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# Buying BOYS' SUITS

FARMERS' BULLETIN  
No. 1877  
U. S. DEPARTMENT  
*of* AGRICULTURE



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# BUYING BOYS' SUITS

by

CLARICE LOUISBA SCOTT, *Assistant home economics specialist*

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**B**OYS HAVE the reputation of not caring for clothes. But whether they say so or not, they want to be comfortable in their clothes, and they want to look like other boys.

This means suits and trousers need to be roomy, cut full, suited in style to an active, growing body, made of substantial materials with good workmanship, and near enough to the prevailing mode not to be conspicuous.

Mothers who buy for the boys in their families generally want to get the greatest possible wear value for the money they can spend. They must know how to check for quality not only the outer cloth and linings of a suit, but also those materials not so much in evidence, such as interlinings, paddings, and stays. They must learn how to know substantial tailoring and develop an eye for details. They must be able to read labels critically and ask intelligent questions of the salesperson in order to judge the "hidden qualities" of a suit that cannot be determined by seeing or feeling.

Brought together in the following pages are practical tests and factual information to help a woman check the important points of quality in a boy's suit before she buys.

## QUALITY AND PRICE

What is it that makes one suit look well and wear well while another soon loses its shape and goes to pieces?

Price is not the whole story. Seasonal variations in cost of materials and labor make it impossible for values in ready-made clothes to remain the same within established price lines. Nevertheless it saves much time and aimless shopping to have a price limit in mind at the start and to decide what type of suit will best serve the purpose.

Buying a suit for a boy is different from buying a suit for a man. A boy is more active and growing, so two seasons' wear—sometimes only one—is about all that can be expected. Thus a boy cannot get full value from the highest grade of worsted suits, which are often good buys for a man. For the same reason, much of the fine tailoring worth the cost in a man's suit would be an extravagance in a suit for a boy. This explains why the best suits for boys are, as a rule, comparable with medium-quality suits for men.



Suits and trousers of the sports type usually are best for boys, because they are fashioned on roomy lines. They allow for action and growth and make it unnecessary to get a suit that is too large at first.

Practical helps in coping with activity and growth are outlet seams and hems in coats and trousers. Look for these in the body of a coat, the back seam, or rise, of the trousers, and at the lower edges of sleeves and trouser legs. In lower grade suits these allowances are missing because they take more cloth. But inasmuch as they make it possible to enlarge a suit, sometimes as much as one whole size, they usually justify extra initial cost.

## SIZE AND FIT

Buy clothes to fit the boy regardless of size labels. Until a standard system of sizing clothes according to body measurements is adopted, the only way to make sure of getting suits or separate trousers that really fit is to have the boy try them on. This is necessary because sizes are not uniform and because boys differ so much in body build.

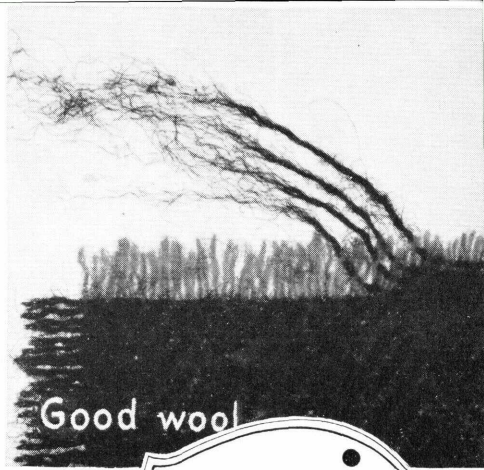
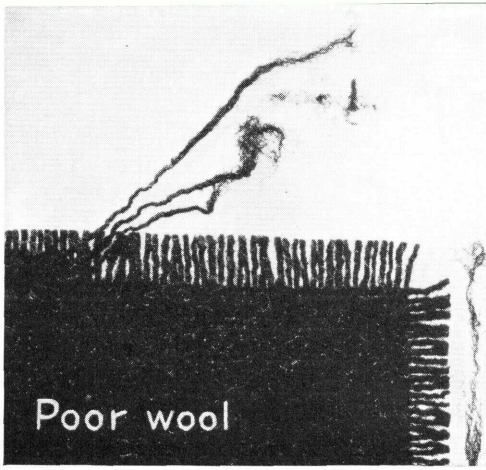
Two suits labeled the same size may differ as much as two sizes in actual measurement. Trousers marked the same size may vary from 2 to 4 inches in length. And the back rise of the trousers, which so directly affects comfort, is sometimes as much as 3 inches shorter in one line of clothing than in another. With such variation in size markings, it is easy to understand why many "bargains" turn out to be misfits. It also shows why it is not wise to attempt to estimate size from the suit last worn by a boy. For, in addition to the variation of sizes in different lines and types of clothing, in one season a boy may grow as much as two sizes, as clothes are now marked.

To take care of the difference in figure types some manufacturers make suits not only in "regulars" but in "stouts" and "slims." Other dealers carry only regular sizes and suggest alterations for stout and slender boys. But even if the alterations are skillfully done, the suit is often uncomfortable and unsatisfactory because it was built originally for another type of figure. The better plan is to keep looking until a suit is found that fits reasonably well in the first place.

