

# CLOAKING DEVICES, The veqlargh's in the details

As I drafted this installment, I realized just how many little tricks there are to finishing cloaks. I hope mine help you!

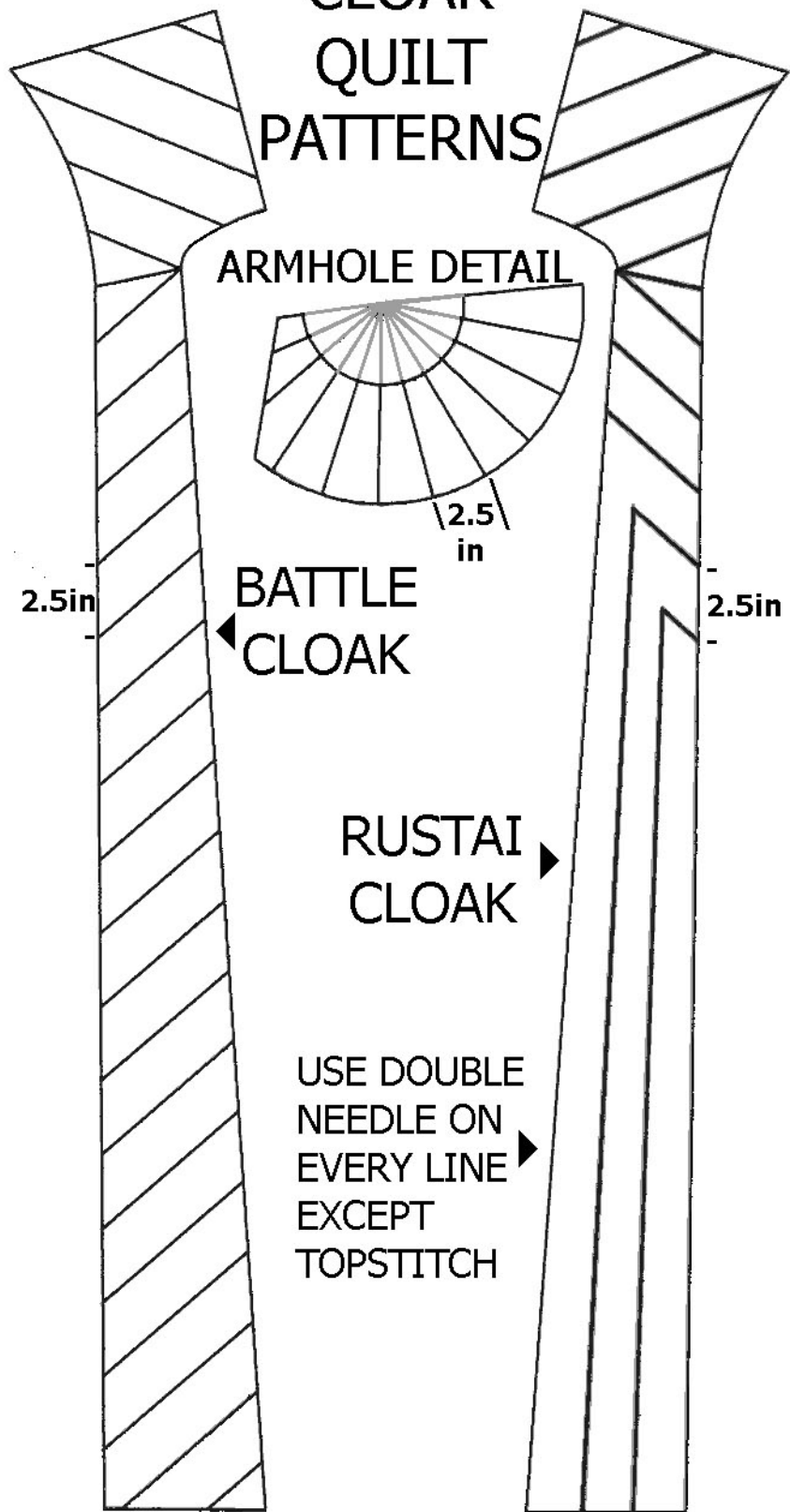
**QUILTING YOKE PANELS**--There are two patterns seen frequently on cloaks. The first is found under the pockets of battle cloaks. It consists of diagonal rows of quilting starting at the shoulder line. Make a template out of cardboard (I use matte board) 2.5 inches wide. The slope I use is the width of the template. Start the line at the point where the shoulder meets the neck, then drop one template width below the shoulder line at the armhole. This makes the lines of quilting drop away from the neck. If you do it from the opposite direction, the slope will be shallower, because the slope of the shoulder will be working against you. I mark the lines to be quilted in chalk. There are also fabric markers available. I find chalk easy to rub off in case of errors. Mark several lines on one side, then do the other front panel. Check for symmetry often. Fabric moves, the template moves, things shift during sewing. It is much easier to catch variations from symmetry early. Mirror the slope on the yoke back. The pattern will make inverted V's at center back.

