

# D.I.Y. Fab-Pads™

Did you know that a menstruating person can leave behind up to 400 pounds of plastic before they reach menopause? One-time-use period products are not only costful to your wallet, but they are costful to the world in which we live. Cloth pads are an awesome alternative that you can make out of old shirts, towels, or other fabric that you have lying around. These also make for a more sustainable alternative to ones that are commercially purchased, and your bank account will definitely benefit. See the section in this book on reusable menstrual products and period poverty for reviews of reusable fab-pads and other reusable alternatives.

Fab-pads is a term coined by Shout! Shout! to describe reusable pads made out of fabric. These can be used over and over. Whatever fabric you use, make sure that you wash it in hot water before making the pads to prevent shrinkage. Fab-pads are notoriously comfortable, they don't tend to chafe as much as the one-off disposable pads, and they can also help with period odor. However, they DO require some work.

## **CARE:**

You will need to scrub them (by rubbing the fabric against itself, no need for brushes) and soak them in cold water for at least 30 minutes. Be sure the water is cold to prevent staining. Any basin or container will do. You can use a small container with a lid if you are worried about privacy. If you have no shame, just soak them right in the sink. Fab-pads are machine washable and you can either tumble dry them on low or hang them to dry. DON'T use fabric softener, as it will decrease their absorbency.

The instructions to follow are for use with a sewing machine with a zig-zag stitch, but you can hand-sew them if you have the skills. If you're REALLY desperate, but don't want to/have the ability to cut and sew, you can try using thin, folded dish towels, wash cloths, or cloth diapers and pin them into place as necessary. They are comfortable and completely adequate for menstrual needs.

The sewing instructions on the next page are courtesy of Suzanne, the Hillbilly Housewife who was kind enough to post them as public domain ([www.hillbillyhousewife.com](http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com)). Recommended materials are flannel for the outside and more flannel, terrycloth, or cotton quilt batting for the inner layers. You can use old flannel shirts, towels, baby blankets, cloth diapers... whatever you have that is easiest and most comfortable for you.

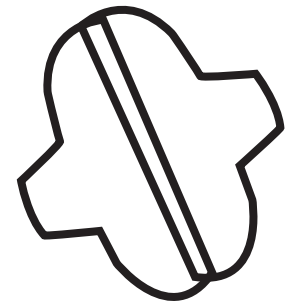
# D.I.Y. Instructions

Print both patterns or tear them out of the book and cut as instructed below.

- The two full half-patterns will be the “top” side where you can insert the inner pads. You can wear this side on top in contact with your skin or on the bottom in contact with your panties. Try both and see which is more comfortable for you.
- The full piece will be the “bottom piece” or other side.

## OUTER PAD:

1. Make a 1/2” hem using either a straight or zig-zag stitch down the long sides of the two top pieces (where the dotted line on the pattern is).
2. Arrange the top pieces with the bottom piece. The top pieces will overlap each other.
3. Zig-zag hem around the outside twice. You can also do a straight stitch down the lines for the wings to give them extra motility and strength and so the inner pads will fit better. At this point, you can add a snap or button to the wings on your preferred side. A safety pin will also suffice. Use whatever is comfortable. It can always be changed.

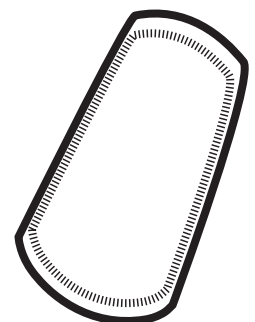


## INNER PAD:

This is the absorbent part! Customize with fabrics as you see fit. Use 3-4 layers for heavy or overnight. You can use a single layer for lighter days. If you just need a liner, don't even worry about inserts. Using layers makes for easier cleaning, less drying time, and max absorbency. Use two layers of flannel for the top and bottom layers and a more absorbent material for the inner layers like terrycloth or cotton batting.

1. Cut the number of layers you are going to use for your insert and stack them neatly atop one another.
2. Zig-zag stitch twice around the outside of the pile.
3. Trim if desired.

