

1973

EC73-491 Menswear....Fly Front Zippers

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FLY FRONT ZIPPERS



Extension Service, University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture Cooperating with the
U. S. Department of Agriculture and the College of Home Economics
E. F. Frolik, Dean J. L. Adams, Director

MENSWEAR: FLY FRONT ZIPPERS

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Choose the zipper for men's pants carefully. The use of the pants and the method for care should dictate your choice. Regular trouser zippers are usually found in 9" and 11" lengths, though occasionally, 6" zippers can be found for use with blue jeans or play clothes for boys. Metal chains rather than plastic chains are preferred for more durability.

The 9" zipper is usually heavier and has a gilt finish to the chain. It is intended for work or play clothes. The 11" zipper has a lighter chain, often colored to match the zipper tape. This zipper is intended for regular suit trousers or casual slacks. The zipper will be too long for the placket and will have to be cut off. Do not make this necessary cut, however, until the zipper is installed in the pants and secured by several rows of stitching across the top.

As manufacturers begin making plastic chains with greater strength, more zippers with plastic chains will be sewn into men's pants. Many of the manufacturers of knit pants are installing them now. Though the metal zipper is still more desirable at this time, you may use a plastic zipper with confidence if one with a metal chain is not available.

Patterns will vary in directions for the fly facing and zipper shield (Fig. 1). Some will have separate pieces for the facing. Others will have extensions added to the center front seam to eliminate the extra piece. The zipper shield is always an extra piece, but the shaping and means of installation may vary considerably from one pattern to another.

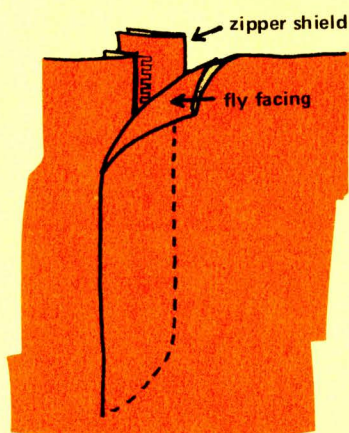


Fig. 1

Patterns will also vary as to directions for interfacing a fly facing or zipper shield. If the fabric is lightweight or stretchy, you may want to add a lightweight interfacing.

The zipper methods in this circular are adaptations of the methods used by industry and the pattern companies. Try various techniques to find the one that is easiest for you. This circular shows three methods of zipper application:

Method I: Fly Facing added to pattern and cut on pant.

Method II: Easy do

Method III: Separate fly facing

METHOD I: FLY FACING EXTENSION ADDED TO THE PATTERN

You can add your own facing for the left front and eliminate the separate fly facing of the pattern if you wish. Add 1½" to the center front seam. Curve the extension into the regular seamline about ½" below the dot shown on the pattern (Fig. 2). As an aid to accurate cutting and ease of construction, cut the extension on both fronts.

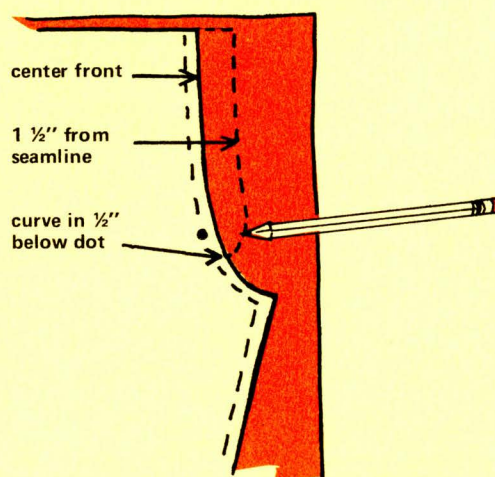


Fig. 2

The pattern for the zipper shield may be included with your pattern or you may cut your own. Follow the shape of the extensions to draw your own pattern. Cut the shield double and add seam allowances. One easy-to-design shield is a rectangle 4½" x 12" cut from self-fabric and folded in half lengthwise.

Prepare the Pants for the Zipper

Mark the center front line on the wrong side of the fabric with a tracing wheel, soap sliver or chalk. Mark the dot that shows where the zipper stop will be placed. Some patterns will show a second dot farther down along the crotch curve. The crotch line is stitched between the dots before installing the zipper. If your pattern is not marked, measure over about 1" from the cutting edge of the pattern inseam and mark the second dot on the seamline. The length between the dots will vary according to the size of the pattern (Fig. 3).

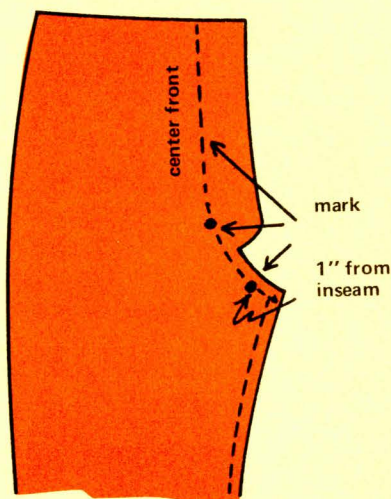


Fig. 3

Stitch the curve between the dots with a stretch stitch or two rows of straight machine stitches. The first row will be on the seam line, the second about 1/8" inside the seam allowance. Set the machine for 12-15 stitches per inch, depending upon the thickness of the fabric. Backstitch or lockstitch at each dot. Machine baste the rest of the center front seam to the waist. Clip the first basting stitch to aid in removing it later. Clip into the seam allowance below the curve of the extension (Fig. 4). Press the

