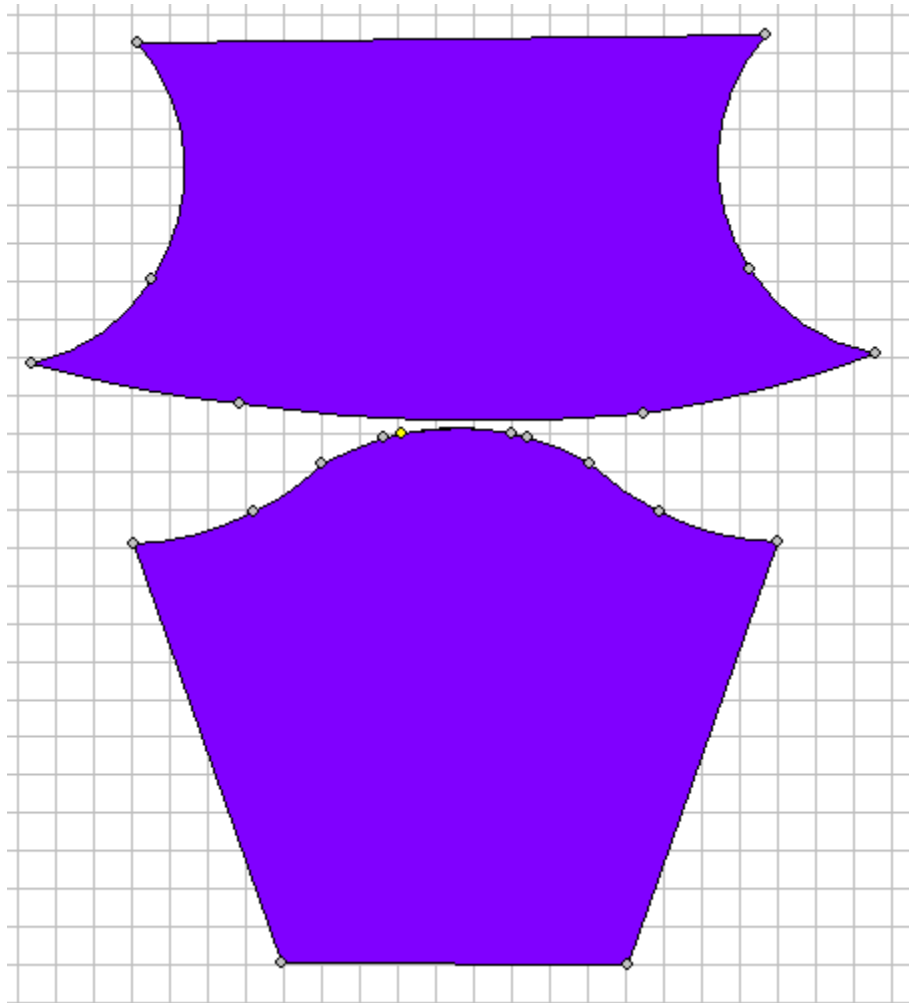


Easy Easing

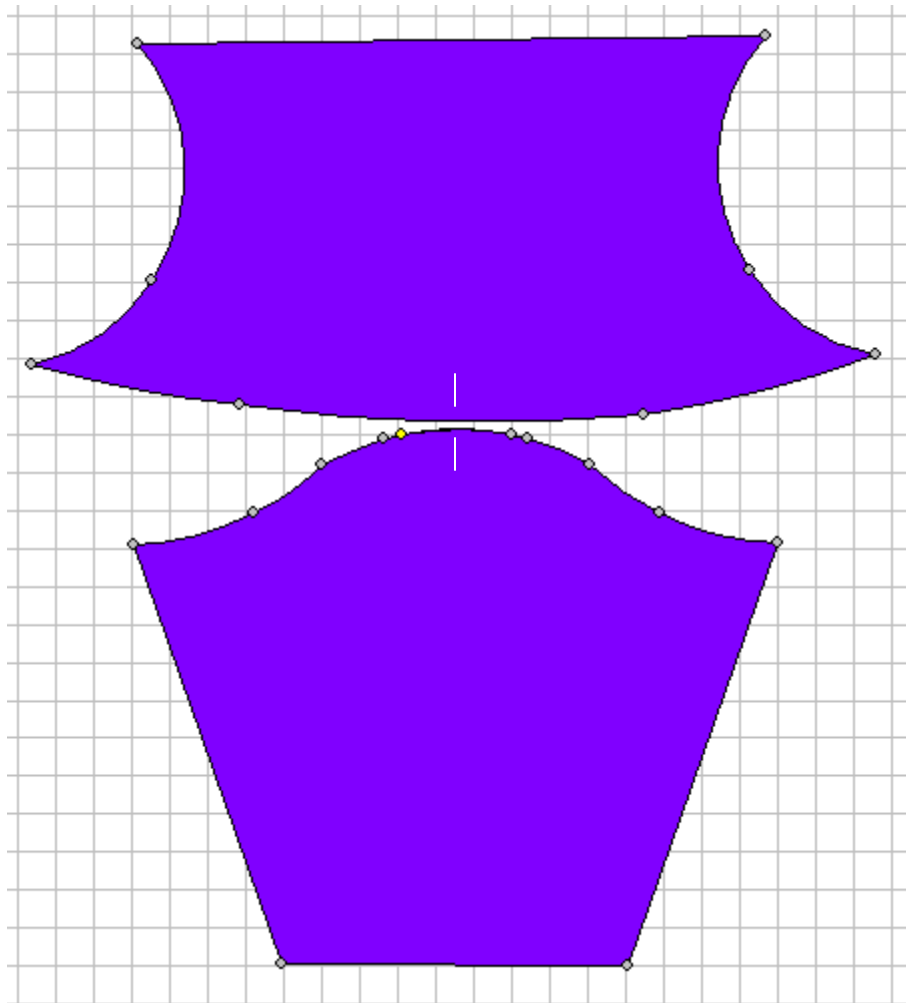
Quite often in sewing garments or accessories, you will need to sew a curve onto a straight piece or as below, a curve onto a larger, not-so-curved piece. The way you do that is through **"EASING"**.

In the examples below, the darker purple will represent the right (patterned) side of the fabric, while the lighter, lavender will represent the wrong side (inside).



1) First, on the right side where the edges will meet, **mark the center of both pieces.**

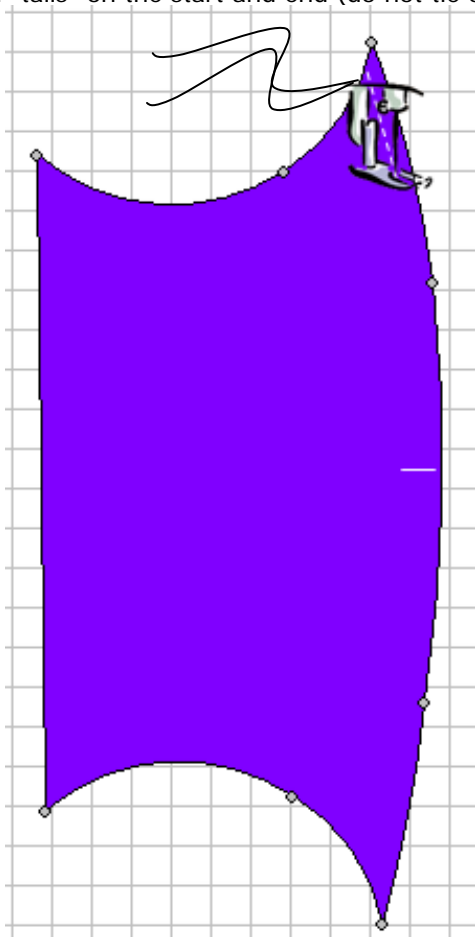
I usually use chalk, but you can use a pin – the good thing about chalk is that it doesn't fall out and you don't have to worry about sewing over it while doing other steps. Most patterns will have the center indicated by a circle or dot, but if they don't, fold the piece in half to find the exact center.



2) On the largest piece, you are going to add a basting (larger than normal seam) stitch, 1/8" inside the normal seam line. In other words, if the directions tell you to sew 5/8" seams for your project, you are going to sew the basting line at 4/8" (i.e., 1/2"). This is so that you don't need to remove the basting stitch later – it won't show on the end product since it will be inside the final seam line.

