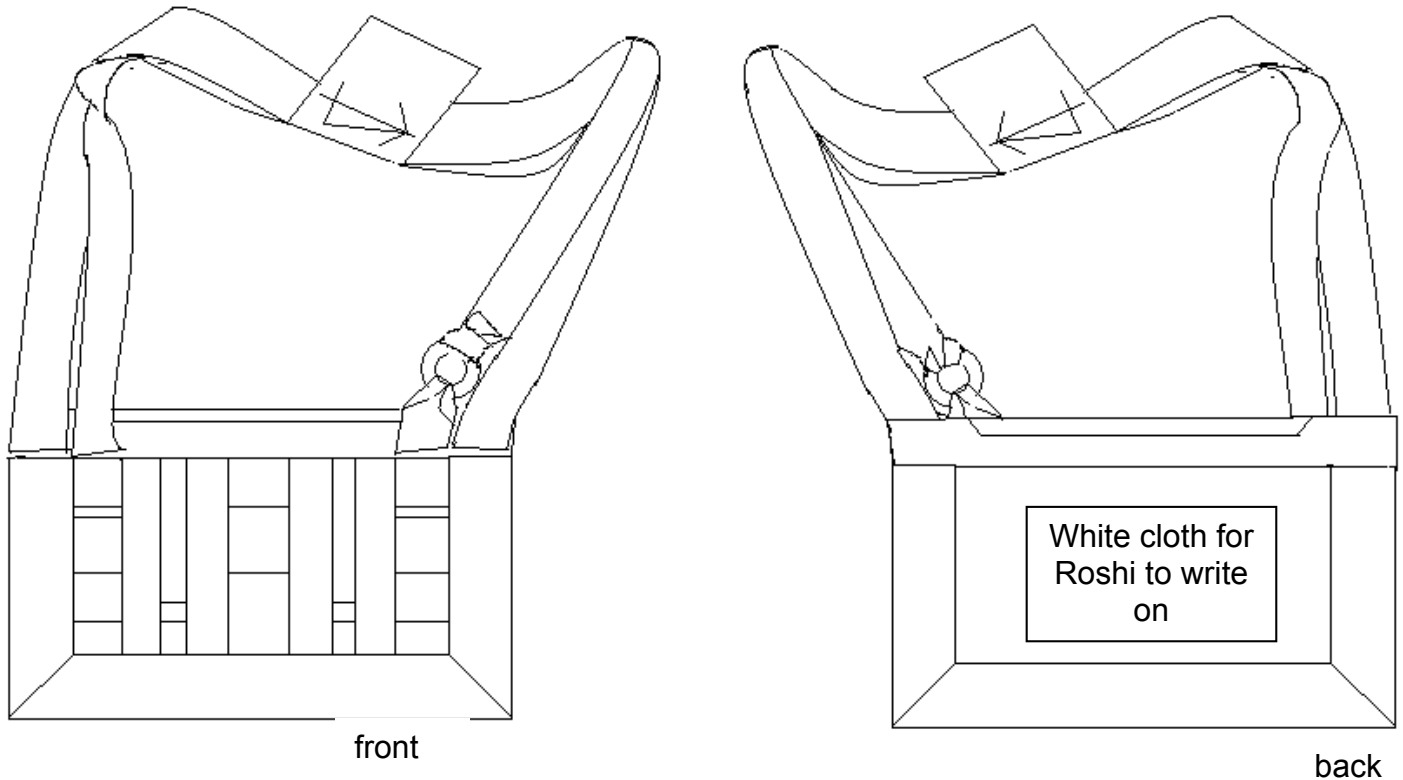


Rakusu Pattern



1. You will need:
 - 1.25 yards black cloth
 - 0.5 yard white cotton (smooth fabric, so that it's easy to write on)
 - 0.5 yard black or white interfacing
 - 1 ring, plastic or light wood, 2" – 2.5" in diameter
 - 1 length of green embroidery thread

Your rakusu is an intricate and individual piece of work and should be made without rushing. Please allow yourself plenty of time to work on it with full attention and enjoy making it, particularly if you are not accustomed to sewing. Before each time you begin to work on your rakusu, light a candle and offer incense, dedicating the merit of your practice to the relieving of suffering for all beings. You may want to chant the Four Vows of the Bodhisattva or the Refuges in Pali. While you sew, repeat the following phrases with each stitch; I take refuge in Buddha, I take refuge in Dharma, I take refuge in Sangha. You may say it in whatever language you are most comfortable, your mother

tongue, or Japanese or Pali if you prefer. (Sino-Japanese: Namo Kie Butsu, Namo Kie Ho, Namo Kie So Pali: Buddham saranam gacchami, Dhammam saranam gacchami, Sangham saranam gacchami.) It is very helpful to have a finished rakusu in front of you while you work. The cd at the end of the book contains pictures of each step.

2. Read all instructions carefully before you begin. If you are making a Peacemaker Rakusu and receiving fabric from friends and family, please roughly cut the pieces to size and dye them in black dye before continuing with the instructions. If you are using store-bought black fabric, there is no need to dye the fabric, but it is a good idea to wash and dry it before continuing. In all cases, iron your fabric flat before measuring and cutting the pieces.
3. Page 12 shows how to cut out the black or dyed material. First cut out the paper patterns of the A, B, C and D pieces (see pages 13, 14, 15, 16).and pin them on the fabric. This will give you the exact measurements for cutting and for the folds of the center section or “field” of your rakusu. Be aware that A1 and A2 mirror each other, allowing for outside seams. Please cut each piece 0.5” longer than the paper pattern to allow for folding. All pattern pieces already include seam allowance so you do not need to add in for that.
4. Mark all pattern pieces accurately on the cloth before cutting anything, using a sharp white or lead pencil and a straightedge. Mark along the length of the cloth, using the selvage as a parallel. However, do not include the selvage in any of the pattern pieces. There are 16 pieces of black cloth, 2 pieces of interfacing and 2 pieces of white cloth. Be careful to use the straight grain of cloth at all times
5. First mark:

1 strip E	36”	x	4.5”
1 strip J	42”	x	4.5” (44” for tall people)
1 strip H	42”	x	4.5” (44” for tall people)
1 strip F	14.5”	x	4.5”
1 strip G	9”	x	2”
1 strip K	10”	x	4.5”
1 strip L	9”	x	4.5”
2 strips A1 and A2	9”	x	2”
4 strips B	7”	x	1.5”
2 strips C	8”	x	1”
1 strip D	8”	x	2.75”
6. Now cut all these pieces using sharp scissors, making square corners and very clean lines. You will be sewing along the seam allowances, so please be very precise.
7. Lay out all pieces of fabric in the pattern of the rakusu, so that you have a general idea of what it is going to look like. Check with the picture at the beginning of the pattern or a finished rakusu, if available.

