jersey are endless. Not only is it great for neckline details and controlling extra fullness, but why not use it along the waistline, or sleeve heads, or even as pretty cuffs?!

I hope this explains everything well enough; please feel free to comment if youâve got a question!

---

**BurdaStyle**

*Shirring/Smocking Jersey*