

1963

## EC63-429 Making Bound Buttonholes

Anna Marie Kreifels

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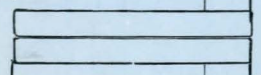
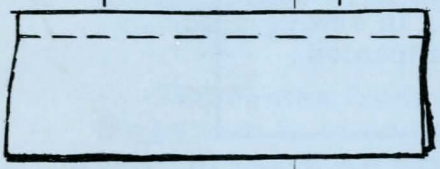
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# making BOUND BUTTONHOLES

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A durable and neat bound buttonhole is the result of accuracy and skill. With practice you can develop this skill and learn to understand the need for accuracy which helps to give your garment a hand tailored look .

There are several methods for making tailored buttonholes. Each differs slightly in technique, but results are similar. This circular tells how to make bound buttonholes by the "piped" or "tuck-strip" method in which cording may be used if desired. After learning this method you might try to follow instructions given on pattern guide sheet, in sewing pamphlets or books published by commercial companies .



# MAKING BOUND BUTTONHOLES

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

Sometimes unusual placement of buttons and buttonholes is a part of the design of a garment. If this is the case, follow pattern markings for best results. Usually buttons and buttonholes are placed on the center front or the center back line of the garment. Center front placement is used as the example in this circular.

Always make a sample buttonhole in a scrap of fabric from which the garment is being made. This will help you decide if the method you plan to use gives good results on that particular fabric. Bound buttonholes are always made through an interfacing basted to the wrong side of the fabric. Therefore, use an interfacing when making the sample buttonhole.

Baste with thread of slightly contrasting color for all necessary marking. These markings will show on both the right and wrong sides of the garment and bastings are easily removed. Pencil markings are sometimes used on interfacings, but avoid marking the outer fabric with pencil. Chalk markings are usually too broad for accurate stitching of bound buttonholes.

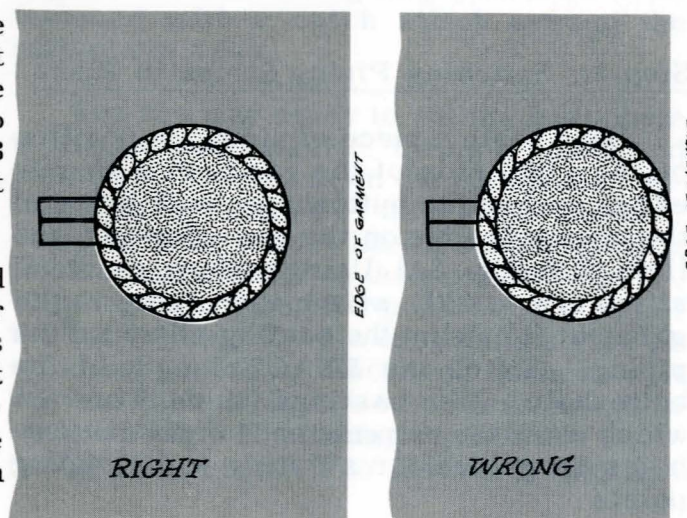
To determine the length of the buttonhole, measure the diameter of the button plus the thickness. Test for proper size by slipping the button through the sample buttonhole you make.

The center front of the garment should be marked with a basting thread before the pattern is removed. If buttonhole markings are used as given on the commercial pattern, check the spacing for accuracy.

Occasionally you may wish to change the spacing or the number of buttonholes. The position of the buttonhole nearest the neckline needs special consideration depending on the style of the garment. A button placed in line with the crown of the bust helps to prevent a front closure from gapping. If the buttonholes continue below the waistline of the garment, plan to place one buttonhole at the exact waistline. A hook and eye or snap is used instead of the waistline button on belted garments. Placement of the buttonholes nearest the waistline is determined according to the width of the belt and the size of the buckle. Double check your markings for accuracy.

Buttonholes are placed so that the edge of the button, when buttoned, will be about 1/4 inch from the garment edge. The buttonhole for a large button is placed so that the edge of the button rests about 1/3 its diameter from the edge of the garment when buttoned.

Horizontal buttonholes should extend slightly (1/16 to 1/8 inch) across the center line toward the edge of the garment. This allows the button shank to rest on the exact center line when buttoned. Vertical buttonholes are placed with the cutting line on the center. Notice the buttonhole markings on the pattern being used.