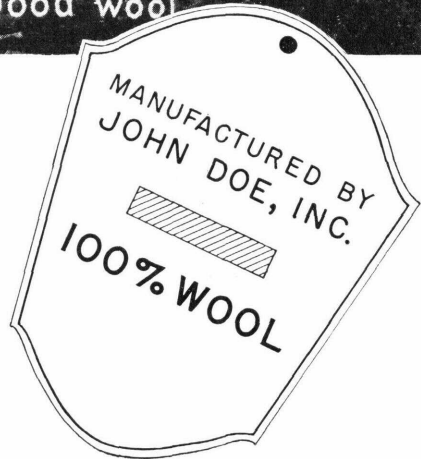
## SUIT MATERIALS

To stand up under the hard wear that a boy gives a suit, materials have to be sturdy. Best fabrics for the outer cloth have weaves that are firm, strong, and not likely to snag, and textures that are soft and comfortable. In addition, a satisfactory suiting takes a good press, does not wrinkle readily, and is of a color that does not show spots quickly.

Suitings of all types should be thoroughly shrunk. The growth of the boy is enough to contend with, without the added trouble of shrinkage in the fabric. Because of the construction of wool fibers, it must be expected that wool suitings, even though sold as thoroughly shrunk, will continue



“All wool” or “100 percent wool” means that the suiting is made of new wool. Short, stubby, damaged fibers make harsh, poor-wearing cloth, while longer, finer and softer fibers make resilient, good-wearing cloth that holds a press.



to shrink slightly with repeated steam-pressing. As yet it is not common to find wool suits bearing printed facts about shrinkage, but buyers should know about this quality. In contrast, many cottons bear tags that state how much shrinkage to expect. These cottons are always a better risk than unlabeled ones.

Color permanence is another hidden quality of suitings essential to a good buy, but as yet definite facts about this are practically impossible to get. Wash trousers of such staple cottons as covert, jean, and gabardine, are often labeled “colorfast” or “yarn dyed,” but seldom do other materials carry information about color permanence.

Fabrics of wool, of cotton, and of mixed fibers are the three main types of suitings used for boys’ garments. Because these materials differ considerably, they present different problems in buying.

Wool suitings are difficult for most of us to judge with certainty. The Wool Products Labeling Act, effective July 14, 1941, gives some help. The law provides that all fabrics containing wool or purporting to contain wool shall bear a label, conspicuously placed, with definite statements about fiber content. The name of the manufacturer or distributor shall also be on the label or on a separate tag in close proximity to it. If the label reads “100% wool” or “all wool,” it means that the suit is made of all new wool. If the wool is reused or reprocessed, instead of new, the label shall bear a statement to that effect. It is sometimes believed that new wool is always best, but this is not true. There are both good and inferior qualities of new wool.

Since fiber content cannot be a complete guide to quality, feel the cloth and look closely at both sides. Note the weave and amount of give both

ways. A good suiting will feel springy and soft, but at the same time firm and sturdy. Poor quality cloth will feel hard, lifeless, and scratchy.

Suitings may be either worsted or woolen. Worsted suitings are made of the longer wool fibers combed parallel. Typical worsteds are serge and gabardine. Yarns are smooth, even, and strong, and weaves are smooth and distinct in these materials. Since worsteds are made of choice wool they wear long and well, resist wrinkles, hold a press, and take less care than do mixed fabrics. The main disadvantages of worsted suitings are their tendency to become shiny and show spots, due to the smooth, hard surface and plain color. Also worsted is expensive for a boy's suit because he is likely to outgrow it before he gets the good of the long-wearing qualities of the cloth.

Woolen suitings are made of the shorter wool fibers which, unlike worsteds, are not combed parallel. Typical woolens are tweed and cheviot. In these fabrics the yarns are less even and smooth, the weaves appear less definite. The rough, napped surface finishes that characterize woolens are practical because they prevent shine. Woolens generally do not wear so long as worsteds, but they cost less, and a boy is more likely to get the worth of a woolen suit before he outgrows it.

**Mixed fabrics** Many suitings are now made of wool mixed with cotton or rayon. These can be had at much lower cost than all-wool suiting of good quality, but when more than a very small percentage of either cotton or rayon is used, the character of the cloth is noticeably changed. It wrinkles badly, loses shape, and will not hold a press. Much rayon in a suiting causes it to shine badly with even slight wear and weakens it so that it soon becomes thin and breaks at the knees, seat, pocket edges, and other places where the rub comes.

Both cotton and rayon can now be made to look like wool so closely that the average person cannot tell the difference either by appearance or feel. But here, again, the fiber content labels required under the new Wool Products Labeling Act should be helpful. On suits not all wool, the labels are required to give facts such as "Made of 60% wool—40% cotton" or "80% wool—20% rayon." Definite information of this sort is a real help in judging value in relation to price. It gives the purchaser a better idea as to what to expect of the suiting in wear and in care.

**Cotton fabrics** Many cottons designed for winter trousers are printed with characteristic wool patterns. As a rule, these materials are not represented to be other than pure cotton, but some purchasers mistake them for wool because they are so similar in appearance. Most confusing are the thick cotton twills printed on both sides to look like tweeds and herringbones. These cottons make good low-cost separate trousers that wear well and can be washed, but they are not satisfactory for lined coats.



