

# Mas Costume Accessories

By Giselle Carter  
from Gemz Mas

Notting Hill Carnival is one of the world's biggest street festivals. Led by members of the Caribbean community, the soundsystems, atmosphere and beautifully crafted costumes make it a highlight of the year for Londoners.

Costumes are made at Mas Camps, where every year designers, craftspeople and volunteers make stunning, creative costumes built around welded wire frames and based around their chosen theme.

Gemz Mas specialise in costumes for children, and have picked "Gulliver's Travels" as their theme for 2018. In this tutorial Giselle will teach you how to make accessories for Mas Costumes, including a neck piece, belt and wrist and leg accessories.



Images Courtesy of: Giselle Carter, [www.gemzmasband.co.uk](http://www.gemzmasband.co.uk)

Mas means "Carnival Celebrations" and is short for "Masquerade"!

## materials



- foam (can be purchased from any carnival supplier\* or craft shop) •
- hot glue gun & glue sticks •
- diamantes, rhinestones & gems •
- paper or cardboard • pencil • scissors •
- straight pins • sequin roll •
- ostrich feathers •
- stretch fabric (preferably Lycra) •
- overlocker or sewing machine •

Images Courtesy of: Giselle Carter, [www.gemzmasband.co.uk](http://www.gemzmasband.co.uk)



This feathered back piece is built around a welded wire frame- it needs to be strong to last a whole day of dancing!

\*Carnival suppliers include: Exquisite costume creations, Leyton Industrial Village



### Step One:

**Create a template.** On a piece of plain paper or cardboard, draw templates for your accessories: one shape each for the wrists, neck, waist and legs (you can be creative with your shapes!). The shapes should be big enough so that they are visible and fit comfortably.

### Step Two:

**Cut out your shapes.** Place your template on the foam and cut out the shape on the foam. Place your template on the fabric and cut out the shape on the fabric.



#### Template Tips:

Having trouble thinking up templates for your accessories?  
You can photocopy the templates on the last page of this guide

...Or have a look at our Carnival and Festival Fun themed Pinterest board for inspiration!



### Step Three:

**Make your straps.** Cut inch-wide strips of stretch fabric at least 15cm long each for the straps. For the waistband, wrist and neck piece, cut 2 straps each. For the leg piece, cut 4 straps each.

**Sew your layers together.** Pin your fabric shape and straps to your foam shape. Your straps should be sandwiched between the foam and the fabric.

Stitch the fabric and straps onto the foam with an over locker (blades down) or standard sewing machine.



#### Top Tips:

Don't worry if you can't sew, you can glue the fabric to the foam using any fabric adhesive spray, and hand stitch the straps to the sides.

...Or you can attach them by piercing an eyelet into each side of the accessory. Insert the strap into the eyelet and tie a knot at the end of the fabric to secure it.



#### Step Four:

Using hot glue, apply a thin line of glue around the circumference of the accessory and attach rhinestones / diamantes / gems to decorate.



#### Step Five:

For the wristband and leg band, apply a line of hot glue down the middle and attach one baby ostrich feather. Decorate on and around the feather with sequins and gems.

**Wear your accessories with your costume to add some bling to your look!**

### Things to think about:

**Before you make your Mas accessories, why not think about and learn:**

- What is the history of Carnival, why is it important in Caribbean culture?
- What other carnivals happen around the world?
- What techniques and materials are used for costumes?
- What kind of stories do carnivals tell? Historically, some carnivals have been acts of celebration, many have religious origins, and some have been acts of defiance!
- If your Craft Club attended a carnival, what would your theme be? What stories would you tell?