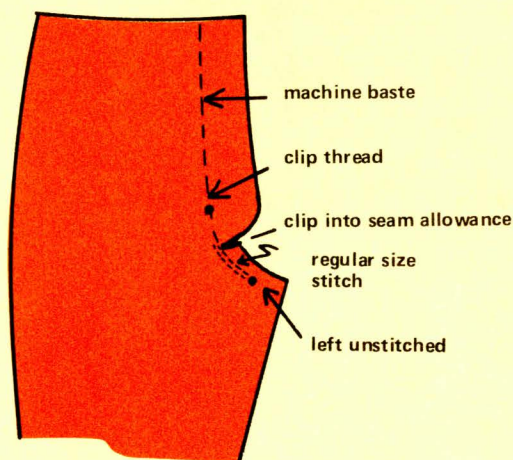


Fig. 4

seams open on the wrong side, then press well on the right side.

Trim the extension on the right front to 5/8" wide, or mark a line 5/8" from the center front (Fig. 5). Accuracy is important. The zipper installation will be guided by this line.

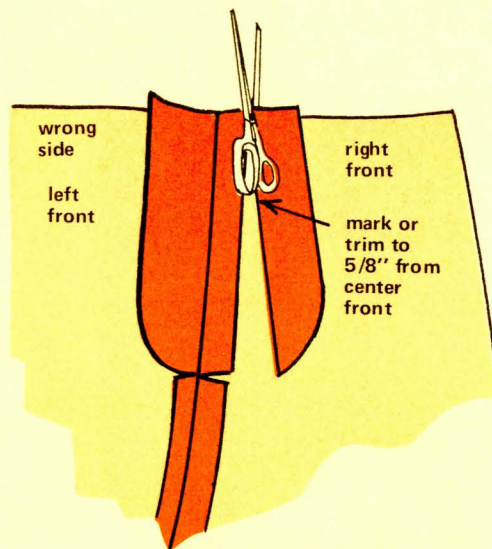


Fig. 5

Step 1: Stitch the zipper to the left front seam allowance. (Fig 6) Turn the garment wrong side out and place it so that both fronts and the right front seam allowance lay to one side. This leaves the left front seam allowance free. Lay the zipper face down on this seam allowance with the zipper-stop 1/4" above the point denoted on the pattern. Placing the stop 1/4" above the point where the basting stitch begins will make it easier to topstitch later. The right edge of the zipper tape should lay along the basted center front seam. Using a zipper foot,

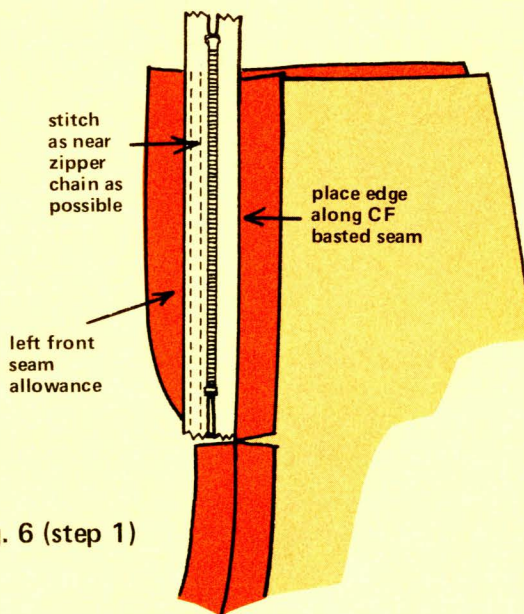


Fig. 6 (step 1)

stitch on the left side of the zipper tape as near to the zipper chain as possible. Leaving the tails free begin just below the zipper stop and stitch up to the waist. Check to be sure you are not stitching so closely that the zipper cannot be unzipped. A second row of stitching may be added to the outside edge of the zipper tape to add strength. Be sure that you are stitching only on the left side of the tape and only to the seam allowance. Pin or tape along the edge to hold it if necessary. Backstitch at each end.

Step 2: Stitch the zipper to the right seam allowance. Move the garment so that only the seam allowance of the right side is free. Line up the edge of the unstitched side of the zipper tape to the raw edge of the 5/8" seam allowance. If you did not trim the extension, line up the zipper tape to the previously marked 5/8" line. The zipper will still be face down. Hold with pins or basting if necessary. Beginning just below the zipper stop, stitching as near to the zipper teeth as possible and still allowing the zipper to unzip. The tails of the zipper tape should remain free. Backstitch at each end. Be sure the tape is stitched only to the seam allowance. The slight bubble or bluge in the facing is normal and will lay flat later.