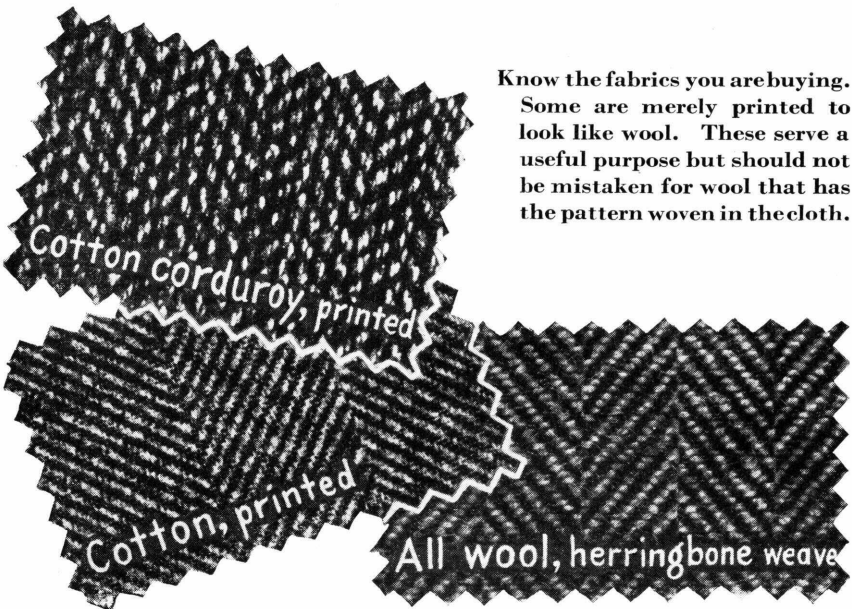
Cotton corduroys in the mottled and wool-like patterns are classics in school suits and separate trousers. Best indications of the quality of corduroy are a close pile and a firm weave of yarns of uniform size, which can be judged from the back of the cloth. Loosely woven corduroys are weak and become shapeless with wear, and the pile eventually rubs out, particularly on the seat, knees, elbows, and in the crotch, where the legs rub together. Corduroy in the printed patterns sometimes is mistaken for wool, but on close examination it is readily identified as cotton.

In wash cottons for boys' wear the texture should be soft rather than harsh and stiff. It is a mistaken notion that the stiffer a fabric the better it will "hold" a boy. Stiffness is often the result of poor-quality yarn and excessive sizing in the fabric, and scratchy, unwieldy textures are uncomfortable to wear.

Cotton for boys' summer wash pants are varied in type. A few of the staple materials are homespun, covert, jean, and gabardine. There are also novelty cords and practical tweedlike weaves known only as trouser materials. These range in quality, but the ones that wear best are firmly constructed and finished without excessive sizing. If they are sleazy and heavily filled with sizing, as many of the "bargains" are, only thin, raggy cloth with very little strength is left after washing. Such trousers are not economical. Within a short time they have to be replaced, and during the time that they are wearable they give little satisfaction.

New and very practical for boys are summer shirt and slack ensembles of hopsacking and similar cotton. The material is made in a wide choice of colors and has sufficient body to tailor well, yet it is comfortably cool. It

**Know the fabrics you are buying. Some are merely printed to look like wool. These serve a useful purpose but should not be mistaken for wool that has the pattern woven in the cloth.**



also launders easily. Styles that may be worn with the shirt in or out are adaptable to a number of occasions. When buying one of these ensembles, take special care to learn about color permanence not only to washing but to sunlight.

## SUIT COATS

When buying a boy's suit the coat is generally tried on first for size and fit. The coat, too, serves as a key to the quality of the whole suit. Unless the coat is well made of good materials inside and out, there is no need of looking further at the trousers, for they are certain to be comparable in quality.

Much that determines the real worth of a suit coat cannot be seen. Since informative tags are scarce, a purchaser has to depend in large measure on feel, stretching, and similar tests.

As the boy tries on a coat, notice the cut. Unless the cut is accurate, the coat will lose shape in wear and cleaning. Cloth with a definite woven pattern, as stripes or plaid, is easy to check for accurate cut. More difficult to judge are all-over patterns or plain colors.

Look at the sleeves. The warp or lengthwise yarns should drop straight down from the high point of the shoulders as the arms hang down straight at the sides. Also the warp yarns of a coat back and front should drop straight from the shoulders to the lower edge of the coat. Any twist in the lengthwise grain of the goods, such as is sometimes noticeable about the armholes or at the neck, indicates bad cut. No matter how well such a coat has been pressed and appears to fit, it will soon lose shape with wear. Clever pressing does much to hide such defects while the suit hangs in a store.

The reason that low-grade suits are badly cut is that in order to sell them at low cost, labor must be economized. Instead of cutting one or only a few suits at a time, deep layers of cloth are piled together and many suits cut at one time. Naturally deep layers of cloth do not permit accurate and precise cutting, which is essential to good tailoring. Better suits for boys are cut in small lays.

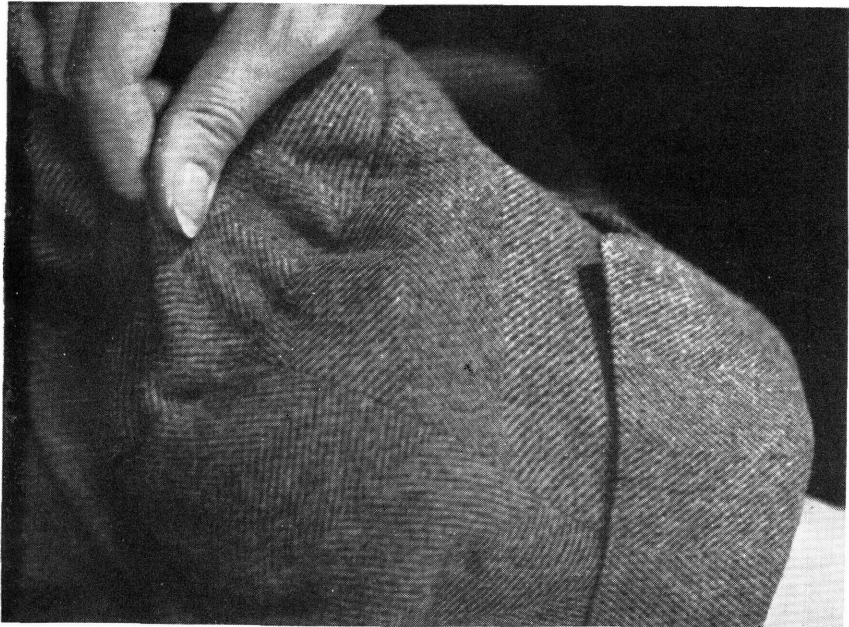
Careful matching of fabric patterns such as checks, plaids, and stripes is still another indication of quality found only in good suits. This takes time and also more cloth, but the appearance of a suit carefully matched is far superior to that of one in which patterns run hit and miss. Places where pattern matching or the lack of it is readily noticeable are where pocket welts and flaps break into the coat front, where coat fronts meet when buttoned, at seam lines, and where the collar rolls over and meets the back. Matching affects appearance—not the actual wearing qualities of a suit—so when it is necessary to buy a suit from the lower price ranges, it is wiser to avoid



