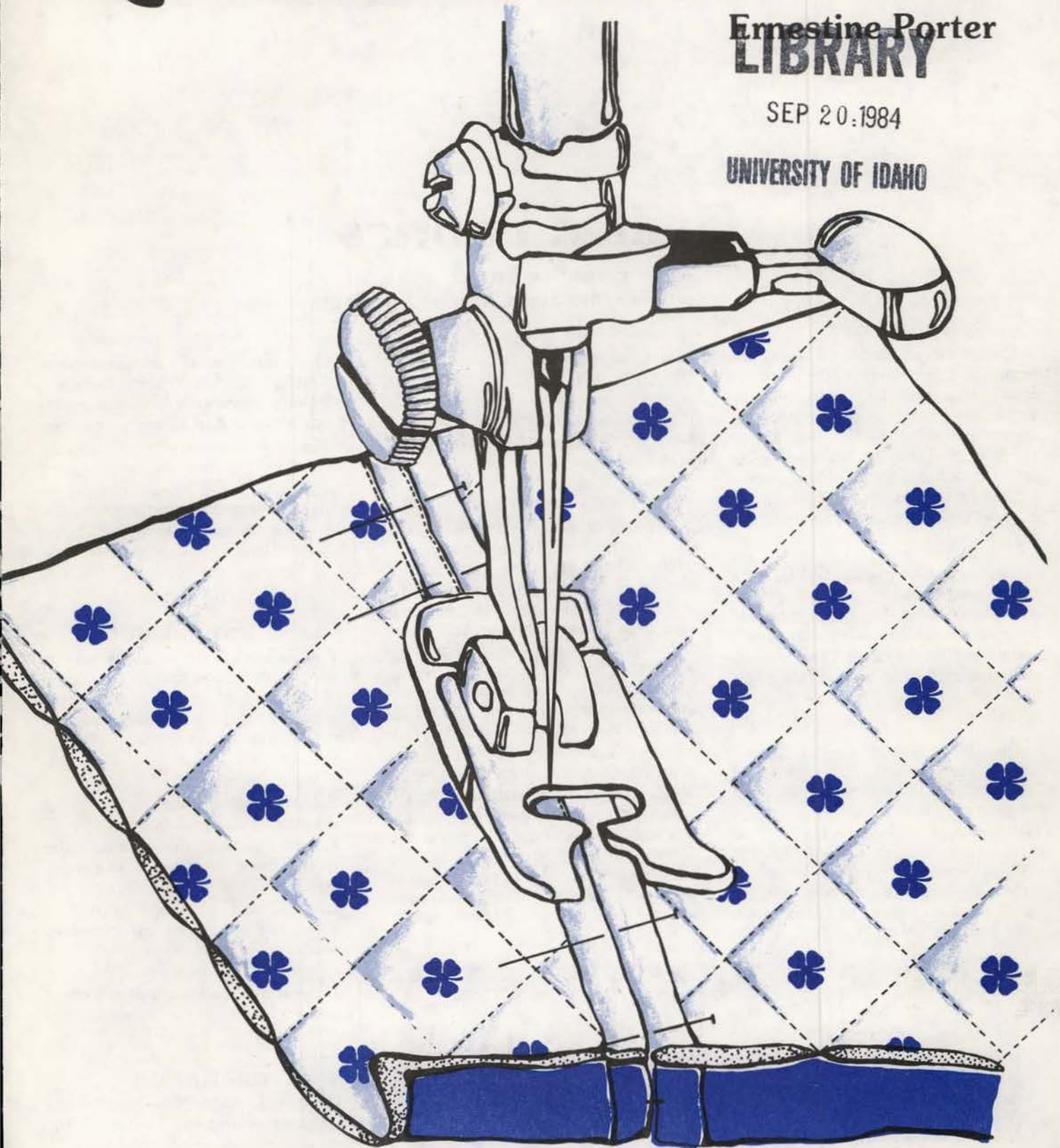


Quilted Fabrics

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Quilted Fabrics

Ernestine Porter
Extension Textiles and Clothing Specialist

Quilted fabrics usually consist of two layers of fabric with a filler between them. The three layers are held together with stitching. This publication covers prequilted fabrics that are already layered and stitched by a manufacturer. Some of the common patterns for quilting stitches are diamond shaped, channel quilted (parallel rows) and design quilted.

Two types of prequilted fabrics commonly available are single-faced and double-faced. Single-faced quilted fabrics have a fashion fabric on one side and a tricot on the other. Double-faced quilted fabrics have fashion fabrics on both sides in coordinating colors or prints.

