

Homeless Coat: Construction

Permission is given to duplicate these patterns and instructions as long as the attribution to me is kept, and as long as no profit is made selling them or the coats made from them.

This oversized coat is meant to layer over other garments and to convert easily into a sleeping bag. It is sized to fit medium to large men, as women and children are given priority to sleep inside shelters. It is simple to sew (even for beginners) with as many straight edges as possible.

The concept of a coat/sleeping bag goes back at least as far as Napoleon's invasion of Russia, with many people "unventing" (independently coming up with) options. Though neither Ruth Ciemnoczowski nor I were the first to come up with interior pockets, I was impressed enough with the ones on a coat she had made (sized specifically for newspaper for insulation) that those are used here with her permission.

Please check the other free downloads for printing pattern pages, fabric layouts, and how to alter the pattern pieces to fit the material or blankets you have.

Suggested seam allowances can be as narrow as you can comfortably sew, up to $5/8$ "/1.5 cm.

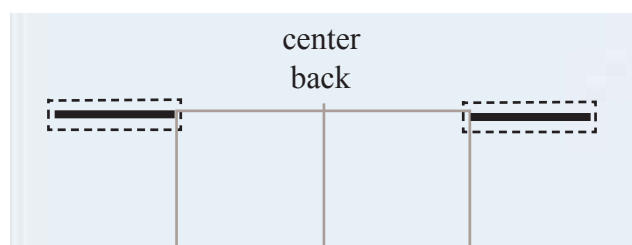
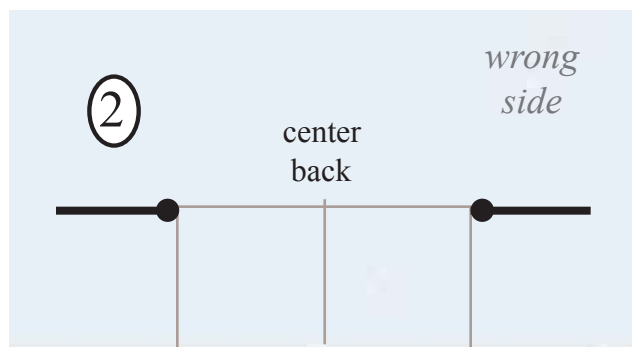
In addition to fabric and thread, you will need cord or tape:

- 1 piece 44"/112 cm.
- 2 pieces 24"/61 cm.
- 4 pieces 12"/30.5 cm.
- 1 piece 4"/10 cm.

A tied knot should release easily but not slip.

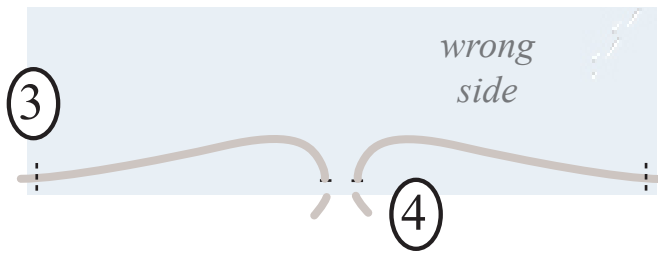
The Back

1. Stay-stitch close to the curve of the neck to keep it from stretching out.



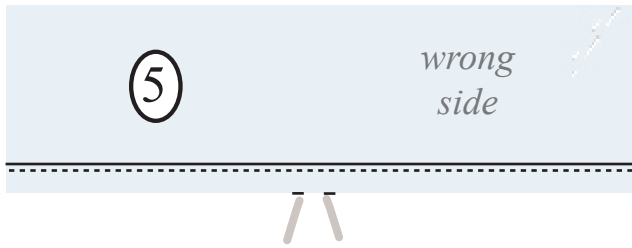
Find the center of the bottom by folding the back lengthwise.

2. Measure $1\frac{1}{2}$ "/2.5 cm. on each side and the same up from the raw edge. Make two horizontal buttonholes or reinforced slits (sew around the cuts) $\frac{3}{4}$ "/2 cm. If you decide on eyelets or grommets, remember the body may lay against them, so keep them small and flat.



