

IV. GETSUL/GETSULMA OR NOVICE SHEMDAP

[NOTE: THE WAY THAT THE SEWING OF SANGHA ROBES IS DONE IS NOT NECESSARILY THE SAME AS THE WAY SEWING IS DONE IN THE WEST. THEREFORE, PLEASE READ ALL THE DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE BEGINNING TO SEW YOUR FABRIC]

The Buddha did not speak about any difference in the lower robe, or shemdap among the different levels of ordained Sangha. However, according to the culture of the Tibetan Mahayana Tradition, 3 different shemdaps have come into being. These 3 different shemdaps are designed to show the 3 different levels of ordination. Those people, who have left the householder's life and have taken the vows of Rabjung, wear a plain shemdap. Those individuals, who have taken Novice vows, Getsul & Getsulma, can wear a shemdap which has 2 additional side panels. However, many Novice Sangha continue to wear the plain shemdap. The Fully Ordained Sangha, Bhikshu & Bhikshuni, members wear a shemdap that is designed with the addition of several panels which are arranged at right angles to one another.

A. Measurements

Due to the fact that most guide systems for sewing machines are in the inch system, sewing measurements are given in this system. However, for greater accuracy in some measurements, the metric system is used, with the English system conversion as follows:

- 1 Meter = 100 cm = 1000 mm = 39 3/8 inches =
 - OR 1 yard = 36 inches = 36" = 91.5 cm = 915 mm
- 2.54 cm = 25.4 mm = 1 inch = 1"
- 1.27 cm = 12.7 mm = 1/2 inch = 1/2"
- 0.635 cm = 6.35 mm = 1/4 inch = 1/4"
- 0.3175 cm = 3.175 mm = 1/8 inch = 1/8"

B. Size of Patterns

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1) Like the zen, the Main Panel of the shemdap is made in 3 pieces. The total length of the shemdap is calculated by measuring the HEIGHT of the shemdap needed by a person. [The pattern provided is for a person that has a height of 42.0 inches from their waist to their ankle. This is a medium height for a person about 5 feet and 7 – 10 inches tall.] Then the length of the material to be cut would be the height + 1/2" inch for seam allowance times 3. For layout of cutting & dimensions, see **Diagram IV.a**.

Example calculation: Height of shemdap = 42.0" [Waist to Ankle]
+ 0.5" for seam allowance
= 42.5" for each piece

$$\frac{X}{3} \text{ [number of pieces]} \\ = 127.5'' \text{ [3.54 yards or 3.25 meters] for total}$$

length of fabric for the Main Panel. Additional fabric is required for Top and Bottom Panels (see below).

- 2) Adjust the size of the patterns by adding or subtracting the differences between your size and the pattern sizes.

C. Number of Pieces & Measurements (includes seam allowances)

See Diagram IV.a

The Getsul/Getsulma or Novice Shemdap is made up of 13 total pieces.

For this Shemdap, we have calculated the measurements as noted above for a medium height individual which translates into the following measures:

- 1) 3 pieces [of 36'' wide x 42 ½'' long each] comprise the Main Panel.
- 2) 6 pieces for the Top and Bottom Panels; 3 pieces form the Top Panel and 3 pieces form the Bottom (overlaid) Panel. Thus, each piece is 9 and ½'' inches long x width [36'']. And each Panel is 9 ½'' long x [A + B +C] = 3[36'']=108'' wide *minus* seam allowances.
- 3) 4 pieces, 2 pieces for each Side Panel; each piece = 25'' long x 4'' wide.

D. Layout & Cutting Instructions for Patterns

See Diagram IV.a

1) Main Panel

- a) Obtain the required length of fabric, and cut it into three equal lengths. (42 ½'' each).
- b) Label each piece as A, B, and C.
- c) ROTATE the 3 pieces 90 degrees.
- d) NOTE: Material width in this example is 36''. If a wider material is used, then adjustments to the final width of the shemdap must be made by cutting off the excess width from each piece, or just the third piece) AFTER the pieces ARE ROTATED 90 degrees.

