

1971

## EC71-474 Shutter Buttonholes

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# SHUTTER BUTTONHOLES

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# shutter Buttonholes

By Jane Speece  
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The shutter buttonhole is often used in garments made of heavy or bulky fabrics and with fabrics that ravel easily. It also can be readily adapted for use in leather and artificial leather garments. However, basting cannot be used with the leathers and fake leather because needle marks would show. The interfacing is applied to the garment before any marking is begun. Marking is made on the interfacing with pencil. Clear tape is used in place of pins. Much of the stitching is completed on the wrong side of the garment.

Techniques for the shutter buttonhole differ slightly from other buttonhole techniques, but results are similar. The woman interested in achieving the finest results should try various methods and adapt the technique to her skills and the kind of fabric she is using.

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.

## Marking the Buttonhole

Mark the center of a woven or knitted fabric (but not leathers) with a contrasting color of basting thread on the right side of the fabric before you remove the pattern. Buttonhole placement is also easy to mark at this time, but first check the spacing of the buttonholes on the pattern for accuracy. This is also the time to see that the spacing is suitable for your figure proportions. Mark buttonholes with a basting thread. Extend the basted line so it will be longer than the expected buttonhole length. This line will serve later as a guide in placing the shutters.

## Interfacing

Once the center front and buttonhole placement marks are completed, apply interfacing to the coat, suit, dress bodice or blouse front you are sewing. If you are sewing with leather, draw the center front and buttonhole placement lines on the interfacing in pencil.

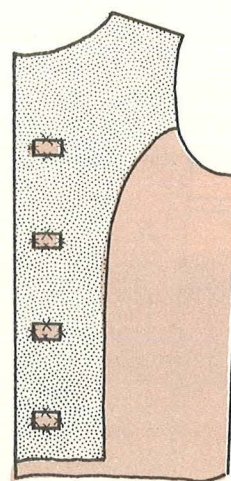


Fig. 1

Cut out a square of interfacing around the buttonhole area in heavier fabrics, such as those used for suits and coats, to eliminate bulk and to prevent puckering. A lighter weight interfacing, such as muslin or batiste, is placed in the open square and catch-stitched to the interfacing (Fig. 1).

Interfacings used on dresses and blouses ordinarily are not as heavy as those used on suits and coats and need not be cut out in this area.

## Preparing the Window

Cut a piece of lightweight fabric, such as organza or woven underlining fabric, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches longer than the buttonhole. Use a blending or matching color. Center the piece on the right side of the fabric over the buttonhole markings. Use clear tape to hold the piece securely on the straight grain of the fabric. A pin may be used to hold the piece on woven fabrics or knits. Machine or hand baste directly along the buttonhole slash line (Fig. 2).

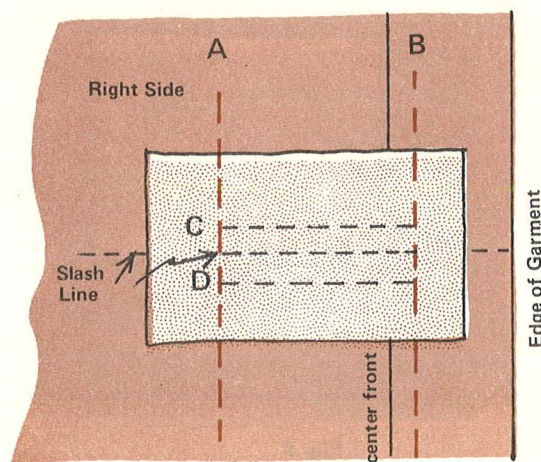


Fig. 2 Woven or Knit Fabrics



Baste two lines down the front of the garment with thread of a contrasting color the exact length of the buttonhole (lines A and B in Fig. 1). These lines must be parallel to the center front line and on the straight grain of the fabric. Then baste a line 1/8 inch above and below each buttonhole slash mark (lines C and D). When sewing leather, draw the marks with pencil on the interfacing (Fig. 3). The rectangle formed will be the stitching guide.

