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# MACHINE *Knit* AMERICA

Design & Fashion for Today's Knitter

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## Knit for Profit

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continues  
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Frances Tabor  
shows you  
how it's done





# Knitting for Profit

## Put It All Together - Part 1

by Sharon Nani

The next series of articles within the "Knitting for Profit" column will concentrate on 'putting it all together'. Several decisions must be made with each project. To demonstrate the analyzing and decision-making process, I chose my basic six-gore flare skirt pattern with a co-ordinating short-sleeve dolman top. My game plan is to take you through the steps involved in these projects. This includes the detailed steps of the optional knitting techniques that have not been described in my previous articles for **Machine Knit America**. The skirt and top are treated as two separate projects for analyzing purposes. I begin with the skirt. Consider these categories:

- **Select a Project**
- **Select an Appropriate Yarn**
- **Select a Pattern Shape**
- **Adjust the Size if desired:**  
(This is Diagram 1)
- **Select your Fabric**
- **Swatch your Fabric**
- **Apply your Swatch Information to Knitting Diagram 1:**  
(This results in Diagram 2)
- **Analyze your Knitting and Finishing Instructions**
- **Select your Knitting Technique Options**
- **Apply These Decisions to Diagram 2: (This results in Diagram 3)**
- **Knit your Project**
- **Steam and Finish**
- **Enjoy**

### I. Select a Project: Skirt

I want a classic, basic skirt that can be worn with a variety of tops.

### II. Select an Appropriate Yarn:

**70% wool / 30% rayon**

(known as wool/ray, veeven, dynasty, ) I discussed yarns and their characteristics in the last issue of **Machine Knit America**. This yarn holds up very well for dress wear. The wool gives it great stability and the rayon adds a nice sheen and drape. I selected black for the basic, classic look.

### III. Select a Pattern Shape:

**Six-gore, fitted-waist, a-line at hip, flare above knee line**

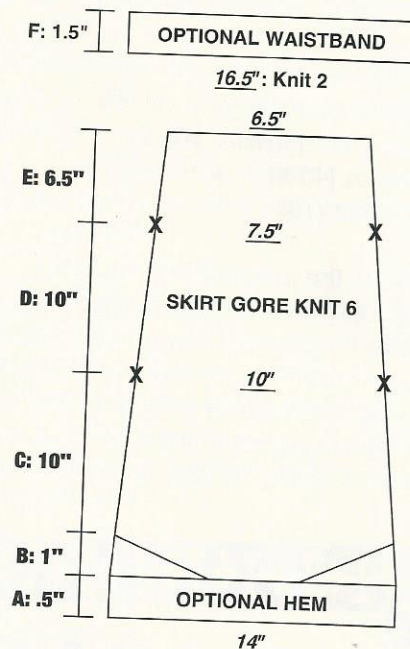
My body shape is a smaller waist with fuller hips and long legs. I am comfortable with a skirt with more gores and hip ease, and a flare at the hem line. Therefore, I would personally choose an A-line style. I would choose to knit 4 gores for a fitted appearance, and 6 gores for a fuller appearance. To create a style with a little more pizzaz, I choose to have a flare from above the knee line to the hem line.

### IV. Adjust the Size if desired:

**Medium: To fit: Waist: 28"-30", Hip 36"-40", Length: 27"**

Here, I am going to add a discussion about the elements of basic pattern charting. The information from steps III. and IV. are visualized in a drawing of the pattern shapes with the measurements in inches or centimeters recorded on it. I refer to this as **Diagram One**. This is a very simple project and only consists of 1 pattern shape which is the skirt gore. This shape is knitted six times. Refer to Diagram One for the size medium skirt gore.

DIAGRAM 1:



Notice the following charting points for Diagram 1 :

1. Each time a different measurement is recorded, a new letter is assigned to that section. These letters are posted to the left of the shape.
2. Each time a different measurement in **width** takes place, this measurement is recorded in the center of the shape. For your convenience, I have put all width references in **italics and underlined**.
3. Each time a different measurement in **length** takes place, this measurement is recorded at the left side of the shape. For your convenience, I have put all **length** references in **bold print**.

Note: if I draw these diagrams manually, I use different colors for width, length and instructional information.

