Fasteners: Hooks, Snaps, and Tapes

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FASTENERS: HOOKS, SNAPS AND TAPES

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HOOKS AND EYES

Hooks and eyes are used mainly to fasten garments at the top of plackets and at waistbands. Hooks are chosen according to the fabric weight and the amount of strain that will be placed on the fastener. Large hooks are used on heavy fabric and small hooks on lightweight fabrics. Flat hooks and eyes, sometimes called skirt or pants hooks, are used on waistbands and belts. Silk covered hooks and eyes are used on coats and capes, especially on fur garments. Regular eyes are available in two types: the round or loop for edges which just meet and straight, metal eyes for edges which overlap.

When edges overlap, place the hook on the inside of the overlap, approximately 1/4 inch from the edge. Stitch around each hole using double thread and a buttonhole or whip stitch. See instructions for making a buttonhole stitch. Be careful that the stitches do not show on the right side of the garment. Pass the needle between the layers of fabric to the prong end of the hook. Secure the prong with whip stitches. Secure the thread with several small backstitches and run the needle between the layers of fabric making one long stitch. Pull the thread taut and clip the thread close to the fabric. With pins, mark the position of the metal eye on the outside of the overlap so that it lies directly under the prong of the hook. Stitch the eye in place (Figure 3).

Flat skirt or pants hooks are used mainly on waistbands. Position them as you would a regular hook and eye and sew in place with double thread using a whip or buttonhole stitch (Figure 4).

When edges meet, place the hook on the inside of the garment, 1/8 inch from the edge. Stitch around each hole and secure the prong of the hook as described above (Figure 5).

Place the round eye on the inside of the other edge so that it extends 1/8 inch beyond the edge. This extension of the eye allows the hook to fasten without lapping the edges of the garment. Stitch

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around each hole of the eye and tack down both sides of the round eye close to the edge of the garment.

**THREAD LOOPS**

Thread loops may be used instead of metal eyes at a neck or sleeve opening. Use one of the two following methods to form a durable thread loop (Figure 6).

**Chain stitch method.** Secure knotted double thread on the inside of the garment at one end of the desired loop location. Take a small stitch at the point where the thread is brought through the fabric to the right side. Do not pull this stitch tight but allow a loop to form (Figure 7).

Hold the thread from the needle in the left hand and slip the loop over the thumb and the first two fingers of your right hand (Figure 8).

Pull the thread, which is attached to the needle, through the loop, forming a second loop (Figures 9 and 10). Pull on the thread which is attached to the garment to tighten the first loop. Repeat this step until the chain is the desired length. Slip the needle through the last loop and pull taut to secure the chain of loops. Fasten the end of the loop to the garment at the desired location with several small back stitches. End by running the needle between the layers of fabric, making one long stitch. Pull the thread taut and clip the thread close to the fabric.

**Buttonhole stitch method.** Secure the thread knot under the layers of the fabric and make a short stitch at one end of the loop to secure the thread. Form the loop by taking a short stitch at the other end of the loop. Repeat this step four or five times (Figure 11). Fasten the thread with a few short backstitches. Without cutting the thread, buttonhole stitch over the thread loop, placing the stitches as close together as possible without piling the stitches on top of each other (Figure 12). Fasten the stitching with several short backstitches. Then run the needle between the layers of fabric, making one long stitch. Pull the stitch taut and clip the thread close to the fabric.
SNAPS

Snaps are used for closures in areas of little stress and for anchoring portions of the garment. Select small snaps (sizes 4/0 to 1/0) for light to medium weight fabrics and large (sizes 1 to 4 for heavier fabrics.

Hide the thread knot on the inside of the overlap between the layers of fabric at the center of the desired position for the snap, and secure the thread with a small backstitch. Place the ball-half of the snap over this position. Stitch around the snap by making 3 to 4 whip or buttonhole stitches in each hole (Figure 13). Slip the needle between the layers of fabric when you move from one hole to the next. Be careful that the stitches do not show on the right side of the garment. Finish with several small backstitches and slip the needle between the layers of fabric to form one long stitch. Pull the thread taut and clip close to the fabric.

To mark the position for the socket half of the snap, first lap and pin the placket together. Then, if there is a hole in the center of the ball half of the snap, slide a threaded needle through this hole from the right side of the garment into the underlap. Open the placket, pulling the ball half off the needle and thread.

Knot the thread and pull it tight. This positions the knot in the center of the desired snap position (Figure 14). Take a small stitch to secure the thread and sew the socket half of the snap in place. If there is no hole in the center of the snap, locate the position for the socket half by rubbing tailor’s chalk on the ball half of the snap and press it firmly against the underlap while the placket is closed as desired.

HANGING SNAPS

A hanging snap can be used when edges meet but do not lap. Attach the ball half of the snap on the inside of one placket edge. Position the socket half and sew it to the garment through only one of the holes, allowing it to extend beyond the edge of the garment (Figure 15). If this does not allow enough space for the garment to fasten easily, attach the socket half with a thread shank. Sew back and forth between the snap and the placket edge leaving the thread the desired length for the shank. Work the buttonhole stitch over the shank, beginning at the snap end (Figure 16). Secure the thread with backstitches and hide the end of the thread between the layers of fabric.
COVERED SNAPS
Cut two circles of lightweight fabric (generally lining fabric) a little larger than twice the diameter of the snap. Hand stitch around the edge of each circle with small running stitches (Figure 17). Place each snap half face down over a circle of fabric and draw up the thread so the fabric cups around the snap (Figure 18). Fasten the thread securely (Figure 19). Work the ball half of the snap through the fabric by snapping and unsnapping the snap several times. Open the snap and sew to the garment as usual, stitching through the holes of the snap.

PRONGED SNAPS
These snaps are visible on both sides of the garment since they penetrate through the garment when attached. They remain fastened even under considerable stress and are often used on children’s clothes, work clothes, and western attire. Follow the manufacturer’s directions for attaching the snaps.

NYLON HOOK AND LOOP FASTENERS
These fasteners, sometimes called pressure sensitive tapes, are available in tapes and patches of various sizes and shapes. The fastener consists of two pieces of sturdy nylon fabric—one piece with tiny hooks and the other with tiny loops. When pressed together, they mesh and hold.

Pin the loop portion to the underside of the overlap and the hook portion to the right side of the underlap, so that the hook portion does not rub against the body when the garment is unfastened (Figure 20). Machine or hand stitch around the edges of the fastener.
SNAP OR HOOK TAPES

Both hook and eye and snap tape fasteners are available. Snap tapes can be used on lapped closures and hook and eye tapes on edges which just meet.

SNAP TAPES

The lapped portion of the garment opening or placket should be as wide or wider than the tape. Pin the tape with the socket half of the snaps to the right side of the underlap and machine stitch around all edges and through all layers of fabric. Turn under the ends of the tape if they tend to ravel. Pin the tape with the ball half of the snaps to the underneath side of the overlap, so that the ball and socket halves of the snaps are aligned. Stitch in place (Figure 21).

HOOK AND EYE TAPES

The facing or opening extension on both edges of the closure should be as wide or wider than the hook and eye tape. Pin the hook side of the tape on the right side of one opening extension with the hooks along the fold line. Machine stitch around the hooks and along the edge of the tape between the hooks, being careful not to hit the hooks with the sewing machine needle (Figure 22). Then fold the tape and opening extension under the garment and stitch the other edge of the tape to the garment through all layers of fabric. Turn under the raw edges of the fabric and the ends of the tape if they tend to ravel. Pin the eye side of the tape to the other opening extension, aligning the eyes to the hooks. Stitch this tape following the same procedure (Figure 23).
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