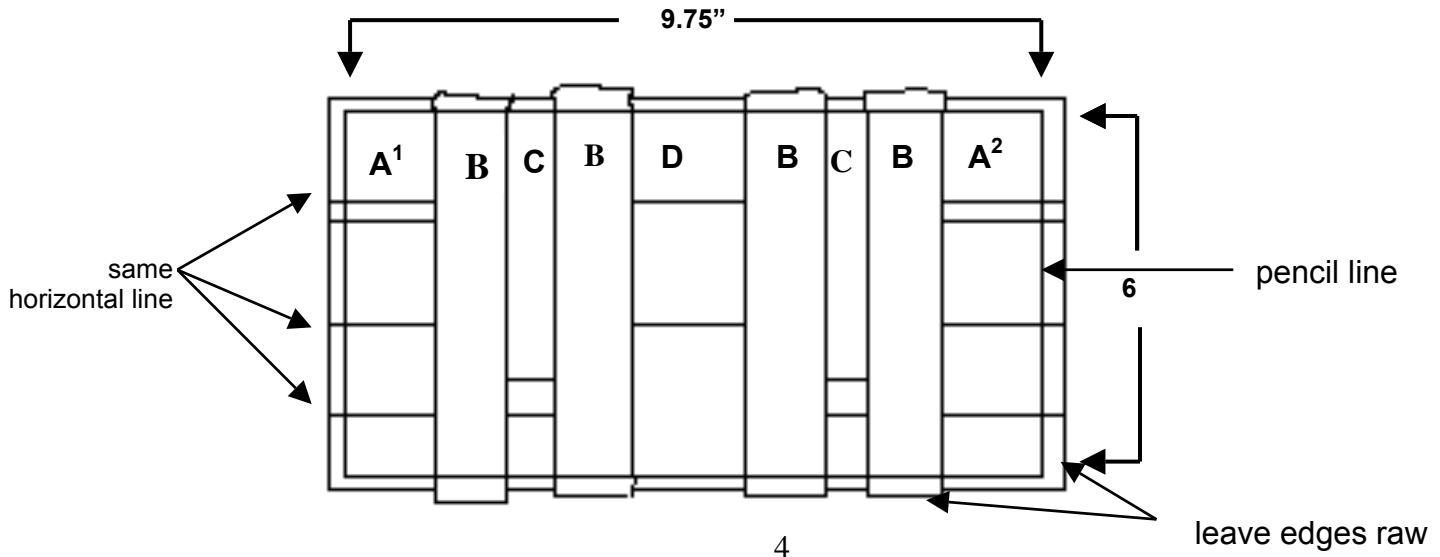
8. Mark, then cut from interfacing:
 1 piece M 15.25" x 11.5"
 1 piece N 10" x 4.5"

and from white cloth:

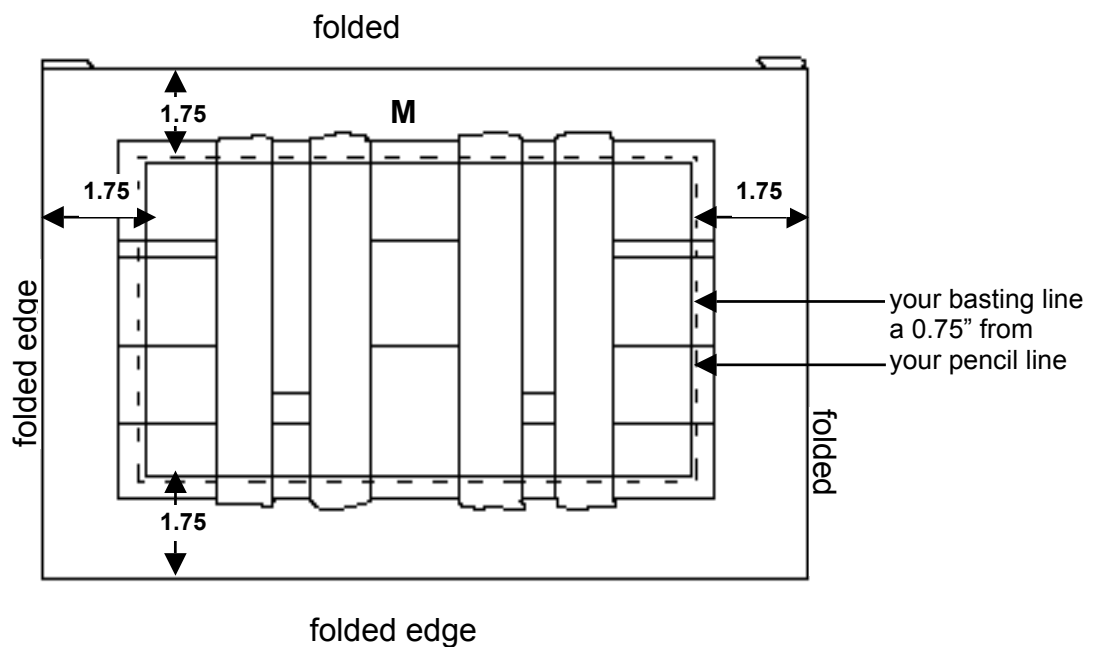
- 1 piece P 12.5" x 9"
 1 piece O 10" x 3.5"

Soak piece P in a solution of 50% soy milk and 50% water. Then stretch and iron it. This will make it easier for the teacher to write the verse of the kesa on it. Put M, N, P and O aside until you get to # 13.