Continued on next page



4. The diagram is read from the bottom upwards, in the same line of reference that it is knitted.

5. Look at the pattern shape, notice the name label: **Skirt Gore**; and the number of times this shape is to be produced: **Knit 6**. In personally drawn patterns or production patterns, it is a good idea to put this information on each pattern shape. When designers write patterns for specific magazines, they write their instructions according to the desired format of the magazine. This might include putting a certain Roman Numeral on the pattern to always represent a particular shape or piece of a pattern. In production knitting, a knitter should have all vital information on their pattern. They are not given a step-by-step written instruction. This would be much too time-consuming not only to generate in the sample knitting, but to execute in the production knitting as well. The simple thing of how many times a shape must be knitted is vital. You would be amazed at the hardship and loss of money it would cost when it is time to assemble the product and all the pieces are not there. It is not the production knitter's responsibility to understand all phases of the construction of the product. They only perform what is on their production pattern, or what they have been taught in their original training as procedures to always follow.

Before I leave the description of Diagram 1 of the charting process, it is important that we talk about measurements and the ease factor. In the process of teaching charting, I find that the most confusion or lack of confidence comes in knowing how much ease to put in a garment at a particular spot. The fact of the matter is that all of us are individuals with individual figures and feelings about what we are comfortable with. The charting programs that are available on today's market try to follow a standard that would apply to a large number of the customers. They usually use a larger ease factor to accommodate

more sizes of customers.

My goal in this series of articles is to encourage you to think as an individual. So I am going to approach this project by telling you why I chose the measurements that are on my pattern. It is up to you as an individual to decide where you disagree with me (it is totally appropriate to disagree in design and charting).

First, I see myself as wearing a size medium. (This right off the bat gives you the insight that a designer sets his/her sizing chart according to their personal feelings of what they are trying to achieve. So in today's market, it is wise for you to take a close look at the finished measurements, not the labeled size, when you choose a pattern to knit.) My waist is 28", hips are 41" and the distance from waist to fullest part of hip is 7.5", waist to knee is 22". These are the measurements I need to analyze the sizing of this pattern.

I always examine the "width" measurements first. Let us start at the top of the skirt, the waist line. The diagram calls for 6.5". If you knit six gores, this will make a total of  $6.5" \times 6 = 39"$ . When you seam 6 gores together, you will lose approximately 1.5" of this width. This leaves you with  $39" - 1.5" = 37.5"$ . My waist is 28". So this was an ease of 9.5". To some people, this may seem like a lot. But I am not planning on putting in a zipper. This 37.5" must be able to stretch over my 41" hips when I put the skirt on! I find that a 10" difference in waist ease still lays nicely without the insertions of darts with the yarn that I have chosen and also will stretch over the hip line.

The next width measurement down in 7.5". This takes place 6.5" below the waistline. Notice that I said that the fullest part of my hips is 7.5" below my waist. This gives me 1" to play with if my measurements are slightly off to ensure that I have the proper measurement at the hip line. Therefore,  $7.5" \times 6$  gores = 45". If I still lose the 1.5" in seaming my gores together in finishing, this leaves a finished measurement of 43.5". This is

2.5" ease above my hip measurement of 41". A standard ease is considered to be 2" larger than hip measurement. A loose standard ease is considered to be 4" larger. My personal preference is 2-3" ease at hip line.

Looking down 10" further, at the 16.5" line the new width of 10" is given. There is no secret here. It is strictly a design decision. I wanted an A-line style skirt that started flaring above the knee. My knee is at 22" below the waist, so the gradual flare starts above the knee line. The final width measurement of  $14" \times 6 = 84"$ .

This also was a personal choice decision. I measured a skirt that I liked the bottom width of. I divided that circumference measurement by 6 and arrived at 14". Notice that the total length of this skirt is 27" (the 1" dart is not included, as it is 'darted' out to compensate for the A-line shape.)

The industry standards that I have been exposed to use an 18" length for above the knee mini, 22" for a knee length, 26-27" for standard below the knee length, and 32" for mid-calf length skirts.

6. The final information on Diagram 1 is part A the optional hem and part F the optional Waistband. It is left blank because in the next issues I will discuss hem and waist band options. The only important thing to recognize is that the pattern showed a .5" hem. If you choose one of the larger hems, deduct the difference in length from part C so that you maintain the 27" total length.

The next issues will continue with the discussion of the rest of the category steps of the project, the procedures of charting Diagrams 2 and 3 and the options of the different knitting techniques that you can apply. Meanwhile, take a good look at Diagram 1 and prepare the measurements to your liking. ❖