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Clothing Pointers for 1946

HELEN ROCKE

Clothing the family should be somewhat easier in the coming months than it has been in the past year. For some time, efforts have been in progress to make available more of the needed types of garments and less of the high-cost fancy types. The coming of victory creates a change in the need and demand for fibers and textiles but it will take some time before adjustments can be made to meet the peace time needs.

Efforts to control clothing prices are being continued. Since April 1942, ceiling prices have been in effect to regulate the distribution and cost of clothing. But clothing has been one of the most difficult of all products to control due to style changes. If a few extra stripes were added to fabrics, or a few buttons or trimmings added to garments the previous ceiling prices no longer applied. Last year, American consumers spent over 5½ billion dollars more for their clothing than they did in 1939.

All consumers can share in helping to control prices by doing some careful thinking and planning before buying. Any clothing that has a reasonable amount of wear left in it is worth salvaging to be remodeled or made over. Fashion pages still continue to give makeover ideas, and to present styles that lend themselves to combinations of materials, as contrasting yokes or sleeves, or jackets and vests of a different color and material than that used in the skirt.

The woman who shops for and uses ready-mades, needs to choose carefully and use her ingenuity to get more service and satisfaction from those which are available. Poor workmanship may continue to be a problem for some time.

Taking time to strengthen some of the weak places or to do a little extra finishing or refitting often saves time that might be spent later in mending. In addition, comfort, and attractiveness may be given to the garment.

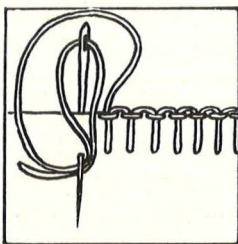
Following are a few suggestions that may be helpful:

More Service From Ready-Mades

Seams—Poorly stitched and fraying seams are common examples of the poor workmanship in many garments. To strengthen a narrow or loosely stitched seam on an inexpensive garment, restitch the seam just inside the original seam with the machine set to make 14 to 16 stitches to the inch. If the material frays easily, make a row of stitching near the edge or overcast the edges. This should be done before laundering or dry-cleaning because these processes increase fraying.

Plackets—Many plackets will give better service if strengthened at the end by a few securely fastened stitches or by a short length of tape sewed on the wrong side of the placket opening.

Buttonholes—Working over the machine-made buttonholes on most ready-made garments will lengthen their service and im-

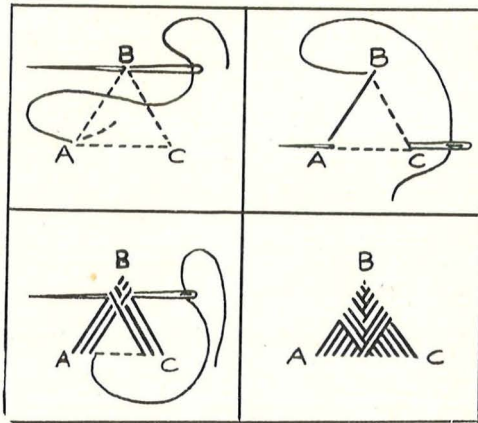


Detail of buttonhole stitch.

prove their appearance. Snip off the loose threads and rework the buttonholes using threads to match the fabric in color.

Make the buttonhole stitch working from right to left. Bring the thread from the eye of the needle to the left under the point of the needle. Complete the stitch by drawing the thread through the loop and pulling upward to form a purl along the inner edge of the buttonhole.

Pocket Corners and Ends of Pleats—Patch pockets on wash dresses, blouses, and aprons may be made more sturdy by laying a piece of tape on the underside of the garment in line with the pocket top and stitching it in with the corners.



Steps in making an arrowhead tack.

Arrowhead tacks may be used to strengthen and finish end of piped or corded pockets, the ends of pleats or darts. In addition to service, they add distinction to an otherwise ordinary dress.

The size of the arrowhead is determined by its position. The ing should be the width of the two pipings. At the top of a kick pleat in a suit skirt, the arrowhead may be five-eighths to three-fourths inch wide.

Mark the arrowhead by basting a triangle to indicate size and position. An easy way to mark the position and to keep edges even is to cut a triangle from white paper, baste in place and work over it. Buttonhole twist, rope or strand floss may be used. Fasten the thread and follow the order of stitches as indicated in the illustration. Place the stitches carefully side by side but do not let them overlap. Fasten the thread invisibly on the wrong side. Press from the wrong side on a well-padded ironing board.

