

## Make Your Own Pocket

### The History of Pockets in Women's Clothing

When it comes to pockets for women in western dress, the history is quite surprising!

The easiest examples of pockets being sewn into clothing date back to the 1600s, but those pockets were only found in men's clothing and were sewn into trousers or waistcoats. For women, the pocket remained a separate accessory into the late 19th century.

Women's pockets were not attached to the clothing, instead they wore a separate item, almost like a handbag. The pocket would be tied around their waist and worn under their skirts, also known as petticoats. The petticoat would have a slit a woman could reach her hand through to get to her pocket.

In her pocket, a woman could keep small things like keys, coins, handkerchiefs, notes, or sewing tools.

While very practical, pockets were also deeply personal and tell us a lot of about lives of the women who carried them.



This pocket was made in 1802. The front is embroidered with flowers and vines. In the center of a heart "LS/1802" is stitched. From the Litchfield Historical Society Collection.

# Pocket Instructions

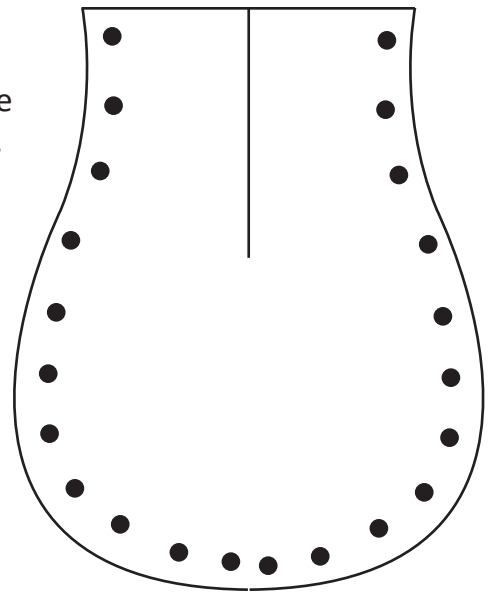
## Supplies Needed:



- Template
- Marker
- Felt
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Yarn or Ribbon
- Paperclip or Tape
- Supplies to decorate (fabric paint)

## To Make Your Pocket

1. Trace and cut the pocket template on two pieces of felt
2. Using the hole punch, punch holes around the curved edge of one piece of felt, approximately 1/4" from the edge and 1" apart.
3. Lay the piece of felt with the holes punched over the second piece of felt and use the marker to mark each hole on the second piece of felt. Use the hole punch to punch a hole on each marked spot.
4. Cut a piece of yarn or ribbon approximately 4 feet long. Thread the yarn/ribbon on to a paperclip. You will use the paperclip like a needle to help push the yarn through the holes. Alternatively, you can wrap a piece of tape around the end instead of using a paperclip.
5. Stack both piece of felt with the holes lined up. Starting with a hole on the flat edge, thread the yarn through the first hole, leaving approximately 1.5" of yarn at the end (this will be used to tie the pocket around the waist.)
6. Using a simple stitch, go down through one set of holes and up through the next. Continue sewing until you reach the end of the holes. Leave the extra yarn/ribbon to tie around your waist.
7. Cut a slip ~4" in the middle of the front of the pocket to allow your hand to enter more easily.
8. Decorate your pocket. Pockets are personal, so make your pocket special to you!



For video instructions, visit our Website.

[www.litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org)

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# Pocket Template

