

# Shortening Pants and Sleeves

14.120

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Buying a garment and having it fit exactly is a rare occasion, especially the length of pants or sleeves. With simple alterations, you can put in a customized hem that's much nicer than most manufacturers, and it's right for you.

### Shortening Pants

Note: When shortening a considerable amount, it may be necessary to taper the pant or sleeve at the hem to maintain the same look as the original.

Remove the original hem stitches.

While wearing the proper shoes, turn up the hemline at the desired location. Place a pin at the front, back and sides of each pant leg.

Mark the new hemline with pins, a water-soluble marker or chalk.

Trim the excess hem allowance to approximately the same width as the original (1).



If needed, taper the seams, following the instructions below.

Finish the hem raw edge by serging, turning under the cut edge, or using seam tape to cover the raw edge.

Press the hem to the wrong side and pin in place. Re-hem the pants, using one of the methods shown in Guideline #11.130, Simple Hems.

### Shortening Straight Sleeves

Remove the original hem stitches.

While wearing the proper undergarments and any other items that will be worn under the garment, pin the new hem length at the front, side and back of both sleeves.

Trim the excess length to approximately the same hem width as the original.

If needed, taper the seams, following the instructions below.

Finish the hem raw edge by serging, turning under the cut edge, or using seam tape to cover the raw edge.

Press the hem to the wrong side and pin in place. Re-hem the sleeves, using one of the methods shown in Guideline #11.130, Simple Hems.

### Tapering a Straight Pant Leg or Sleeve

Measure the original width of the pant leg or sleeve hem and the width at the new hemline. Subtract the original hem circumference from the new hem measurement. Divide the difference by four on pants, and divide by two on sleeves (assuming there are two seams per pant leg and one seam on sleeve). This is the additional amount each seam needs to be taken in at the hemline. For example: If the difference is 1", each pant seam needs to be taken in 1/4".

Restitch the seam tapering gently from old to new seamline, then remove the old stitching up to the junction. Rehem.

## Tapering a Narrowing Pant Leg or Sleeve

If the pant or sleeve has a narrow hemline circumference, or a sharp taper, adjust the angle of the hem allowance so the new hem will lie flat. Turning a narrower hem into a wider opening without tapering will create puckers when stitching.

Chalk the taper down to the hemline (2).

Fold the hem allowance up to the wrong side and mark the taper to the opening. This will be your stitching line on the hem allowance portion.

Unfold the hem and finish drawing the line from the hem folded edge to the unfinished hem allowance edge. Note the reverse angle, allowing for the upper hem edge to fit the larger circumference when it's turned up (3).



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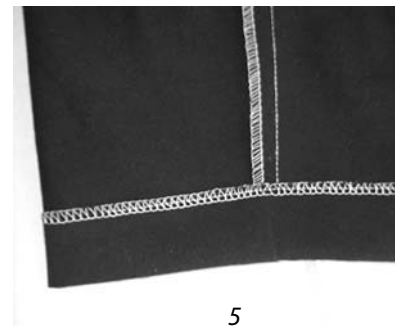


3

Stitch on the drawn line, tapering to the original seamline. Trim the excess seam allowances (4). Finish the hem upper edge and restitch in place (5).



4



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