

## **Historic, archived document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

684F  
p. 2

# *coat making* at home

LIBRARY  
RECEIVED  
★ JAN 14 1942 ★  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE  
FARMERS' BULLETIN  
no. 1894



● *To give a*  
*home-made coat*  
**a PROFESSIONAL  
LOOK**

Study the lay-out and plan all pattern pieces and the material before cutting.

Choose a reliable pattern in the correct size and test it out in muslin.

Allow generous seams.

Cut pattern pieces accurately, following the lay-out.

Mark perforations and notches carefully.

Match plaids and stripes.

Pin before basting.

Fit the coat so it hangs straight from the shoulders.

Stitch seams evenly.

Use machine stitch to suit the thickness of the cloth.

Press each part of the coat as it is finished.

Make buttonholes straight, even, and strong.

Interface the collar and the coat fronts.

Tape armholes, neck line, and shoulder seams.

Tape bias edges or seams.

Make the collar and lapels so they allow for roll.

Tack the front facing to the coat, to prevent its rolling to the front.

Try on for proper sleeve fit.

Hem the coat with stitches invisible on the right side.

Hem the lining separate from the coat.

Make the outside stitching straight and even.

Make pockets accurately and locate them at the same height on both sides.

## CONTENTS

	Page
Pattern.....	2
Materials.....	2
Outer fabric.....	2
Interfacing.....	3
Lining.....	3
Interlining.....	4
Findings.....	4
Equipment.....	5
Pressing and fitting.....	7
Fitting.....	7
Making the coat.....	9
Cutting.....	9
Taping.....	11
Darts.....	12
Stitching.....	12
Pockets.....	13
Interfacing.....	14
Buttonholes or loops.....	15
Front facing.....	17
Sleeves.....	18
Interlining.....	19
Lining.....	21
Buttons.....	22
Hems.....	23
Unlined coats.....	24
Fur trim.....	25
Remodeling a coat.....	27

# COAT MAKING AT HOME

by

MARGARET SMITH, Junior Home Economics Specialist

---

A well-made, well-fitted coat is a joy to the wearer and a pride to the maker. Tailoring reaches its highest art in coat making. Many a woman is finding that she can give the tailor-made touch to a coat for herself or the children once she understands some of the tricks of the trade and takes time to do exacting work.

Coats usually bulk large in the family's clothing budget. It is hard to find a well-fitting, warm coat for less than fifteen or twenty dollars. Since they cost so much, most coats have to last for several seasons, and only a good-quality coat will keep its appearance after hard and continuous wear.

By making the coat at home, a woman can get a coat of excellent quality—one that will give years of warmth and wear. It may even be possible to make coats for two members of the family for the same amount of money that one coat would cost ready-made.

Making a good-looking coat at home, a coat with the air of the professional tailor, is no more difficult than many other sewing jobs that women tackle. And in no other task is one so richly repaid for painstaking, careful work. Some women may not care to try their hand on new material but will use their tailoring skill in remodeling old coats for themselves or others in the family. Perfection of construction is important here, too, if the coat isn't to look like a hand-me-down.

This bulletin, then, is designed to help with the simple techniques of tailoring so that one can make or remodel a coat at home. It includes pointers on selecting the pattern and materials, lists necessary or desirable equipment, and tells in detail how to go about making the coat. There are also special sections on fur trim and remodeling.

## Pattern

When making a coat a high-grade pattern is a good investment and a very small item in proportion to the total cost of the materials. Buy the same size that you would for a dress and not a larger size. Patterns are made with all the allowance necessary for the coat to be worn over a dress. If the figure is irregular, it is best as a rule to get the size pattern that fits the shoulders and bust and make other necessary alterations.

It usually pays to test the pattern in muslin. Then changes such as length of sleeves or body, and alterations in the bust or hips can be made in the muslin and the paper pattern changed accordingly. If the pattern needs to be shortened or lengthened to any extent, it may mean a saving in the amount of material needed.

Choose a style that is simple and comparatively easy for the first coat. As skill develops, you can undertake styles with more difficult construction features. Keep style and material in mind at the same time because each influences the choice of the other. The thicker, rougher wools usually look best in straight-hanging styles, while softer, lighter cloths work up well in more fitted types.

In making a coat of pile fabric such as corduroy or velveteen, choose a style with as few construction lines as possible, and little outside stitching. These materials do not always press as smoothly as wools.

For a washable coat, choose a style that can be ironed easily. One with few thick places is best, as these show iron marks.

## Materials

Buy the amount of material suggested on the pattern envelope for the size and the width of the fabric you have chosen. The yardage needed for napped materials is also generally given. If plaid or striped material is used, additional yardage will be needed for matching patterns, so it is more economical to buy plain-color fabrics. It is easier to keep coat materials from becoming wrinkled than to press them smooth. So unwrap materials as soon as you get them home and hang them up by clipping the cut ends with a skirt hanger or folding the material over a hanger.

### Outer fabric

Examine the yarn, weave, and weight of the material and study its likelihood of matting, snagging, or fuzzing up. Stretch it to see if it will keep its shape. Rub the cloth to see if the yarns separate. Read labels and be sure the material is colorfast to sunlight, dry

cleaning, and water. Shrinkage is important too. Unless the material is labeled as thoroughly shrunk by the manufacturer, it will be safer to ask the store to shrink it for you. This will also keep the fabric from water-spotting.

If it is a wool fabric you are choosing, crumple it in your hand to see if it has a springy feeling and does not crush easily. Poor-quality wools feel heavy and rather stiff, and soon look dull and matted. Good-quality woolens feel alive and keep their attractive appearance through years of wear.

Cotton corduroys and velveteens are now made in coat weights. With warm interlinings, they are good for cold climates. Without an interlining they are much used for lightweight sports and dress coats. The velveteens are especially good for moderate-cost evening wraps. Piques and novelty cottons are popular for summer coats and are generally unlined. Silks, linens, and rayons are used for warm-weather coats. Choose materials that are firm. If silk, a pure-dye (unweighted) will give better wear than a weighted one. If rayon is chosen, look for one that can be pressed easily. Some rayons will stick to a hot iron and get shiny with pressing.

Showerproof cotton broadcloth and fine twills are new and very good for raincoats for the whole family. These are "breathing" materials and are not so warm as the usual rubberized ones. Raincoats of these fabrics are easy to make. They require the same type of construction as sport's coats, with double-stitched seams, and as few construction lines as possible. They may be lined for extra warmth with woolen or warm cottons, or they may be made reversible, with the other side of wool coating or corduroy.

## **Interfacing**

Most coats require a little stiffening in the collar and down the front. Loosely woven muslin, or material made purposely for interfacing and known as wiggin, gives the stiffening needed by most coatings. Whatever material is used, be sure that it is thoroughly shrunk and that all sizing has been removed.

## **Lining**

The lining is almost as important as the outer cloth, for it receives hard wear and should last for several seasons. Make sure that the lining is preshrunk, or steam-shrink it before cutting; otherwise it will be likely to draw up when the coat is cleaned.

Pure-dye silks, in firm, rather heavy crepe or satin, are good choices for lining dressy coats. The pure-dyes give better service



generally than the weighted silks, which have been known to split and rub into shreds around the armholes, neck line, and hem in less than one season's wear.

For sport coats and tailored coats rayon crepes, satins, and twill weaves are durable, although they may feel uncomfortably cold to the touch in winter. Wool linings, usually in plaids or bright colors, either of velveteen or corduroy, are used for very warm sport coats; for lighter weight coats, use napped cotton. Rayons or smooth mercerized cottons are suitable for warm-weather coats such as pique or crash.

### **Interlining**

If the coat is to be worn in very cold weather it needs an interlining. Choose one suited to the weight and style of the coat. All-wool interlinings—light, medium, and quilted—give warmth without much weight. The light and medium weights are loosely woven woolen fabrics, sometimes napped on one side. They supplement a rather heavy or bulky outer cloth. Quilted interlining, usually lamb's wool quilted between thin cotton fabric, is very warm but because of its thickness can be used successfully only with a soft lightweight outer cloth.

Less warm than the wool and suitable only for interlining a coat for mild weather wear is a woven cotton fabric napped on one side.

There are also "wind breaker" types of interlining, usually chamois-like or suede. Being rather stiff, these materials are used mainly through the shoulders and in the back of the coat down to the waist, to give protection where it is most needed. Such interlinings may be permanently attached in a coat or made detachable, with a lining on one side, so they may be worn only in coldest weather.

### **Findings**

**TAPE.**—Most coats need to have some of the seams taped, particularly those at the shoulder, neck, and armholes. Sometimes front edges, such as those with revers, also need to be taped, to keep them from stretching. For this, buy tailor's tape, or if you cannot get tape made for this purpose, use a pliable cotton selvage. Whichever you use, be sure it is preshrunk.

**THREAD.**—Choose colorfast matching thread or a shade darker for seams and outside stitching on dull fabrics. Mercerized cotton thread of good quality works well into most woolens. Silk thread is best for the coat hem and for seams where there is strain, as around the armhole; it is also used for outside stitching on glossy fabrics.

