30-minute vampire cape

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http://www.burdastyle.com/projects/30-minute-vampire-cape

My girlfriend isn't a big fan of costumes, and this year she THOUGHT she'd gotten off the hook. I'd been so occupied with my costume that she didn't think she was going to have to wear one. However, I LOVE HALLOWEEN (it's my birthday), and that idea was totally unacceptable to me. Solution: the super last-minute, 30-minute vampire cape, black pants, a white shirt, gummy teeth, and a lipliner drop of blood. The cape body is basically a circle of doubleknit (think kid's circle skirt) finished with twill tape for shaping and stability. I lucked out and had this lying around. Knit doesn't fray, so you could actually skip the finishing. The collar is made of an old black polo shirt and some leftover red poplin from my Strawberry Shortcake Danielle dress. It stands up thanks to a foam insert cut from an ironing board cover and a couple of strategically placed snaps. It honestly took me less than a half hour to make, and a good 10-12 minutes of that was handsewing the snaps and hand tacking the layers of the collar when I noticed they were trying to shift about.

Materials

Stuff I had lying around: a black doubleknit doughnutty thing that my sister-in-law cut off a skirt(?) god-knows-how-long-ago, a black promo polo shirt for Martini, red ribbon, two snaps, and leftover red poplin

Step 1 — Cut your cape body and finish the raw edges if so desired.

Make the body of a full circle skirt using either Burdastyle's instructions or one of the many tutorials in cyberspace. Use black knit or fleece, recycle an old shirt or skirt, etc. The possibilities are limited to your available materials and your deadline. If you've got a bit more time, you can use satin or something that requires finishing. When drawing your doughnut, the important thing is that the radius measurement will be your finished length. As you can see from the finished product, my cape is more accurately a capelet due to the existing dimensions of my doubleknit doughnut. To make your cape longer, make your circle bigger. You might have to do a paneled circle if you need a very long cape. If you're short on time, go with the capelet; it's much quicker. For an adult, cut your smaller, interior circle (waist circle in skirt instructions) about 45 cm (17.5) cm in circumference. For a child, cut it a little smaller so it doesn't fall off his or her shoulders.

Once your cape body is cut, cut open your circle vertically. This will be the opening of your cape. Finish the straight edges and the lower hem if desired or if your fabric requires it. Depending the amount of time you have, you could use twill tape, DF bias tape, a normal hem, Fraychek, or even clear nail polish. Keep in mind that fabrics like knits and fleeces won't fray, so finishing them is totally optional.

Step 2 — Create the beef of your stand-up collar.

Use your cape body to help you cut your collar pieces. Start with the foam or whatever you're using to give it body. I used foam from an ironing board cover. If you don't need to be able to wash it, you could use Fun Foam. Use your imagination and the supplies you have at hand.

Lay out your cape body on the foam, slightly open so the straight sides don't touch. Trace your inner circle on the foam and remove the cape body. This will be the base of the collar where it connects to the cape body. Measure out about 3.5 in (9 cm) from that mark in various places around the neckline and then connect those points. Draw a straight line between the ends of your two arcs. Cut out this shape.

Step 3 — Cut out your collar exterior and lining.

Make your black exterior collar by adding seam allowance around all sides of your foam collar guts from step 2. Add a little more SA to the neckline than to the other sides. Cut it out. Repeat with your red (or purple or whatever colour you choose) lining fabric. You should now have four pieces: the cape body and three collar pieces—exterior, lining, and foam guts.

Step 4 — Assemble collar

Right sides together (RST), sew collar exterior and lining pieces together around straight edges and top curve. Clip curves and corners, turn right side out, and press well. Insert foam piece into collar and secure with a couple of pins.

Step 5 — Attach collar to body

Pin collar as one piece RST (black collar to cape body exterior) to cape body. Stitch and press raw edges UP. Stitch again, sewing SA to lining side of collar to help support its weight. This leaves ugly visible raw edges. Don't worry. You're about to hide them.

Step 6 — Cover raw edges with ribbon

Pin a satin (grosgrain would work okay, as long as it wasn't too stiff) ribbon (1 cm/.5 in wideish) over the visible raw edges. Stitch down the lower edge of the ribbon, going slowly and straightening out the collar and cape body pieces as you sew. Repeat for the upper edge. Your ribbon should overhang the front of the collar to create the ties that hold the cape on. (See finished product photos and detail of red collar.)

Step 7 — Optional--add snaps to help the collar stand up

If your collar stands up well on its own, you may not need to do this. Mine stood reasonably well, but it had a slight tendancy to flop backwards. Solution: hand-sew a couple of snaps to the outer edges to help support the collar. See detail photos for placement. Try not to go all the way through the layers when sewing the snaps to the outer collar so the black thread doesn't show on the collar lining. I also hand-tacked the collar layers in a couple of places to prevent shifting. I didn't know if I'd need to wash this at some point.

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