REFITTING

Some ready-made dresses are difficult to alter, so avoid buying one that requires complicated changes. If a dress that fits throughout can not be found, it is usually best to buy one that fits the upper part of the body. The skirt is less difficult to alter.

When trying on a ready-made dress in the store, examine seams,

hem and waist line to see if there is enough cloth to allow for needed changes or for possible shrinkage if the dress will be laundered.

Remember that if seams are let out, the previous stitching line will show on some materials such as jersey. Many misfits cannot be remedied. A narrow sleeve cap or back cannot be satisfactorily enlarged unless there are unusually wide seam allowances, because skimpy shoulder seams soon tear out.

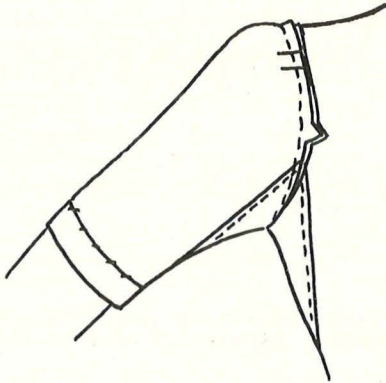
In altering, rip no more than necessary. Clip the machine stitching between places to be changed. Remove stitching carefully to avoid pulling or tearing the cloth. Press the edges of opened seams, being careful not to stretch them.

Tight Armhole—On some ready-made dresses, the armhole seam is finished with a binding or several rows of machine stitching. Ripping off this binding or taking out all but one row of stitching will sometimes give enough room to make an otherwise tight armhole comfortable. However, in many cases, this weakens the armhole and usually is not advisable. Overcasting and a row of very close stitching along seam edges will help strengthen the armhole if this must be done. If the armhole is very tight, it may have to be trimmed out and the sleeve refitted.

Misplaced Elbow Fullness—Rip the sleeve seam between points above and below the elbow. If there are darts, rip them out also and press the sleeves. Then try on the blouse to find the correct place for the elbow fullness. Make new darts and restitch the sleeve seam.

Sleeve Small Across Upper Arm—If the sleeves seem small across the upper arm, it may be that one of the following changes will help:

1. If the seams are wide enough, let out the sleeve and waist seams on each side of the armhole.
2. If the sleeve is long enough, raise it and recut the top, adding extra width at each side of the sleeve cap. Refit the sleeve in the armhole. Mark a new bottom line. It may be necessary to face the lower edge of the sleeve.

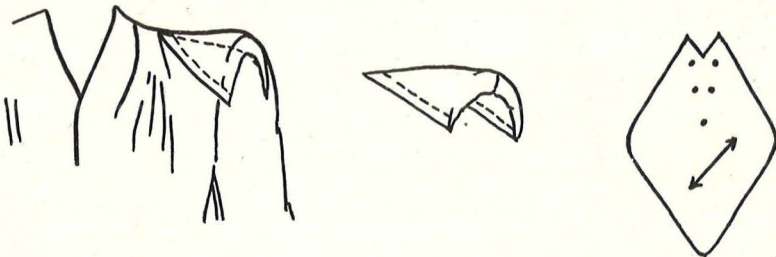


Gusset for tight sleeves.

3. Release the underseam of the sleeve until it is comfortable. Ease in the extra fullness around the top or, on a large arm, ease in a little fullness in the sleeve at the underarm side.
4. If the underarm sleeve seam is too narrow to be let out, set a gusset in the underarm seam of the waist at the armpit line and also set a similar piece in the sleeve.

Material for the gusset may sometimes be obtained by cutting a small strip of material from a facing or from the hem or a belt of the same material. Sometimes a small diamond-shaped piece of material $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 2" in size, set in at the joining of the underarm and sleeve seam will give the extra width needed.

