

We Dress Bleurette

Casino Dress – 1906

“Now is the moment to prove that you have profited from the fashion lessons of Aunt Jacqueline. This little dress isn’t difficult to tailor according to the patterns that we give you now: but it demands of you that you be a very good stitcher and a good embellisher.

Granted that this is a dress, it could make a reappearance under the name of lingerie, if it is of linen or batiste with lingerie seams, but it is also pleasing when carefully executed in a wool fabric.

If you make the casino dress of linen, mousseline, or batiste, you’ll need an under-dress of silk or white satinette. If you use silk or any non-transparent fabric, you won’t need an under-dress.”

This is a translation of the opening few paragraphs of *Tante Jacqueline’s* directions for creating the *Robe de Casino* of 1906. The pattern pieces show both the dress and puff sleeve and the under-dress (on the pattern pieces it is called a lining) and under-sleeve. The only other piece is the shoulder flounce, called a *bretelle*.

The hem of the dress and of the shoulder flounce may be trimmed with lace or other light trim. According to the pattern, the dress and shoulder flounce may also be merely hemmed. At the end of each shoulder flounce is a bow knot of ribbon, and the left one has streamers of ribbon hanging from it. The neckline may be turned under or finished with lace or other light trim.

If you use lace or trim applied flat, you will need at least a yard and an eighth of lace, but if you choose to gather the trim for a more ruffled effect, you will need twice as much, about 2 ¼ yards.

Because of the gathers that form the yoke of the dress, use a lightweight fabric for the dress. The shoulder flounces could be made of the same fabric, lace, or tulle, and trimmed with lace or tulle trim. For anyone who loves ruffles and flounces, this is your chance to go all out! The dress will look simple and sweet if made of plain white batiste, soft eyelet, very light plisse, or gauze, and simply hemmed. A blouse-weight silk or wool would be very dressy, if you could find this.

Cut the front of the dress on the fold and the back with seam allowance as shown. Gather the yoke of the dress front and backs to correspond with the size of the dress lining as it is shown. If you are lining the dress, cut one front on the fold and two backs as shown. Place the linings under the gathered fronts and backs, baste at shoulder seams and armholes (or pin) to hold them together, and from now on treat them as one unit. Sew the dress shoulder seams, right sides together.

Cut the sleeves, and under-sleeves, if you are using them. You may use the under sleeve to help achieve a very puffy sleeve, even if you do not use an under-dress. Stitch the small dart in each sleeve side seam as shown. This helps the sleeve puff out more. Hem or trim the sleeve ends. Hem the under-sleeves. Gather the sleeves and under-sleeves separately along the tops, to fit the armholes of the dress. Gather the bottom of the sleeves and under-sleeves to the same dimension to fit (with a little ease allowed) *Bleurette’s* arm. Baste the under-sleeve and sleeve together along the side seam and top

of sleeve seam allowance. Invisibly stitch the sleeve to the under-sleeve along the gathering line—this will allow it to puff nicely. Work with each lined sleeve as a unit, now.

With right sides together, stitch each sleeve into the armhole of the dress taking care to stitch beyond all your gathering and basting lines, so that none of them show.

Next, hem or trim each shoulder flounce. Gather each flounce slightly along the flat edge, drawing up each by about 1". With wrong side of flounce against right side of dress, position the flounce (curved side toward the sleeve) so that it runs across the shoulder from the lowest gathering line in the front to the lowest gathering line in the back of the dress. Pin in place and stitch to the dress invisibly.

At the end of each flounce on the front of the dress there is a decorative knot of matching or contrasting ribbon. Stitch four ribbon streamers to the back of one of the knots, and place this one on the left. The streamers are about 3 ½" long.

Turn under and trim or hem the neckline of the dress.

With right sides together, stitch the side seams of the dress including the sleeves.

Hem the dress. If you wish, apply a slightly gathered lace or tulle ruffle to the skirt at the hemline. 20" of trim will make slight gathers; 24" can be used for a more-gathered effect.