3. On the wrong side of the back, sew the two 24"/61 cm. cords at each edge, 1"/2.5 cm. from the bottom.

4. Thread the loose ends through the slits.

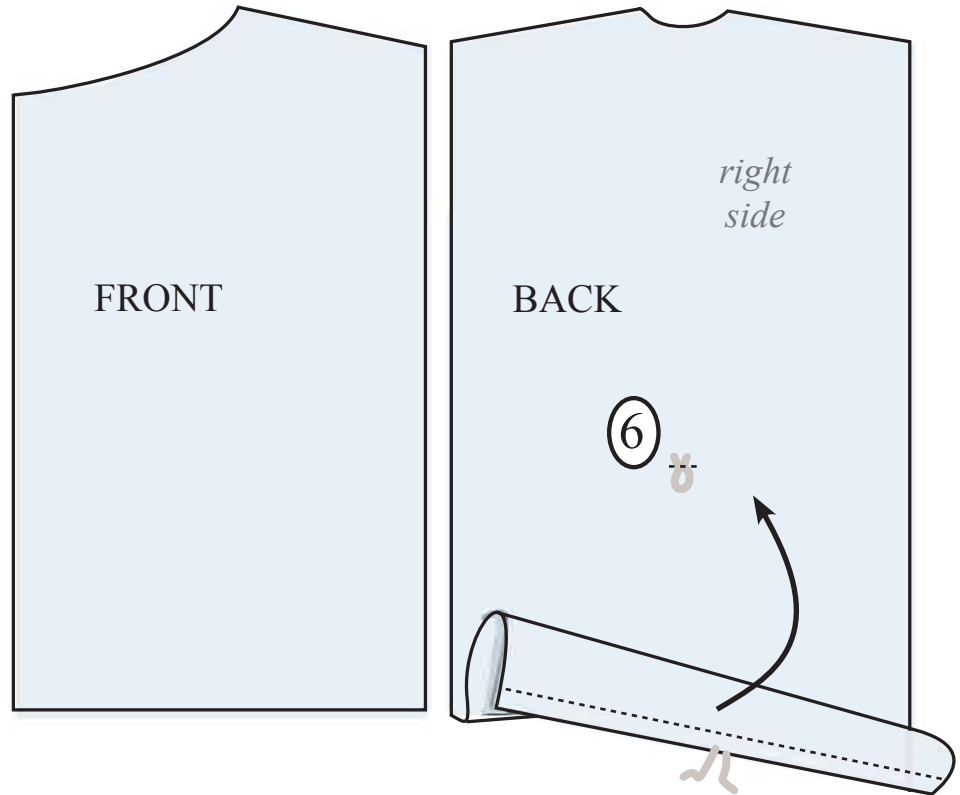


5. Turn up the bottom to the wrong side so that the slits are at the new bottom edge and stitch across. Hold the cords tight so they don't get caught in the stitching.

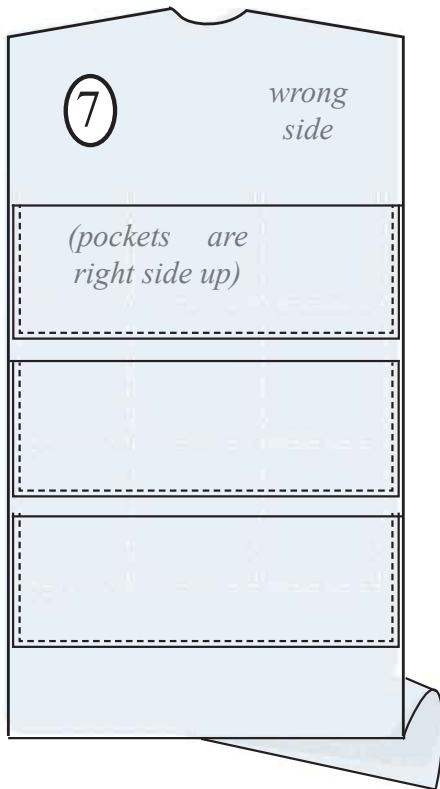
Center back loop

6. Butt one of the Fronts against the Back at a side seam (this is not marked on the pattern as it will have changed if you altered the length).