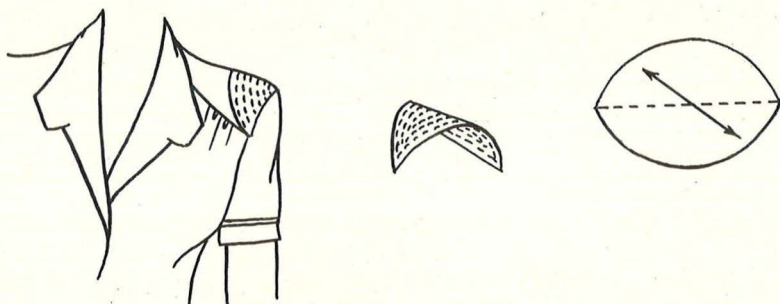
Fitting Shoulders—In order to attain the important style feature of smooth broad shoulders, shoulder pads are an essential in every dress. It is often necessary to make some changes in the



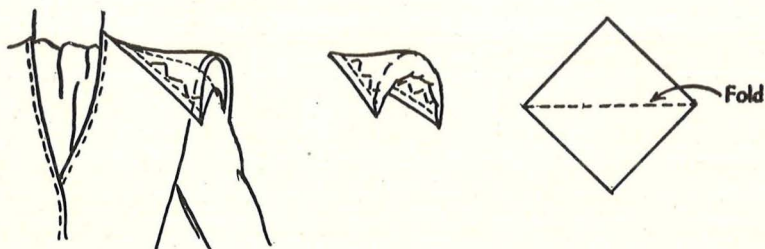
(1) Pad for dress—dart on underside helps to shape pad to fit shoulders.



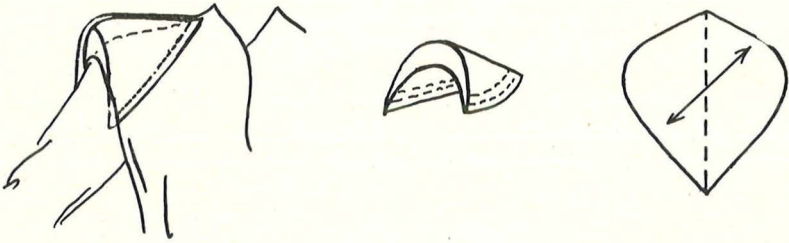
- (2) Shaped pad which fits over top of arm—especially desirable for extended shoulder effect, and for kimona and raglan sleeves.



- (3) Pad for blouse or wash dress—made of material like garment and usually without cotton filler.



- (4) Pad for jacket or dress—folded edge is soft and may be shaped over top of arm.



- (5) Pad for coat—front of pad is longer than back and is especially desirable for figure requiring extra padding at front of shoulder.

shoulder pads found in ready-made dresses. Sometimes they have been carelessly made and attached, and give an undesirable effect. An incorrectly fitted pad may cause a sleeve to appear incorrectly fitted. The present shoulder line calls for a clean-cut, trim pad, straight and smooth on top, and form-fitting to the shoulder. So it is important to have pads made and fitted to the shoulder before any fitting of the blouse or sleeve is done.

Many pads which are thick at the outer edge and not fitted to the figure give an unbalanced effect. Such pads may sometimes be remedied by opening the sides and readjusting the padding. If the outer covering and padding is not long enough to fit the shoulder well, a new covering and extra padding may be needed. Pads in which the edges have been bound with heavy tape may form a harsh line along the shoulder.