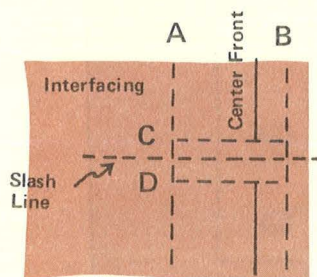


Fig. 3 Leather

### Stitching the Window

Stitch around the rectangle formed by these lines. Stitching will be done on the right side of knit or woven fabric, on the wrong side of leather. Start stitching at the center of the buttonhole and continue around the rectangle. Use the needle to pivot at the corners. Count the number of stitches on each side to aid in accuracy. Overlap several stitches when the starting point is reached.

Check to be sure all rectangles are the same length and width and fall on the straight of grain. Then pull the threads to the wrong side and clip. Remove basting threads (lines A and B) marking buttonhole length (Fig. 4).

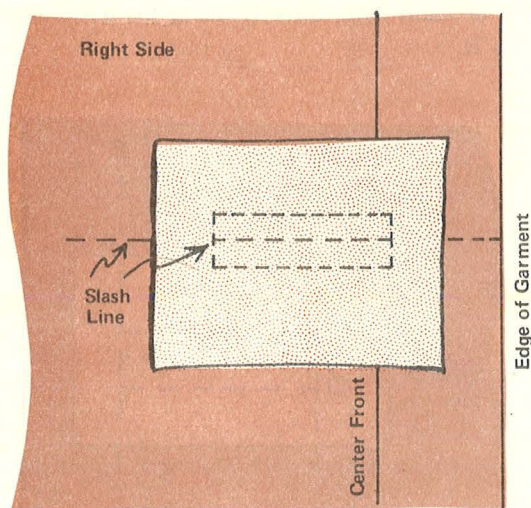


Fig. 4

### Center Slash

Slash along the marked buttonhole center to 3/8 inch from each end. Form a triangle by clipping up to the stitching at the corners (Fig. 5).

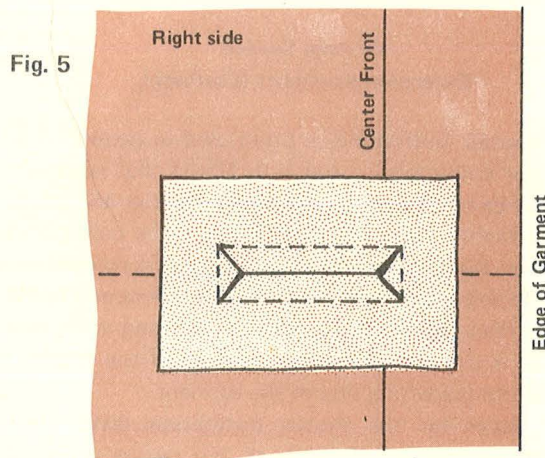


Fig. 5

### Turn Window to the Wrong Side

Pull the rectangle through the slash to the wrong side of the garment. Press away from the opening to form a window. None of the lightweight fabric should show on the right side (Fig. 6) when pressing is completed.

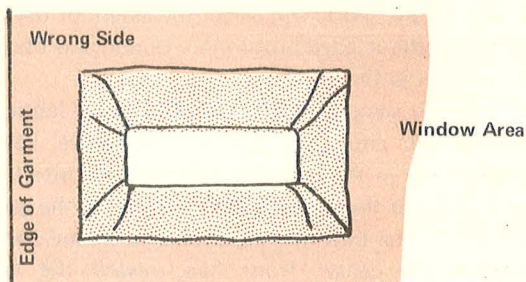


Fig. 6

### Prepare the Shutters

Cut two pieces of the garment fabric 1 1/2 inch wide and 1 1/2 inch longer than the buttonhole. These pieces may be cut on the bias or the straight grain. Place the right sides together and machine or hand baste across the center lengthwise (Fig. 7a). This basting will be removed when the buttonhole is finished. Pressing each piece in half before stitching may help you follow the center lengthwise line. Leather or artificial leather strips may be taped to hold them securely. Then fold the pieces with the wrong sides of the fabric together (Fig. 7b).

