

Beginning a New Costume

thedoctorboy.com

1. Choosing your character
 - a. look for a character you love
 - b. if there is a character whose design you love but you don't know very well, no one is going to stop you from cosplaying them, but at least acquaint yourself with that character
 - i. will help with posing for photos
 - c. Choosing the version of your character
 - i. characters sometimes have more than one outfit and there may be one that you like more than their "main outfit"
 - d. Don't be afraid to choose a character of the opposite gender.
 - i. called crossplay
 - ii. common practice in cosplay
 - iii. many ways to make yourself present as a different gender
2. Budget
 - a. cosplay can be an expensive hobby
 - b. know how much money you have to spend going in to a costume
 - c. plan out approximately how much the costume is actually going to cost you
3. Breaking down the costume
 - a. get as many references as you can
 - i. look for images from all angles - there may be pieces you miss if you only look at it from one or two
 - b. how many pieces
4. Deciding to make or buy
 - a. Buying: if buying, different places to buy will be covered in another episode
 - b. Alter: you can also buy pieces and modify them to your needs

5. Shop for fabric and other things you need
 - a. make a list before you go
 - i. pattern
 1. NOTE ON PATTERNS:
 - a. pattern sizes are a pain in the butt.
 - b. make sure you measure yourself and select the size that correlates to the measurements.
 - c. just because you are a size 6 in jeans or other store-bought clothing does not mean you'll be a 6 in the pattern you are looking at.
 - d. if there is no size chart on the patterns themselves (some have them, some do not), check the website of the pattern brand for their size chart and how to measure.
 2. check sewingpatterns.com before you go
 - a. select more than one pattern for whatever you are looking for in case the store doesn't have the one you want
 - b. saves time at the store
 3. you may need to alter a pattern to make it look exactly right, but you can usually find patterns that look close
 - ii. fabric
 1. either print references and bring them or (if you have a smartphone) put references on your phone so you can compare colors and get the shades correct
 2. look at the fabric's weight too
 - a. i.e. you don't want to buy broadcloth for a jacket, despite the multitude of colors it comes in
 3. get fabric yardage from pattern
 4. buy more than you think you need
 - iii. thread
 - iv. bias tape/zippers/buttons/snaps/etc
 - v. other things for props or accessories
 1. look in unconventional places
6. Cut out your pattern
 - a. make sure you're cutting out the proper size
 - b. save all those extra little pieces in the pattern that you haven't cut and once you're done cutting the fabric, save the pieces you used, too. You never know when you'll need a similar pattern and there's no point in spending another \$8 on the same pattern unless you really want to
 - c. make alterations to your pattern if needed
 - i. suggestion: tracing paper (mention rolled tracing paper)

7. Pin your pattern to your fabric
 - a. make sure if certain pieces need to be a different color or fabric type, that they are cut from the fabrics they need to be cut from
 - b. pattern tells you how you can lay out the pieces to maximize area used on the fabric (so you will waste as little as possible)
 - c. pin your pattern to your fabric.
 - i. If you are working with something that will maintain pinholes (like vinyl or pleather) you can use weights to hold the fabric in place.
 1. careful that the pattern may shift in this case. make sure you're checking it regularly as you cut
 - d. cut out your pattern
 - i. it's ok if you cut it a bit larger than the pattern (like less than half an inch)
 1. will give you a bit more working room and save you if fabric starts to disintegrate or fray
 - ii. try separating out sections so you don't confuse what goes where
 1. ex. if there is a lining, put all the lining pieces in one place and all the outer fabric pieces in another
8. Sew it all together.
 - a. Follow the directions on the pattern
 - i. sometimes patterns can be hard to read or go about things in ways that are much more difficult than they should be.
 1. If you get stuck, the internet is your friend. Try looking up tutorials or asking questions.
 - a. great place to start is cosplay.com
 - b. make sure to finish your edges
 - i. hem everything and clip loose strings
9. shoes
 - a. a lot of people neglect this
 - b. shoes can have a big impact on the presentation of your finished product
 - c. options:
 - i. buying shoes
 1. if they're normal, look at places like target or payless
 2. best for shoes that are plain black or brown or sneakers
 - ii. shoe covers
 1. a lot of shoes in cosplay are abnormal
 2. you can make shoe covers for these
 - a. removable ones
 - b. permanent ones
 3. lots of tutorials online for these

10. Wigs

- a. wigs are important
- b. there are very few costumes that will look good with your own hair
- c. lots of places to buy wigs from
 - i. I will go over this in another episode
- d. styling wigs
 - i. lots of tutorials online for this
 - 1. cutting
 - 2. styling
 - 3. spiking
 - 4. dying
 - 5. etc

11. Props

- a. what props do you want for your character
- b. props are fun and can make it easier to pose for photos
- c. Things to keep in mind:
 - i. you will have to carry these around with you the whole time you're in costume
 - 1. including if you have to go outside for anything
 - ii. con rules
 - 1. these can be found on the convention's website before a con
 - 2. many have
 - a. size restrictions
 - b. rules about guns/bows
 - c. rules about materials
 - i. ie no live steel
- d. a lot of standard props can be bought online or in dealers rooms
- e. props can be made any number of ways
 - i. look
 - 1. shape and size in objects
 - 2. everywhere
 - ii. standard materials a lot of people use
 - 1. clay
 - a. several types
 - i. polymer clays
 - 1. sculpey
 - 2. Fimo
 - ii. paperclay
 - iii. model magic
 - b. each type has its own advantages and disadvantages
 - 2. fun foam
 - 3. acrylic paint
 - 4. wood

5. paper mache
6. cardboard
7. feathers
8. PVC piping
9. A bit more advanced:
 - a. Heat-mold plastic
 - i. wonderflex
 - ii. syntra
 - iii. Warbla (new)
 - b. insulation foam
 - i. can be dangerous; always wear a mask, goggles/glasses, and gloves when working with this
 1. will need to be sealed after carving
- iii. there are tutorials all over the place for each of these
 1. great places to start looking:
 - a. cosplaytutorial.com
 - b. cosplay.com
 - c. deviantart.com
 - iv. Don't limit yourself to only these materials
 1. the most important thing with making props is the shape once it's all finished
 2. you can use the most random things to get those shapes
 - a. ex of what people have used
 - i. garden hose
 - ii. old computer parts

<http://www.wikihow.com/Make-Cosplay-Costumes>

<http://www.cosplaytutorial.com/guides/startingacosplay.php>