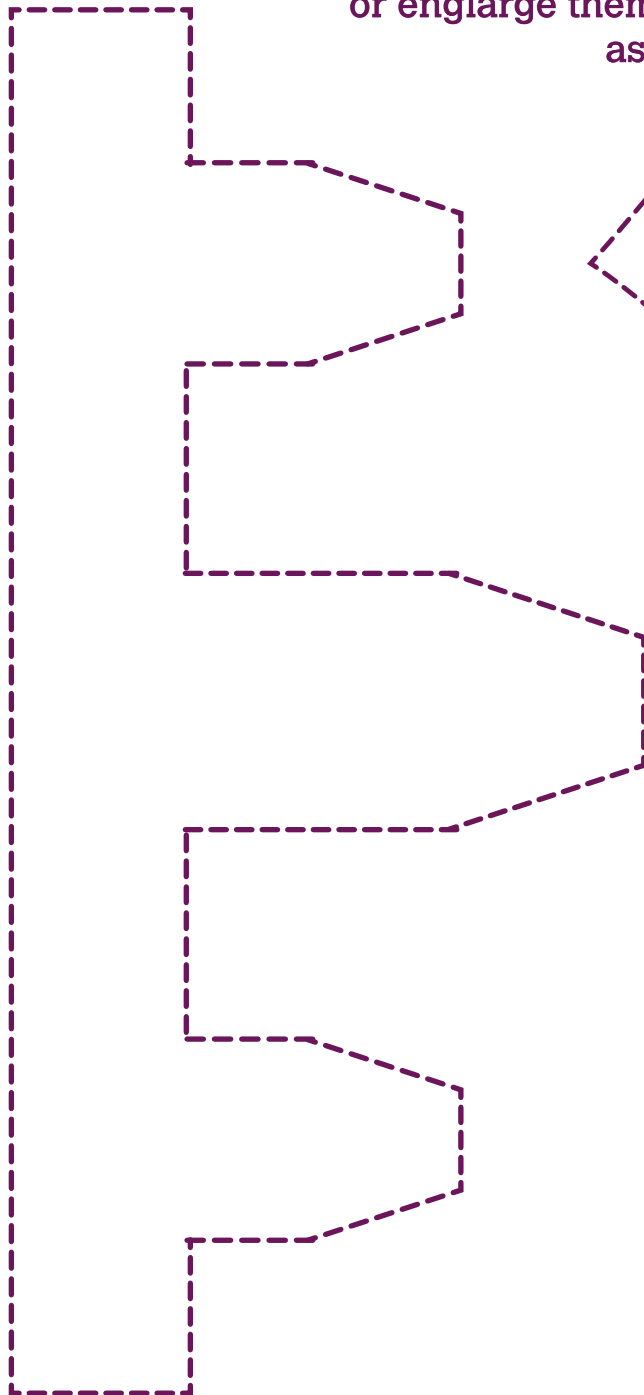
Craft Club is a national campaign that champions craft in schools, galleries, libraries and anywhere else you can bring people together to share craft skills.

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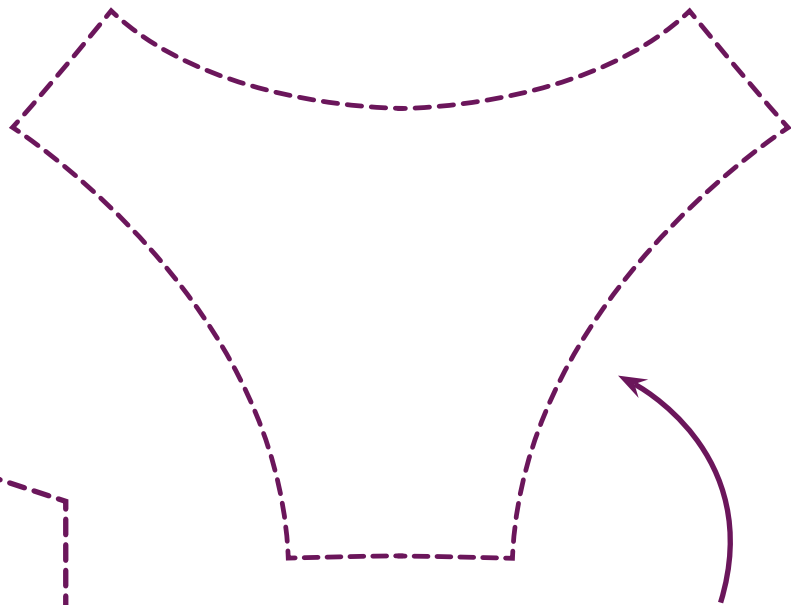
# Templates

These are not to scale.  
You can use them as inspiration for shapes,  
or enlarge them on a photocopier to use  
as templates.



## Belt:

- Photocopy at 141%  
or A4 > A3
- Shorten or lengthen  
according to size



## Neck piece:

- Photocopy at 141%  
or A4 > A3
- Shorten or lengthen  
according to size



## Arm or leg bands:

- Photocopy at 141%  
or A4 > A3
- Shorten or lengthen  
according to size