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HEG84-196 Short Cut Tailoring Techniques: *Finishing The Hem*

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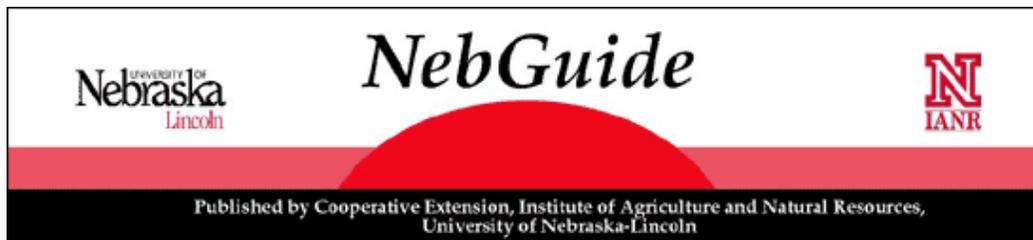


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Short Cut Tailoring Techniques: *Finishing The Hem*

This NebGuide provides methods for finishing the hems on jackets and coats, with attention to back vents, front facings, and eliminating bulk from the hem.

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An inconspicuous hem is a mark of quality construction. A properly finished hem in a tailored garment helps to achieve a professional look and adds the final touch.

Suggested widths for hems in jackets and coats are: 1 1/2 to 2 inches for lightweight fabrics and 2 to 3 inches for heavy-weight fabrics.

Interlacing the Hem

The hem of a jacket or coat can be given body with a strip of added interfacing. A quick method is to use fusible interfacing. Cut lightweight woven fusible on the bias and nonwoven fusible on the crosswise stretch. Fuse the interfacing to the hem or the garment side for a curved hem as it will not ease.

One method is to cut the interfacing on the bias and 1/4 inch less than the hem width. Do not fuse over seams. Instead, place fusible interfacing under the seam allowances. For a sharp hem edge, place the interfacing 1/4 inch from the cut edge of the hem and on the hemline (*Figure 1, Method 1*). Fuse in place.

KEY

■ **Right Side**

▣ **Wrong Side**

■ **Interfacing**

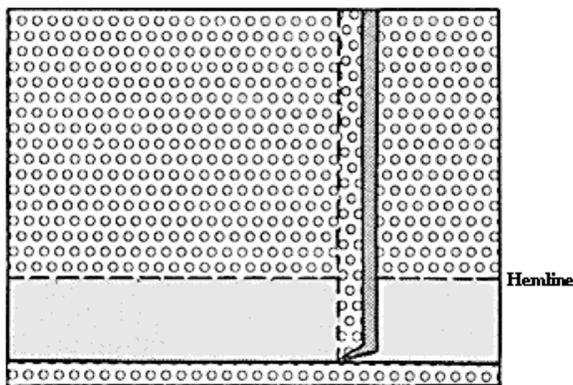


Figure 1., Method I

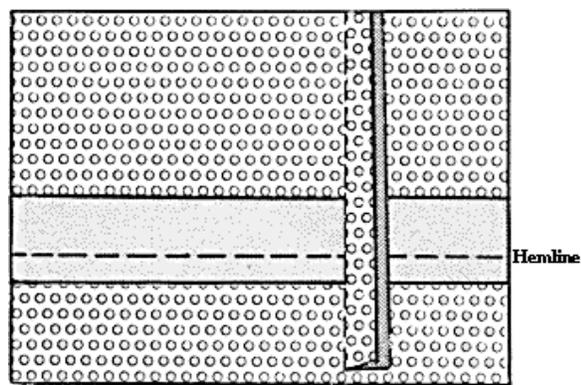


Figure 1., Method II

Another method is to cut the interfacing as wide as the hem. Place the strips $\frac{5}{8}$ inch below the established hemline for a soft hem (*Figure 1, Method II*). Fuse in place.

