



## PATTERN REVIEW: RIVA Shirt and Shorts Set in Midweight Linen

### Description



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## Midweight Linen and Mix Natural Midweight Linen

I'm so lucky to have had the chance to review the [RIVA set](#); it's one of my favourite patterns now. I almost missed out on this pattern and dismissed it at first because it's so hard to see the garments in the photos. The cover photo shows a woman gazing off into the distance over terracotta-roofed buildings. I couldn't really tell what she was wearing, but once I perused the photos I realised I was in love with the trousers – they looked like the ultimate vintage shorts. I was also intrigued by the collar shape of the shirt.

The [RIVA shirt](#) is a new take on the classic button-down shirt, with an interesting back pleat detail and oversized fit. There are options for a full sleeve with placket and cuffs, or arm cuffs for a more casual look. The [RIVA pants](#) are wide legged, high-waisted trousers with double pleats and back welt pockets. The waistband is quite unique, with a button extension and fishtail back (something I had to google). There's also the option of shorts with a deep weighted hem.

I saw in the pattern booklet, a photo of a lady through the doorway in the short sleeve shirt and shorts looking so carefree and cool. I thought this would be the perfect outfit for hot summer days in Brisbane. I liked the slim collar of the shirt and the wide leg shape of the shorts. I was so excited to make them!

I was impressed when the pattern arrived on my door. It came in a very tall narrow package and I was curious what I might find inside. I normally opt for the PDF versions of patterns and the few tangible copies I have worked with are packaged in envelopes. The pattern is printed on premium paper and is packaged securely in a tall mailing tube (which you can use to store the pattern in). I liked that each size is printed in a different colour making it a breeze to cut out my size. I was also very excited about the booklet that came with it. It's a nice treat having physical instructions, as opposed to staring at them on my computer screen when I use PDFs.

For the shirt I used: [FS BLEACHED Mediumweight Signature Finish Linen](#) as I figured ivory would match most of the bottoms in my wardrobe. I have to say the signature finish is so soft on the skin and I wished that all linens

came in this form. This is one of the most dreamiest fabrics I have worked with and even before I cut out the pattern pieces, I knew I would love this shirt solely because of the fabric.

I didn't have time to toile (naughty, I know), but came to the conclusion that a size 2 would fit me. For a loose garment like this, I wasn't too worried. I compared the bodice of a well-fitting shirt and knew it would be okay. The back of the shirt is a generous width and I was slightly worried it would drown me.

I've made a few [FS patterns](#) and the instructions are always well written. I loved that there are multiple diagrams in the steps, which show you different angles and indicate exactly where to sew.

I also wanted to mention that I have sewn a few different shirts before but the way the collar meets the button placket is just the \*chef's kiss\*. I have struggled with this part before, feeling displeased with frayed edges and dodgy sewing at these corners because instructions were not clear enough. But the [RIVA shirt](#) collar is different, it looks so professional and clean.

Sewing this shirt was relatively quick; I had the buttons on and was modelling it in front of my mum within 5 hours. I love the oversized look and how the shirt fits on me. The collar is just perfection and I wasn't sold on arm cuffs before but I like them on this shirt. The back pleat is unique and makes the shirt fun. I always tuck my shirts in so you can't see it properly in the photos but it creates a nice shape in the back.





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For the next time, I would reduce the length of the shirt (I'm 161cm for reference). I didn't notice at the time of cutting, but the front and back pieces are quite long and in hindsight I should have shortened them by 10cm or so. It feels almost like a shirt dress on me and there's a lot of excess fabric tucked into the shorts.

Now onto those brilliant shorts!

I chose: [FS MIX NATURAL Midweight Softened Linen](#) as I adored the flecked look in this natural linen. I thought a nice neutral colour would complement the ivory Riva shirt and other blouses in my wardrobe. Again, I didn't make a toile (I know this is risky business), and luckily the size 2 fit me like a glove! No modifications were needed. I went by the measurements and also compared a trouser pattern I owned against them.

I knew the construction of trousers is more involved than a shirt, but I was surprised to finish them in a day. I found the instructions were straightforward and concise which made them a breeze to sew. I am always intrigued by different methods of installing a fly front zipper. I was a bit unsure about this technique at first, but it was actually easier than my previous method and it turned out perfectly. This was my first time creating a fishtail waistband and I was nervous to sew it, but it turned out that they were easier to sew than I'd thought.

After I attached the waistband, I realised I had swapped the left and right pieces around, resulting in too short of a waistband – I was devastated. I could have unpicked and rotated the panels, but I decided to add a small extension. This part would be tucked behind, so my mistake would not be noticeable. I omitted the back welt pockets as I didn't want the extra bulk but next time would like to try them. I have never sewn this style pocket before but I'm sure the instructions would be super detailed, making the process simple for a newbie like me.





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I'm really happy with the fit of these shorts. I usually have to do some sort of adjustment but was impressed that these fit me with no modifications. While I was cutting out the pieces, I noticed the waistband was straight and was concerned it wouldn't fit (I normally use a curved one for my swayback). But I think due to the cut out in the fishtail back, it allows the waistband to conform to a perfect fit. I also really love the thick hem on these shorts; it gives weight to each leg and holds the shape nicely.

I am so happy with how these two pieces turned out and they will be great in summer or layered for cooler months. They both fit me so well and I look forward to mixing them in with my wardrobe. These are the trousers of my dreams and I've been wearing them everyday for the last week. They are so comfy and seem to go with most of the tops in my wardrobe.

A big thank you to FS for giving me the chance to do this review. I could not recommend the [RIVA Pattern](#) and their exquisite linens more!

### CATEGORY

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