

Lightweight Balaclava pattern

This is a sewing pattern for a very simple head covering. Since it's not too thick, a helmet can fit over it no problem, so it's perfect for riding your bike when it's a bit chilly. And since it's lightweight and breathable, you won't overheat if your body temperature rises, from biking.

You can make it using any knit fabric, but an old t-shirt works perfectly. If it's a large size, you can even make two balaclavas from one tee.

Start by cutting out the two pattern pieces. The head piece can be folded in half to cut on the fold, but since you'll need four it's usually easier to stack up 2 or 4 fabric layers and cut them out unfolded.

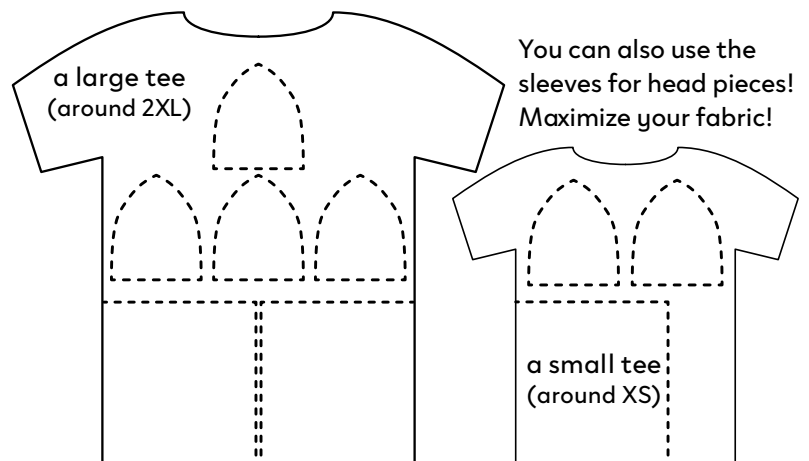
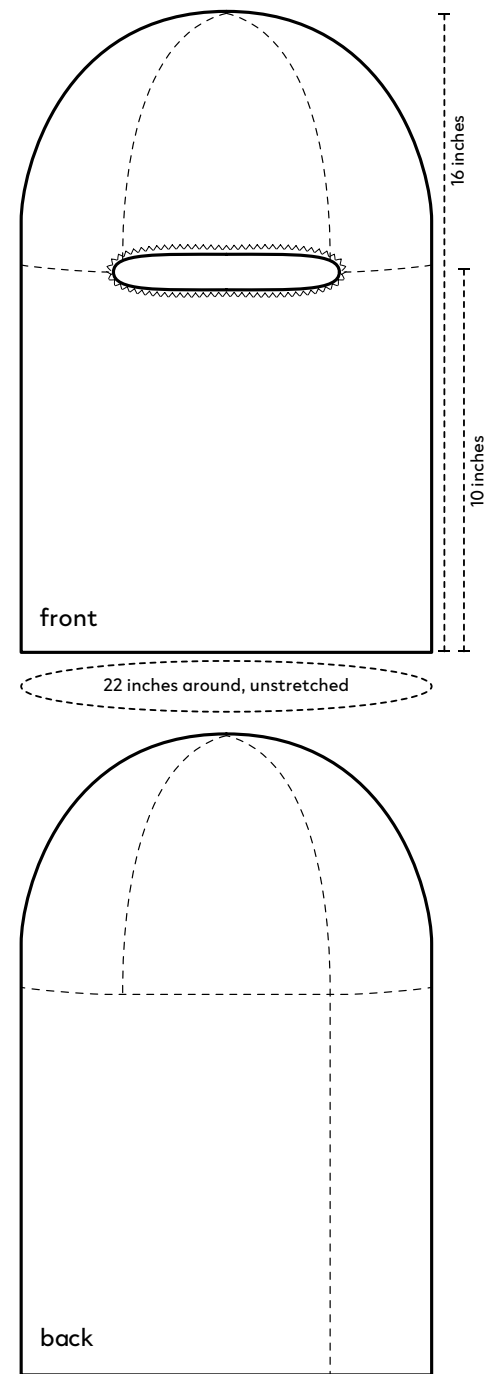
The rectangle piece is 11¼ inches wide (cut on the fold, so the actual fabric piece is 22½ inches wide), by ≈10¼ inches tall, but you can make it taller if you like! There are notches at the center and at the fold, so it can easily line up smoothly when sewn to the head piece.

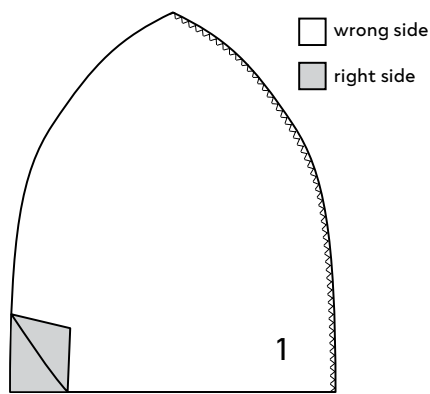
Now cut out the fabric pieces. If using a tee, cut the tube piece with the bottom of the pattern piece lined up with the bottom of the tee. See below for some examples of how you might cut the pattern pieces. If using other fabric, leave the bottom edge raw or add a bit to the length to account for a folded-up hem. If making two balaclavas out of one tee, if you can't fit two tube pieces on the fold, cut the tube as two separate pieces with ¼ inch extra and sew an extra seam to make the tube.