The filler in quilted fabrics is usually a polyester batting, although foam "sheeting" is sometimes used. Check the type and thickness of the filler when selecting your quilted fabric. A thin to medium polyester batting is suitable for both fashion wear and home accessories. Thick battings are best used for items such as bedspreads, outdoor wear and window quilts.

Use the foam filler only for items for the home; it is not recommended for garments because it makes the quilted fabric stiff and uncomfortable to wear. Cotton batting tends to bunch and shift in laundering, so if the quilted fabric is cotton filled, be sure the filling is securely held in place with small stitch patterns.

Because of their practical yet versatile characteristics, the popularity of quilted fabrics has grown, especially for use in garments. Quilted fabrics provide warmth without weight and offer easy care. A wide variety of fabrics are used when making quilted fabrics, such as calico, broadcloth, corduroy, velveteen and satin. Thus garments made from quilted fabrics can be suitable for casual or evening wear, indoors or out.

Manufacturers of quilted fabrics often have matching or coordinating fabric available that has not been quilted. Consider combining these fabrics. For example, if sewing a dress, make the sleeves and skirt in the coordinating fabric with the bodice in quilted fabric. Or, make napkins from the coordinating fabric to match quilted place-mats.

Quilting stitches should be even without broken threads. You may find some specialty fabrics on which intricate stitch lines are used for special touches.

The care requirements will vary depending on the fiber and fabric combinations used in the layers. Cottons take a longer drying time than the synthetics. Polyester batting fabric is fast drying and maintains its loft. Acetate may require hand laundering.

Pattern Selection

A wide variety of garments can be made from quilted fabrics, including vests, jackets, coats, skirts and robes. For best results, use a pattern designed for quilted fabrics.

Follow these guidelines when selecting your pattern:

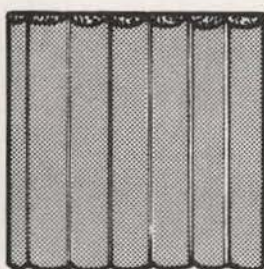
- Select a pattern with a minimum number of design details.
- Look for patterns that have no collar or that have a standing or shawl collar.
- Sleeves with a dropped shoulder style are easier to put in than sleeves with a set-in style.
- Edges that are finished with a trim provide a decorative finished effect and are less bulky than those finished with a facing.

Interfacing

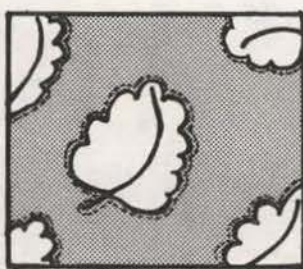
Garments made of quilted fabrics usually do not require interfacing because the filler generally provides sufficient support. If using a thin, lightweight



Diamond shaped



Channel quilted



Design quilted

quilted fabric, however, interfacing is recommended in the collar and button-hole areas.

Select a type and weight of interfacing that is appropriate for the quilted fabric. A sew-in interfacing is suitable for any quilted fabric. A fusible interfacing cannot be used on a quilted fabric because the pressure required to adhere the interfacing will flatten the filler. A fusible interfacing, however, can be used on a facing or under collar if it is not quilted.

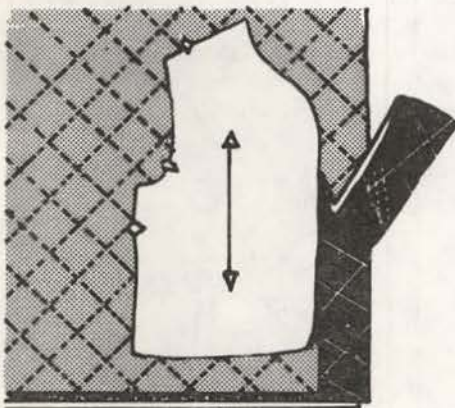
Layout and Cutting

Preshrinking is recommended to prevent additional fabric shrinkage in the garment. Preshrink using the same method that will be used to clean the garment. Zigzag-stitch along both cut edges of the fabric before laundering to prevent the quilting stitches from working loose at the cut ends.

Check both sides of the fabric and the quilting stitches for flaws or pulls. On double-faced quilted fabric, note if the two fabric layers are the same width.

A quilted fabric cannot be straightened if it is off-grain. Determine, therefore, what is most predominant in your fabric — the fabric grain, the fabric print or the quilting stitches — and use that as a guide when positioning the pattern pieces on the fabric.

Follow the recommended pattern layout on the guidesheet. If folding the fabric, pin through all the layers at various points to line up the stitching or design. When cutting out the pattern, you will have more accuracy by cutting through only one layer of the quilted fabric at a time.



If the quilted fabric, however, is thick or slippery or if matching the design or stitching, you should place the patterns on a single layer of the quilted fabric.

Also more accurate is to place small detail pattern pieces on a single layer. Place the pins through only the top layer of the quilted fabric.