## HOW TO MAKE THE BUTTONHOLE

### Step 1. Marking

Mark the position of the buttonholes with basting thread. Use a gauge to insure accurate spacing. With basting thread, mark two lines showing the exact length of the buttonholes (lines A and B in Fig. 1). These lines must be parallel to the center line and on the straight grain of the fabric. Then baste a line 1/4 inch above and below each buttonhole mark. Extend these marking lines beyond each end of the buttonhole (lines C and D in Fig. 1). These lines are later used to guide your stitching, so be exact when measuring and marking.

### Step 2. Preparing Piping Strips

Pieces of material for piping are cut on the lengthwise grain. Bias is sometimes used for unusual effects. Cut piping strips 1 to 1/2 inches wide and use the following formula for figuring the length needed: Length of buttonhole plus 1 inch times number of buttonholes times 2.

Fold the piping strip lengthwise in the exact center with right sides out. Do not stretch creased edge. Machine baste 1/8 inch from the creased edge the entire length of the piping. Cut the prepared piping into equal pieces so there will be two pieces for each buttonhole. Each piece should be one inch longer than the length of the buttonhole.

### Step 3. 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 the basted guide line (line C in Fig. 3A). Using a short machine stitch (18 to 22), stitch the piping to the garment following the basting stitch on the piping. Stitch the EXACT length of the buttonhole. Use bastings (lines A and B) which mark the extreme ends of the buttonholes as guides for starting and stopping points.

