

BIKES AND BLOOMERS

VICTORIAN WOMEN'S
CONVERTIBLE CYCLE WEAR
SEWING PATTERNS

#4 CYCLING SKIRT / CAPE

A cycling costume inspired by
Mary & Sarah Pease's 1896 UK Patent #13,832

PATTERN #4

CYCLING SKIRT / CAPE

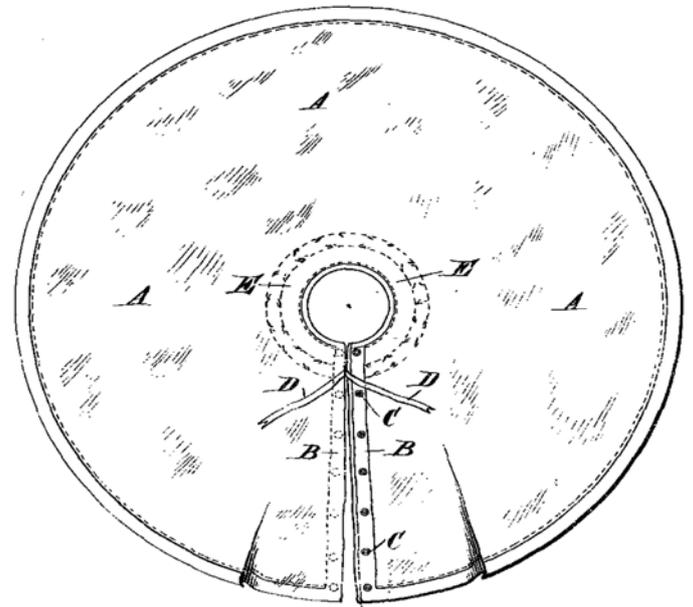
DESIGN FEATURES

This cycling garment is one of the more radical designs of the time because the skirt completely comes away from the body. The design consists of a full circle skirt that converts into a cape - the waistband turns into a stylish high ruché collar. If made in a light fabric the garment can be rolled up and attached it to the handlebars with the gathering ribbon.

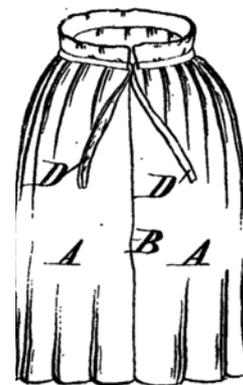
THE INVENTORS: MARY ELIZABETH & SARAH ANNE PEASE

MARY ELIZABETH and **SARAH ANNE PEASE**, of Sunnyside, Grove Road, Harrogate, Yorkshire, Gentlewomen registered a patent for 'Improved Skirt, available also as a Cape for Lady Cyclists' on 11th April, 1896. They were sisters. Mary was 23 and Sarah was 25.

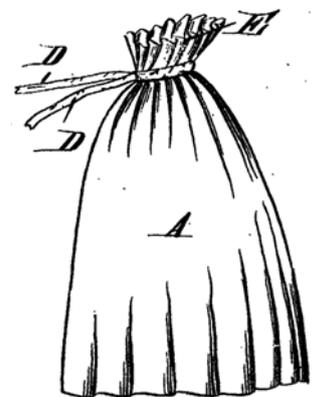
The Pease sisters are some of the younger patentees of the period and their design reflects their exposure to the changing social context. Many women were interested in wearing more 'rational dress', especially for physical activities like cycling, and some replaced their skirts with bloomers or knickerbockers. In doing so, they pushed at accepted parameters of how and in what ways women could be in and move through public space. However, this was not always a socially safe or comfortable act. These kinds of costumes catalysed a range of reactions from people in different places - from verbal to sometimes physical abuse. While many may have wanted to cycle in bloomers, without a skirt, they were made acutely aware of the need to have a back-up plan. Mary and Sarah's combined skirt/cape was just that. It enabled wearers to choose when, where and how they cycled and, to some extent, limit exposure and have some control over the more extreme reactions to their cycling activities.



(Full circle skirt and cape)



(Skirt gathered at the waist)



(Cape gathered at the collar)

“The rational dress now greatly adopted by lady cyclists has one or two objections inasmuch when the lady is dismounted her lower garments and figure are too much exposed.”

Pease sisters (1896)



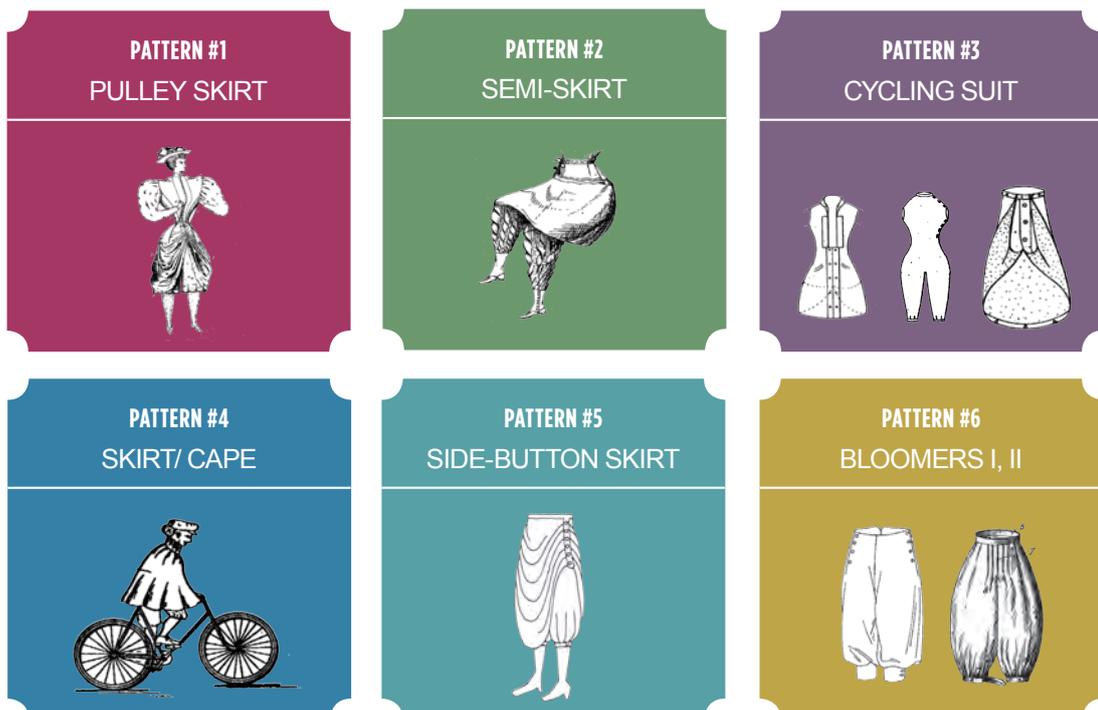
VICTORIAN WOMEN'S CONVERTIBLE CYCLE WEAR SEWING PATTERNS

Victorians enthusiastically took to the bicycle. Yet women had to deal with many social, political and material challenges to their freedom of movement. Cycling in 'ordinary' dress could be dangerous as it wrapped around pedals and caught in wheels. Wearing more 'rational' cycle wear, such as shorter skirts and bloomers, was more comfortable, but not necessarily safer as some parts of society were threatened by the sight of this progressive 'New Woman' carving new modes of gendered independence in public space. Onlookers sometimes hurled abuse and stones! However, nothing was going to stop women from cycling. In response, some creatively protested against restrictive ideas of how a woman should act and move in public through their clothing, by designing **convertible costumes** that enabled wearers to switch from street wear to cycle wear when needed. Luckily for us, these inventive women not only imagined, made and wore radical new forms of cycle wear - they also patented their designs!

Six sewing patterns in this collection (comprising a total of nine different garments) are inspired by convertible cycle wear patents lodged in the 1890s by inventive British women. They form part of an ESRC funded **Bikes & Bloomers** sociology project led by Dr Kat Jungnickel at Goldsmiths, University of London, with Rachel Pimm, Nadia Constaninou, Alice Angus and Britt Hatzius. More about the lives of these fascinating inventors is in *Bikes & Bloomers: Victorian Women Inventors and Their Extraordinary Cycle Wear* (Goldsmiths Press). Along with the book, these patterns bring to life some of the inspiring cycling, sewing and suffrage stories that have helped shape how we cycle today. They also (still) provide useful ideas for functional clothing that works on and off the bike. We look forward to seeing what modern sewing cyclists make with them.



PATTERN COLLECTION



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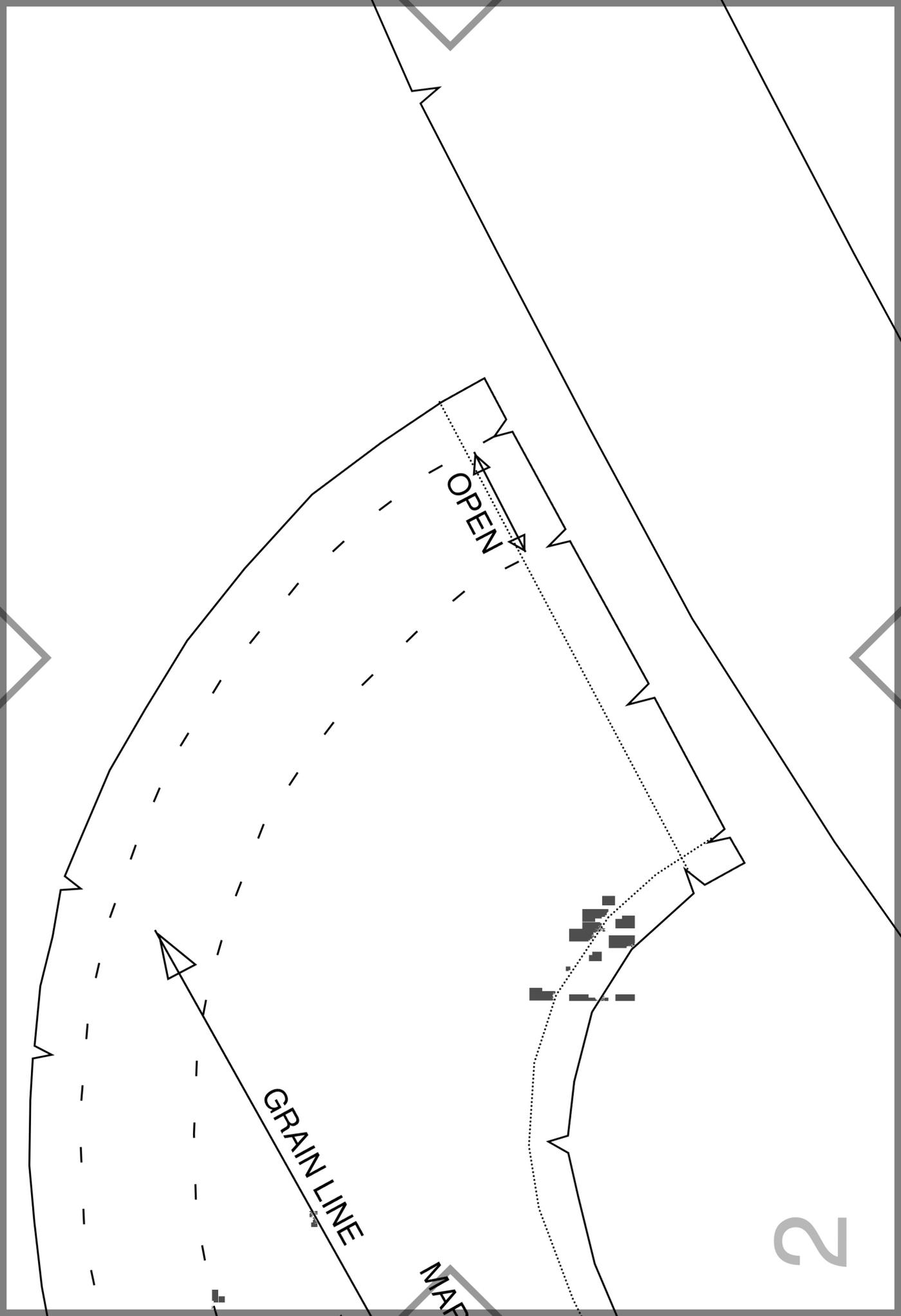
RY