When laying out the pattern pieces, use a "with nap" layout if the fabric has a nap or a one-way design. For best results, match widely spaced quilting stitches or bold fabric designs.

Marking and Pressing

Use tailor's tacks, chalk, pins, fabric marking pen or clips for marking quilted fabrics. A tracing wheel is not suitable because of the fabric thickness. Clips in the seam allowance are not appropriate for some seam techniques such as a flat-fell seam.

Set the iron at the appropriate setting for the side of the fabric being pressed. Press lightly to avoid flattening the batting. If one side of the fabric is corduroy, velveteen or velvet, protect the pile when pressing. When pressing seams, use a seam roll and only the tip of the iron. When pressing seam allowances in one direction, press side and shoulder seams toward the back, the neckline seam up and armhole seams either toward the shoulder or the sleeve, depending on personal preference.

Stitching

Stitching hints:

- Use a stitch length of eight to 10 stitches to the inch.
- Use a loosely balanced thread tension.
- Reduce the pressure slightly on the presser foot.
- Place pins close together to prevent shifting.
- Make a test seam.

When topstitching on quilted fabrics, use all-purpose thread or topstitching thread. Use a size 14 to 16 needle, depending on the fabric and garment. Use a stitch length of six to eight stitches per inch.

Staystitch all edges of quilted fabrics to prevent stretching, to secure the quilting stitches and to help flatten the edges. Staystitch one half inch from the edge unless enclosing the edge in a trim, in which case it may be necessary to stitch one quarter of an inch from the edge. With thick quilted fabrics, pin together the layers of the quilted fabric before stitching to prevent shifting. If possible, trim the batting from the edges after staystitching.

Stitch the dart as usual. Press the dart along the line of stitching. Slash the dart, stopping five eighths of an inch from the point. Trim the batting from the dart, if possible. Press the dart open with the point flat. Using the zigzag stitch, finish the raw edges of the dart.

To help reduce bulk when sewing with quilted fabric, proceed as follows:

- Use a coordinating fabric that is not quilted for pockets in side seams, undercollar and facings.
- Trim and grade seam allowances when appropriate.
- Trim the ends of seam allowances after crossing with another line of stitching.
- Clip or notch curved seams.
- Understitch facings.
- Trim batting from seam allowances and darts when possible. This can be done when the fabric is channel quilted or when the quilting stitches are far apart. It is not practical when the rows of quilting stitches are close together because trimming the batting would involve removing stitching and then securing the threads.



Seams

Suitable seams are the plain seam with a seam finish, the flat-fell seam, the welt seam, the narrow seam, the topstitched seam, the taped seam and the encased seam. The seam selected depends upon the type of garment, the fabric and personal preference. Below are some guidelines to help in deciding which seam or seams to use.

- The plain seam with a seam finish can be used on any seam, straight or curved.
- On medium to sharply curved seams, the welt seam, flat-fell seam and taped seam are difficult to do.



Flat-fell seam



Narrow seam



Taped seam



Encased seam

- If the fabric ravels, use the plain seam with a seam finish, the flat-fell seam, the taped seam or the encased seam.
- With thick quilted fabrics, the narrow seam and the encased seam are recommended.
- For a decorative effect, the flat-fell seam, the welt seam and the topstitched seam result in stitching on the right side while the taped seam and encased seam result in bias tape or braid on the right side.
- For reversible garments, use only the flat-fell seam, the taped seam or the encased seam.

For the plain seam, the welt seam, the narrow seam or the topstitched seam, stitch as usual. Suitable seam finishes for the plain seam are the straight stitched edge, the stitched and pinked edge, the zigzag stitched edge and the bound edge. For the flat-fell seam, the taped seam and the encased seam, use the instructions that follow.

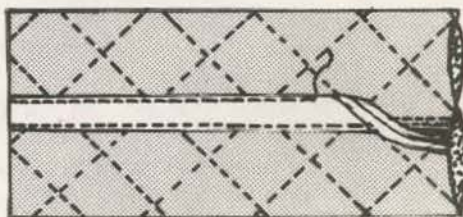
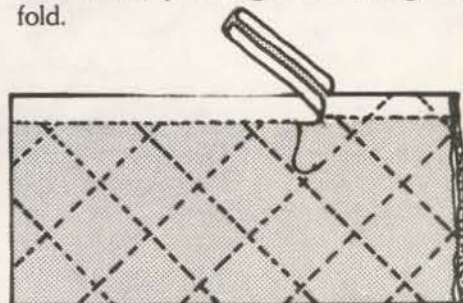


When sewing quilted fabrics, the sleeve is usually attached to the armhole before the side and sleeve seams are stitched. In the sleeve seam, therefore, stitching the second row of the flat-fell seam can be a little awkward. For more ease, turn the sleeve so the right side is inside. Starting at one end (either the bottom of the sleeve or the bottom of the jacket), stitch as far as possible; break the stitching. From the other end, continue stitching, overlapping the first stitching for 1 inch.

