

Button Loops

12.201

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SEW-lutions Guidelines

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Whether you're using them at a beautiful cuff, up the back of a fabulous wedding gown or as a jacket closure, button loops offer an alternative to the traditional buttonhole. You can make them from self-fabric tubes or from braid, ribbon or cord.

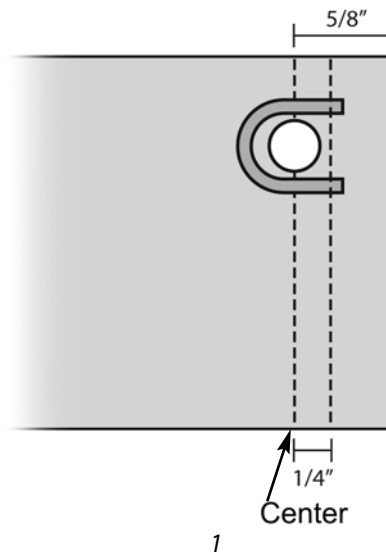
To make a narrow fabric tube used for the loops, see Guidelines 1.150 and 1.151 Tube Turners. The loop fabric needs to be cut on the bias to allow the loops to curve nicely without creasing. The actual tube size can vary depending on the look you want and the fabric weight, but the finished diameter should be less than 1/4".

Pattern Play

Button loops go along the closing overlap edge of a garment and they extend out from the edge. Cut the garment side with the buttons according to the pattern, but on the overlap side some adjustment will be needed if the pattern wasn't originally designed for a loop closure. To adjust the overlap side, find the center line and add 5/8" toward the cut edge for seam allowances; this will be the new cutting line. Adjust the matching facing the same way to position the loops extending from the edge.

Size Wise

To determine the size of the button loop, wrap the fabric loop around the button comfortably and mark the ends 1/4" beyond the garment edge placement line (center) (1). This is the length of the button loop.

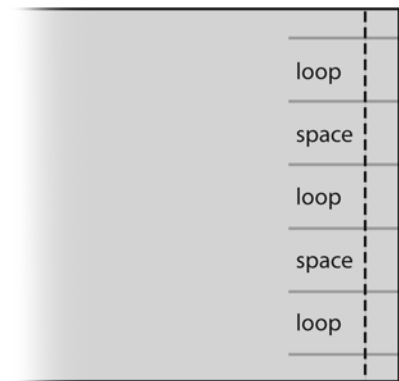


Loops can be made individually, or they can be made from a continuous length, but this measurement is key to consistency. It's good to stitch a sample and test the button through it to be sure of the sizing.

Marking

Mark the entire length of the garment opening with a line 1/4" from the center line (toward the cut edge)—this is a guide for the ends of the button loops.

Then mark the position of each loop as determined above in testing with the button. Loops can be placed next to each other or there can be space between them, depending on the location and security needed for the closure (2).



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Loops can be sewn directly to the garment or they can be sewn to a tear-away stabilizer guide before applying them to the actual garment edge. A guide is often easier if there are several loops to ensure consistency in the sizing and positioning.

As you shape the loops, be sure the seam in the fabric tube will be to the underside as the garment closes (facing you as you sew), so it won't show in the finished closure.

Applying the Loops

Apply the loops to the garment along the positioning line determined above. If you're using a tear-away guide with the loops pre-positioned, stitch through it to attach the loops to the garment, matching the seamline to that on the garment.

If you're using a continuous tube for the loops, you may need to clip it at the turnaround between loops just to make a flatter seam.

Baste the loops in position just inside the seamline, being sure that they don't shift position as you sew. Removable tape can be helpful for holding the shaped loops in position.

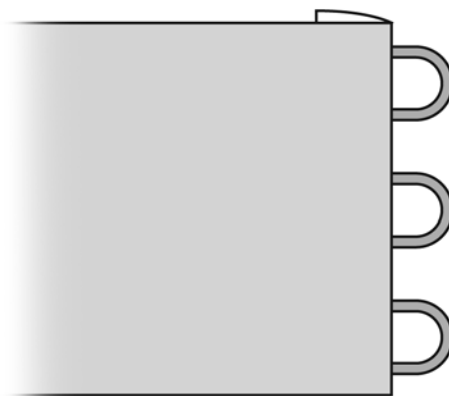
Finishing

Once you have the loops in place, sew the facing in place along the seamline.

Double check the positioning and sizing of the loops, then tear away any stabilizer.

Trim and grade the seams and fold the facing to the inside (3). Understitch the seam to help hold it in place. Press well, but try not to flatten the loops unless it's a look you want.

Mark the button locations under the loops and stitch in place. Keep in mind that there should be some underlap to avoid gaping if the garment is to be worn by itself with nothing underneath. If the loops are on the front of a jacket and it will be worn with a blouse, the center front edges can simply meet when it's buttoned. 🖱



Loop Options

In addition to making narrow fabric tubes for button loops, you can also use ribbon, trim, knitted cord or elastic. The latter makes loops more flexible and easier to open and close. Elastic cord comes in black and white, but if you need a color, head to the hair care aisle at your discount store and look for pony tail fasteners in an array of colors—just clip them to the length needed.

Premade elastic button loops for wedding dresses come by the yard with a small header that is inserted into the seamline to anchor the loops. They come in black, white and ivory colors and the loops are usually 1" apart to accommodate small pearl or satin covered buttons.