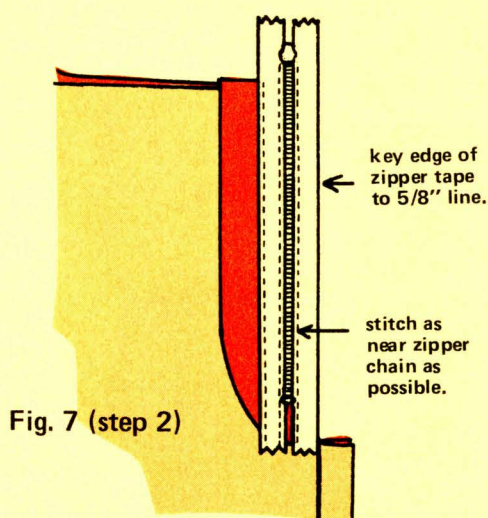


Fig. 7 (step 2)

Step 3: Topstitch on left side. (Fig. 8) Turn the garment right side out the place it so you can topstitch on the left pant front. The facing layer should lay flat and smooth. Using 10-12 stitches per inch, stitch 1 1/4" to 1 1/2" from the center front seam. Make sure that the facing layer is caught securely in the stitching line. Baste the line before you stitch if you are inexperienced or unsure of your accuracy.

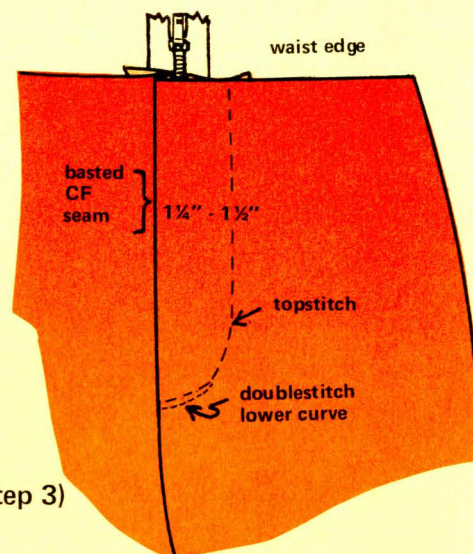


Fig. 8 (step 3)

Curve the stitching line toward the seam as you reach the lower edge of the zipper. For reinforcement add a second line of stitching along the lower curve. This reinforcement may wait until the zipper shield is installed if you prefer.

Step 4: Install zipper shield (Fig. 9). Remove the basting from the center front. Holding the pants wrong side out, slip the zipper shield under the right side of the pants. Line up the folded (finished) edge of the shield to the edge of the facing on the left side. On the wrong side pin or tape the shield along each side of the zipper to hold it in place.

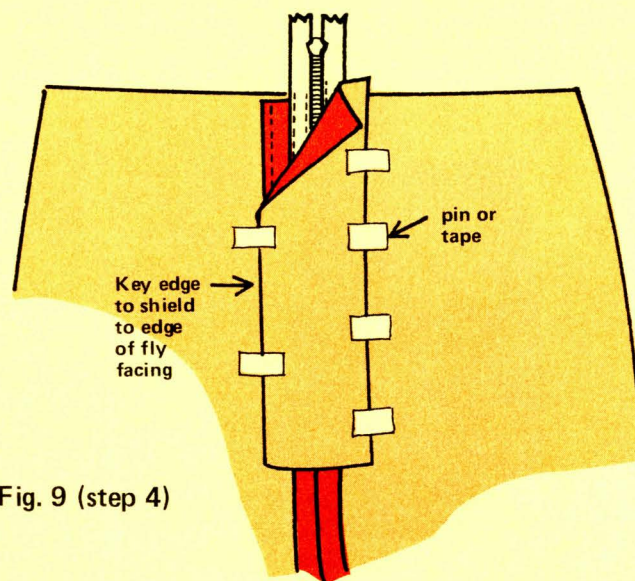


Fig. 9 (step 4)

Step 5: Topstitch (Fig. 10). Turn the garment right side out. On the right front, topstitch through all thicknesses along the folded fabric edge that runs along the zipper chain. Remove the tape or pins holding the zipper guard. To add a reinforcing row of stitches, turn the garment to the wrong side and stitch just the seam allowance of the right pant front to the zipper shield.

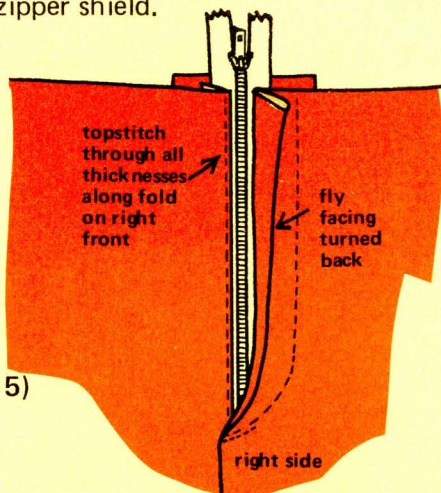


Fig. 10 (step 5)

Step 6: Secure lower edge of zipper (Fig. 11). Turn the garment wrong side out and position it so that the lower edge of the zipper tape and zipper shield are exposed. Stitch across the lower portion several times to hold. Trim off the lower edge of the zipper shield if it is too long.