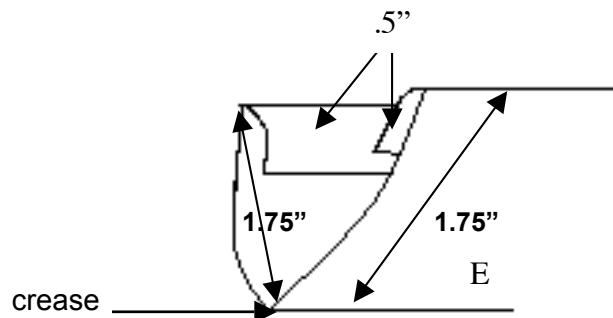
10. Start sewing the center section. Use the paper patterns from pages 13, 14, 15 and 16 to make the lines on the back side of strips A, B, C, and D. Bring marked lines of tucks together and press the tucks in the direction shown by arrows on the paper pattern. Check with a finished rakusu. Then pin the edges precisely together. Baste along stitching line.
11. Join pieces A, B, C, and D (see diagram on front page) following your lines exactly and, using the step stitch, sew together: B – D – B
 then sew together: A1 – B – C (make sure horizontal lines match)
 A2 – B – C
 Now: sew the three pieces together, lining up horizontal lines with ruler first. (See front page)
 Then press the seam allowances toward the B pieces and press your whole center piece flat.
 You don't need to cut off the uneven edges yet (see fig. on this page)
12. Mark with a pencil a rectangle of 6" x 9.75" on the center field. There should be at least 0.25" outside your pencil line. (See below.)



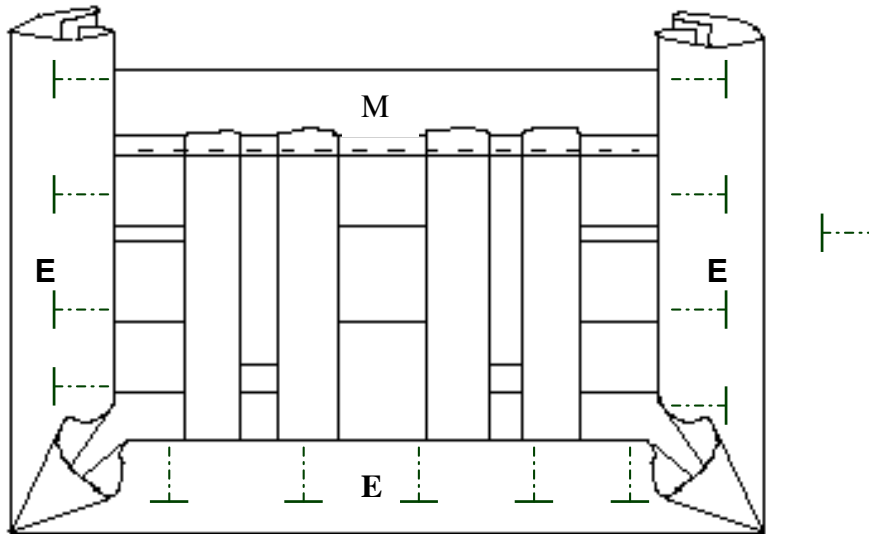
13. On interfacing piece M, fold and press a 1" edge, turning under all four sides, so the cloth measures exactly 9.5" x 13.25" from each folded edge. You might have to adjust the fold so that the cloth measures these dimensions precisely.
14. Fold your center field horizontally and vertically, marking the center with a pin. Do the same with the interfacing. Using the pins as marks, place the finished center field exactly in the middle of the interfacing so that there is a 1.75" space between the pencil line of your center piece and the folded edge of the interfacing. Pin, then baste with small stitches 0.25" outside of pencil line. Press.



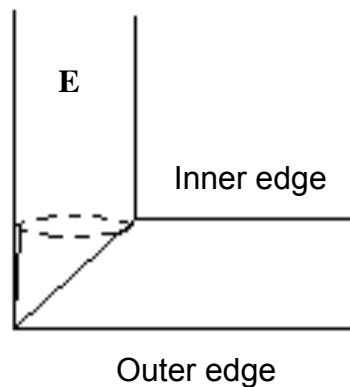
15. Now turn the whole thing over (the interfacing piece is now called "the frame"). Place white cloth piece P in the middle so there is about 0.25" between the raw edges of P and the folded edge of the frame. Pin, baste with small stitches 0.25" from the edge of P.
16. Press border piece E exactly in half lengthwise, then press both raw edges inside so that it measures 1.75" wide.



17. Starting at the top left corner on the front, tuck the front and back border around the fold edge of the frame, ending at the top right corner. Pin as you go, making sure that the edge of the frame fits very snugly into the crease of the border. Do not worry about the corners yet. Just keep the edge and crease together. The fold of the border E should meet your pencil line on the center section exactly. Does it look like the diagram? Check with frontpage and with fig on page 6.

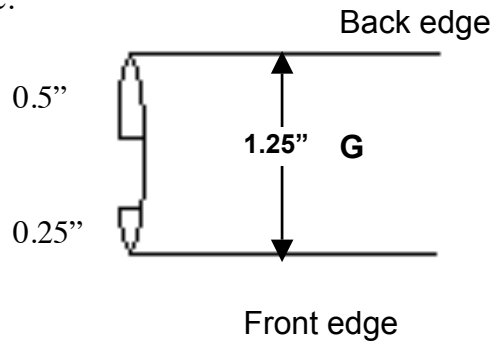


18. Now the corners. On the front, fold the excess cloth inside, towards the side edges. You will have to unpin a little to get the fold to lay neatly, then re-pin. On the back, fold the excess cloth towards the bottom edge of the frame, to distribute the thickness evenly.

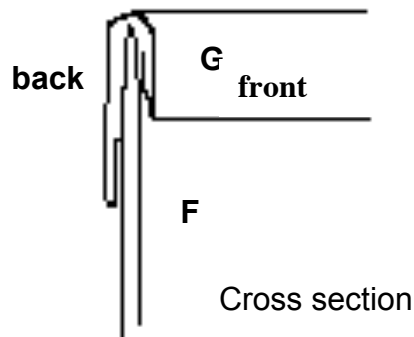


* Do the inner edges meet at 90 degrees?

19. Baste inner and outer edges of the border, taking care not to shift the frame edge from the crease of the border. Make sure the corners are making a 45° angle.
20. Blind-stitch by hand the inner edge of the border and the corners on the front first. Your stitches should pick up the interfacing but not come through to the back. Then turn it over and stitch the back in the same way. Press carefully. Are you satisfied? Trim off the raw ends of E so they are in line with the top edge of the frame. (See fig on previous page)
21. Press piece F in the same way as you did E. Fold it over the top edge of the rakusu, again making sure it's a snug fit. Pin. Tuck the ends of F neatly inside themselves with the excess cloth towards the back of the rakusu. Slip-stitch the front first, then the back.
22. On piece G, press a crease 0.5" from the edge, press a crease 0.25" from the other edge.