A small ¼ inch seam allowance is included in the pattern pieces, meant to serge along the edge without trimming any off (or barely), or zig-zag close to the edge. Add extra when cutting out fabric for a larger seam allowance or to size up the balaclava for an extra-large head size; cut it as it is and use a larger allowance to size it down. The size as-is is adult medium-large, good for a head circumference of 22–24 inches.

Cut small notches or mark with a pen or chalk at the notches along the top of the tube piece, in three spots along the top of the fabric.

For pandemic safety, keep in mind that this balaclava as it's designed is meant to still wear a facemask underneath, since one single layer of knit fabric is not Covid-safe. If you want to make this face-covering safer, you can cut another shorter tube piece, down to the line on the pattern, to make a double-layered tube around the mouth/nose area. Hold the two tubes together when attaching to head piece, matching up notches/seams of all three layers. This will make the mask more Covid-safe, but still not super safe, so definitely only use outdoors with social distancing! Or create a pocket between to the two layers to slide in a filter or a piece of woven fabric as extra protection, if you want to be really fancy.





Note: You may want to consider the inside/wrong side of the t-shirt fabric to be the right side of your balaclava where there's printing on the tee, if (you know, for some reason) you want to avoid any identifying features on your head covering.

If you don't have a sewing machine or a serger, everything can be hand-sewn instead, just make sure it retains some stretch.

The small included seam allowance is meant to serge along the edge without trimming any off, or zig-zag stitch close to the edge.

1. With right sides together, line up two head pieces and serge or zig-zag stitch from the top point down to the bottom along one side (either side). Repeat with remaining set of two head pieces.

2. Unfold the two head-piece sections and hold them together with each other, right sides touching. Serge or zig-zag, from the bottom on one side, up over the top and back down to the bottom on the other side. The head piece is now like a weird little hat.

3. Take the tube piece, fold it in half wrong-side-out, and serge or zig-zag up the side, making it into a tube. Notches are along the top.

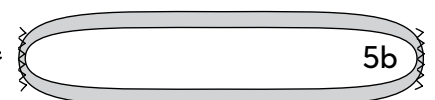
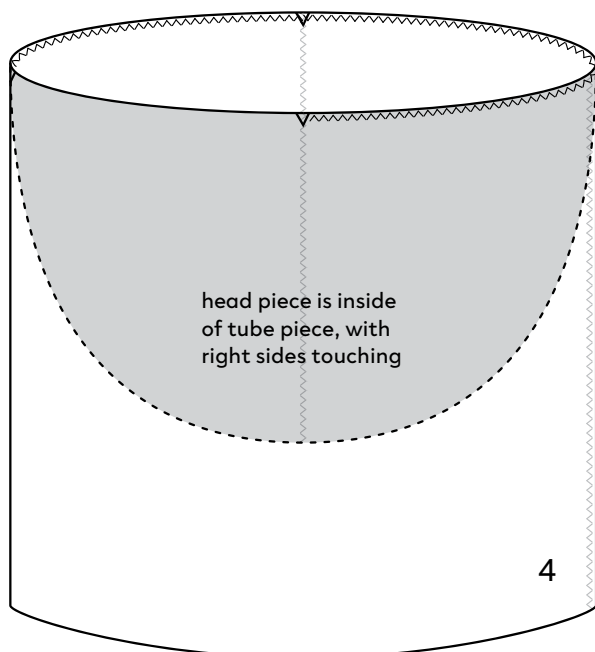
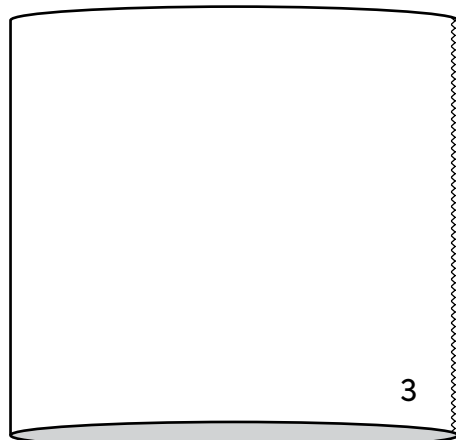
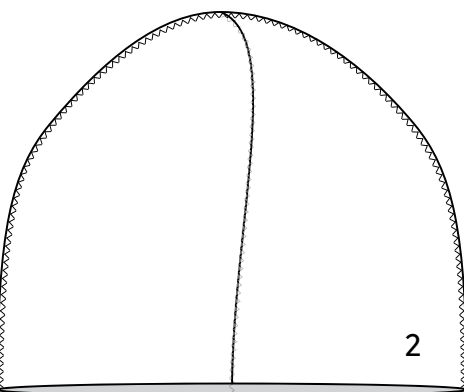
4. With the tube piece still wrong-side-out, turn the head piece right-side-out and place it inside the tube. Align the three notches and one seam of the tube with the four seams of the head piece.