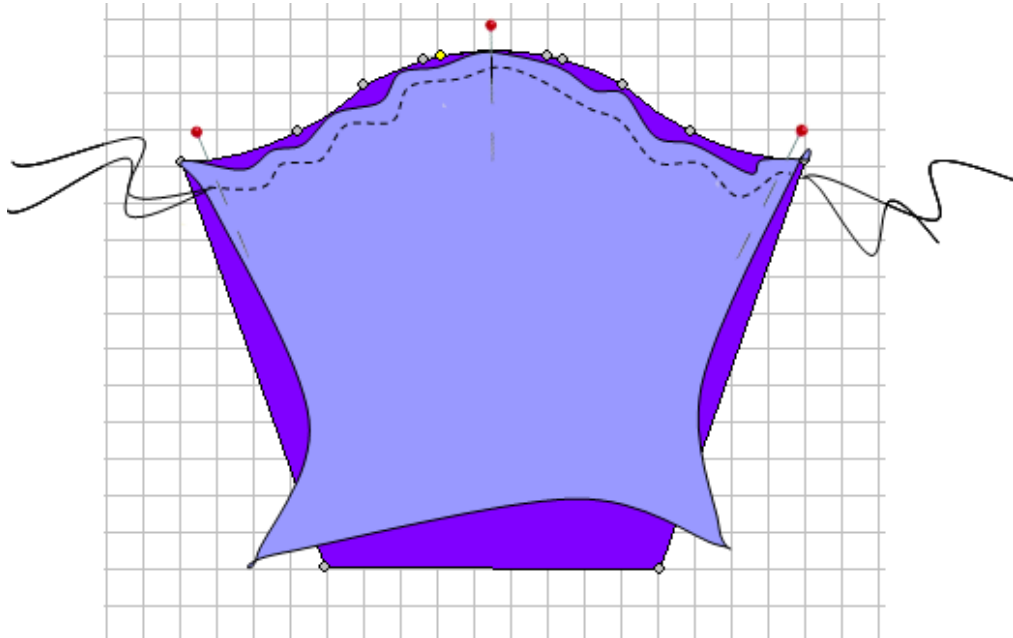
NOTE: If you are setting sleeves into a jacket or top, you will do the basting on the sleeve side not on the armhole.

Leave a good sized "tails" on the start and end (do not tie off or back-stitch the ends).



3) Pin your two pieces, right-sides together, one pin matching the center you marked and pins in each of the outside edges.

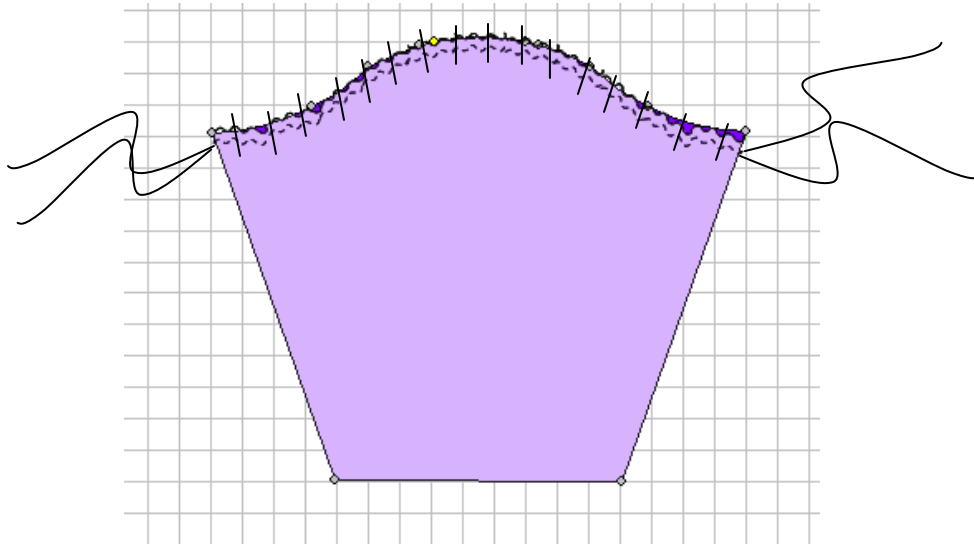
Your larger piece will be "wavy" and will look like there's no way this is going to fit together.



4) Begin gently pulling the bobbin thread of your basting stitch (reason – the bobbin will be easier to pull up, the top stitching should glide along it). Do this from each side until you get the top, larger, wavy piece of fabric to be pretty much the same size as the bottom. The “gathers” should be fairly evenly distributed along the length of the basting. If they aren’t, you can take your fingers and move it around. If you move it too much and it goes back so that the piece is longer than the top, then just pull the bobbin thread a little to “ease” it back in.

