

YOKES

Introduction

Yoke is one segment of the garment that can be constructed on the garment. It can be seen in the garment of children, men and women. It is introduced in a garment based on the need and to hold the gathers. For decorative purpose, it is sewn at shoulder, upper and lower part of the hip. Yokes can be constructed with different structures, variations like 'V' shape, oval shape or with different colour according to the taste and need of person.

Yokes are shaped pieces of fabrics used as a part of a garment. Shapes add decoration to garments. It can be used to create fullness or be a part of the garment from where fullness can be provided. Yokes can create interest and variation in garments. Yokes are often seen on men's shirts. They can be used in women's tops, skirts and baby frocks also.

Yoke is a fashioned [pattern](#) piece used in garments, usually fitting around the neck and shoulders, or around the hips to provide support for looser parts of the garment. The yokes offer support for slacker parts of the garment like in a gathered skirt or the body of a shirt . They are effectively horizontal panels near the shoulders or waist, which are often used for shaping because dart values can sometimes be absorbed into this seam line. Hence, the yokes are responsible for a trim and smooth upper area of the waistline in garments. Yokes are less often designed for decoration of garments. Yoke construction was first seen in the 19th century.



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Selection of Yoke Design:

The important factors influencing the yoke design are given below.

1. Design of the fabric:

The form of the yoke should go along with the fabric design. For fabric designs such as large checks or stripes, yokes with round or curved shapes are not well suited. Instead, straight line yokes are more appropriate. Floral designs or curved line fabric will go in harmony with round or curved yokes.

2. Design of the garment:

It also influences the design of the yoke. It is preferable to design yokes that are similar in shape to the design details of the dress like collar, cuff, pockets, etc.

3. Purpose and use of the garment:

Yokes find best utility in school uniforms and home-wear apparel. For party wear garments, innovative and fancy yoke designs like asymmetrical shapes, etc. with contrasting material and decorative edging can be implemented.

4. Sex and age of the wearer:

Round and curved yokes go well with girls while straight yokes are more suited to boys. Simple yoke designs without decorations are preferred by the older generation.

5. Figure and personality of the wearer:

The physical stature of a person also decides the nature of the yoke. In the case of a short, plump figure, deep narrow yokes with vertical decorations should be adopted. This causes a vertical eye movement giving an impression of added height and reduced width, thus making the person look taller shorter and fatter and are suitable for thin figures. Also, a yoke that is wide at the shoulder and pointed toward the waistline gives an idea of a narrow waist and wide shoulder.

Creating Variety in Yoke Design:

1. Variety in shape and size:

A yoke can be designed with a number of shapes like square, round, straight line, scalloped, triangular and asymmetrical. The width and depth of the yoke can be changed to produce desired effects. The yoke with a panel has a part of the yoke stretching out to the full length of the garment. Whereas in a partial yoke, the yoke may extend into the sleeve or it may extend for a certain part of the garment. Figures are showing the yoke with a panel and without a panel for a frock.



Yoke with panel



Yoke without panel

2. Variety in material and grain:

For garments with light shades, yokes with contrasting colours are used . Likewise, yokes with prints can be attached to plain garments or vice versa to provide a good appearance. With respect to grain, the yoke is cut in an inclined direction to the lengthwise grain while the garment is along the lengthwise grain.

3. Designing seam line of yoke:

The yoke attachment to the main panel of the garment can be carried out in a decorative manner by inserting ruffles, lace, decorative stitches or top stitches with contrasting coloured threads.

4. Decoration within the yoke:

Additionally, the yoke can be beaded, quilted, embroidered, shirred, smocked, tucked or pleated to enhance the appearance.

5. Introducing the yoke at different positions:

Basically, the yoke can be introduced in three positions: at the top of the garment (shoulder yoke), above the waistline (midriff yoke) or below the waist line (hip yoke).

6. Designing yokes which release fullness in various forms:

The fullness in the body of the garment can be released in the form of gathers, pleats and tucks originating from the edge of the yoke.