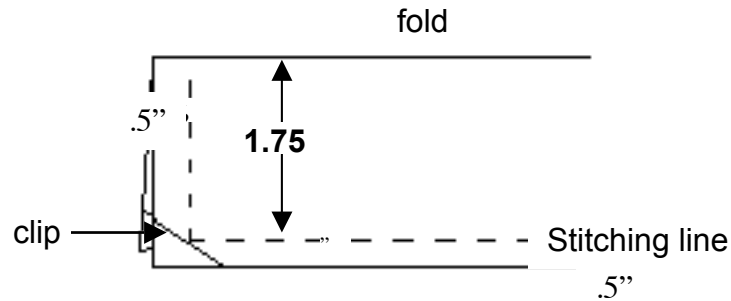


23. Fold G over the top edge of the rakusu, so that 0.25" shows in front and 1" in back. Is it centered?

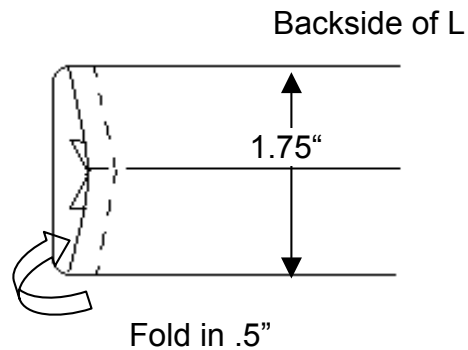


24. Pin G to F, folding in the ends neatly, at a right angle in front and forming a slant in back. See the drawings on page 2. Baste and blind stitch. (If you wish, stab-stitch bottom of G through all layers to give the edge a firm finish).

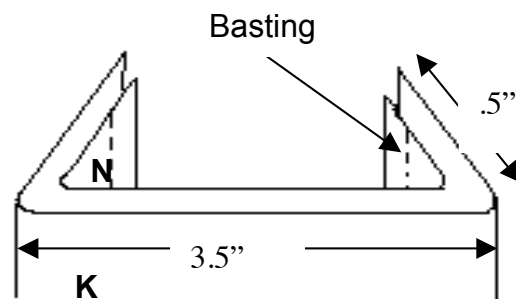
25. Now the straps. Fold pieces J and H lengthwise and pin, raw edges together. Step stitch 0.5" from raw edges. Stitch across only one end on each piece. Clip corners and turn inside out with the aid of a chopstick. Press.



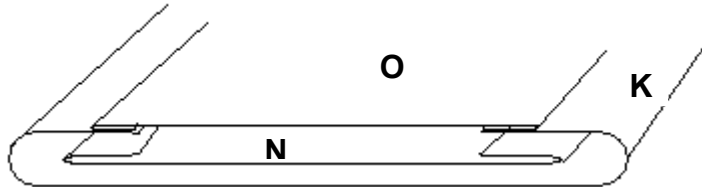
26. Fold L lengthwise and pin raw edges together keeping one end open. Turn inside out with the aid of a chopstick. Fold and press. See drawings. Fold in 0.5" on one end and close with small stitches.



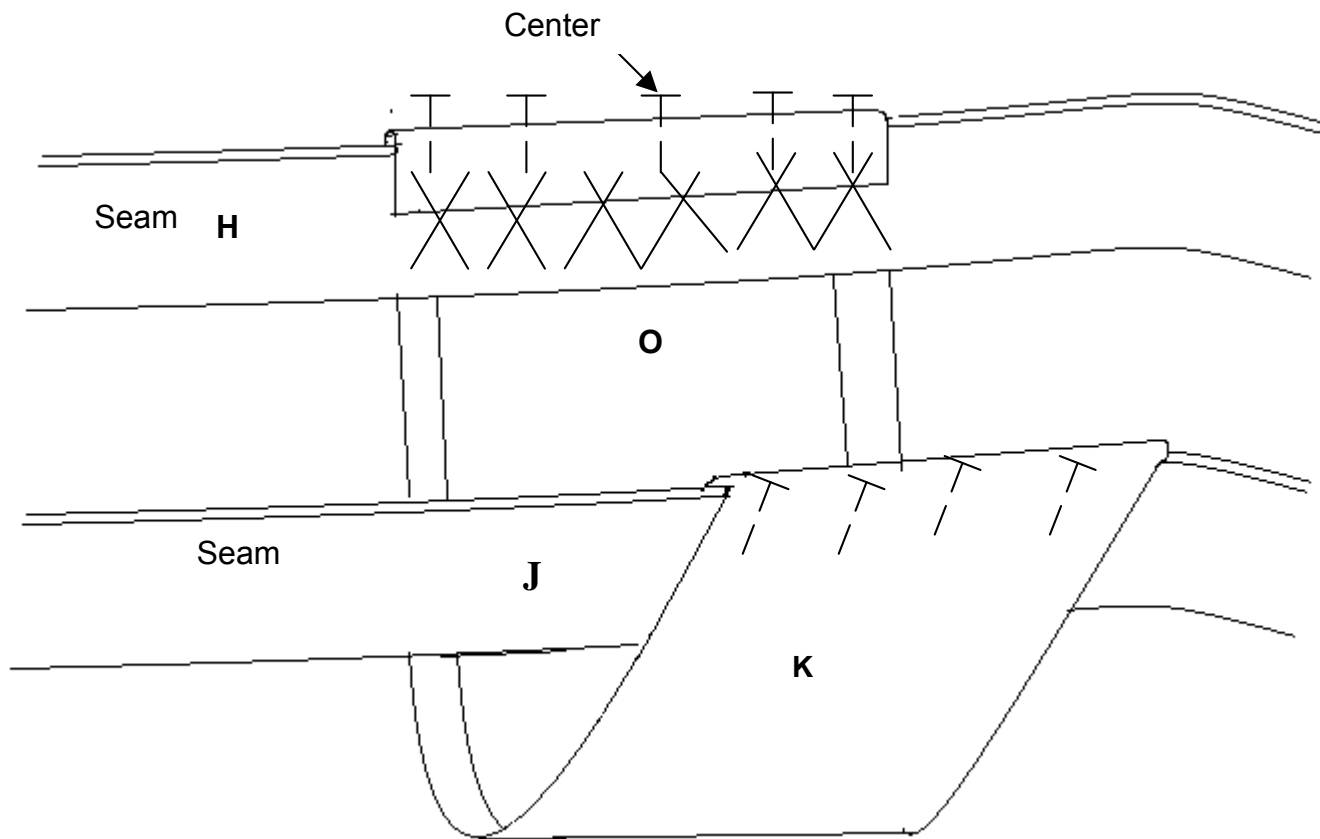
27. Pin K and N together and baste along sides 0.25" from raw edges, allowing K to be a fraction looser than N. This is because K has to fit around N. Fold in 0.5" on each side and press.



