

Zero-what?

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The purpose of this design was to execute garments in a zero-waste pattern cutting technique that were typical in silhouette and style for the ready-to-wear women's market.

My practice-led research has focused on zero-waste (ZW) pattern cutting techniques for several years. I enjoy it for two primary reasons: first, as a creative challenge that simultaneously employs the designer and patternmaker within me, and second, to contribute to solutions for sustainably creating apparel.

Several exhibitions focusing on ZW designs have been mounted in recent years to support and promote the practice, including *YIELD* in the United States and New Zealand, *Zero Waste Fashion Repatterned* in the United States, and *Make/Use* in New Zealand. However, few designers have bridged the gap between creating a single zero-waste garment (as shown in an exhibition) and marketing multiple designs in the ready-to-wear market. Consumer acceptance of the designs is critical for success in the marketplace.

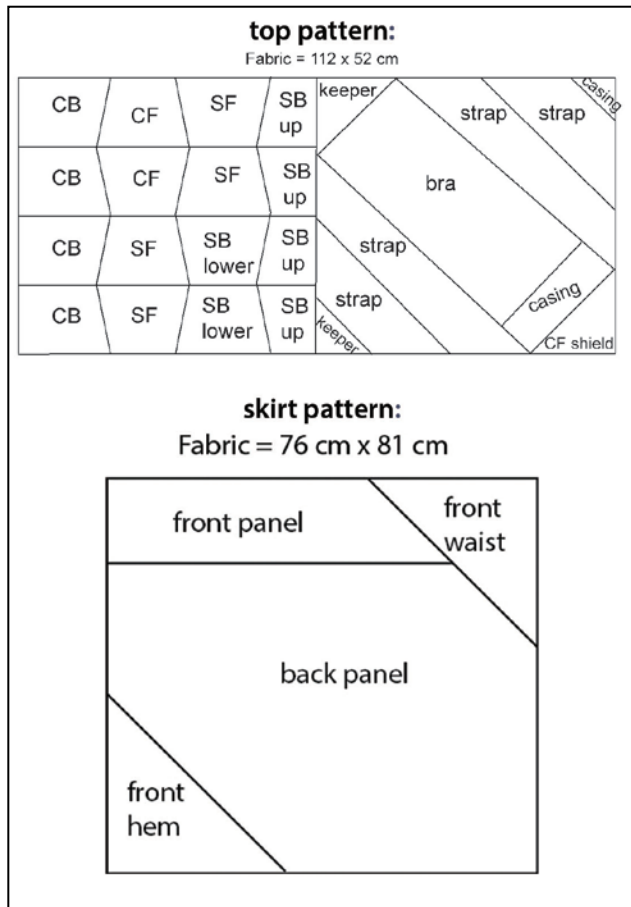


As Michaelson and Chattaraman reported in 2017, consumers prefer zero-waste dresses that are “typical” aesthetically over those that are atypical, even when considering the zero-waste concept behind the designs (Michaelson and Chattaraman, 2017). Typical dresses are those judged to be either classic in style or currently in style (Minshall, 1994).

To that end, *Zero-what?* is a ZW design that appears very typical in silhouette and style. A red and white micro-check gingham top with lace detail at the waist is paired with a white knee length pique skirt with lace trim accenting the diagonal seams. The top, similar to one I previously designed using a ¼” black and white gingham check (Carrico & Kim, 2014), is designed with the midriff section formed by twelve tessellating trapezoid shapes. The bra and straps are bias cut. For this design, a fabric with either double-face or no face is required since the bra section twists once to achieve the fit and look desired. Gingham was a natural choice for the summery look, especially since gingham has experienced such remarkable



popularity in womenswear recently that Forbes even declared it the “It print of Spring 2018” (Boyd, 2018). The opening at center front beneath the bra twist can be closed up by a triangular piece of fabric. The triangle can fold down (as shown in front view) or be folded up and secured with hooks and eyes (as seen in the side view). The skirt is a short version of Halston’s bias cut tube dresses from the 1970’s (Gross & Rottman, 1999). Center front and center back hang bias so the seams, while sewn on grain, fall diagonally around the body. Lace trim was applied to the seams to accentuate them and complement the lace trim on the gingham top. The skirt has an elastic waist.



Zero-what demonstrates that a zero-waste pattern can yield a garment with a typical silhouette and style. Such an undertaking is an increased challenge to the designer / patternmaker since all the fabric must be utilized in a way that does not alter the style or silhouette beyond typicality. Indeed, *Zero-what* has met the criteria for promoting “greater adoption of ZW designs” by Michaelson and Chattaraman (2017) by harmonizing the atypical diagonal seams on the skirt with a straight knee-length silhouette while the gingham top has typical seam placement with slight atypicality in the twist at the front bust.

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