Hooded Hound Coat Instructions

We make these out of any kind of fabric we find, but have had the best luck with heavy upholstery/decorating fabric and winter wool blends for the warm coats. Consider odd sources of fabric, such as old blankets, drapes or rugs. It sounds weird, but these are typically thick heavy fabrics that wear and wash well. And they're warm. Using velvety or plush fabrics with satin inside will result in a stunning, although not very warm, look for your hound.

Throughout these instructions we refer to the inner fabric and the outer fabric. The coats actually end up fully reversible, so this is just to make it easier to explain what's going on. You'll probably never actually reverse it if you're using a woolie fleece for one side, but it's a cool feature if you're making a spring/fall-weight coat and can't decide which color looks best on your hound.

Time Needed:

Each coat takes me 45-60 minutes to make. I don't pin stuff and my patterns are already made, so it may take you slightly longer, especially for your first coat.

Materials Needed:

- 5" strip of 2" wide sew-on velcro (or 10" strip of 1" wide velcro)
- 1 yard of outer fabric
- 1 yard of inner fabric
- Large sheet of paper for pattern (wide wrapping paper, butcher paper, a cut open paper bag, or taped-together newspaper works well)
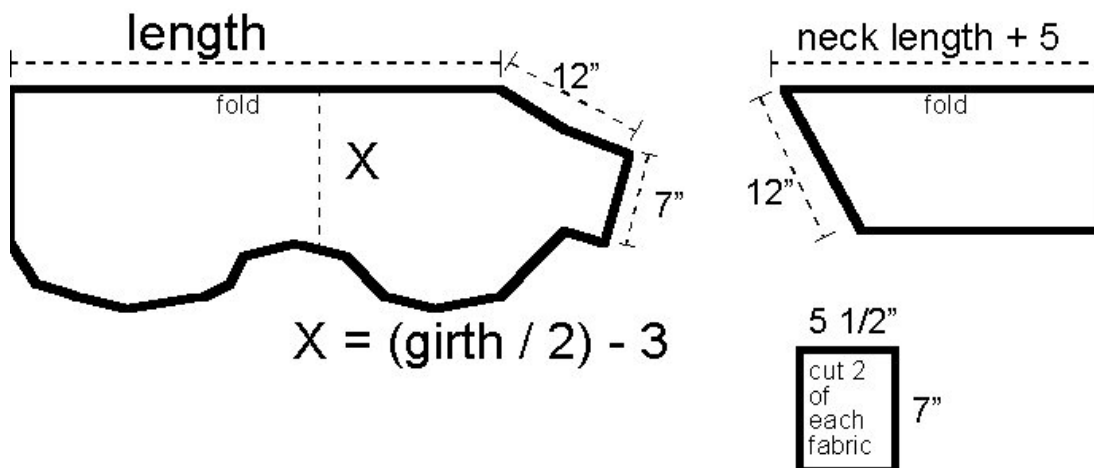
OPTIONAL FOR DRAWSTRING:

- 1 Plastic Drawstring Stopper (most fabric stores have these, but they're small and hard to find without asking)
- 2 foot piece of string or ribbon for drawstring

Step 1 - Measure Hound and Make Full-Size Pattern

First, measure your hound in these four places and write down the measurements.

- Length - From where the neck bends and becomes the back to where the tail starts (usually 26" - 30")
- Girth - Biggest distance around the chest, just behind the front legs (usually 28" - 32")
- Width - Distance across chest as you look straight on at the hound (usually 6"-9")
- Neck Length - Distance from where the neck bends and becomes the back over the head to the eyes.

X = (girth / 2) - 3

Next, take a large sheet of paper (wrapping paper, butcher paper, a cut open paper bag, or taped-together newspaper works well) and draw out your pattern similar to the one above, but to the size you measured on your hound. Don't worry about matching the drawing above exactly. Generally, you want the coat full around the chest and rear and thinner in the stomach region. The rounded corners on the tail end add a very nice look and make later steps easier.

To figure out the X measurement in the drawing above, divide your hound's girth by 2, then subtract 3 inches.

Now take the pattern to your hound. This is a tough job, but worth the effort. Hold the pattern in place along the hound's spine and make sure the coat falls as you would like. Make sure the butt is covered. Make sure the coat is long enough for the hound. Make sure the coat will cover the chest but not drown it. Hold the neck piece to your hound's neck. Verify that it will loosely make it around your hounds neck. Don't worry if the neck seems too long. You will be folding it over to allow for the drawstring. If you need to make changes, do it now--even if you have to do the pattern over. Once you get a perfect pattern for your hound, you'll never have to go through this again.