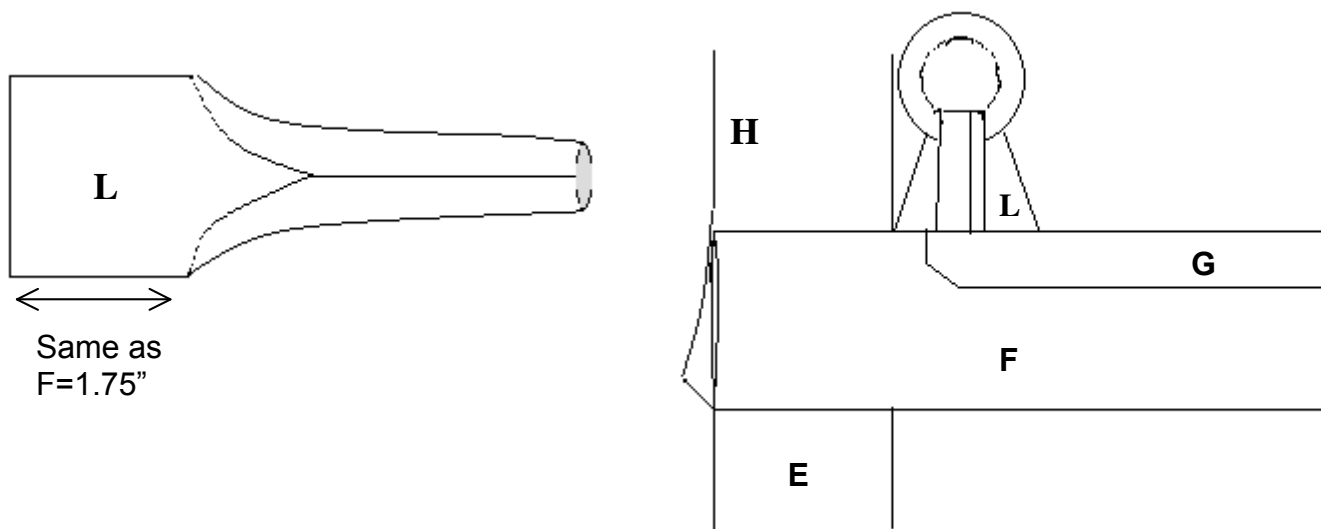
28. Fold in 0.27" on long sides of piece O and press. Pin O to K/N so that 0.25" of K shows on either side of O. Baste, then slip-stitch. Fold raw ends over 0.5" and press. Mark center of each side with a pin.



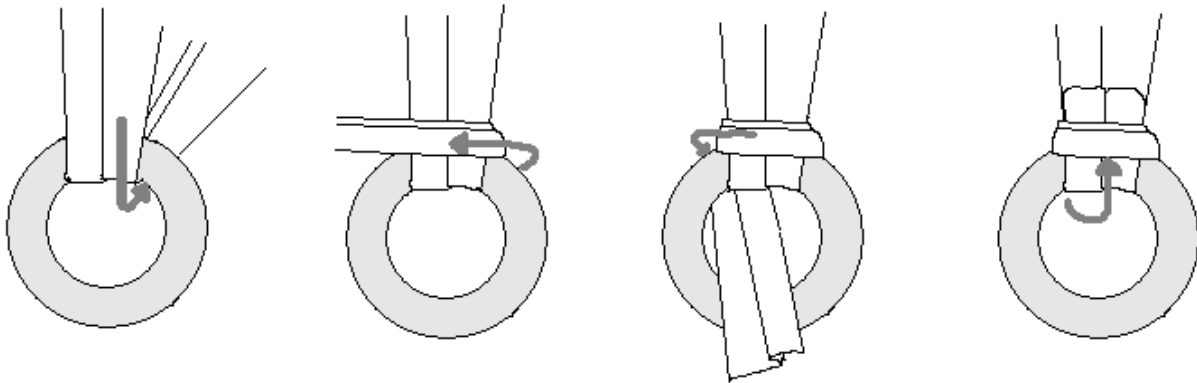
29. Pin the finished ends of J and H to the top edge of your rakusu, on the left as you look at it, as illustrated on page 1. The seamed edges of the strap should be towards the center of the rakusu and lined up with the bottom of F. Stitch them securely from the back with double thread, without coming through to the front. Pin the raw ends of H and L temporarily in place on the right.
30. Draw the raw ends of J and L through the rakusu ring and pin to get an impression of how it will look. Make sure that J will be on top of H (see front page).
31. Now try it on and check in the mirror. The bottom edge of the rakusu should come approximately 3" below your navel when you are standing up and cover your mudra when you sit in zazen. If it is too long, shorten J and L straps on your left side as you are wearing it. Place hands in shashu to help you judge. When you are satisfied, pin the straps in place. Edges are still raw.
32. Fold rakusu in half to find the exact center back point of the straps. Mark the center back on both straps with pencil. Fold the raw ends of K over the straps, lining up the center points and pin. Cross-stitch the raw ends of K to straps and place both sides together, so the straps are sandwiched inside K. Slip-stitch folded edges together. Press so that you don't see the stitches. (See the following page for drawing)



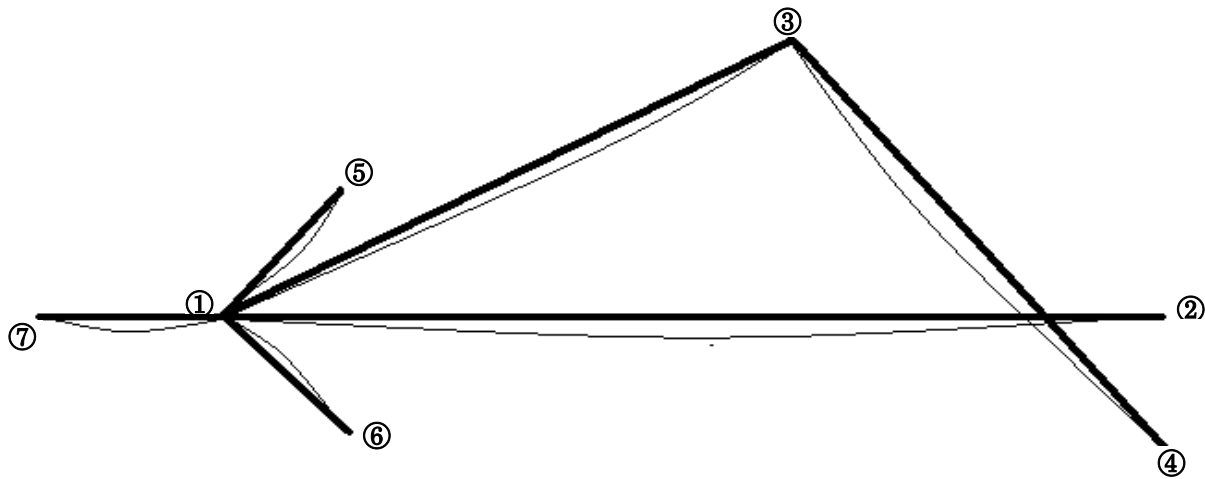
33. Fold the edges of L, one over the other, to the front, and stitch invisibly but firmly through all layers, finishing off the raw end neatly. Press well. Stitch it to the rakusu., like you did with J and H. Draw the other end of L through the ring, fold in raw edge and stitch it to the top edge of the rakusu at the back (see drawing).



