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## EC55-401 Machine Stitching and Tucks

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MACHINE STITCHING AND TUCKS

by

Helen Rocke

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Machine stitching with threads of different size and texture is an inexpensive trimming which often adds a professional touch to tailored garments. The beauty of machine stitching lies in the use of thread of contrasting or matching color and texture, in regulating the tension and length of stitch to suit the material, and in spacing the rows of stitching in even and regular arrangement.

Stitching with mercerized or silk sewing thread. This is effective for collars and cuffs, belts, pockets, and pleats along the front opening of dresses and blouses. The wide side of the presser foot may be used as a gauge for spacing the rows of stitching.

One must plan so that the bands, pockets, or belts to be stitched are the right width for the number of rows of stitching to be made. Pin carefully in position first and then baste along the edges and through the center, spacing the basting so that it will not be necessary to stitch through it.

Stitching with pearl cotton, embroidery floss, or similar thread. Such stitching is often used on fabrics of plain color, making an all-over pattern for yokes, fronts of blouses, and jackets. The stitching is done before the garment is sewn together. Number 5 pearl cotton or rope embroidery floss is suitable for heavier fabrics such as linen, suiting, flannel, and other materials of equal weight. Wind the floss on the bobbin and use regular mercerized thread on the top of the machine. It may be necessary to lengthen the stitch and slightly loosen the bobbin tension.

Effective designs may be made by rows of diagonal stitching placed about an inch apart, or by making two or three straight rows of stitching close together and spacing them at regular intervals. Mark the pattern or design on the wrong side of the material. If the fabric is inclined to stretch, or is cut on the bias, baste to thin paper with diagonal basting. Stitch through the paper and remove paper and bastings when the stitching is completed.

Heavy-duty mercerized thread or special trimming thread may be used for this type of decorative stitching. These are used in the regular way but with a heavier needle than for ordinary sewing.

Elastic thread of the finer, lighter-weight quality is also used for decorative purposes. It may be used for a number of rows of shirring, or to shirr the entire front of a blouse or jacket. The elastic thread is wound on the bobbin without stretching, and mercerized thread is used on top, with the machine threaded in the regular way. The material is held flat and smooth and the elastic thread shirrs as it stitches. Ordinarily no adjustment in the tension is necessary unless the material does not shirr, or if the elastic thread sews into the fabric so tightly that it breaks when the shirring is pulled out straight. Then loosen the bobbin tension slightly.



## TUCKS

Dainty tucks are an attractive trimming for blouses and dresses made of fabrics such as batiste, handkerchief linen, lawn, voile, organdy, and other sheer materials. With the exception of the wider plain and the corded tucks, those described are most effective on material without pattern or design.

Plain tucks are made interesting and decorative by variations in width and grouping. Tucks may be as fine as one-sixteenth of an inch. These may be grouped, or an entire surface such as a yoke or blouse front covered with them. Wider tucks may also be grouped so that there is interest and variety in the spacing as well as the tucks. The machine tucker is a time-saver if tucks are to be stitched by machine. A cardboard gauge helps in accurately measuring tucks made by hand. Such a gauge has two notches, the first notch to mark the exact width of one tuck and the second notch in line with the fold of the next tuck. This serves to keep the space between, as well as the tucks, even.

Scalloped or shell tucking is made by taking two stitches at even intervals over narrow handrun tucks. These stitches are drawn close together to form scallops. (Figure 1.)

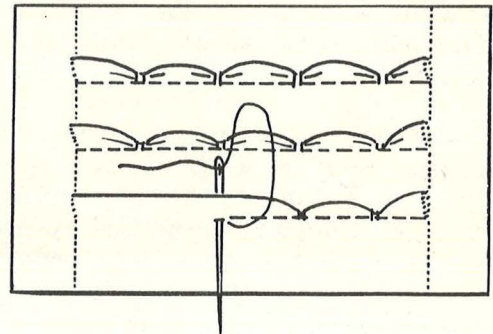


FIG. 1.—Scalloped or shell tucking.

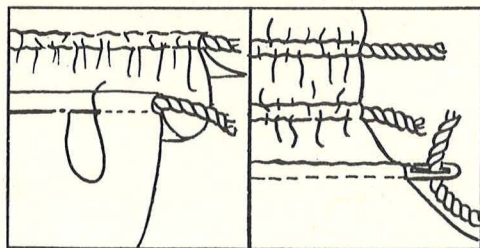


FIG. 2.—Corded tucks.

Corded Tucks are effective for taffeta, crepes, and other such materials. The cord may be basted inside the tuck and the stitching done by hand or machine (with a cording foot) if the tucks are not spaced too close together. If closely spaced, the cord is drawn in after the stitching is finished. (Figure 2.)