Roll over the corner of the collar.

If properly interlined with linen canvas, it will spring back quickly into place. If it rolls back slowly then sized cotton has probably been substituted.

To be sure that shoulder padding is fastened firmly in place, catch hold of the lining with one hand and of the coat with the other. If a coat is well made, these are securely tacked together; otherwise the inside padding will shift with wear and cleaning.



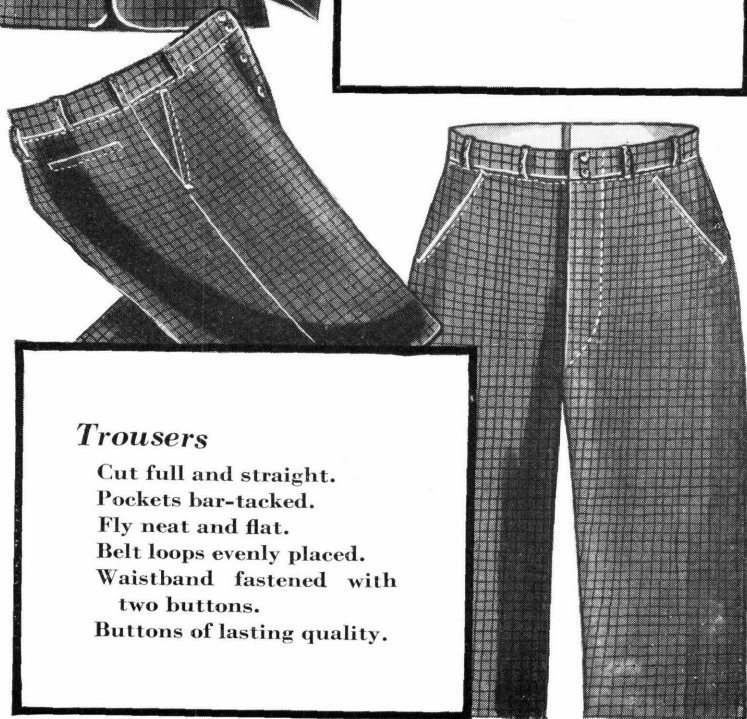


## OUTSIDE MARKS OF QUALITY



### *Coat*

Fabric pattern matched.  
Cut accurately with grain.  
Fine, close stitching.  
Collar smoothly shaped to fit neck.  
Front softly rolled; flexible.  
Armholes smoothly pressed.  
Buttonholes firmly worked.  
Buttons hand-sewed.  
Pockets precisely tailored and reinforced.  
Pressed thoroughly.



### *Trousers*

Cut full and straight.  
Pockets bar-tacked.  
Fly neat and flat.  
Belt loops evenly placed.  
Waistband fastened with two buttons.  
Buttons of lasting quality.

## INSIDE MARKS OF QUALITY

### *Coat*

Lining only in coat fronts;  
exposed seams bound;  
hand-felled at armholes,  
neck, and shoulders.

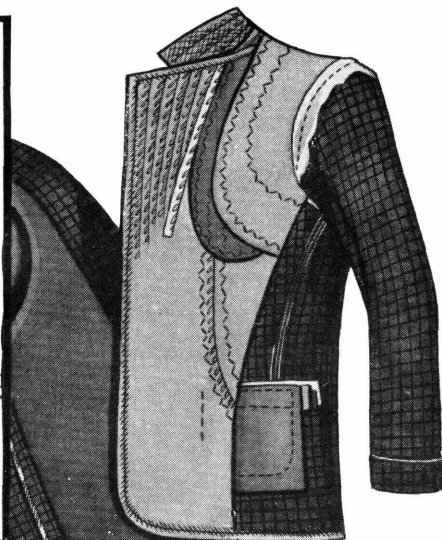
Taping at armholes and along  
front and lower edges and  
roll of revers.

Fabricstays at pocket mouths.  
Seams at least three-eighths  
inch wide.

Outlets in body and hems of  
sleeves and coat.

Front stayed with shape-  
retaining interlining.

Padding of flexible mate-  
rial, secure, not excessive.



### *Trousers*

Cut with no piecings.

Waist, bias-faced.