Bias interfacing strips cut from muslin or lightweight hair canvas can also be used. Cut strips 1 inch wider than the garment hem. Place the strips with the bottom edge $\frac{5}{8}$ inch below the marked hemline for a soft edge. Machine stitch the bottom edge and catch stitch the top edge of the interfacing to the garment (*Figure 2*).

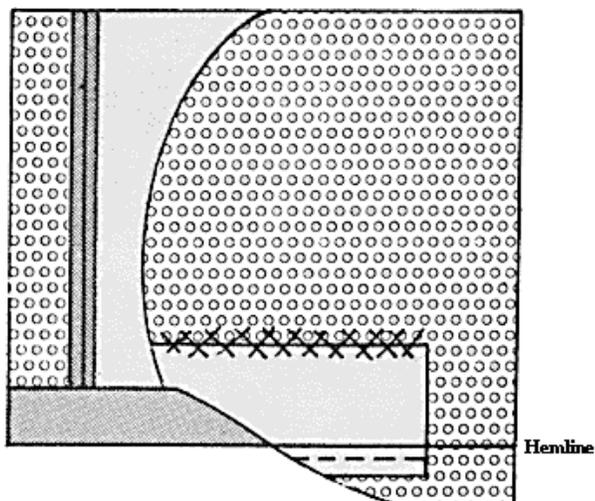


Figure 2.

Eliminating Bulk

To eliminate the bulk in the area where the facing folds back over the hem, the facing, hem, or both may need to be trimmed. The weight of the fabric indicates how much trimming should be done. Shown here are two ways to handle corners to get a smooth look. Select the one best suited for your fabric, design and individual needs.

Method I

This technique is a good choice for bulky and heavy textured fabrics as it staggers the trimming of both the facing and the hem. However, it does not allow for the garment to be lengthened at a later time.

Trim the fabric, leaving $\frac{5}{8}$ inch hem allowance on the facing and ending at the seam line. Leaving a 1-inch

width in the garment hem, trim for about 2 inches more into the garment hem (*Figure 3*). The rest of the garment is left with the full hem allowance. Catch stitch the garment hem to the interfacing. Steam press the hem to get the desired edge.

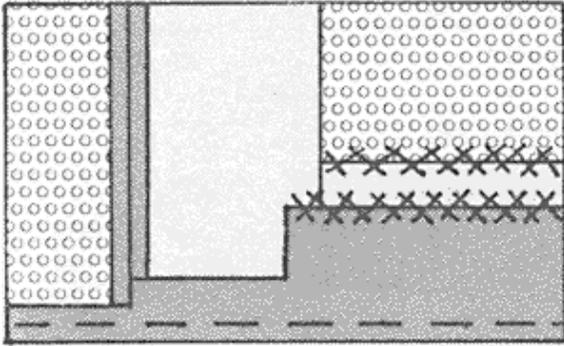


Figure 3.

Method II

Another popular technique allows the garment to be lengthened at a later time, if necessary. Trim $\frac{5}{8}$ inch away from the end of hem between the top and the basted hem. Then trim $\frac{5}{8}$ inch away from the top of hem to the fold line (*Figure 3A*). Catch stitch the hem to the interfacing. Steam press the hem to get the desired edge.

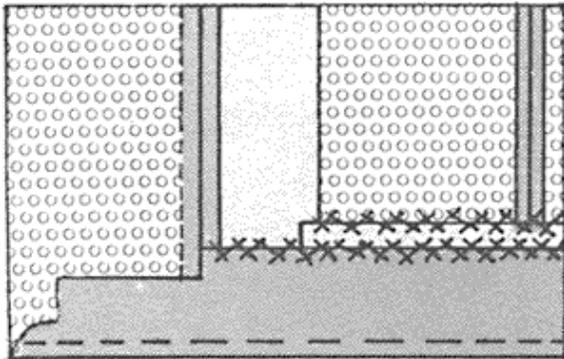


Figure 3A.

