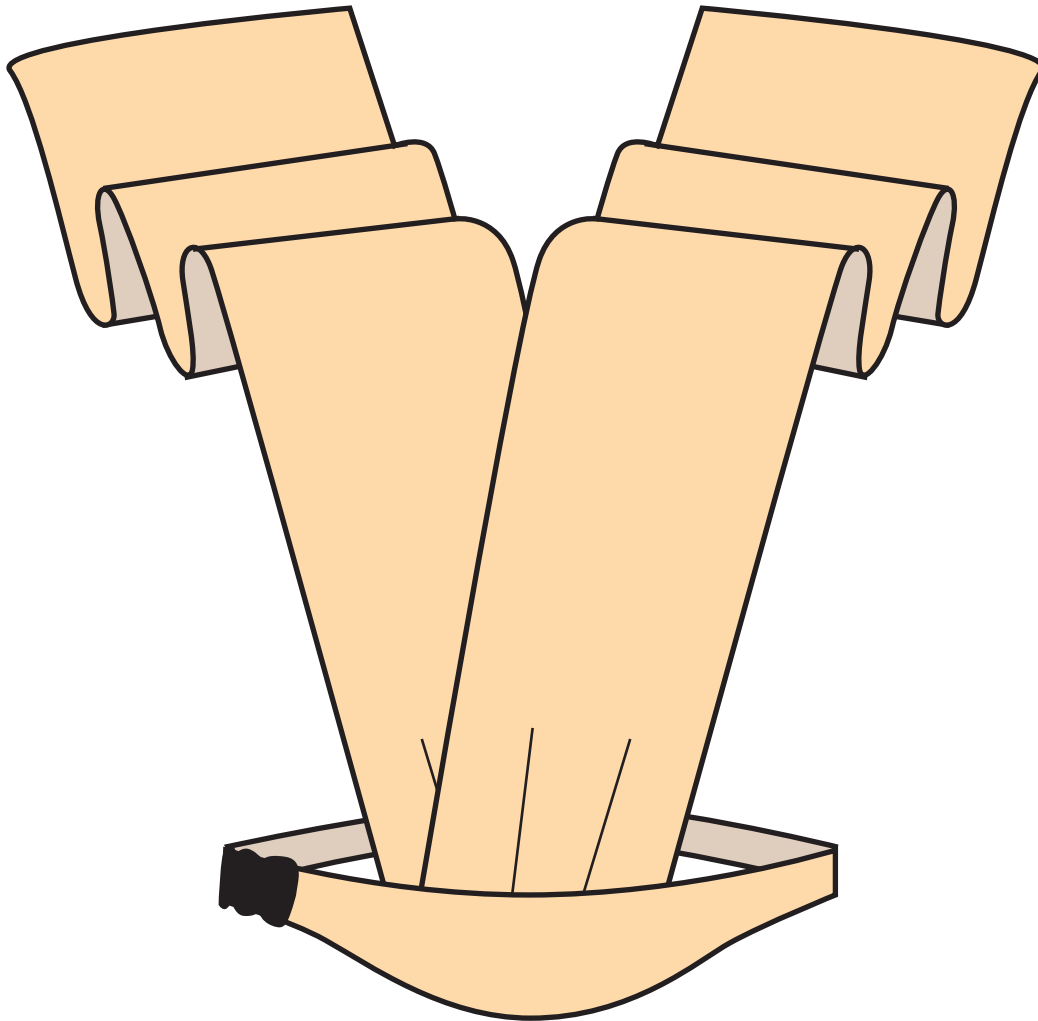


Hybrid Carrier

Buckle Waist Woven Wrap

Executed by Alyssa Leonard and inspired by the XOXO Buckle Wrap



Materials:

100"x60" cotton tablecloth or equivalent babywearing-safe material

3 yards of 60" wide fabric or 5 yards of 45" fabric

(Carrier could be probably be modified to fit 3 yards of 45" wide fabric with narrower wraps)

