

1974

## EC74-496 Tailoring Touches

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# TAILORING TOUCHES

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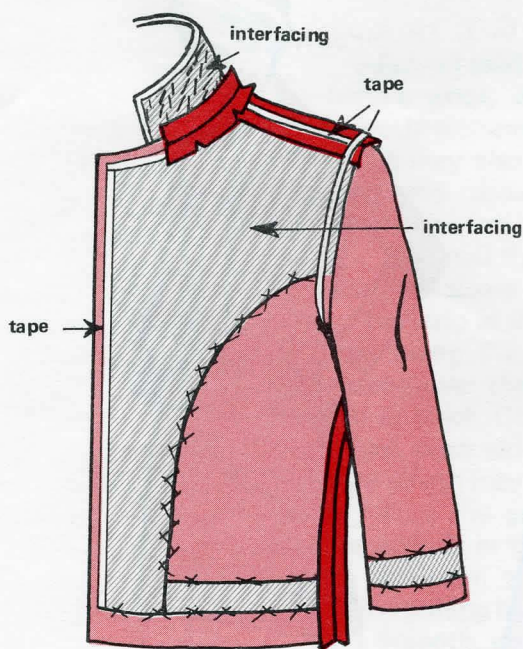


# **TAILORING TOUCHES** **Jane Speece** **Extension Specialist (Clothing)**

Care taken with the final touches of tailoring a garment often means the difference between a homemade or a custommade look. Tailoring touches take extra hours and more handstitches at the time you are constructing your garment, but they will mean extra years of wearing life for your garment. In addition, you will appreciate the quality look that you have achieved.

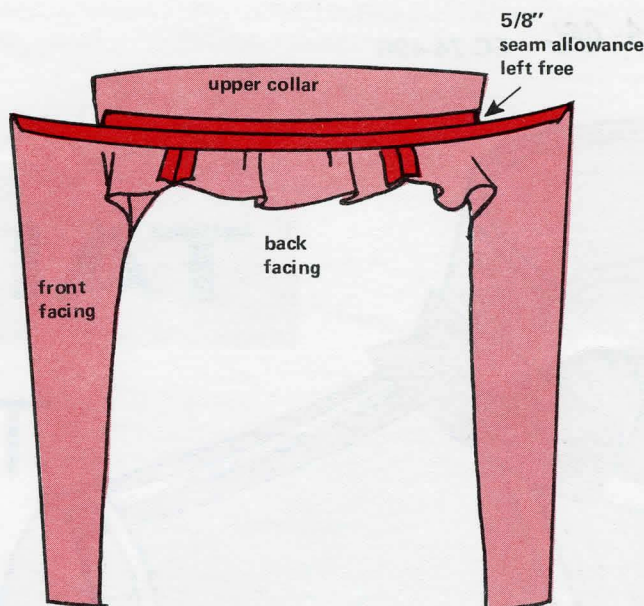
## **ATTACHING UPPER COLLAR AND FACINGS**

In this method of tailoring the undercollar is already attached to the garment. The roll line is taped and the pad stitching completed before this final section is applied (Fig. 1). The upper collar is stitched to the front and back facings and the joined sections are then applied to the garment as one piece.



**Fig. 1.** Undercollar is attached to garment before upper collar is attached.

Accuracy is important as the facings are joined to the collar. Match notches and construction points of the front and back facings. Stitch and press seams open. Then match notches and construction points of the upper collar to the facings. The 5/8" seam allowance at the collar edge is usually left free. Stitch and press the seams open (Fig. 2). Your pattern guide will state directions for the garment you are constructing. Notch convex

