



Upcycled Jeans Skirt with Triangle Panels



All Sizes



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Creativity is healing.

Upcycling is a great way to give new life to old jeans. I like to do projects to use up all of the jeans, from top to bottom. One great thing about recycling is that you can use the structure already built in to the original garment. This makes for a faster completion time on your project, but also preserves the quirks and memories from the original piece of clothing. You can add embellishments to give your finished product maximum personality.

When you're making skirts, you don't have to limit yourself to denim. Other fabrics will work, and will give your finished skirt a different texture, color and attitude.



MATERIALS NEEDED TO MAKE 1 UPCYCLED JEAN SKIRT WITH TRIANGLE PANELS:



- One pair of jeans, pants or capris. Remember, you don't have to limit yourself to jeans. The best part? You can make this skirt to fit anyone! Just start with a pair of pants that fit in the waist. It doesn't matter if the pants are too short, because you'll cut off the bottom anyway. And it doesn't matter if the pants are a little too snug in the hips, because you'll slit the hips open.
- Cotton fabric for the triangle panels. For a small child, you only need about 1/2 yard of fabric. For an elementary-school-aged child, you'll probably want about 3/4 yard. For a teen or adult, you want 1 yard for a skirt that isn't too full. Get 2 yards if you want a skirt that is more full, or if you want to add details like a belt through the belt loops, or ruffle on the bottom.

- Coordinating thread
- Scissors
- Yard stick
- Pins
- Iron
- Optional rick-rack or other trim for the hem



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CUTTING OUT THE PIECES:



1. Slit up the side seam of the jeans or pants to about 1/2" below the bottom edge of the pocket. If there is any rivet or metal reinforcement or decorative stitching at the bottom of the pocket, your slit should stop at least 1/2" before that spot.
2. Once you make that slit, there will be a folded, stitched seam showing, where the fabric has been doubled over. That edge is always very bulky. Trim out that edge, very close to the seam line, making sure that where you reach the end, just below the pocket, your cut edges meet in a point, not with a rectangle cut across the top.

3. Cut out the in-seam of both pants, up one leg, through the crotch, and back down the other leg.

4. Again, you'll have a thick, exposed seam, where the fabric has been folded over and overcast. Cut out that bulky edge.

5. With your pants folded flat, and the seams cut out, the front and back crotch lines should now look like the pictures at the right. The crotch curve will have to be cut out of the front and back in order for your skirt not to bulge out in front and back. Follow the directions on the next page for cutting out that curved area.

6. Decide how long you want the skirt to be. If you want a knee-length skirt, cut off the fabric 1 1/2" below the knee. If you want the skirt to hit at mid-calf, cut off the pants 1 1/2" below that line. You can choose to make a long skirt by leaving the legs of the pants long.



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7. Below the crotch seams, the leg lines are straight. Follow that straight line up the leg and cut out the crotch seam so that there is no curve at the crotch line on the front or back of the pants.

The front of the pants should now look like the picture at the left, and the back of the pants should now look like the picture right below.



8. Optional step to add more room into the hips: If the hips of your pants are seriously tight, but the waist still fits, you can give yourself more room in the skirt by cutting the back center seam a little higher.



9. Now you're ready to cut your triangle panels. Lay the pants out over the cotton fabric. If you want a narrow skirt, (not very full), make the opening for each of your 4 triangles fairly small. If you want a full skirt, open up the triangle as in the picture at the left.

10. Gently lift each side of the pants barely off the cotton fabric and cut up a straight line to the center point at the top of the triangle.

11. The bottom of each triangle piece cannot be straight. It has to be curved to match the line of your skirt. Use a yard stick to measure from the center point at the top of the triangle to the bottom edge where you have cut off your pants. Measure that same length from the center point at the top of the triangle all the way across the bottom of your cotton fabric, just as if you were using a giant compass. The line curves as you move the yard stick. Cut the bottom of the triangle along that curve.

12. Repeat steps 10-11 for the skirt sides and back. **Note:** the skirt side-panel triangles should be identical, while **the front and back will likely differ**. Mark which piece is which so you know where to put them in the skirt.



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13. For this particular skirt, I used a “cheater cloth,” where tiny fabric squares were stitched together. To avoid having raw edges on the inside of my skirt, I also cut white-cotton triangles to go behind each pink triangle. I will include this step when I’m making any recycle skirt if my cotton triangle fabric is very thin and I am trying to keep it from looking see-through.