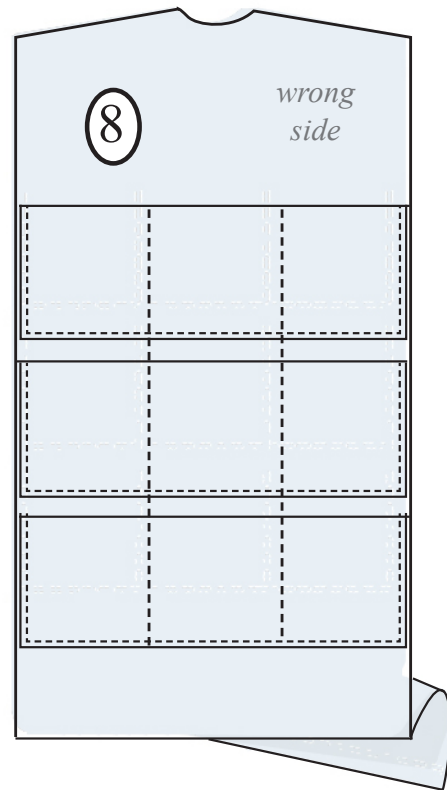
Sew the short loop to the right side of the back so that the flap's cords can tie through it.



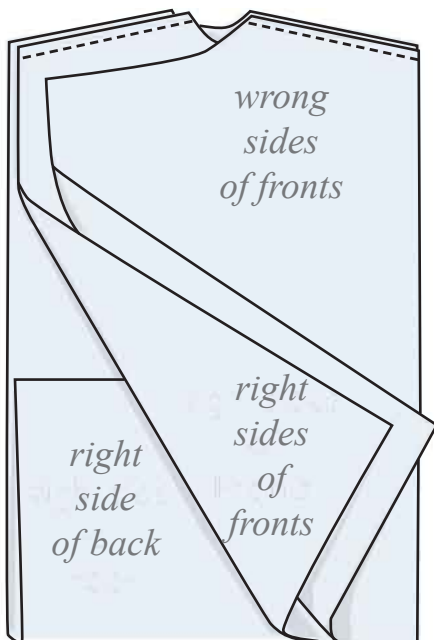
Pockets:



7. Place across wrong side of back starting 1 7/8 cm. below mark for sleeves. Sew across sides and bottoms.
8. Sew vertically through all of the pockets. Don't catch the flap!



How many and how wide you make the pocket sections is up to you. Think about the size of newspapers homeless people may want to fold into them for insulation.



Shoulder seams:

Lay the back right side up (flap will be on top, pockets down). Lay fronts right sides down on back, matching side seams.

Sew each front to the back.

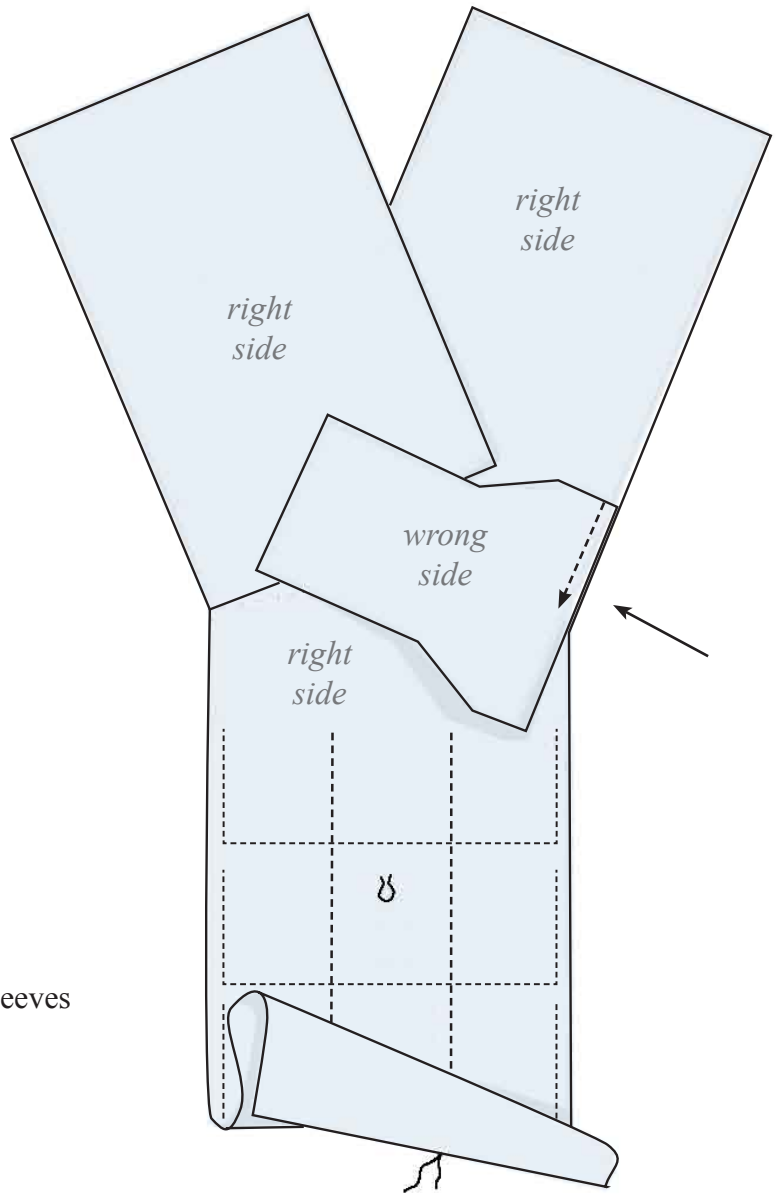
Sleeves to Front/Back:

Open the coat out, right side up. Lay one sleeve, right side down, on it so that its center is on the front/back (shoulder) seam.

Sew from the sleeve edge to the seam. Be sure the needle is down through the fabric and raise the presser foot.

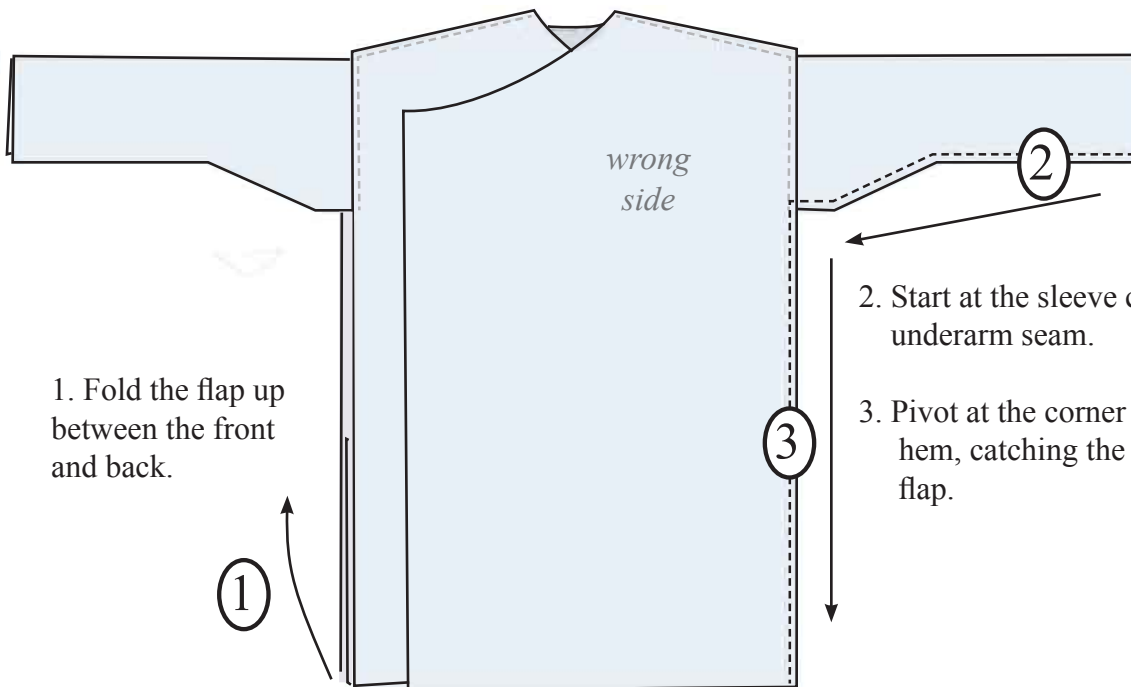
Pivot the sleeve so that the second half of the sleeve matches the side seam and finish sewing it.

Repeat with the other sleeve.



Underarm and Side Seams:

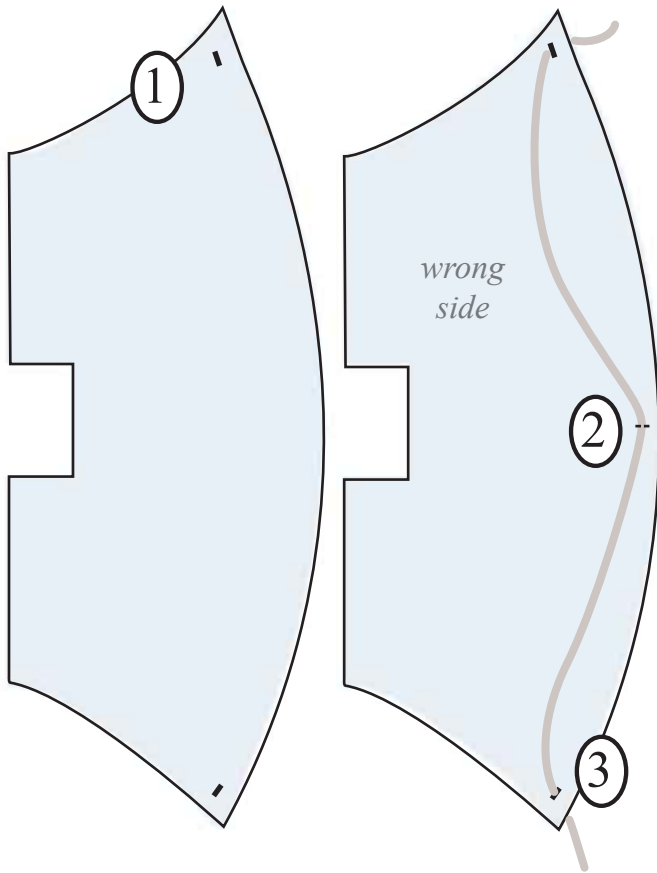
Fold the coat right sides together with the sleeves pulled out..



1. Fold the flap up between the front and back.

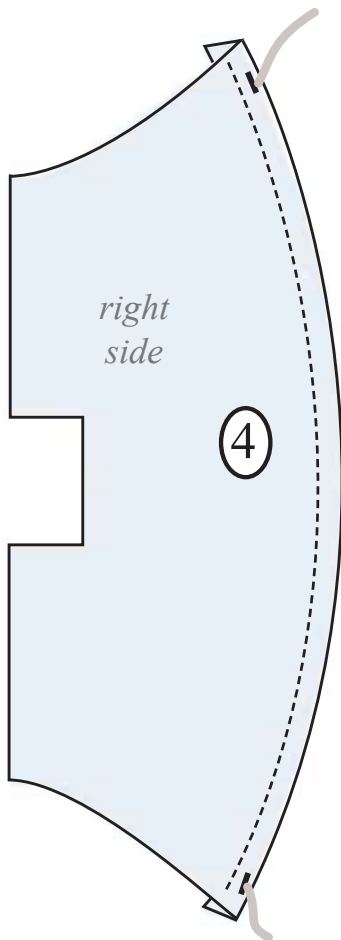
2. Start at the sleeve cuff and sew its underarm seam.

3. Pivot at the corner and sew to the hem, catching the side of the back flap.

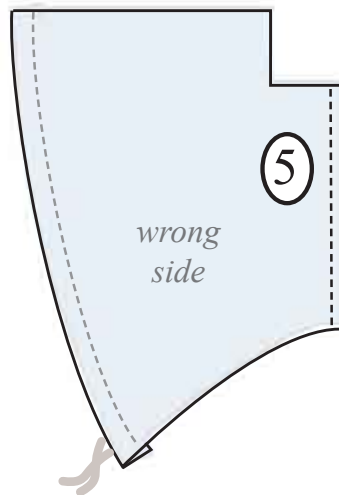


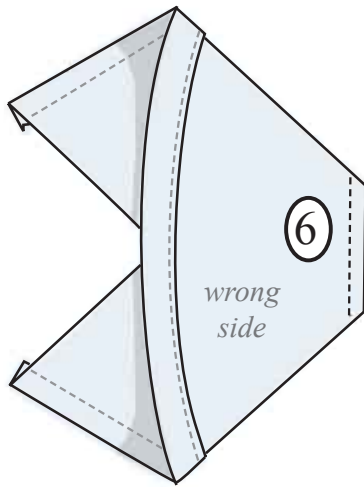
Hood:

1. Work two buttonholes or reinforced slits from each end of the hood as you did at the center of the bottom back (same size, same spacing from edge).
2. On the wrong side of the hood, tack the center of the longest cord at the middle of the long curved edge.
3. Thread the ends of the cord through the holes.



