



PATTERN REVIEW: Ashton Top by Helenâs Closet Patterns

Description

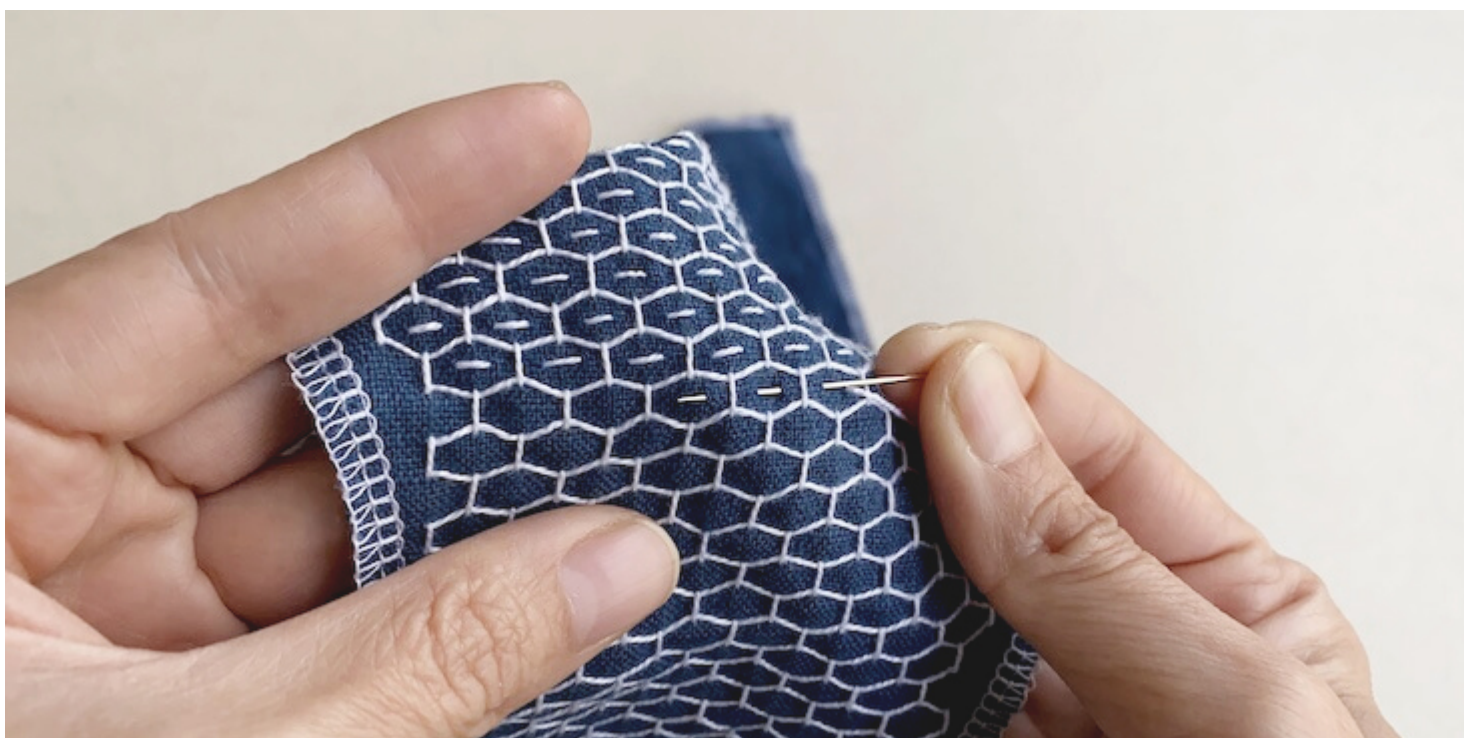


Helen's Closet Ashton Top made in FS Insignia Blue Linen



The [Ashton Top](#) designed by [Helen's Closet Patterns](#) is a teeny tank that packs a big punch. Guaranteed to be a wardrobe workhorse, its simple but genius design will carry you through the seasons. It is perfect for the warmer months and is a great layering piece under a cardigan or jacket when it gets colder.