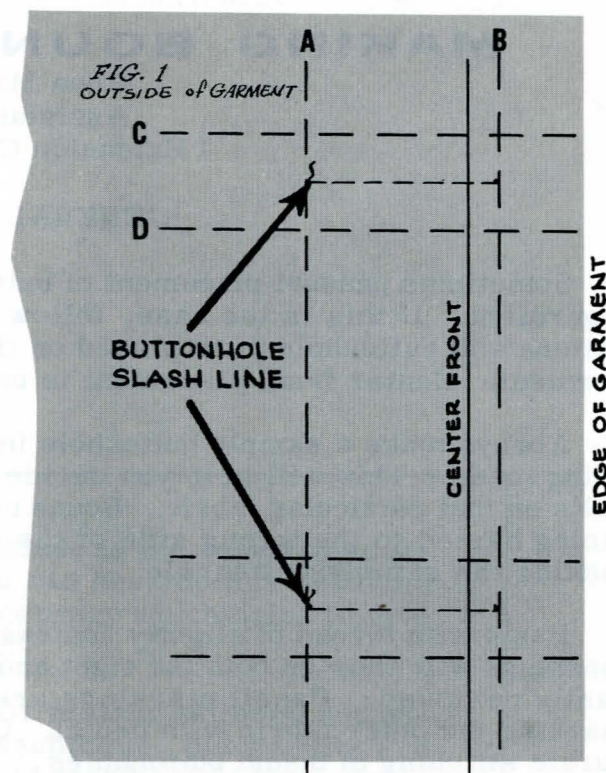
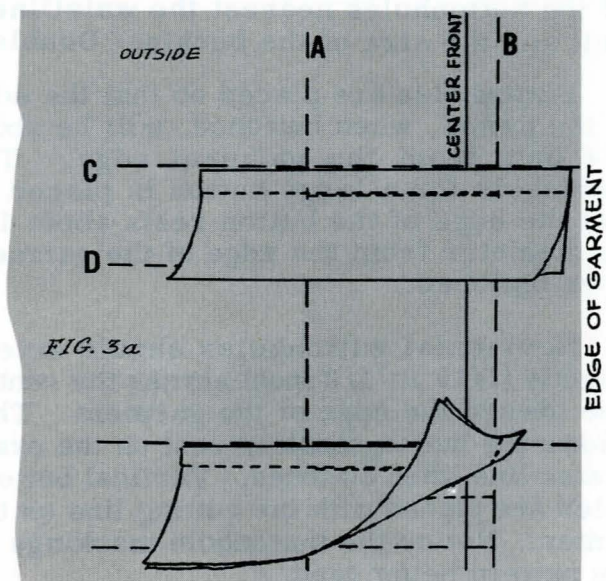
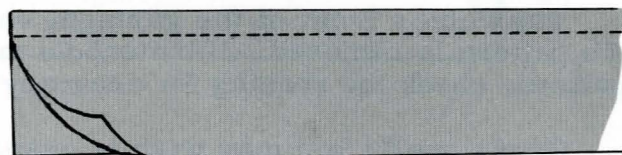
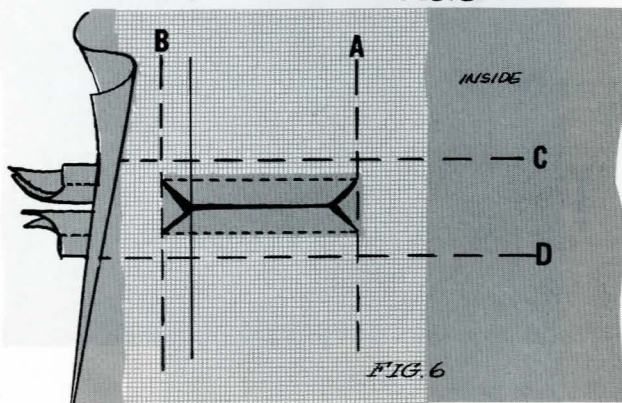
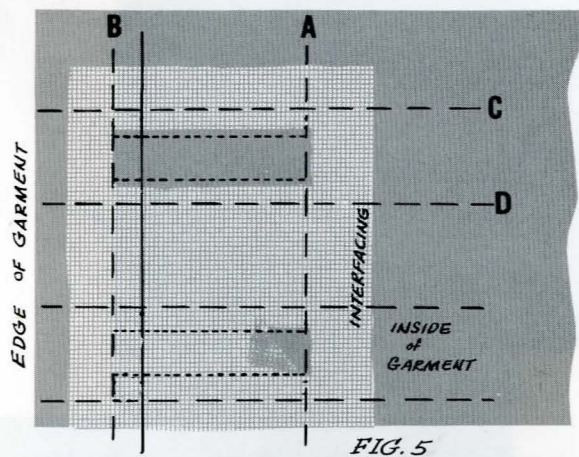
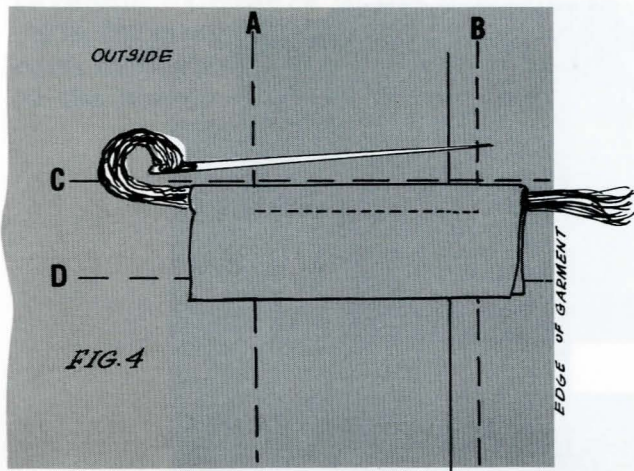
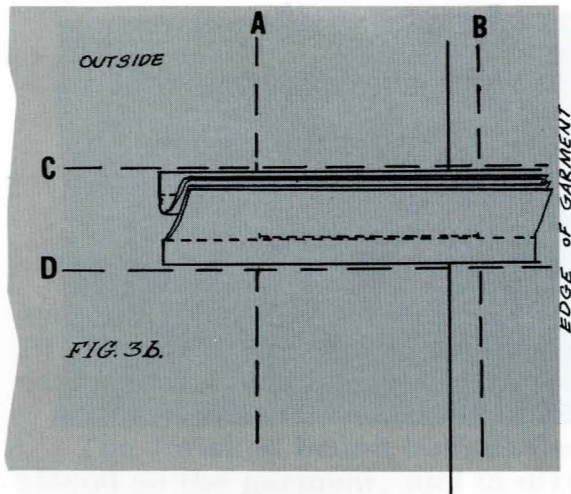


FIG. 2







Place another piece of piping along the other edge of the buttonhole and stitch it in place in the same manner. Secure the threads by back stitching or by tying. Counting the number of stitches from one end to the other will help keep each edge of the buttonhole an equal length. If the fabric is soft, stitch counting might not be successful.

