

1971

## EC71-429 Bound Buttonholes

Jane Speece

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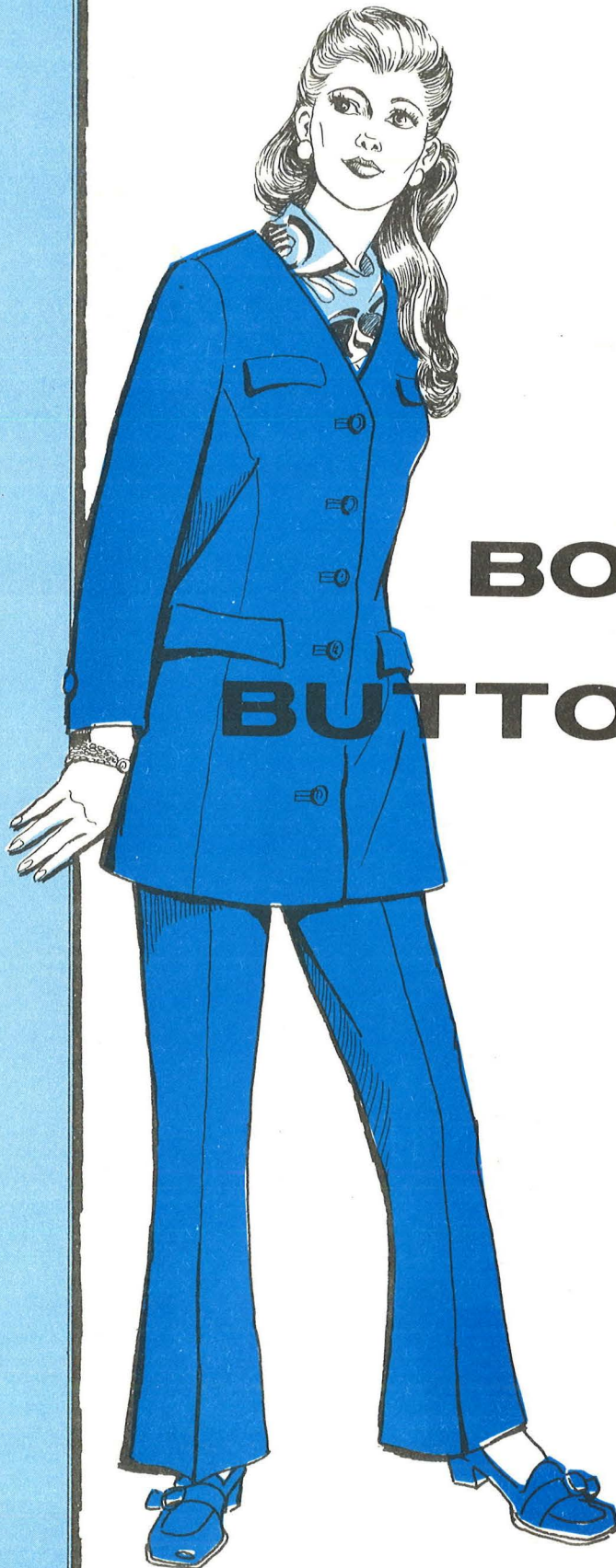
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# BOUND BUTTONHOLES



Extension Service  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture Cooperating with the  
U. S. Department of Agriculture and the College of Home Economics  
E. F. Frolik, Dean J. L. Adams, Director



# Bound Buttonholes

By Jane Speece  
Extension Specialist (Clothing)

The bound buttonhole is used in garments to add a custom touch. There are several techniques for making this hand-tailored buttonhole, but the results are similar. One method concerns the two-strip, bound buttonhole. If you are interested in achieving the finest results, try various methods and adapt the techniques to your personal skills and preferences.

Buttonholes in suits and coats are usually  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch in length. Dress buttonholes usually range from  $\frac{5}{8}$  to 1 inch in length. The size or shape of the button and the weight of the fabric will affect the length of the buttonhole. To gauge the needed buttonhole length, add the diameter of the button to the width.

Make a sample in a scrap of garment fabric to test for proper size and to judge results before beginning the buttonholes in the garment. Use the same interfacing on the wrong side of the sample as will be used in the garment.

Horizontal buttonholes ordinarily extend about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch beyond the center front line toward the edge of the garment. Vertical buttonholes are placed so the slash line corresponds to the center front line.

The center front of the garment should be marked with a contrasting color basting thread before the pattern is removed. Buttonholes are also easy to mark at this time. You will work on the right side of the fabric. Before marking, check the spacing of buttonhole slash lines (Fig. 1) on the pattern for accuracy and to be sure the spacing is suitable for your figure proportions.