Taped Seam

With the taped seam, single fold bias tape is stitched flat to the right side of the garment over the seam allowances. To make the taped seam, pin the seam allowances **wrong** sides together; stitch on the seamline. Press seam allowances flat (not open). Determine in which direction the seam will be pressed (see the Marking and Pressing section). Grade the seam allowances, trimming the seam allowance that will be on top to three eighths of an inch and the one that will be on the bottom to one quarter of an inch. Trim the batting from the seam allowances, if possible.

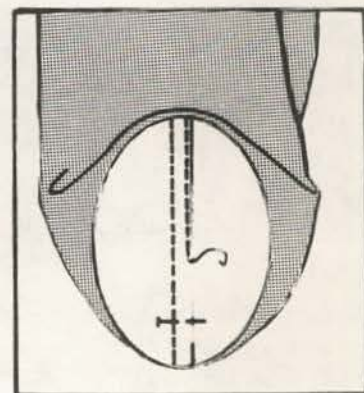
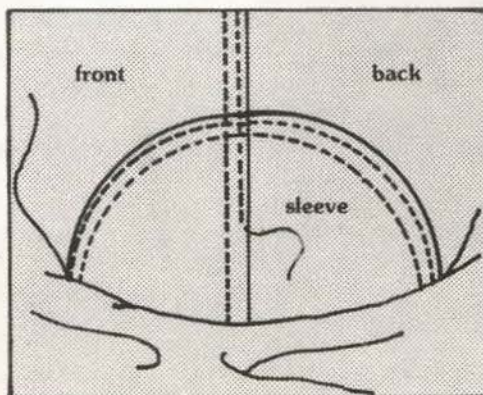
Pin single fold bias tape to the seam allowances, with the tape on the side of the wider seam allowance and with the edge of the tape just covering the stitching. Stitch in place close to the edge of the tape. Open out the project, and press flat so the tape covers the seam allowances; pin. Edgestitch along the fold.



When stitching the bias tape to the garment, stitch both "rows" in the same direction to prevent shifting. For stitching in a sleeve, see the Flat-Fell Seam Section.

Flat-Fell Seam

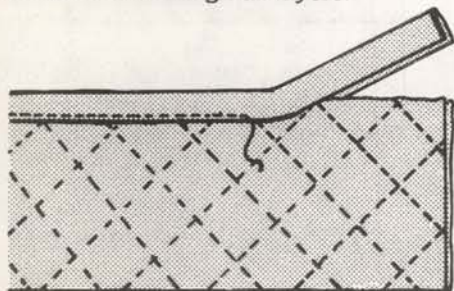
To make a flat-fell seam, pin the fabric on the seamline. Press the seam allowances open; then press both seam allowances to one side. Trim the bottom seam allowance to one eighth of an inch. If possible, trim the batting from the top seam allowance. Fold the top seam allowance under to half its width; press. Edgestitch to the garment along the fold.



Encased Seam

With the encased seam, the seam allowances are encased in tape or braid and stand away from the right side of the garment. To make the encased seam, pin the seam allowances **wrong** sides together; stitch on the seamline. Press seam allowances flat (not open); trim to one quarter of an inch. Trim batting from seam allowances, if possible.

Encase the seam allowances with extra wide, double fold, bias tape or fold over knit braid, with the edge of the tape or braid just covering the stitching. With the narrower side of the bias tape up, stitch the tape or braid to the seam allowances through all layers.



When stitching another seam that intersects with an encased seam, fold the tape or braid back, up or down. That decision depends on the location of the seam and personal preference.

Linings

Linings can be used to finish a garment by lining to the edges. And, some single-quilteds with a very loose backing structure must be lined to provide stability and wear life to the garments made from them.

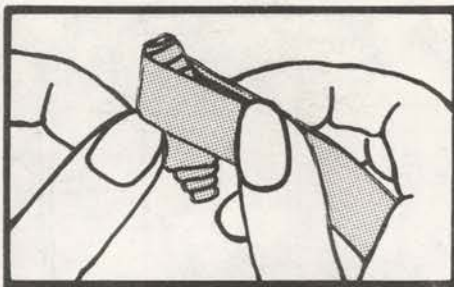
Fasteners

Quilted fabric garments, with their smooth, uncomplicated lines, look great with special closures. These include closures such as toggles, frogs and unusual buttons.