WAIST FACING

CUT 1 PAIR SELF

CHANNEL FOR TIES

SIDE SEAM

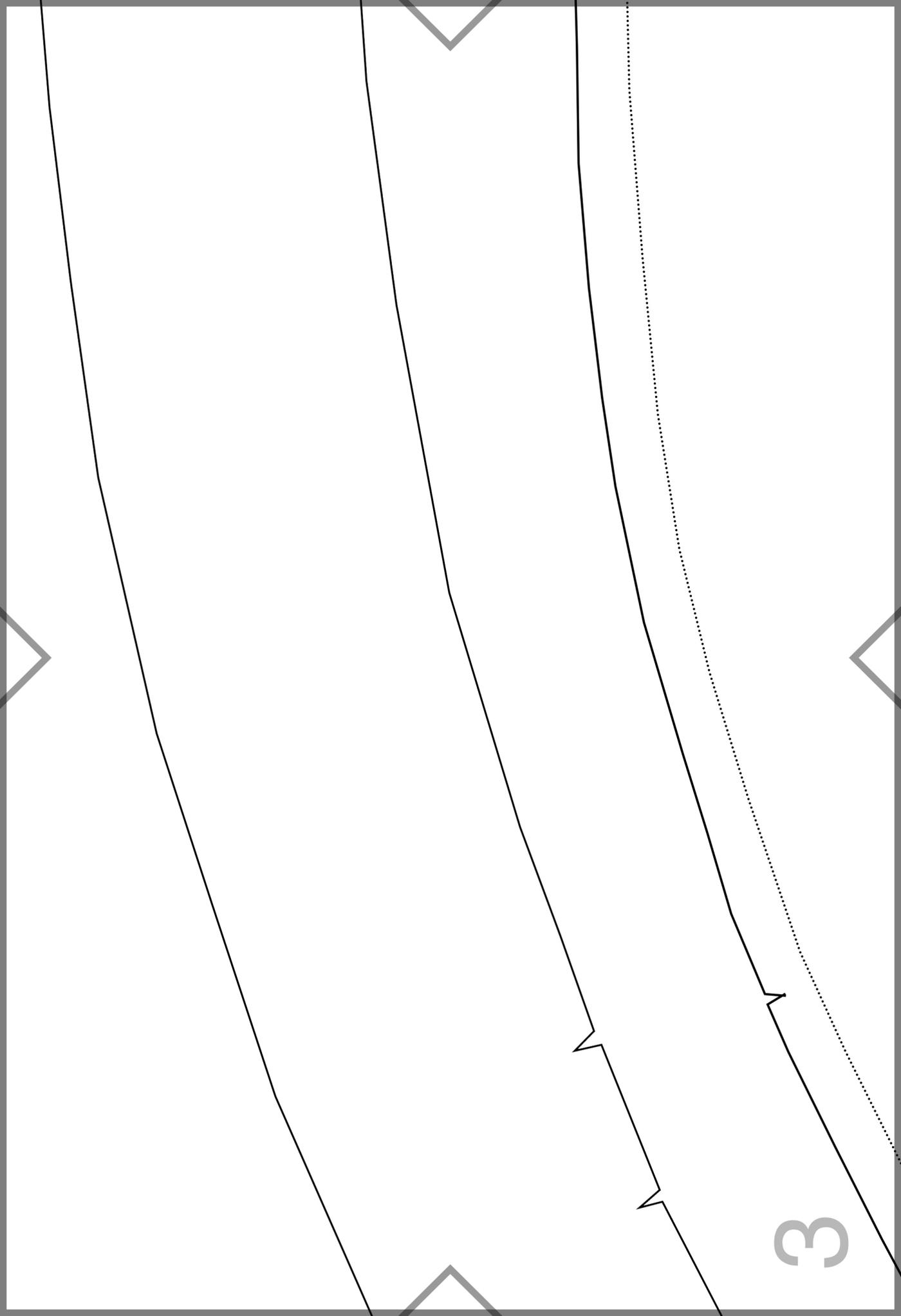


OPEN

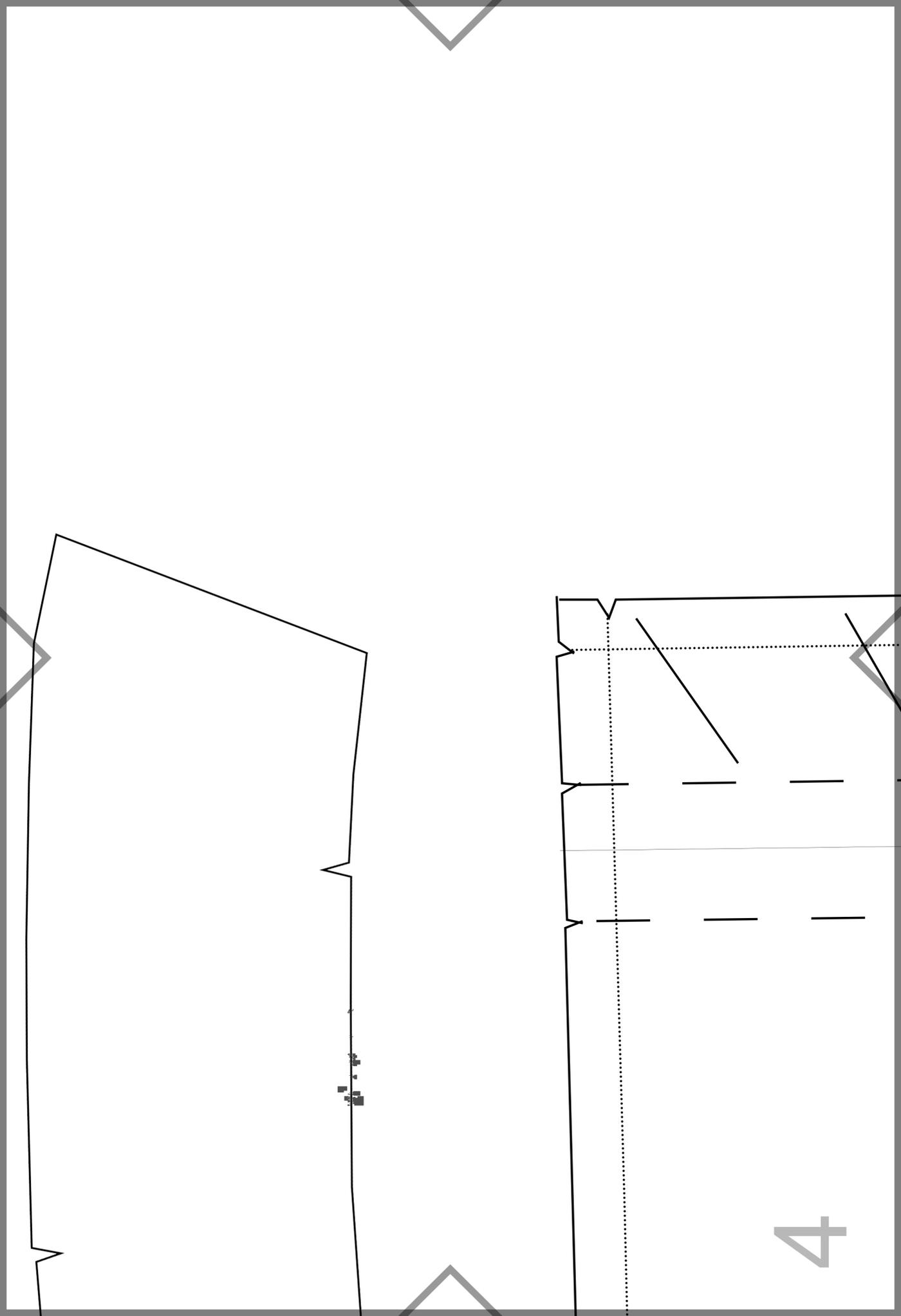
GRAIN LINE