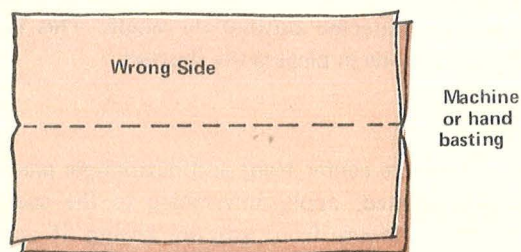
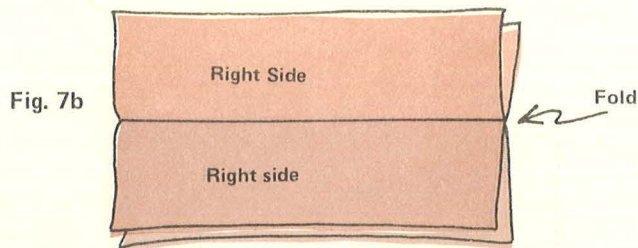


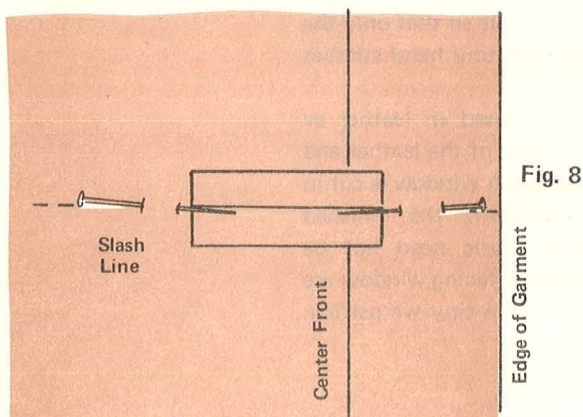
Fig. 7a





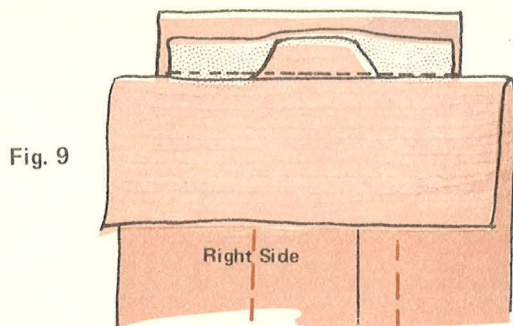
### Placing the Shutters

Place the shutters in the window from the wrong side of the garment. The basted or taped seam should be centered directly on the center line of the buttonhole. Use the previously basted or penciled line as a guide. Pin or tape at the direct center of this guideline to hold the shutters while stitching (Fig. 8). Baste if the fabric is slippery, bulky or ravels easily.



### Stitch Shutters

Turn the garment wrong side out. Place it on the machine with the garment uppermost and turned back so that the stitching on the window rectangle is exposed. Stitch exactly over the previous stitching line for the entire length of the patch (Fig. 9). Double stitch to make more secure. Be careful not to catch any of the garment fabric in the buttonhole stitching.



### Finish the Ends

Following the same procedure, stitch back and forth across each triangle at the end of the buttonhole several times (Fig. 10). Clip threads. Remove basting lines or tape. Press.

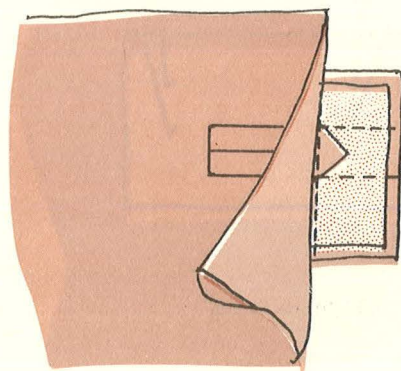


Fig. 10

### Finishing the Facing at the Back of the Buttonhole

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

The following steps are important in knit and woven garments to increase the life and to enhance the appearance of the back of the buttonhole.

