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STRESSLESS DRESSING

I'd like to share a few tips with you on some fast and easy methods to help you in "speed dressing" and, hopefully, generally lessen the stress level in the dressing room.

Sick of safety pins? I can't count the number of times that I have pricked my fingers (or other portions of my anatomy), ruined my nail polish, or damaged my belt in applying the contortions necessary to safety pin my belt to my costume. Not to mention the panic that sets in when my pin box seems to have walked off when I wasn't looking. No more! I sew the male halves of two #4 snaps to the center front and center back of the outside of the top band of each of my skirts and harem pants, and sew the female halves to the inside center fronts and backs of my beaded belts. When dressing, all I have to do is simply snap the belt to my costume and then hook it. Voila! My belt is anchored and centered in one easy step. This method may also be used to anchor your harem pants to your skirt - simply sew the female halves of two snaps to the inside centers of your skirt bands, then snap your pants to your skirt.

Slippery beledi dress? Blousing your beledi dress can be a nightmare, or you can make it easy on yourself. Sew a casing on the outside of your beledi dress at the hip level, leaving an opening where the two ends of the casing meet. Thread a length of grosgrain ribbon (your hip size plus about 12" for the tie ends) through the casing to form a drawstring. Now you can just tie your dress on, and it will always drape evenly and at the right height. The casing also reinforces your fabric and prevents tearing when you anchor the dress to your harem pants or belt.

Want invisible elastic? If you're like me, your skin tone is not black, white, or pink. No problem - custom dye your elastic with tea! You can obtain a wide variety of shades by varying the length of the dyeing time and the strength of the tea. I've used this technique to camouflage elastic in openwork sleeves, chin bands, and zil loops.

I feel like I must have more suggestions tucked away in the corners of my mind. When enough of them have surfaced, I'll take pen to paper again. Until then, I hope you find these tips can help to simplify your life.