**SEAM BINDING.**—Matching silk or firm rayon-ribbon binding makes a flat hem finish; it is also good for finishing seams on unlined coats.

For finishing curved seams on unlined woolen or silk coats, as around the neck facing and armhole, a silk bias binding in matching color is needed. For cotton coats, use thin cotton bias binding.

**BUTTONS.**—Look for good-quality buttons that are durable and will not fade in the light; they should also stand dry cleaning. Sometimes coat buttons fade onto the coat when it is dry-cleaned. These spots are hard to remove, especially if the coat fabric is a light color.

## Equipment

Good equipment simplifies coat making, though many well-tailored coats have been made with very little equipment. Much of the labor can be reduced by good sewing aids.

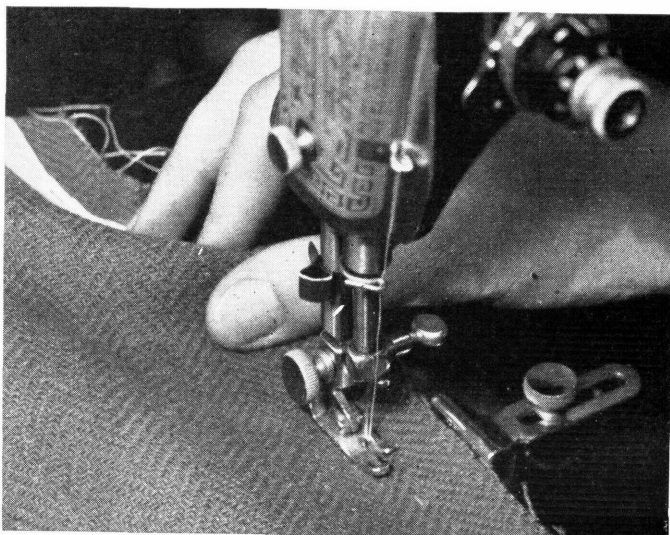
First, a clean, flat cutting surface, large enough to spread out the largest pattern piece, is needed. A table is most convenient, but open floor space may be used if spread first with clean papers.

A sewing machine in good working condition is essential to tailoring. Before starting to sew, give it a good cleaning and oiling; then run it a while to remove any surplus oil. Be sure the needle is sharp and of the right size to suit the thread. One of the most useful of all the machine attachments is the seam gage. Screw it in place so that the straight edge is a seam's distance from the needle, and use this edge as a guide to straight stitching. It is easier to follow and more accurate than lines of basting.

Dressmaker pins, size 4, bought by the box, are handier and more economical than those in a paper. Poor-quality pins are likely to leave marks in the material.

Paperweights are useful for holding the pattern pieces in place when the coat material is so thick that the pattern cannot be pinned on smoothly.

An 18-inch ruler or a yardstick is needed for the correct placing of pattern pieces on the cloth. A 6-inch transparent ruler is convenient for measuring seams, darts, and hems,



Use the seam gage as a guide to straight, even stitching on outside edges.

and finds similar uses in general sewing. However, a gage made of cardboard is a handy substitute. A good tape measure is needed for checking personal measurements.

Construction guides on a single pattern piece can be marked with tailor's chalk. To mark two pieces at once, make tailor's tacks of colored embroidery cotton. Embroidery cotton is also useful for basting. Wax pencils should not be used for marking, as the wax melts in pressing and penetrates the fabric.

Sharp dressmaker shears, with bent handles, and blades that cut clean to the point and are at least 4 inches long are needed for accurate and even cutting.

A smaller pair of sharp scissors is handy for cutting threads and removing bastings. Pinking shears, though not necessary, are an aid in finishing the lining seams.

Thin needles, with large, easy-to-thread eye, called crewel needles, size 8, are good for heavy sewing and basting. Many women like a finer needle, size 9 or 10, for sewing on lightweight fabrics, such as the lining.

An adjustable or individual dress form is convenient for fitting coats and for putting in the lining and interlining. It is not essential, though, if good help can be obtained from a neighbor or member of the family.

A full-length mirror pays for itself many times, for best results require a full-length view as construction progresses.

For pressing, a steam iron is most convenient, as no press cloths need be used. If such an iron is not available, however, good pressing on woolens can be done with an iron and two press cloths—one of woolen and one of linen or firm cotton. A sponge or cloth is handy for dampening the press cloths.

A smooth, well-padded ironing board, at a suitable height from the floor, makes pressing as well as regular ironing easy.

A sleeveboard is good for sleeves and short seams and darts, but a magazine rolled and wrapped in muslin is a good substitute.

A tailor's ham or cushion, made at home by stuffing two ovals of heavy muslin about 12 inches long, with cotton, wool scraps, or sawdust, helps in pressing the tops of sleeves and curved seams. If one is not available, careful work over a sleeveboard will serve instead.

A clapper of hardwood is good for beating steam out and flattening the seams after they have been pressed. A clapper may be purchased at any tailor's supply shop, or a good one can be made easily at home from a piece of hardwood about 2 inches thick, about 3 inches wide, and 15 inches long. Sand or rub the wood until it is perfectly smooth.

## Pressing and Fitting

Frequent pressing is essential to good sewing and especially in tailoring. Never cross two seams without first pressing both of them open. Do not fold the coat more than is necessary, and as soon as the shoulder and side seams are made, hang up the coat when working on other parts.

To press wool coatings with an ordinary iron, place the woolen cloth over the open seams, and on top put the linen or cotton cloth. Dampen the second cloth with a sponge, and press. Always press with the grain of the fabric, and lift the iron and set it down squarely. If the iron is pushed along as in ordinary ironing, the seam may be wrinkled or pushed out of place. After pressing, lift the press cloths and beat the open seam with the clapper. (See pictures, page 8.)

Silk or rayon fabrics can be pressed smoothly either with a steam iron or by putting a piece of tissue paper over the seam on the wrong side, dampening it slightly, and pressing. Take care that the iron is not too hot, as it may scorch, or in the case of acetate rayons, melt the cloth.

Pile fabrics, such as velvets or corduroys, can be pressed best when laid face down on a velvet board and steamed as wools, or with a steam iron. If no velvet board is available make a pad with several layers of cloth, soft cotton or wool, and a piece of velveteen laid face up on top. This keeps the pile fabric from being matted down.

Ordinary cotton or linen fabrics are ironed the same as dresses of the same fabric, on the wrong side to prevent shiny places, particularly on dark colors.

In some parts of the coat, fullness may have to be shrunken in, as in darts or eased-in fullness at the elbow. This extra material is worked in smoothly under the press cloths, then steam-pressed flat. It may be necessary to repeat the shrinking several times before the fullness is completely eased and shrunk into the desired shape. Woolens can be shrunk more successfully than other fabrics.

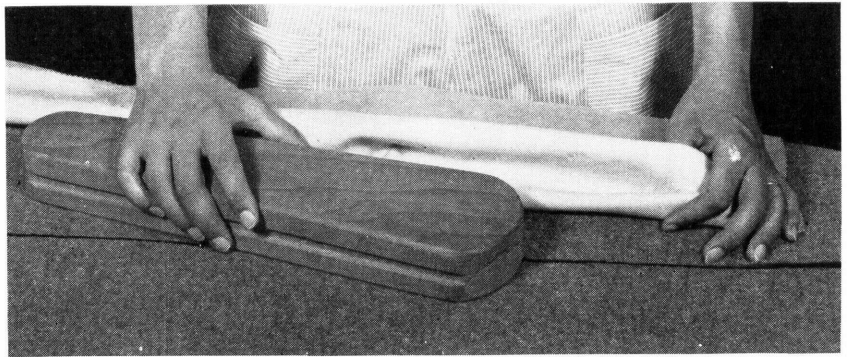
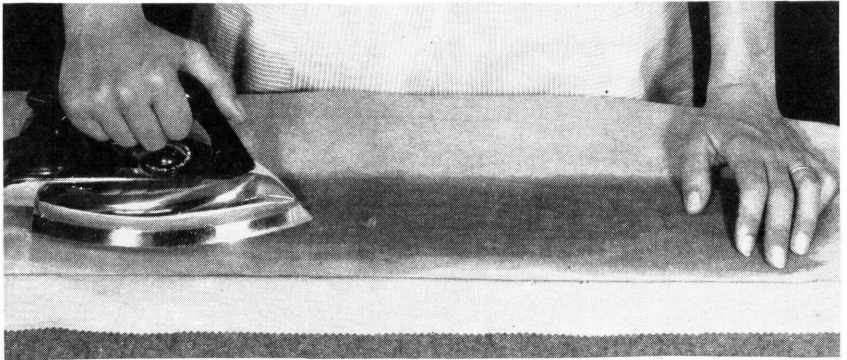
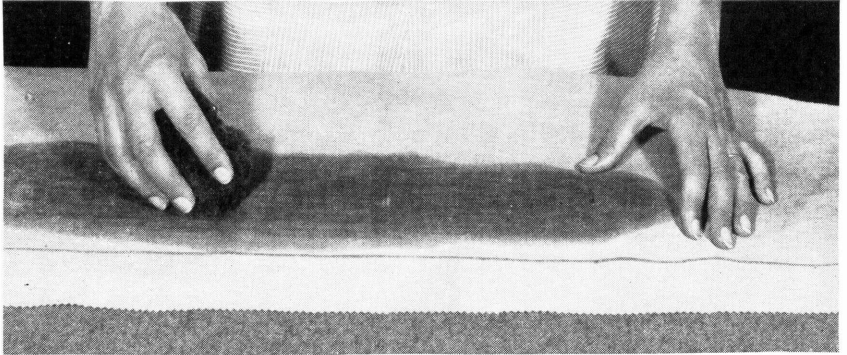
### Fitting

The coat should be fitted after the shoulder and underarm seams are basted. Slip the coat on, and pin with center fronts meeting, and matched at neck and lower edge. If shoulder pads are to be used, make them first and slip them into place for each fitting.

