

Mandarin Blouse

If you are looking to get an Instagram-worthy wedding outfit, this tutorial is for you.

Material Required

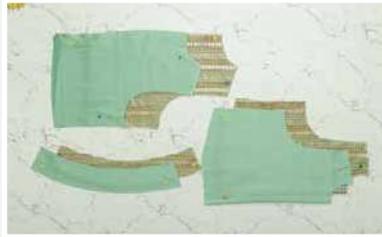
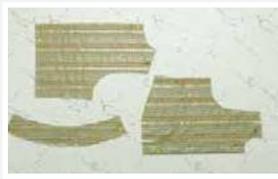
1 meter of sequin fabric with a width of 45"
1 meter of satin fabric for the lining with a width of 45"
¼ meter of thick interlining fusing
Templates for the Mandarin Blouse which you can download from our website www.ushasew.com
Openable metallic zipper of 14 inches
2 Hook and Eye Set
Beaded Pins
Chalk
Measuring Tape
Scale
Usha Janome Zipper Foot
Hand Needle
Scissors
And Matching Thread

In this tutorial, you will learn how to cut the pieces required for a Mandarin collar blouse from the template, joining the lining and the main piece together, attaching the front and back pieces of the blouse, hemming with bias strips, attaching a zipper and lastly working on the highlight piece which is the collar.

Step 1 Template Marking and Cutting

Let's start with the sequined fabric, open it and fold it lengthwise and lay it on the table. Then place the templates for the Mandarin blouse downloaded from www.ushasew.com on the fabric. Place the front template on the fold as shown. Then place the back template. As you can see the back template is not placed on fold as we need two separate pieces of the back. Use the remaining fabric to adjust the collar template on it. Make sure you place the collar template with seam allowance as the other collar template is for fusing. Pin them in place with beaded pins. Use a piece of chalk to mark these templates on the fabric. Gently trace the materials on the fabric. After you are done, unpin the template. Remove the templates and pin the fabric again to ensure that the fabric stays in place while cutting.

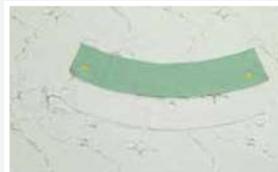




Use a pair of scissors and cut out the pieces from the fabric. Start with the front portion and proceed to cut the collar as well as the back. Similarly, use the templates and cut the required pieces from the satin lining fabric, just like we have done for the tutorial. You should have the front, back and collar piece. We need 2 pieces of satin lining fabric for collar.



Once you have all these pieces, bring the fusing out. The fusing is used to provide extra stability to the fabric and to ensure that it keeps its shape. We'll be using this on the collar. The shiny part is the wrong side that will stick on the fabric. Place the without seam allowance collar template on the right side of the fusing and trace it over with a piece of chalk. Note this template is a bit narrower than the collar template we've used for the sequined fabric. Cut the collar piece out. Be careful as it's easy to go wrong with curved pieces.



Now, take the leftover satin lining fabric and fold it in half like shown in the tutorial and cut off the extra fabric. Now let's cut the bias strip from this fabric. From the edge of the fabric measure 1.5 inches and mark it. Do this throughout the fabric. After you are done, use a ruler to draw a straight line with the help of the marked points. Cut the strip out. Repeat the same process for two other strips, you should have three bias strips in total.



These are all the pieces you need to create your Mandarin collar blouse. Just to recap, this is our front piece, this is the collar and its fusing, the back pieces and the bias strip.



Step 2 Attaching the Lining Fabrics to the Sequin Fabric and Creating Darts

Take the front piece with its lining, unpin them and open the fabric. Place the wrong side of the sequined fabric on the right side of the lining fabric as shown. Let's stitch all over as pointed to fix the lining fabric to the main sequined fabric.





Take the pieces to the USHA Wonder Stitch Plus Sewing machine. Adjust the fabric under the presser foot. Set the stitch selector dial to A and the stitch length to 2.5. Start sewing. When you come to any corner use the pivoting technique where you turn the fabric while the needle is still inside the fabric. Go all around the front piece right from the armhole to the neckline and the sides. Cut off the thread. Your front piece should look like this but we are not done yet.



