



18 INCH AND AMERICAN GIRL BIKINI AND TANKINI TOP

Make Your Outfit Instructions

1. Preview of Completed Outfit

Play this video and check out this great outfit that YOU will make!

2. Tools and Resources Required

- 1) Paper pattern (printed from PDF file downloaded to your computer)
- 2) Fabric – 8” (20cm) Lycra or spandex (two way stretch fabric) This is sufficient to make both the top and pants
- 3) Matching thread
- 4) Tear-away or tissue paper
- 5) Paper scissors
- 6) Fabric scissors or Rotary Blade & Cutting Mat
- 7) Clippers/snips
- 8) Marking pen/pencil
- 9) Pins and hand sewing needle
- 10) Ruler
- 11) Loop/tube turner or safety pin



3. Preparing Paper Pattern

- 1) Check the 'Tip' measurement is correct.
- 2) Decide if you are making the bikini or tankini top and cut out the relevant pattern pieces following the solid line.



4. Cutting Out Fabric

- 1) Place paper pattern pieces #4 OR #5 (depends on whether you are making the tankini or bikini top) onto a single layer of fabric ensuring that the maximum stretch is going in the direction of the arrows. Pin in place.
- 2) Cut around the paper pattern with fabric scissors or rotary blade. Remove pins.
- 3) Place paper pattern pieces #1, #2 and #3 onto doubled over fabric ensuring that the maximum stretch is going in the direction of the arrows. Pin in place.
- 4) Cut around the paper pattern pieces with fabric scissors or rotary blade. Remove pins.

5. Prepare Frills and Straps

- 1) On the first frill (piece #3), sew a row of gathering stitch (long straight stitch 5 length) about 1/8 inch (3mm) in from one long raw edge.
- 2) Sew a second row of gathering stitch about 1/4 inch (6mm) in from the same long raw edge.
- 3) Repeat with second frill.
- 4) Fold the strap (piece #2) in half length-wise with the right sides of the fabric together. Pin.
- 5) Using a small zigzag (2 width and 2 length) or stretch stitch sew down the long side of the strap with 1/4 inch (6mm) seam allowance securing beginning and end with reverse stitches.
- 6) Repeat with second strap.
- 7) Using a loop turner/ tube turner or safety pin, turn straps right side out.

6. Attach Straps

- 1) Take the first bikini top piece (piece #1) and place it on the table with the right side of the fabric facing up. Place the first strap onto the bikini top with the seam of the strap facing towards the left and one end of the strap extending past the left edge of the 'V' at the top. Fold the bikini top in half (right side over on top of the left side) so that the two long straight edges are now together and the two edges of the 'V' are together. Pin.



- 2) Starting at the bottom and using a small zigzag (2 length and 2 width) or stretch stitch, sew the side seam stopping $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6mm) from the top. With your needle down in the fabric, lift the presser foot and turn the fabric so you can sew across the top and secure the strap. Finish sewing just before the fold of the fabric to avoid creating a peak. Ensure you secure beginning and end of the seam with reverse stitches.
- 3) Cut a 'V' out of the seam allowance at the top beside the strap. This will reduce the bulk. Turn top to right side out.
- 4) With raw edges even, place a pin at the bottom of the top. Sew a row of gathering stitch (length 5) along the curve about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6mm) in from the edge. Start sewing at the seamed edge and finish at the folded edge. Secure threads at the folded edge by either tying a secure knot or doing reverse and forward stitches.
- 5) Repeat steps 1) to 4) with second bikini top piece.

7. Attach Frills and Join Front Pieces

- 1) Place the two bikini pieces on the table with the folded edges in the centre facing towards each other. Place a pin in each along the fold to ensure that you attach the frill to the correct side and end up with two mirror image pieces and not two identical pieces.
- 2) Now working with one top and one frill, place the top on the table with the side with the pin facing up. Lay the frill on top with the right side facing up and the side with the gathering stitches just overhanging the folded edge. Pin one short end even with the bottom of the top and the second short end just above the seam allowance where the strap is attached.
- 3) Now pull on the two bobbin threads at one end to gather the fabric between the pins. Even out gathers and place another pin in the centre to secure gathers and frill in place.
- 4) Place tear-away or tissue paper down and lay the bikini top and frill over this. Using a straight stitch (length 3) sew between the two rows of gathering thread, securing beginning and end with reverse stitches. The tear-away or tissue paper helps to stabilize the fabric and avoid stretching while sewing.
- 5) Remove the tear-away or tissue paper and the gathering threads.
- 6) Trim frill at the top on the angle so that it is in line with the bikini top. Trim frill at bottom so that it is even with the bottom of the bikini top.



- 7) Pull on the gathering thread at the bottom of the bikini top until the length of the bottom is 2 ¼ inches (5.5cm) and all the gathers are in the centre. Secure gathering thread with a knot.
- 8) Repeat steps 2) to 7) with the second bikini top and frill.
- 9) Overlap the two bikini top pieces at the bottom so that the frills overlap ¼ inch (6mm). Pin.
- 10) Sew across this overlap with a straight stitch securing by sewing forward and reverse. Trim threads.

8. Attach Bottom Band

- 1) Fold bottom band in half so that short ends meet and mark the fold with a pen or pin.
- 2) Using a pen or pin, mark a point 2 inches (5cm) each side of this centre pin.
- 3) Place the band on the table with the right side facing up. Place the bikini top over the band with the right side facing down (both right sides are together). Match the centre front of the band with the centre front of the top and with raw edges even, secure with a pin. Now match the left edge of the bikini top with the 2" (5cm) mark on the left of the centre point, secure with a pin. Match the right edge of the bikini top with 2" (5cm) mark on the right, secure with a pin.
- 4) Place tear-away or tissue paper down and lay the bikini top and band over this. Using a small zigzag (length 2 and width 2) or stretch stitch sew ¼ inch (6mm) seam attaching the top to the band. Secure beginning and end with reverse stitches. The tear-away or tissue paper helps to stabilize the fabric and avoid stretching while sewing.
- 5) Remove the tear-away or tissue paper.
- 6) Fold the band so that the two short ends meet and right sides are together – this will be the centre back. Pin.
- 7) With raw edges even sew a ¼ inch (6mm) seam using a small zigzag or stretch stitch, securing beginning and end with reverse stitches.
- 8) Clip seam allowance on the angle at the top and bottom of centre back seam.
- 9) Turn the raw edge of the bottom of the band ¼ inch (6mm) into the wrong side and secure with pins. Turn the raw edge of the top of the band (the part that is not attached to the top) ¼ inch (6mm) into the wrong side and secure with pins.



- 10) Fold the bottom of the band up to meet the top of the band ensuring that the wrong sides are together and the back seam allowance is separated to reduce bulk.
- 11) Match the back seam and the folded edges of the top and bottom, securing with pins. Now match the bottom folded edge with the seam line where the top is attached to the band ensuring that the seam allowance is facing down into the band. Secure with pins.
- 12) Place tear-away or tissue paper down and lay the bikini top and band over this. Using a small zigzag stitch sew from one edge of the bikini top around the back band until you reach the other end of the bikini top. Secure beginning and end with reverse stitches. The tear-away or tissue paper helps to stabilize the fabric and avoid stretching while sewing.
- 13) Remove the tear-away or tissue paper.
- 14) Hand sew the remaining band to the bikini top using a slip stitch.
- 15) Turn top to right side.

9. Congratulations You Did It!

Celebrate! YOU made a really cute bikini or tankini top. Well done!