3-4 pieces of approximately 4" x 14" fleece, batting, wool, felt, open cell foam

1 Large buckle (I used a 1.5" buckle off of a Chicco narrow based carrier)

Sewing machine

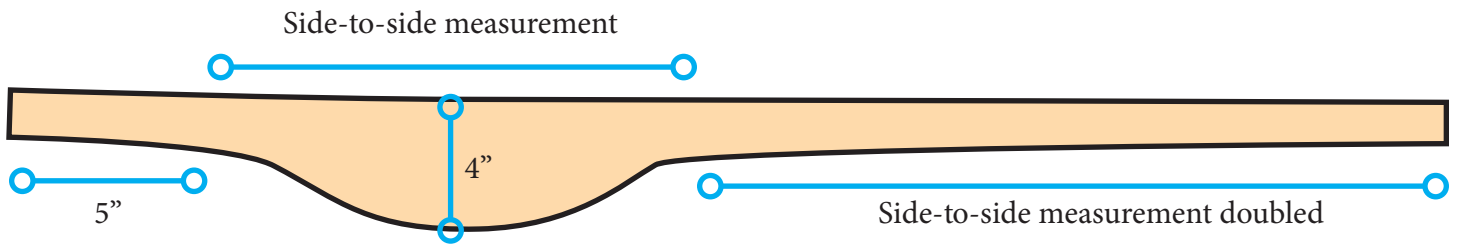
Size 16 denim needle (and a spare)

All purpose polyester thread with 2 full bobbins

Newspaper, blank newsprint, or gridded wrapping paper for pattern drafting

Pins pins pins!

Drafting the waistband



I drafted my waistband pattern initially on some blank newsprint. I started with the wider section where the wrap would be anchored, and drew this out about 4" high. I then measured around my natural waist from one side to the other. This was how long I made the shaped part of my waistband. I drew the top edge straight and gently curved the bottom up from the 4" height up to a more narrow 1.5" height (to match my buckle.)

To one side, I added 5" to thread on the female side of my buckle and sew it in place. To the other side, I added my side-to-side measurement doubled. I could have gotten away with less, probably, but I wanted my husband to be able to use it as well. Plus, it's always easier to hem something shorter than to make it longer.

If I had a dual-adjust buckle, I would have added a singled side-to-side measurement to each side to make it more symmetrical.

If I wanted to make the waistband out of webbing, I could have simply added .5" to each side of the curved section of the waistband to turn under the raw edges and then threaded the webbing through the whole thing, which probably would have been easier than cutting, sewing, turning, and topstitching that long, narrow waistband.

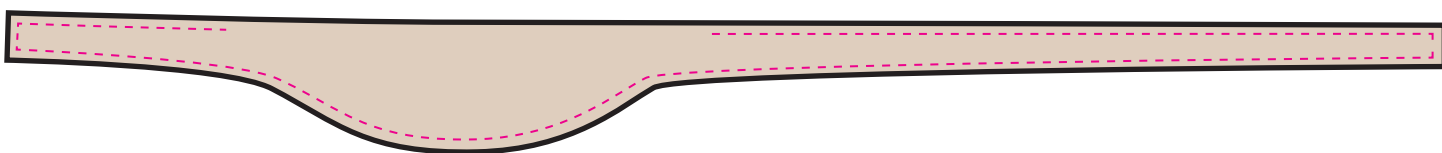
I cut two of these out of my tablecloth, being careful to add a full .5" seam allowance to all edges. Make sure to cut one piece patterned-side-up and one patterned-side-down.

I cut just the center curved part of the waistband out of 4 layers of fleece. In hindsight, I will never sew with fleece ever ever again. My sewing machine hates it. I regret not buying the thick felt I found in the remnant bin.



Constructing the waistband

I ran a few wide zigzag stitches along the 4 layers of fleece to keep them together. I then laid them on top of my waistband pieces and trimmed them to make sure they wouldn't be too big.



With the two waistband pieces right-sides-together, I sewed around the outside edge, leaving the top edge of the waistband open.

I trimmed my seam allowances off (especially along the waistbands) and turned the entire thing right-side-out.