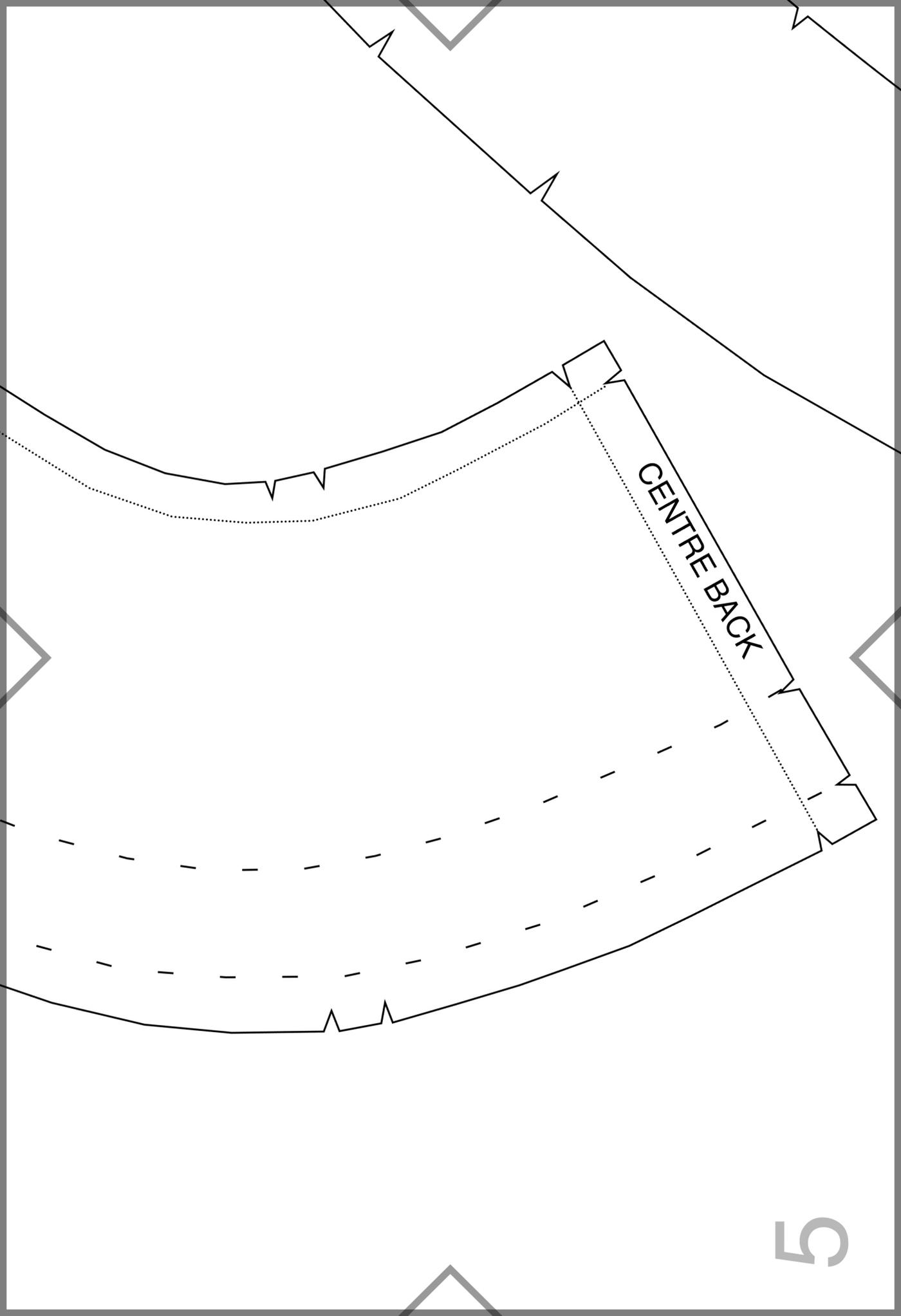
MAF

2

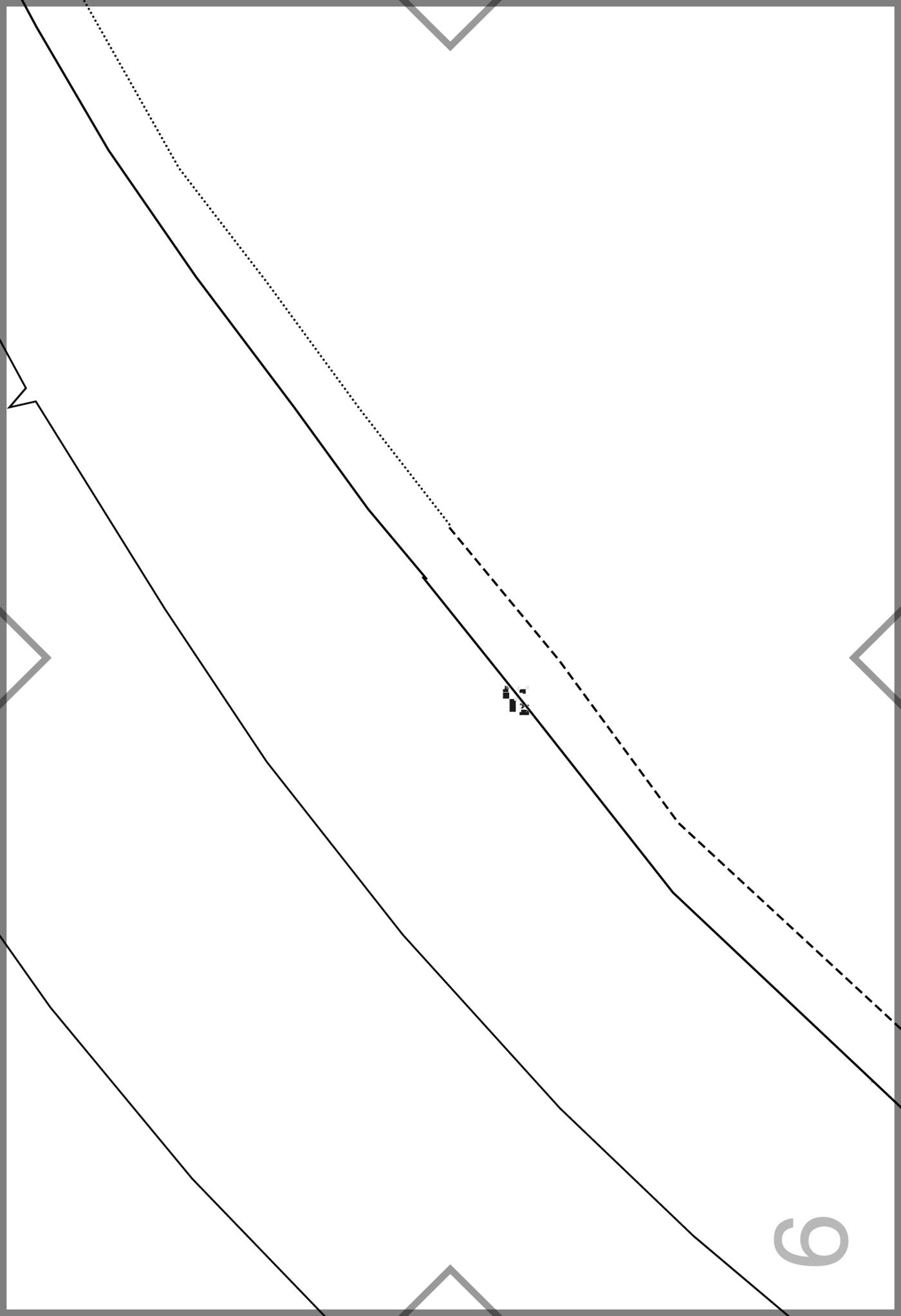


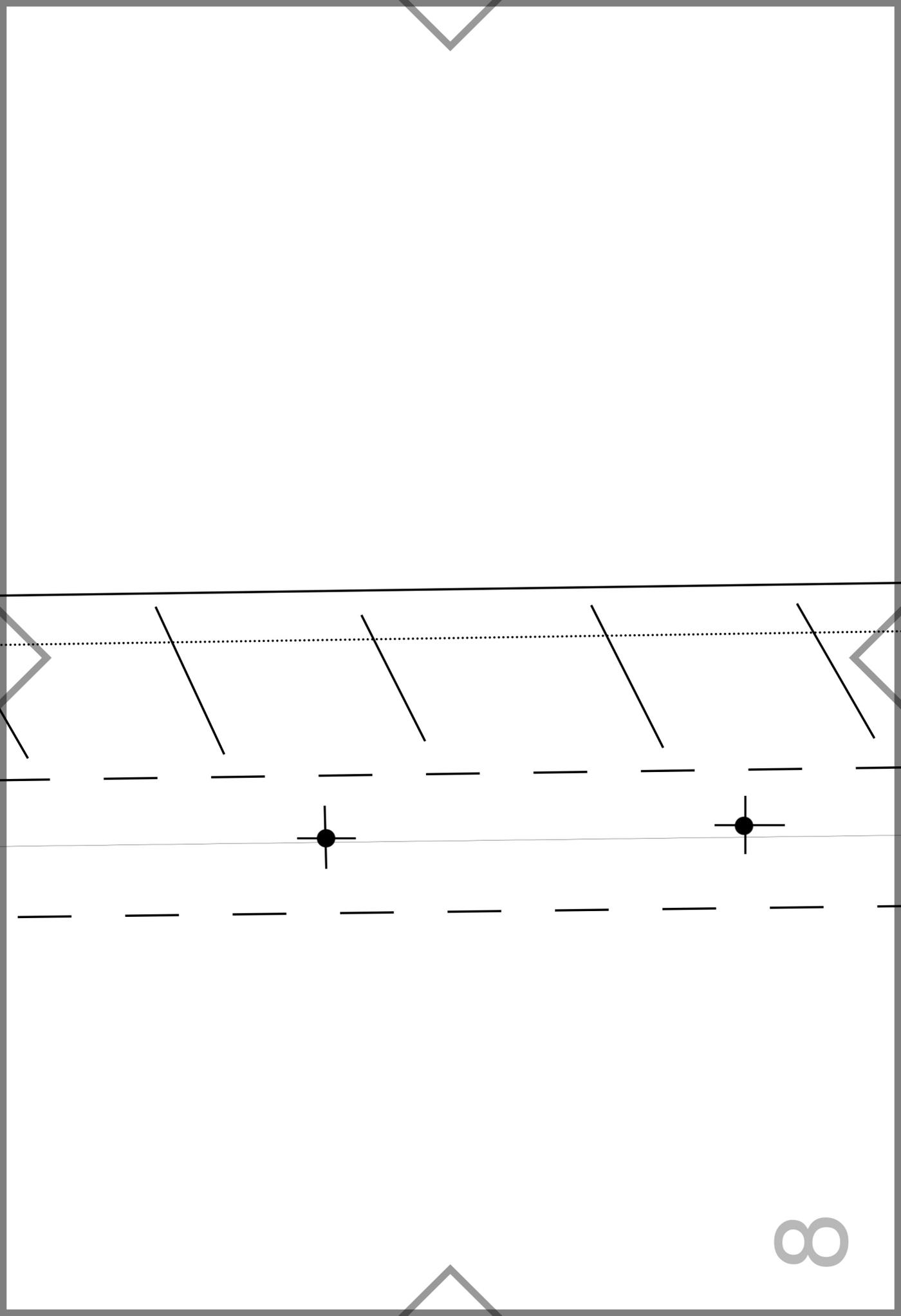
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CENTRE BACK