Step 2 - Cut Fabric

Fold the inner fabric in half. Place the long straight side of the pattern pieces for the body and the neck along the fold. You can put a few pins in at this point if you'd like, but I don't. I just hold the pattern in place while I cut. Precision is not that important here.

THIS IS IMPORTANT! Allow 1/4" - 1/2" extra around the pattern as you cut the fabric. This will be your seam allowance. If I know I'll be top-stitching (which I do with all but the bulkiest fabrics), I go with a 1/4" seam allowance. Otherwise I go with 1/2".

Next, fold the outer fabric in half. Don't use the pattern to cut the outer fabric. Instead, use the folded inner fabric pieces as the pattern. This will assure you that the two sides will match perfectly. Cut the outer fabric to match the inner fabric shape.

Finally, cut the stomach strap pieces. Cut two 5 1/2" x 7" rectangle of the inner fabric and two of the outer fabric. (If you're working with a bulky inner fabric such as woolie fleece, use the outer fabric for all 4 of these pieces. It's yucky working with velcro on fleece.)
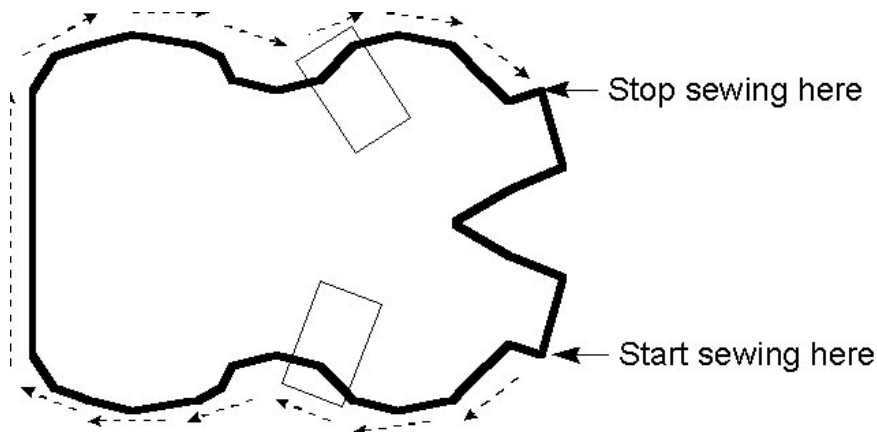
Step 3 - Construct Stomach Straps

Place one inner fabric and one outer fabric 5 1/2" x 7" rectangle right-sides together. Using a 1/4" seam allowance, stitch along three sides, leaving a 5 1/2" edge open, forming a pocket. Repeat this for the other two squares. Turn the pockets right side out. You can top-stitch these at this point, but I find it unnecessary.

Trim the velcro to be 1/8" shorter than the pocket on each side. Place the fuzzy side (as opposed to the hook side) of the 2" velcro on the inner fabric about 1/8" from the sewn edges and top-stitch into place. (If you are using the 1" velcro, cut two pieces and place them side by side and stitch into place.)

Read this carefully. It's where I sometimes get mixed up. Place the hook side of the 2" velcro on the OUTER fabric of the other stomach strap and top-stitch into place. (If you are using the 1" velcro, cut two pieces and place them side by side and stitch into place.)

Step 4 - Sew Body of Coat

Unfold and align the inner and outer coat pieces, right sides together with the inner fabric on the bottom. Place the stomach straps in between the inner and outer coat pieces. We made these bigger than they needed to be, so they will stick out of the coat. (This allows you to make adjustments later if needed.) When placing these, you want to make sure they'll fall behind the front legs. On males, you want these as close to the front legs as possible to avoid tinkle damage. Place the straps with the inner fabric down. (Don't think about the velcro if you can avoid it, or you'll confuse yourself. Just put them with the inner fabric down. If you used the same fabric for both sides of the straps, put one with the velcro up and one with the velcro down.) Allow about an inch of each strap to extend out of the coat as shown above. If you have to make adjustments later, this will be the place, so I just allow for it from the start. Pin the straps into place.

If you're one who likes to pin stuff, pin all the way around the coat. I find that I only need to pin the stomach straps in place to get a good result.

Now sew the two pieces together. You'll leave the chest straps and neck un-sewn. This will allow you to add the neck. Start sewing as indicated on the diagram. Sew around almost the entire coat, sewing over the stomach straps to trap them in place. Stop as indicated on the diagram.
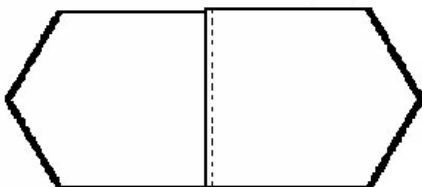
Clip curves and turn right side out.