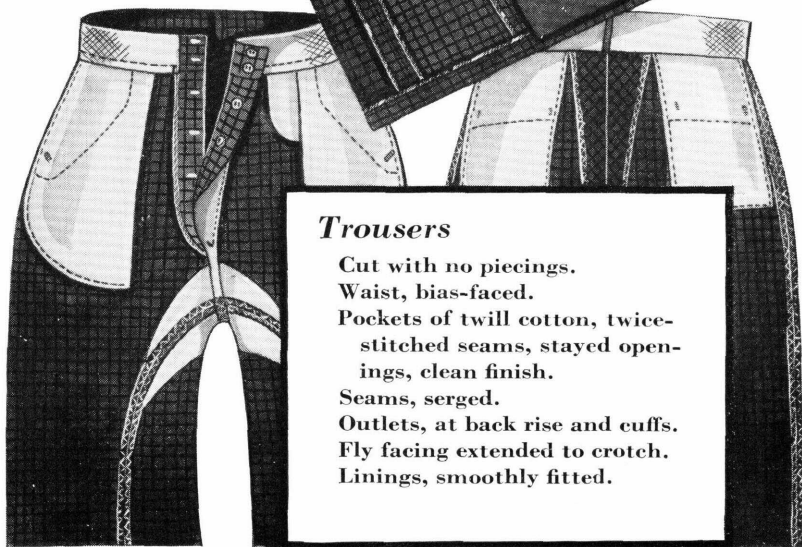
Pockets of twill cotton, twice-  
stitched seams, stayed open-  
ings, clean finish.

Seams, serged.

Outlets, at back rise and cuffs.

Fly facing extended to crotch.

Linings, smoothly fitted.







Stretch just back of the roll of the rever. If there is no noticeable give and a narrow band of tape can be felt, the coat has been made with bridle stays. These stays keep coat fronts from sagging.

Try to stretch the underarm seams. If they will not give, it is because the armholes have been taped to keep them from stretching out of shape.





plaids and stripes and choose instead less definite allover patterns or plain colors that do not require matching.

Notice the pockets to see how well they are tailored.

**Pockets** The upper coat pocket is usually a welt, the lower either patch or duplex. Duplex pockets, that is, bound pockets designed with a flap that may be worn inside or out, are generally better than patch pockets for a boy's coat because they do not become baggy with use. But because duplex pockets require more skillful workmanship, time, and material, patch pockets are always used when the cost is kept low. However, patch pockets are not necessarily an indication of low quality. That style of pocket is often desirable on sport and summer suits.

All types of pockets should be evenly constructed with straight, precise stitching that blends in color and has all ends fastened securely, never left dangling. Pockets in low-grade suits are often very weak in construction and quick to break out at the ends. They also lack the inside stay which is used in better suits to keep pocket mouths flat and unstretched. To determine whether a stay has been used, stretch the pocket edges and see whether there is any noticeable give. If properly stayed, they will remain firm.

In a good suit, the outer cloth extends well down inside the pockets so that the linings, even though well matched, will never show. In poor suits, starched, sleazy linings that usually do not harmonize come very close to the pocket tops.

**Padding** Look now at the set or fit of the shoulders, and feel them well out into the top of the sleeves. Have the boy move his arms forward and up. A good suit will have little shoulder padding, and what there is will be flexible and soft, giving a neat, smooth, natural-looking fit. Over the top of the sleeve you can feel a separate narrow strip of soft padding. In good suits this padding is so placed and tapered in thickness that it will be practically impossible to see or even feel any definite line where it begins and ends.

In contrast, suits of poorer grade are less carefully padded. The shoulders are often overpadded with hard, stiff material that makes them look too wide and square for good proportions. They have an unnatural stiffness, and as the boy moves his arms, abrupt lines where the padding starts and stops can be seen. Unlike the better suits, they have no separate strip of sleeve padding. Instead, the padding in the shoulders simply juts on out into the sleeve, giving the shoulders that unnaturally wide, stiff appearance.

Next, catch hold of the outer cloth of the sleeve and shoulder with one hand and the lining with the other to make sure that padding, outer cloth, and lining are held firmly together. This prevents shifting of padding and consequent change of fit when the suit is cleaned. In poorly made suits, padding is laid in loosely, with only a few insecure stitches holding

it to the coat. These soon break and allow the padding to slip out of place.

**Taping** While examining the shoulder and sleeve, also test the armholes to see if they have been taped to prevent stretching. The best way to determine this is to stretch slightly the curved seam line leading to the under arm. If the armholes are properly taped, it is not possible either to see or to feel any "give" here. If they are not taped properly they will stretch noticeably.

There are other places, too, where taping is important, but these are not so easy to detect as around the armholes. However, if care has been taken to tape armholes, it is fairly safe to assume that other places likely to stretch and sag are also protected, in the same way.

Tape is needed along the lapel front and lower edges to preserve their shape. But unless there is a curved corner at the lower front, it is practically impossible to test for this by stretching.

Even more important than tape along the front edge is the bridle stay. This is the wide tape stay attached to the interlining, extending from the collar along the roll of the rever almost down to the first buttonhole. Without this stay, a coat front soon sags, the roll of the rever stretches, and the coat hangs unevenly. This unevenness is particularly noticeable when the coat is unbuttoned. It is easy to tell whether or not there is a bridle stay. Turn the rever of a coat up and pull gently along the roll line. If an unyielding strip of stay tape can be felt, a bridle stay is there. But if the line of this roll stretches readily, the bridle stay has been omitted.

The tape itself must be of good grade, or it will not hold the edges smooth and the shape perfect. This, however, is something that the purchaser can learn only by asking, unless there happens to be an informative tag. The best type of tape is a thin, lightweight linen and cotton mixture, uniform in width, thoroughly shrunk, and dried without stretching. If even slightly stretched, it will draw up when the suit is dry-cleaned and cause taped edges and armholes to pucker. When this happens, the appearance of a suit is about as objectionable as if there were no taping at all.