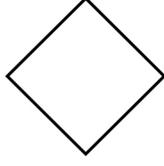


BAG OUT HEM WITH FACI

CAPE HEM FACING

CUT OR FOLD TO PRINT SAFE BOX

LINE UP SHAPES



STICK TOGETHER

CUTTING LINE

SEAM ALLOWANCE

SEW HEM FACING TO CAPE HEM

SEW WAIST FACING TO CAPE SELF TO REINFORCE

BAG OUT WITH CAPE LINING AT THE HEM

SEW A CHANNEL FOR A DRAWSTRING AT THE WAIST/NECK

THREAD CORD OR RIBBON THROUGH CHANNEL WITH SAFETY PIN

HAND STITCH OPEN LINING TO CAPE AT THE SIDES

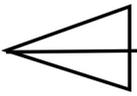
SEW ON BUTTONS AND BUTTON HOLES

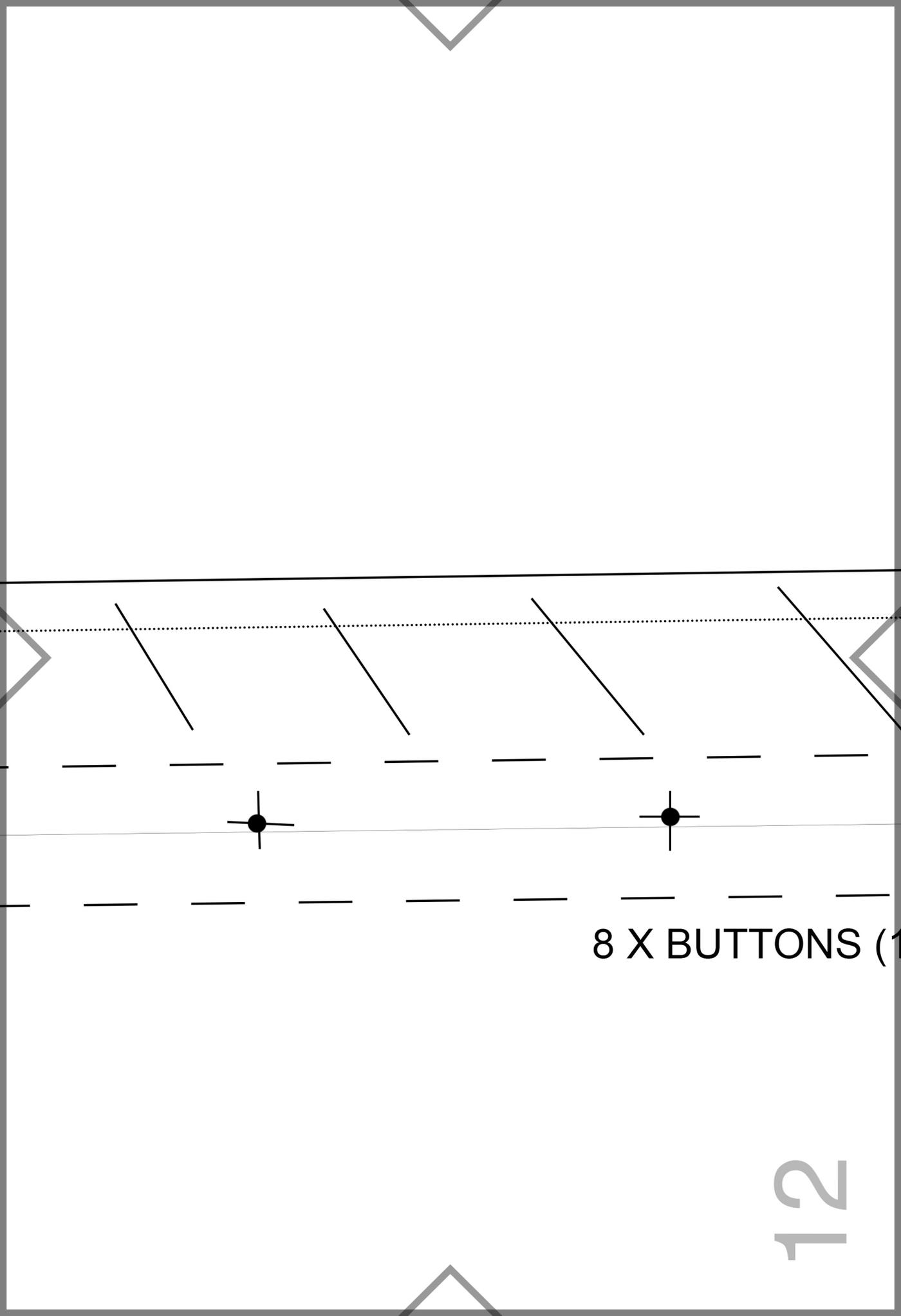
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND IMAGES OF THE GARMENT IN CONSTRUCTION
VISIT WWW.BIKESANDBLOOMERS.COM

