

Pleated Knit Trim

By: sunnyb64

<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/pleated-knit-trim>



I was recently working on a knit top that just needed something to make it more interesting, so this is what I came up with after getting some inspiration from a shirt I saw on ModCloth.

Step 1 — Preparation



You'll need a strip of knit fabric and your garment. I put this on the edge of the sleeve and around the neckline. I made my strip about 1.25" wide. If you want to finish the edges, you can--for my actual shirt, I did a rolled-hem finish on my serger (both sides of the strip for the neckline pieces, and one side for the sleeve pieces), but a close-together zig-zag stitch would probably work well too. Also, for the neckline, this would probably work best if any facings are already in there.

Step 2 — Start pleating!



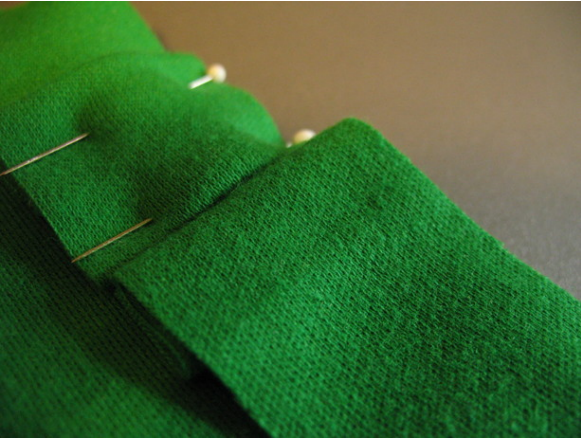
Fold the strip width-wise, like this. I tried to keep the depth of the fold somewhere around 3/8" to 1/2"...don't think it always worked, but I didn't see any parts jumping out as ridiculously huge. So don't feel like you have to measure everything--I measured the ones that looked overly big, but I mostly just eyeballed it.

Step 3 — Adding trim to the neckline



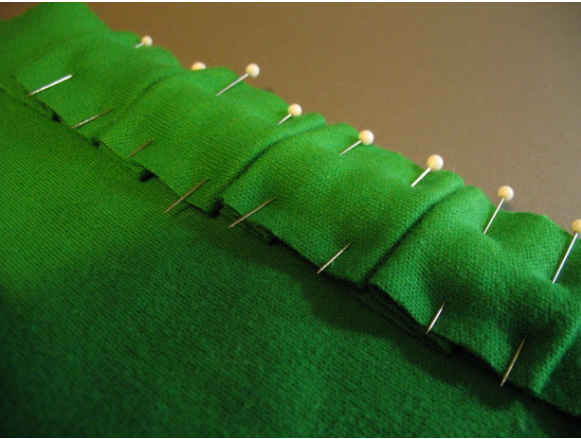
Pin this fold down on the neckline, so that one edge slightly overlaps the seam between the neckline and the facing. Then make a fold in the opposite direction, so that the folds underneath match up in the center.

Step 4 — ...and more pleating...



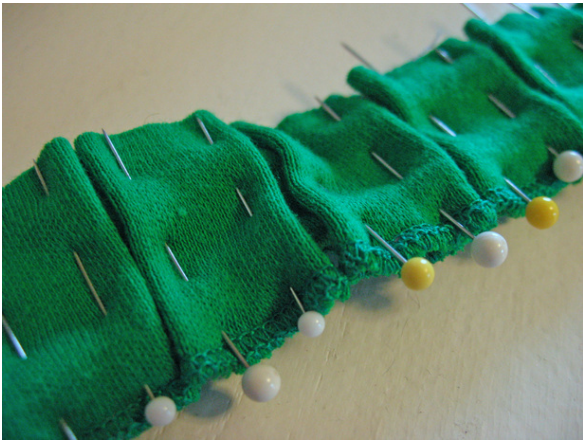
Pin the new fold down. Then make a third pleat so that the folds on the upper part of the trim meet up in the middle.

Step 5 — ...and still more pleating!



Continue folding and pleating like this, alternating directions and pinning to the shirt as you go. (The "rectangles" showing at the top of the box pleats ended up being approximately 7/8" - 1" between the folds.) If you look at the trim from the side, it should have a bit of a zig-zaggy look. If you run out of trim, you can just cut a new strip, fold the raw edge under, and pin that fold adjacent to the last fold of the old strip. (I trimmed away the excess to cut the bulk, too, when this happened to me.)

Step 6 — A note on sleeves



If you're going to add trim to the edge of a sleeve, you can do the same process--I found it easier to make the pleated strips separate from the sleeves, then hand-baste the trim onto the edge before sewing the actual seam to keep the pleats from coming undone. (I was using the pleats to extend the length of the sleeve, so the edge is sewn as part of the seam and the finished edge functions as the hem. I also hand-stitched the inner pleat edges together to help it keep its shape.)

Step 7 — Almost there!



Going back to the neckline, now...stitch down the middle of the pleats all the way around. I started from the center of the v-neck in front and to hide those raw ends, I added a smaller strip of pleats right in the center. You'll want to give this a good pressing to help it keep its shape--it got a little puffier once the pins were out and a little more so after I washed it, but it held up pretty well otherwise. I hope someone finds something fun to do with this--if anything was unclear, let me know. And if you end up using it, I'd love to see your creations!