Preparing Patterns of Different Types of Yokes:

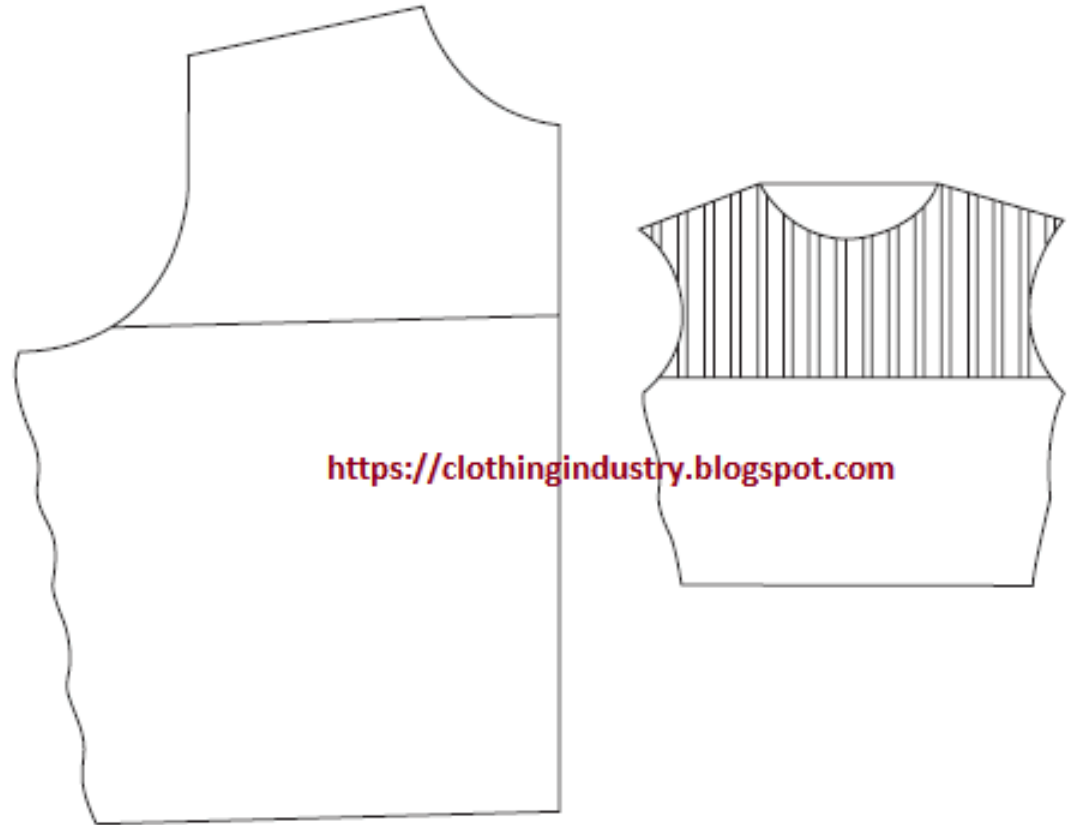
1. Yoke without fullness:

This type of yoke comes in a wide range of shapes and sizes. The pattern for such yokes can be prepared by two methods. For a curved or 'V' shaped yoke, the yoke line from the shoulder to the center front is constructed in the front bodice as desired. In the case of a straight line yoke, a line is drawn from the armhole to the centre front of the bodice pattern and both sections are labelled.



2. Yoke with fullness:

These yokes involve decoration of the fabric with any fullness (tucks, pleats, gathers, shirring and embroidery). The fullness must be completed prior to the attachment of the yoke pattern. The required amount of fabric is cut and desired types of tucks are stitched according to the design. Now, the paper pattern is placed over the tucked fabric and the yoke is cut with the required seam allowance.