The ceremonial or ruStai cloak starts the same way at the shoulder, but the quilted lines are made with a 4mm double needle. The slope of the lines is the same, but at the point where the skirt meets the front panel, the lines turn down, to divide the cloak panel into thirds. When measuring for the division, start after the seam allowance needed to join the front panel to the skirt.

**QUILTING ARMHOLES**--If you consider the armhole facing to be part of a concentric ring, then the quilt pattern radiates from the center of the ring. Make the distance between lines at the outer seam line the same 2.5 inches as the front quilting.

**OTHER PANEL EMBELLISHMENTS**--This is a great place to personalize your cloak. You may find a great fabric to use as an accent, and quilt it following the inherent design, or you may choose to enrich the cloak by couching metallic braid in the quilt lines, or by adding appropriate symbols to the quilted design, trefoils, house crests, etc. If you plan to wear lots of pins, badges or insignia on your cloak, though, then keep the base design simple.

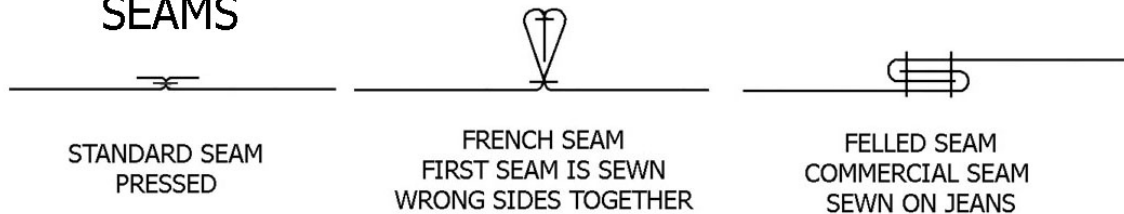
# CLOAK QUILT PATTERNS



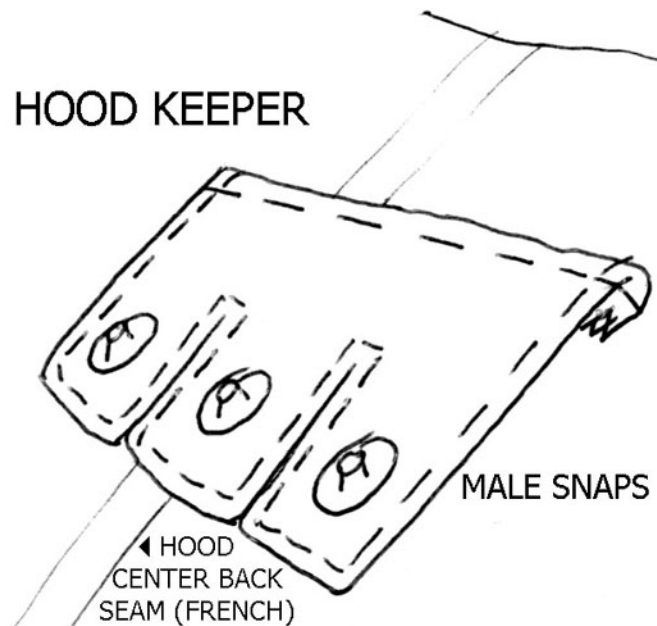
(Insert quilt patterns.jpg here)

ADDING THE HOOD--I used to sew the hood into the panels before quilting, but the process was cumbersome and it drove me crazy. Now I make the hood and stitch it on at the very end. Start construction by making a deep hem (1 to 1.25 inches) on the front of the hood. This provides body to the hood opening. Then sew the center back seam, closing it with a felled seam, like on jeans, or a French seam. The remaining seam at the top of the hood can be serged or sewn as a standard seam, since it will never show. Finish the lower edge of the hood by serging or folding the edge to the outside and stitching.