Serge or zig-zag starting just after a notch/seam point one over from where the tube seam is; sew towards the tube seam, then keep sewing around, past the next notch/seam, and stop when you reach the final notch/seam, or just before reaching it.

Now the head and tube pieces are attached except for a hole which is about the width of one of the head piece quadrants, or slightly wider.

5. Turn the whole thing right-side out. Now you have two options. **5a)** Fold a hem (approx ¼ inch) around the long hole, folded into the wrong side /inside. Zig-zag stitch around the folded edge, to open up the hole and neaten the edge. It's tricky to sew around the two joining points—just do the best you can. You may prefer to do the hem by hand for a neater look. **5b)** Just let the edges curl naturally, and either be done for a scrappier look, or fold it in at the two sides, with the top and bottom edges curled, and stitch up and down the sides to open it up.

Done! Now you have a new head covering and can get out there and, you know, ride your bike with your face and hair safely covered and protected from the elements!



Print this page and the next two pages with printer
set to print at 100% scale.

Test Square
2 x 2 inches

cut 4
for head piece

← stretch →

← notch or mark →

cut 1 on fold
for tube piece

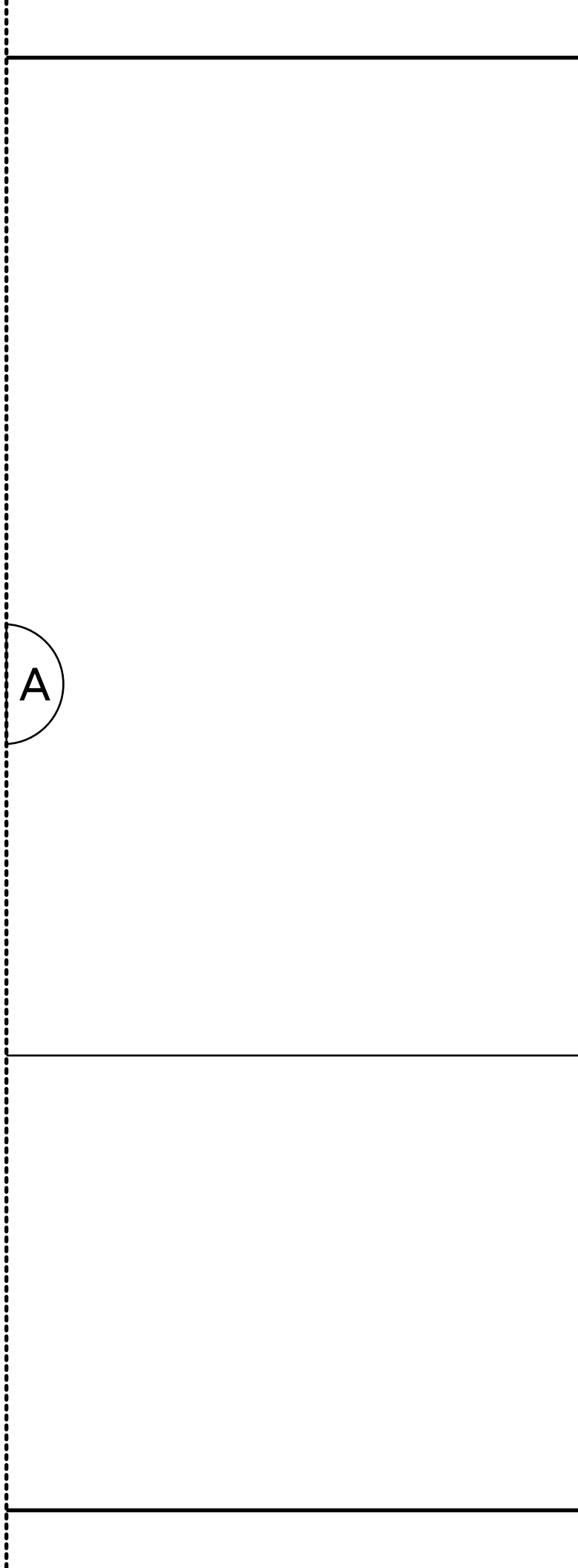
For optional second shorter tube piece to make double-layered mouth/nose section, cut another piece on fold, down to this line.

A

← stretch →

The bottom edge can be the hem of the t-shirt if you're using a t-shirt; otherwise it can be left unfinished (just let it curl) or add a bit extra length here if you'll be hemming it up.

↓ Add more length to the bottom here if you want a longer neck tube.



Cut along the dotted line on this page, then tape this to the other page with the **A** half-circles forming a whole circle.

Then cut around the whole outer rectangle for your pattern piece.

$\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam allowance is included in pattern pieces. See notes for adjusting seam allowance and/or size of piece.