

# A Really Nice Hem That's Really Invisible

By: Roseana Auten

<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/a-really-nice-hem-thats-real>

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This fabric, a cotton stretch sateen print, was kind of expensive â€” more money than I normally spend on fabric. I wanted to make just the right project with it, and get all the details done perfectly. Sometimes, if you've spent quite a while sewing something, it's very tempting to look at the finishing work, like closures and hems, as the downward slide in the project. But previous experience with this sort of fabric told me that I'd really need to rethink my approach. Here's what I came up with.

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## Step 1 — Good Interfacing

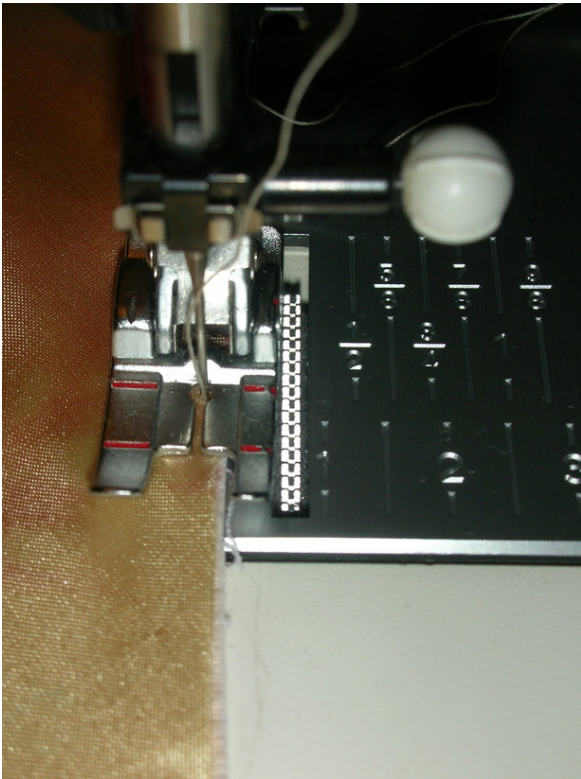


I wanted my hem to be invisible. I knew if I stitched it by machine, the stitches would ruin the smooth look of my fabric. And because my sateen is woven with Lycra threads, it's got some significant crosswise stretch, which is hard to handle. No, using a sewing machine was out. The solution? Stabilize the hemline with a strip of good quality interfacing, and then hand sew the hem, catching the stitches in the interfacing. The garment fabric will not show a single stitch if you're careful enough! Here's my interfacing, the Pro Weft interfacing from Fashion Sewing Supply. I cut a 2" strip, on the stable grain. Just like our fashion fabric, interfacing is stable when you pull it in one direction, and stretchier in the other direction. Notice I don't use the

non-woven interfacing that tends to be in abundance in our stores.

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## Step 2 — Bind the Raw Edge of the Hem



I was also concerned about anything bulky in my hem. I knew if I finished the raw edge of the hem by turning it under, there was a good chance it would leave a "hump" and show up on the public side of the garment after I pressed it. So I cut a 1" bias strip from the same China silk I used for the skirt lining, and sewed it in a very narrow seam to the raw edge of the hem, right sides together. I used my single-hole presser foot and single-hole throat plate for this. When you're "sewing small" like this, use every tool you've got to keep your fabric from getting pulled down into the feed dogs of your machine.

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## Step 3 — Keep the Tension High



I was concerned that I'd distort my hem when I was attaching my bias strip. Why? I was sewing on the crossgrain, which is the direction of the fabric that has the most stretch. Once a fabric like this gets stretched out of shape, there's no correction. So I increased my top thread tension to help counteract this problem. I also used long stitches (4.0) for this step.

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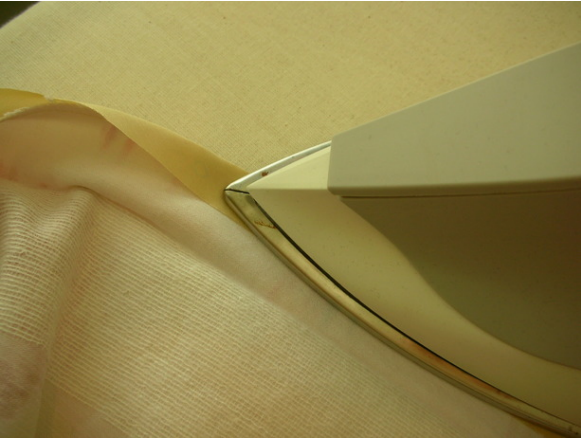
### **Step 4 — Press the Bias Strip**



Next, I pressed my bias strip to the right side of the garment.

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### **Step 5 — Enclose the Raw Edge With the Bias Strip**



Then, I turned my work wrong side up on my ironing board and folded the bias strip over the raw edge of the hem, and pressed firmly and carefully. You're enclosing the raw edge in your bias strip.

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### **Step 6 — Stitch Again**



Next, I returned my top thread tension to normal (2.5-3.0), and my stitch length to 2.5, and stitched the strip down. This meant more tiny sewing, so I kept my single-hole presser foot and throat plate on my machine.

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### **Step 7 — Press the Hem**



I gave my work another good press.

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## Step 8 — The Finished Hem



I'm not crazy for hand sewing, but if there's something on TV, it's not so bad. My stitches don't show at all because I anchored them to the interfacing on the hem.

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