Check the coat, back and front, to be sure that it hangs straight from the shoulders. A full-length mirror is a great help.

Next baste in the sleeves and try the coat on again, to see that the sleeves hang straight from the armhole, without folds or wrinkles.

The crosswise threads should go straight across the arm, and the lengthwise grain of fabric should go straight up and down. If the grain is not straight, shift the sleeve in the armhole until the sleeve does set correctly.



Top.—Place woolen press cloth on opened seam, then linen cloth over it. Dampen thoroughly along seam.

Center.—Press with grain of the fabric. Lift the iron and set it down, to keep the seam from wrinkling.

Bottom.—Lift press cloths and beat seam with clapper, to remove the steam and keep the seam flat.

## Making the Coat

Study the pattern and instruction chart carefully, so as to be thoroughly familiar with the pattern and the process of making the coat. Put away all pattern pieces you are not going to use and press the ones to be used with a moderately hot iron.

Look for the perforations that indicate the direction of the material on every pattern piece, and note all the construction perforations or notches, so none will be missed in marking the pattern.

### Cutting

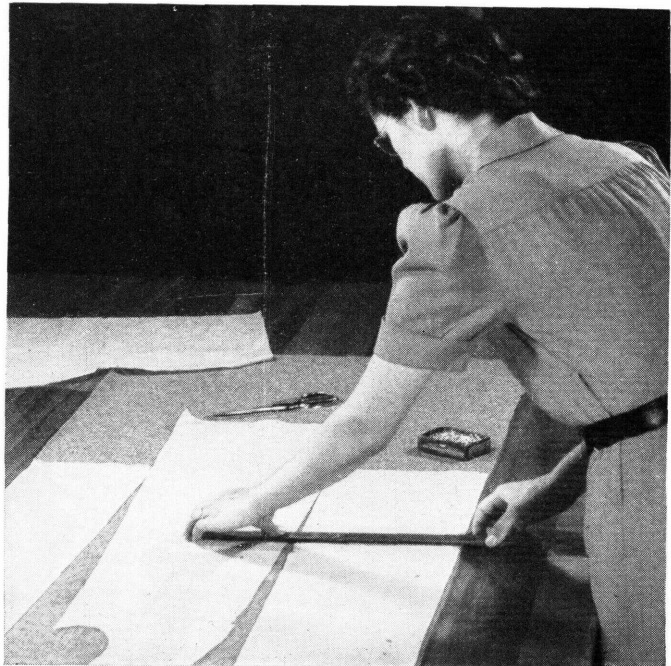
Press the coat fabric if there are any wrinkles in it, and lay it out straight on a flat cutting surface. Then place the pattern on the material, following the lay-out for your size and material width. Never cut any part of the coat before planning and marking the position of all pattern pieces. If the goods have a nap, be sure that the pattern pieces are laid on so that the nap goes in one direction.

If plaid material is used, cut the left front first, and pay particular attention to the way the plaid falls on the center front, the front edge, and where the buttons will be placed to look best on the plaid. Then cut the right front, matching the plaids both lengthwise and crosswise. Cut the back, with the same plaid in the center back as in the front. Match crosswise plaids at the underarm seams. Sleeve plaids are matched crosswise at the sleeve notches. If possible have the plaid corresponding to the center front and back, go down the center of the sleeve.

More yardage will be required for plaids. Striped materials are cut the same way, with stripes matched at center fronts, underarm, and sleeve top.

Lay all the pattern pieces straight with the thread of the goods, and use as a guide the perforations that mark the grain of the goods.

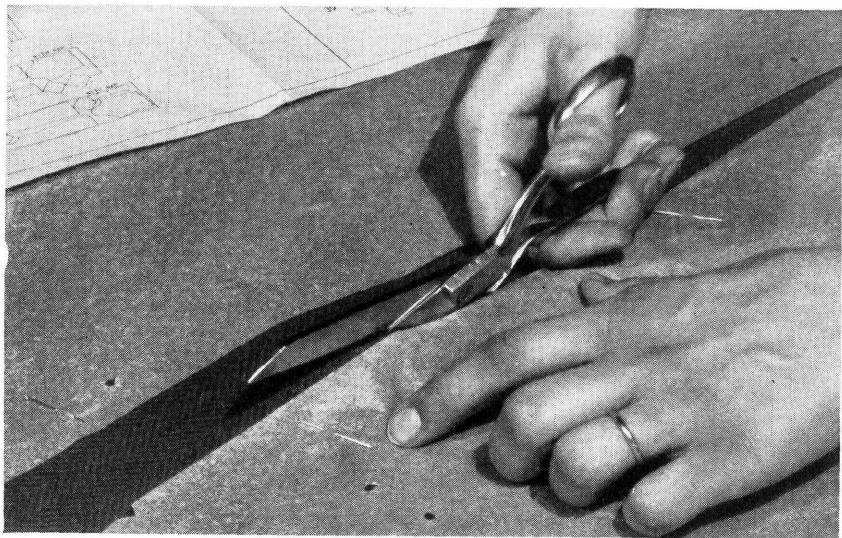
Place pattern pieces so that perforations indicating lengthwise thread of goods are an even distance from the outer edge.



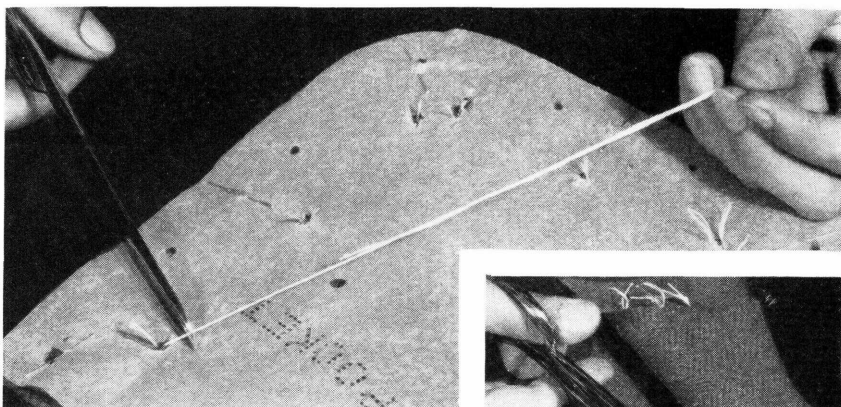
Measure to be sure they are exactly the same distance from the selvage. Pin the pattern on smoothly, with the pins perpendicular to the edge of the pattern. With a pile fabric, lay the material right side up. If the pattern slips on these fabrics, hold it in place with weights, rather than pins. If the coating is very thick, cut only single pattern pieces, as the pattern may shift if one attempts to cut two thicknesses at once.

Cut with long strokes of the shears for an even edge. If the material frays easily, allow about a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch seam on the shoulders, underarms, and sleeves. Do not cut notches in the fabric, but mark all sewing perforations either with chalk or tailor's tacks before removing the paper pattern.

Cut out the lining and interlining. Sometimes a special pattern for the lining is included; otherwise the coat pattern is used. The lining is cut just like the coat except that a 1-inch fold is allowed at the center back for a pleat and the front is cut off according to perforations on the pattern. The interlining is cut the same as the lining except that no back pleat is allowed, and it is made about 3 inches shorter. If quilted interlining is used, cut off all seam allowances to avoid bulk at the seams. Cut the interfacing by the coat-facing pattern. The collar stiffening is cut by the pattern for the undercollar. If the coat has a bias back or is made of material that stretches easily, it is a good idea to put an interfacing across the front and back of the shoulders, to help the coat retain its shape. Cut these pieces straight with the grain of the goods.

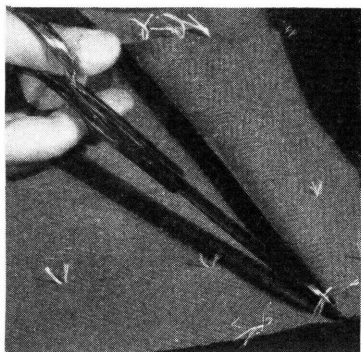


Use shears with blades at least 4 inches long. Cut with full strokes for an even edge.



