

# Square Heart Neckline

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<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/square-heart-neckline>

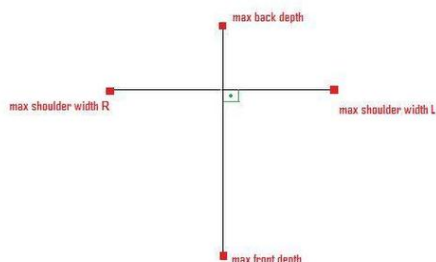
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Whether its a top or a dress, you can try this – romantic surprising neckline shape, embellished with a gathered and ruffled strip of contrasting fabric.

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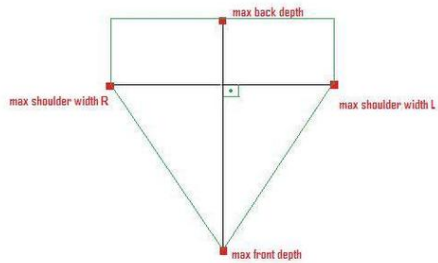
## Step 1 — MARKING NECKLINE POINTS...



First you need to get the right neckline - mark how low you want your neckline to go, front and back, and measure symmetrically left and right where it would stop on the shoulder line. For a good overview i made a projection that includes both back and front. These 4 points are places on two perpendicular lines that follow the straight grain: maximum depth back/front , maximum shoulder width right/left [depth and width refer to neckline area].

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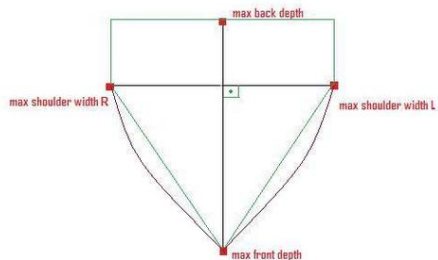
## Step 2 — ...DRAWING BASIC LINES...



For back neckline trace 3 lines through these 3 points: max back depth, max shoulder width left and right - parallel to the main lines we drew in the previous step. For front neckline unify in a triangle these 3 points: max front depth, max shoulder width left and right.

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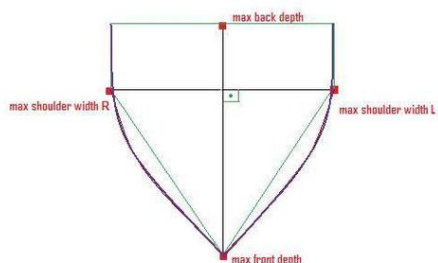
### Step 3 — ...A HEART TAKES SHAPE...



We are still at the front neckline: from shoulder to max front depth round the 2 lines by going outside the area of the triangle with 1-2 cm.

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### Step 4 — ...HARMONISING LINES...



Check that that back and the front necklines easily "flow" into one another, if not - adjust them. Make a paper pattern for the neckline with the area you need to subtract and include it in your top/dress design by copying its lines on the front and back top/blouse pattern. Do this carefully making sure that the shoulder line and the center front and center back lines coincide on the pattern pieces you are unifying. When cutting leave 1 cm on the inside for attaching the contrasting strip.

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### Step 5 — ...A STRIP AND A ZIG-ZAG EDGE...



Now cut a straight-grain strip of contrasting fabric - i made it 4 cm wide. The recommended length is twice the neckline circumference - so first measure around the neckline with a cord or a flexible measuring tape. Put the strip wrong face up under the sewing machine's universal foot and zig-zag one edge with less than 1 mm stitch width. Keep the edge of the strip in the middle gap on the foot when sewing - about 1 mm above the gap - that mm gets folded towards the strip and the edge gets impeccable finish!

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### Step 6 — ...GATHERING TWO STRAIGHT STITCHES...



One cm from the other edge of the strip - use a straight stitch with the stitch length dial at maximum - 4 in my case! Leave long thread ends when starting and finishing stitching. Do the same 3 cm from the same edge. For the first stitch: gently pull the upper thread at both ends gathering the fabric evenly till the length of the strip over this stitch equals the neckline circumference. Tie together the threads that come from the same stitch at each end. Repeat the same for the second stitch but do not tie the threads because we will need to fix it more loosely than the first stitch. Tip: Set the upper thread tension to a medium value so that that fabric gets gathered but not too much! I put it in 4.

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### Step 7 — ..PIN AND STITCH ON THE WRONG SIDE...



Starting and ending with the maximum front depth point, pin the strip face down on the wrong side of the top/dress fabric. Now straight-stitch it using 2 1/2 -3 stitch length and regular upper thread tension. At corners cut surplus fabric 1-2 mm close to the stitch so that fabric doesn't pull when you turn them inside out and so you get to preserve the neckline shape!

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### Step 8 — ...REVERSE, PIN AND HAND STITCH...



It's time to turn the strip to the right side of the top/dress fabric. Pin along the second gathered stitch on your strip. Loosely hand-stitch and take out pins. Tip: whenever you need to sew pieces by hand before machine sewing use a contrasting thread - it will be easier to take it out. If you machine straight-stitch do it 1-2 mm near the hand stitch - your final stitch will be safer when you pull out the hand stitched thread.

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### Step 9 — ...MULTI-STITCH ZIG-ZAG...



Top-stitch along the hand-stitched thread using a straight or a multi-stitch zig-zag. I preferred and recommend the latter if available. Tip: if you use the multi-stitch zig-zag, to reinforce to ends use the straight stitch. therefore start stitching with the stitch pattern dial set to straight stitch, make 2-3 steps, reverse stitch, then put the stitch pattern dial to multi-stitch zig-zag. When rotating the stitch pattern dial or the stitch length dial always make sure that the needle is completely above the foot.

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### **Step 10 — ... CLEAR AND WEAR!**



Take out the hand-stitched thread and the machine stitch that was meant to gather the strip at this level. And you are ready!

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