

Dressing a Big Doll

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Illustration 1. 24in (61cm) Baby Crissy with "growing hair," by Ideal, in her dress made from the pattern given here. She has solid black eyes.

Most collectors like to have at least one or two big dolls in their collections; some people collect nothing but big dolls. I have found that very often the bigger dolls are better made, or at least made of sturdier materials, than their smaller counterparts simply because they would too easily pull apart from their own weight if thin materials and fragile joints were used. Although many dolls are initially made for children, children are not always easy on their toys. In working with dolls for many years, I have noticed that if a doll's arm is missing (or has been torn nearly off), it is usually the left arm. I assume that is because most children

use their right hands to take their dolls' left hands when going for a "walk." Dolly ultimately gets dragged all over by her left arm; in time it comes off. For large dolls to survive at all they have to be well made.

By the time the collector acquires the wonderful big toy doll, it has often lost its clothing along the way. If the doll is big enough, the collector could buy baby clothes for the doll. The *Baby Crissy*, seen in *Illustration 1*, can wear the six month size baby clothes. However, a lot of collectors like to dress their own dolls and have found it difficult to locate suitable patterns. Although the two dolls shown here do not look alike,

they are both wearing variations of the same pattern. Both dolls measure 24in (61cm) tall. *Baby Crissy* has bent baby legs so it is difficult to get an exact measurement and the proportions of head size to body size are different from *Toodles*, seen in *Illustration 2*, but the chest size (15½in [39cm] measured under the arms) is the same for both dolls. The waist size does not matter with this pattern because the dress is a high-waisted style.

Toodles wears a simple sleeveless version of the pattern with a double-layered skirt (not obvious in the photographs). *Baby Crissy's* dress has puff sleeves and the addition of lace and ribbon trim. The panties for both dolls are exactly the same.

MATERIALS:

Suggested materials: lightweight cotton, cotton blends, linen, summer weight fabrics.

1yd (.91m) of 45in (111cm) dress fabric. Thread to match.

1¼yd (1.14m) of ¼in (.65cm) elastic (amount depends on doll size).

18in (46cm) of ¼in (.65cm) wide ribbon trim (optional).

1yd (.91m) of 1in (3cm) wide lace trim (optional).

¼in (.65cm) wide rickrack for skirt hem trim (optional).

½in (1cm) folded bias tape to bind neck and armholes (depending on style of dress you are making).

INSTRUCTIONS:

PANTIES: Lay patterns on straight of fabric as indicated and cut out pieces. With right sides facing, sew front and back pieces together at side seams, matching dots.

Right sides facing, sew center back seam together, matching points. Right sides facing, sew center front seam to-