

Corset/Stays Making Day

(Don't be scared by the length of this guide; it covers several styles of corsets & lists options. Highlight what is relevant to what you're making and use the checklist on the last page.)

What to bring:

A pattern, if you have one; a picture, if you don't

Sewing machine if you have one

Sewing equipment – pins, needles, scissors, tape measure, thread, seam ripper, etc

Pencil, tissue paper (or Trace & Toile), paper-cutting scissors

Lunch (fridge and microwave are available)

Fabric:

This is just a general guide – check your pattern for specific instructions

- At least a metre for mock-up – an old sheet, some calico, or 'Trace and Toile', about \$2/m from Spotlight or Lincraft
- Outer fabric – this should be a firm fabric like cotton drill, or it can be decorative
- Lining fabric – pure cotton or linen
- Interlining – recommended if your outer fabric is fine or soft; pure cotton or linen

Corset boning – pre-1850s corsets

- Cheap and easy version: Plastic cable ties from Bunnings, 5mm-7mm wide ideally. Many people use these and they work fine.
- Plastic corset boning (because you can't get whalebone these days!): available at metrofabrics.com.au and at boobytraps.com.au
- Pre 1700s Historically accurate – reed boning – available from overseas suppliers
- Alternative to plastic – spiral steel boning, available at metrofabrics.com.au and at boobytraps.com.au

Corset boning – 1850s onwards corsets

- Cheap version for light support: Plastic cable ties from Bunnings, 5mm-7mm wide
- For light support (or closely-boned corsets): Plastic corset boning, available at metrofabrics.com.au and at boobytraps.com.au
- For full support/waist training: spiral steel boning, available at metrofabrics.com.au and at boobytraps.com.au

Other corsetry needs:

Busk

- for back lacing, pre 1850s styles, the easiest is a paint stirring stick (about \$1 from Bunnings)
- for later Victorian/Edwardian styles with a hook-busk at the front and with back lacing, you'll need a steel corset busk of the correct length for your corset style. Best place to get these in Australia at present is:

<https://metrofabrics.com.au/collections/corsetry-supplies/products/straight-steel-corset-busks>

- some Victorian patterns require a spoon busk: these are available at:

<https://metrofabrics.com.au/collections/corsetry-supplies/products/steel-spoon-busks>

Grommets/eyelets

- Technically, for pre-1830s corsets/stays, your lacing holes should be hand-sewn without eyelets. I've always used eyelets!
- Post-1830s corsets use eyelets; the double-sided ones are best, particularly if you're waist-training. Spotties or Lincraft should have them.

Corset bone casing, binding & lacing

- For late Victorian/Edwardian corsets that are constructed as a single layer, you might need bone casing. You can make your own from strong twill tape, or coutil casing is available at: <https://metrofabrics.com.au/products/cotton-coutil-casing?variant=42787480399>
- For just about every style of corset (except very early stays), you'll need bias binding to bind the edge of your corset; you can make your own, or you can get narrow and wide at Spotties, and poly satin binding by the metre in various colours for decorative corsets. Early (pre-1750s) stays are sometimes bound with soft leather – but fabric binding will work fine.
- You'll need strong lacing for your corset. I'll probably have some spare, in black or white, or you can try Spotties or Lincraft, or you can order your own in several colours at: <https://metrofabrics.com.au/collections/corsetry-supplies/products/corset-lacing>

See checklist on next page

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Checklist

Item	Have?	Notes/Questions?
Pattern/picture		
Fabric <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main• Lining• Interlining?		
Boning		
Busk		
Grommets/eyelets		
Binding		
Lacing		