1/2 FROM

CUT 1 P

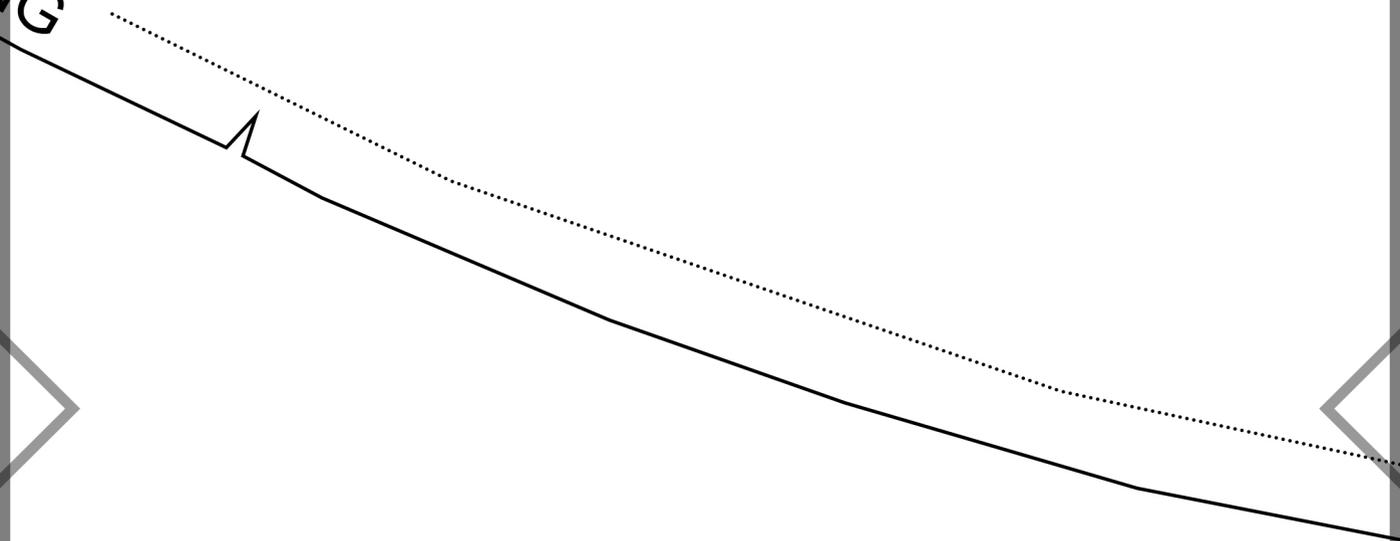
CUT 1 P





8 X BUTTONS (1

IG

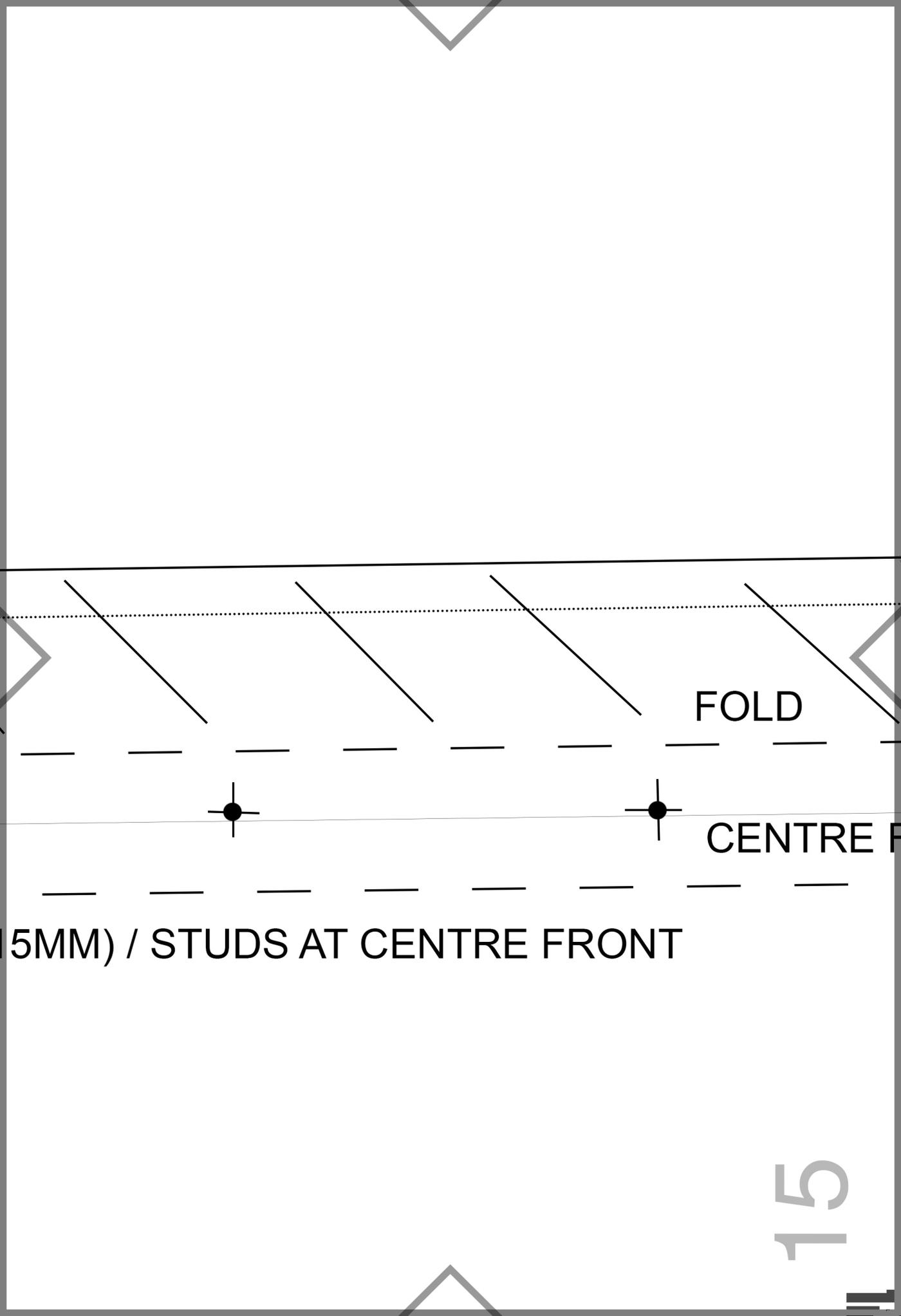


NT & BACK

AIR SELF

AIR LINING

GRAIN LINE

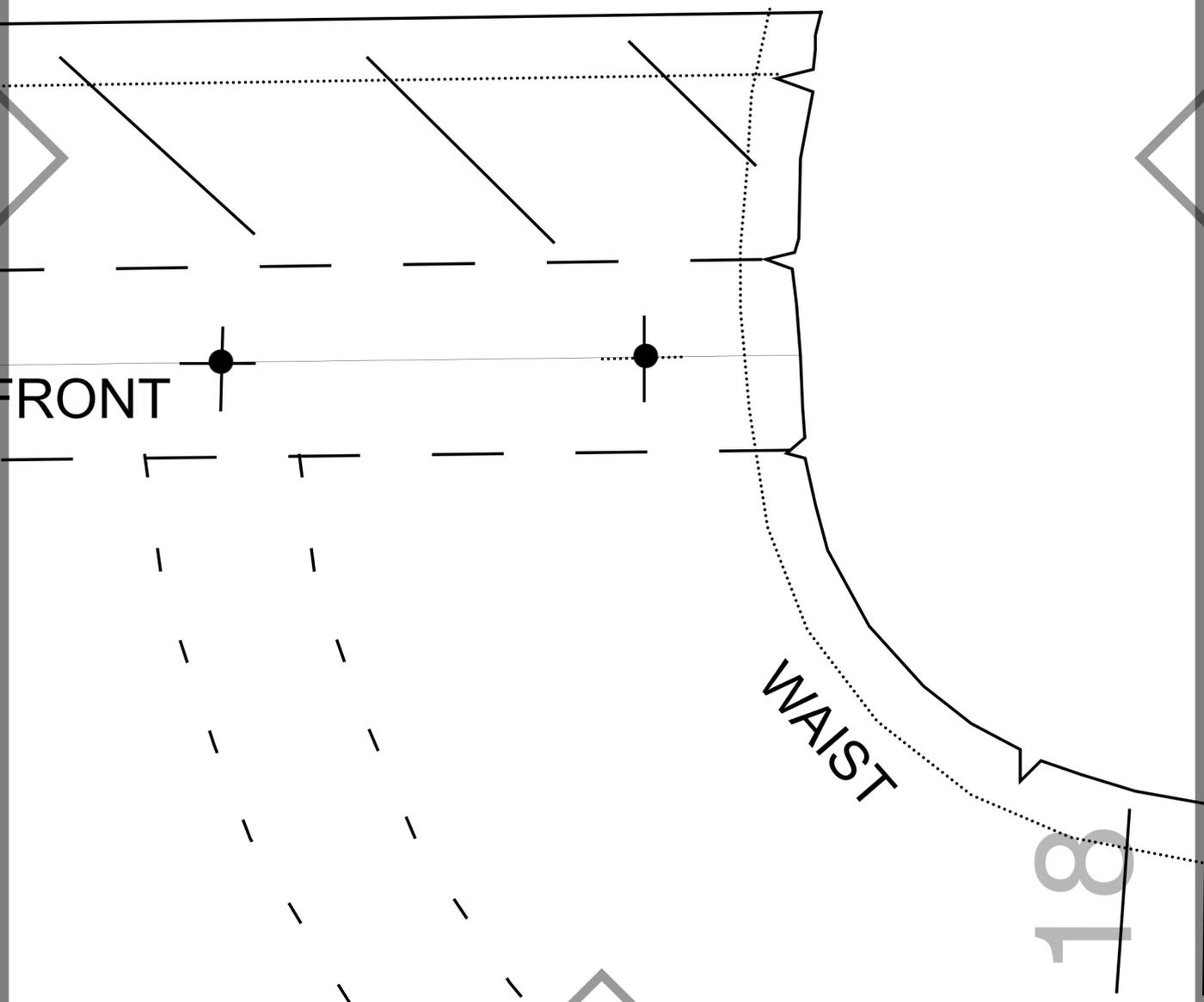


FOLD

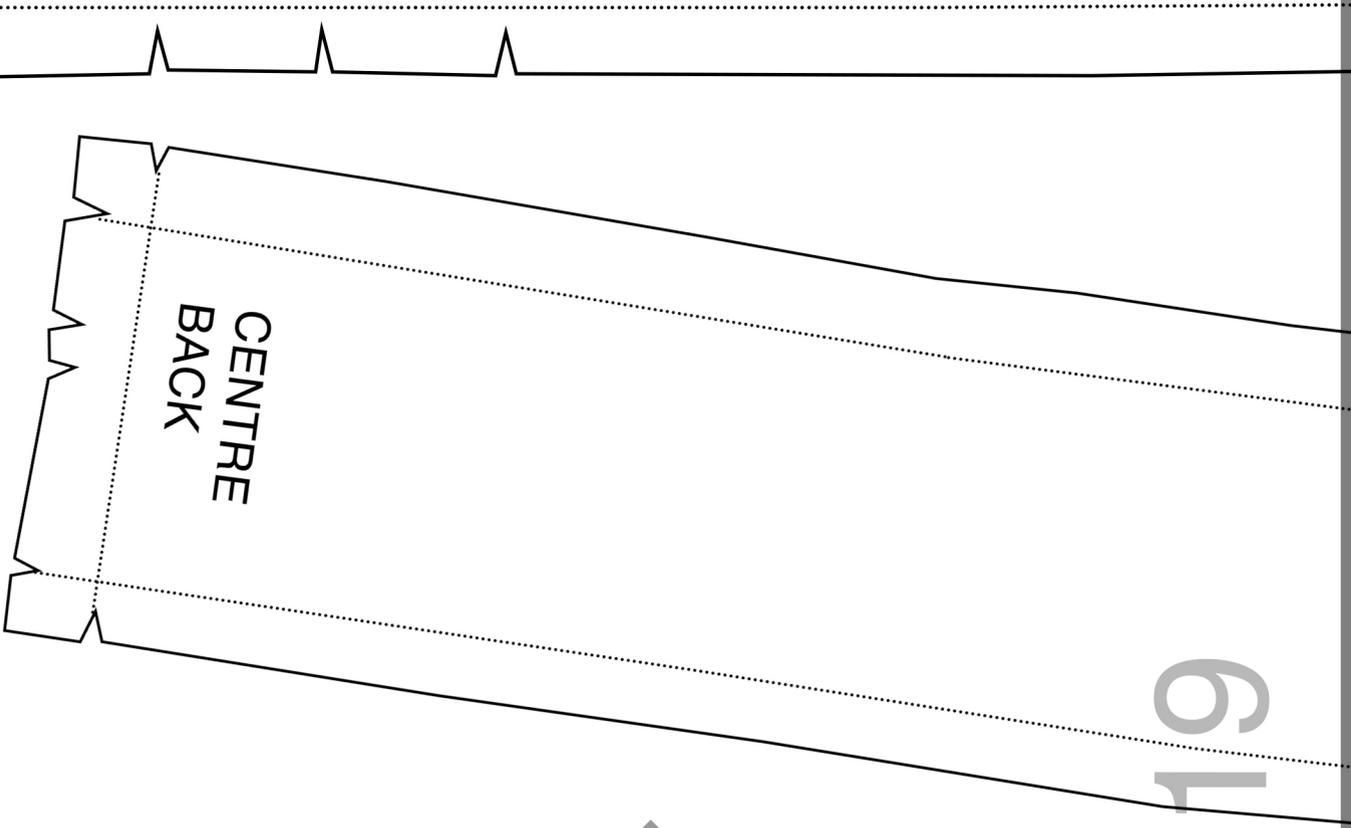
CENTRE FRONT

