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Joan Hinds, Jean Becker

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Joan Hinds, Jean Becker : Twelve Dancing Princesses: Sewing Regal Costumes for 18" Dolls before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Twelve Dancing Princesses: Sewing Regal Costumes for 18" Dolls:

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. S E W I N G.....A N D.....S I G H I N G.....D R E A M I N G.....A N D.....D O I N G...!By PatriciaTWELVE DANCING PRINCESSES, by Joan Hinds and Jean ?Becker, with Illustrations and Bacgrond Design by Kathy Marsaa, is a wonderfultool for anyone who wants to learn how to sew. Regular-sizedpatterns -- for grown-ups and even for small children -- can bebig and unweildly for the novice sewer. And....if a wrong cut ismade.....So much wasted material!Some people try to start learning to sew by making doll dresses,from commercially-available doll-dress patterns. This is OK --up to a point. There is always some dis-satisfaction in buyingcommercial patterns because: 1) No matter what size -- from doll-size to 7W -- these patterns seem all to be made of tissue paper,which can so-easily tear, and so are not good for more than oneor two uses. 2) Many of these patterns are just plain BORING,for outfits one wouldn't want to buy for oneself.Enter THIS book! As the 12 Dancing Princesses WERE all, (all ofthem!!) Princesses, all of them shown in beautiful ball-gowns,fill this book's pages. All the the "princesses" herein are 18"dolls, and each one has her own lovely ball-gown and tiara to sew,from dress-pattern and crown-making instructions within. Also in-cluded is the pattern for the costume worn by "The Prince"! One18-inch boy doll is shwn, modelling his Prince's outfit. (Littleboys, too, should be interested in sewing...after all, King GeorgeVI and footballer Rosie Greer BOTH loved to do needlepoint! Andone boy-doll, surrounded by twelve beautiful girl dolls....whocould ask for anything more pefect?)Sewing clothes for an 18" doll is not exactly minature work -- butit's not doing a full-sizem human dress pattern, either. If amistake is made, and it cannot be rectified, the amount of materialthrown out is minimal. The dress-patterns in this book are all ongood paper, and can be traced, (over and over and over again!), tomake more flexible, secondary-patterns, which can be pinned tocloth. And these secondary-patterns, (traced from the top, or fromthe bottom, using dressmaker's carbon paper), can

be of any material. I personally like the paper from brown paper bags, which is flexible, yet far more sturdy than the regular "tissue-paper" of which most regular, human-sized paper patterns are made. (Very expensive, couture-quality dress patterns sometimes do come in a more sturdy material than the flimsy -- and too easily torn -- patterns you will find at your local fabric shop....but most "regular" patterns come only in this all-too-throwaway tissue-like paper.) If they were fairer to their customers, ALL patterns would be on good paper that can be traced, like those within this book. Well, at least, in this beginning-to-learn-to-sew-by-making-doll-dresses book, this good, er...."pattern"...is followed! Of course, many users will buy this book simply to make doll-dresses, and NOT as a practice-book to make larger, human-sized clothes. With either aim in mind, however, this book works very well! The two authors of this book suggest that one buy their book, "Best Doll Clothes Book", before starting on this book, for learning the most basic doll-clothing sewing techniques. However, working diligently, first, on the dancing-slippers, and then, on one of the one-crown designs, to begin with, will give experience and confidence to work up to the two-and-three crown dresses. ALL of these clothes are spectacularly beautiful, even the one-star ball-gowns. There are NO boring clothes in this book! Each dress is presented with a beautiful line-drawing of the finished gown, and a one, two, or three crown insignia as to the difficulty level. The origin and maker of each different doll-model is also given, (and this in itself is a mini-introduction to the world of 18" dolls made today.) Just as in regular commercial patterns, there follows detailed instructions on how to construct the piece, interspersed with good illustrations of how this is done. Unlike most commercial patterns, however, the instructions for making each dress is followed with instructions for making each crown! A pattern is also included to make the dancing slippers. This is just one pattern, but various decorations are shown. The doll-dress-patterns are labeled with one, two, or three crowns each, in ascending order of difficulty -- but I'd try the dancing slipper pattern first, as this exercise-adventure in the basics of shoe-making really does seem the easiest to do! At the end of the book, are large, colour photographs of the doll-models, two to a page, wearing their princess-ball gowns. It's nice to see that the dolls themselves represent an ethnic mix, so that each girl who sees this book, and dolls, can think of herself truly as a princess, as well. Princess Sapphire is definitely Black. Princess Jade seems an Inuit, First Canadian, or Native American Princess, dressed in a Western-style gown, not native to her people, but still very becoming. Princess Elizabeth looks almost as if she could be an elfin, fairy princess -- or perhaps a human princess with Down's syndrome. Princess Aurora, with ruddy cheeks and beautiful, long, wavy auburn hair, could very well be Irish. The French Princess really does look French. And so on. These are just my own impressions, of course -- but it IS nice that these Princesses come across as individuals, and not with cookie-cutter-like sameness. Thinking along the lines of different nationalities for one's dolls is not what little girls often do -- but it's nice, I think, for at least older makers of these gowns to reflect upon the nice diversity presented, of how each Princess is truly a diplomat in her own right, and how well all these thoroughly equal Princesses get along together! The inside back cover has a picture of the two authors, in the Royal robes and tiaras they undoubtedly have well-earned! As in the inside front cover, (entitled "Once Upon A Time"), whimsical and witty text, in a medieval-inspired, but very readable font, follows. (WHAT is the name of that font? I want to buy it!) On the back cover, all of the "Twelve Dancing Princesses"-dolls, together with their dashing Prince, are in one photograph, with a fairy-tale castle just visible in the background. This is a book for those who like to sew, those who like beautiful ball-gowns, (and to CREATE beautiful ball-gowns), those who like dolls.....and those who like to dream!

19 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful Fairytale Outfits for 18-inch Dolls By A Customer This book has twelve gorgeous outfits for 18-inch dolls in styles not easily found in stores. If you are looking for dress-up clothes for this size doll this is definitely the book for you. The patterns are easy to follow and are rated by level of difficulty, and there is a good photo of each outfit. This book made me want to buy more from these authors. First-rate.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Peggy Love doll clothes pattern books

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