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Short Cuts in Sewing

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Short Cuts in Sewing
By HELEN EASTER

Do you remember the days when the sewing lady came to your house and sewed and sewed and then you pulled up your sleeves? And there were yards and yards and spools and spools of bastings, and mother made you save them all so carefully? Do you remember the fine hand finishing on edges and tiny seams, that never showed at all when your friends admired your new dress? But that was several years ago. The idea today is not only to save time, energy and batching thread, but to do everything in the easiest way possible.

Have you often marveled at the clever devices that are used to put together the readymade dress and have you stopped to realize that you have most of the facilities in your own home to make these very same things, and that they are simplicity personified if you just take the time to analyze them?

Take for instance the cable stitch that has been so popular as a little "stylish touch" to your petticoat dress. Do you know that all you have to do to make that same cable stitch is to wind your bobbin with heavy mercerized or silk thread and lengthen the stitch? Then stitch from the wrong side.

The bound buttonhole has been not only a popular trimming but a useful one as well. The extension placket, the bound placket and the faced placket. The extension placket is a good one to use for your underwear and wash dresses. It is made by first leaving an extension on the material when cutting. Stitch a strip of bias tape under each side on a line with the seam, making thickness to which to sew fasteners. Then bind the raw edges with bias tape.

The bound placket can be used for children's wash dresses when the placket comes under a plait. Simply bind the opening with a continuous piece of bias tape.

The faced placket is for sheer dresses, where it is desirable for no stitching to show. This is a little more difficult to make. There are eight steps.

1. Cut a piece twice the width of desired finished placket.
2. Hem with narrow machine hemmer.
3. Crease through the center.
4. Place center of placket piece on line where placket is to be cut.
5. Stitch width of narrow foot from line where placket is to be cut.
6. Cut through the center.
7. Pull placket piece through to wrong side.
8. Crease and stitch close to the edge.

There are three easy plackets to make.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Mark with basting thread the exact length of buttonhole.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Lay a piece 2½ inches wide and 1 inch longer than the opening over it, on the right side, with center to the bastings line.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Stitch the width of the foot from the bastings all around.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Cut on bastings line and diagonally to the corners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Pull contrasting material through the hole.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Pull back the short ends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Bring cut edges back to the middle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Stitch just outside the outer edge of binding.</td>
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And there you have a finish that is neat and durable. It may be "just for looks" or it may be used to finish the set-in pocket in the middle you are making for the young sister. But even this method of making bound buttonholes is not simple enough for the efficiency experts of the art of dressmaking. That simple device which is listed in your book of machine attachments as the "binder" is a little gem in the saving of time in dressmaking. Bias binding has been used in trimming for dresses, an easy way to finish a seam when the material is too bulky to use a French seam, as a finish for the flat seam and now to make a sturdy buttonhole that is especially practical for the small youngster's rompers.

Do you remember what a tedious job it was to make a placket and how the pleats on your petticoat wash dress were laboriously made as the placket on your Sunday dress? But why such work? Who ever stops to look at a placket?

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