Ring in the New Year With...
A New Dress Shop Update! - New Winter 2008 Collection! - New Pattern Features!
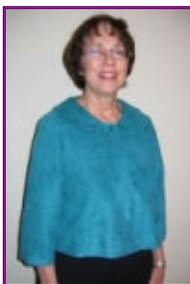
The Winter 2008 Collection

The most exciting designer patterns of the current season are now available to you in Dress Shop's Winter 2008 Collection, for less than $2 each!

We are pleased to announce a collection of 26 patterns that will help you create an entire wardrobe for Winter 2008. You can make them up in your choice of color and fabric texture -- custom sized to fit you!

It's always fun to visit your favorite shop in person or on-line and see the hottest new styles from the best fashion designers in the industry. This new collection features everyday and holiday patterns suitable for embellishing and dressing up. There are tops for stretch and woven fabrics, turtlenecks and mandarin collars galore. Included are Polar fleece or Berber jackets, a snazzy raglan jacket, and a couple of amazing princess hoodie sweatshirts and panel vests similar to what LL Bean is offering.

The hot fashion cropped swing jacket tops the list. There are also a gored skirt with flare which adds flair for the office, church or holidays, and a fast and easy plus-sized holiday dress to make in a hurry for busy women.

Flannel nightgowns finish the list for those cold winter nights - for yourself or as holiday gifts for family. All are easy to make in just a few hours from start to

Older Versions of Dress Shop Are Archived
Special Upgrade Offer Available Now.

It has been 15 months since Dress Shop 7 was released as the latest incarnation of the venerable Dress Shop line of pattern drafting software. With every update to Dress Shop, we do everything we can to continue to support all older versions while adding new features and improvements. Over the many years of Dress Shop releases, this has become increasingly difficult to pull off. New features and some of the older products (Doll Shop (prior to the current Deluxe), Sew By Design, and various no-longer-sold pattern packets, for instance) sometimes do not work well with the new patterns, tools, and products being released. Yet owners of those products do not appreciate seeing features stop working.

With the current update, therefore, Livingsoft will no longer be adding enhancements to the older products. Dress Shop 5 and Dress Shop 6 will be joining Dress Shop 4 in the archives. You can still get fresh copies of these products as well as the final updates released for each. But, there will no longer be additional updates and future pattern collections (including the current Winter Collection) will not be available for these older versions.

For anyone that wishes to keep getting new updates, new patterns, and new collections, we are drastically simplifying upgrades to the current Dress Shop 7 from the complicated and confusing options that we have had for each different older version. Effective immediately, there are just 3 upgrade prices for any and all Dress Shop products:

1. Any owner of any version of Dress Shop less than Pro can get the current Dress Shop 7 Standard for just $50.

2. Any owner of any version of Dress Shop Pro can get the current Dress Shop 7 Pro for just $50.

finish. All are easy fit and easy to wear. Your choice of fabrics and colors determine if it is to become an everyday or dress-up garment. Many are an ideal canvas for your choice of embellishments. You may select embroidery, appliqué, fabric painting, beading or trims to exhibit your creative skills.

These are named patterns which you can load from the normal pattern menus, mostly outerwear, loungewear, and the casual fit folders. The little girl nighties can be accessed by selecting View - Pattern Set - Girl's Patterns, then checking in the Loungewear folder. All the options are preset for you in the current hot styles, with pre-selected necklines, collars, ease and shaping. You also have available every pattern option that the similar library pattern included, so you can easily make many more garment variations using the many pattern settings, adjustments, and options available from the Options menu.

The Winter 2008 Collection is available as a Introductory Special price of only $49.00.

Enjoy the pictures the test team members have provided of their interpretations of the designs!

www.LivingsoftNW.com/Products/Winter2008.htm

NOTE: This collection is only available when using Dress Shop 7. It is not supported in older versions of Dress Shop.

Special Offer for this month only!

Upgrade to Dress Shop 7 at the new low upgrade price (see adjoining column) and get the Winter 2008 Collection at half price! This special will be available through February 15th, 2008. Use coupon code WT-208 when checking out to get this special price.

Tips for working with stretch fabrics
by Kaaren Hoback

Dress Shop includes several articles discussing knits and fabric stretch factors. You may find that entering the true value of stretch is not exactly what you had

3. Anyone can upgrade from Dress Shop 7 Standard to Dress Shop 7 Pro for $250.

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Customer Service Corner
by PeggySue Moellmann

PeggySue staffs the phones and email support lines at Livingsoft. This section of the newsletter will be the regular place to answer those questions that keep coming up.