Bring out the template once again and place it on one half. Notice the two notches at the bottom and the dot at the center. These are the markings for the dart. Mark the darts points indicated on the template with chalk. After you are done, flip the template and mark the three points on the other half as well. Then remove the template and with the help of a ruler join the two notches and one dot to form the triangle dart like shown. Do this for both the sides. Make sure that your lines are straight.



We have to now stitch these darts, match the two ends like shown in the tutorial and stitch over the line. Don't forget the reverse stitches to secure your stitches. Cut the thread and do the same for the other side. Match the lines, and stitch over them. Once done, cut off all the extra threads. Your front piece should look like this from the back and from the front.



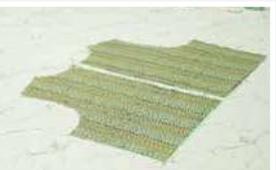
Now let's take the back piece and unpin them. Unlike our front piece, the back pieces are two different sections excluding the lining, if you are wondering why, it's the opening of the blouse where the closure is with zippers.



Like the front piece, place the wrong side of the main sequined fabric over the right side of the satin lining fabric. We'll be attaching the lining to the main fabric now by sewing all over.



Once again, take the fabrics to your USHA Wonder Stitch Plus Sewing Machine and start off by sewing one piece. Stitch all across like shown in the tutorial, use the pivot technique when you get to the end so that it's one continuous stitch throughout. Cut the thread





and let's move on to the other piece. Your two stitched pieces should look like this.

Now let's work on the back darts, place the back template over the fabric and mark the three points indicated on the template. Turn the template and do the marking for the other piece as well. After you are done, use a ruler to connect the marked dart points. Ensure that you mark a straight line.

To stitch these darts, align the bottom dart points and fold the fabric like shown and now sew over the marked line, reverse stitches are essential for this step. The same process will be repeated on the other piece. Cut all of the extra threads. Our stitched darts should look like this.

Step 3 Attaching the Front and Back Pieces By Stitching the Shoulders & the Side Seams

Next on the list is attaching the front and the back piece by joining the shoulders. Place the two back pieces over the front piece, right side facing right and pin both the shoulders. Align the edge of the shoulder with the presser foot and begin sewing. Remove the pin as you sew. Do the same on the other shoulder as well. These are our straight stitches but to avoid any frayed edges, we now have to do zig zag stitches over them. Set the Pattern Selector Dial to C and the Stitch Length to 1.5 and sew on the edge of the shoulders. Note that reverse stitches are not required while doing zig zag stitches. After you are done cut the extra threads. Doesn't the fabric look much neater? This is how the two pieces will look like post stitching. After the shoulders, we will be stitching the sides. Pin the sides like shown in the tutorial and let's sew on the seam allowance.

Place the material under the presser foot and reset the Pattern Selector Dial to A which is straight stitches and the Stitch Length to 2.5 and begin sewing. Use reverse stitches at the start and end to secure the stitches. Remove the pins as you go. Once you reach the end, lift off the presser foot, cut off the thread and move to the other side. Repeat the same process of sewing. Your stitches should look like this.



Step 4 Attaching the bias strip to the armholes and the bottom hem

The basic structure of our blouse is ready, next on the list is attaching the bias strips. One strip will go at the bottom and the other two will be used for the armholes. Leave about $\frac{3}{4}$ " inches of the bias strip at the start and place the right side of the strip on the right side of the fabric around the arm whole as shown. Align it to the edge of the presser foot and begin sewing. When you are about to reach where you started, stop. Before cutting the thread align the strip till the joint and stitch the bias strip vertically as shown. Cut the extra strip leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ inch extra. Now sew the remaining two inches and also flatten the seam of the bias strip and stitch over it. After you are done, move to the other arm hole and repeat the process.

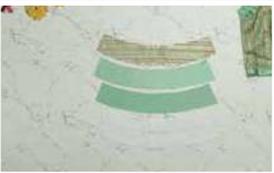
Our armholes are done.

Now we move to the bottom of the blouse. Fold the bias strip into half, wrong side facing the wrong side and place it against the bottom of the blouse, folded side of the bias strip up and open edges at the bottom. Fold the bottom edge of the blouse inwards by $\frac{1}{2}$ " as shown. Leave about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of the strip at the start. Set the fabric under the presser foot and start sewing. Make sure you use a steady hand and ensure that the bias strip is folded correctly throughout. Go all the way across from one side of the front of the blouse to the back and to the other side of the front opening. When you reach the other edge of the opening again leave two inches of strip at the end and cut off all the extra bias strip.