**Interlining** The revers of a coat can practically make or ruin the appearance of a suit. In a coat of very good quality, the revers are not pressed into a sharp crease; they roll back smoothly. Pinch this roll hard between the fingers. If it springs back into place quickly, the interlining is probably a haircloth mixture, the best type of material for the purpose. To reduce the cost of a suit, cotton canvas is often used instead of haircloth for the interlining. In still lower grades of suits, burlap may be used. Both of these materials can be creased flat because they do not have the quick spring of good haircloth.

The collar interlining in a good-quality coat is linen made especially for the purpose. It resists creasing in much the same way as haircloth. To test it, roll the corner of the collar forward. If it has a linen interlining, it will spring back into place quickly. But if sized cotton has been sub-

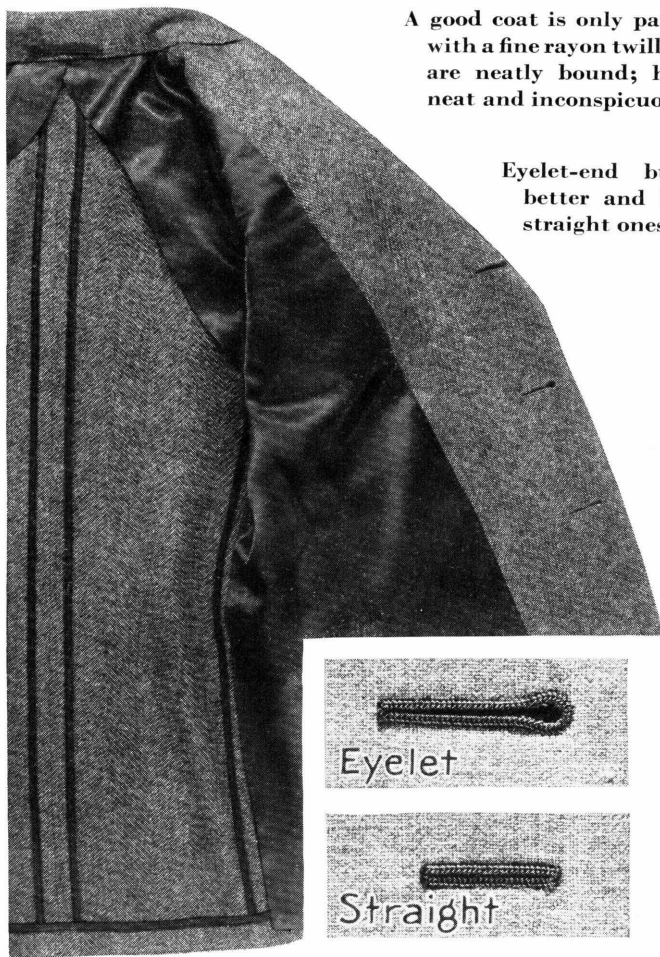
stituted for the linen, the collar corner will roll back slowly and usually will not lie so flat as before.

On the underside of the collar, a plain-weave wool, hand-felled in place makes the best facing. Napped cotton, which closely resembles the wool, is used in the cheaper suits.

### Lining

Notice the lining inside the coat and the way it is put in. Rayon, of fine rather than coarse twill weave, with a soft rather than a highly lustrous finish, is generally the most satisfactory material. The firm, slippery texture of rayon makes a coat easy to put on and take off, and it has good body so that the lining stays in place. Besides the qualities that can be seen, color permanence and thorough shrinkage are others about which to ask. The dye of some linings will rub off and stain shirts.

The sleeve lining is usually not so good in quality as the body lining.



**A good coat is only partially lined, and with a fine rayon twill. Exposed seams are neatly bound; hand finishing is neat and inconspicuous.**

**Eyelet-end buttonholes look better and last longer than straight ones.**





In lower grade suits, cotton sateen is sometimes used. This lasts well enough; but, as a sleeve lining, it becomes fuzzy and clings to the shirt sleeves, which makes a coat extremely hard to put on and take off. It also wrinkles easily.

Linings properly put in will be hand-felled with small, inconspicuous stitches along the shoulder line and around the armholes, neck edge, side seam, and lower edge. Look for the fold of extra lining pressed along the side seam, lower edge, and wrists, to allow for take up and for slight shrinkage.

Partially lined coats are generally more satisfactory than those fully lined. They fit more neatly and are easier to press at home. Contrary to general opinion, a partially lined coat requires more skill and time to make than one fully lined because the exposed seams and hems have to be carefully bound. There is also less danger of seam skimping in a partially lined coat.

If a coat is fully lined, feel carefully around armholes and side seams to see whether the seams are wide enough so they will not pull out. Some coats are made with seams that dwindle off to as narrow as one-eighth of an inch in places. This is dangerously narrow particularly when the material is not of compact weave. Even when there are no allowances for growth, seams through the body and around armholes should be at least three-eighths of an inch wide as insurance against pulling out.

**Buttons and buttonholes** Buttons and buttonholes should be durable as well as neat in appearance. For if buttons break or buttonholes lose their shape and do not stay fastened it is difficult to make repairs. On a coat, buttons of bone or ivory are usually better than composition because they are unaffected by steam pressing. Buttons should be sewed on by hand with strong waxed linen thread. Generous stands or shanks on the buttons save the strain that sometimes pulls holes in the material.

In examining buttonholes, look for a neat, uniform appearance, flexibility, and strong construction. In boys' suits, buttonholes are generally made by machine rather than by hand; and, aside from being less expensive, good machine-made buttonholes are the stronger and more lasting.

Look first to see that buttonholes are worked exactly with the crosswise grain of the cloth. Eyelet-shaped buttonholes fit better around the stands of the buttons. The stitches need to be close and firm, with threads securely fastened at the ends. In tweeds, homespun, and summer wash materials, the "cut-after" buttonhole is preferable. This type buttonhole is worked first and the opening cut afterward in contrast to the more familiar method of cutting the hole and then stitching it. These cut-after buttonholes do not pull out easily, and the tiny fringe of thread left after the buttonhole is cut protects the stitching from wear.

