

Simple Pattern Innovations

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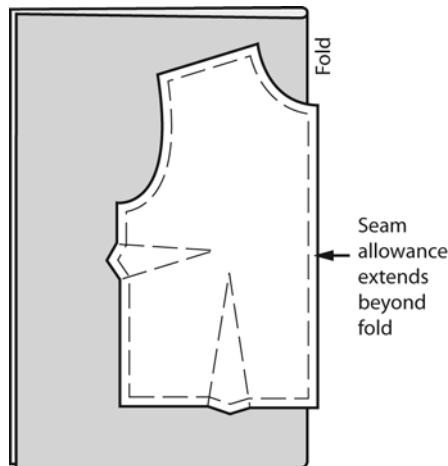
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Sometimes it's just fun to customize a pattern; other times the fabric may necessitate some design changes. These simple modifications are easy if you understand basic principles of patternmaking, and set aside any fears.

Eliminating a Straight Seam

If you're using a large print or plaid fabric, your garment may look better without a center front or back seam, ensuring no break-up in the design patterning, and eliminating the need to match design points at these very visible areas.

To eliminate a straight seam at the center front or back of a design, simply slide the pattern piece over on the fabric so that the foldline is along the designated seamline (1).

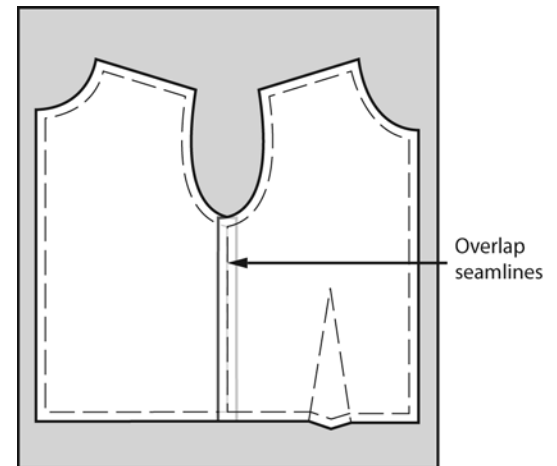


1

Allow the seam allowance to extend beyond the fold, or fold it under, in case you plan to use the pattern again with its original seaming.

Another place to abandon straight seams is on the side of a jacket, if your fabric is wide enough to cut the entire pattern circumference. This is particularly helpful if you're doing some kind of embellishment technique where a seam could be distracting, or bulky.

To eliminate a side seam, simply overlap the seamlines on the front and back pattern sections and pin, then cut a continuous piece of fabric (2).



2

It's important to note that if the seamline you're doing away with includes some type of opening to get the garment on and off (like a zipper), you must relocate the accessibility elsewhere, otherwise you can't get into the garment!

Creating a Seam

Let's say you're a bit short on fabric and you can't cut a piece on the fold that was supposed to be, but you have room for half of it elsewhere. Or, you're working with a symmetrical plaid you need to balance. Or, perhaps you need to add an opening where none exists in the original design. All of these may be possible with the addition of a seamline.

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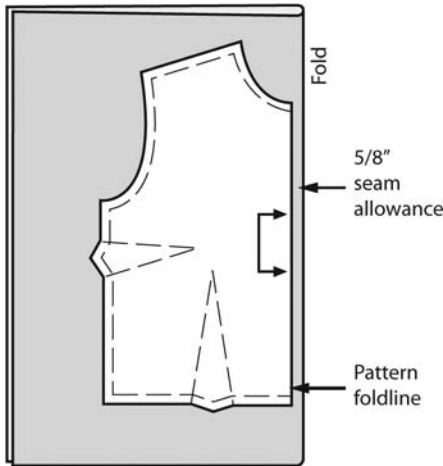


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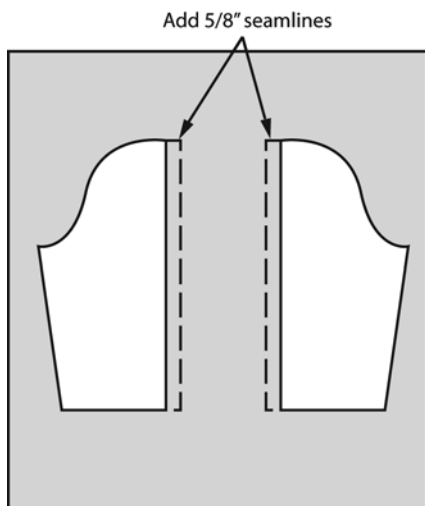


To add a seam where none exists, simply draw in a new cutting line $5/8$ " outside the original line that was originally designed to be placed on a fabric fold (3).



3

To add a seam in the middle of a pattern piece, like a sleeve, for design detailing, draw a line along the straight grain, and add $5/8$ " seam allowances to both sides of the new seamline (4).

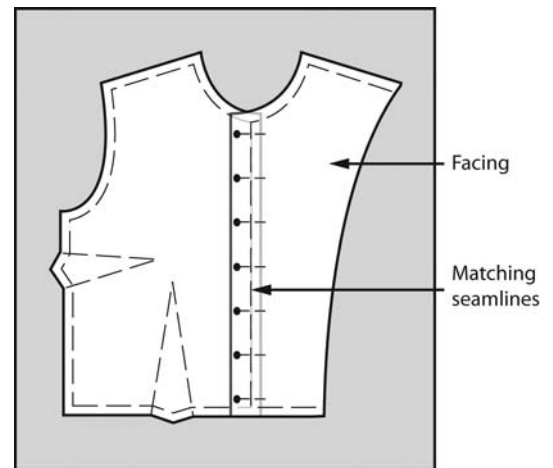


4

Creating a Cut-on Facing

When working with bulky fabrics, it's often nicer to have a fold rather than the thickness of a facing seamline with various layers of fabric and interfacings inside. This technique of creating a cut-on facing is used often on coats and outerwear jackets with a straight center front seam; however, it can also be used at a center back opening.

To create a continuous facing, simply overlap the seam allowances of the adjacent garment and facing pattern pieces and pin in place (5). Cut out one large piece, and mark the foldline at the original seamline.



5

Worth Noting

These easy-to-do pattern innovations may necessitate changes in corresponding pattern pieces, so read the guidesheet thoroughly to be sure which pieces need to be altered. For example, eliminating a center front seam in a bodice means that the front neckline facing needs to have the same change. Or, if you add a front bodice seam, you'll need to do the same to the neckline facing. If you relocate a seamline in a sleeve, the cuff may need to be modified as well. Think through the effect of your design change before making it and remember those pieces that match up with the corresponding pattern sections. ■