After you are done, we'll be doing top stitches on the bias strip attached at the arm hole and the bottom, this will ensure that the circular strip stays flat and gives a neat finish. Sew as shown in the tutorial. Do the top stitch on the other arm hole as well. Cut off all the extra threads and move to the bottom of the blouse. Make sure the fold of the bottom bias strip is flat and even while you do the top stitch over it. Your final stitches should look like this. These are the arm holes and this is the bottom hem of the blouse.

Step 5 Attaching the Zipper

Next Step attaching the zipper to the blouse. Take a 14 inch open ended metallic zipper. To attach it, fold one side of the back of the blouse by half an inch and place it over the right side of the zipper like shown and pin it. Make sure the pin goes through the fold and the zipper to hold it in place. Open the zip completely. Turn the blouse and lets work on the other open end.



Now fold the other section by half an inch and place it on the other end of the zip. The folded edge will be placed on the right side of the zipper. Pin it in place for the ease of stitching.

Now close the zipper and we'll be stitching along the pinned section to attach it to the fabric.

Take the blouse to your sewing machine. Open the zipper once again to make it easy to sew and replace the regular presser foot with the USHA Janome Zipper foot.

After you are done, align the edge of the fabric with the presser foot and begin sewing. Don't miss out on the reverse stitches, yes, they are important while attaching the zipper as well. Cut off the thread and sew on the other side of the zip as well. Keep taking out the pins as you make your way down. The attached zipper should open with ease, without any fabric obstructing the path and your stitches should like this.

Step 6 Creating the collar

After we are done attaching the zipper, we will move on to working on the collar, the main highlight of this blouse. You should have your main sequined collar piece, two lining fabric collar pieces and two interlining fusing collar pieces. We now need to iron the shiny or the wrong side of the fusing fabric to the wrong side of the lining fabric so that it sticks and provides the added stability. Just simply place the fabric, fusing side up on the ironing table and iron over it for it to stick. This must be done for both the pieces separately. Now turn one lining piece around, right side facing up and place the main fabric over it. The sequined side should face you. Now place the right side of the other lining fabric over the main fabric like shown. Once it's done, we'll be sewing all these pieces together. Pin the collar in place, ensure that the beaded pin goes through all the fabrics. Before sewing, replace the zipper foot with the regular one. Start off by sewing from the fusing fabric, make sure you don't start from the top of the fabric. Once you reach the end of the interlining fusing, turn the fabric. We will be sewing the collar materials together in one continuous stitch but we'll be sewing only three sides, you'll see why.



After you are done, cut the extra thread and remove the pins. Create notches in the fabric on the side we've just sewn. Also cut the edges diagonally from the top like shown in the tutorial, remember to not cut on the stitches. Continue creating notches throughout, this will help flatten the circular stitch. Once again, remember to not cut on the stitches while giving the notches.

Now turn the collar inside out from the unstitched side like shown in the tutorial. Place the right side of the collar against the right side of the blouse, the edge of the collar should align with the edge of the zipper like shown in the tutorial and pin it in place, continue pinning the collar throughout. After you are done, cut off the extra zip.

For the ease of stitching, open the zip and align the edge of the collar with the zipper foot and begin sewing. Take the pins off as you make your way to the other side. As you can see, we've stitched and

Step 7 Finishing the collar, arm holes and bottom by hand hemming

Now for a neater finish, we will hand sew the opened edges of the collar. After you are done with the collar, we will hem the armholes as well as the bottom by folding the bias strip inside and sewing over it. Fold the extra bias strip at the bottom inside as well and sew over it. Continue sewing till you reach the end. Once this step is complete, take about two hooks and attach them to the collar of the blouse for the perfect fit. Don't forget to sew the eye of the hooks as well. Your blouse is now complete. We recommend styling it with a lighter saree as the blouse in itself adds a 'WOW' element to your look. It's the perfect style statement to make at your best friends' wedding or at your family function. Let us know which other blouses you'd like to see. Don't forget to like, comment and share this tutorial.