Feel carefully around buttonholes to see if they are worked through the interlining of the coat front. If the interlining has been cut away,

the buttonholes may not remain firm, and the material around them may pucker and draw, and spoil the appearance of the coat front.

## TROUSERS

The points to check in buying good wool trousers are the same whether they are purchased separately or as part of a suit. In wash trousers though, construction needs to be somewhat different because washing is harder than dry cleaning on seams and finishes. There are also a few points of workmanship that apply only to shorts, knickers, and longies, or slacks.

As in the case of the coat, the trousers must be cut accurately if they are to keep their shape and fit. Also, for the sake of appearance, the fabric pattern needs to be carefully matched. Check for this up the back and front rises and at the side seams. Look also for piecing in the crotch. Good trousers are never pieced, but those made to sell at very low cost nearly always are.

Seams in all types of trousers, wool and cotton alike, should have an allowance of not less than three-eighths of an inch. How seams are finished depends on the material and the method of cleaning most suitable for the material. A good finish for unlined trousers, either wools or washables, is serging, which corresponds to overcasting except that it is more secure and is done by machine. Trousers with no seam finish usually have irregular, skimpy seams, and this combination almost always results in pulled-out places practically impossible to repair.

In knickers, leg bands of worsted usually give most satisfactory wear. They stretch readily without losing their elasticity as cotton bands do, and they are more comfortable than elastic webbing, which tends to restrict.

**Linings** Seams on winter shorts and knickers are hidden beneath a lining, but allowance on them is none the less important. Try to check this by feeling. Well-made knickers and shorts have perfectly fitted linings with no folds or wrinkles. The linings and trousers are cut true and seamed as two separate garments with each seam pressed open before the lining and the trousers were put together. To cut down on time and cost of manufacture, trousers and linings are often seamed together. This makes thick, bulky seams that never press well or look well, the linings are invariably full of folds and wrinkles, and in case of shrinkage such trouser seams pucker.

Good lining for trousers is closely woven cotton twill with a soft, flexible, somewhat leathery texture. It is free of excess sizing, and fully shrunk, a quality essential to permanent shape. Cheapened imitations of this lining are loose in weave and are made to look firm with heavy sizing. However, rubbing these a little will stir a white dust and reveal the sleazy quality. Muslins are also used as trouser linings. Though these wear

better than heavily sized fabrics, even the best qualities used are likely to be too thin and soft to serve the purpose as well as the heavier twills.

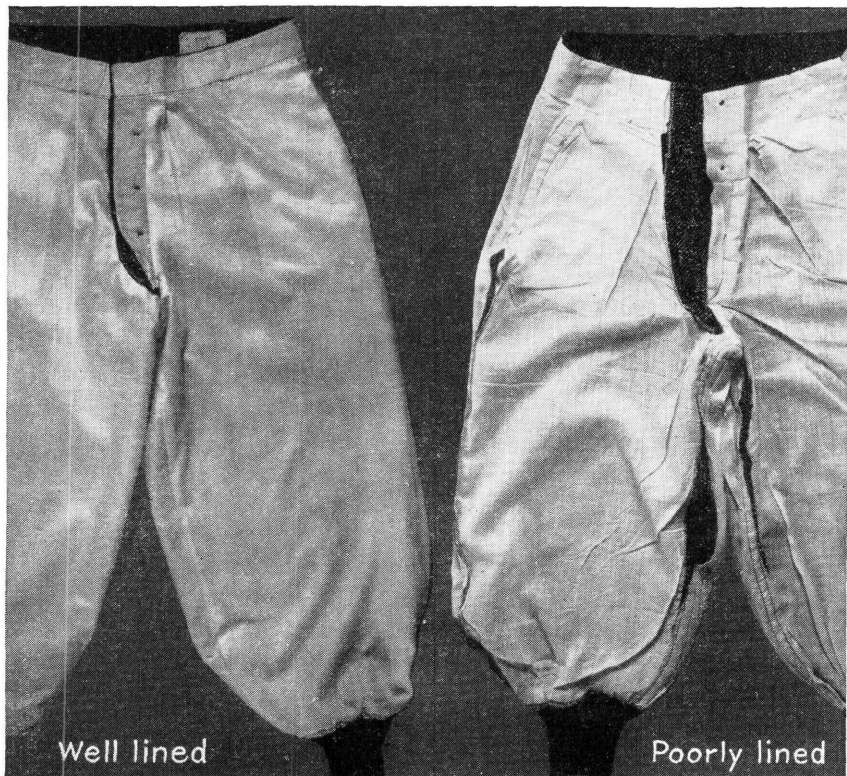
**Pockets** Pocket materials and construction have much to do with trouser values, because boys invariably give their pockets hard wear. Pockets that will last are made of twilled cotton much like the trouser lining but stronger. Heavily sized muslin is also substituted here many times; but when the starch rubs or washes out, the pockets are too flimsy and soft to last long. They wear out quickly and are a continual annoyance since they cling to the hands and pull out.

A good pair of trousers has four good-sized pockets, one at each side and one on each hip. The mouth of every pocket is taped inside to preserve the shape. At the ends, secure stitching or worked bars guard against tears. If these bars are worked through so that the pocket material serves as a stay, the outer cloth is better protected against strain that at times causes breaks beyond the bars.