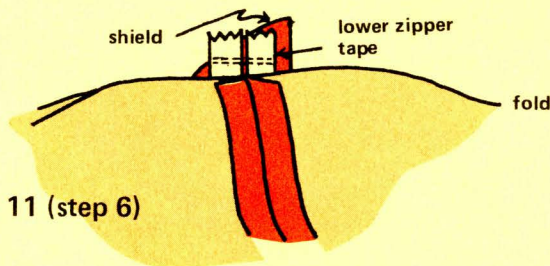


Fig. 11 (step 6)

Step 7: Secure top of zipper (Fig. 12). Turn the garment right side out. Open zipper. Stitch with a long stitch across the top of each side to hold the

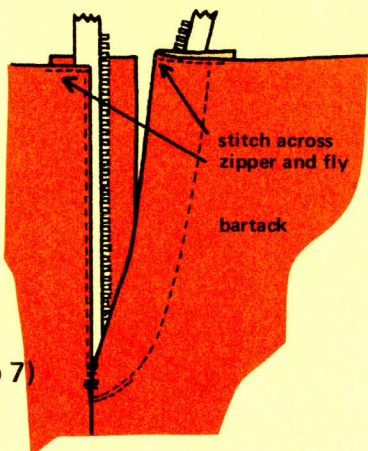


Fig. 12 (step 7)

zipper, zipper guard and facing in place. Turn sewing machine wheel manually to avoid breaking the needle. Cut off the extra length of the zipper. Bar tack where the zipper opening begins.

METHOD II: EASY-DO FOR BOY'S PLAY PANTS

This method is intended to be a quick means for installing zippers in children's clothes. You may find that it is not suitable for the finer work that you are doing with men's trousers. It is also an easy method to use if you need to replace a broken zipper.

Following the directions from the previous method, cut extensions for both left and right fronts. Mark the center fronts, stitch the lower crotch seam and machine baste the fronts together. Since both extensions will be used, do not mark or trim along the 5/8" line on the right front as was done in the previous method. Press seams open.

Step 1: Turn the garment wrong side out and place it so that both fronts and the left front seam allowance lay to one side, leaving the right front seam allowance free (Fig. 13). Place the zipper *right side up* with the left edge of the tape along the center front basted line. The zipper stop should lay

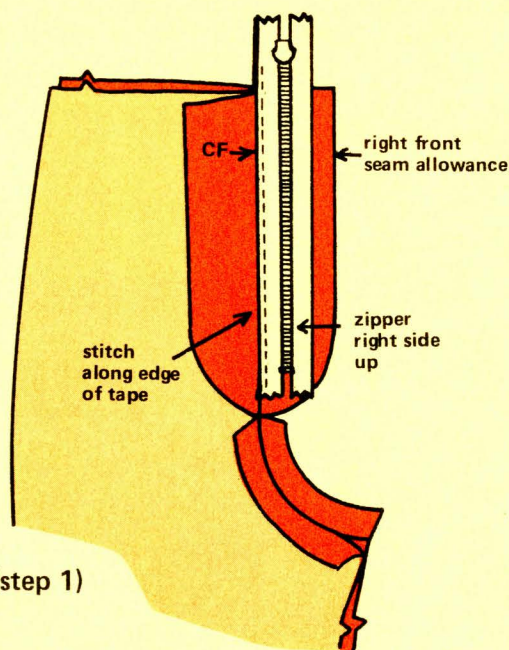


Fig. 13 (step 1)

about 1/4" above the point denoted on the pattern. Using a zipper foot, stitch along the edge of the tape. Be sure that you are stitching only to the seam allowance.

Step 2: Place the pants so that only the left front extension is exposed (Fig. 14). Turn the zipper so that it is *face down* on the left front extension. Stitch as closely as possible to the zipper teeth, then stitch a second row along the edge of the zipper tape. Be sure that the zipper is stitched only to the extension.

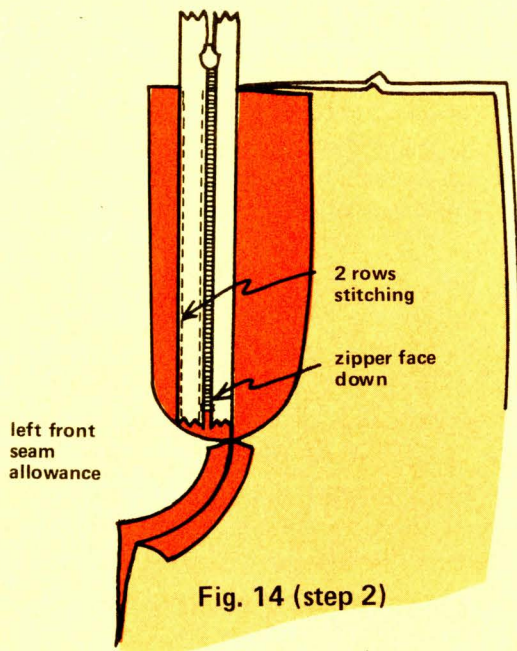


Fig. 14 (step 2)

Step 3: Turn the garment right side out and position the fly facing on the right pant front (Fig. 15). Pin, tape or baste, if necessary, to hold it in place. Top-stitch $1\frac{1}{4}$ " to $1\frac{1}{2}$ " from the basted center front line, curving in at the bottom of the zipper. Stitch a second row along the lower curve.

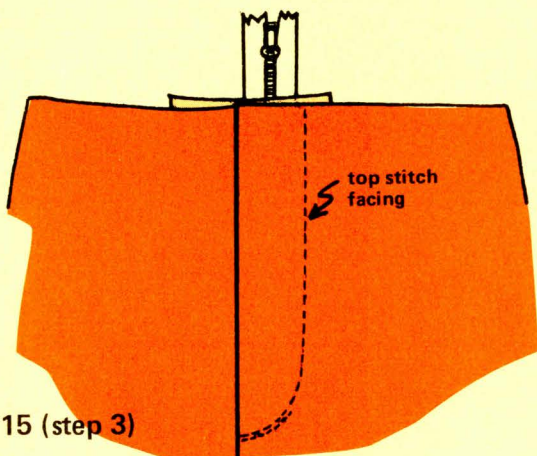


Fig. 15 (step 3)

Step 4: Remove the basting line from the center front (Fig. 16). Turn the garment to the wrong side and fold back the extension of the right front so that the folded edge extends just beyond the zipper

chain. Press in the fold. Pin or place tape along the raw edge to hold until stitched if necessary.