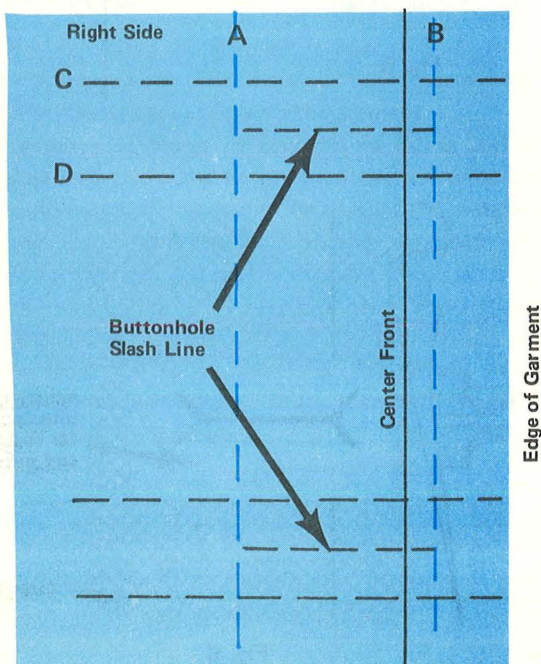


Fig. 1

## Step 1. Marking the Buttonhole

Baste two lines with contrasting color thread the exact length of the buttonhole (lines A and B Fig. 1). These lines must be parallel to the center front line and on the straight grain of the fabric. Then baste a line  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch above and below each buttonhole slash mark. Extend these marking lines beyond each end of the buttonhole (lines C and D, Fig. 1). These lines are later used to guide your stitching.

## Step 2. Interfacing

Interfacing should be applied before the buttonhole is started. Heavy interfacing used in suits and coats should be cut out in a square around the marked lines (Fig. 2). Slip in a lighter weight interfacing fabric, such as muslin or batiste, to use as the buttonhole backing. Catch-stitch around the edges. The interfacing on a dress ordinarily is not as heavy as a suit or coat and need not be cut out in this area.

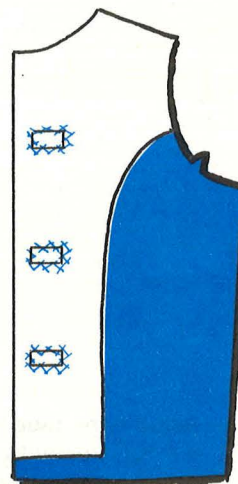


Fig. 2

## Step 3. Piping Strips

Scraps of fabric may be cut on the bias or straight of grain to make the piping strips. Cut each strip  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in width and the length of buttonhole plus 1 inch for length. Each buttonhole requires two strips.

Fold the piping strip lengthwise in the center, wrong sides together. Machine baste  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the edge of the length of the strip. Tiny hand stitches may be used in a bulky fabric (Fig. 3).