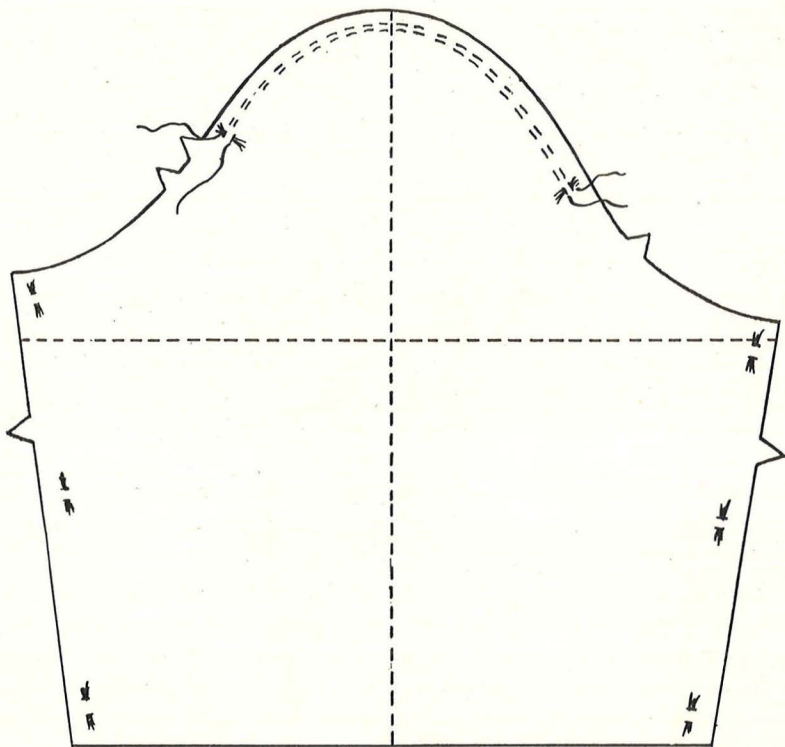
When a thick pad has been machine stitched in place along the armhole seam or through the center of the pad, it is usually desirable to rip this stitching and tack the pad in place. In wash dresses, pads are more satisfactory when snapped in place so they may be removed before the dress is laundered.

Pads in various sizes may be purchased at notion counters, but are expensive and it is not always possible to find those which fit correctly. They are easy to make at home, and the size and design may be correctly adjusted to the figure and special garment. In addition to making a costume up-to-date, well-fitted pads help in concealing figure irregularities as sloping shoulders, one shoulder higher than another, or very narrow shoulders.

The illustrations indicate kinds of pads suited to different types of garments.

Putting in Sleeves—If a sleeve is not correctly placed it may help to remove and reset them. A well fitted sleeve hangs straight down from the high point of the shoulder when the arm hangs naturally at the side. Lengthwise yarns run straight down from the top of the shoulder to the elbow, crosswise yarns of the sleeve cap are parallel to the floor at the armpit level.

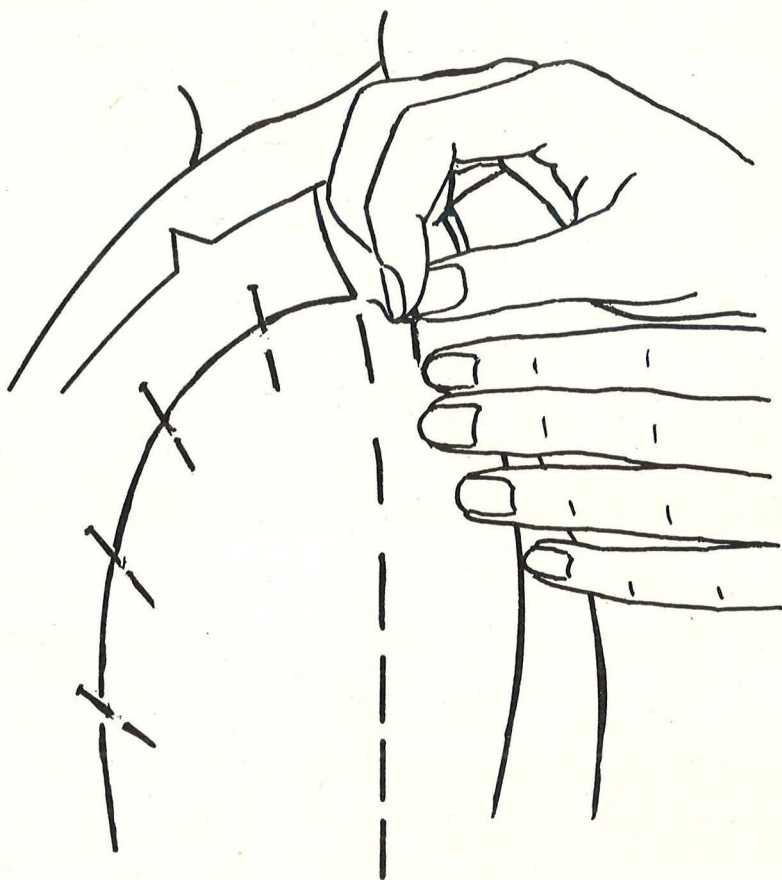
The fit of a sleeve often depends upon how it is pinned and basted in the armhole. First see that the armhole line is good. See that all seams entering the armhole are finished and pressed.