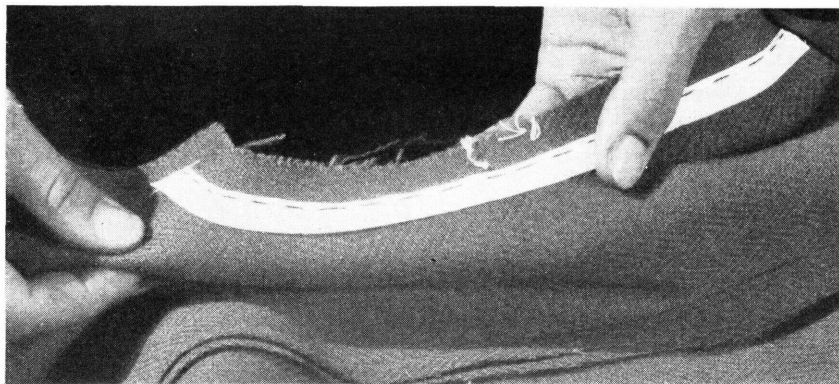
Above.—Make tailor's tacks by pulling a doubled thread through each perforation. Cut thread so that each end is about one-half inch long.

Right.—Pull pieces of material apart gently and snip threads in center. This leaves threads in both pieces.



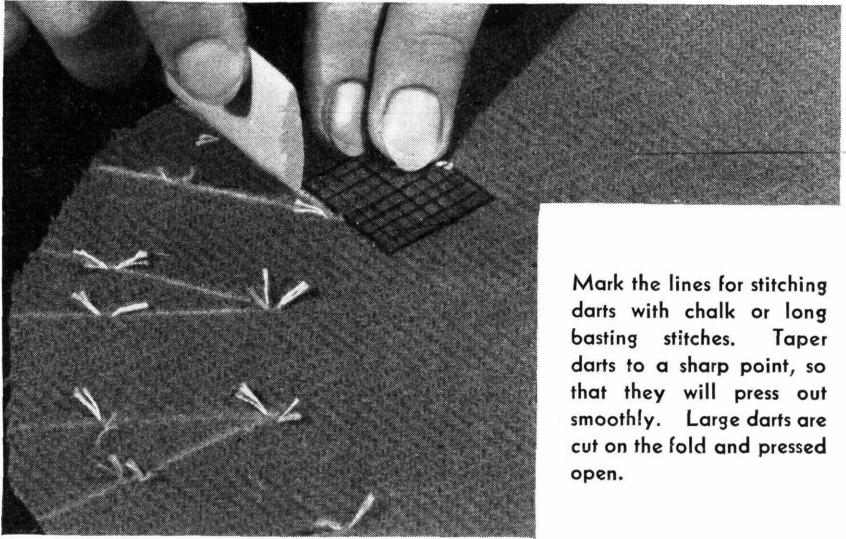
## Taping

Tape the armhole seams of a coat as soon as the pattern is removed, or they will stretch in handling. The tape is usually basted over the stitching line and sewed in when the seams are stitched. Ease the tape into curves and clip where necessary to keep it from rolling. If a flat seam is needed, the tape can be caught by hand beside the line for stitching. Bias seams, such as those in the center back of some coats, should be allowed to stretch before they are taped. Stitch around the neck line with a loose stitch, to keep it from stretching.



Tape shoulders, armholes, and front edges to prevent stretching. Ease the tape around curves so it will lie flat when pressed. Sew in with seam.





Mark the lines for stitching darts with chalk or long basting stitches. Taper darts to a sharp point, so that they will press out smoothly. Large darts are cut on the fold and pressed open.

## Darts

Stitch and press all darts before basting the seams. It is easier to stitch darts straight if the stitching line is drawn in with chalk. They may also be folded down the center and pressed. As the darts are stitched, taper them gradually to nothing at the end. Tie the ends of the thread securely, and clip about one-half inch beyond the knot, or work the ends back into the stitching line. Large darts, such as those on the front shoulder, are usually split on the fold to within about one-eighth inch of the stitching. Press the dart flat, shrinking in any extra material at the end of the dart so it blends smoothly into the coat. It may be easier to press the darts over a tailor's ham, to get the rounded effect. In materials that fray, it is best to leave the darts uncut or to overcast the edges. Smaller darts are generally pressed to one side, but top-of-sleeve darts are sometimes pressed open, so as to give the sleeve a smooth roundness.

## Stitching

Baste back and fronts together the seam's distance from the edge, being sure to match the notches. In places where one piece has to be eased to another one, such as the back shoulder eased onto the front or elbow fullness eased into the front sleeve seam, pin the edges together, so that the fullness is evenly distributed; then baste with small stitches to hold the fullness in place. Much of this fullness can be shrunk in so it is not noticeable, especially in woolens.

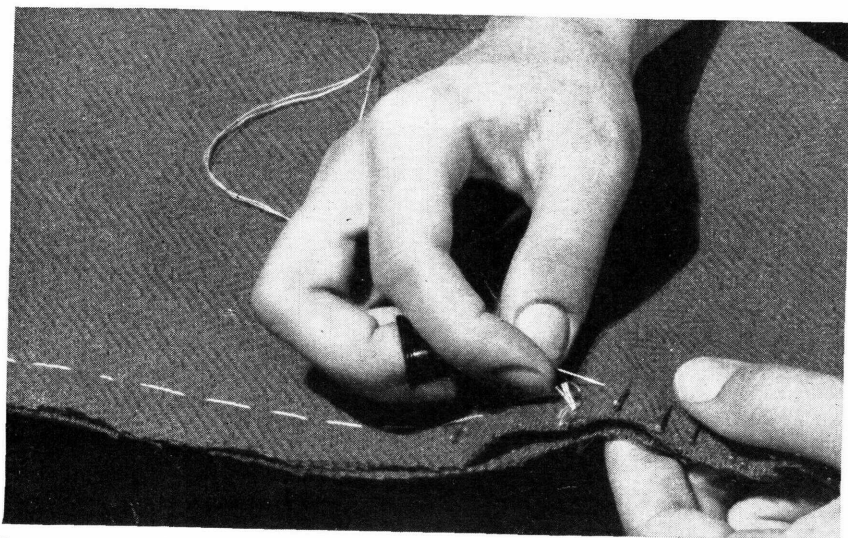
Try on the coat for comfortable fit. Make any adjustments that are necessary, baste, and fit again. Tape shoulder seams and front edges. Stitch the seams and sleeve seams, using the gage attachment as a guide for straight stitching. Remove bastings, open seams, and press thoroughly.

## Pockets

Patch pockets on coats are generally faced. Protect the top edge from stretching by laying a piece of tape into the fold and tacking it lightly. Then catch-stitch the hem in place. Turn under seam allowance at sides and bottom of pockets, and baste. If the pockets are bias, first stitch around the edges by machine, about one-eighth inch less than the seam allowance from the edge. Then fold the edges to the inside and baste. Turn the pocket lining under so it will be at least one-quarter inch smaller at the sides and lower edge and about 1 inch below the top of the pocket. Press, cut off surplus seams, and slip-stitch to the pocket.

Pin the pockets in place and try on to check the position. Then stitch, either close to the edge, or in from the edge, as the style may require, using the presser foot or a basting thread as guide. Tie off threads on the under side.

If special pockets are used such as welt, slot, or flap types, follow the pattern instructions carefully. The secret of making these pockets well is in having the applied pieces cut accurately and stitched evenly and straight to the coat. Corners should be precise and



Baste coat together at shoulders and underarms. Ease in and pin fullness between notches, as at elbow; then baste. Try on to check the fit before stitching.

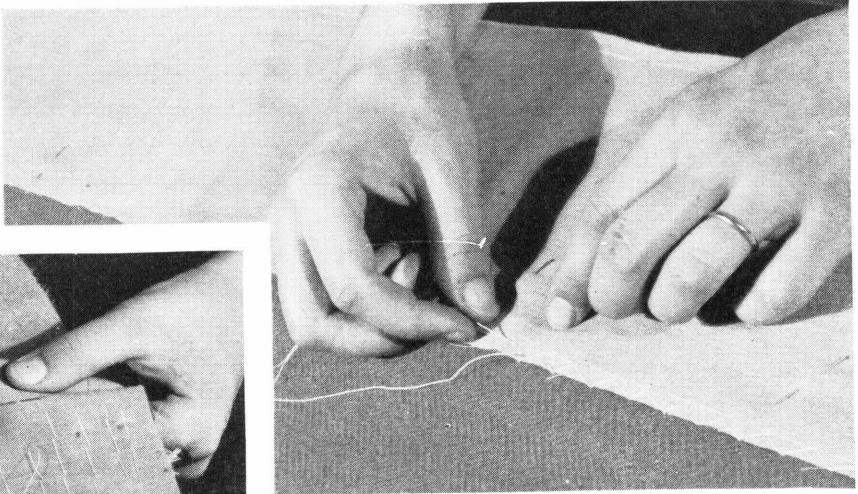
accurate. Flaps may be square or rounded, but they should always be perfectly made. Inaccuracies in details such as pockets can spoil the whole appearance of a coat and label it as home-made.