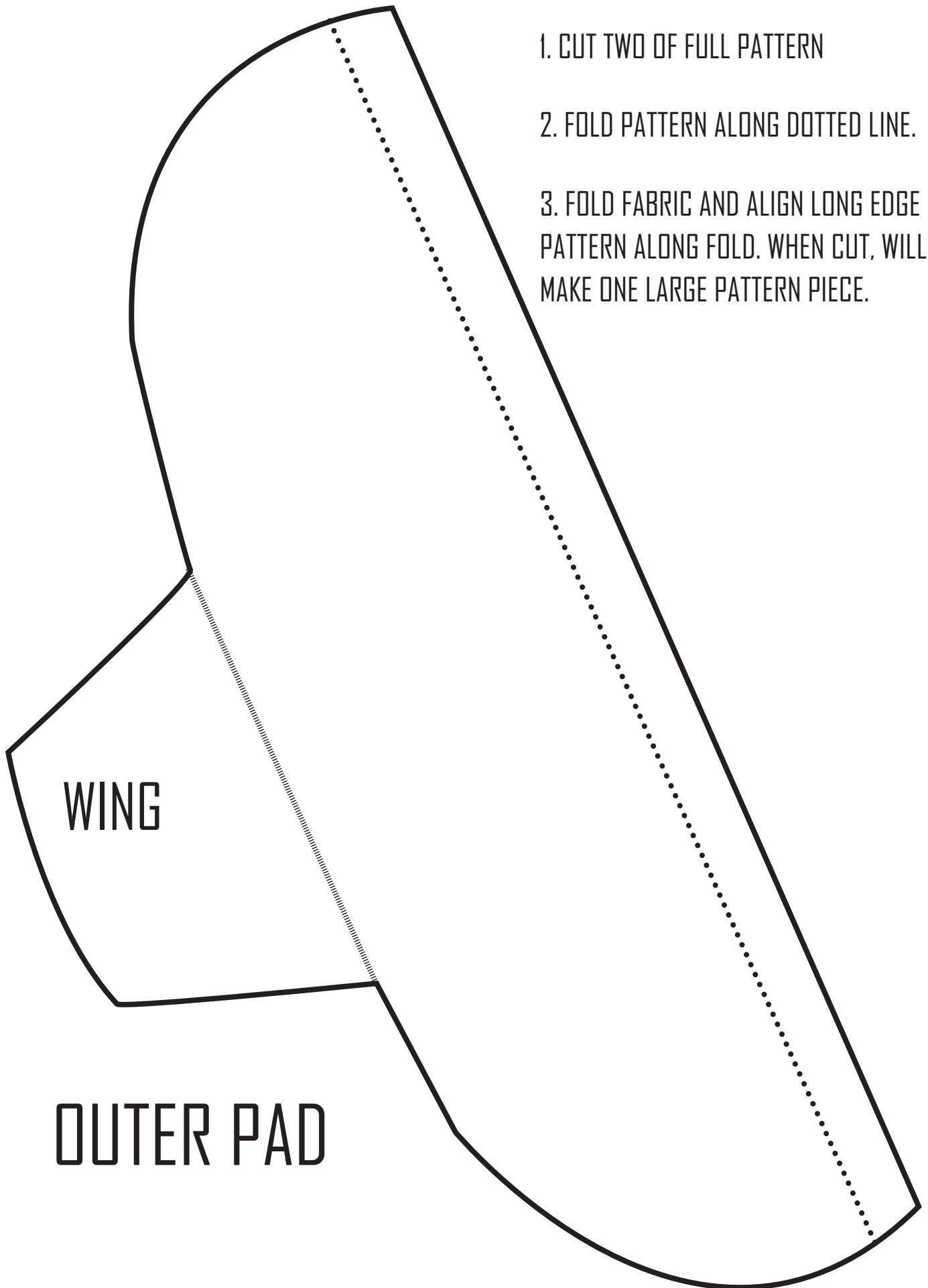
Insert the inner pad into the outer pad and try it on. Comfy, right?