This tank can be sewn up in a variety of woven fabrics. I chose to work with the [INSIGNIA BLUE Linen](#) because the blue is reminiscent of the traditional indigo used to contrast with white Sashiko stitching, which was an embellishment that I planned to embroider on my Ashton. I've shared techniques in my Sashiko journey while making this top, and you can refer to a 2-part tutorial where I've detailed the entire process in the following blog posts: [Hitomezashi Sashiko on the Ashton Top: Part ONE](#); and [Hitomezashi Sashiko on the Ashton Top: Part TWO](#).



INSIGNIA BLUE Linen is perfect for Sashiko stitching

This linen is perfect for Sashiko stitching. First, its opacity conceals the stitching on the reverse side. Second, it is sturdy enough to withstand the

constant handling required with the embroidery work. Its best feature is its soft and buttery feel, which provides little resistance as the needle travels back and forth through the fabric. It was simple tactile pleasure holding it in my hands while stitching, and this greatly increased the meditative effect that comes with embroidery.

The weight and structure of the linen also made it the ideal fabric to highlight the A-line shape in the Ashton's design. Without a doubt, this sewing pattern ranks high on my TNT list. Another brilliant design detail is that this woven top requires no installation of closures. The neckline is just wide enough to pull it over your head. This coupled with the flattering A-line shape makes the garment very easy to wear *and* to sew – eliminating the need for buttons, snaps or zippers. This means that the pattern is well-suited for beginner sewers.

Another bonus for the beginner is that the instructions are top-notch, as one would expect from any pattern from Helen's Closet Patterns. Even though I consider myself an intermediate sewer, I find it very reassuring that there is so much detail invested in explaining all the steps required for a successful make. I always find useful tips in the instruction manuals that help me improve my sewing skills, and in this pattern I learned how to install an all-in-one facing with the burrito method.



Rolling up the “burrito” to sew the all-in-one facing to the bodices



Pulling the garment right side out after sewing in the facing using the burrito method

There are two views in this pattern, one is hip-length, and the other is cropped. In addition, there are two options available for finishing the neck, armhole and hem. I went with the option of using the all-in-one facing and the hem facing. The other option is to finish these seams with bias-binding. I chose the option of the all-in-one facing because the facing conveniently provided a layer to protect the reverse side of the embroidery. The Sashiko was applied within the framework of the facings. In the back facing, you can see the elegant curves of the facing which has been showcased by the embroidery.



Completed Sashiko embroidery on the front and back bodices

If you plan on embroidering the Ashton Top as well with Sashiko, then here's a word of caution. When you arrive at the step to grade the seams and to snip into the seam allowances when installing the facings, be careful *not* to cut into the threads of the embroidery. Position your scissors in between stitches and check on both sides of the fabric before you make a snip.



Sizes for this pattern run from 0-30. The size range is extensive which makes the pattern size-inclusive, catering to different body types. A B-cup is drafted for 0-22; and a D-cup is drafted for 12-30. I sewed up a size 4 with zero modifications, and my cropped version pairs up well with high-waisted bottoms. For example, in the pictures I am wearing my Ashton with high-waisted tailored pants – the [Tatjana Trousers](#) by [Just Patterns](#) made in [FS BLEACHED Heavyweight Linen](#). The Ashton Top's basic lines make it very versatile and easy to style. In addition, it is such a quick sew that I finished it in one joyful morning. This is also a great scrap-buster, with the possibility of facings and bindings made in contrasting fabric.

A quick Google search will reveal that the Ashton is a pattern favourite for many. The simplicity of its design is its greatest asset, and this has made it a fabulous jumping off point for many different hacks as well. There are numerous blogs that Helen has written detailing ways in which the Ashton can be hacked. For example, it can be transformed into a dress, a peplum top and even a jumpsuit. Recently, Helen has also released a [Sleeves Expansion Pack for the Ashton Top](#). This takes the sleeveless Ashton and widens its potential to be made with 4 types of sleeves – long, short, petal or

butterfly. Thereâs even the option to include pockets for the longer version.

It is amazing to me how one pattern can provide so many different looks. I am in awe of its cleverness, versatility and transmutability. So if you havenât joined in the Ashton bandwagon, then I encourage you to jump right in. It provided me a lot of fun, joy and creativity, and I am confident it will do the same for you.

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