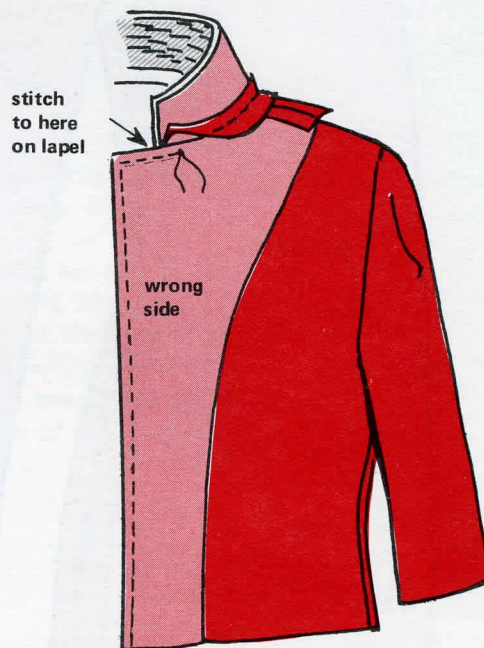


**Fig. 2.** Stitch upper collar to front and back facings

curves and clip concave curves, if necessary, to aid the seam in laying flat.

Turn the garment right side out. Place the facing on the garment right sides together. Match center back of collars, shoulder seams and any other construction points noted on the pattern. Pin, baste if necessary.

Beginning at the lower hem edge, stitch each front facing to the garment up to the point where the neckline seam of the facing ends (Fig. 3). The



**Fig. 3.** Stitching upper collar and facing



pattern will have denoted the point. Ease the facing onto the garment and slightly stretch the lapel as you stitch. Take a diagonal stitch across the point of the lapel, rather than pivoting at the point, to give a sharper corner when turned. Remove the garment from the sewing machine leaving several inches of thread rather than back stitching.

To stitch the collar, begin at the center back and stitch around one side of the collar to the neckline seam (Fig. 4). Ease the upper collar to the undercollar. Again, take a diagonal stitch across the

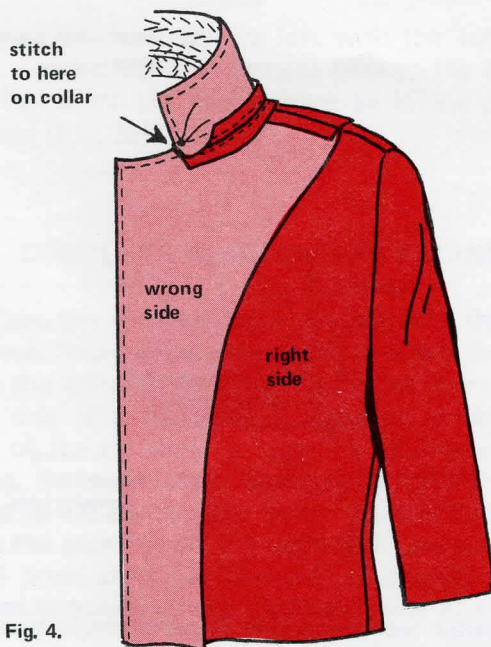


Fig. 4.

point of the collar and leave tails of thread as you remove the garment from the machine. Stitch the other side of the collar in the same manner. The neckline seam allowance should remain free and not be caught in the stitching.

Turn the facing right side out to check the accuracy of the stitching (Fig. 5). The top edge of the lapel should look as if it is a continuous part of the neckline seam. The collar should be at a direct angle from this seam. If there are any gaps on the outside or if seamlines do not meet perfectly, restitch the seams to meet.

If the seams are perfectly matched, turn the facing to the wrong side again. Reinforce by hand at the points where the stitching lines meet, using the tails of thread. The neckline seam allowance remains free.

Trim and grade seams around collar and lapel points to 1/4". Diagonal cuts across corner seam allowances will help to give a sharper point when turned. If interfacing has been stitched into the seam, trim it as closely to the seam as possible.

collar should be at a direct angle



Fig. 5. Check the right side of garment for accurate stitching

Press seams closed, then open, then to one side. They will turn toward the undercollar and the garment body (Fig. 6).