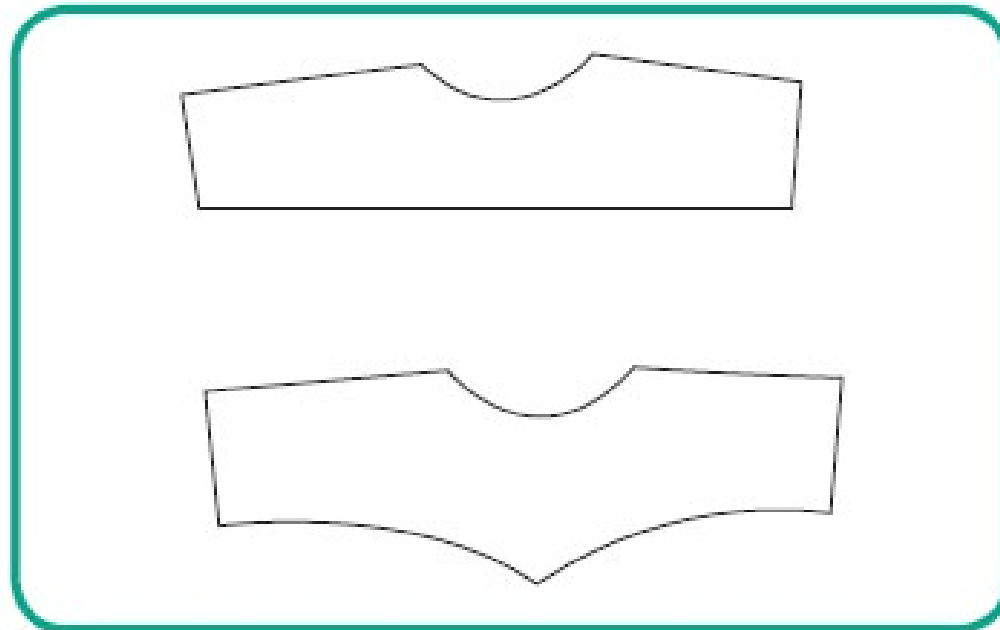
Types of Yokes

Yokes are classified based upon the pattern made and decorations as plain or basic yoke and decorative yoke.

Plain / Basic Yoke

Plain or basic yoke has got simple structure. It can be placed on front and back part of men's shirt. According to the shape of garment, use of garment, age of person, yokes are suitably cut and joined. This yoke is a part of the garment which is cut and joined with a piping or seam. **Example** : Bodice block of a body front cut half way through to add with gathers to the rest of the garment.

For drafting yokes take a bodice pattern and mark from the shoulder to the center of the front bodice. This technique can be used to construct 'V' shaped and circular shaped yoke. To construct a straight yoke, marking should be made according to the length of yoke from armhole to center front

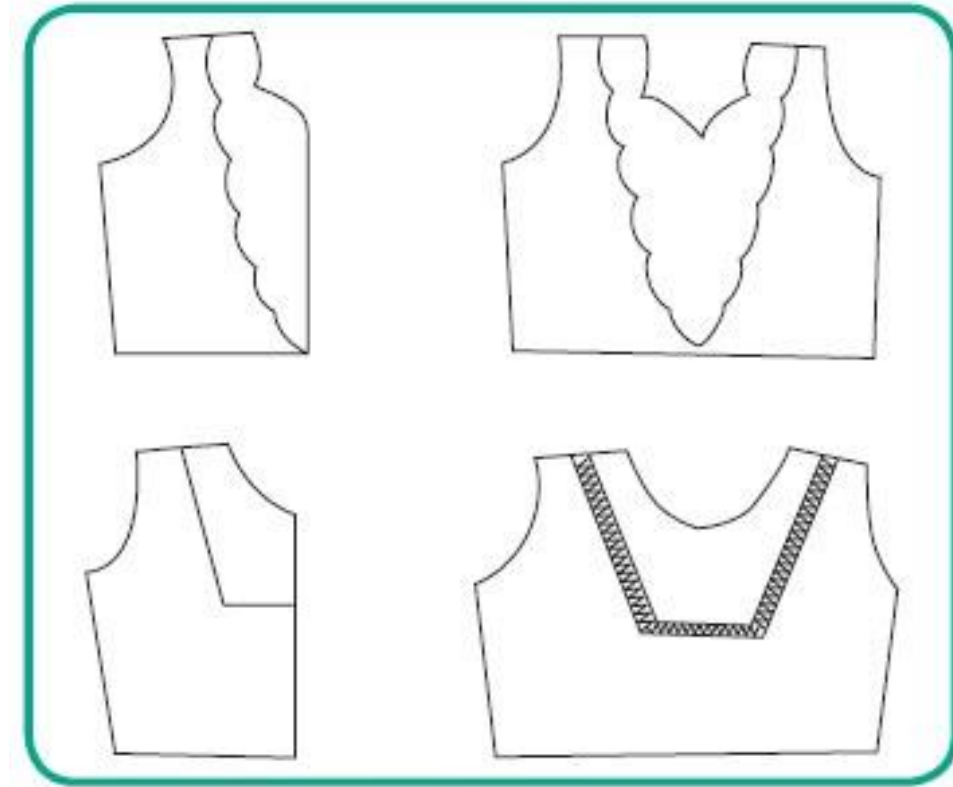


Decorative Yoke

Contrast colour materials can be used for making yoke. Use of various tucks, pleats and frills add interest to the garment. According to the wish of wearer, piping or frills can be stitched at the edges of the yoke.

Yoke can be joined using plain fabric or by adding one or more layers for stiffness. For skirts, yoke is cut to the shape of the waist line. Then the skirt part is gathered and attached to the yoke. The bottom of the yoke should match to the size of the gathering in the skirt.