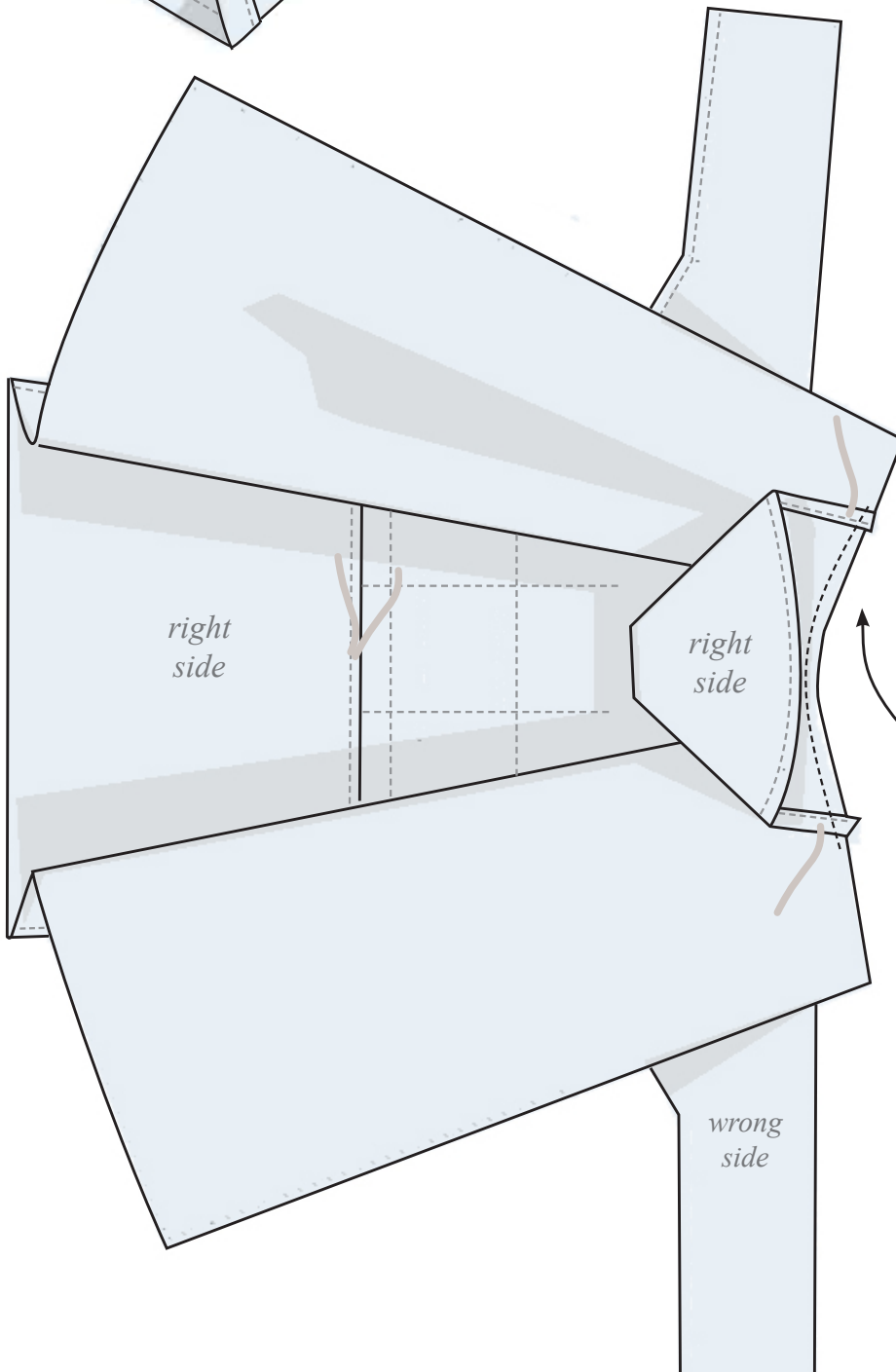
4. Fold over a 1 1/2 cm. seam allowance and topstitch, being careful not to catch the cord.
5. Fold the hood wrong sides together and sew the center back seam.





6. Open the hood out and fold in half the other way, so that the square cutout at the upper back becomes a straight line, and stitch across this end.

Turn the hood right side out.



Hood to Coat

(Coat is still inside out)

Open out the front flaps.

Fold the back's neckline to find its center. Match the right side of the center back seam of the hood to the right side of the center back of the coat.

Track the neck edge up along the front and sew the hood to the coat.

Don't catch the ties.



Front ties

Turn the coat right side out. Sew one of the four remaining ties to each upper front corner. Lap the front left over right for a (U.S.A./European-style) man's coat, right over left for a woman's, and sew matching ties to the coat fronts, one on the outside and one on the inside.

The generous sleeves fold into deep cuffs. If turned to the inside, they make pockets to help keep the hands warm.

For sleeping, turn the back flap up over the fronts to make a pocket to keep the legs warm.