34. Finish raw ends of H and sew it on. Finish raw end of J and tie it to the ring. It may take some practice to get the knot to sit at the right length. It will hold itself in place if you pull the strap taut after tying it. Check with drawing. Usually, it is not stitched.

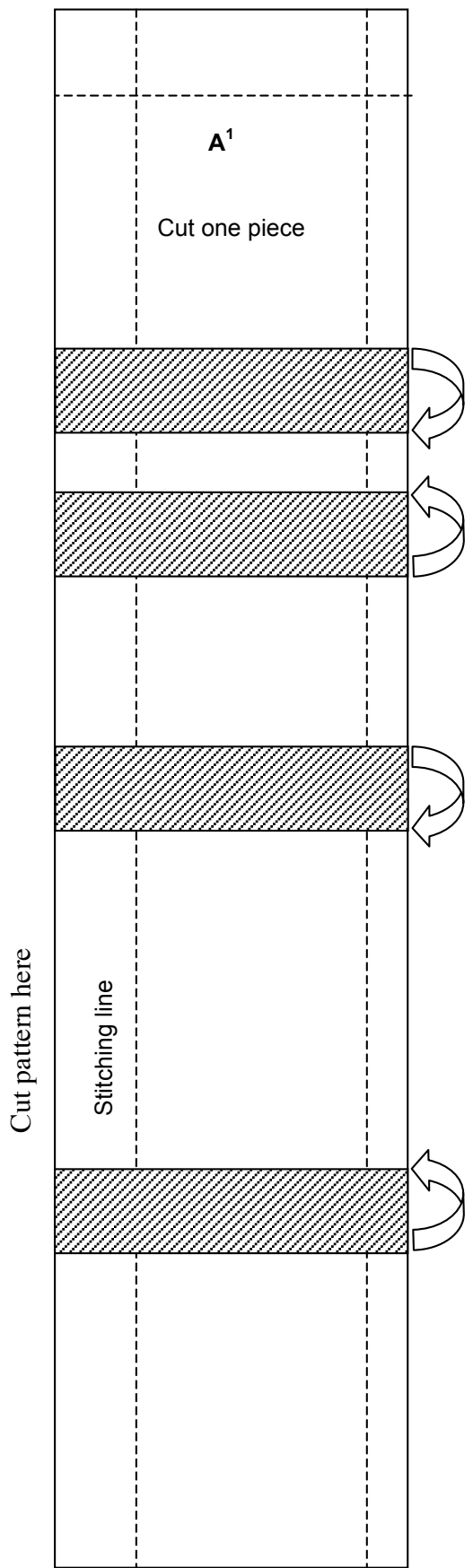


35. Lastly, the broken pine twig. Thread your needle with green embroidery thread and practice on a spare piece of cloth. If you like, mark the main points with pencil to guide you. Push needle through all layers, except for the first and last stitches. One line is one stitch. The pine twig should be in the center and about 1” from the edges. The design should look as pleasing on the back as on the front. The numbers on the drawing indicate in which order to stitch. Press.

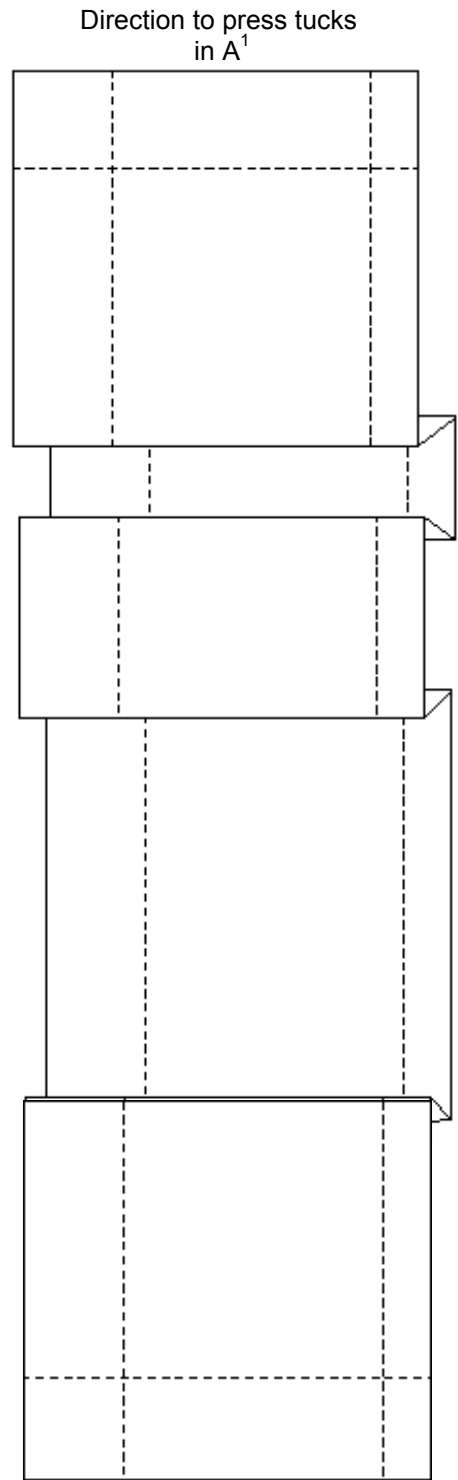


- Stitch from the inside of the cloth to point ①
 - At the right side one stitch to point ②
 - At the wrong side to point ①
 - At the front side to point ③
 - At the wrong side to point ④
 - At the front side to point ③
 - At the wrong side to point ①
 - At the front side to point ⑤
 - At the wrong side to point ①
 - At the front side to point ⑥
 - At the wrong side to point ①
 - At the front side to point ⑦
 - At the wrong side back to point ①,
- but then come up just through one part of the cloth and make a few stitches on top of each other on the inside, where nobody can see it.