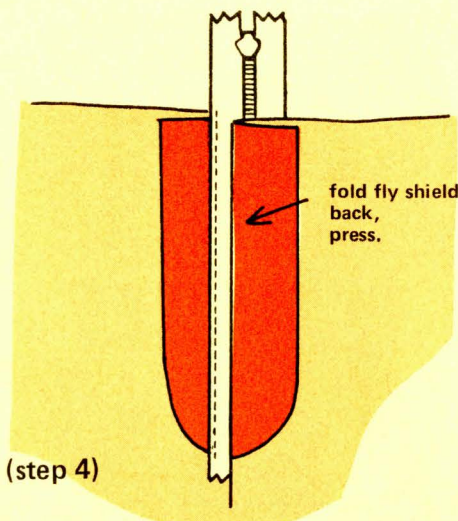


Fig. 16 (step 4)

Step 5: Turn the pants right side out. Topstitch along the edge of the zipper on the right pant front, catching the shield edge securely (Fig. 17).

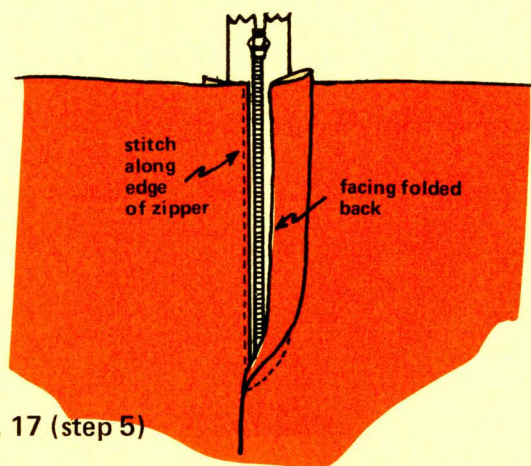


Fig. 17 (step 5)

The zipper shield in this method does not extend far beyond the zipper chain. If you prefer a wider shield, cut an extra piece for the shield and stitch it into place as you topstitch close to the zipper chain.

The zipper is stitched to the waist edge of the pants before it is cut off as in the previous method.

METHOD III: SEPARATE FLY FACINGS

If your pattern includes a separate piece for the fly facing, you may find the following method helpful. You may also find that you need a lightweight interfacing if you are working with a stretchy or lightweight fabric.

Stitch the pant fronts together along the lower crotch line as in the first method, but do not baste the center fronts together. Use soap, chalk or a basting thread and mark the center front at waistline edge on the right side of the fabric.

Step 1: Right sides together, stitch the left fly facing to the left front. Grade and trim the seam allowances. Clip into the seam at the dot on the facing and leave the full seam allowance on the lower portion and the crotch seam. Press the clipped seams toward the facing (Fig. 18).

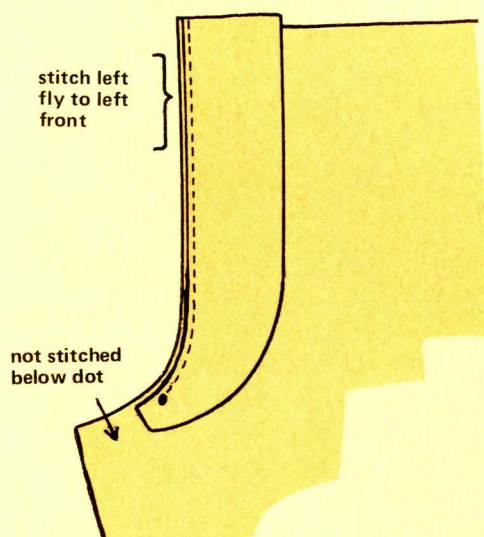


Fig. 18 (step 1)

Step 2: Sharpstitch on the facing just along the edge of the seamline to keep the facing in place as the pants are worn. Turn under the portion of the facing that was left unstitched and continue the line of sharpstitching so that this portion is stitched to the left front seam allowance (Fig. 19).

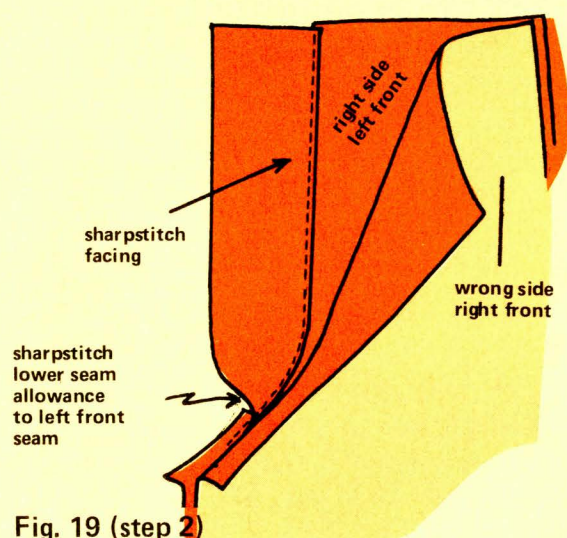


Fig. 19 (step 2)

Step 3: Carefully press under the seam allowance of the right pant front and the fly facing of the left pant front. The crotch seams may also be pressed open at this time (Fig. 20).