The seams down the front are graded so that the widest layer will lay next to the portion that shows on the outside of the garment (Fig. 6). The

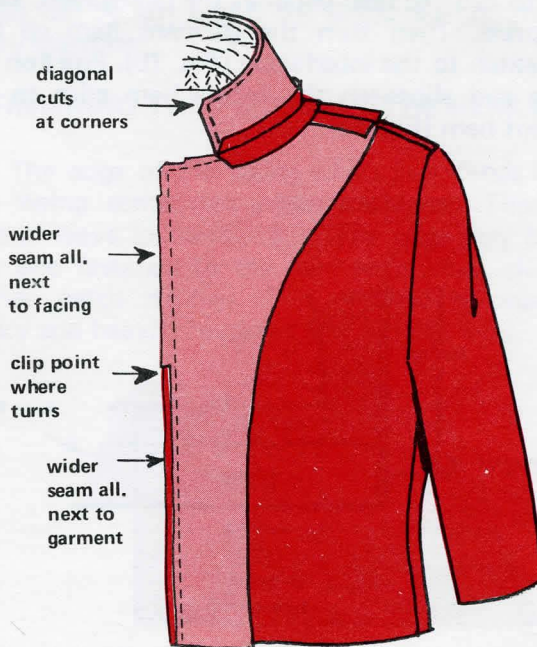


Fig. 6. Grading seams



lapel will be graded so that the widest area will lay next to the facing. At the point where the facing reverses from the outside to the underside, clip into the seam and reverse the grading so that the widest portion lies next to the garment. This will keep the widest seam allowance on the top and prevent a ridge from showing on the right side. Usually  $3/8''$  for the wider seam allowance and  $1/4''$  for the narrower are sufficient. Press seams open, then to one side. Those in the lapel area will turn toward the garment, the portion below the lapel will turn toward the facing.

Once the facings and upper collar have been stitched to the garment and seams graded and pressed, the hem of the garment should be completed. This step is necessary before final finishing steps are completed on the facings and collars.

### FINISHING THE HEM WHERE IT JOINS THE FACING

The hem of a suit or coat often becomes too bulky through the area where the facing folds back over it. The hem, the facing, or both may need to be trimmed out. The weight of the fabric should dictate whether or not trimming is done, because the garment cannot be lengthened once the facing edge is trimmed out.

One way to finish the hem is to trim out most of the hem allowance of the facing (Fig. 7a). Leave  $1/2''$  to  $5/8''$  to turn under as the facing hem. Baste and press. Then turn the garment hem up and catchstitch to the interfacing (Fig. 7b). Position the facing and slipstitch the facing hem edge to the garment hem (Fig. 7c).

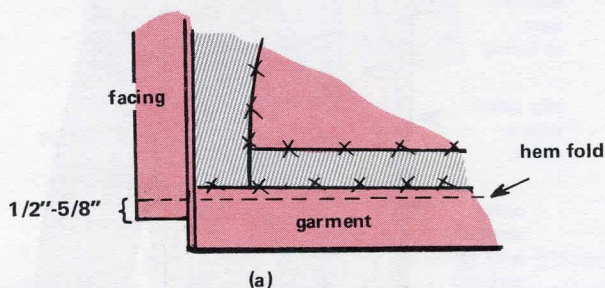
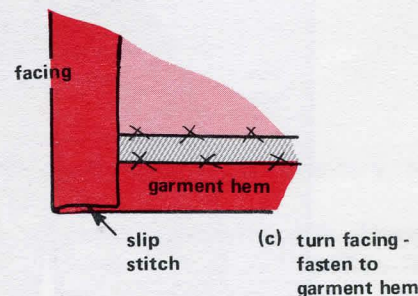
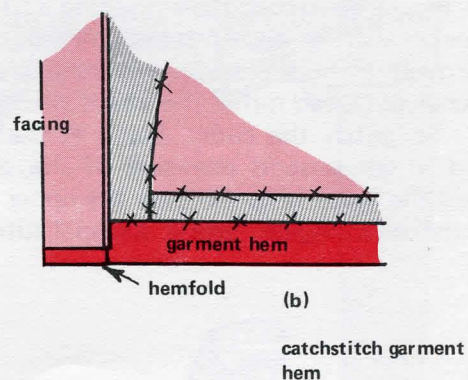
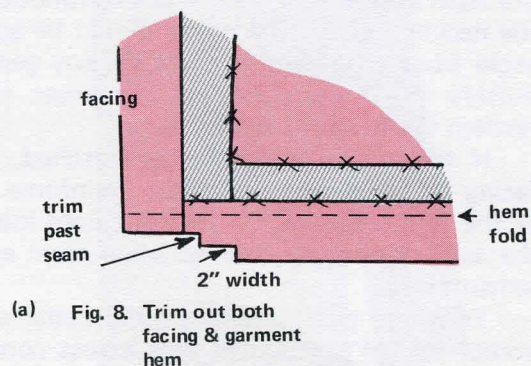