Handling Vent Hems

Many tailored garments have either a center back or two side back vents. There are two ways of finishing these vents. Choose the one that works best for you. Either method gives a neat, flat vent.

The overlapping side along the vent edge can be stabilized with fusible interfacing. You may choose not to put it in the hem. Sewn-in interfacing can also be used. Catch stitch it in place.

Before finishing the vent, lay the garment wrong side up on a table. Arrange the vent layers in the finished position. Trim the layers of the vent so they are even with lower edge of the garment. Then trim the under vent, which will be to the inside of the garment, slightly shorter so it doesn't peek out (*Figure 4*).

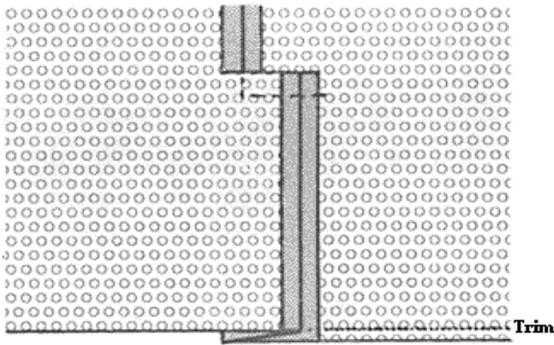


Figure 4.

Method I

The mitered corner technique is neat in appearance, eliminates bulk in the vent area, and allows the hem and vent edge to be smooth. It is more satisfactory when the hem and facing are the same width so the miter is on a 45° angle.

1. Press the vent facing in its finished position, then press up the hem allowance (*Figure 5*).

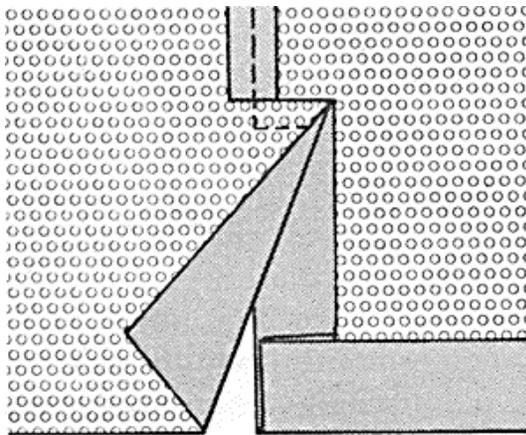


Figure 5.

2. Unfold the fabric to see the pressed lines.
3. Fold back the corner of the fabric on the bias so that the fold touches the intersection of the two pressed lines. Press in place (*Figure 6*).

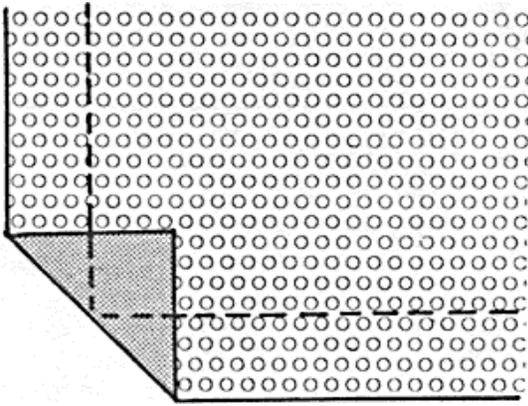


Figure 6.

4. Open the corner and refold the hem area on the bias with the right sides together. Machine stitch the two angled creased lines together (*Figure 7*).

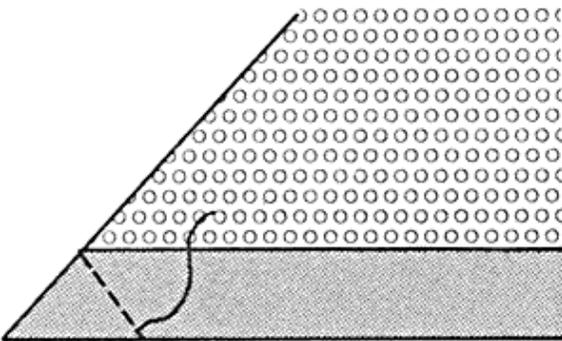


Figure 7.