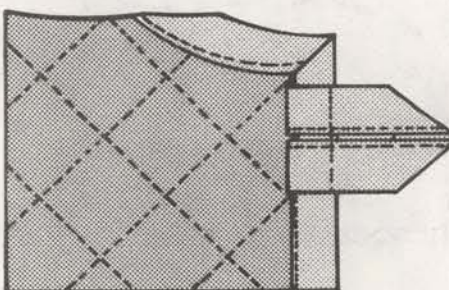
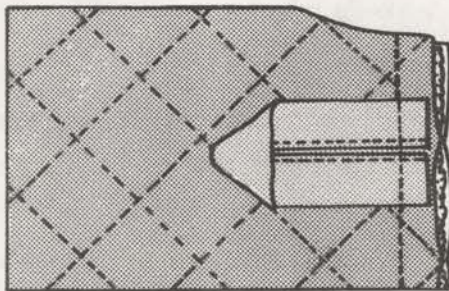
Button Loops

Suitable trims for making button loops are double fold, bias tape; extra wide, double fold, bias tape; and fold over knit braid. Also, soutache braid and middy braid work well. Proceed as follows:

1. Mark the placement of the button loops on the edge of the project.
2. Measure length of trim needed to slide over the button.



3. Determine the length of trim needed for each loop:
 - If finishing the edge with a facing or lining, add $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch to the measurement in step 2.
 - If enclosing the edge in a trim, measure the width of the trim, multiply by four, and add to the measurement in step 2.
4. If using double fold, bias tape or fold over knit braid, stitch folded edges together.
5. Cut the trim into the lengths from step 3 above. Pin each loop to the garment, with raw edges even, folding the tape.



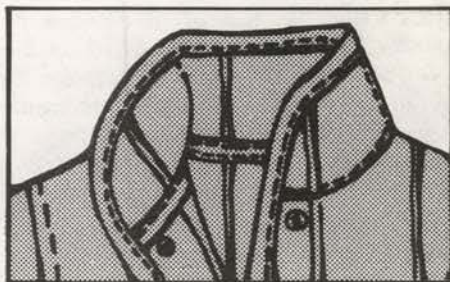
6. Stitch the tape to the garment, just inside the seamline.
7. Finish the edge of the project with a facing, lining or a trim. After applying a trim, fold the loops toward the edge. Stitch in place by hand or by machine, stitching along the edge of the trim.
8. Bring the front edges together, and mark the position of the button on the other front section. Sew button in place.

Zippers

Centered, lapped, conventional separating and exposed separating applications are suitable for quilted fabrics. Follow the instructions in the zipper package or pattern guidesheet. Before applying the zipper, trim the batting from the seam allowances, if possible. For best results, hand-baste the zipper in place before topstitching to prevent shifting.

Gripper Snaps

Many outerwear coats and jackets can be closed with gripper snaps. Look for the larger or heavier size snaps, and apply according to package instructions.



Gripper snaps

Buttons and Buttonholes

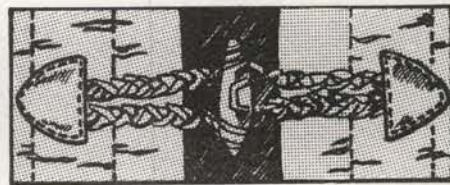
Make buttonholes by hand or machine. Choose buttons with a shank on them — the shanks allow the buttons to sit freely on top of the quilted fabric and not fight the thickness of the fabric around the buttonholes.



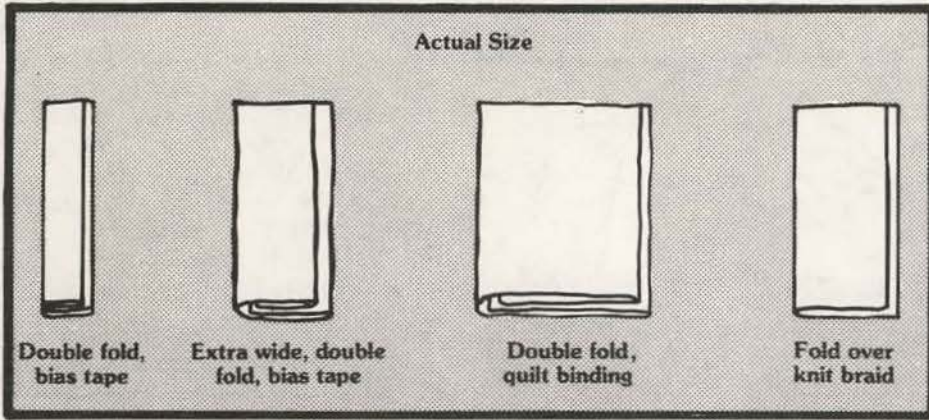
Buttons and buttonholes

Toggles and Frogs

Arrange placement of the toggles or frogs so that the button, or ball, lies on the center front line. Machine or hand sew the frog or toggle in place.



