

Creating the perfect buttonhole

The style and quality of your buttonholes can be the difference between your garments having a professional touch or not. Here's some useful advice for creating great looking buttonholes plus ideas for using different types of buttonhole to suit your fabric.

Marking Buttonholes

Mark the center and ends of the buttonhole on the fabric - one way that works well is a straight line through the center, with short perpendicular lines at the ends: +-----+

Position the marked buttonhole under the buttonhole foot, aligning centres, with one end directly under the needle.

Sewing Buttonholes

Stitch buttonholes according to the instructions in your machine instruction manual.

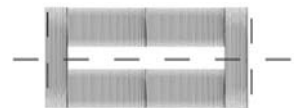
The sequence in which the parts of each buttonhole are sewn varies from one machine to the next, but the basic parts of the standard buttonhole are the same regardless of the order of the steps i.e. two long satin stitch beads, one at each side of the buttonhole, a bartack at each end, and a series of short securing stitches to prevent the buttonhole from coming undone.

Tip 1: Some buttonhole feet have a sliding gauge for measuring the length of buttonholes without marking them on the fabric; simply mark the beginning of the buttonhole and use the gauge to set the length.

Tip 2: If your sewing machine has an automatic buttonhole feature, use it when stitching multiple buttonholes, such as at the front of a coat or blouse. After stitching the first buttonhole, your machine will "remember" it; to stitch additional buttonholes, simply position the foot and sew. The machine will automatically move through the steps and stop when the buttonhole is complete.

Standard

Used for fine to medium weight fabrics - blouses, shirts, lightweight trousers.

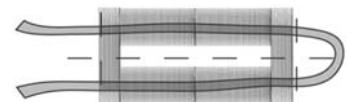


Corded

Stitched over cord for added stability and/or a more prominent appearance.

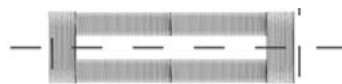
Follow the instructions in your sewing machine manual for creating corded buttonholes. Generally a length of cord is folded in half and looped around a "toe" at the front or back of the buttonhole foot.

Position the looped end toward the edge of the fabric, as this is the end that receives the most stress when the garment is buttoned and the fabric pulled taut. When the buttonhole is complete, pull the ends of the cord to pull the loop snug at the end of the buttonhole. Trim ends; if working on a knit fabric, pull ends to back and knot together before trimming.



Heirloom

A buttonhole with narrower beads than a standard buttonhole. Used for fine or lightweight fabrics - blouses, shirts, dresses, children's clothes, heirloom stitching.



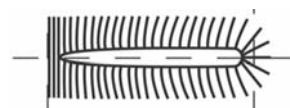
Stretch

Less dense and more flexible than a standard buttonhole. Used with all knit and stretch fabrics, such as cotton interlock and jersey.



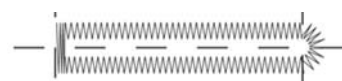
Handlook

The look of hand-sewn buttonhole stitches. Used for light to medium weight fabrics, such as handkerchief linen and cotton batiste - blouses, shirts.



Round

Used for medium to heavyweight fabrics, with the rounded end toward the edge of the garment - jackets, coats.



Keyhole

Used for heavyweight non-stretch fabrics, such as suiting, with the round end toward the edge of the garment - coats, jackets. To determine the buttonhole length, calculate bead length only; eye will sew accordingly.



Straight Stitch

Used to prestitch buttonholes and pocket openings, as well as to reinforce button openings in leather.

