

DRESS A GIRL DRESS GUIDELINES

At Dress A Girl Around the World, we are making “God’s best dress,” and we carefully screen every dress before it is sent. Please carefully read and follow the instructions below for your dress to be included. Thank you very much for following these guidelines!

FABRIC:

- 100% cotton or a cotton/poly blend (with mostly cotton) should be used.
- The dresses will be washed in rivers, creeks, watering holes and maybe scrubbed with rocks. Only cotton will stand up to this treatment.
- When choosing fabric, consider the size it will be. Use baby/nursery patterns for smaller sizes.
- Most dresses should be 44” wide (the full width of standard fabric. (See the sizing chart, for the length and width for each size). The length has been adjusted to allow for the dresses to fall below the knee. When using a store bought pattern, adjust the length so that the dress will fall below the knee.
- Most girls in these countries are malnourished so their bodies are smaller, so the 44" wide fabric is fine. If making a size 12 or 14 sundress, please put a small 3-4" 'kick-pleat' in the side or back seam to allow for running and walking.
- *PLEASE NOTE: WE ARE NO LONGER USING PILLOWCASES.*

SUNDRESS TIES: Ties should be 42-44” each. 36 is acceptable on extra-small (size 0-2).

- Ties should also be made of double-wide, double fold bias tape. (Store bought or hand made)
- This is enough length to be tied into a bow; otherwise it’s only enough to tie in a knot, which the girls then might not be able to untie. Ties should also be in one length (not pieced together) with the ends either turned under or zig-zagged across.
- Please do not use thin bias tape or ribbon for the ties.

POCKETS:

- Placed slightly below the mid-point of the dress (slightly below the waist...think about putting your hands in your pockets and where you’d like them to be.) pocket chart available.
- Pockets should measure a minimum of 6” wide x 6” high--any smaller won’t give much room, AND hands might not fit. Larger size dresses can use larger pockets.
- Pocket fabric should coordinate both in color and pattern. Be creative if you desire, but the pockets need to be practical as well.
- We prefer 2 pockets (this might be the only place a girl has to herself for her ‘treasures,’ as many times several family members live in a very tiny house).
- Pockets maybe turned out or pinked with a straight or zig-zag stitch. Double thickness makes a better pocket.

SEAMS:

- Inside seams should be serged or zig-zagged in the seam allowance. This ensures that the seams will not break through. Think of little girls playing and running. If the seam opens, she has no way to repair it.

HEMS:

- should be very shallow and either serged on the raw edge or turned under. The girls have no way of letting down the hem in case of growth, so a shallow hem (1/2-3/4”) is plenty.

ELASTIC:

- Follow each dress cut instructions for elastic lengths per size. Elastic stretches and most of the girls are small across their chest area, so larger elastic isn’t needed.

AVOID:

- Avoid white fabric or thin fabric (gingham, for example, tends to be very thin).
- We are trying to give the girls dignity and their dark skin would show through. Hold fabric up to a light source. Is it see-through?
- Avoid using fabric that has: Americana/patriotic; Halloween (skulls, pumpkins, ghosts); obvious Christmas (Santa, snowmen; though red/green holly or pine/berry patterns ok); Disney or any character fabric (Cinderella, SpongeBob, Star Wars etc); or any printed English words.. None of these things would be appropriate in a foreign country. Think about a little girl wearing a dress made out of the fabric chosen...is it appropriate?

EDGES:

- All edges should be either pinked or turned under, no raw edges exposed. On the sun dress, ensure that all the raw edges are enclosed in the bias tape ties and that the bias is securely fastened where it intersects with the elastic.

EMBELLISHMENTS:

- Should all be securely SEWN on
- Could include appliques, yo-yo's, buttons, braided or woven trims, ric rack, lace, or eyelet.
- Please do not use hot glue to attach decorations or embellishments.
- If using ribbon as decoration please ensure to use a FABRIC ribbon (ie grosgrain), not CRAFT ribbon (craft ribbon will eventually disintegrate in water, which would be problematic with washing!).
- Please consider placing a belt or sash on size 10 and larger. Older girls like a waistline and don't want to look pregnant when they are not.

PLEASE CONSIDER:

- The dress each girl receives maybe the ONLY dress they EVER have. We want it to be a high-quality product in which they feel dignified and beautiful.
- These girls live in areas where they are easy targets for trafficking. Does the dress you are making add to their dignity?
- Girls in some of these countries are considered 'less than human' just by virtue of their sex, and they have no standing in their societies. We want them to know that they are loved by God and that they are indeed precious, with high standing in the eyes of God. We show them that by taking care to make the best dress possible.
- Some of these dresses will go to some of the poorest-of-the-poor, and the poor deserve nice things with good workmanship, not just leftovers or hand-me-downs. "The Lord hears the cry of the poor," we want to honor Him by honoring them.
- Is the dress that you are making a dress that you would be proud having your daughter or granddaughter wear? Is it "God's best dress"?

THANK YOU for serving God by helping Dress A Girl Around the World!