

# one-hour wide belt



**Perfect for the office:** a nubby tweed obi belt cinched around a classic black sheath.

## Create this patternless, Japanese-inspired wrap with a twist

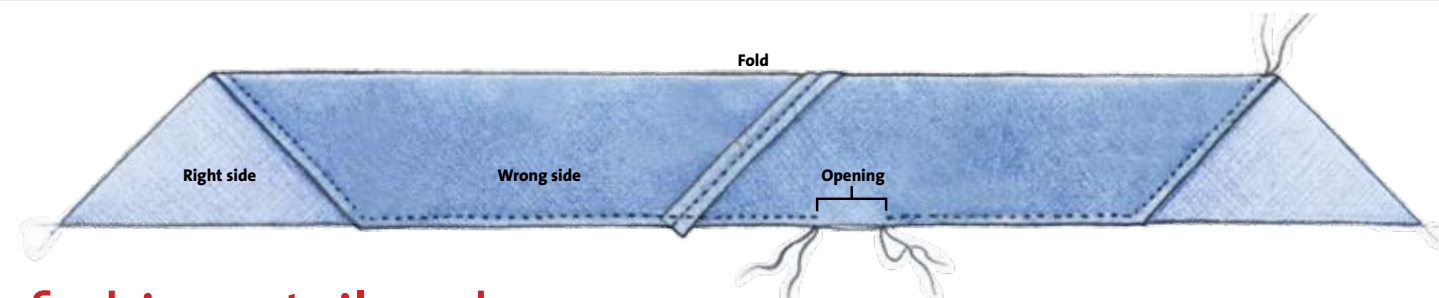
The wide belt is a hot commodity in modern fashion, because it's a truly versatile accessory. It's also very easy to sew. The style of the quick-to-make belt at left is inspired by a traditional obi, which, for centuries, has cinched the waists of kimonos. It's a smart choice for defining the waistline of any figure, large or small, and lends drama to any outfit—from a cocktail dress to a simple T-shirt and jeans. On the following pages, I'll teach you how to sew the belt, tie it, and then wear it with style.

### SHOWCASE AMAZING FABRIC

The obi-inspired belt is a great opportunity to use drop-dead-gorgeous fabric. Lightweight and medium-weight home-decorating and garment fabrics are excellent choices for a tailored obi. Textured, striped, and ribbed designs, in particular, look amazing cut on the bias (a 45-degree angle). For a softer, dressier version, the silkier the fabric, the better your result.

I also urge you to consider using a brocade that is similar to kimono fabrics, like the midnight blue rendition shown at right. Using an expensive fabric won't break the bank, because the designs don't require all that much yardage. I cut the fabric on the bias, which, besides being economical, ensures that each belt gently hugs the waist's curves.

*Joyce Murphy (JSMPatterns.com) teaches workshops across the country. She is a member of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers (PACCPProfessionals.org).*



## fashion a tailored wrap

This 4-inch-wide by 86- to 100-inch-long obi is designed for a 30-inch waist or smaller. To accommodate a larger waist, just make it longer. Slant the ends to follow the bias grain, or square them off if desired.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1¼ yards of 45-inch-wide fabric, which makes a sash up to 100 inches long with a single seam in the middle; longer sashes require two seams
- 2¼ yards of Fusiknit fusible tricot interfacing (Fabric.com)

### STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

Use ¼- or ½-inch seam allowances throughout.

- 1 Start with bias strips 9 inches wide.** Piece the strips together to achieve the necessary 86- to 100-inch length, plus seam allowances.
- 2 Interface the fabric's wrong side.** Cut the interfacing on the bias (on a 45-degree angle) to fit the fabric edge to edge. Piece together, if necessary, by butting the edges. Fuse in place.
- 3 Fold in half lengthwise, and stitch the raw edges together.** Leave a 1- to 2-inch opening for turning, as shown above. Stretch the fabric slightly as you sew, to prevent the stitches from popping when you wrap the obi around your waist. Trim, turn, and press. Slipstitch the opening closed.

## how to tie

- 1 Center the seam at the front, and wrap the ends to the back.**
- 2 Twist the ends slightly, bring to the front again, and tie a loose knot.**
- 3 Tuck the bottom end up behind the knot, and drop in front of the knot.**

### GO TO THE WEB

Visit [BeSewStylish.com](http://BeSewStylish.com) for a "How-to-Tie" video demonstration.

## SOURCES

For brocade, tweed, and other obi-worthy fabrics, visit:

**BANKSVILLE DESIGNER FABRICS**  
[BanksvilleDesignerFabrics.com](http://BanksvilleDesignerFabrics.com)

**FABRIC PLACE**  
[FabricPlace.com](http://FabricPlace.com)

**JO-ANN STORES**  
[Joann.com](http://Joann.com)

For vintage kimono fabric, visit:

**AH! KIMONO**  
[AhKimono.com](http://AhKimono.com)

**KATIE'S VINTAGE KIMONO**  
[KatiesVintageKimono.com](http://KatiesVintageKimono.com)

**KYOTO KIMONO**  
[KyotoKimono.com](http://KyotoKimono.com)

MODEL PHOTO: JACK DEUTSCH; HAIR AND MAKEUP: SYLVIA PICHLER; STYLIST: ALISON BERLIN; STUDIO PHOTOS: SCOTT PHILLIPS; ILLUSTRATIONS: BOB LAPOINTE

