



# Patch Pockets, Part 1

18.210

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Patch pockets are perhaps the simplest and most recognized pocket type. They appear on shirt fronts and jeans backs, on jackets, skirts and even on home décor items.

## Pocket ID

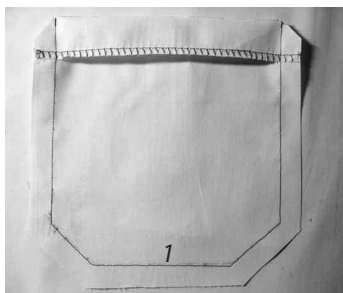
As the name suggests, a patch pocket is a separate shape stitched onto the garment. The upper edge is hemmed and the other edges are topstitched in place. The upper hem allowance varies with the pocket size, but 3/4" to 1" is customary. The side and lower edges include a seam allowance that's pressed to the wrong side before the pocket is sewn to the garment.

Patch pockets are generally rectangular in shape with square or rounded corners. On western wear, the hem and pocket shape may be altered to repeat the points and curves of the garment yokes.

## Basic Instructions

Cut out the pocket shape according to the pattern. Mark the hem foldline.

Finish the upper hem raw edge by pressing under 1/4", serging or applying another seam finish. Turn the hem to the right side along the marked foldline. Stitch along the side and lower seamlines. The stitches will secure the hem at each side and continue around the pocket shape as staystitching to prevent stretching (1).



Clip the upper corners to reduce bulk and trim the seam allowances to 1/4". Turn the hem to the wrong side, concealing the seam allowances, and press the remaining seam allowances to the wrong side along the stay stitching. Topstitch the hem's lower edge through all thicknesses.

Using a removable marker or chalk, transfer the pattern's pocket placement marks to the garment fabric. Pin the prepared pocket in place and edgestitch along the side and

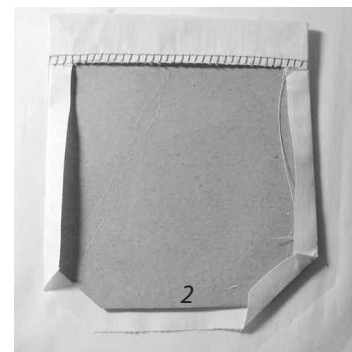
lower edges to attach the pocket to the garment. Backstitch at the upper edges to reinforce the pocket opening.

## Shaping Up

Patch pockets are generally symmetrical, and it can be difficult to keep both sides the same length with corners that match. The simple solution is to use a template for pressing the pocket.

Begin by tracing the pocket pattern, without hem and seam allowances, onto template material. The template can be made from heat-resistant plastic, freezer paper or lightweight cardboard (a file folder works well). Cut out the template just inside the seamlines and hem foldline. Trim away up to 1/8" more if the fabric is thick.

When the side and lower edges have been staystitched and the hem allowance is turned to the wrong side, position the template on the pocket wrong side (2). Press the seam allowances over the template and allow them to cool before removing the template. A light spray of starch will improve the permanency of the folds.



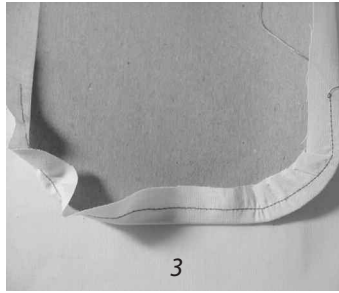
Metal pocket templates are also available from notions suppliers. They are a good investment if you make pockets often.

## Cornering

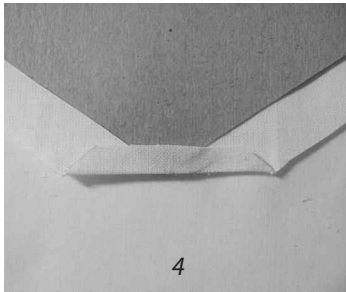
Even with templates, extra bulk at pocket corners and curves presents a challenge.

If the pocket edges are curved, run a line of easing stitches 1/4" inside the seam

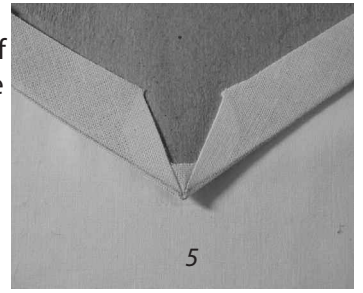
allowance along the curves. Position the template on the pocket wrong side and pull the stitches to gather the seam allowance snugly around the template curves (3). Press with steam to flatten the gathers, trim the seam allowance and attach the pocket to the garment.



For pockets with corners, reduce the bulk by mitering the pocket seam allowances. With the template in place, first press the point over the template edge along an imaginary line straight across the point. Trim the seam allowance 1/4" from the pressed edge (4).



Next, press the seam allowances on either side of the point over the template (5). The pressed edges will meet at the corner. The result is a flatter finish with no stray corner to peek out from under the finished pocket.



For more information on pockets, see Guideline 18.211 Patch Pockets, part 2. 📖