Fig. 7. Trim out facing hem

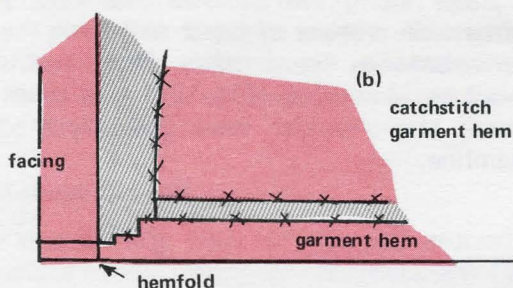


Another technique that is particularly good for bulky and heavily textured fabrics staggers the trimming from both the facing and the hem. Leave  $1/2''$  to  $5/8''$  hem allowance on the facing. Trim out the rest of the facing hem, continuing on into the garment hem, for  $1/2''$  (Fig. 8a). Leaving a  $1''$





width in the garment hem, trim over for about 2" more into the garment hem (Fig. 8b). The rest of



the garment hem will be left with the full allowance. Catchstitch the garment hem to the interfacing. Complete the facing hem as in the previous method (Fig. 7c).

## COMPLETE WORK ON THE FACING

Turn the garment right side out with the facing in place. Slightly roll the seamline where the facing joins the garment so that it will not show on the right side (Fig. 9). Reverse direction at the lower edge of the roll line to turn the seam toward the facing. Baste securely. Use diagonal basting if the fabric is loosely woven, bulky or stretchy. Steam press the garment on the right side, using a double faced press cloth. A pounder or clapper may be needed to achieve sharp lapel and collar points.

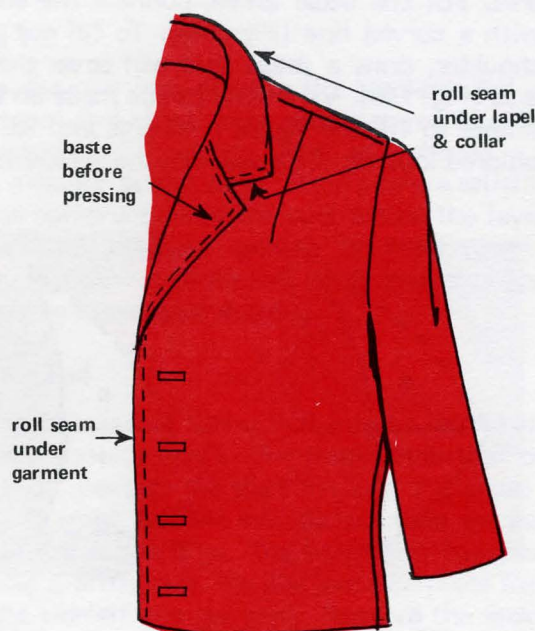


Fig. 9. Roll seamline to underside

Try on the coat or jacket to be sure that the roll line has not been pressed out. Repress into the roll if necessary. Then turn back the facing and sew the neck seam allowances of the upper and lower collars together by hand with a running stitch (Fig. 10). Fit the upper collar over the shaped undercol-

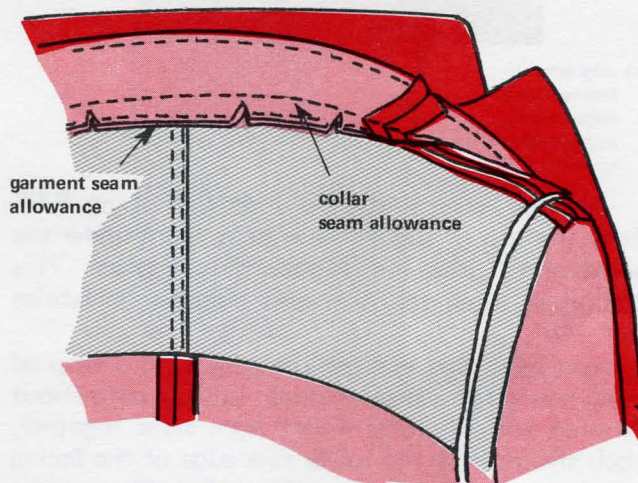


Fig. 10. Sew seam allowances together with a hand stitch

lar. Bulky fabrics or the pad-stitching on the under collar may prevent perfect seam matching. Preserve the collar roll rather than trying to make the seam lines meet exactly.