Sleeve showing crosswise and lengthwise grain of material marked by lines of basting, and gathering threads between notches.

Make sure that the sleeves are cut and marked as mates. Make two rows of gathering, preferably machine stitching, over the top of the sleeves between the notches, the first, the seam's depth from the outer edge and the other about $\frac{1}{4}$ " out from this and in the seam allowance as shown in the illustration. Draw the gathering threads slightly and then press the top of the sleeve over a curved pad to form a cup shape.

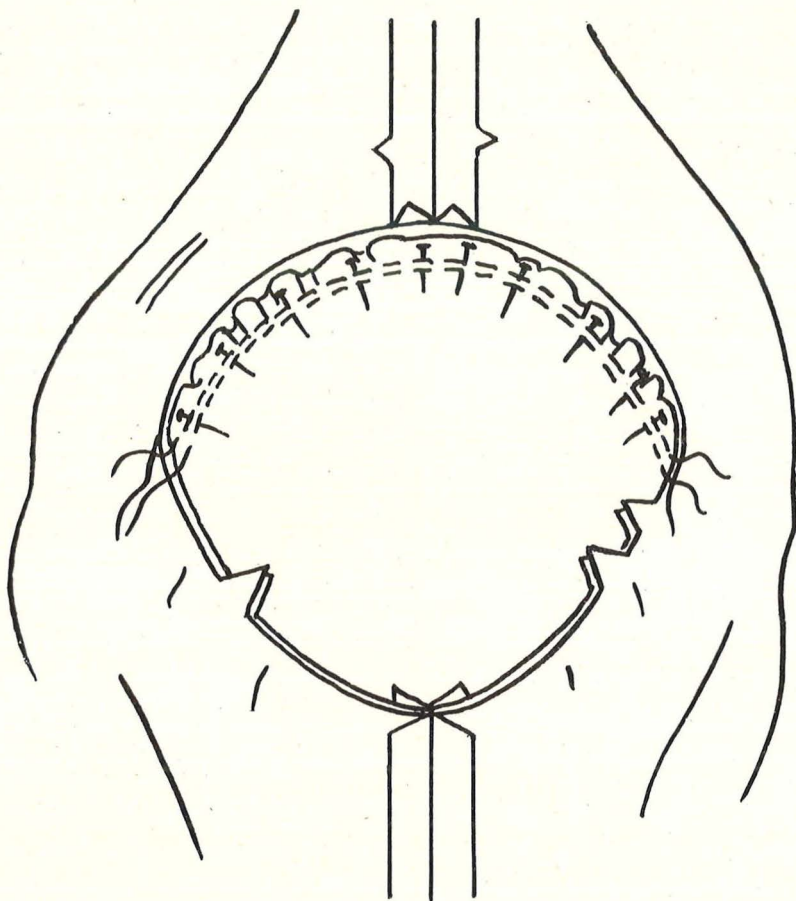
The easiest way to put the sleeve in the armhole is to have someone help you who will pin the sleeve in position on the figure.



Pinning a sleeve in position with the garment on figure.

Put on the dress with shoulder pads in position, then slip on the the sleeve and have it pinned in place, with pins put in at right angles to the seam line. The high point of the sleeve in many cases needs to be placed slightly in front of the shoulder seam to make the sleeve hang correctly.

Remove the dress, and slip stitch the sleeve in position from the right side. Check the basting line from the wrong side to smooth out irregular places. Try on to be sure the fit is correct before the final machine stitching of the armhole seam.



Sleeve with fullness evenly adjusted and pinned in armhole of dress.

If working alone, prepare the sleeves for fitting, and put on the dress as described above. Stand before a mirror and place the sleeve in position so the lengthwise grain of the material hangs straight. Pin the sleeve at the high point of the shoulder, remove the dress and finish pinning the sleeve in place. Work from the inside of the dress with the sleeve right side out and blouse wrong side out. Match notches and lowest part of sleeve with lowest part of armhole. With the sleeve side toward you, place pins in the seam line at right angles to the edge, first at top and bottom and then at the side notches. Smooth the lower half of sleeve cap into the armhole with little or no fullness. Hold in place with a few pins. A very plump arm may need more ease here than a slender one. A plain sleeve top will have about 2" of extra fullness to be eased into the top. Draw up and fasten the gathering threads. Avoid drawing them too tight. Keep the sleeve fairly smooth over the top to the point where both the armhole and the sleeve begin to curve down. From there, ease the extra fullness into the armhole evenly with no pleats or folds in the stitching line. Pin to hold fullness in place.