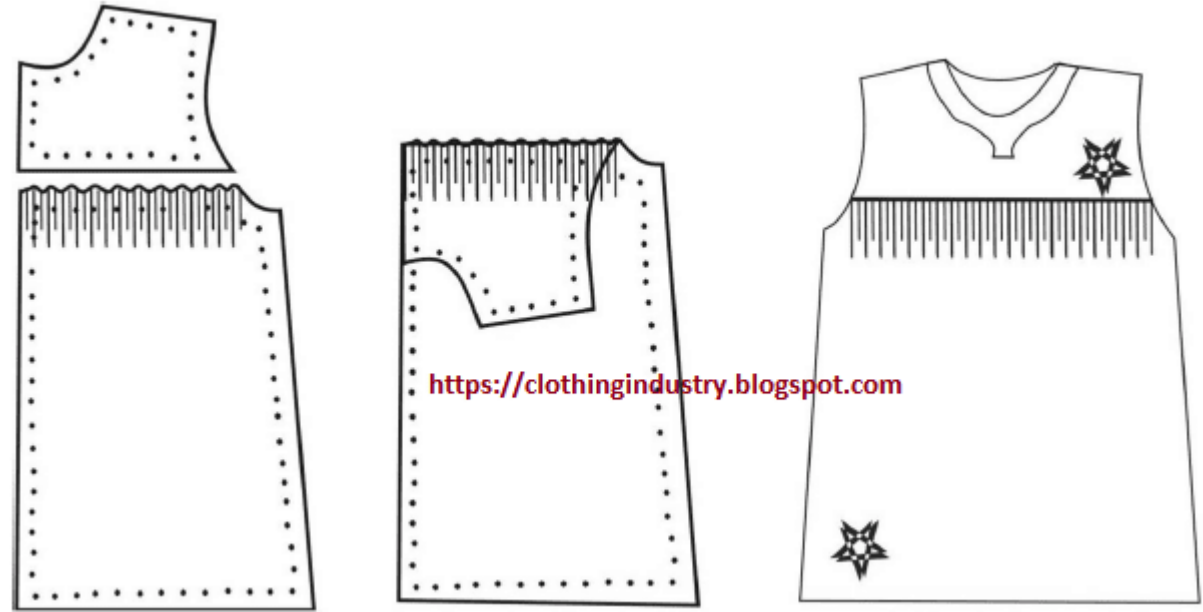
To construct yokes with curved edges on panel skirt, lapped seam can be used. These kinds of yoke can be used on the bodice part of kid's front, upper part of night dresses and on the waist bands of skirts. Yokes of desired shape can be cut and stitched and decorations using embroideries can be added to the garment.



Attaching Yokes:

A plain [seam](#) or lapped seam can be used to append the yoke to the lower section. The skirt is gathered such that the width of the gathered skirt is the same as the width of the yoke. The yoke is now placed over the skirt right side facing up and, subsequently, the notches are matched. Pinning and tacking are done in order to distribute gathers evenly. After attaching the yoke, the tacking should be removed. The yoke is turned up on the right side and pressed. The straight and decorative yokes are shown in , respectively

In yokes consisting of both curved and straight lines as in a skirt with panel, the seam runs almost at right angles to the corner. The lower segment of the garment is gathered and stitched initially. In the yoke, stitches are made nearer to the seam line and the corners are reinforced. Now, the seam allowance is folded to the back side and tacked with small stitches close to the fold. To make a flat seam, cuff the notches into the seam allowance.



By placing the yoke over the top of the lower section, the seam lines are matched. Tacking followed by top stitching close to the folded edge of the yoke is done. If necessary, a tucked seam effect can be obtained by doing the top stitching away from the folded edge of the yoke.

Apart from skirts, yokes frequently appear in men's shirts, trousers and coats. Depending on the form of the shoulder line, the yokes on shirts, tops or coats can be cut in two variants. In the first type, the yoke is cut as a single pattern piece, thus the back and front pieces could be merged along the shoulder line. The other variant includes the back and front yokes as two separate pieces, especially for drop shoulders as two separate pieces are required to retain the curve of the shoulder line. Alternatively, the yoke can be cut in one piece and darts can be provided along the shoulder line to impart the necessary curved shaping. Moreover, on trousers and skirts, the yoke region facilitates the dart value to be absorbed into a single panel.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Yokes are separate part of a garment.
- Variations in garments can be created using yokes.
- Proper placement of yoke is very important.
- Yokes are of two types, namely yokes without fullness (basic yoke) and yokes with fullness. (decorative yoke)
- Yokes can be introduce in a garment to release fullness and for ease of movement.