5. Trim the seam to 1/4 inch. Press the seam open over a point presser (*Figure 8*). Turn and press again, slipping an envelope between the layers of fabric to eliminate any seam impressions.

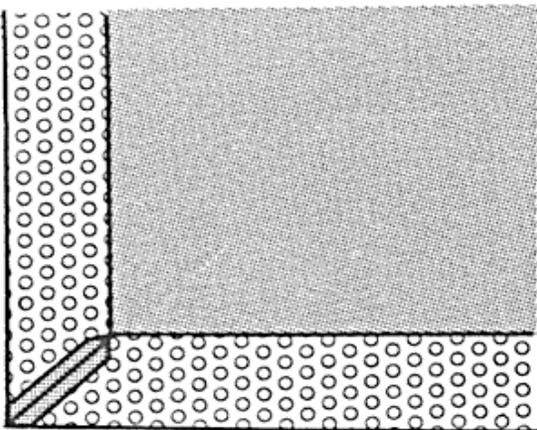


Figure 8.

Method II

The faced vent is done by folding the vent facing against the garment back, right sides together. Place the facing so a scant 1/8 inch extends below the edge of the garment. Stitch across the bottom along the hemline (*Figure 9*).

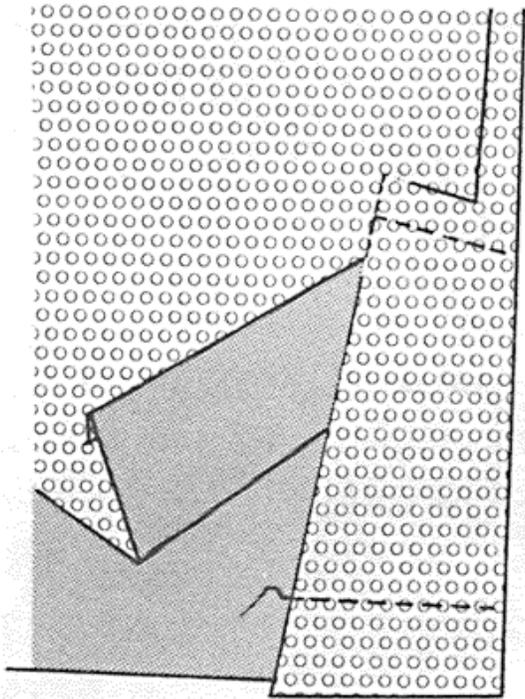


Figure 9.

Trim the seam allowance (*Figure 10*). Turn the vent to the right side and press. Roll the seam to the inside, and use an envelope as a shield between the fabric layers.

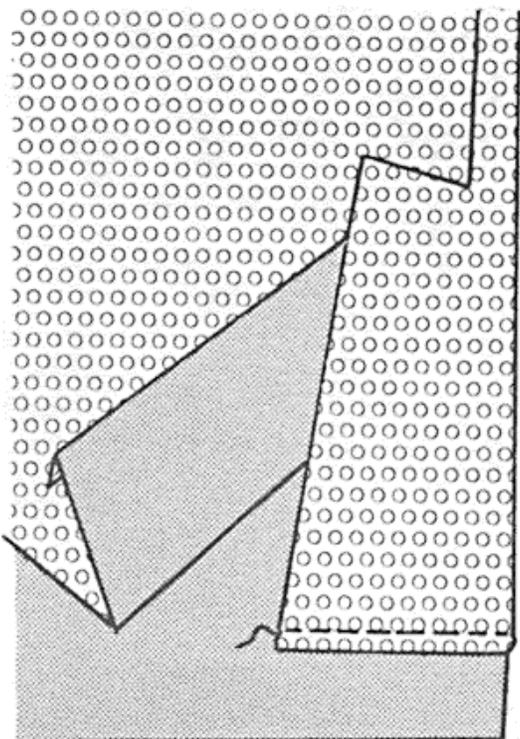


Figure 10.

