

Kimmy's Undies

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It's fun to remember the iconic toys of childhood, and even better when you can have one of your own. When my sister and I were little kids, an impish Canadian doll named Kimmy – made in Toronto by Regal Toys -- was extremely popular.



Kimmys came two sizes, and in a host of costumes and styles, including one all decked out in Maple Leaf tartan and another dressed in Inuit-style fur garb. They were adorable and much sought-after.



This Kimmy was gifted to me by my doll collector friend Joyce. I'm not sure if this is her original dress – I'm inclined to think not – but since I'm not actually a collector myself, it doesn't really matter. I'm just happy to have her in my small group of vintage dolls.

In addition to a dress or other outfit, Kimmy would have been wearing shoes, socks, and underpants. My Kimmy didn't have any of those.

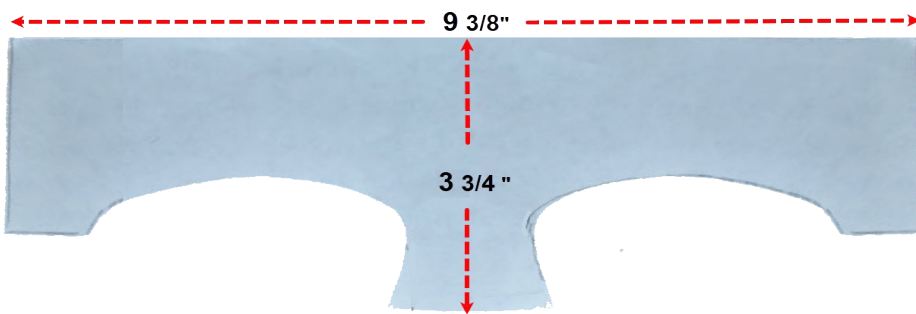


I'd been intending for some time to make her a pair of panties for modesty's sake, and after I got Melinda's Christmas outfit finished last week, I decided it was high time to make them up. (Apparently Scampers thinks I need his help).

Kimmy's kind of an odd shape, with a very round tummy and a protruberant backside, but the panties turned out to be reasonably easy to make. I really should have done it years ago when she first arrived, but better late than never, I guess.



My red-headed Kimmie is the smaller of the two sizes, standing about 9" tall. To begin, I measured around her hips, then the crotch length. I used these measurements to draft a one-piece pattern, which ended up being 9 3/8" wide and 3 3/4" tall.



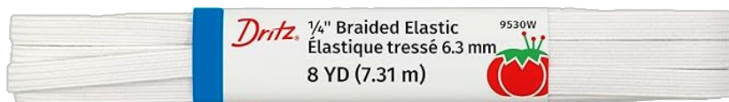
Making the pattern involved a little bit of trial and error to get the leg openings right. I tried the paper pattern against the doll and then cut a sample in fabric and made slight adjustments.



When made up, the panties will have a centre back seam and a seam across the seat, as you can see in the photo at left.



To make up the panties I used a firm T-shirt knit; a softer knit would be too difficult to work with. I traced the pattern directly onto my fabric, and cut it out along the traced lines.



Then I cut a piece of 1/4" elastic to just fit the doll's waist, or about 1/2" shorter than the waist measurement of the pattern.

To prepare for attaching the elastic, I folded the top edge of the panties about 1/4" to the wrong side. A light press with the iron will help keep the fold in position, or you can baste it if you like. Stitch it with a straight stitch, a regular zigzag, or a multi-stitch zigzag if your machine has it.

I'm using a multi-stitch zigzag to attach the elastic, stretching it to fit the waist edge as I sew. A regular zigzag stitch or even a straight stitch will work for this job.



The elastic gathers the waist nicely to fit the doll.

The next step is to finish the leg edges. To do this, I fold about 1/4" to the wrong side, and give it a light press. (This is where a soft T-shirt fabric would fail you: on the curved edges it's tough to roll the fold evenly. A soft fabric won't hold the fold as you try to stitch, and will stretch too far out of shape.)



I am sewing the folded leg edges using a straight stitch, but you can use a narrow zigzag stitch if you prefer.

The firm T-shirt fabric is sufficiently stable that it won't fray, but if you like you can trim close to the edge with pinking shears before folding to the inside.

With the elastic in place and the leg edges hemmed, I am stitching up the back seam of the underpants.

I have folded them along the centre front, right sides facing, bringing the centre back edges together so they meet evenly. I've pinned the seam to make sure the elastic is even, and I'm sewing a 1/4" seam along the back.



All that remains is to stitch the crotch seam. I've refolded the panties so the leg edges meet evenly, and have stitched across, back-tacking at both ends of the seam.



Ta-da:
I'm done!



Kimie's underpants are a reasonable fit, though I could maybe have made them a bit more snug. She's tough to fit with that extremely protuberant rear, but at least her modesty has been restored . . .



Looking at them now, I can see how these pants have a bit of a “grandma’s bloomers” vibe, so I have adjusted the pattern to snug them up a bit, in case I ever want to make another pair.



Kimmy’s been in need of these for a while, and given how relatively easy they have been to make, I can’t believe I took so long to get around to doing it! With the wind at my back, I got busy and also made panties for my vintage Tammy doll and for my 18” fashion doll, using the same method to develop the pattern.



Now that I’m kind of on a roll, maybe I’ll get some outfits finished up for Tammy’s little sister Pepper and for a couple of ponytails who need attention.
Stay tuned!