Q. I recently updated my Internet Explorer browser to version 7 and Dress Shop no longer displays properly. I get a small window in the upper left corner of the screen and not enough of the program shows in it to do anything useful. What can I do to correct this?

A. There are two fixes, depending on whether you have Dress Shop 7 or any earlier version of the Dress Shop line. For Dress Shop 7 users, just get the latest update and all will be well.

But, the latest update for Dress Shop does not apply to Dress Shop 5 or Dress Shop 6 products. For customers still using one of those products, you should get a "patch" that will correct the problem. You can get the patch by clicking here.

Q. I was wondering if Dress Shop is based on a textbook to draft the patterns.

A. While Dress Shop patterns were derived from the practical experience of many people, the one book that was used as a major reference more than any other was "Patternmaking for Fashion Design", by Helen Joseph-Armstrong, an excellent manual for pattern making basics. The only major difference between Armstrong's guidance and Dress Shop's patterns is that Dress Shop bases everything on a percentage of some body

in mind for your design.

After I calculate the fabric's actual stretch I take a sample (often not even cutting any off) and use a shaped small round vase that has a waist. Failing that I use my fist. Best yet is to use a dress form, if you have one.

I wrap the fabric around the vase, fist, or dress form at bust and hip area ON GRAIN and stretch it about 25% of what the fabric's total stretch is, then again at 50%, 75% and 100%.

Since the design idea is already established in my head, knowing the actual stretch involved and how soft or firm the fabric stretch and drape is helps to better visualize what is needed.

If the fabric is soft, drapes well, and has an 80% calculated total stretch and I feel I need to use 100% of that, I will enter 80.

If the fabric is firmer, I want to make sure this garment still can pull over my head and the stretch is 54% so that I determine about half is what will work, I divide the 54 by 2= 27% and enter that number. Notice I'm saying about half and about 25% -- without proper machinery it's difficult to work exact percentages, but this approach really helps. You can pre-stretch the fabric from 0 to 100% on a gridded mat or alongside a ruler, from 0 to 50% or from 0 to 25% before making your guesstimate on your 6 by 6 sample piece, as in the stretch percentage article in the program.

I'm lucky to have a Styrofoam head form such as you would use to store a hat or wig on. If I take a band of fabric that measures what the neck will measure finished, using the knit factor of my pattern, I can take a length (width) of fabric 2-3 inches wide by neck length, pin it together, and see if it easily slips over the head. The form's neck isn't quite mine, but you can see how it wears.

The head forms are often available at beauty shops and Sally's Wholesale/Retail Hairdressing supplies forms for shops working on or holding wigs. Forms are also available from this on line site where one costs $8.00US plus shipping.

http://www.3rdpoweroutlet.com/Items/wighead-1-imp?

Only use horizontal stretch if there is nothing holding the vertical length stretched out. Use horizontal and vertical for items like bathing suits or if you plan to add a "stirrup" to stretch pants.

measurement, while Armstrong uses fixed measurements in many cases, generally derived from her experiences with average garment wearers. So, when she recommends adding a half inch of shoulder extension, Dress Shop actually uses 11% of shoulder length instead (average shoulder length is about 4.5 inches). That way, the Dress Shop patterns will work for any sized body, including children and even dolls if they are truly human shaped. More importantly, the patterns will provide a good fit for large and small adults, tall and skinny, or broad and not so skinny - percentages of body measurements make them work for all.

But, the pattern drafting designs and theories in Armstrong's book are excellent and a very close match to the pattern drafts that Dress Shop uses.

Q. Should I get a CD version of Dress Shop, or are download versions adequate?

A. Having a CD is certainly reassuring and eliminates some of the hassle of downloading. But, just in case you do have broad band Internet access, I should point out the other side of that question. Online master can be updated the instant a new version is developed. Sometimes that creates problems. But, those problems can also be corrected equally quickly.

CD masters, on the other hand, have lead time issues. First, the publisher must wait until it has a proven stable master. Then that is shipped off to a manufacturer for mass production. Those in turn are shipped back and placed in inventory for future sales. And, they generally stay there until they are near used up, at which time the process is repeated.

While this is the common process that any software maker goes through, it comes with some consequences. Online updates and downloadable masters may be more recent versions than their CD counterparts. In Livingsoft's case, CD sales are much less than online sales, so it takes longer to use up inventory. We could toss the old versions, but that comes with costs which must be added to the sales price.

Bottom line is - if you have broadband Internet access, downloadable updates and masters are cheaper (free) and will always be more recent than CD masters.

LivingSoft Northwest Links

Do you want to join our online community, where information on the use of Livingsoft Northwest software, user groups, and help resources is available? It's easy and it's free. Just use the "Livingsoft Community" link on our home page at:
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