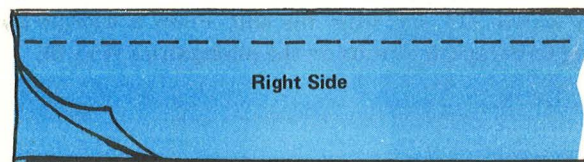


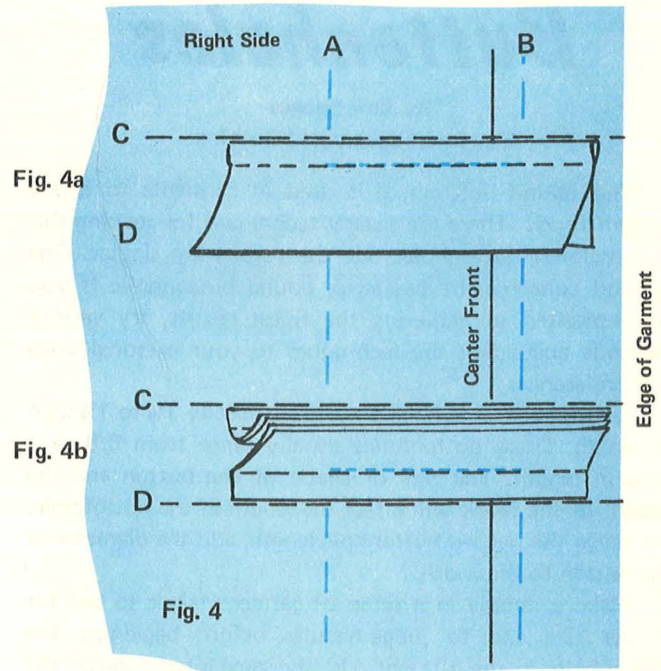
Fig. 3



#### Step 4. Stitching Piping Strips in Place

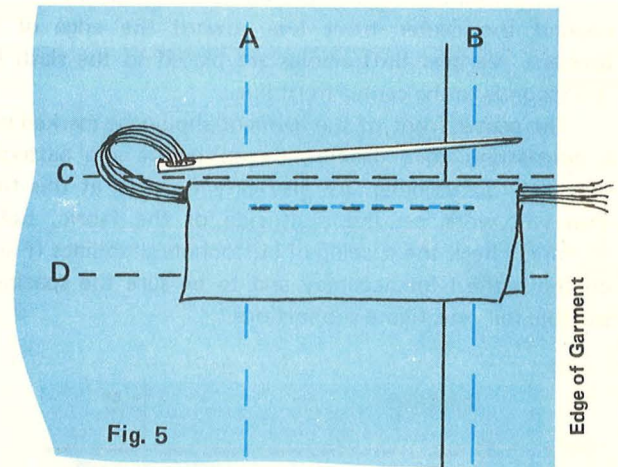
Hand baste a piece of piping in position on the right side of the garment with raw edges toward the buttonhole slash line and the creased edge on basted guide line C (Fig. 4a). Using the regular length machine stitch, sew the piping to the garment following the basting stitch on the piping. Use basting lines A and B, marking the ends of the buttonholes as guides for starting and stopping points. Secure threads by back stitching or tying. Counting the number of stitches will help to keep the buttonholes equal in length. Place the other piece of piping on line D (Fig. 4b) and stitch it into place.

When all piping strips are in place, check the row of buttonholes to be certain all are the same size and shape and in a straight line. Restitch any questionable lines before proceeding.



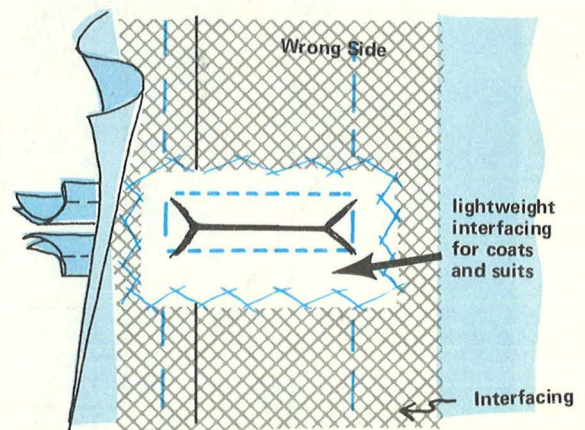
#### Step 5. Cording

Buttonholes in heavy fabrics are usually corded to maintain shape and to increase their durability. To cord the buttonhole, thread yarn in a darning needle and run the yarn through the piping strip (Fig. 5).



#### Step 6. Slashing the Buttonhole

Using a sharp, pointed scissor, cut on the marked slash line to within 3/8 inch from the end. Form a triangle by clipping to the stitch threads on the piping strips (Fig. 6).





### Step 7. Turning

Turn the piping to the inside of the garment. The creased edges of the piping strips should meet exactly at the center of the buttonhole. Baste the buttonhole lips together using a whip stitch or tailor basting (Fig. 7).

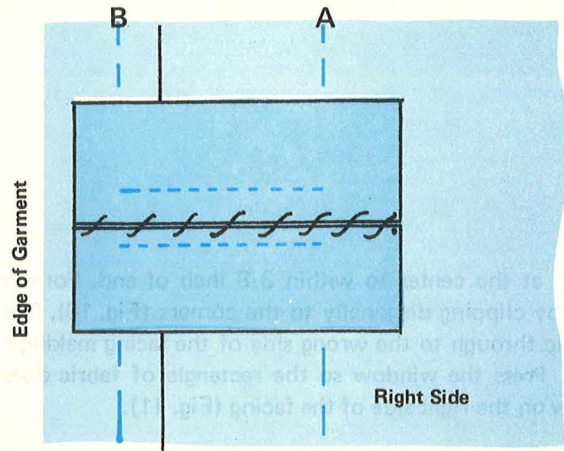


Fig. 7

### Step 8. Stitching Ends of Buttonholes

Turn back the edge of the garment and gently pull out the triangular point formed by cutting in Step 6. Place the garment right side up and fold it back along the end of the buttonhole. Machine or hand stitch several times across the end of the buttonhole to fasten the triangular point to the piping strips (Fig. 8). Be careful not to catch the outside of the garment in this stitching. Grade the edges of the piping strips. Catch stitch them to the interfacing if the fabric is bulky. Press.

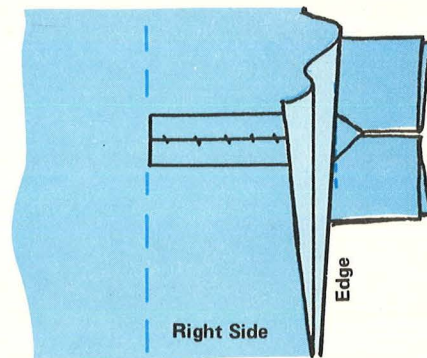


Fig. 8

### Finishing the Facing on the Back of the Buttonhole

The facing should be stitched to the garment, but not fastened down, before the back of the buttonhole is finished. Pin the facing in place on the garment.