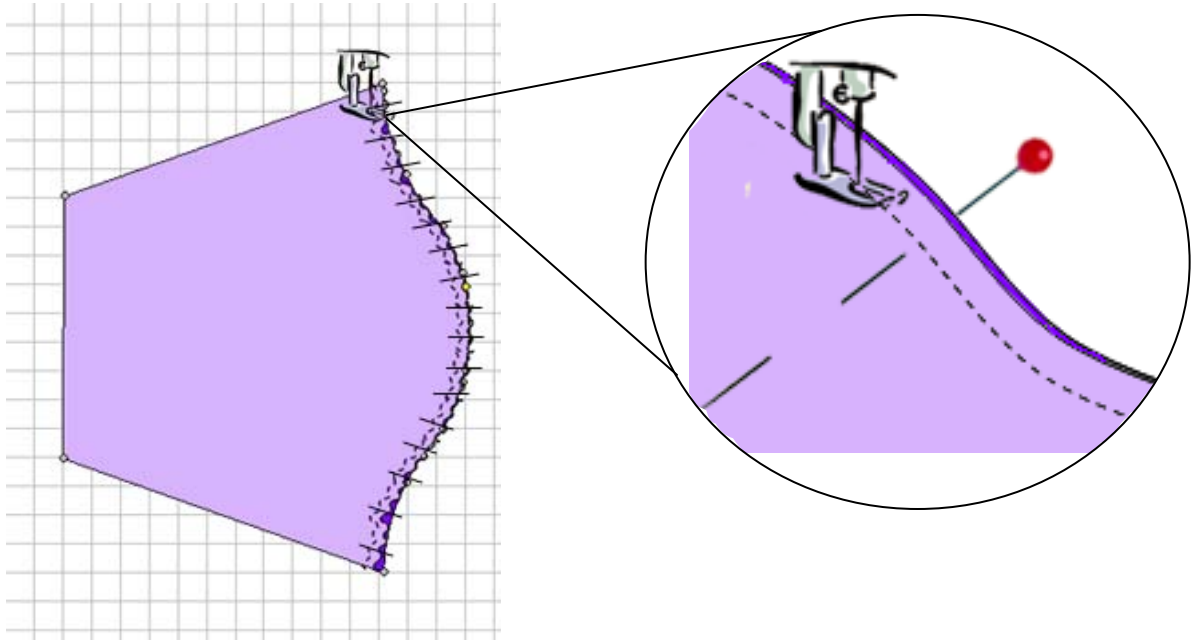
I typically keep pinning from the center of each part I’m working on. So my next pin will go halfway between the center and edge, then halfway between those two pins and so on. Once everything is evenly distributed you should see no areas where it looks like you will sew in part of the fabric on top of each other. It should just be a small bunch of little waves.

You should have really long ‘tails’. Do not cut these off! Why? You want to not have to re-do your basting should you need to re-pin or take out your seam and try again. When you are entirely done with sewing your two pieces together, you can, and should, trim these off.

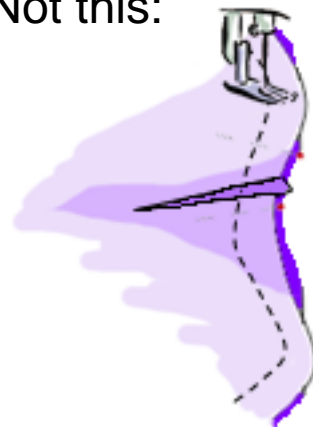


5) Next baste your two pieces together – again inside the normal stitching line, typically in a 4/8" seam and using a larger basting stitch size.

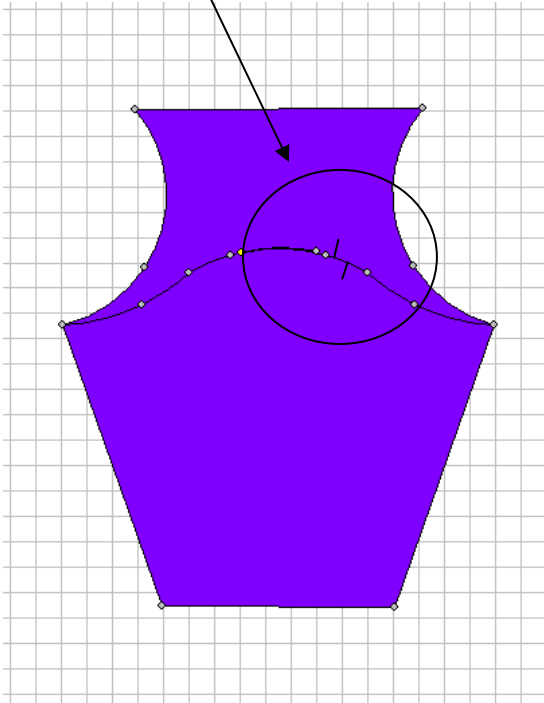
As you are sewing, remove pins just before you get to them (unless you have one of the rare machines that hops pins fairly well – which are not many). If it looks like you are going to get a pucker use your finger or a seam ripper to hold the fabric down. You want to avoid sewing in any puckers.