2) Top and Bottom Panels

- a) To form the Top and Bottom Panels for the shemdap, you will need to cut 6 lengths of material. **See Diagram IV.a.**
- b) The Top and Bottom Panels are formed from 3 pieces each, and are identical.
- c) Each piece is 9 and ½'' inches long. The widths of the pieces correspond to the width of the A, B, and C pieces of the Main Panel [above] plus ¾'' for the simple seams used here. In our patterns for Getsul Shemdaps, this is 36'' long [width of the material] x 9 and ½'' long for each piece. If you have uneven A, B, and C pieces for the Main panel of the shemdap, you must match the pieces of the Top and Bottom Panels to these widths.

3) Side Panels

The Novice Shemdap is the same as the Rabjung Shemdap except there are two extra vertical panels. See **Diagram IV.a.**

- a) To cut these panels, you first need to calculate their lengths.
 - i) The length will be the height of the shemdap minus 17".
 - ii) This is because the panels are placed vertically on top of the Main Panel at a distance of 8 and ½" below the top and 8 and ½" above the bottom.
 - iii) For this pattern, the finished height of the shemdap is 42". The pattern piece for these side panels will be 42" - 18" plus 1" for seams = 25" in length.
- b) Two strips make up one side panel, so you need to cut 4 strips.
- c) The strips are 4" wide; thus, cut 4 strips that are 25" long X 4" wide.

E. Sewing Instructions

Note: Some of the sewing instructions of the Getsul and Rabjung Shemdaps are the same, therefore, on occasion, reference is made to the Diagrams for Rabjung Shemdap, which are prefaced with a III. Diagrams specific for the Getsul Shemdap are prefaced with a IV.

1) Main Panel

*You will stitch with an **Overlap Seam***

Overlap Seam is made in the following way: [Same as for Rabjung Shemdap, see Diagram III.c]

- With RIGHT SIDES together, lay piece A on top of piece B, having the A piece short of meeting the B piece by ¼", that is, the B piece extends ¼" past the edge of the A piece.
 - Stitch a ¼" seam [from the edge of the A piece and which is ½" from the edge of the B piece].
 - Fold over the extra ¼" of the B piece to cover the raw edge of the top A piece. Pin and press. Then top stitch close to the left edge of the folded edge of the B piece to produce a finished seam on the inside of the garment. Press finished seam
- a) Using the Overlap Seam technique, stitch the B piece to the C piece. To keep the finished pieces all the same width, this time the B piece should be short of the C piece by ¼", and the extra ¼" of the C piece if folded over the raw edge of the seam and stitched.
 - b) Each piece should measure 35.25" wide after sewing seams.
 - c) DO NOT yet stitch the C piece to the A piece.

2) Top and Bottom Panels [Refer to Diagram III.d, for Rabjung Shemdap]

- a) Check to see that your seams on the Top and Bottom Panels will match those of the Main Panel before you sew these pieces together. Adjust for any differences. Then pin and stitch with simple, [should be approximately ¾" seams], WITHOUT joining the final seam of the last piece with the first piece. NOTE: Since you are **not** using the Overlay Seam Technique, you use a ¾" seam so that the seams will match up correctly.

3) Constructing Side Panels

- a) Examine **Diagram IV.b**. Note that there are 3 openings labeled U, W, and Y, interspaced between 4 solid sections, labeled T, V, X, and Z, in the middle of each finished Side Panel. These lengths of the gaps and solid sections are dependent upon the length of your finished panel.
- b) To find the lengths of these gaps and solid sections, divide the total length of your side panel [minus 1" for seam allowances] by 7. This will give you the length of the sections A through G shown in **Diagram IV.b**.
- c) For this pattern, the total finished length is 24". If we include the ½ of both of the seam allowances of 1" to make the total length 24 ½" and divide by 7, we get 3.5" for each section. So all the sections will be equal, except the top T and bottom section Z, which will be ¼" shorter due to the overlay of the Top and Bottom Panels.
- d) To construct each Side Panel, first pin and press, then sew two 4" wide strips together with a ¼" seam, leaving gaps at sections U, W, and Y. Both the gaps and the solid sections will be 3.5" long.
- e) Open the panels so the two strips are side by side. Top stitch down the middle of each strip to reinforce the gaps and solid sections. **See Diagram IV.b**.
- f) Fold the other raw edge of each of side of the Side Panels down ¼" and press.