Stitch piping strips to the other buttonholes. Check all measurements and stitchings to make certain all buttonholes are in a straight line and have the exact shape and size. Sometimes a check of stitching is easier when inspected on the wrong side of the garment where folds of piping do not interfere. **BE ACCURATE.**

#### Step 4. Cording

Buttonholes in wool garments are usually corded. To cord the buttonhole, thread yarn in a heavy needle and insert the yarn in the piping strips at this point of construction. Cording will help maintain the shape of the buttonhole. If the piping strips have been cut on the bias, cording is necessary to prevent stretching.

#### Step 5. Cutting the Buttonhole

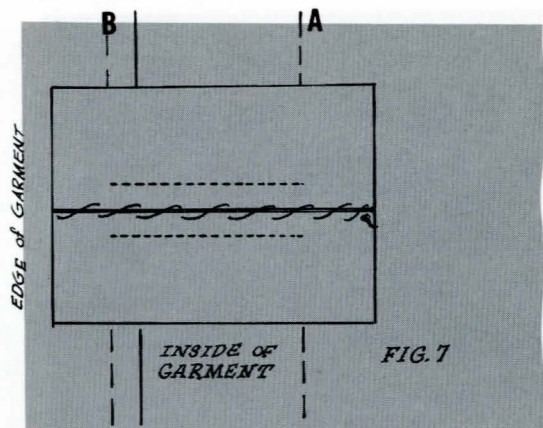
To avoid bulkiness in the buttonhole area, heavy interfacing should be trimmed out before the buttonhole is cut in the garment. This is done by cutting only the interfacing along the outside of the two rows of machine stitching and across the buttonhole ends. Do not cut machine stitches. Lift out the rectangular piece of interfacing from the buttonhole area (Fig. 5). The edge of the interfacing may then need to be fastened with a catch stitch around the buttonhole area.

You are now ready to cut the buttonhole in the garment itself. Using a sharp and pointed scissors, cut on the buttonhole cutting line to within 1/4 inch from the end. Cut diagonally to each line of stitching which fastens piping strips to the garment (Fig. 6). This forms a triangular point at each end of the buttonhole. Do not cut piping strips or stitching threads. Puckered corners will result if fabric is not cut close enough to the stitching. If stitching threads are accidentally cut, restitch to insure durability.



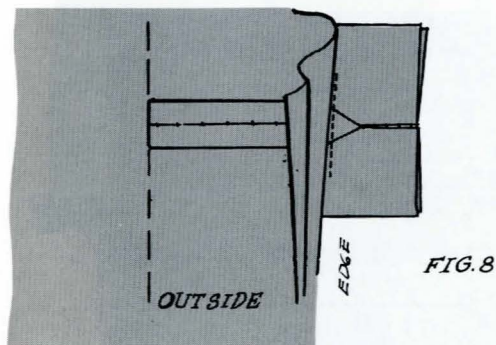
### Step 6. Turning

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 and each strip should take up one half the width of the opening. Tailor baste the creased edges of binding together the full length of the strips (Fig. 7).



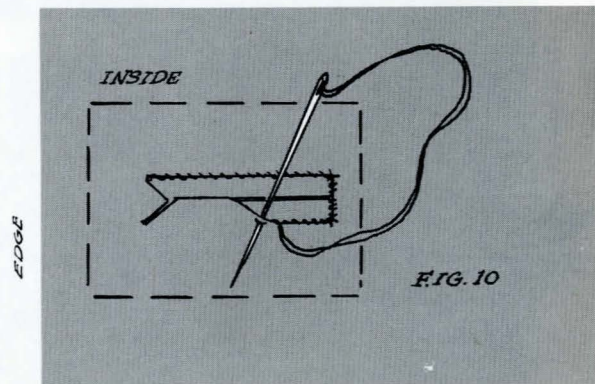
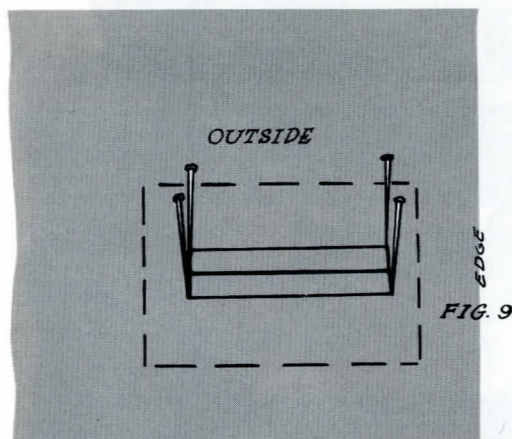
### Step 7. Stitching Ends of Buttonholes