After the lower hem is finished, the raw edge of the facing will be catch-stitched to the interfacing if the lining is to be installed by hand. The facing edges will be left free if the lining is to be stitched in by machine.

## FINISHING THE FACING AT THE HEMLINE

The edge of the facing where it extends below the lining sometimes poses problems. There are several ways to handle this. The edge may be left raw and fastened to the hem with small, close-together catch stitches. This method is usual for bulky and heavily textured fabrics (Fig. 11a).

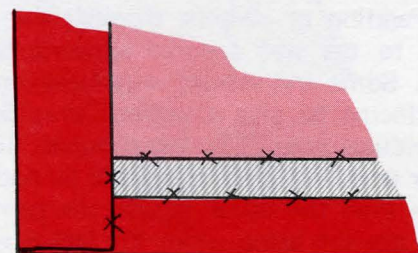
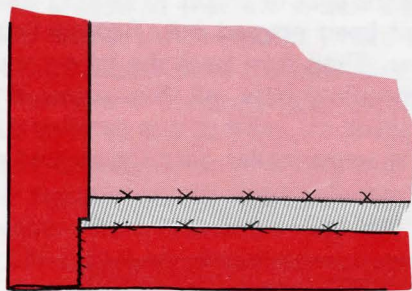


Fig. 11. (a) catchstitch raw edge to hem

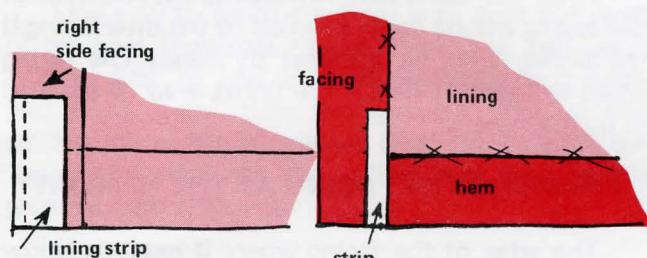




(b) clip into facing - turn edge under and slipstitch to hem

Another way is to clip into the facing 5/8" above the top of the garment hem. Turn under the facing edge, press and slipstitch into place. This method is usual for firm and lightweight fabrics (Fig. 11b).

You may also enclose the edge with a strip of lining fabric for a special touch. Cut the strip about 2" wide and 4" long. Then, right sides together, stitch the strip to the lower raw edge of the facing along with 5/8" seamline (Fig. 12a). Turn, press and catchstitch the raw edge of the strip to the wrong side of the facing. The lower edge will be turned up with the facing hem. The upper edge will be covered by the lining. (Fig. 12b).



(a) stitch lining strip to right side of facing

(b) strip covers raw edge

## SHOULDER SHAPES AND PADS

Padding or shaping through the shoulder area adds to the well tailored appearance of a suit or coat. Some individuals may need only a layer of interfacing to give a smooth shoulder line. Other individuals may have one shoulder higher than the other and find it advantageous to pad one shoulder more than the other so that the garment shoulder lines are the same when the jacket is worn. Other people may have hollows through the shoulder area, and shaping will build out the garment so that the hollows will not show. Making your own shoulder pads or shaping means a truly custom-made fit when you wear your garment.

### Pattern for the shoulder pad

Pin in any darts on the shoulder line of the pattern, then pin the back and front pattern pieces together along the shoulder seamline. Place the pattern on a sheet of paper and trace the armhole curve between the notches. Draw a notch at the shoulder seam line (Fig 13). Also mark a point where the shoulder seam line meets the neck seamline.