Cut a piece of lining or underlining fabric about 1½ inch wide and 1½ inch longer than the buttonhole. The color should match the garment. Pin or tape 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. 11a). Match the four corner points with pins from the facing side (Fig. 11b). Gently pull the facing loose from the garment. Baste, then stitch around the rectangle, slash and pull the rectangle to the wrong side of the facing. This will make a window in the same manner as on the front of the garment.

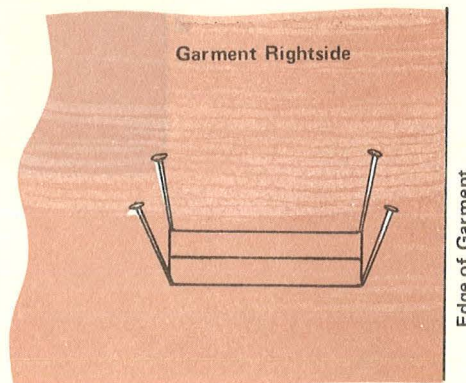


Fig. 11a

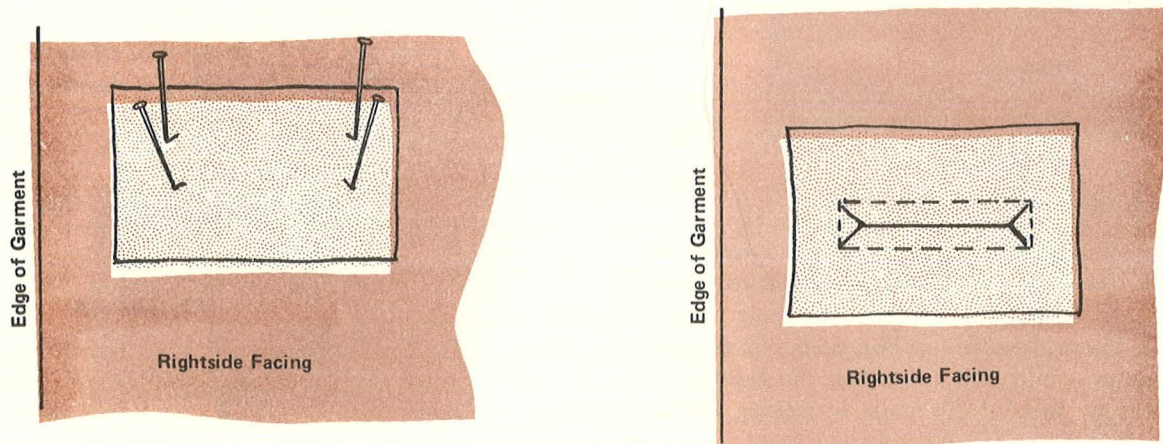


Fig. 11b

Center the window over the buttonhole so that only the lips show. Fasten around the edges with tiny hand stitches (Fig. 12).

Whether or not the procedure is used in leather or artificial leather depends upon the weight of the leather and the personal preference of the individual. A window is cut in the leather facing to correspond with the finished buttonhole, but the extra piece of fabric need not be stitched on. Instead, the raw edges of the facing window are fastened around the buttonhole lips with a tiny whipstitch.

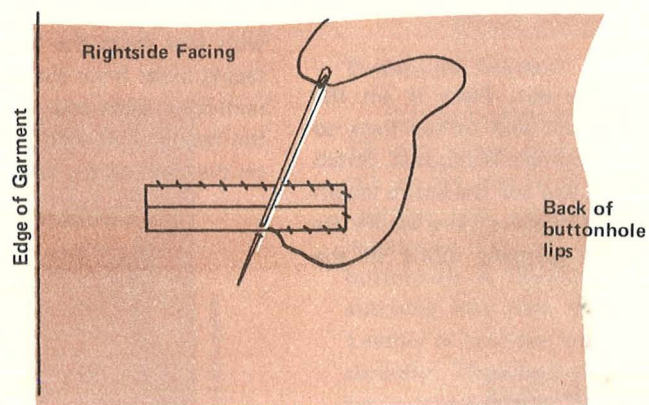


Fig. 12