I ironed the entire thing flat after this, paying special attention to folding the raw edges of the open section under, and making sure the waistband was smooth and straight.



The Wraps

I then cut and hemmed my 2 wraps. My two wraps are 100" long and approximately 24" wide after hems (25" or 26" before hems.) A previous prototype created by Alison Ladman used 15" wide wrap straps, and she would have preferred slightly wider (possibly 20") wraps. I decided to go big or go home with 24" straps, going nearly as wide as some of the more narrow commercial woven wraps. The length I chose is (I believe) about equivalent to the commercial XOXO Buckle Wrap, and combined *should* make the equivalent length of about a size 7 wrap.

My base size is a 6 and my hope is to be able to do a back carry with two reinforcing torso passes and still have enough tail to do a knotless tibetan finish up front.

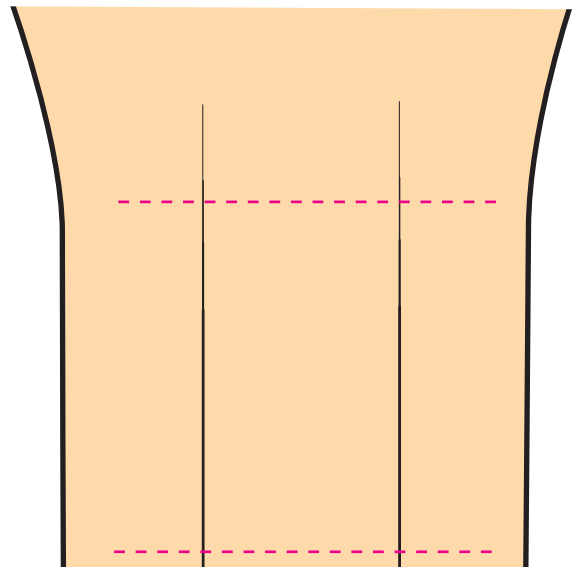
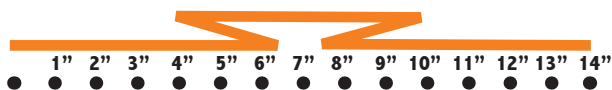
I hemmed 3 sides of my wraps with a double folded .5" hem. (In pictures, the bottom edge is hemmed because it was the existing hem from the tablecloth.)



After hemming, I added a single wide box pleat to the bottom of each wrap to narrow the width from 24" down to 14" (the approximate width of a standard infant-size body panel.) In order to reduce the width by 10", each pleat is about 2.5" deep, so I started each pleat 3" from the center so the two pleats don't overlap each other in the middle. I ran a line of wide basting stitches along the bottom edge, as well as about 12" up from the base, in order to keep this pleat in place. I used the longest stitch length possible, and left my threads long on the top line of stitching so I could easily remove it later.