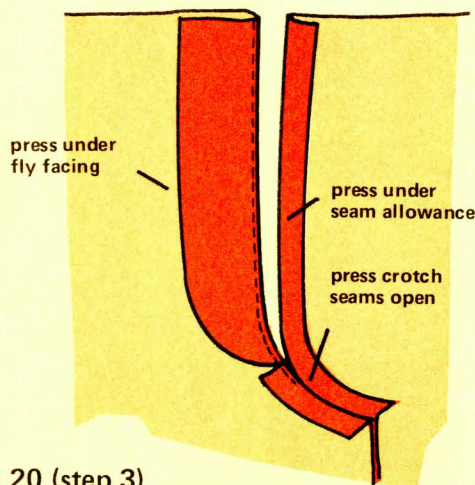


Fig. 20 (step 3)

Step 4: Turn the garment right side out and position the zipper face up under the folded edge of the right front. Place the zipper stop about $\frac{1}{4}$ " above the point denoted by the pattern. Baste through the garment and zipper along the folded edge on the right side of the fabric or tape in place on the wrong side of the fabric. You may postpone stitching this seam until you add the fly shield (Fig. 21).

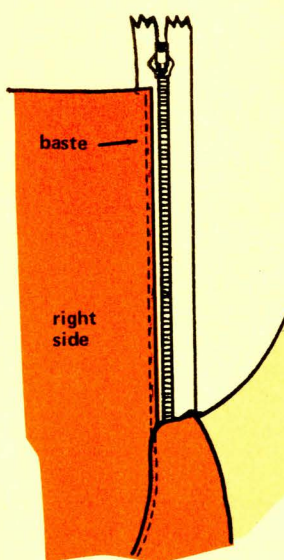


Fig. 21 (a)
(step 4)

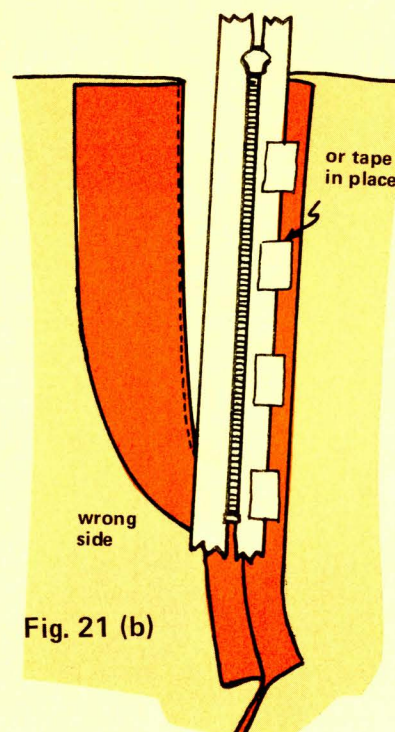
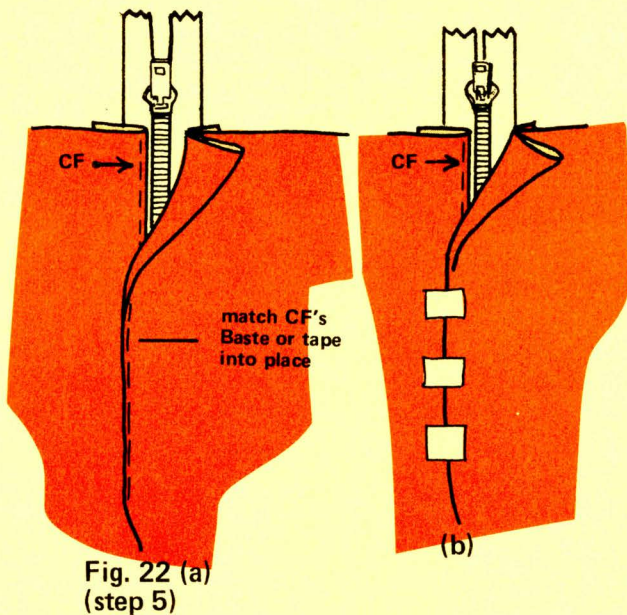
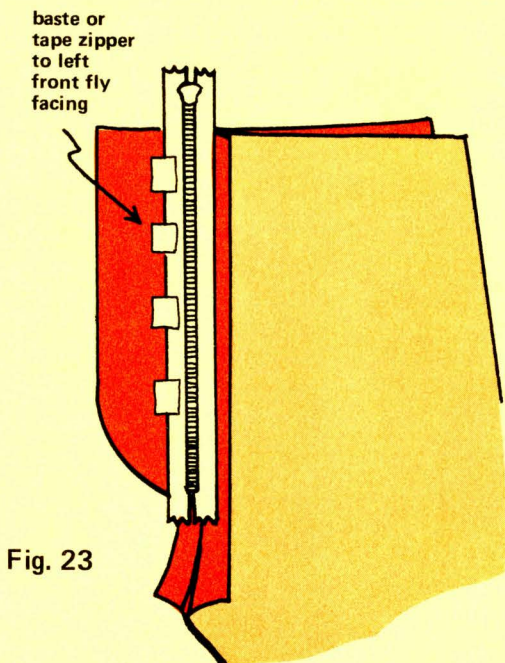


