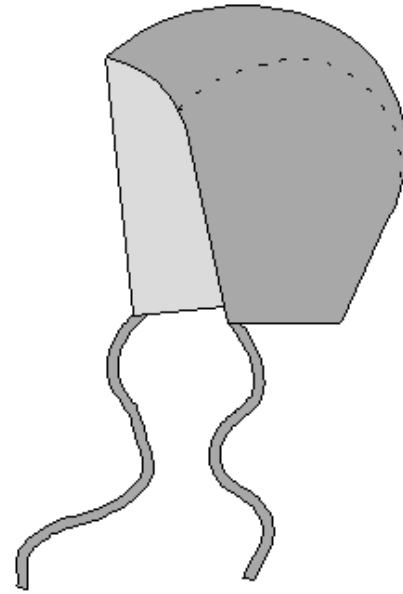


The Coif

The coif is one of several styles of cap known by that name. All of them were close-fitting caps, most often made of linen. The coif was also called a “biggin.”

The style had been fashionable since the early Middle Ages at least, and remained so well into the 17th century. Servants continued to wear them well into the 19th century.

Coifs were worn by people of all classes and ages. They were often worn as an under cap for another, more elaborate hat, or as a base for draped veils. The secure fit of the coif provided a secure base for pinning, and a washable protective layer between the more elaborate hat and the hair.



About the Pattern

The Coif pattern consists of a center panel, called the Gusset, and two side panels. The coif can be lined, or constructed as a single layer.

The coif can fasten with ties or with a buttoned chin strap. Ties are more adjustable, but the buttoned strap gives a tidier appearance, with no dangling ends.

Fabric and Color

Coifs were most often made of white linen.

Constructing the Coif

Cutting

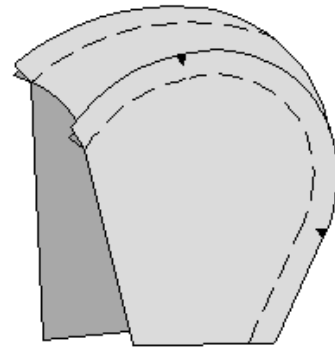
For the lined version, cut two Gussets and Four Side panels. For the unlined version, cut one gusset and two side panels.

View A: Lined Coif

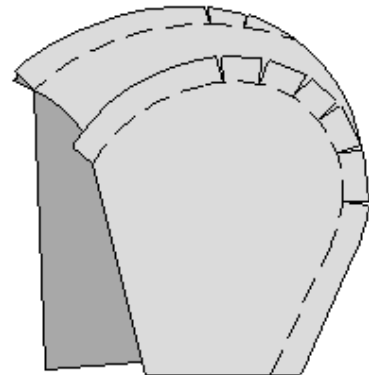
Seams

Pin Side panel to Gusset, matching notches. Stitch. Repeat for other side.

Repeat for lining.



Press seams open, clipping as needed.



Ties

(Skip this step if you wish to make the Buttoned Strap version.)

Cut two strips of fabric 1 1/2" wide and 12" long.

Fold right sides together and stitch, forming a tube.

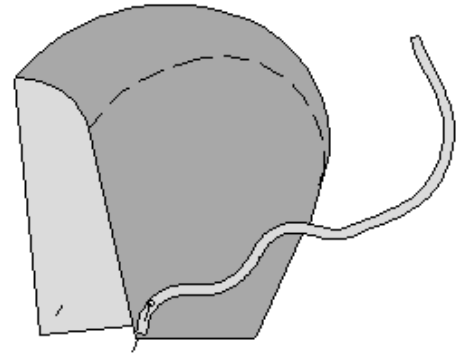
Trim seam allowances to 1/8".

Turn. Press.

Turn one end in 1/4" and stitch closed.



Fold unfinished end of ties under twice. Stitch to inside of coif corners as shown.

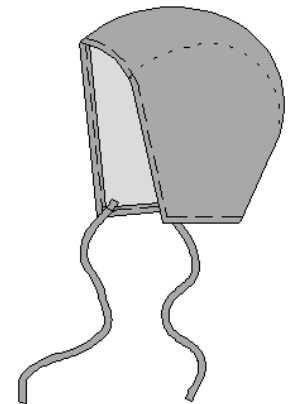


View B: Unlined Coif

Make as for Lined Coif, clean finishing seams.

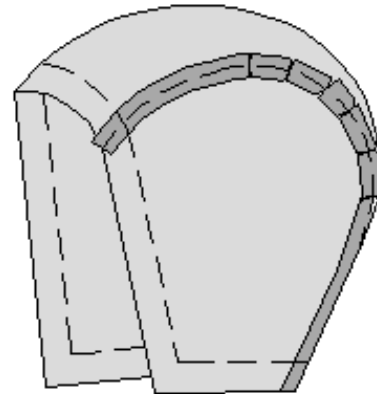
Press edges under 1/4". Turn under and press again. Hem edge.

Make ties as above and tack to inside at corners.

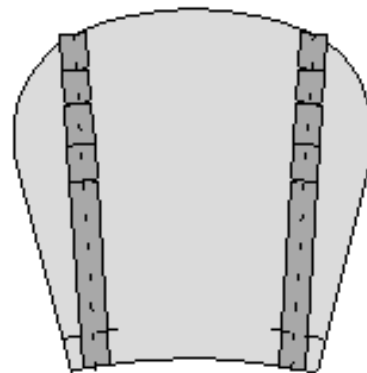


View A Lining

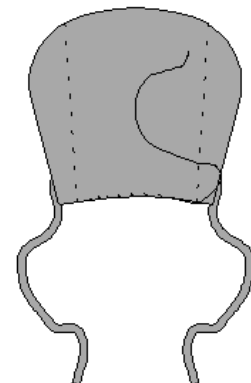
Pin Lining to Coif, RIGHT sides together, being sure that ties are between layers.



Stitch, back tacking at corners to secure ties, leaving an opening between seams at back. Trim and grade seam.



Turn Right side out. Press. Slipstitch opening.



Buttomed Strap

To find length of strap, put on coif and measure from corner to corner, passing tape measure under jaw. cut strap 1 1/2" wide and the above measurement plus 1" long.

Make strap following directions for Ties.

Sew button to end of strap.

Make a buttonhole in one corner of coif (right side is easier if right handed) placing it on the diagonal as shown.