4) Sewing Side Panels onto Main Panel

- a) Measure the width of your shemdap. The Side Panels should be placed equidistant from each other in both directions.
- b) Side Panel I will be equidistant from Side Panel II at a point that is halfway around the Shemdap.
- c) If you have equal sections, as this pattern does, the width of each section is 36". So the width of the whole shemdap is $36" \times 3 = 108"$ minus seam allowances of 2 and ¼" = 105.75". Divide this width by 2 to get a halfway mark of 52.875".
- d) Since there are three sections, to place the Side Panels neatly and exactly 52.875" apart, subtract the width of the B piece [35.25"] which equals 17,625" and divide this by two, which = 8.8125" Thus, to place the middle seam of Side Panel I exactly 8.125" (easier to measure with metric here, which is nearly 22.4 cm) to the left of the seam between sections A and B of the Main Panel, and the middle seam of Side Panel II exactly 8.8125" (22.4 cm) to the right of the seam between sections B and C of the Main Panel. **See Diagram IV.c**.
- e) Pin and then sew the two Side Panels in place on the Main Panel by placing the top and bottom raw edges of each panel exactly 8 ½" below the top and 8 ½" above the bottom of the raw edges of the Main Panel. **See Diagram IV.c**.
- f) Stitch Panels in place by first stitching the top raw edges in place with a ¼ inch seam. Then stitch down both outside edges of each Side Panel by stitching close to the outside edges. It is important to stitch in the same direction, DOWN, for both sides of the Side Panel to prevent uneven placement due to the fabric stretching. Then stitch the bottom raw edge in place with a ¼" seam.

5) Overlaying the Top and Bottom Panels onto the Main Panel [Same as for Rabjung Shemdap, refer to Diagram III.d]

- a) See **Diagram IV.e**. Matching the seams of the Top Panel to the seams of the Main panel, and with the WRONG SIDE of the Main Panel facing the RIGHT SIDE of the Top Panel, pin these two Panels together.
 - b) Stitch the Top Panel to the Main Panel at the TOP EDGE, using a ¼” seam. To avoid stretching of fabric causing a mismatch of seams, first stitch the middle B piece, and then the 2 outer A and C pieces, sewing from the B piece seam out to the edges of the other 2 pieces.
 - c) Pin and stitch the Bottom Panel to the Main Panel in the same manner as described above for the Top Panel.
- 6) Joining the Shemdap into a Circle [Same as for Rabjung Shemdap, see Diagram III.e]**
- a) Turn your garment WRONG SIDE OUT. With RIGHT SIDES together, turn the garment so you can join the A piece and the C piece of the Main Panel together.
 - b) Using the Overlap Seam Technique, first pin, then sew the above Pieces. To avoid stretching problems, sew from the middle B piece of the Main Panel outwardly, as described above.
 - c) Then, turn your Garment RIGHT SIDE OUT.
- 7) Finish Sewing Top and Bottom Panels to the Main Panel [Same as for Rabjung Shemdap, see Diagram III.f]**
- a) Press ¼” of the other raw edge of the Top Panel to the inside or wrong side of the Top Panel.
 - b) Fold the Top Panel over the Main Panel [so that the RIGHT SIDE of the Top Panel comes down and over the RIGHT SIDE of the Main Panel].
 - c) Pin and then stitch the bottom of the Top Panel to the Main Panel at the bottom edge of the Top Panel in the same manner described above to avoid stretching of fabric and uneven matching of seams, leaving the last 10” at either end free.
 - d) When you top stitch the Top and Bottom Panels in place, be sure to place them carefully over the raw top and bottom edges of the Side Panels to securely sew these in place.
 - e) Top stitch the upper and lower edges of the Top Panel to within the 10” of the end, to keep the garment pieces squarely in place.
 - f) With RIGHT SIDES of the last 10” of the Top Panel together, pin and sew the first and last pieces together with a ½” seam, matching this seam with the seam of the Main Panel.
 - g) Lay the Top Panel on top of the Main Panel, pin, press, and finish stitching the last 10” of the bottom edge of the first and last pieces of the Top Panel to the Main Panel.
 - h) Repeat the procedure for the Bottom Panel. Press.

Diagrams can be found under IV. Getsul or Novice Shemdap under the title: Compressed Getsul Shemdap.