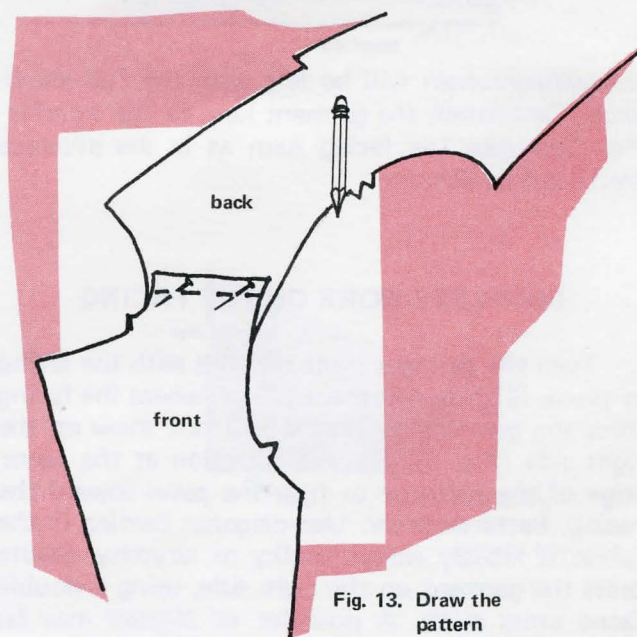
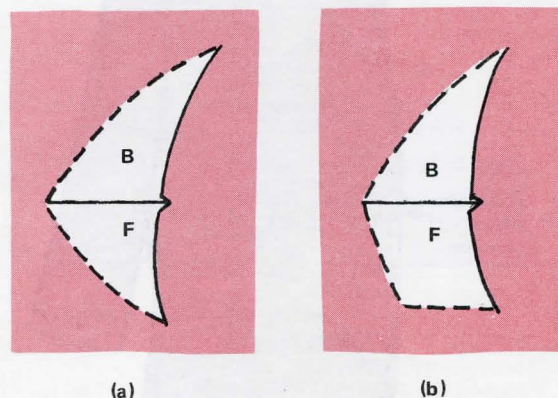


Fig. 13. Draw the pattern

The shape of the pad will vary according to the amount of shaping needed through the shoulder area. For the usual shape, connect the end points with a curved line (Fig. 14a). To fill out a hollow shoulder, draw a shape that will cover this hollow area (Fig. 14b). Variations can be made on the basic shapes to fit any figure problems and to give the tailored look on the outside of the garment.



(a)

(b)

Fig. 14. Draw the shape for your figure



## Fabric for the Shoulder Pad

The outer layers of the pad may be made of muslin, of the interfacing fabric used in the garment or of a lightweight canvas interfacing. Thin layers of cotton or polyester batting supply the inside padding. The woman with square shoulders may need no more than one or two layers of interfacing canvas and no padding.

## Build and shape the pad

Place one outside layer of the pad around a curved surface similar in shape to the shoulder. This could be a dress form, a tailoring ham or a rolled up turkish towel. Pin the points in place (Fig. 15). Make the right and left pads at the same time to be sure you have opposites.

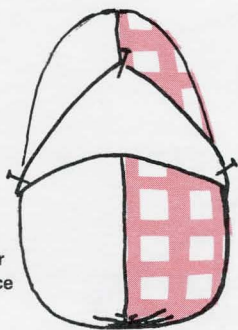


Fig. 15. Shape pad over a curved surface

Pull a layer from the roll of batting and place it over this outside layer. Build up the pad one layer at a time. Steam press as each layer is added. When the pad seems thick enough, slip the top layer in place and give a final steaming. Let the pad dry on the curved area or pin edges to hold the curved shape.

## Test for Fit

Slip the pad into place in the garment. Put on the garment and check to be sure that you have the right amount of padding. Add or subtract any needed amount at this time. Once you are satisfied with the construction of the pad, fasten the layers together with diagonal basting or hand running stitches. Press the pads around the curved area once more to give permanent shaping.

## Install the Pad

Put on the jacket, stand in front of a mirror and slip in the shoulder pads. The thickest portion can extend  $\frac{1}{2}$ " beyond the seamline into the sleeve if desired. Current fashion will dictate how far past the seam the pad will go. The individual figure can also make a difference. Pin the pad into place from the right side of the garment. Remove the jacket and attach the pad at each end of the shoulder seam and at each point of the armscye (Fig. 16).