## Interfacing

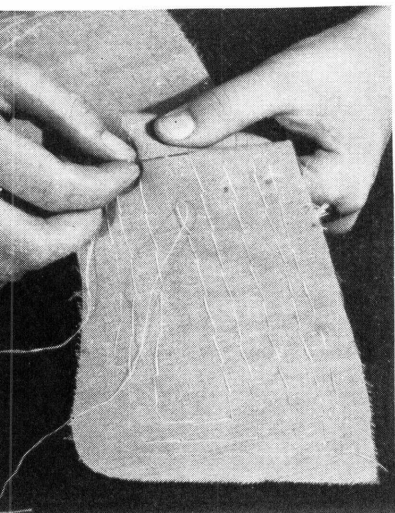
Pin and baste the interfacing to the fronts on the outer edge and match the notches. Put the coat on a dress form, and roll the lapel back and shape the interfacing smoothly to it. The reason for doing this is that it allows the extra amount needed in the interfacing for the lapel roll. Then baste and catch-stitch the inside edge to the coat. Baste the interfacing over and under the collar around all the edges and tack with tailor's basting.

Tailor's basting is a loose permanent basting that keeps the materials from slipping, yet does not show through on the right side. The stitches catch through only a thread or so on the coat fabric and are about an inch apart on the wrong side. Several rows of machine stitching between the shoulder-seam notches of the collar may be used instead of the basting.

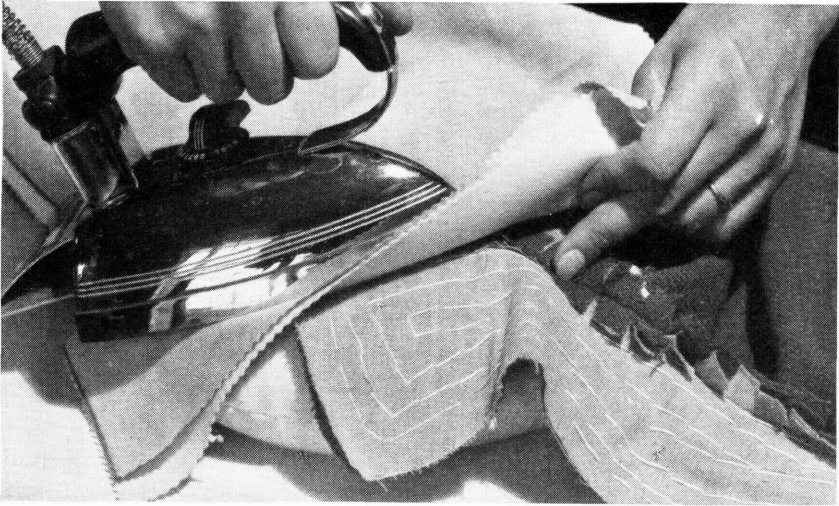
Baste the under collar to the coat, tape the neck line, and stitch. Baste and stitch the top collar to the coat facings. Clip the neck-line



Above.—Catch-stitch interfacing lightly to body of the coat so the stitches will not show on the right side. Make stitches about half an inch apart.



Left.—Use tailor's basting to fasten interfacing to under collar. Catch about one thread of coat fabric in each stitch. Stitches should be about 1 inch apart.



Clip the neck seam at intervals so it will press out flat. In lined coats, press open all the way. In unlined coats, neck seam across the back is pressed toward the collar. Curved edges can be pressed easily over a tailor's ham.

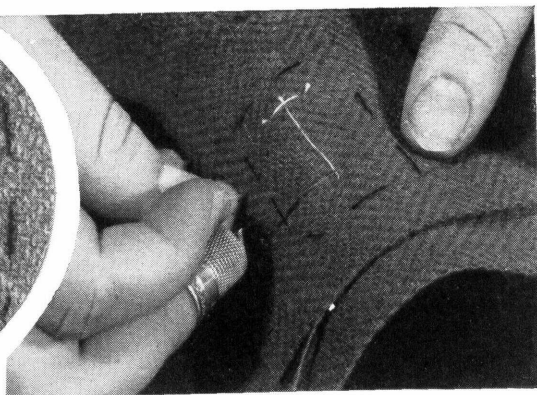
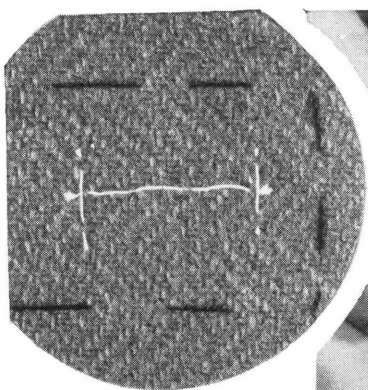
seam at intervals so it will lie flat; press open. In unlined coats, the neck-line seam in the back is pressed up inside the collar, but opened in the front.

### Buttonholes or loops

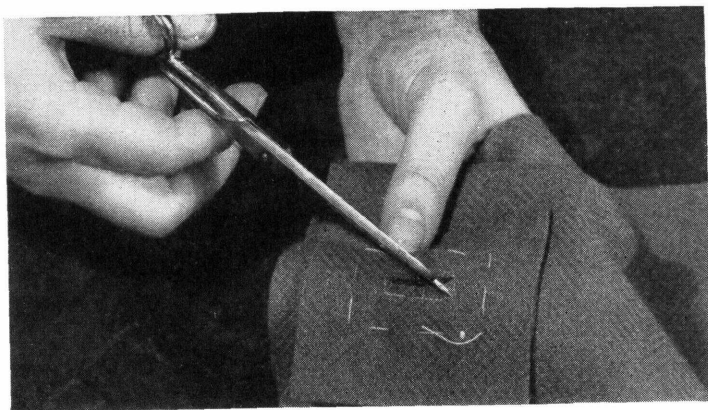
Well-made buttonholes give a coat the stamp of good tailoring. Choose the type of buttonhole that suits the material and kind of coat. If it is a sport coat, worked buttonholes are generally best unless the material frays too easily or is corduroy, velveteen, or some thin pile fabric that takes a bound buttonhole better. Dress and all-purpose coats usually have bound or two-piece buttonholes for strength and that tailored look. The stitching lines should be straight and an even distance apart; the width of the binding exactly the same on both sides of the opening, and the corners strong. But bound buttonholes do not wash satisfactorily, so the worked type is better on wash coats.

Mark with basting the cutting lines for buttonholes, and be sure that they follow exactly the grain of the goods. The finished buttonholes should be a little longer than the diameter of the buttons. It is a good idea to make a trial slash on a scrap of the material, to see how long the buttonhole needs to be to go over the button easily.

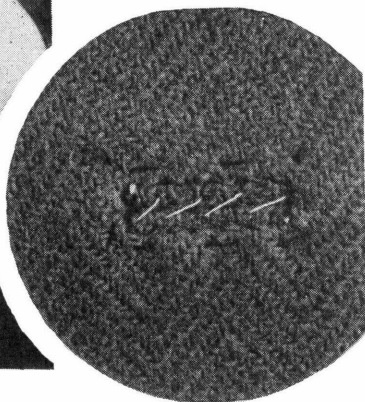
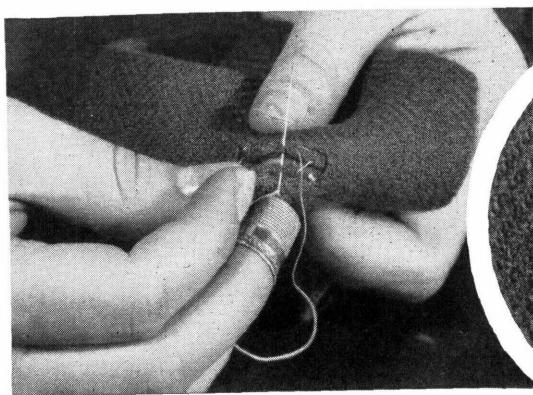
To make a bound buttonhole, baste a patch of the coat fabric, about three-fourths inch longer than the buttonhole and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, to the coat, right sides of the fabrics together, and the grain of the material matching. Mark ends of buttonhole plainly for stitching.



Mark the cutting line and ends of buttonhole. Stitch even distance from cutting line.



Cut buttonhole in center, just to stitching line at corners.



Pull buttonhole patch through to wrong side. Make binding even and straight on right side.

Stitch buttonhole, an even distance on each side of cutting line, turn square corners and stitch straight across the ends, using a small stitch, about 15 to an inch. Begin and end the stitching on one side, not at a corner, for greater strength. Cut buttonhole along the center line to one-fourth inch of each end, and clip diagonally clear to the corners, but be careful not to cut the stitching. Draw the buttonhole patch through to the wrong side; pull the ends back tight, baste, and press. Then work the binding back on the right side until it is even and straight, and the same width on both sides; baste. Sew the buttonhole invisibly on the stitching line on the right side of the binding. Baste bindings together loosely in the center, and press. Sew by machine the little triangles on the under side of the buttonhole ends, to the buttonhole lining. The buttonholes are now left for finishing until after the front facing is put on and pressed back to the inside of the coat.