Don't skip this step. Take the coat to your hound and try it on. Make sure the stomach straps are an appropriate length to fit snuggly but not too tightly. Check the length of the coat. (You can make the coat shorter, but not longer at this point.)

If you need to adjust anything, turn the coat wrong side out, and re-stitch it now. You'll thank yourself later, believe me.

Step 5: Turn coat right-side out.

Step 6: Sew Neck Parts Together

Sew neck parts together as shown below (right-side to right-side), but do not sew long edges together. It's easier to sew the neck to the body if the neck piece is open.
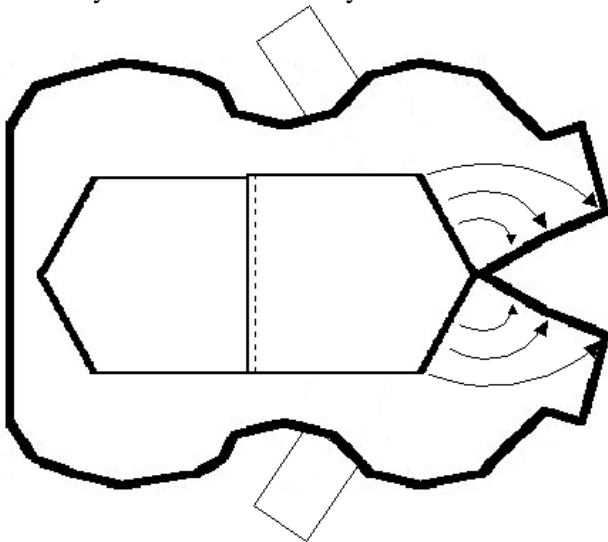
Step 7: Match Neck to Coat

This part seems like it's not going to work, but it always does!

Choose one side to work with first (i.e. outside fabric first). Lay the coat and neck as shown below with the coat right side up, and the neck piece wrong side up so you are matching right side to right side. Match neck piece to neck opening, following the arrows below, and making sure to keep matching right-side to right-side all the way along. You'll be sort of "bending" the fabric around to match it up. Pin as you go. Sew when one side is matched and pinned.

Do this for both inside and outside fabrics (inside to inside fabric, outside to outside fabric).

> **Note:** If your neck piece is quite a bit (more than ½" at either end) wider than the neck opening, you may need to trim the width of the entire neck piece slightly before sewing it here. If it's just a little bit wider, you can work it in as you sew.

Step 8: Sew Long Part of Neck and Chest Strap

When neck is attached to coat, sew long edge of neckpiece (right-side to right-side). If you start your sewing on the inside fabric, you can sew the entire neck, and continue along the outside fabric chest strap, sewing it until you have only the inside of the front to finish. Leave just enough space to turn neck right-side out.

Step 9:

Turn neck right-side out, and finish the inside chest strap.
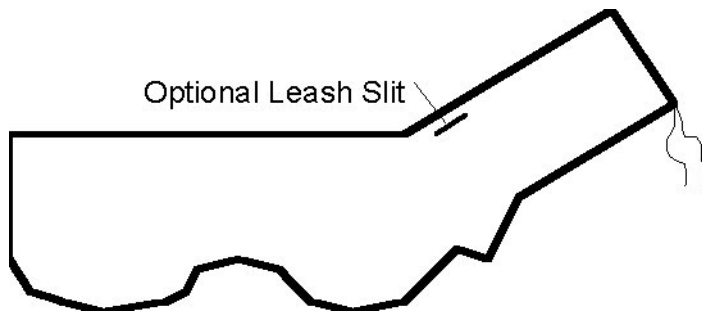
Voila! A beautiful coat for a beautiful hound!

ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL STEPS:

Creating a Finished Edge Seam

If desired, press coat and sew a ¼" to ½" finishing seam around the outside (bottom) edge of the coat. This is not a necessary step, but it makes the coat look a little more "finished." You can even use a decorative stitch for an added special touch.

Creating a Leash Slit:

Create leash slit as shown below. Using the button-hole feature on your sewing machine creates a nicely finished leash slit. Finishing by hand-stitching the slit also works as well.

Optional Leash Slit

Adding a Drawstring:

1. Fold the end of the neck over toward the inside about an inch and stitch in place to form the channel for the drawstring.

2. Make two small slits in folded over drawstring channel. Make the slits in the inside of the neck. Use a safety pin on the end of the drawstring to feed it through the channel of the hood. Slip the plastic drawstring stopper onto the drawstring and tie knots in the end of the drawstrings. I usually let the drawstrings hang about 4 inches on each side when the hood is fully open. This is plenty if your using the drawstring stopper. If you're just going to tie the hood, you'll need to leave a longer drawstring.

Original instructions provided by Greyhound Manor Crafts. Additional instructions and diagrams provided by Lisa Quast.