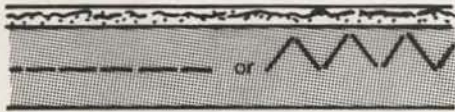
Toggles and frogs



Finishing Outside Edges with Trims

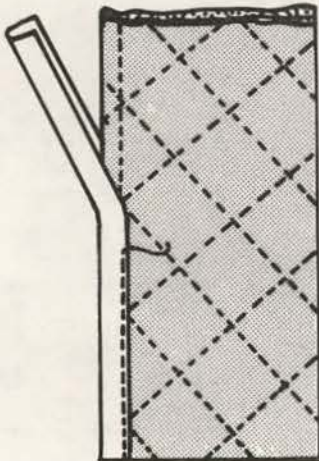
Double fold, bias tape; extra wide, double fold, bias tape; double fold, quilt binding; and fold over knit braid can be used to finish the edges of a garment. *If not already done, trim the seam allowances to the seamline.*

To secure the stitching and help flatten the edges, stitch one eighth of an inch to one quarter of an inch from the edge using a straight stitch. Or, stitch close to the edge using a plain zigzag or multistitch before enclosing the raw edge of a quilted fabric with tape or braid.

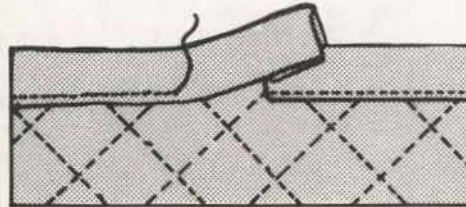


Applying Double Fold Bias Tape; Extra Wide, Double Fold, Bias Tape; and Double Fold, Quilt Binding

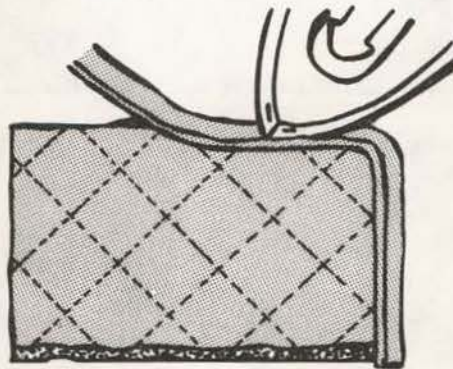
Enclose the raw edge of the garment in the bias tape, with the narrower side of the tape up.



Pin. At the end, open the center fold of the tape, and fold the end under one half of an inch. Lap the folded end over the other end.



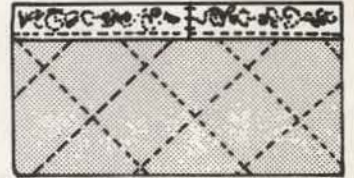
Stitch close to the edge of the tape. **If the edge is curved,** use an iron to swirl the bias tape to the shape of the curve before pinning.



On outside corners, miter the bias tape. When stitching, stop at the edge of the fabric. Miter the bias tape as shown in drawings below. Continue stitching, starting on the diagonal fold.

Applying Fold Over Knit Braid

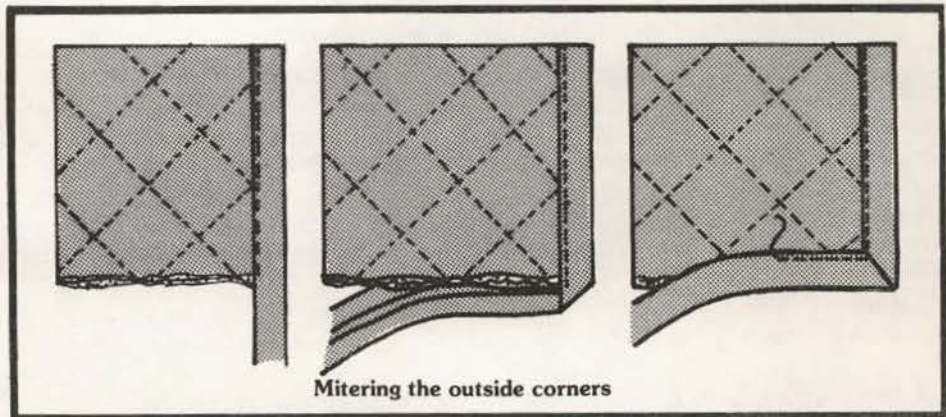
Enclose the edge of the garment in the knit braid; pin. At the ends, fold both ends under, and handstitch the folds together. Machine-stitch close to the edge of the braid.



On outside corners, miter the knit braid. Pin the braid to the fabric, form the miter, and mark its location.