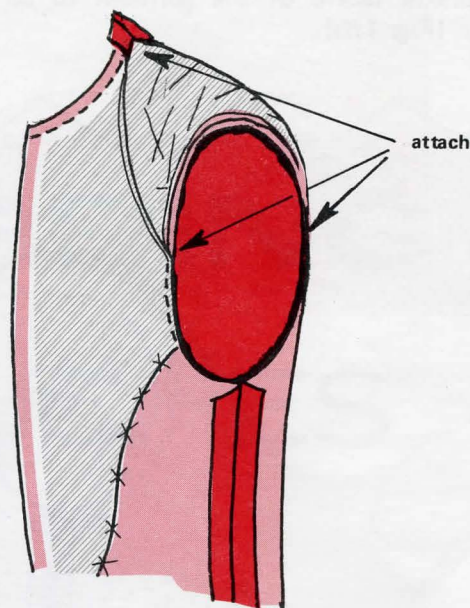


Fig. 16. Install the pad

## SMOOTH SLEEVE CAPS

The shrinking out of sleeve fullness usually causes pleats or wrinkles in the sleeve seam that tend to show on the right side of the garment. Notches can be made in the seam allowance to help alleviate these wrinkles (Fig. 17a). In addition a bias strip of fabric can be placed between the seam and

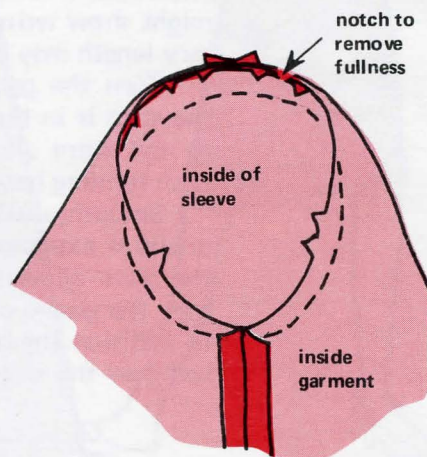


Fig. 17.

(a) notch seam allowances to remove fullness



the outside fabric of the garment to serve as a cushion (Fig. 17b).

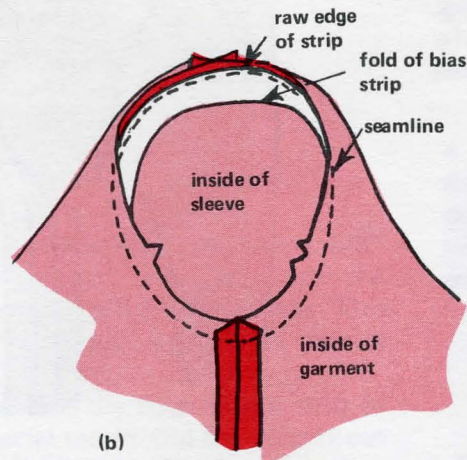


Fig. 17. Handsew bias strip between seam allowance and sleeve

Fabric used for the bias strip may be cut from lamb's wool, muslin, cotton or wool flannel. A smooth textured self-fabric or a lightweight, firm fabric may also be used. Cut the bias strip 6" to 8" long and about 1 1/2" wide. Fold it in half lengthwise and baste along the length.

To install the strip, first turn the garment wrong side out, sleeve inside the garment. With the center of the strip at the center of the sleeve cap, place the fold along the sleeve seamline. The strips should extend over the sleeve cap and around the armhole. Pin in place. Once the strip has passed any area that might show wrinkles on the right side, any unnecessary length may be trimmed off.

Turn the garment right side out to check that the strip is in the right place. Then fasten the strip to the seam allowance near the edge of the fold with running hand stitches.

Smooth, well rounded sleeve caps are one of the qualities expected from fine tailoring. Notching of the seam allowance and addition of the bias strip over the sleeve cap eliminates the outside wrinkles. In addition the bias strip also helps maintain a good roll over the sleeve cap for the life of the garment.