Cut a piece of lining or underlining fabric about 1½ inches wide and 1½ inches longer than the buttonhole. The color should match the garment. Pin or hold the rectangle of fabric over the buttonhole area on the right side of the facing. From the right side of the garment stick pins through each of the four corners of the buttonhole to mark the exact size on the facing (Fig. 9a). Match the four corner points with pins from the facing side (Fig. 9b). Gently pull the facing loose from the garment. Baste, then stitch around the rectangle marked by the pins.

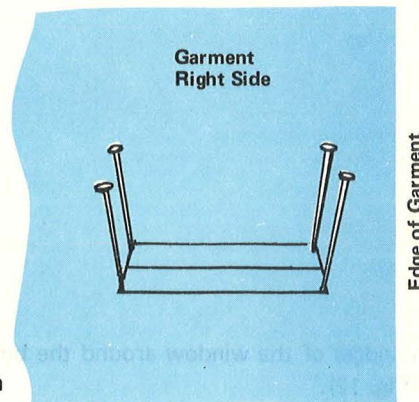


Fig. 9a

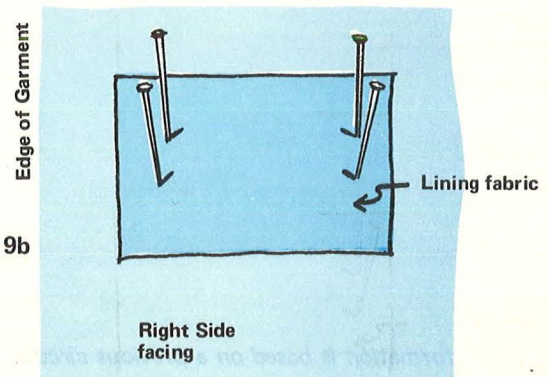


Fig. 9b

Slash at the center to within 3/8 inch of end. Form a triangle by clipping diagonally to the corners (Fig. 10). Pull the fabric through to the wrong side of the facing making a window. Press the window so the rectangle of fabric does not show on the right side of the facing (Fig. 11).

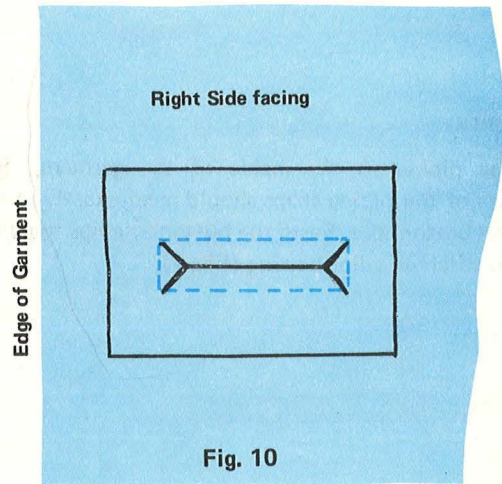


Fig. 10

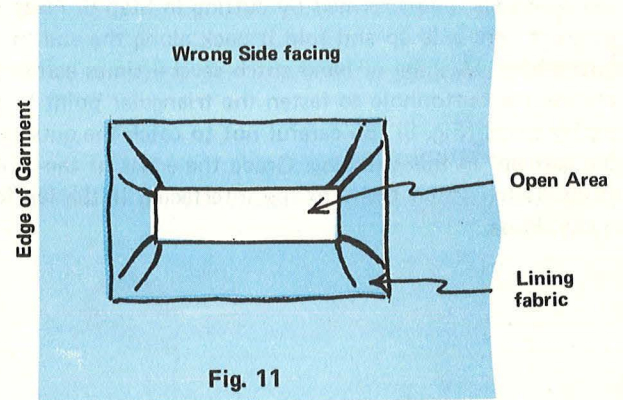


Fig. 11

Fasten the edges of the window around the buttonhole lips by hand (Fig. 12).

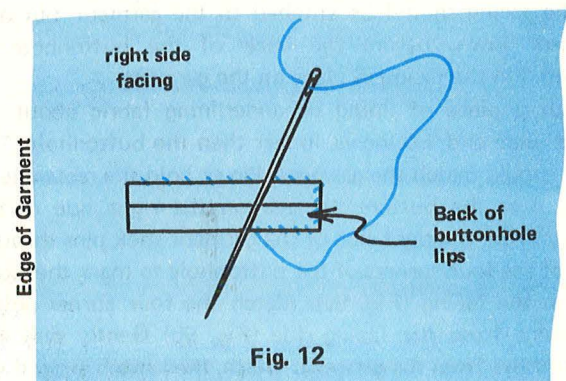


Fig. 12

*This information is based on a previous circular written by Anna Marie Kriefels, Extension Area Home Economist.*