(5MM) / STUDS AT CENTRE FRONT

15



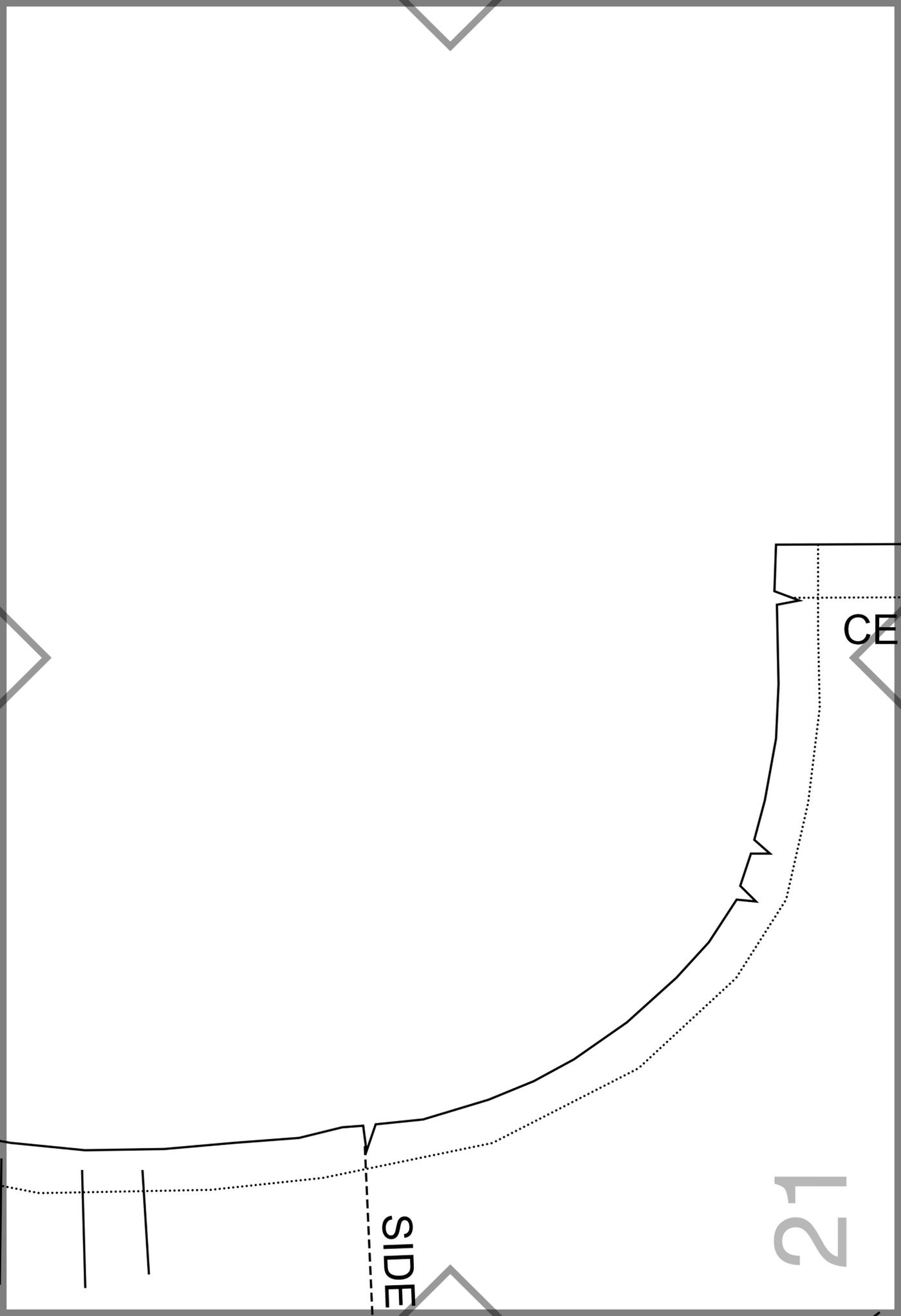
18



CENTRE
BACK

61

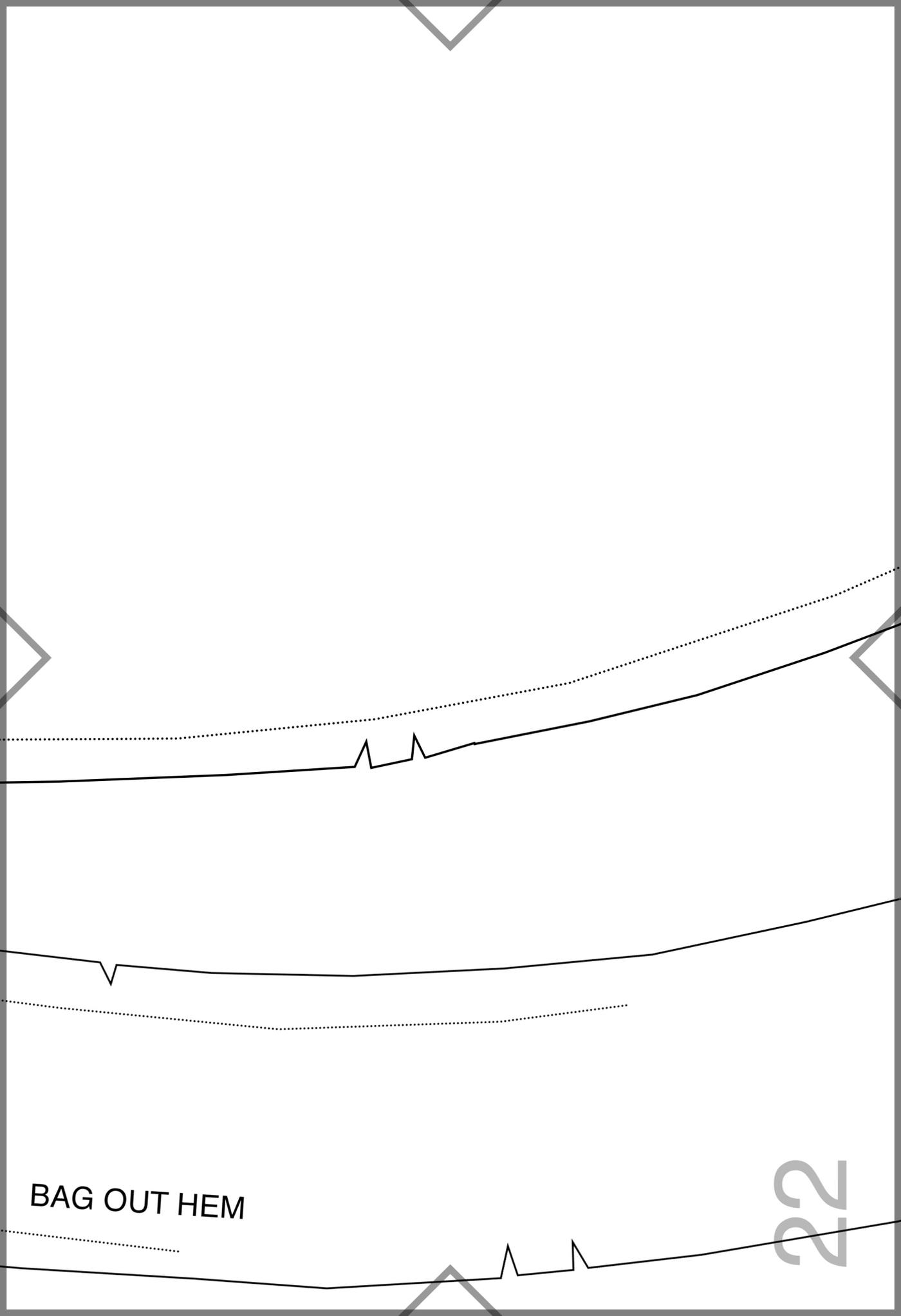
SEAM



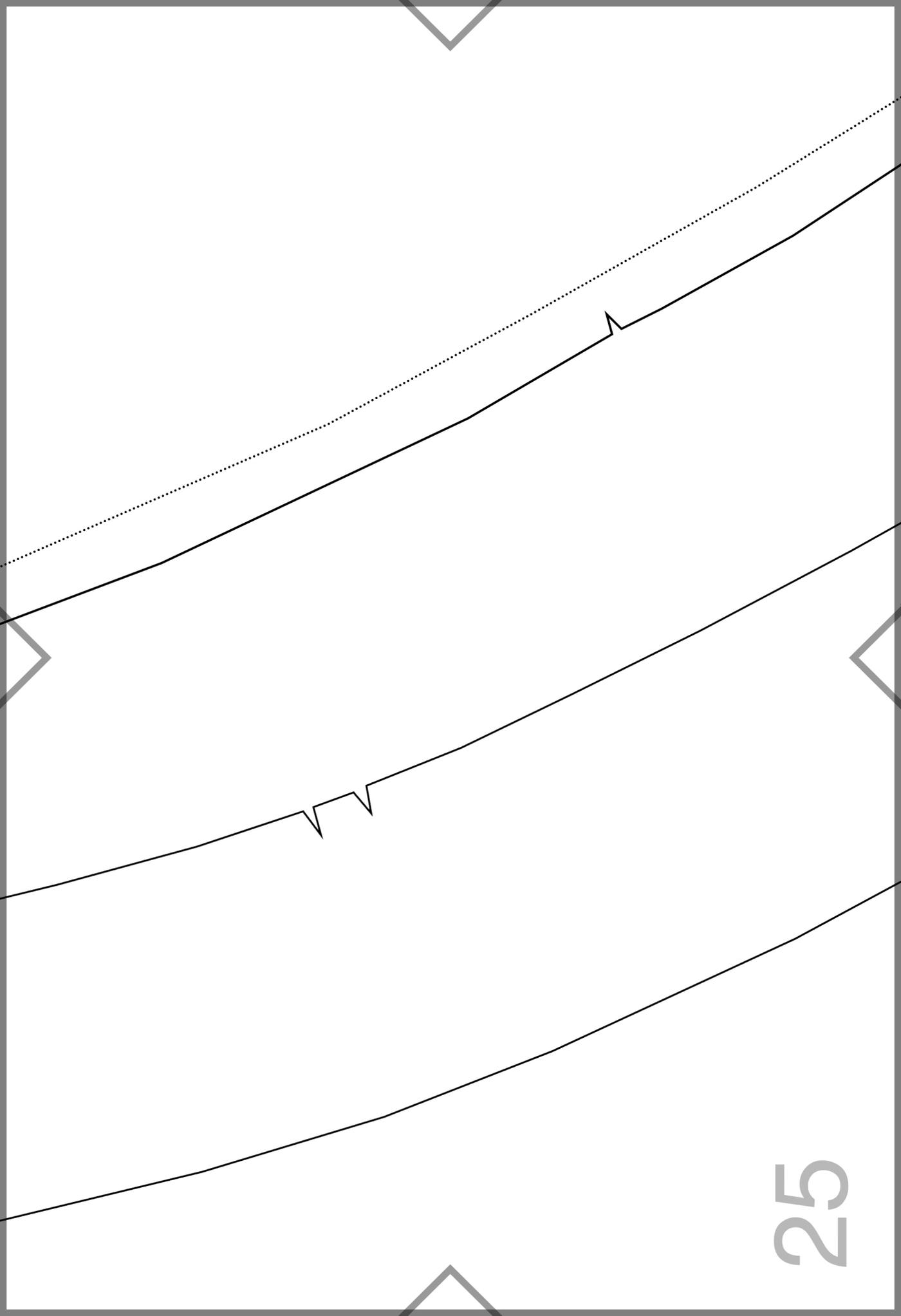
SIDE

CE

21

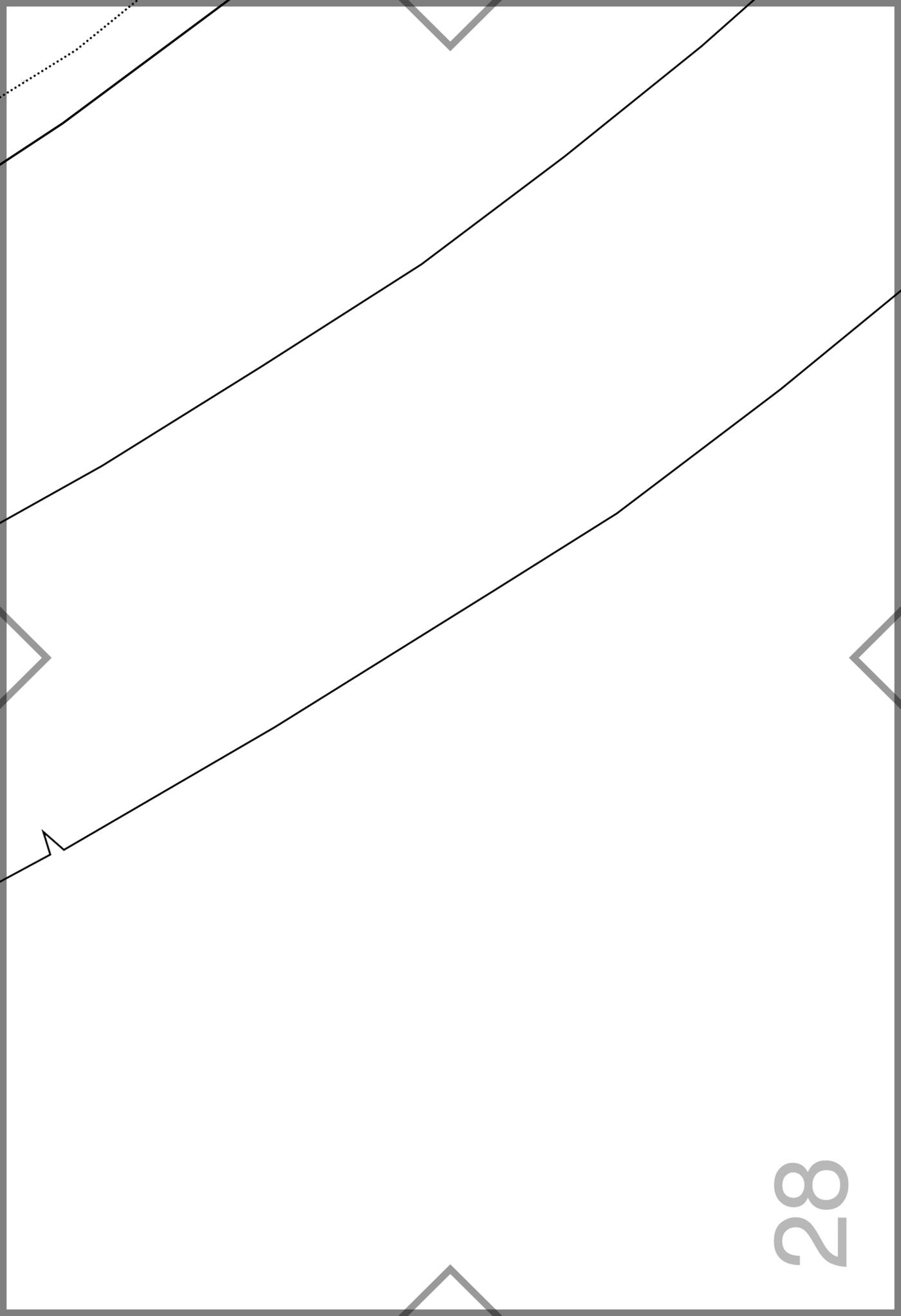


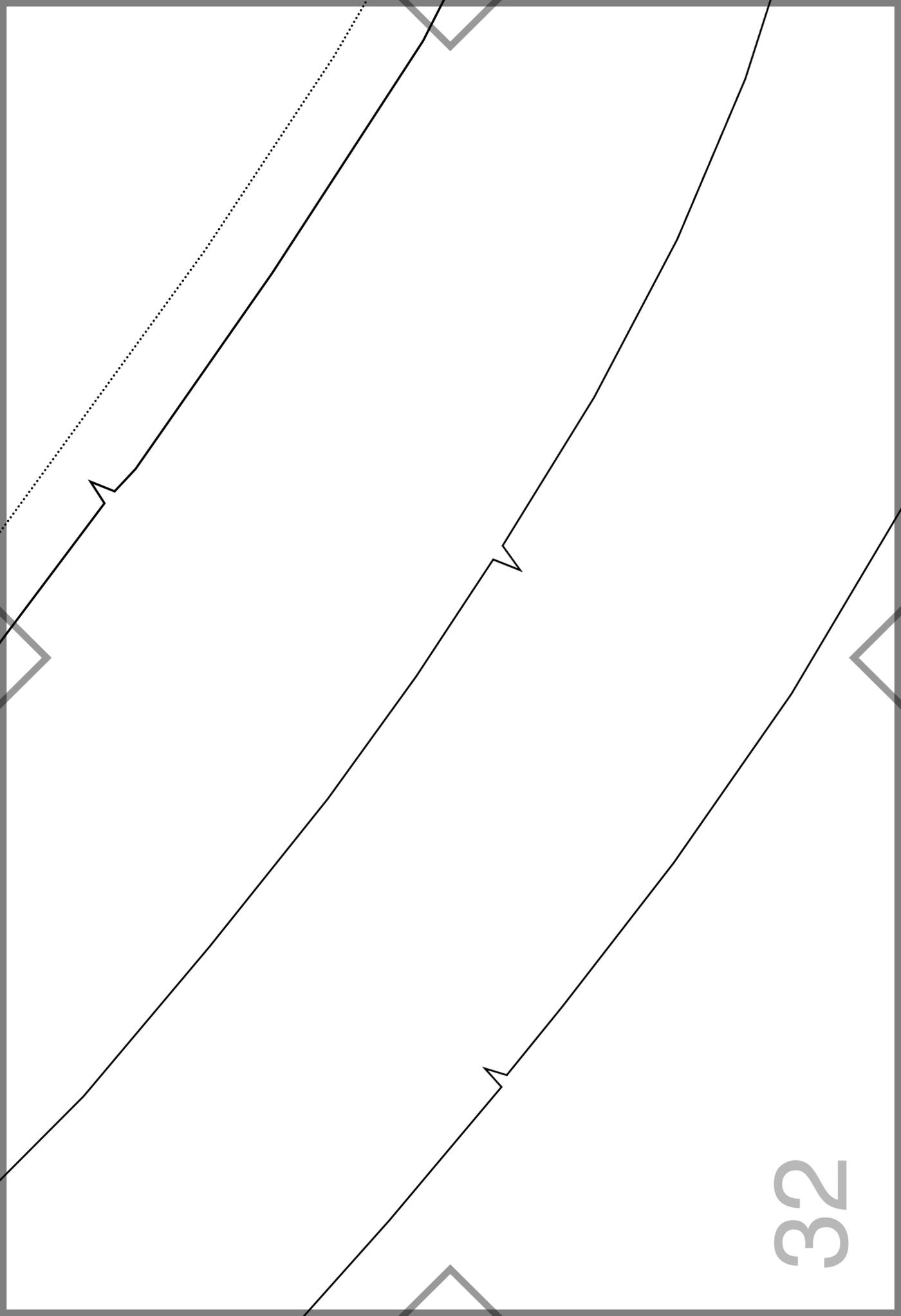
BAG OUT HEM

