Belt Loops

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Nothing's worse than accenting your waistline or hipline with a great belt only to have the belt move around and end up someplace you don't want it to be. Belt loops to the rescue!

Belt loops are easy to construct and there are several options, depending on the desired look. You can add them to a garment that's already complete, or insert them during the construction process.
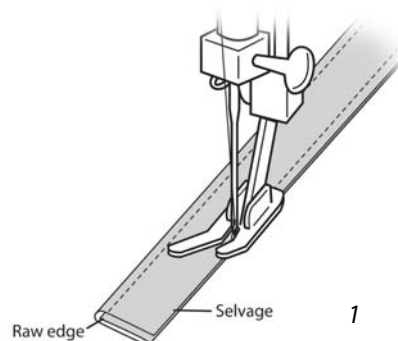
Making belt loops

Sometimes called a belt carrier, a cloth belt loop is usually made from the same fabric as the garment it's placed on. Carriers are placed around the waistline or hipline at the side seam, 2"-3" on either side of the center front and back, and in spaces between if needed. A larger area necessitates additional loops.

To make cloth belt loops, first figure the length needed for one carrier. The length is the belt width plus 1". If you're working with thick fabric like heavy wool, add a bit more.

Multiply the determined length by the number of loops needed and cut a strip this length and three times the desired finished width of the loop along the fabric selvage.

Fold the fabric strip in thirds, encasing the raw edge and press.

Topstitch the strip along both edges, and cut the strip to the needed lengths for all the loops (1).

Did you know?

Men's trousers traditionally have 7 belt loops placed around the waist, always including one at center back.
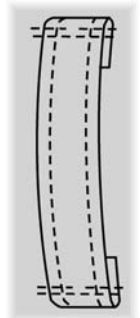
Alternatively, if the garment style doesn't lend itself to topstitching, stitch the selvage edge in place by hand.

To make the loop-making process quicker, simply insert a narrow strip of fusible web inside the folded loop strip and press to hold the layers together. The fusible web helps to add firmness to the loop as well.
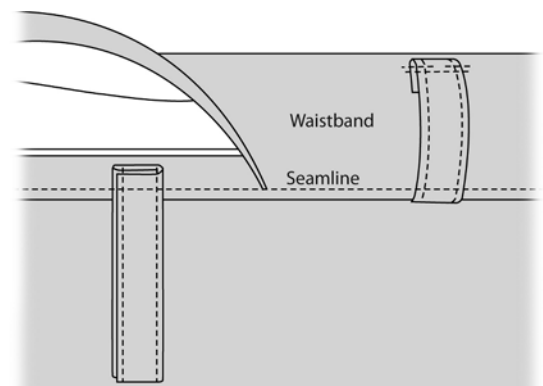
Applying belt loops

To attach the belt loops to a garment, fold under 1/4" at each end and press. Position the loops on the garment and hand or machine stitch the upper and lower edges (2). On sporty garments, tack the belt loops in place with a dense zigzag to form a bartack.

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If you're adding belt loops during construction, include the lower end in the waistline seam, then fold up the loop and sew the upper end in place using a straight, zigzag or hand stitch (3).

Raw edge — Selvage

1

Waistband

Seamline

3

OTHER BELT LOOP OPTIONS:

Thread Loops

On dresses, belt carriers are often simply thread loops positioned above and below the waistline side seam. The thread loop can be made several ways. The most common is chainstitching by hand. Another option is serging a chain long enough for the loops, and yet another method is to zigzag over several strands of heavy thread. All of these methods allow for matching thread loops.

Make the thread loop long enough to create two or more carriers and thread them into a large-eye needle to sew at the side seam belt position (4); knot the ends on the garment wrong side to keep them from pulling out.

Elastic loops

To add a little flexibility to the belt loop, zigzag over elastic cord with a thread color to match the garment. Then sew in place like a thread chain. For an even quicker loop, use colored pony tail elastics in a suitable color.

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