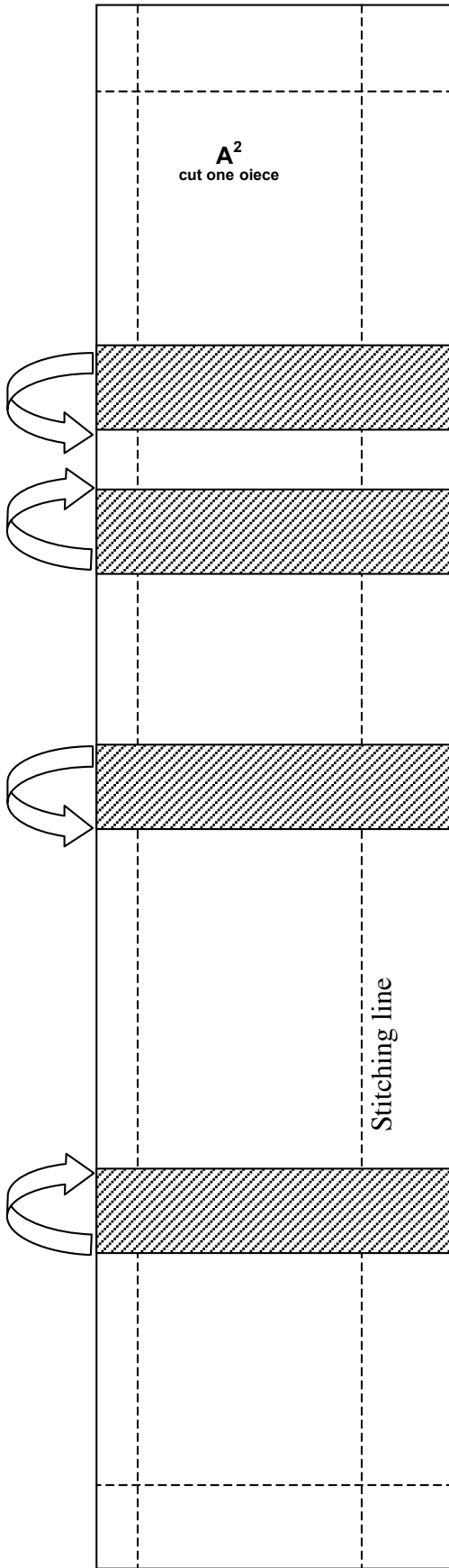
36. You have finished your rakusu. Congratulations and thank you.



This line goes on top of this line



This line goes on top of this line

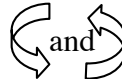


A²
cut one oiece

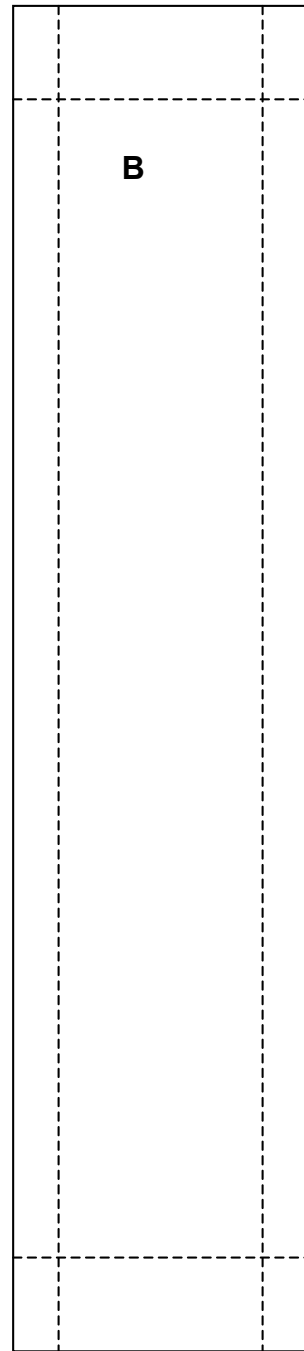
Stitching line

Cut pattern here

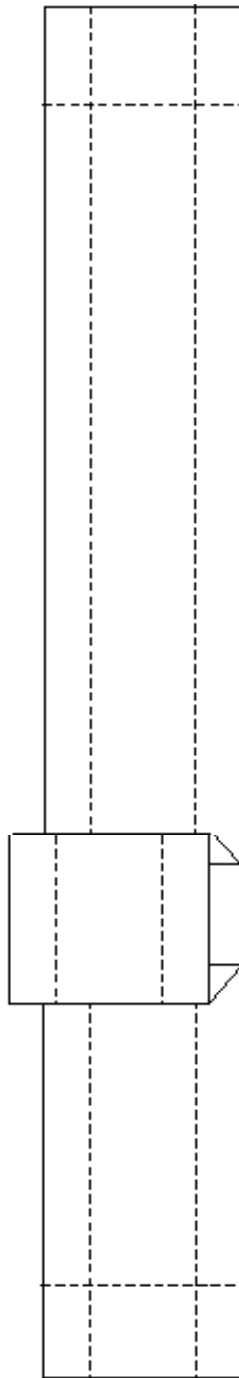
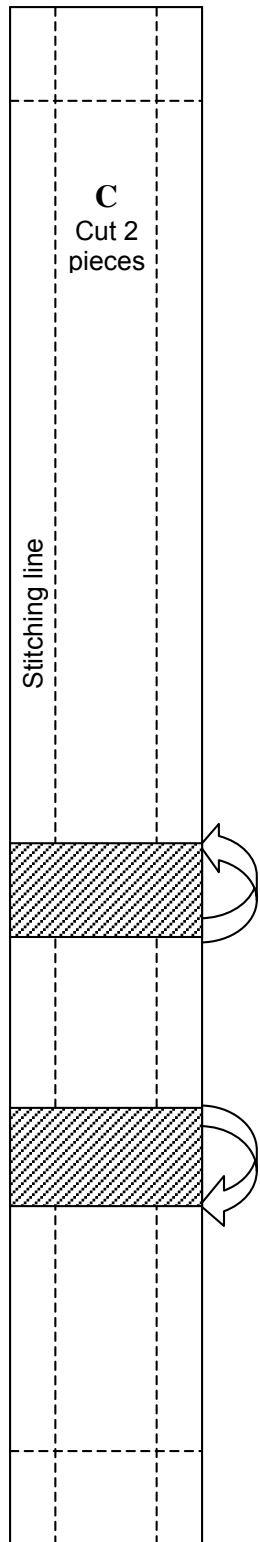
A¹ and A² are exactly the same, except the seam allowance is reversed.

