

So Very Scaly

By: ashchaser

<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/so-very-scaly>



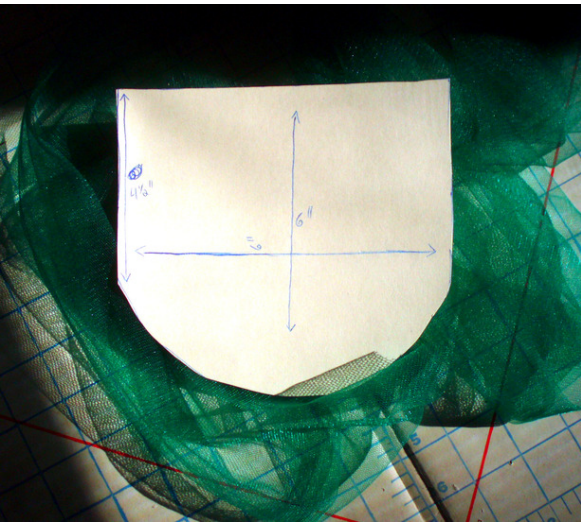
Recently while working on a special Burdastyle project I stumbled upon some of the most beautiful fabric I had ever seen! Rows of scalloped tulle sewn together in layers to create this amazing scale-like illusion...I had to have it and for half off of \$40 a yd, I could sacrifice eating if it meant I could have just one yard! With my one yard of this multicolored fabric I completed a dress, and learned how to make this on my own in a snap. Now I am sharing it with you so that you can spend that hard earned craft money on zippers and such instead!

Step 1 — Tulle!



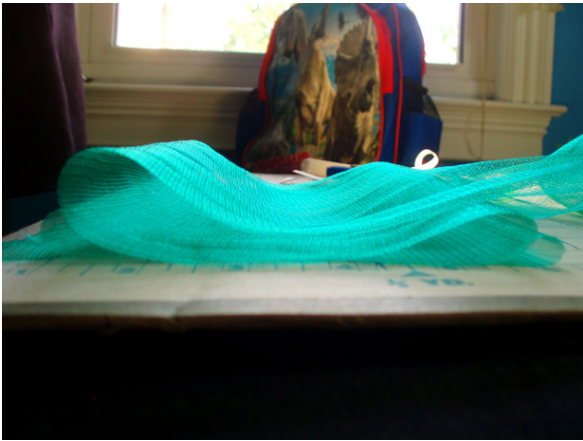
To start: find as much tulle as you can in the same, or a few contrasting colors. If you have a great palette to work with then the finished product will look that much more beautiful and creative! For this project I started out with 3 giant rectangles of white, lime green, and blue green tulle. Each was about 74"x 14", which made about 2 rows each. I went ahead and cut each in half so that I had 6 long strips(easier to work with)

Step 2 — Make your resist



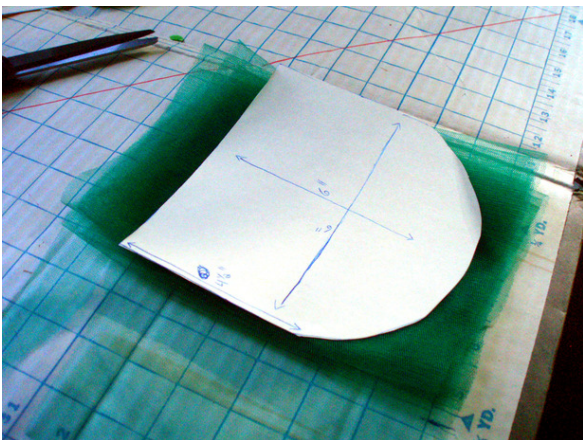
Next you need to create a resist, which is simply a hard copy of the shape you are trying to achieve. To make mine I simply traced the original fabric, yet there is no limit to the exact shape you can do! When creating this you just need to make sure the that the shape is simple and clear, so that when you go to cut your fabric, each layer will be consistent and recognizable. This resist was made from a manila folder, cut 7" wide, 6" at the deepest part, 4 1/2" at the shallowest, and almost semicircular.

Step 3 — Folding your fabric right



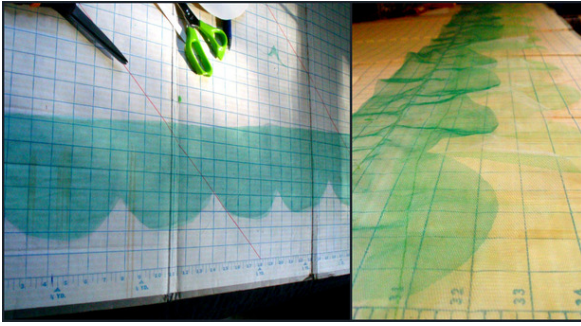
Ok now is the _fun_ part! One by one, take the strips of tulle and fold them back and forth (7" for this exact resist) and when doing this, the more even each layer's width is the better. For example, notice how I am impatient and when doing this step I did not make each one exactly 7" wide, the result was a more irregular row of scallops. This is not bad, but if you want a very even and consistent product...then measure measure measure! Also it helps to have an extra pair of hands to hold down each layer, since tulle does not wrinkle easily it is much harder to keep flat.

Step 4 — Cutting your scales



Next simply place your resist on top of the folded strip of tulle. Very carefully cut straight across the top, and around the bottom. \DO NOT cut the sides: imagine this is one of those snowflake chains we used to make as children, if you do cut the sides then you have lots of little flakes instead of one loooong garland of them.

Step 5 — Sewing your strips together



Alrighty, now after you have finished cutting all of your strips it is time to put them all together. Start with one, laying the second color on top, and stitching all the way across in the farthest 1 1/2" of the first layer. Repeat for each strip you have made, and make sure to use a lightweight #10 needle so not to rip up the tulle. For me this is the most difficult step, since I cannot seem to get each layer parallel to the last (which is why it helps to measure alot and be exact). But I have no problem with a more irregular version of this fabric, and love it!

Step 6 — Scaley Fabric!



Alright, now is the time to stand back and behold all of the hard work you have done! This might take a while to complete all of the necessary steps, yet the finished product is a breathtaking pattern of scales which you could make out of any lightweight fabric you choose. As for what to use this for, please keep in mind that it is very difficult to match the scales up in seams and such, so try to cut down the amount of times you need to cut this stuff up. When using this in skirts I have gotten very close to matching, yet there always seems to be a straggler scale or two that don't quite fit. My solution to this is gathering near the seam, so that you cannot tell which does not match, or only has half of one scale showing.