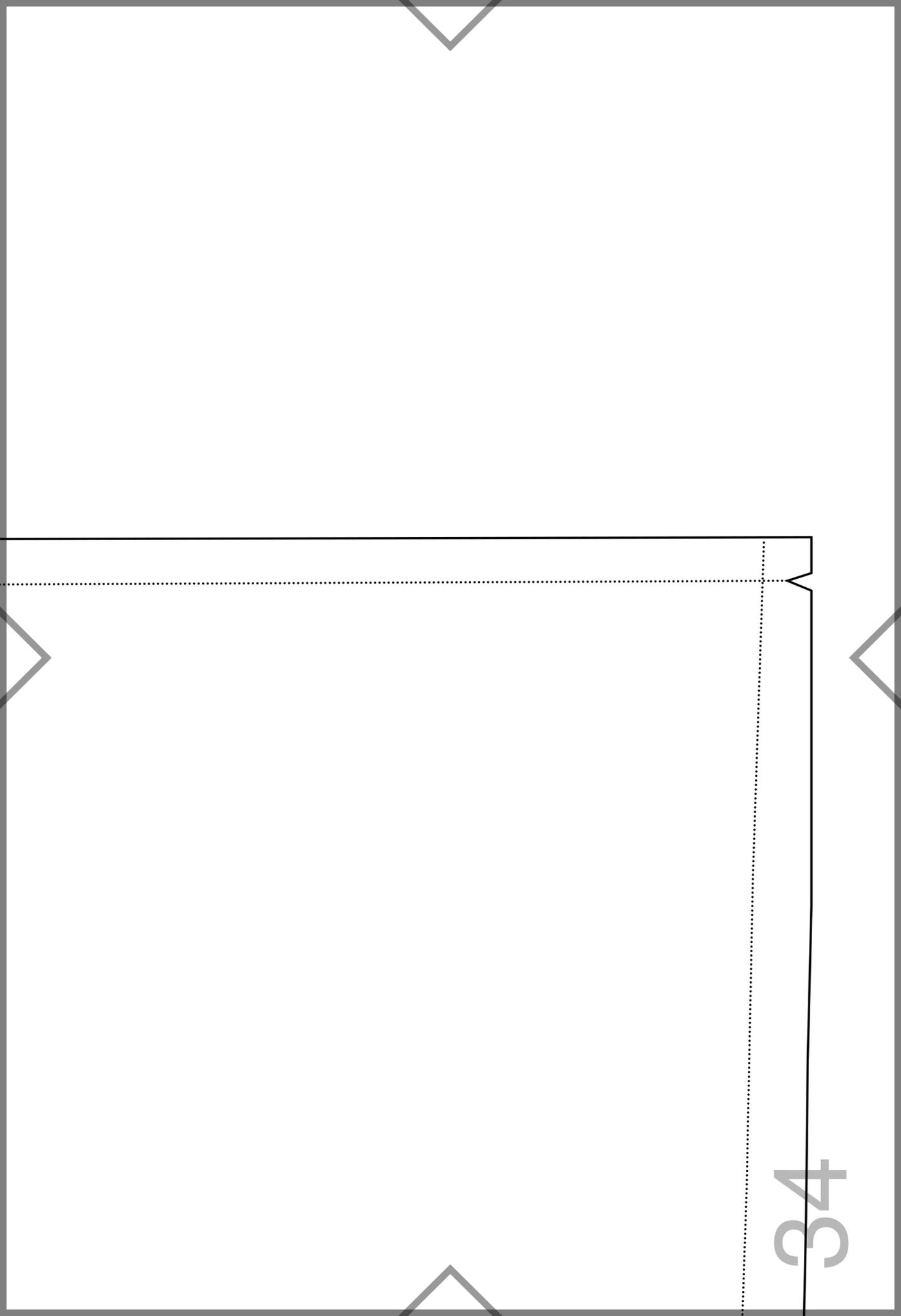


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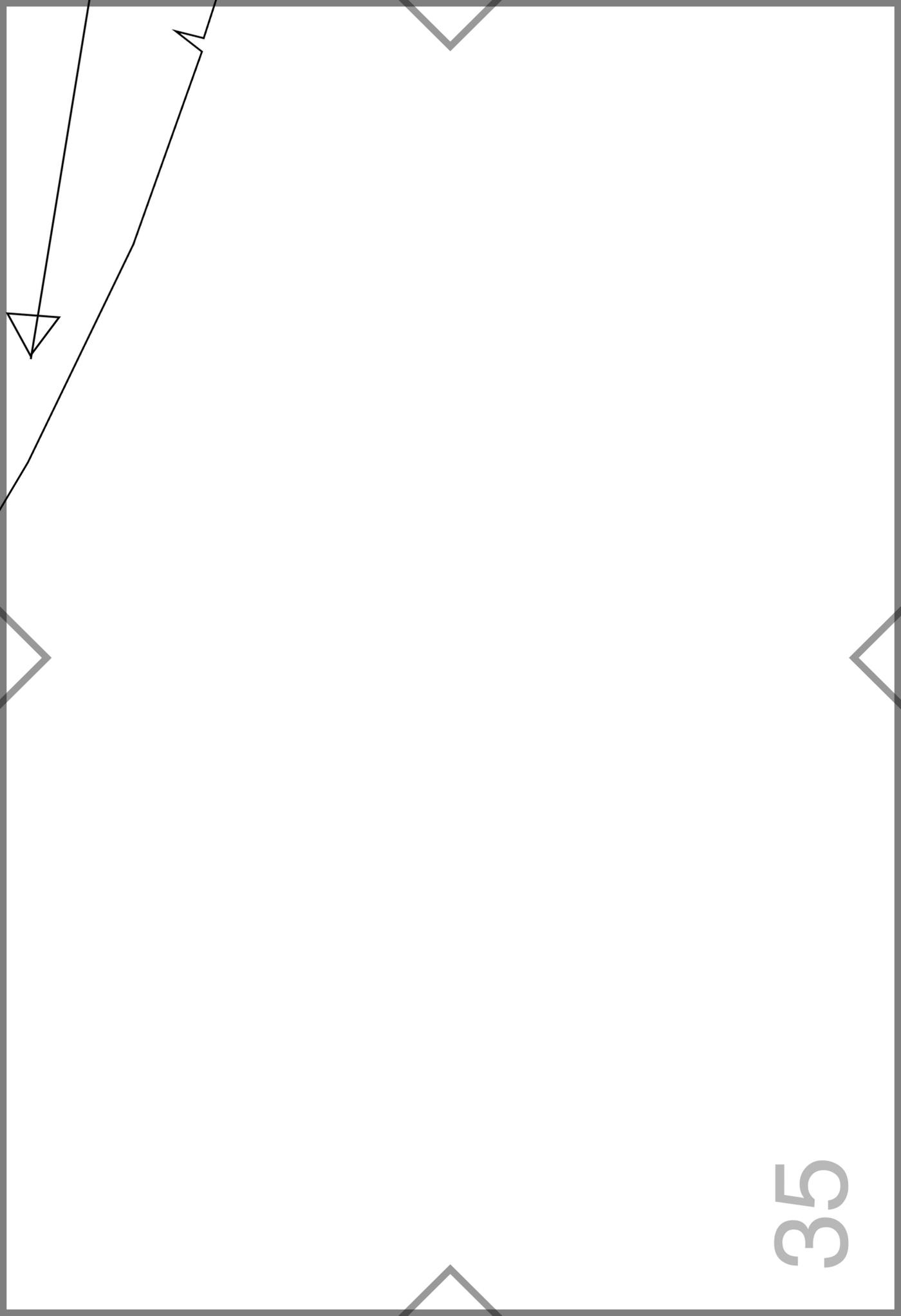


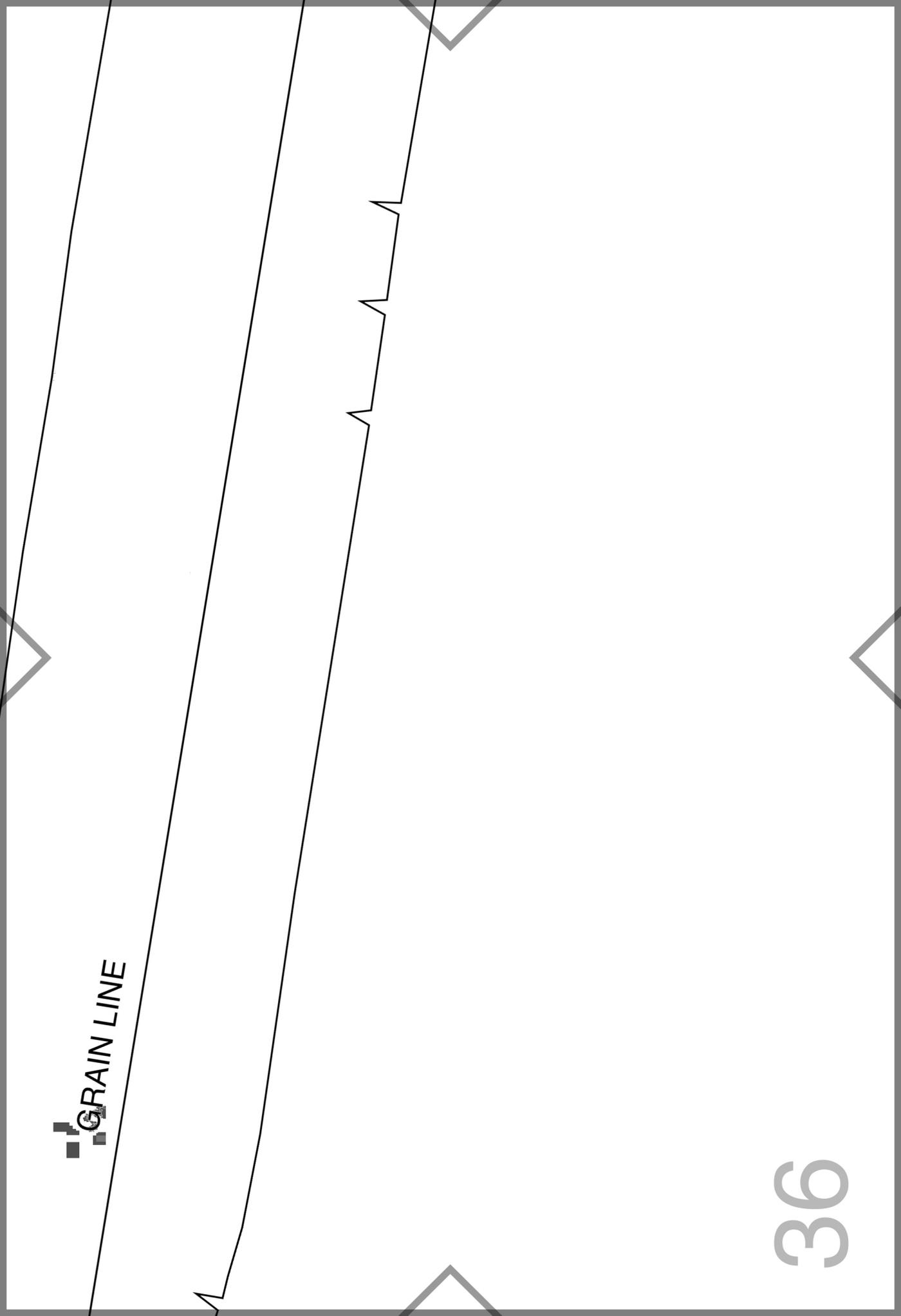






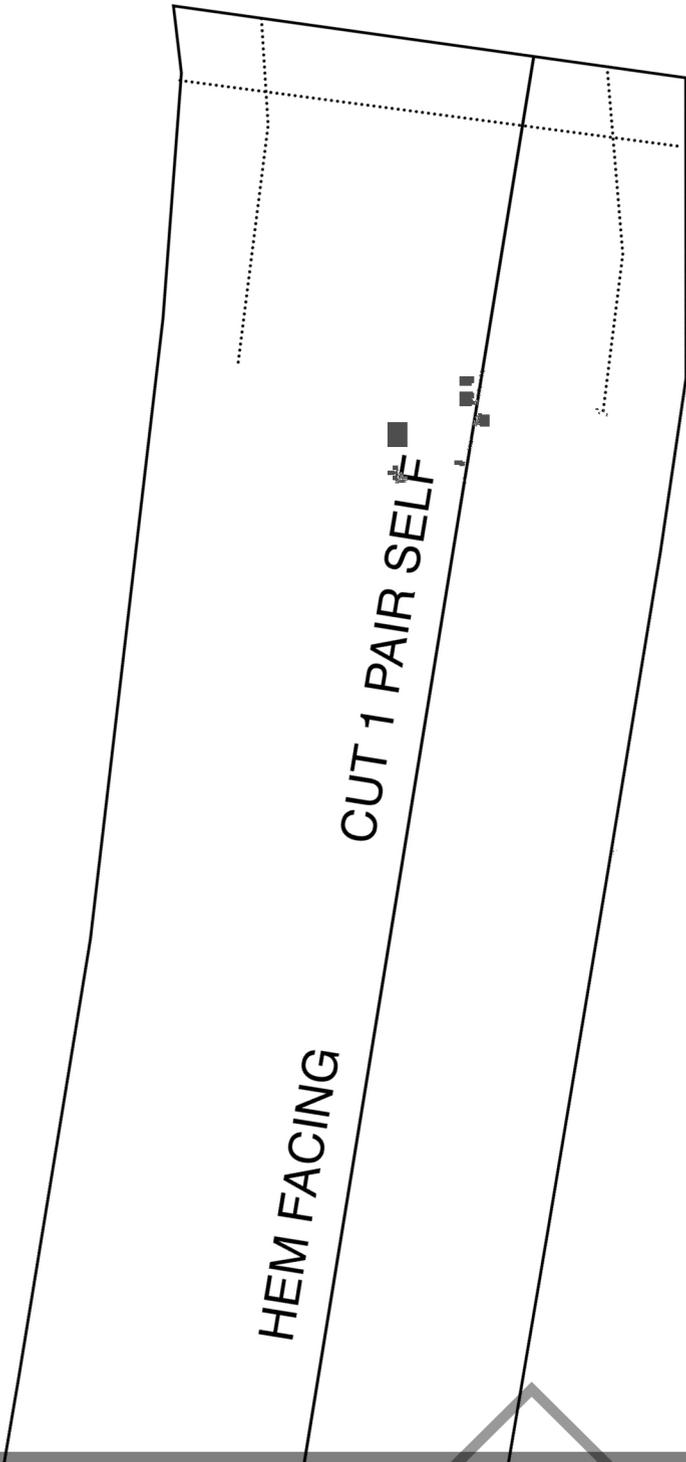
34





A technical drawing showing a grain line. The drawing consists of two parallel lines that are slightly curved. The upper line is solid, while the lower line has a jagged break line in the middle. The text "GRAIN LINE" is written vertically between the lines. There are four corner crop marks on the page.

GRAIN LINE



HEM FACING

CUT 1 PAIR SELF