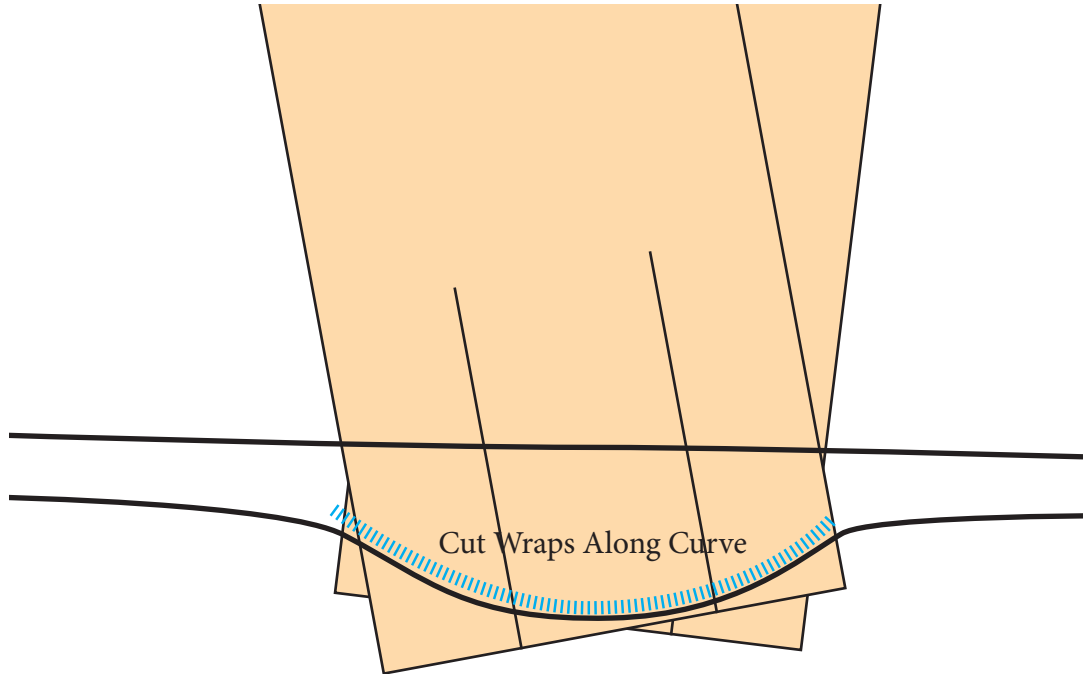


Cross Section:



Wrap Assembly

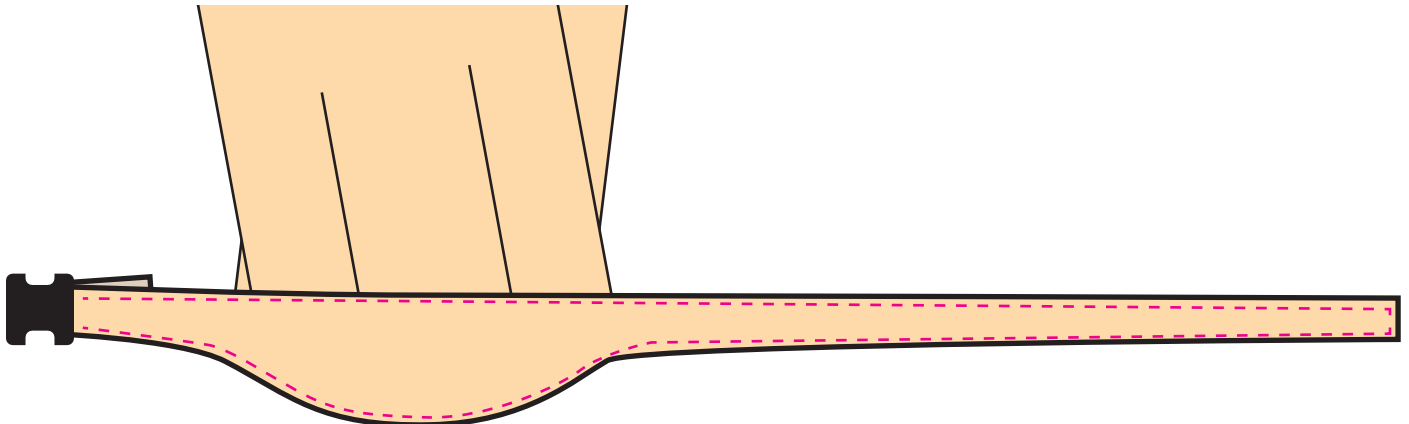
Using my paper pattern piece as a template, I laid the two pleated ends of my wraps on top of each other, angling them both ever so slightly outwards and securely pinning them together. I then used the pattern piece as a guide and cut the bottoms off to match the curve of the waistband.



Final Assembly

I carefully inserted the two angled and pinned wraps into the open top of the waistband, and inserted the fleece on top of these. Once I made sure everything was neatly lined up, I pinned everything along the top open edge through all layers.

At this point, I also threaded the female buckle closure onto the short side of the waistband and folded it under about 3". I then used a single long line of topstitching around the entire outside edge of the waistband to secure the buckle, close off the open edge of the waistband, and even run down the long end of the waistband to keep that all flat and neat.

