Britches for Boys
T-shirt Makeover for Shorts

Use these simple instructions to make a T-shirt into comfortable knit shorts for boys in Africa—the shorts will become a prized possession. Please use a new or “like-new” T-shirt for this project. (There are restrictions in some countries regarding used clothing and import taxes.) Mail completed britches to Britches for Boys, c/o Nancy’s Notions®, 333 Beichl Ave., Beaver Dam WI 53916-0683, and we’ll ship the britches to their destination. For additional information, go to littledressesforafrica.org/blog/.

**Supplies:**

- Adult sized T-shirt (Approximate sizes: Small T-shirt = size 4–6 shorts, Medium = size 8–10 shorts, and Large = size 12–14 shorts.)
- Rotary cutter, mat, and ruler
- Matching all-purpose thread
- 1 yd. drawcord elastic
- Stretch Needle, size 75/11
- Optional: Twin Stretch Needle, size 4.0 mm/75
- Optional: Seam sealant such as Fray Check™
- Optional: 1½ yd. cotton cording

**Instructions:**

1. Prepare T-shirt.
   - Lay a T-shirt flat on a table in front of you with hem toward you and neck closest to the opposite side of the table.
   - Lay sleeves flat and to each side of the shirt.

2. Cut leg pattern from the T-shirt.
   - Cut off both sleeves near armpit seams. These rounded cuts will become the crotch of the shorts.
   - Determine shorts length. Cut off 3”–6” from the bottom of the T-shirt, depending on shorts length.
   - Cut a 2¼” band from the fabric trimmed off the bottom of the T-shirt and set aside. (waistband)
   - Mark a straight line across pattern just under the front neckline ribbing, the same distance from each shoulder seam. Cut along this line through both layers of the T-shirt.
   - Cut open each side from the hem to the underarm. These two pieces are the legs of the shorts.

3. Complete the shorts.
   - Sew or serge each leg seam, right sides together, with a ¼” seam.
   - Turn one leg right side out. Tuck the leg that is right side out inside the other leg, meeting right sides and matching leg seams and curved crotch area.
   - Stitch or serge crotch area, using a ¼” seam. For added reinforcement, restitch the seam close to the original stitching.

4. Prepare the waistline.
   - Quarter mark waistline with pins or a fabric marking pen.
   - Trim the length of the 2¼” wide waistband that was set aside.
     - Measure the waistline of the shorts and add ½” for seam allowances.
     - Trim waistband to the measured length.

**Note:** This technique is especially good for shirts with logos as they will remain intact on the sides of the finished shorts.
• Clip the cords and knot the end of each cord. Optional: Apply seam sealant to cord ends.

5. Prepare the drawcord elastic.
   • Cut the elastic 4”–6” smaller than the waistline measurement of the shorts.
   • Join short ends of the elastic with a ¼” seam allowance.

6. Attach the elastic.
   • Meet right side of the elastic to right side of the garment, positioning elastic seam at the center back of the waistline.
   • Match quarter marks of elastic and garment. Pin.

7. Complete the draw cords.
   • Pull up cords through middle of the elastic at center front.


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Project Design: Modified instructions provided by The Lutheran Quilting Group, Necedah WI
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