

## 101-1

Designer and blogger Gretchen Hirsch demonstrates how to make an updated skirt with a retro vibe.

Watch the video for this project online at:  
<http://youtu.be/mJEUUnQobbQ0>



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Please see page 2 for project instructions.

Linda Skirt #8164

Project with links to the pattern:

<http://www.burdastyle.com/projects/linda-skirt-in-gingham>

Direct link to the pattern:

<http://www.burdastyle.com/patterns/linda>

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<http://www.brothersews.com> <http://www.voguefabricsstore.com> <http://www.burdastyle.com>

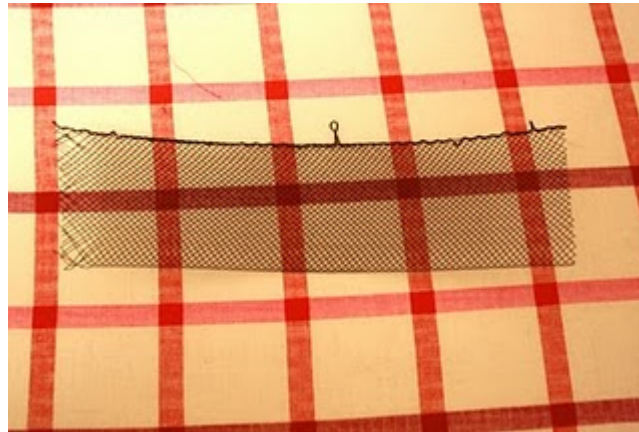
## Hemming a Skirt with Horsehair Braid

By Gretchen Hirsch, [www.blogforbettersewing.com](http://www.blogforbettersewing.com)

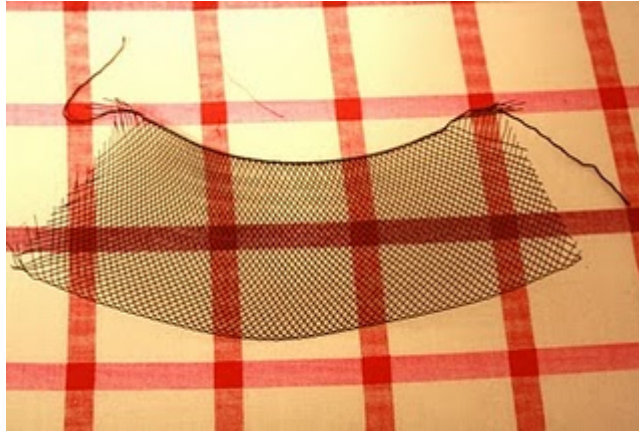
Using horsehair braid on a hem is one of my absolute favorite sewing tricks. It's perfect on circle skirts, making them stand out subtly without the aid of an old-fashioned crinoline. Plus, it removes the need to ease in the hem since it produces a narrow, faced hem.

Horsehair braid used to actually be made of horse's hair, but now it's made of nylon or polyester. You can buy it in various widths. A wider width will give you more body to your hem, and a narrower one will be more subtle. I like a 2-5" width for my skirts.

The wider braids have a string at the top. See the loopy bit up there?



This is used to pull the braid tight at the top to shape it, resulting in a curve at the bottom. Perfect for a curved hem like a circle skirt!



There are little loops throughout the braid so that you can pull them up incrementally as you go, not just on the ends. (However, it does provide a nicer finish if you pull them all the way to the ends as you go, rather than leaving the loops. You can use a pair of tweezers to keep pulling the extra thread to the end as you go.)



We're going to be topstitching our horsehair braid for a casual finish.

So here's how to apply your horsehair braid. Start with your dress **at the desired length plus 1/2"**. If your fabric is thicker, you might want to add a smidge extra for turn of cloth.

First, stitch the braid with a 1/4" stitching line to the **right side** of your dress, lining up the bottom of the horsehair braid and the raw edge of the bottom of the dress. I wouldn't

necessarily recommend pinning it first: This is because you don't want to pull the braid as you go; you want it to apply flat. If you pull it as you're applying it, your hem will look twisted. Just keep feeding it gently, lining up the braid and the dress's raw edge as you stitch.

The 1/4" stitching line is pointed out below with that handy yellow arrow. Keep in mind that this is the outside of the dress.



When you get to the end, you'll want to cover up one end of the braid with some sort of seam binding or a piece of the fashion fabric so the braid won't scratch you. Lap the covered end UNDER the raw end, this way the scratchy raw edge of the braid will be lapped under when you flip it to the inside.



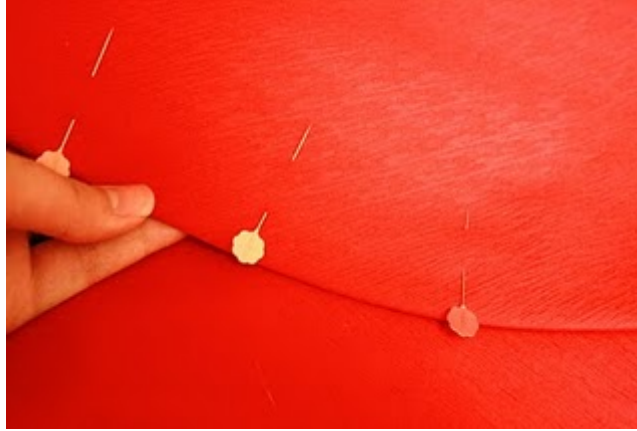
Now flip the braid to the inside and press the hem. Avoid ironing the braid itself; just press the hem.



If your hem is curved, you'll need to pull the loops of string incrementally so that your braid will curve up. You're shaping your hem— isn't it exciting?



Pin the hem as you go. I'm pinning on the outside of the dress since I'm going to top-stitch it and that's the side that will be facing up.



Now take it to your machine and top stitch. Find the right hem width that will catch the horsehair braid near its top. Use a slightly longer stitch width than usual for prettier stitches, 3.5 mm is a good length.

To avoid the fabric twisting as you top stitch, it helps to feed the fabric to the left of your presser foot through as you go with your left hand. If you notice the fabric pulling or twisting, stop stitching and raise the presser foot (with your needle down), and smooth out the fabric around the presser foot to release any tension.



Press your finished hem.



Here's the inside:



Now you can just cut off those extra loops.

That's all!