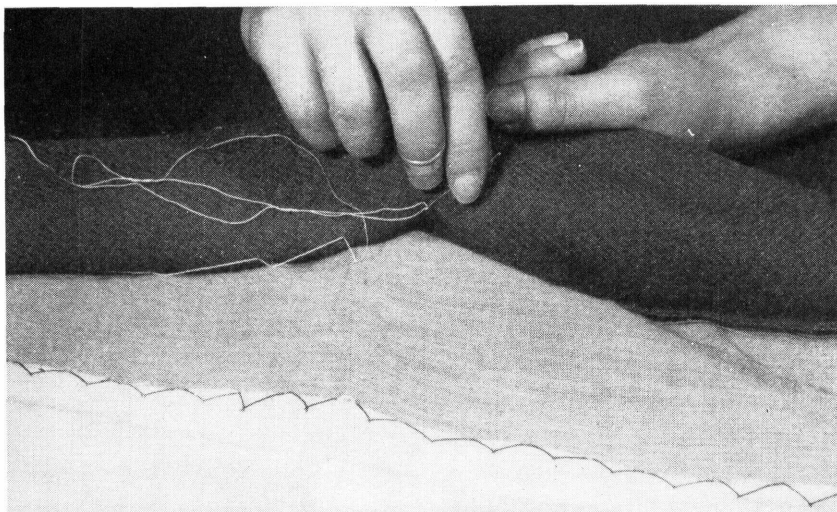
If worked buttonholes are used, they are made after the front facing is applied, and may be left until the coat is about finished.

To make them, mark the buttonhole slash, then baste or machine-stitch along the sides of the slash to mark the depth of the buttonhole. If the fabric frays easily, overcast the edges. In making worked buttonholes, be sure that the stitches are uniform in depth and close together, to make a solid buttonhole. Buttonhole twist can be laid along the edge of a buttonhole and worked over, to make it stronger. The ends may be barred if the buttons have thread shanks, but if they have large shanks of their own, then buttonholes with eyelet or fan ends at the outer edge, where the button pulls, are best. Eyelets are made with a punch, then worked around with a buttonhole stitch, great care being taken to keep the even, circular shape. Coats are often worn unbuttoned, and inaccuracies in buttonholes will spoil the appearance of an otherwise smart coat.

Loops are often preferred as the fastening on dressy coats or others made of loosely woven fabrics. These may be of bias tubing made of the coat fabric through which a strengthening cord or wool yarn is pulled or from heavy rayon or cotton cord sold especially for this purpose. The loops are sewed in as the front facing is stitched to the coat. The ends of loops should be left reasonably long to keep them from fraying or pulling out.

## **Front facing**

The coat is now ready for the front facing. Baste the coat facings, which have been stitched to the top collar, over the coat and under collar. If there is an edge likely to stretch, such as wide revers, tape the edge and stitch. Trim off one seam to about a quarter of an inch, the other to three-eighths of an inch or half an inch; this makes



Sew coat facing lightly to interfacing to keep facing from rolling toward front.

the seam less noticeable down the front. Trim off the collar corners; if the collar is round, cut out small notches in the curved seam, to keep the seam from overlapping inside. Press the front seam open as far as possible; then turn the facings and collar back, exactly on the stitching line, and baste. Leave these bastings in until the coat

is ready to be hemmed. Tack the facing loosely to the interfacing from the inside, about an inch from the seam, to keep the facing from ever rolling back over the front. Catch-stitch the facing to the coat.

### Sleeves

Pin and baste the sleeves, which have been seamed and thoroughly pressed, into the armholes, matching notches and perforations, and easing in smoothly all extra fullness over the top with small basting stitches. If the pattern calls for shoulder pads, slip these in place in the coat; then check the fit of the sleeves. The sleeves

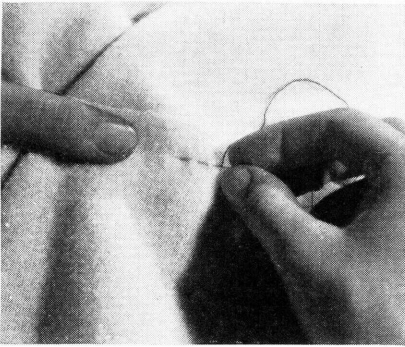
**Press armhole seam open over top of arm. Fold seam at underarm toward sleeve and press, to keep armhole smooth.**

must hang straight and free of folds and wrinkles. If they do not, adjust them before a mirror until they do. Often this takes patience and real work, but it is extremely important to the whole effect of the coat and is time well spent. When the sleeves hang and fit well, stitch them by machine. Press seams open over the top of the shoulder midway down the armhole. The underarm part is pressed back toward the sleeve. Now tack shoulder pads securely in place. If they are not secure, wear and cleaning will cause them to shift, and the coat will have to be ripped open to reset the pads in place.

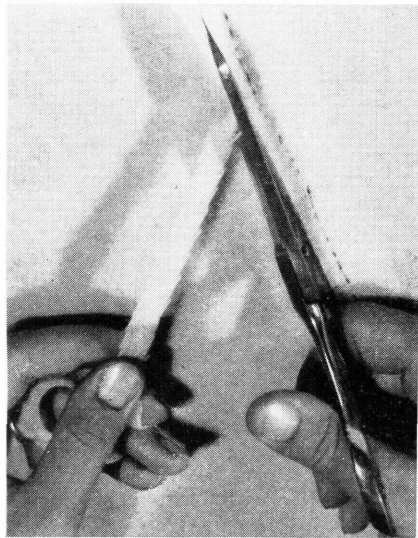
## Interlining

If the interlining is made of a woven material, make lapped seams and darts; make certain the stitching lines are placed exactly on top of each other. Stitch either by hand or by machine and cut off the surplus seam allowance. If a bulky material is used, such as quilted wool or cotton, all seam allowances and material inside the darts are cut off, and the seam edges are pushed together to the seam line and tacked either to the seams of the coat or lining. Usually it is preferable to sew the interlining to the lining, so that the outer fabric will not look too bulky.

Turn the coat wrong side out and adjust it on the dress form or on a coat hanger. Slip the interlining over the coat and pin smoothly in place, with seams matching. Remove the coat and tack the seams of the interlining lightly to the seams of the coat. Attach the interlining to the neck and front with running stitches, to within 10 inches of the lower edge. Sew the collar and front facing down over the interlining, to about 10 inches from the lower edge.



Above.—Make lapped seams on woven interlinings. Be sure to place the stitching lines exactly on top of each other. Stitch either by hand or by machine.

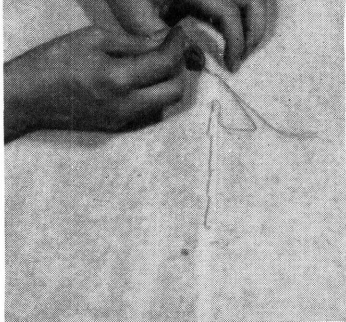


Right.—Cut off surplus seam allowance on both sides, so seam is about a quarter of an inch wide.





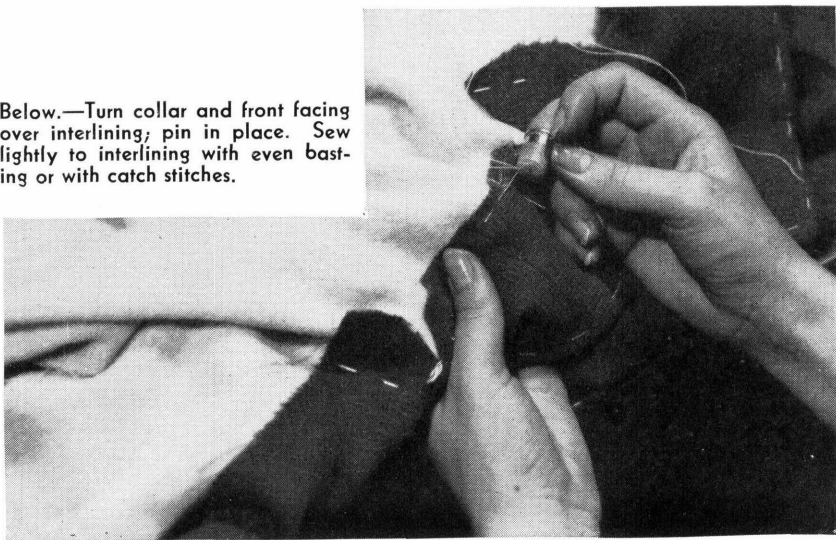
Left.—Pin interlining to coat, with seams matching at shoulder and underarm. Tack interlining lightly to coat seams, to about 10 inches from the lower edge. Do not draw threads tight, as this may draw up the coat at the seams.



Right.—Sew armhole of interlining to armhole of coat, with shoulder and underarm seams matched. Cut off seam allowance of interlining to about a quarter of an inch.



Below.—Turn collar and front facing over interlining; pin in place. Sew lightly to interlining with even basting or with catch stitches.