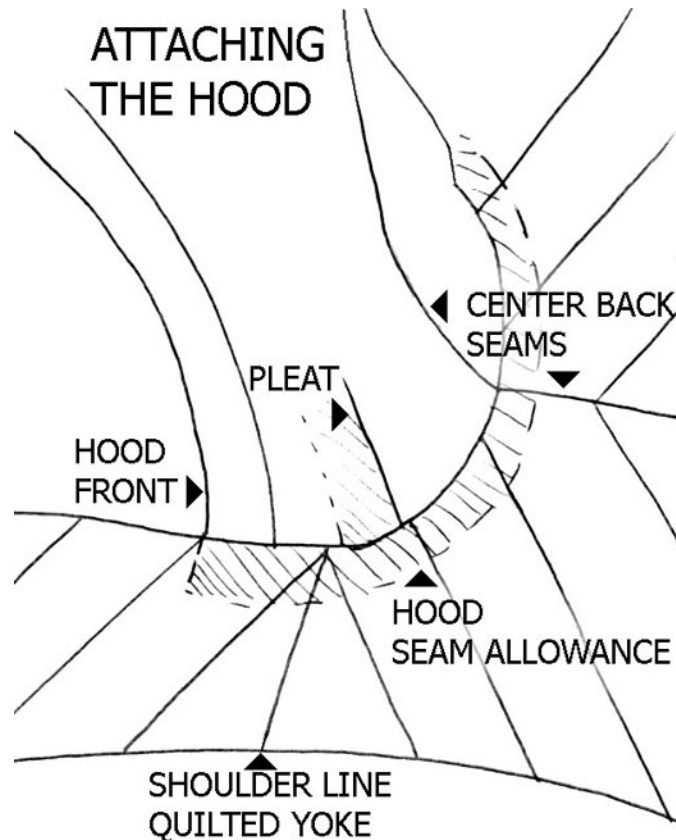
## SEAMS



The design I use for the hood is quite wide, and looks dramatic on a bumpy head, but left hanging down in back, it's sloppy. I devised a 3-tabbed hood keeper which snaps onto the hood to keep it tidy. Draw the shape of the piece onto iron-on interfacing. Iron it onto the back of the fabric so that the fold is at the ends of the tabs. Stitch the sides and between the tabs using a 1/8" seam allowance. Clip the corners and turn right sides out. Top stitch all around the tabs. Serge the open end closed, fold under about 1/4" and press. Apply a male snap to each tab, facing up. The female snaps will be placed on the inside of the hood front edge after the hood is sewn onto the cloak. Topstitch the hood keeper onto the hood at the center back seam about 1 1/2 inches from the lower edge seam line with the tabs pointing toward the point of the hood.



The hood may now be pinned to the neck edge of the cloak. I like to sew on the existing topstitching, so I place the pins so they can be removed from the outside of the cloak. Line up the center backs of the cloak and hood and pin in 5/8" of the lower hood edge. I usually attach the front edge of the hood at the first quilt line, 2 1/2" inches below the shoulder line on the front panel. There will be more hood fabric than there is neckline, so you'll need to make a pleat in the hood. Locate the pleat just behind the shoulder line on each side. Stitch the hood in place using the topstitch line at the neckline. Then sew another line of stitching 1/8" away from the first to keep the hood seam allowance from showing.

