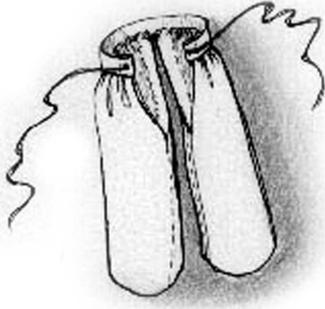




## Split Drawers 1800 - 1900

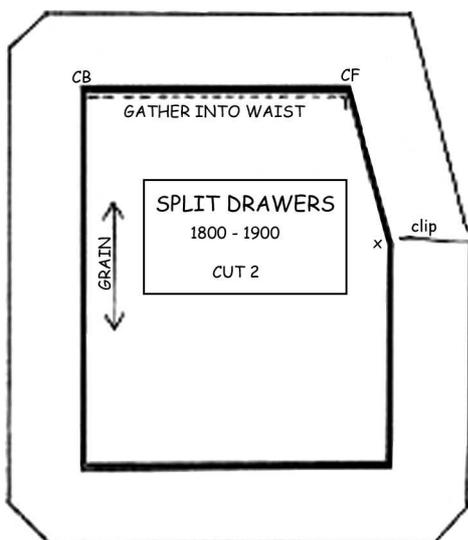


It may surprise you to learn that drawers, or underpants of any type, were not commonly worn by British or American women until around 1800. Then, they were a fashion import from the Continent, and at first were considered highly improper, and only “fast” women wore them! However, by the 1820’s, they were in general use, and by the High Victorian era were an essential and often highly decorative part of attire.

The pattern here is a basic design, and easy to make because there is no crotch seam. This was quite usual.

Earlier ones are fairly plain, a later one would probably have been embroidered and covered in lace and ribbon decoration to within an inch of its life. Also the leg hems would sometimes be gathered.

Fine white lawn is best for our scale - although striped fabrics were sometimes used, most drawers were plain linen or cotton. An old, much laundered, plain or embroidered handkerchief might be good for this, if the decoration is suitable.



You will need:

- normal sewing supplies (pins, needle, thread, scissors etc)
- copier paper or similar paper for patterns
- fabric at least 6” (15cm) by 3” (7.5cm)
- ¼ inch cotton tape or silk ribbon

1. Trace the pattern twice **along the heavy line** -the seam allowances are only shown for guidance. Cut out the patterns. Flip one so you have a left and a right.
2. Place the patterns on the wrong side of the fabric, aligning the grain-lines and leaving seam allowances all round, and pin. The garment will sit better if it is cut on the bias. Cut out the fabric about 1/4” – 3/8” (about 1cm) outside the pattern, which gives you your turnings/seam allowances.
3. Clip in towards the X where marked. Fold both side allowances over the paper, then the hem allowance (but not the waist allowance) and press. You may like to tack the allowances before pressing, both to ensure accuracy and prevent you burning your fingers.
4. Remove the paper (and tacking if used). If you want a lace frill at the hems, add it now.
5. Fold each leg, right sides together, to match up the side seams. Sew from the folded hem up to the point X, using the crease as a sewing guide. Use a small running stitch, with a backstitch top and bottom. Turn right side out, and press. Leave the unsewn edges above point X folded back.
6. Butt the 2 CF (centre front) folded edges together and attach one leg to the other with a few stitches. Run a gathering thread from one CB along the waistline, through the 2 CF’s, and on to the other CB point.
7. Take your cotton tape or double thickness of ribbon, fold back one end, and try it for size around the doll’s waist. Mark where the 2 ends will butt join at centre back, leave a bit for folding in and cut to length. Catch down the 2 folded ends.
8. Pin each finished end to each CB, and the centre of the band to the CF on the legs. Pull the gathering thread, till the legs match the length of the waistband. Arrange the little gathers nicely, and catch down to the band.
9. Use a piece of thin crochet cotton, or flour cotton, or waxed linen thread to make the ties. Sew on to the band at each centre back, leaving about 4” (10cm) for tying in a bow. These ends can be tucked into one of the legs. Don’t be mean with the lengths, as it is very hard to tie the bow without them!