Fig. 21 (b)

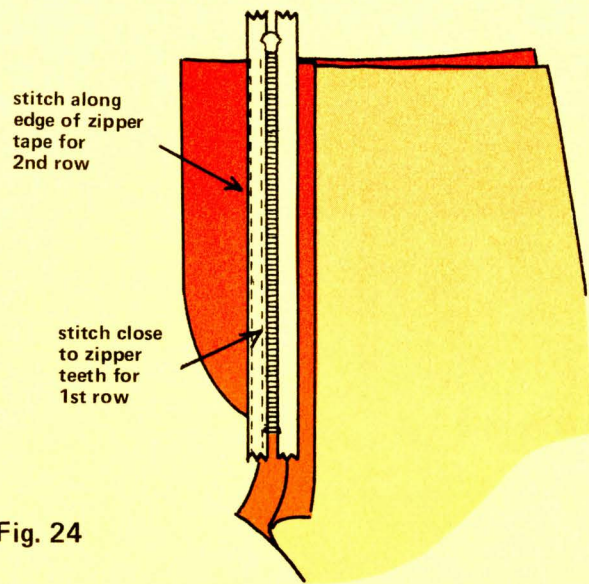
Step 5: Lap the left front over the right front and match the center front lines. Baste or tape into place (Fig. 22a and b). Then turn the pants to the wrong side. Place them so that both fronts and the right front seam allowance lay to one side and the left fly facing lays free. Turn the zipper face down and line up the zipper chain just left of the seam where the facing joins the garment. Baste or tape the edge of the zipper to the left front fly facing



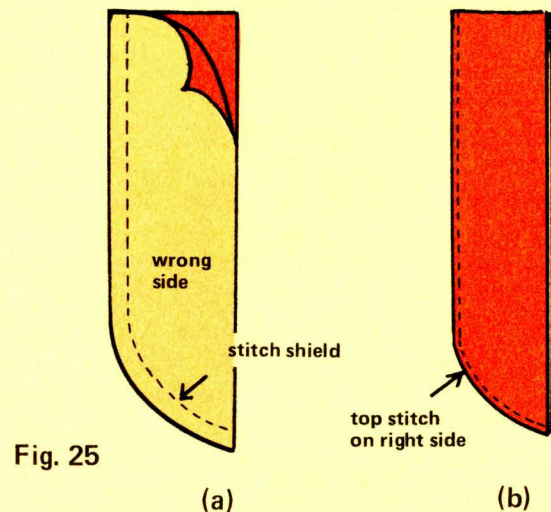
(Fig. 23). Be sure that only the extension is caught, not the front of the pants. Stitch close to the zipper teeth. Remove the tape and stitch a second row



along the edge of the zipper tape (Fig. 24). The zipper will curve at the lower portion near the stop.



Follow pattern directions to prepare the fly shield. Trim the seams. Turn and press. Topstitching along the finished edge will help to hold the fabric flat (Fig. 25). The shape of the shield will vary from pattern to pattern.



Step 6: Slip the zipper shield underneath the zipper on the right pant front (Fig. 26). Pattern directions may differ as to exact placement. An easy key line is to match the raw edge of the shield with the raw edge of the seam allowance to which the zipper is sewed. Check the length of the

waistband to see how it corresponds to your placement of the shield. Topstitch through all thicknesses along the folded edge that runs along the zipper.

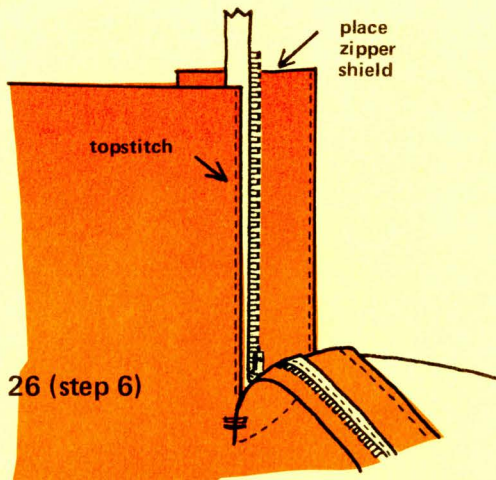


Fig. 26 (step 6)

The raw edges of the shield and seam allowance may need to be finished together if the fabric ravel. The edges can be left raw. One row of stitching through the shield and seam allowance or zigzagging the edges together will add reinforcement to this area (Fig. 27).

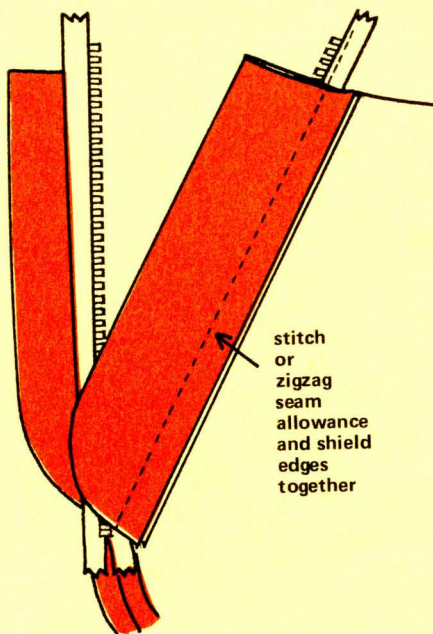


Fig. 27

Step 7: Stitch within the seam allowance across the top of the zipper several times as in the first method to keep the zipper pull from sliding past (Fig. 28). Cut off unneeded length of the zipper.