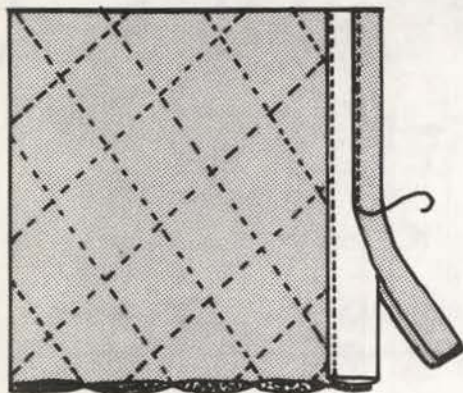
Remove the braid, and fold it right sides together. Stitch as shown; trim. Turn braid right side out, and repin braid to fabric; stitch in place.



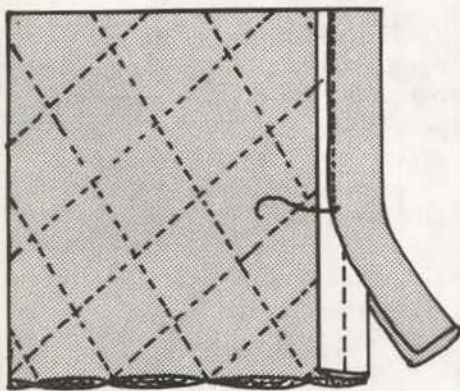
Combining Trims

Various tapes and trims can be combined for a special decorative finish. The following are three suggestions:

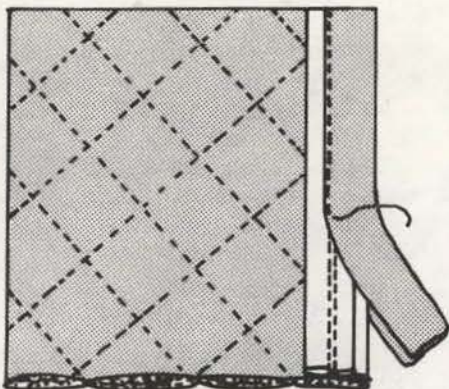
1. Enclose the raw edge of the garment with extra wide, double fold, bias tape, and stitch in place. Then, enclose the edge with a contrasting color of double fold, bias tape, and stitch in place.



2. Enclose the raw edge of the garment with extra wide, double fold, bias tape; baste one quarter of an inch from the edge. Then, enclose the edge with a contrasting color of extra wide, double fold, bias tape, just covering the basting with the fold of the tape. Stitch in place along the edge of the tape.



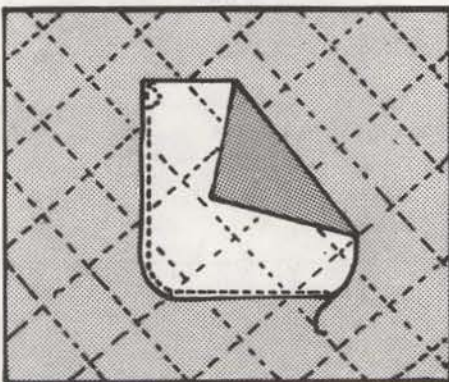
3. Pin bias corded piping to the right side of the garment; baste in place along the piping stitching. Enclose the raw edge with a contrasting color of extra wide, double fold, bias tape, just covering the basting with the fold of the tape. Stitch in place along the edge of the tape.



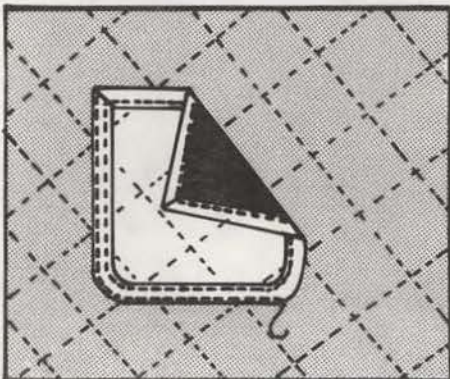
Patch Pockets

The two patch pockets that are recommended for quilted fabrics are:

- The patch pocket lined to the edge;



- The patch pocket with all edges enclosed in a trim.



Sleeves

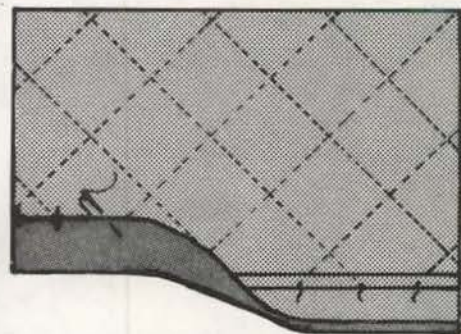
When making a garment with set-in sleeves, measure the amount of ease allowed in the sleeve cap. Stand the tape measure on its side, and measure along the armhole seamlines of the front and back of the garment and along the sleeve cap. For best results, there should be no more than 1 inch of ease in the sleeve cap; remove the excess ease from the sleeve cap, if necessary.