Turn back the edge of the garment and gently pull out the triangular point formed by cutting in Step 5. Place the garment right side up, fold it back along the end of the buttonhole. Machine or hand stitch across the end of the buttonhole to fasten the triangular point to the piping strips (Fig. 8). DO NOT CATCH THE OUTSIDE OF THE GARMENT IN THIS STITCHING. Stitch each end of each buttonhole in the same way. Press lightly. Trim piping strips to about 3/8 inch from stitching line. Grade these edges if the material is bulky.



### Step 8. Finishing the Facing Under the Buttonholes

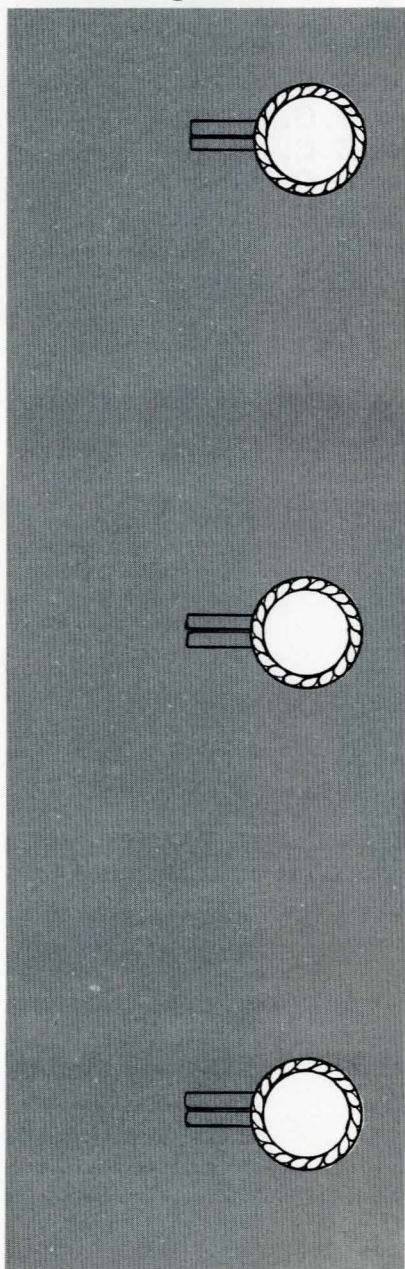
Stitch the facing to the garment, fold it to the inside, and baste it in place. Baste around each buttonhole to prevent the facing from slipping out of place. The grainline of the facing should be identical to that of the garment. Stick pins through each of the four corners of the buttonhole from the right side to mark the exact size of the buttonhole on the facing (Fig. 9). Cut the facing as the buttonhole was cut in Step 5. Cut diagonally toward the pins to form the triangular points. Turn under the cut edges of the facing to form a rectangle identical to the size of the buttonhole on the right side. Whip stitch or slip stitch the facing around the buttonhole (Fig. 10)





Durability of a bound buttonhole depends on how securely the facing is fastened around the buttonhole. Take small, firm stitches but try to keep them from showing. Press well, but not so hard that edges of piping form imprints on the outside of the garment.

The finished bound buttonholes should be uniform in size and shape, properly placed on the garment, and in direct line with one another and with the edge of the garment. Corners of the buttonholes should lie flat without puckers. Each piping strip forming the buttonholes should be uniform in width and cover only one-half of each buttonhole area. Facings should be securely fastened around each buttonhole on the inside of the garment.





The Nebraska Extension Service provides additional clothing construction circulars. These are available at your local county Extension office.

Belts and Belt Carriers	- E. C. 56-412
Pressing Equipment	- E. C. 60-423
Pressing Methods	- E. C. 60-424
Easy Zipper Methods	- E. C. 61-422
Making a Child's Coat	- E. C. 61-426
Lining Skirts and Dresses	- E. C. 61-428
Sleeve Gussets	- E. C. 63-430