Topstitching the left front may be completed at this time or it may be finished after the waistband is applied. If the pattern does not specify, the

stitching line will be $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " over from center front.

Curve the lower portion of the stitching as it nears the crotch curve and lower portion of zipper (Fig. 28). An extra row of stitching may be made along the curve for reinforcement. Bar tack either at the lower end of the fly or just above (Fig. 29).

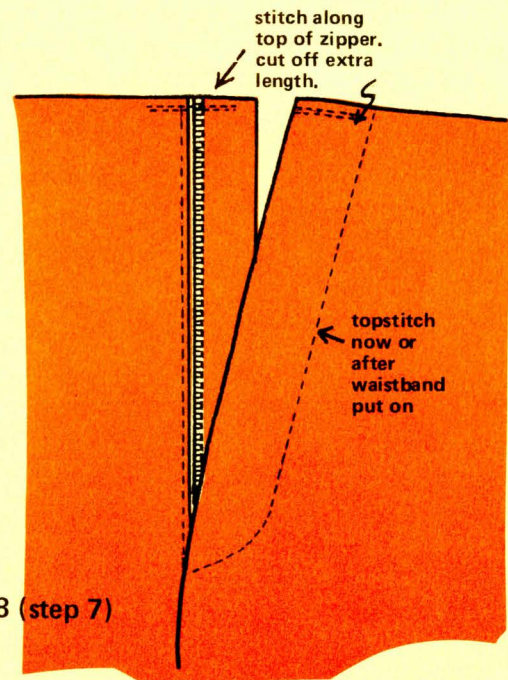


Fig. 28 (step 7)

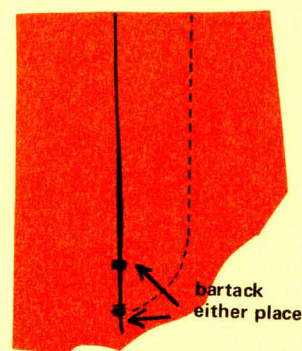


Fig. 29

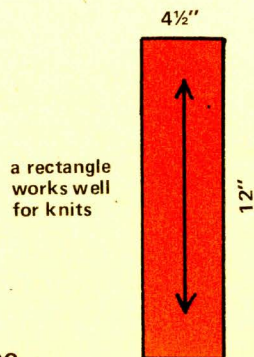


Fig. 30

DESIGN YOUR ZIPPER SHIELD

A satisfactory zipper shield for knits can be cut from a 4 1/2" by 12" rectangle of self fabric. This piece will be long enough for all sizes, and the ends may be trimmed after it is installed in smaller sizes (Fig. 30). Once the piece is cut, fold lengthwise and press well. Raw edges need not be finished as knits do not ordinarily ravel.

Curved fly shields are found in most patterns. You may adapt this basic pattern to your own needs (Fig. 31). Many men like a button on the underside of a waistband to secure the opening. You may want to add a lower extension to stitch to the crotch seam allowance for reinforcement. You may also want to add length to the shield facing so that it will fit smoothly into a traditional waistband facing.

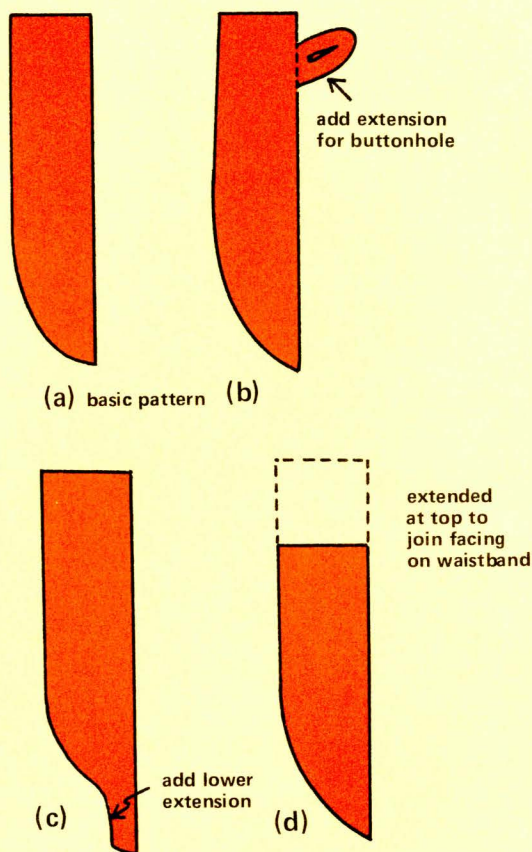


Figure 31

Occasionally, you may prefer to line a zipper shield rather than to use a double thickness of self-fabric. There are times when too much bulk results from seams in a shaped shield or the fabric seems too heavy to use on both sides of a shield. Substitute a smoothly textured, lightweight fabric for the underside or lining side of the shield. Just be sure that the lining you have cut will go on the wrong side of the garment.