With quilted fabrics, you should use the flat method of construction. Attach the sleeves to the garment before stitching the side and sleeve seams.

Hems

The type of hem selected depends on the weight of the fabric and the style of the garment. The following three methods are recommended:

1. Trim along the hemline, and enclose the hem with double fold, bias tape; extra wide, double fold, bias tape; double fold quilt binding; or fold over knit braid. Machine stitch in place.
2. Trim the hem allowance to one half of an inch, and face the hem using wide bias tape or bias hem facing. Stitch the facing in place by hand using the slipstitch or hemming stitch; stitch through only one layer of the quilted fabric. Or, topstitch in place.
3. Trim the hem allowance to 1½ inch or less. If possible, trim the batting from the hem allowance. Tie or glue thread ends of the quilting stitches.



Remove quilting on hem to eliminate bulk

Finish the hem edge by using the zig-zag stitch or double fold, bias tape. Stitch the hem in place by hand using the inside blind-stitch; stitch through only one layer of the quilted fabric. Or, topstitch in place.



Reversible Garments

The following summarizes the techniques suitable for a reversible garment. For more information, refer to the appropriate section in this publication.

Fabric — Use a double-faced quilted fabric.

Pattern — Select a style with a minimum of seams, no darts and either no collar, a standing collar or a shawl collar. Sleeves are easier to insert with a dropped shoulder style than a set-in sleeve style.

Interfacing — Interfacing cannot be used along the center front; it may or may not be used in the collar, depending on the technique.

Seams — Suitable seams are the flat-fell seam, the taped seam and the encased seam. Before starting, determine on which side of the fabric you would like the two rows of stitching or the trim. Then, consider that side the **right** side when following the instructions.

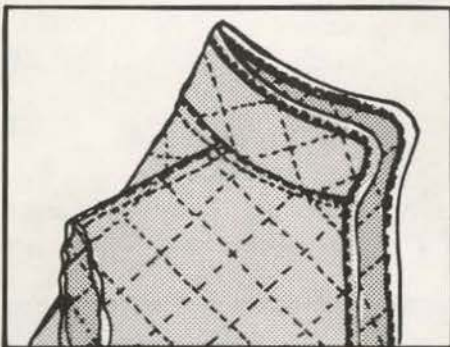
Outside Edges — Enclose in double fold, bias tape; extra wide, double fold, bias tape; double fold, quilt binding; or fold over knit braid.

Pockets — Patch pockets are recommended for reversible garments; pockets in a side seam are not suitable. To reduce bulk in the hip area, place only one patch pocket in each side of the garment as shown. Hand-stitch in place, stitching through only one layer of the quilted fabric.

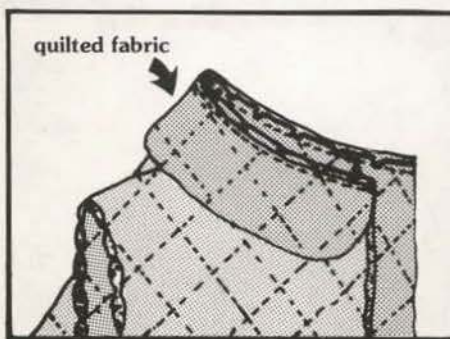
Collars

The following techniques are suitable for reversible garments:

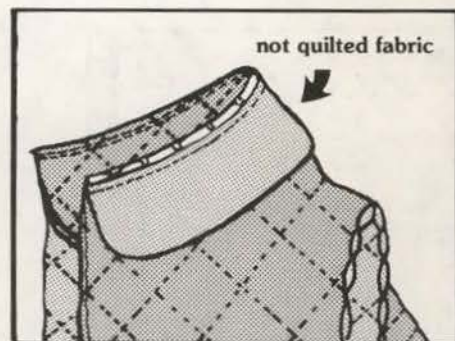
- Use only one layer of quilted fabric. Stitch the collar to the garment, using a flat-fell seam or a taped seam. (Press the seam allowances up toward the collar.) Enclose raw edge of collar in bias tape or fold over knit braid.



- Use two layers of quilted fabrics, or use one layer of a fabric that is quilted and one that is not quilted. Pin one collar section to the garment neck edge; baste.



- Pin the other collar section to the other side of the garment neckline; stitch along the neckline seam through all layers.
- Grade and clip seam allowances. Press both collar sections up. Baste the side and outer edges together close to the edge. Enclose the raw edges in bias tape or fold over knit braid.



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