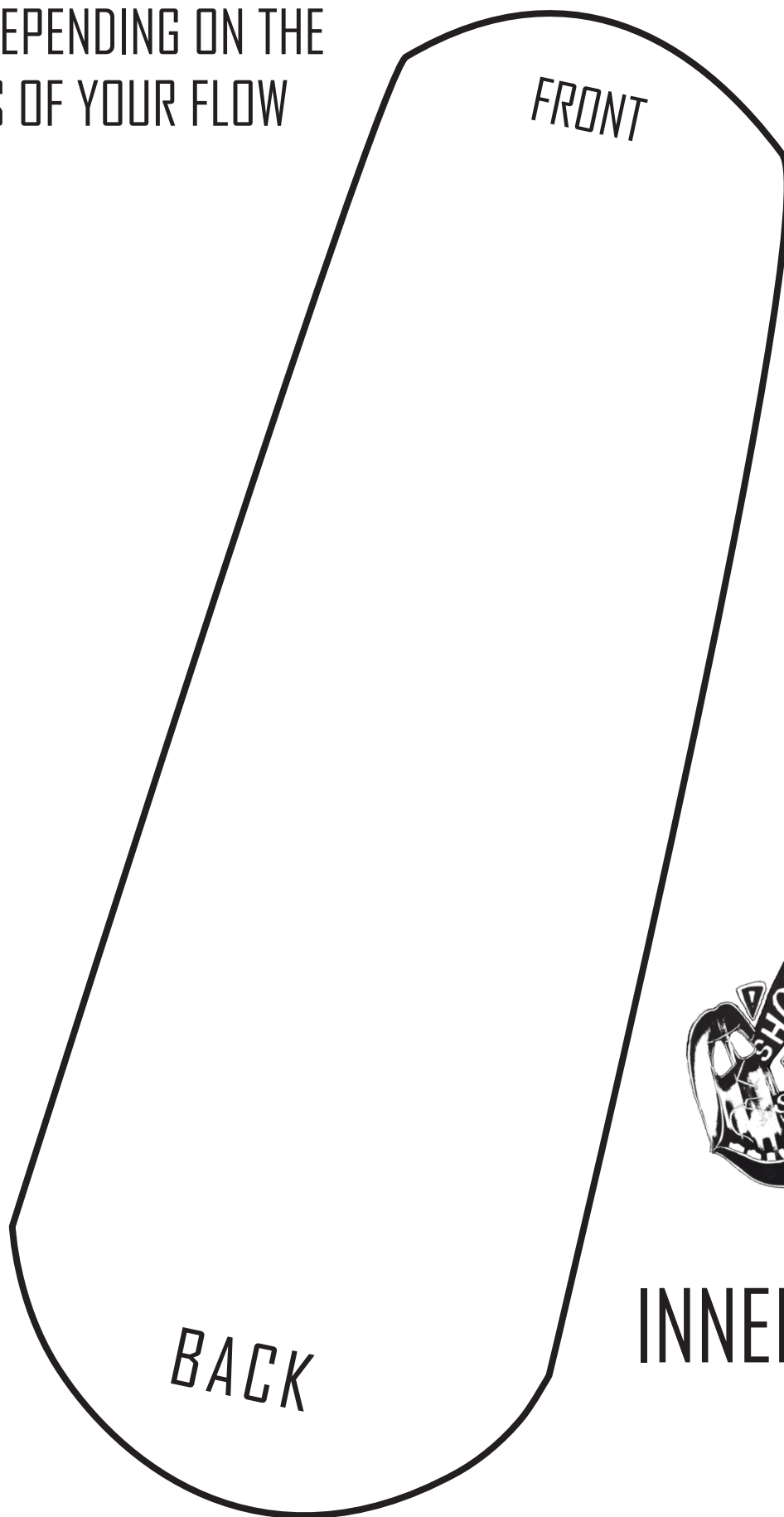
1. CUT TWO OF FULL PATTERN

2. FOLD PATTERN ALONG DOTTED LINE.

3. FOLD FABRIC AND ALIGN LONG EDGE OF PATTERN ALONG FOLD. WHEN CUT, WILL MAKE ONE LARGE PATTERN PIECE.



CUT 3-4, DEPENDING ON THE  
HEAVINESS OF YOUR FLOW



INNER PAD