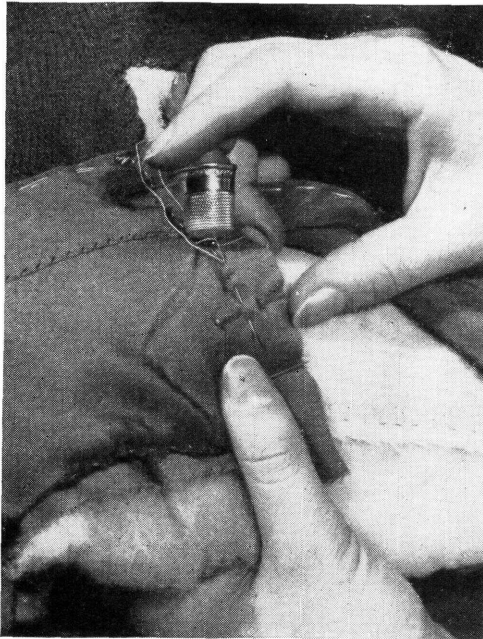


The bound cloth buttonholes may now be finished. Cut a slash in the coat facing to match the opening of each buttonhole and hem the edges back against the buttonhole. If the wrong side of the buttonhole will show, cut the buttonhole the same as on the right side, that is, one-quarter inch short of each end; then clip to the corners. Turn under and hem back the edges to make a rectangular line the same as on the right side.

## Lining

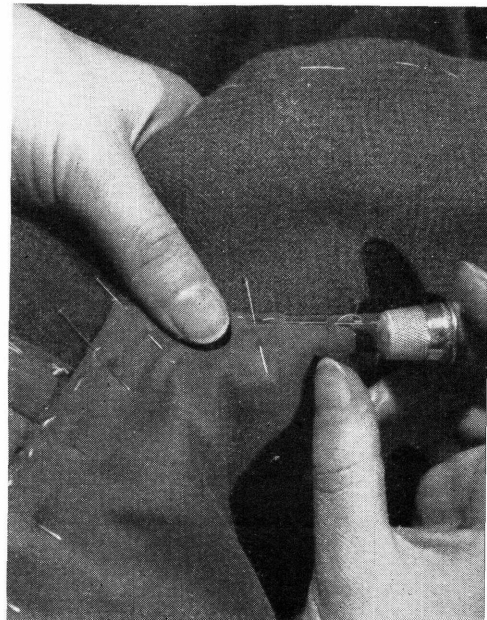
Baste and press the center back pleat of the lining so that the fold is exactly in the center. Catch-stitch the pleat down for about 2 inches at the neck, waist, and hem. Catch-stitch the front dart about 4 inches, and leave the lower ends free. Make the underarm seams of the sleeve and coat lining, and press. Turn under and baste the seam allowance on the front edges and around the back of the neck and shoulder.

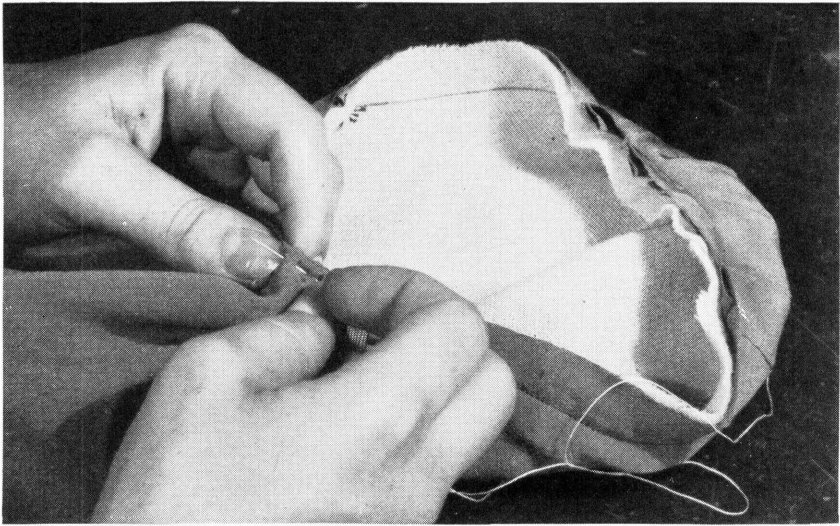
Place the coat wrong side out on a dress form or hanger, slip the lining over the coat, and tack along the side seams. Pin and sew the front shoulder of the lining to the shoulder seams of the coat. Blind-stitch the lining to the coat down the front to about 10 inches from the hem. Sew the back lining in place at the neck and the shoulder seam. Be sure the lining is sewed in loosely, so it does not draw up the coat.



Left.—Pin front shoulder of lining over shoulder seam of interlining. Sew with even basting stitches.

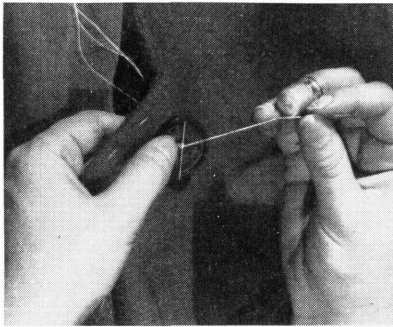
Below.—Baste seam allowance on shoulders and at back of neck. Pin at neck line and shoulder seams. Sew firmly.





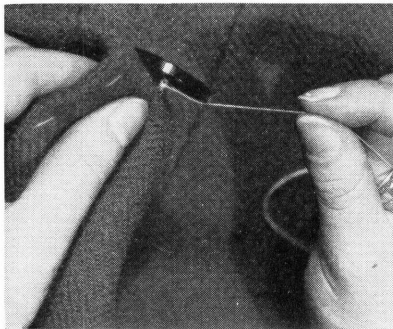
Baste sleeve lining over sleeve interlining, with seams, darts, and notches matched. Stitch around armhole, just inside the stitching line. Turn under on stitching line and baste. Then fit into coat sleeve, pin, and sew securely.

Machine-stitch the sleeve lining and interlining together around the armhole, and take care to match notches, seams, and darts. Trim off the surplus seam allowance on the interlining. Then fold the seam allowance toward the inside, baste it, and press. Adjust this to sleeves, with the seams and notches matched, and blind-stitch firmly but very neatly with strong thread.



## Buttons

Sew the buttons on with strong, matching thread, making firm shanks on all that will be used for fastening. If there are no shanks on the buttons, the buttonholes spread and eventually lose their shape. If the coat is a sport type, tiny stay buttons make good reinforcement on the under side.



Make thread shanks on buttons that will be used for fastenings. Sew over pin or darning needle, then pull it out, and wind the thread around the stitches on the under side of the button. Fasten by running needle back and forth through the shank.

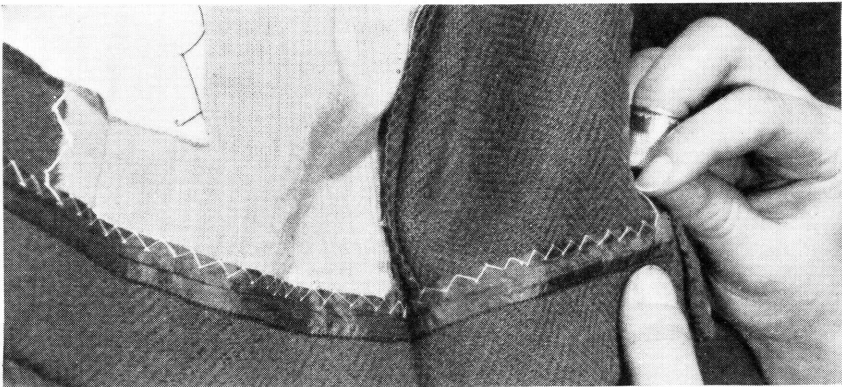
## Hems

Seams not cut along the straight of the goods will stretch, so it is always well to let a coat hang a day or so before hemming. Then put on shoes with heels the height that will ordinarily be worn with the coat. Slip the coat on and button it. Have the hem measured an even distance from the floor. At the same time, check the sleeve length. Do this by raising the hand until it touches the ear. Then turn up the sleeve so it will not pull above the wristbone on the outside of the arm.

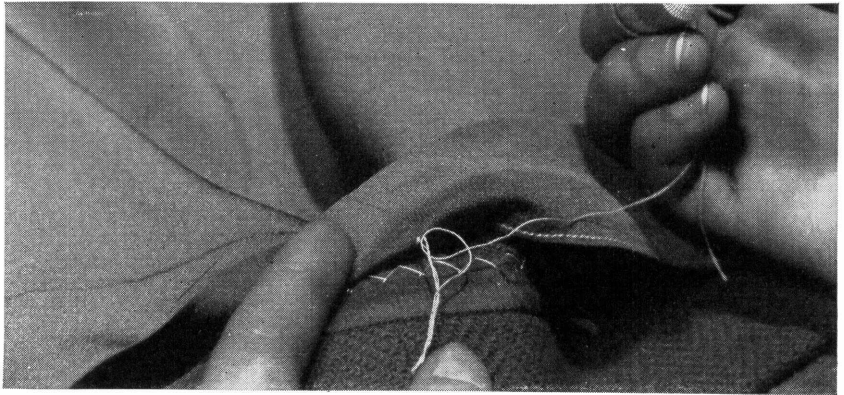
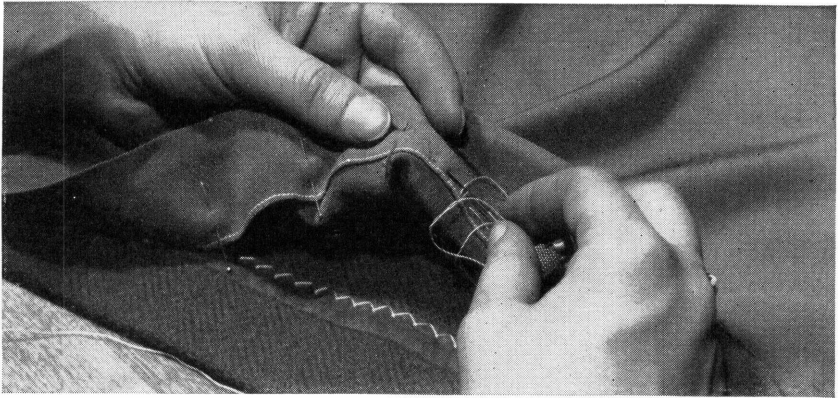
Fold the hems up on the pin line. Hold the two front edges of the coat together, matching at the top, to be sure they will be the same length when finished. Baste the hem in near the fold and try on to see if the coat hangs evenly. Then steam-press. Trim off the coat, facing, and sleeves for a  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch hem. Baste and stitch matching ribbon seam binding one-quarter inch down from the cut edge of the coat hem. Press the hem flat to ease in any fullness, and catch-stitch to the coat with silk thread, as it is strong and holds a hem well. Finish the sleeve hem without the binding.