Finishing the Front Facing at the Hemline

The raw edge of the facing that extends below the lining can be treated in different ways.

- For light-weight fabrics that ravel easily, make a 1/4 inch clip at the top of the hem. Turn the fabric in below the clip. Pin and slip stitch that edge and across the lower edge in place (*Figure 11*).

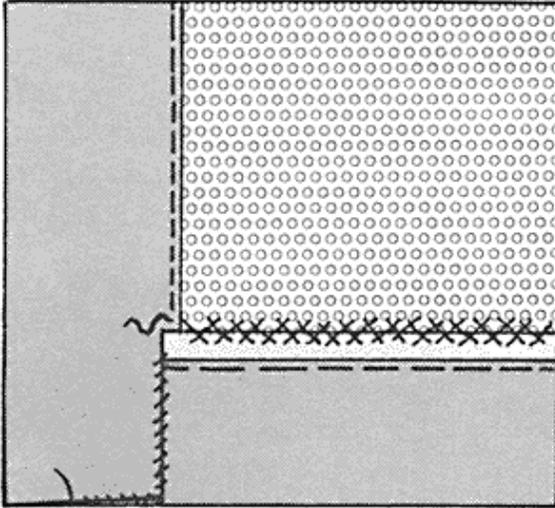


Figure 11.

- For heavier fabrics, catch-stitch the facing edge across the hem with small stitches and slip-stitch the lower edges of the facing (*Figure 12*).

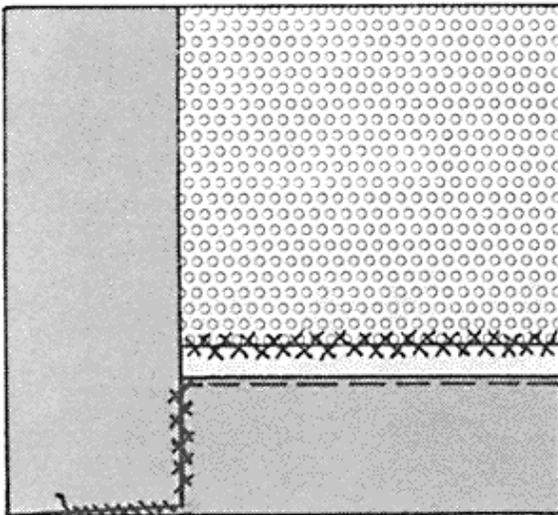


Figure 12.

- Another method for eliminating bulk is to use a strip of lining fabric and bind the edge. Slip-stitch the bound edge across the hem. This gives a very nice appearance with no raw edges.

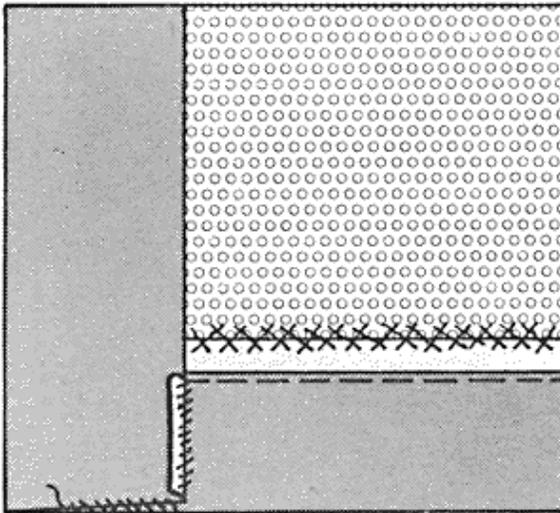


Figure 12A.

After handling the raw edges of the facing, blind or slip stitch the lower edges of the facing to the lower edge of the garment.

File HEG196 under: TEXTILES, CLOTHING AND DESIGN

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