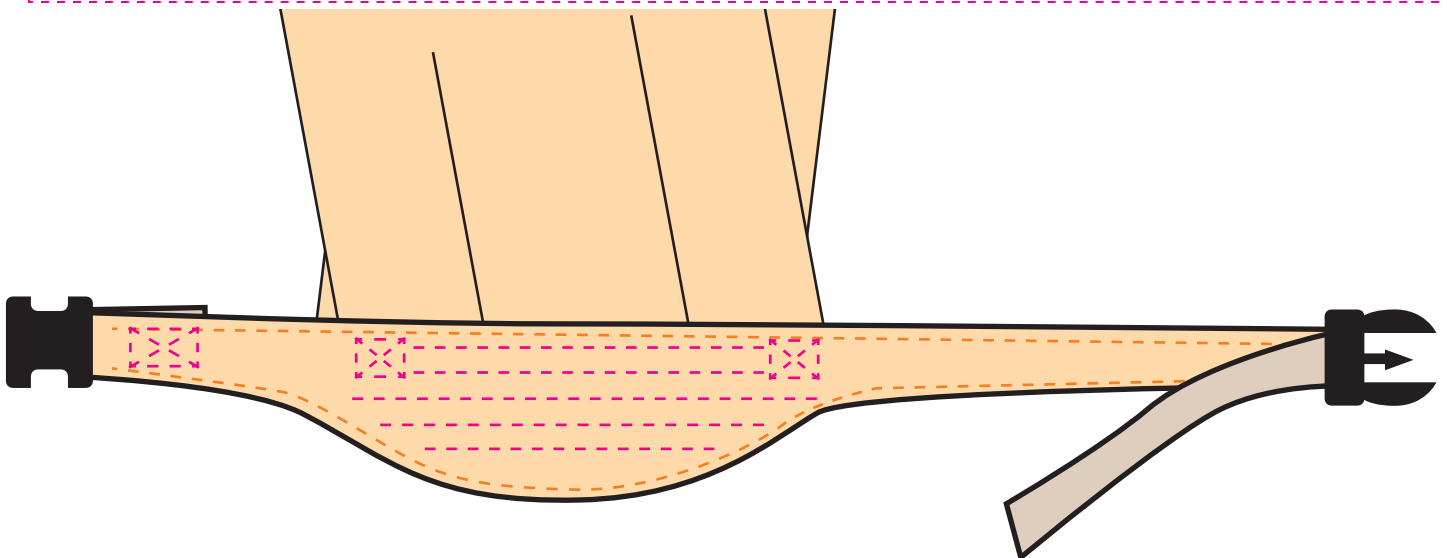


I went ahead and threaded the male buckle onto the long tail so I wouldn't lose it. (If your buckle is sliding, make sure you aren't threading it upside down. The teeth will only catch in one direction.)

I then added some quilting to the waistband to secure the fleece, and three x boxes: one for the female buckle strap, and one in each corner of where the wraps and waistband intersect.

To finish up, I made sure that all of the stitching was secure and caught all the layers of the fabric it was supposed to, and made sure that the waistband fit and didn't need to be shortened. I then carefully removed the lines of basting stitches holding the top of the pleats in place on my wraps.

My machine really struggled with the fleece in the waistband. The combination that worked for me to get it done was using a different machine (not sure if that helped or not), new needle, and a very VERY low tension. It turned the tension down below 2 on my mom's Janome, which seemed even looser than when I had the same tension setting on my Singer.



Finished Product

I will edit this with more specifics once I get to try it out with a real baby instead of dolls and dogs.

So far, I like the width, although I think that 20" would have been fine and plenty. The length was perfect for me. Wrap carries with only two cross passes are not terribly lean-proof, so I wanted to have enough length to do horizontal reinforcing passes for back carries. I'm about a US size 12 (fairly average sized) and this was perfect length for me.

The waistband is narrow (like bare webbing would have been) but so far doesn't bother me much. Again, we'll see once I can do a real trial run with a real baby with real weight. I always lean towards simplicity, but it definitely would have been possible to do a carrier more like Alison Ladman did with a wider padded waistband and webbing on top.

