

The Well Proportioned Tiered Skirt

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Instructions for an 8 tiered square dance skirt:

Tier #	Yards Needed	Width (Circumference)	Length	Fabric selection
1	1.25	264"	7.75	
2	1	206"	6.5	
3	3/4	161"	5.5	
4	1/2	125"	5.25	
5	1/2	98"	4.75	
6	1/4	76"	4.25	
7	1/4	59"	3.75	
8	1/4	46"	9.5	

Finished length 34"

Finished width at the bottom 7.3 yards (apx)

1/2" seam allowances.

1 1/2" elastic for waistband

These rules should be followed when making a long tiered skirt:

1. **Always start with the bottom tier and work up.** In the example above, #1, is actually the bottom tier. This will make it easier to attach the gathered strips together.
2. **Never sew the side seam until all gathering is done.**
3. **Always graduate the tiers** – shortest at the top, to longest tier at the bottom.
4. **The bottom tier should always be at least 6 yds around (216").**
5. **The finished seam should be placed at the side of your skirt.** This is less conspicuous than running it down the middle of the skirt back.

The following are suggestions:

1. **Graduate you color selections.** If your hips are larger than you would like, start with the darkest colors at the top of the skirt and graduate to the lightest.
2. **The most important measurement for a successful finished product is your hip measurement.** The finished width of tier 7 must be at least 10" wider than your hip measurement.

Additional copies of this document can be downloaded here:

<http://nexgen-sd.org/assets/the-well-proportioned-tiered-skirt.pdf>

Instructions for a 3 tiered square dance skirt:

Tier #	Yards Needed	Width (Circumference)	Length	Fabric selection
1	2	216"	11"	
2	1	144"	8"	
3	3/4	72"	13"	

Finished length 22"

Finished width at the bottom 6 yds.

1/2" seam allowances.

1 1/2" elastic for waistband

Instructions for a 5 tiered square dance skirt:

Tier #	Yards Needed	Width (Circumference)	Length	Fabric selection
1	1.25	264"	7	
2	1	191"	6	
3	3/4	138"	5	
4	1/2	100"	4	
5	1/2	72"	9	

Finished length 21.5"

Finished width at the bottom 7.3 yds.

1/2" seam allowances.

1 1/2" elastic for waistband

Waistband instructions:

1. Note that the top tier length is wider than you would expect. This is because, I double the fabric of the top tier and allow for the insertion of 1.5" or 1.25" elastic. The additional length at the top is to accommodate the casing for the elastic.
2. I finish my side seam, leaving a 1.5 inch opening. I will demonstrate where I leave this opening. I then fold my top tier in half and attach it to the 2nd tier.
3. I stitch a straight stitch to form my casing, 1.5" from the top of the topmost tier.
4. Insert the elastic, your waist measurement plus or minus an inch depending on the amount of stretch in the elastic.
5. Stitch the ends of the elastic together and hand stitch the opening closed.

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Instructions for a tiered square dance skirt with mini tiers:

Recently, I've been asked to work with Sari fabric. Sari fabrics typically have a beautiful border that we want to display at the bottom of the skirt. I'm not a fan of 6 yards of fabric gathered at the waist, so I opted to work with a mini tier.

1. Keep in mind that the bottom of the skirt should be 6yds in circumference.
2. If you are going to have just 2 tiers, the first tier should be 3 yards in circumference.
3. The top tier should not be equal in length to the bottom.
4. A good rule of thumb is that the top tier should be 1/3 of the total length and the bottom tier 2/3 of the total length.

Example: Skirt length 21"

- a. Top tier finished length is 7"
- b. Bottom tier finished length is 14"

If you would prefer to use 2 mini tiers, try the following:

Example: skirt length 21"

- a. Top tier finished length is 3"
- b. Middle tier finished length is 4"
- c. Bottom tier finished length is 14"

When working with tiers, it is possible to exposure the upper edge of the lower tier(s) and create a ruffle. If you opt to do this, you will need to add no less than 1.5" to the tier length. Fold over the top seam allowance and create your exposed ruffle. Attach the lower tier to the right side of the tier above it and stitch it in place. I usually finish this off with some type of ribbon or trim. If working with light weight fabric, it is important to remember that a heavy trim will weigh the fabric down.

I want to make a dress with a tiered skirt:

All of the same rules apply when using a tiered skirt on a dress. The only change is to the topmost tier. You will need just the finished width of the topmost tier plus whatever seam allowance you prefer to work with to attach it to the bodice of the dress.

Above, I stated that the seam should run down the side of the skirt. When making a dress, this will be dictated by the position of your zipper.

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