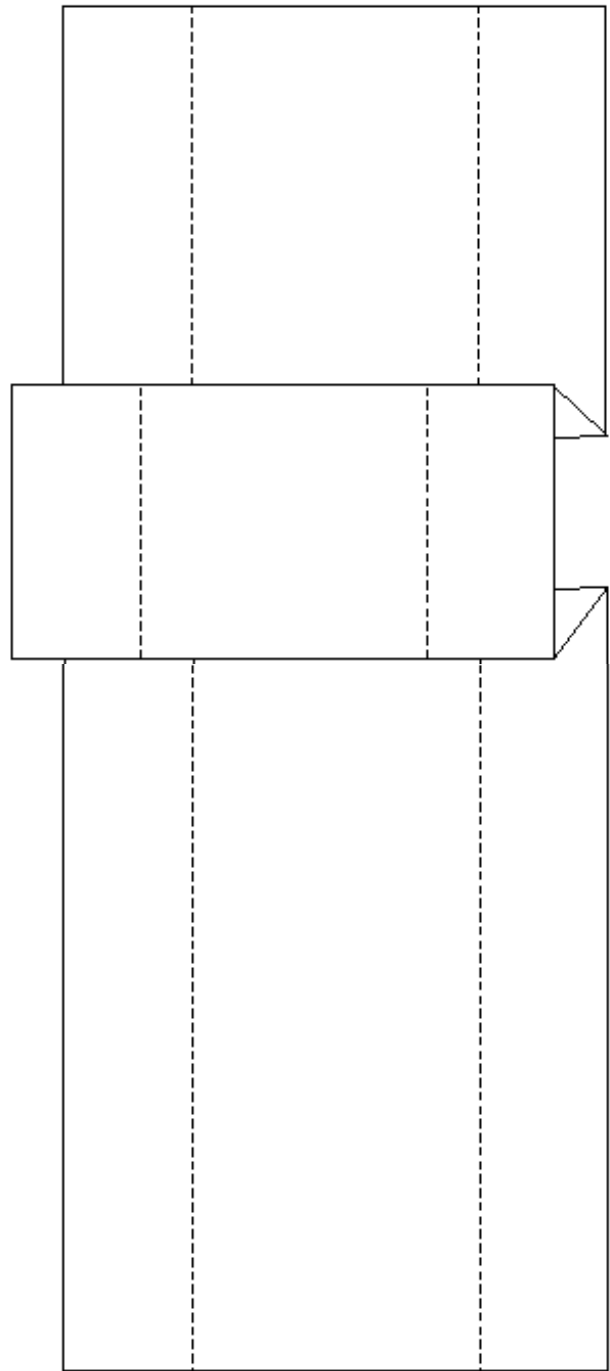
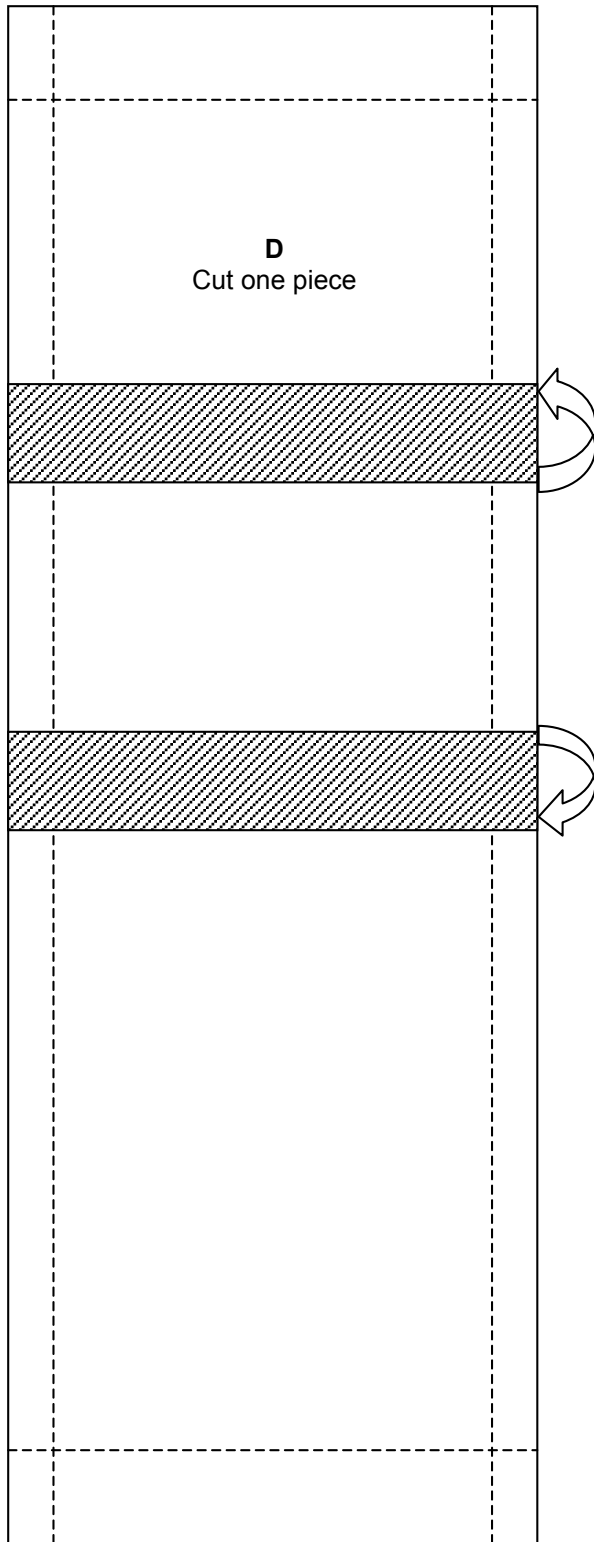


Arrows, indicate the direction in which to press the tucks.



B





For tall people, pieces J and H should be 44". For shorter people, pieces J and H should be 42"