Look inside the pockets to see if the trouser material extends well down inside. If it does, there will be no danger of the lining showing. Some

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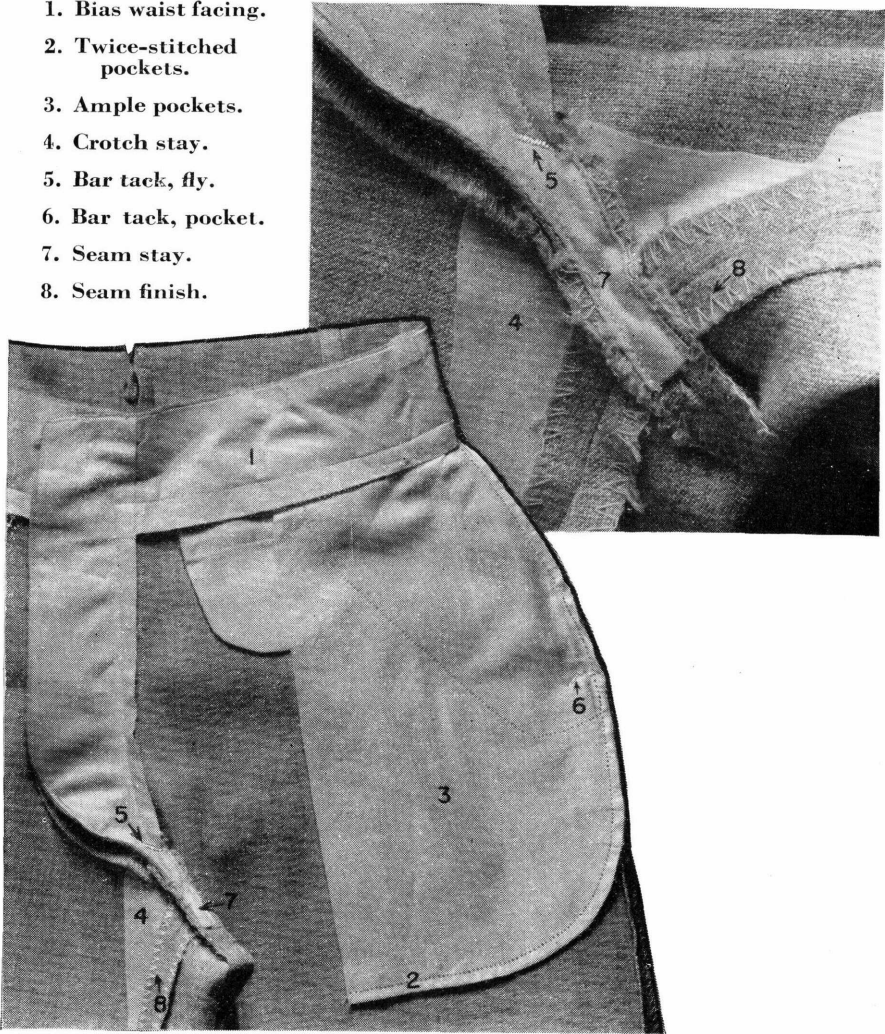
**The best grade of winter shorts and knickers are lined with closely woven cotton twill. The lining should be seamed separately and smoothly fitted, without wrinkles or bulkiness.**





Good unlined trousers are never pieced . . . the waist is bias-faced . . . fabric stays reinforce the crotch . . . strong worked bars protect pocket corners and the fly end against tears . . . pockets of ample size are twice stitched . . . seams have ample allowances and finished edges.

1. Bias waist facing.
2. Twice-stitched pockets.
3. Ample pockets.
4. Crotch stay.
5. Bar tack, fly.
6. Bar tack, pocket.
7. Seam stay.
8. Seam finish.



suits have harmony linings, so-called because they match the color of the suit. These do not show soil as do the older type cream linings.

Inside the trousers notice how the pocket seams are made and finished. They should be double-stitched, as a protection against broken stitching and holes. French or plain seams with their edges either serged or bound are good because they are secure and leave the inside of a pocket smooth and easy to keep clean.

In contrast to these points that indicate pockets of good quality, others detract from appearance and seriously lessen wear. For example, tape is often omitted from the pocket mouth, and scarcely any of the trouser material extends down inside the pocket. Then nothing keeps the pocket from stretching, bagging open, and exposing ugly patches of lining. Stays and bars that help keep pocket ends from tearing out are also often omitted, and pocket seams stitched only once leave raw edges inside to collect and hold dirt.

For good fit about the trouser waist, a bias rather than a straight inside facing is best. Underneath this facing a strip of firm cotton, also cut on the bias, keeps the waist from wrinkling down. This is sometimes replaced with stiffly starched cotton, which soon breaks down and leaves a soft wrinkled waist-line without body.

At least six belt supports are needed about the waist. These are spaced the same on each side in good grades of trousers. In those of poor quality, not only are there too few supports, but they are arranged hit-and-miss.

In checking fly construction, in case buttons rather than a slide fastener are used, notice the width of the lap, the number of buttons and buttonholes, stays, and stitching. Five or six buttons rather than three make a neater closing. And either two buttons on the waistband or one and an extra one facing to the inside keeps the waistband firmly placed. When there is only one button, the waistband twists around it, causing an ugly gap just below the belt.

Bone buttons last longer and are more satisfactory than buttons of painted metal, which may rust, or of papier mâché, which washes apart.

Buttonholes, to wear well, must be worked straight with the grain of the cloth, closely stitched, and then carefully cut so that the stitching is not damaged. Many trousers for boys have buttonholes so badly made and carelessly cut that they scarcely last through one or two wearings.

Underneath the inside fly extension a lining stay should extend on down through the crotch. This strengthens the front rise and keeps the seam below the fly from stretching and breaking.