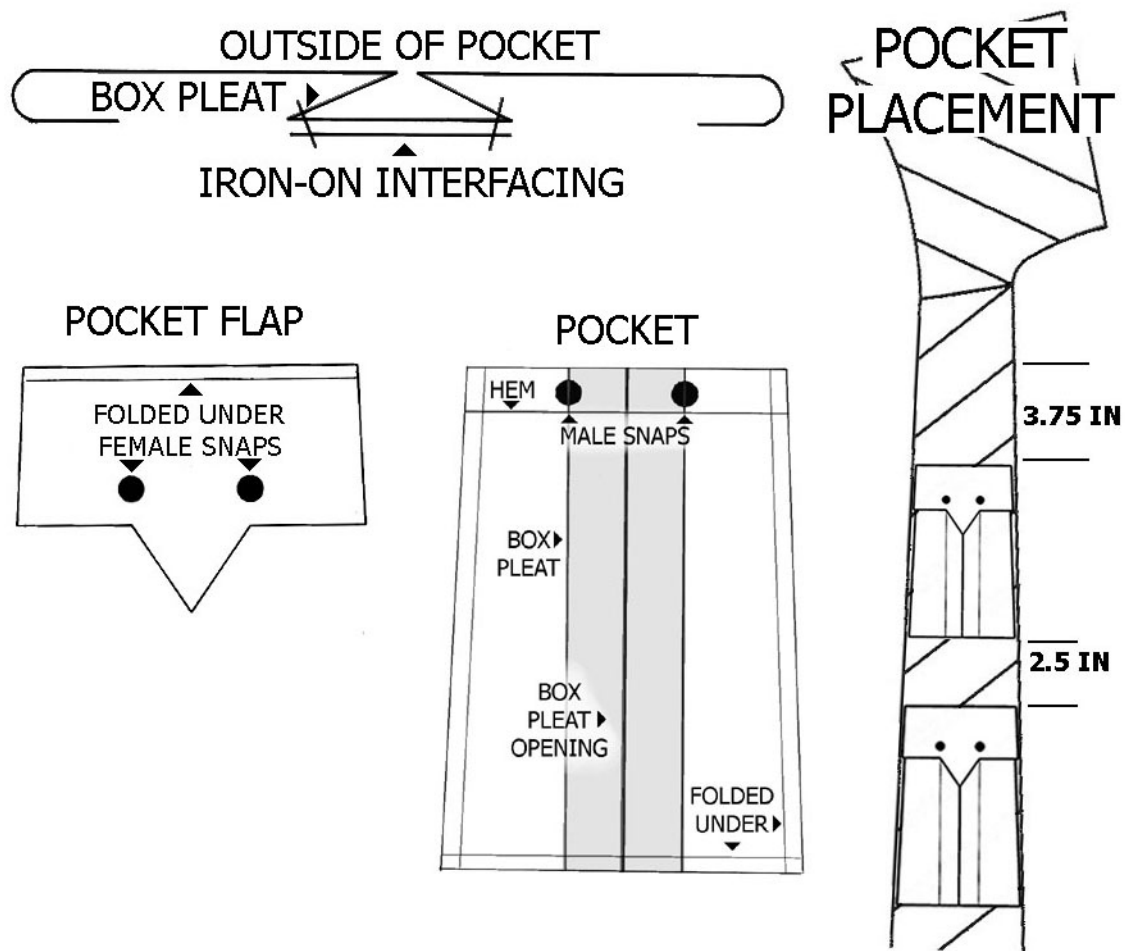


The only thing left to do is attach the three female snaps to the inside of the hood front edge. The first snap is at the center front of the hood. Make sure it is placed close enough to the edge that the edge clears the tab. Hang up the cloak and adjust the hood so that the extra fabric is tucked inside on either side of the central snap. The right and left tabs will snap to the hood over the tucked in edge. The hood is done!

**MAKING MODIFIED CAMP POCKETS**--These pockets have flaps with two snaps and box pleats, but they don't have the full box contour. This makes them a bit easier to make and keeps them tidy looking without starching and pressing. Some authenticity has been sacrificed to avoid the Cyrano Jones look. (Tribbles,

anyone?) It is also much easier to attach the pockets before joining the front panel to the skirt.

Start by drawing the pocket flap seam line on the iron-on interfacing. (I use ballpoint pen.) Cut out the interfacing using a 1/4" seam allowance. Press interfacing onto the wrong side of the front flap piece. If you are using heavy fabric, you may want the pocket flap facing to be a different, lighter fabric to avoid bulk, but still use the interfacing to stabilize the center point of the flap. Sew the flaps, clip corners, turn right side out, topstitch and serge the raw top edge. Mark the location of the snaps and set the appropriate decorative prong snaps (male on the flaps).



Now for the pocket itself--if the fabric is thin, iron on interfacing down the back of the center box pleat. Hem the top of the pocket. Topstitch the inner corners of the box pleat. Mark the center of the box pleat and fold the pleat shut to that line. Press the pleat flat. Place the pocket flap over the top of the pocket so that the point of the flap rests on the pleat opening and the rest of the flap edge is one inch below the edge of the pocket. Mark the location of the snaps on the pocket and set female snaps. Snap the flap to the pocket. Then you can fold in the sides of the pocket to match the width of the flap. Press the sides down,

then fold and press the pocket bottom and the flap top. Check for symmetry of pairs of pockets.

Locate the top pockets at least 4 inches below the hood. This should allow enough space for command bars. Pin the pockets and flaps in place, centering the pockets between the edge of the panel and the seam line for the skirt. If necessary, adjust the width of the sides of the pockets and press again. Topstitch the pockets and flaps into place. Skip 2.5 inches and repeat the process with the lower pockets. Once the pockets are in place you can finish assembling the cloak.

That's it for now. If I have thoroughly confused you, contact me through my website at <http://www.qidar.com> I'll try to untangle the mess!

I have a treat for next time--kid's uniforms!