14. Press any wrinkles out before you start stitching.

PUTTING YOUR SKIRT TOGETHER:



13. With right sides together, put one triangle panel into the pants in the spot where it goes. Start stitching at the point, and work your way down to the bottom of the leg, keeping the other layers out of the way.



14. Repeat for the other side of the triangle, keeping the underneath layers out of the way.



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15. You'll need to repeat steps 13-14 for all 4 triangle panels. When you stitch down the 2nd side of each panel, especially in the front, the triangle tip wants to poke out at the top. Do your best to pinch it flat. You can also tuck it in during topstitching (see page 7).



16. I'm a stickler for seam finishing. You want your finished skirt to look just as good on the inside as it does on the outside. If you don't have a serger, use an overlock stitch or zig-zag stitch on your sewing machine to finish all of the raw edges inside your skirt.



17. Press all of the seams toward the cotton triangle panels.



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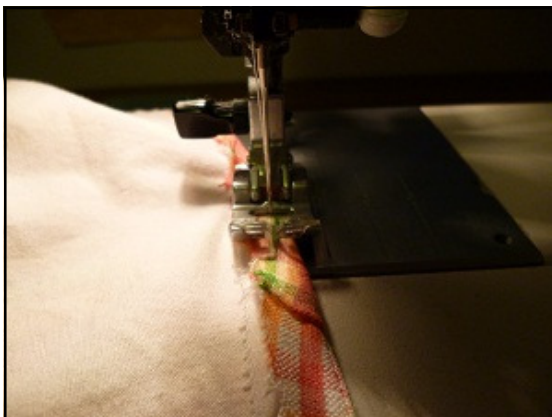
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18. Edgestitching and/or topstitching will give your skirt a high-quality, professional finish. Edgestitch along each seam on the cotton panel just inside your original seam line. This is where you can tuck in any of those top points of fabric that are trying to poke out.



19. Your finished, topstitched triangle panel should look something like this.



20. There are lots of ways to hem a basic skirt, but this is my favorite. Roll the lower edge 1 time with a narrow roll (1/2" or less) and stitch it down using a straight stitch.



21. Roll the lower edge a 2nd time and stitch over it again. Your skirt is hemmed! Be sure to press it for a high-quality finish.

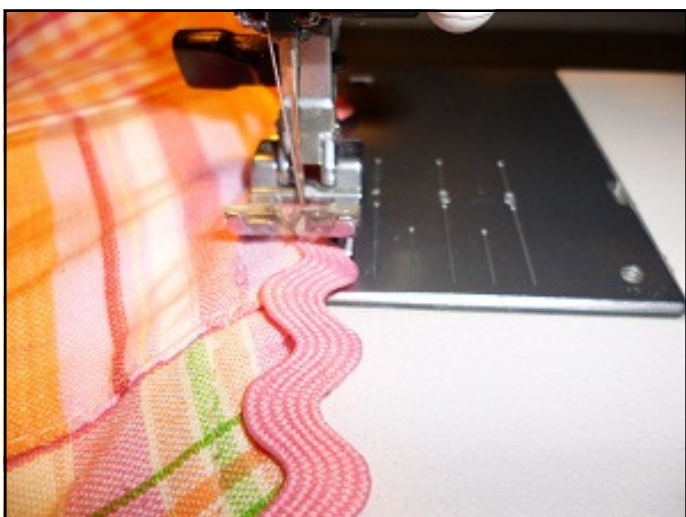


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CHOOSING AND ATTACHING EMBELLISHMENTS:



22. Embellishments are optional, but totally fun. For this particular skirt, I chose rick-rack. But you could also add ruffles or lace, or whatever suits your personality. You could also add appliqué, hot-fix crystals, beading, sequins or other embellishments onto the legs of your pants. You are only limited by your imagination!



23. Wear your skirt proudly!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Amy Coray has been sewing for almost as long as she can remember. She started learning to sew with her mom at a very young age and has always loved sewing. She has sewn professionally for local clients and has also taught sewing classes for a local Bernina dealer. She currently has a studio in her home where she teaches sewing classes for children, teens and adults. You can learn more about her and her projects on her website at www.corativity.com.



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