Not this:

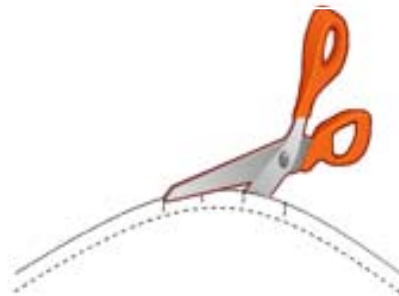


6) When you are done basting the seam, turn it right side out and see if you've caught any folds or puckers. If so, this is your opportunity to take out a few stitches (about 1/2" or so) on either side, and re-baste just that section while keeping it smooth. It may take a few times but the end product will be worth it



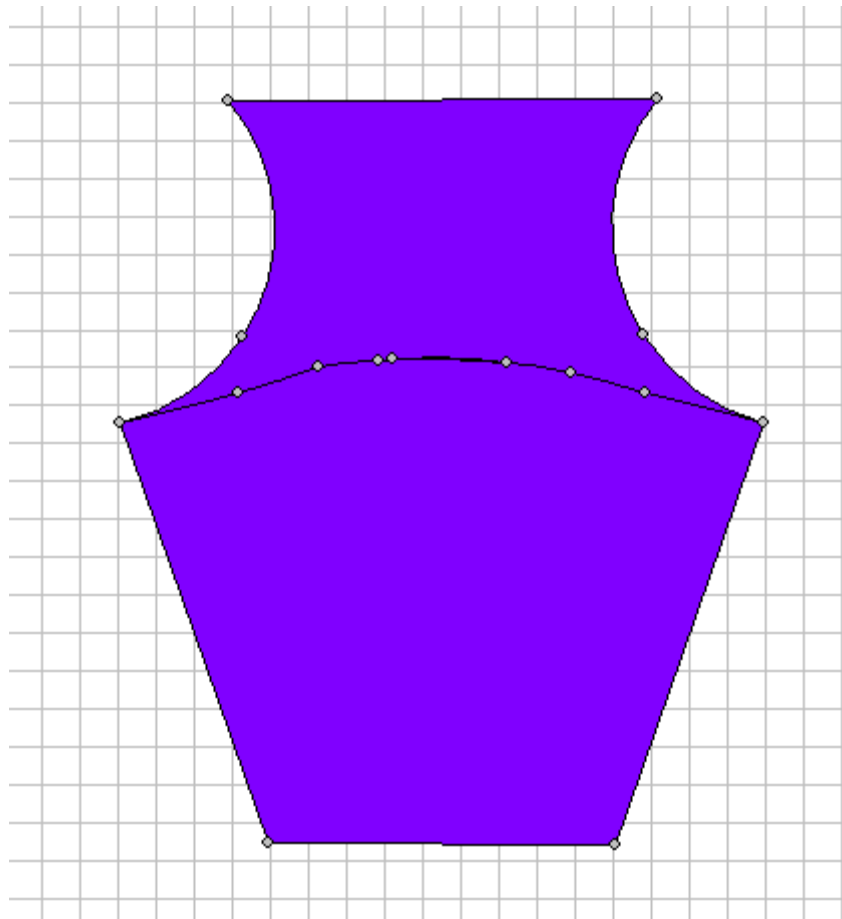
7) Once you have everything looking smooth, turn your pieces back right sides together and stitch with a normal small stitch size, this time on your seam line (e.g. 5/8" seam). Be careful not to re-introduce puckers. If you have some of your basting stitches showing on the right side, just clip them off after you are done.

If your two pieces have a very large curvature, you will want to clip the curves. I typically just take little snips along the curve up to, but not cutting into, the final seam line. It's okay if you snip your basting stitches, just not your real seam stitches. This "clipping" will allow the seam to flex and lie flatter when you press.



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8) Press and you should be all done! Great job!



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