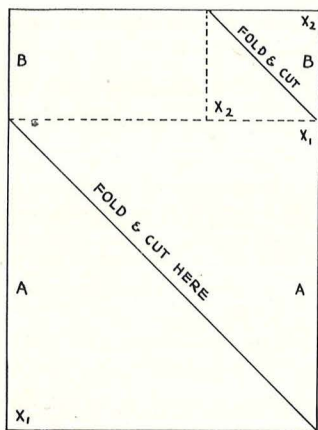
Pin and baste on the seam line, working from the sleeve side. Use small bastings, especially where the fullness is eased. Remove the pins and try on the blouse before stitching by machine.

Adjustments at the Waistline—Sometimes a dress may draw at the bust or waistline because the fullness has not been placed properly. Rip the waist from the skirt and shift the gathers or darts so they come directly under the bust in the front and under the shoulder blades in the back. If the material is strained, releasing the waistline darts will give some extra fullness.

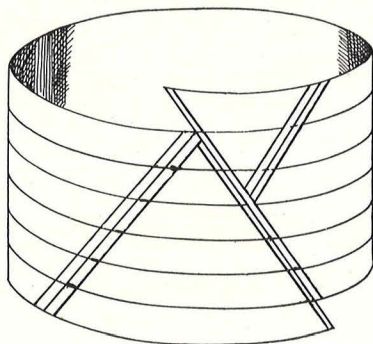
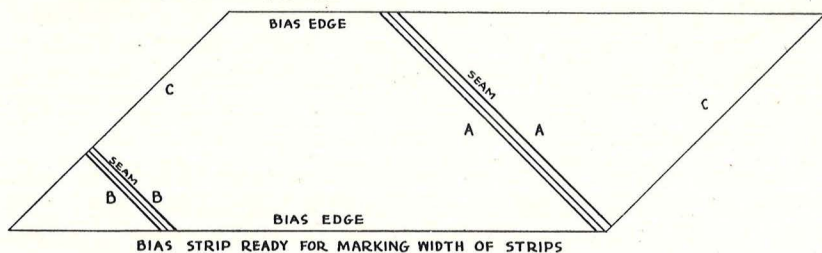
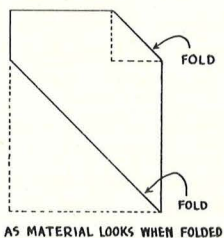
If the waistline is loose or stretched, sometimes the extra fullness can be held in place by stitching a tape or ribbon of the proper waistline length to the waistline seam.

Cutting Bias Tape

The following illustrations show how to cut a quantity of bias strips from a rectangular piece of cloth. Straighten the edges of the cloth and press if creased or wrinkled.



MARKED AND READY FOR CUTTING



Steps in cutting bias strips from rectangular piece of cloth.

Fold so corners marked X_1 and X_2 are together, and cut on the fold lines. Next, place the pieces with sides A and A, and B and B matching. Join these pieces with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam and press seam open.

The long bias strip of cloth is now ready to be marked according to the width of bias desired. Use a long ruler or yardstick and mark lightly with chalk or pencil, taking care not to stretch the cloth.

Next, join edges C and C with the one edge extending beyond the other the width of the bias strip desired. Stitch and press open the seam and the cloth is ready for cutting into one continuous bias strip.

Renew Limp Rayon Material

One method of reviving limp washable rayon material is the gelatin dip. For average weight material, soften 2 tablespoons of gelatin in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold water. Then dissolve it in about 2 cups of boiling water. More gelatin may be added if a very stiff finish is desired. Put the gelatin solution in a bowl large enough to hold the dress. Add cold water until the solution is lukewarm. Then dip the dress which has been washed and rinsed previously. Squeeze it gently to remove excess solution. Then roll in a bath towel until dry enough to iron. If the material is a print with colors that are apt to run, place towels between the folds. Iron on the wrong side and use press cloth for collars, cuffs, and pleats that have to be ironed on the right side.