To measure the hem in the lining, try on the coat or slip it on a hanger. Pin in the lining hem about one-half to three-quarters of an inch shorter than the coat hem. Even off as for coat, turn cut edge under about three-eighths of an inch, machine-stitch, and blind-stitch to lining. Now the interlining, facing, and lining may be tacked on down the front of the coat.

Make French tacks about 1 inch long to join the lining hem to the coat at the seams. These tacks are made by catching the thread into the two pieces of material about 1 inch apart. Do this about four or six times; then buttonhole solidly across the length of the threads. Hem sleeves. Turn up lining so it is  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch shorter than the sleeve. Blind-stitch to coat, leaving about a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch fold below the stitching line. Press well.



Make continuous hem about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide on coat and front facings. Seam binding gives a smooth finish to the top of a hem. Catch-stitch to coat.



Coat lining should be at least half an inch shorter than the coat. Turn under top edge of hem and machine-stitch. Blind-stitch to lining. Make French tacks about 1 inch long to join lining and coat at underarm seams.

## Unlined coats

Spring and summer coats are often unlined, so they should be well-finished on the inside. Woolen coats may have the seams and hem bound with matching silk bias binding. Coats of knit woolen may have the seam edges blanket-stitched to give firmness. Unlined coats of cotton, silk, linen, or rayon may have the seam edges turned back and stitched if the material is lightweight. If the material is thick, cotton binding applied as on wool is a good finish.

Lightweight fabrics, such as soft corduroy, require a lining to give them enough body to hang well. White coats, if made of lightweight materials, should also have linings, especially if they are to be worn over colored or dark dresses, as the colors may show through.

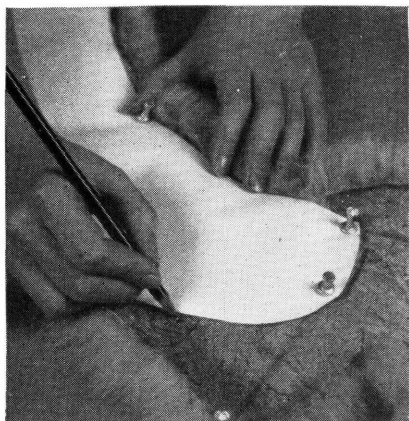
If a coat is to be laundered, it should not be lined, as a lined coat is very difficult to iron properly.

## Fur Trim

Fur trim on coats requires very careful and painstaking work to give a professional rather than a home-made look. To serve as a guide, make a paper pattern of the whole collar, rather than the usual half. Fur cannot be folded for cutting. If old fur is to be used, it will probably have to be pieced to remove worn places; so mark arrows on the skin to show the direction the hair goes. Mark the pieces with chalk on the skin side, and make sure that the hair goes in one direction. Then cut with a sharp knife or razor blade, just through the skin, taking care not to cut the hair. No allowance for seams is needed, as the edges of the fur are whipped together with the edges just meeting. Join the pieces together with a firm overhand stitch, using strong thread. The thread may be drawn over a piece of paraffin or beeswax, to make it pull through the skin easily. After the fur is pieced to fit the pattern, it should be strengthened by sewing thin cotton cloth or cotton wadding lightly to the fur. Sew tape with overhand stitch to the outer edges; then turn the tape over to the skin side and sew it to the cotton. If a fabric facing is used slip-stitch it to the taped edge. If the collar is fur on both sides, make both pieces in the same way, and slip-stitch them together on the right side.

Scraps of fur left after a collar has been cut may be used for buttons. Fur buttons are easy to make; if bought ready-made, they are very expensive.

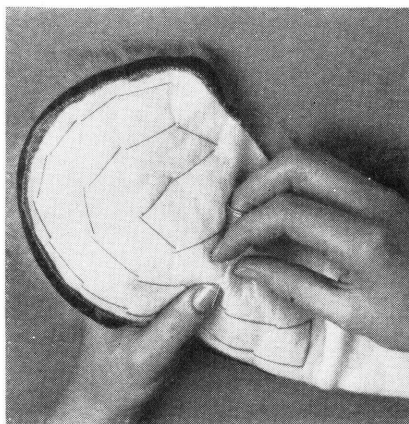
To make fur buttons, buy wooden button molds. Cut a padding of cotton wadding or soft cloth to fit the top of the mold. Then pull a



Mark entire pattern on skin side of fur with chalk or pencil. Cut with razor.



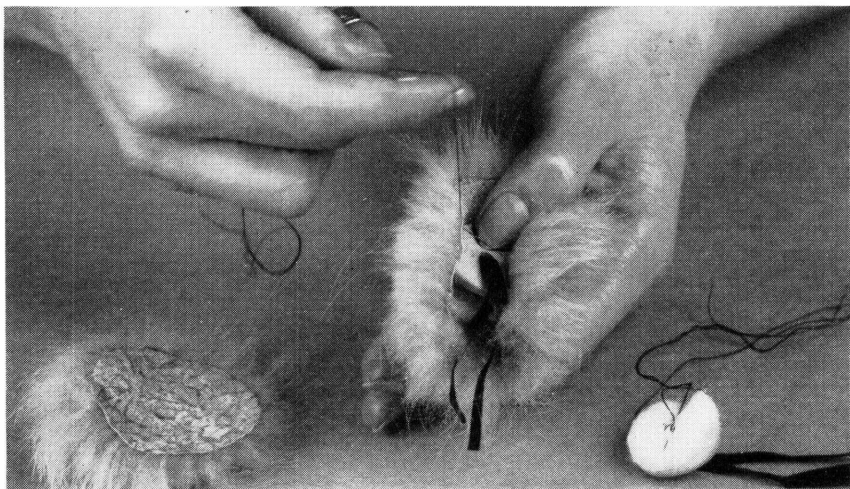
Overhand edges firmly together, taking care not to sew the fur. Use strong thread.



Tape the outer edges with firm tape. Use a small, close, overhand stitch. Ease tape to curves.

Pad the fur with cotton wadding. Baste with tailor's basting. Sew tape over padding.

doubled piece of twilled tape, the color of the fur, through the holes in the mold, and sew it securely at the fold to the button padding. Cut a circle of fur large enough to cover the mold completely, draw it together on the under side of the mold, leaving the tape ends free. Sew securely. Fasten the button in place by sewing the tapes firmly to the coat and leave the shanks of tape about one-half inch long. Cut off the surplus. These tape shanks relieve any strain on the fur buttons and keep them from wearing out quickly.



Pad buttonmolds; sew tape through centers. Sew circle of fur over mold, and catch fur together firmly underneath. Cut off tape ends to about 1 inch and sew them securely to coat.

## Remodeling a Coat

Sometimes a coat needs only slight alterations to bring it up to date. For instance, sleeves with high, exaggerated tops may be easily recut for a more rounded line. But remember that the lining and interlining should also be changed.

When collars and cuffs show wear, a good coat may be given new life by putting on new collars and cuffs of velveteen, fur, or some other suitable material. Or they may be cut down in size or shape. Save fur collars and cuffs that are in good condition, because they can often be used at some future time in changing an old coat.

The body of a coat may need to be restyled, as by taking out some of the flare in the skirt. To do this, rip the hem and seams, and steam-press. Then pin-fit, sew the new seam line in the coat, and change the lining accordingly.

If there are small tears or holes in the coat, as at pocket corners or around fastenings, some of the coat yarns may be raveled from the straight inside seams of the coat and used to darn or reweave the cloth.

Coat linings sometimes show wear before the rest of the coat at the neck, sleeves, and hem. Matching or harmonizing material can be applied, such as a shaped facing, about 2 inches wide at the back of neck, and a 2- or 3-inch band at the cuff and hem. They may be catch-stitched to the old lining to give a decorative effect and look as if they belong.

Many times a whole new lining is needed; in that case rip out the old lining very carefully so as not to stretch or tear it and press the pieces so they can be used as a pattern. Attach the new lining to the coat in the same way that the lining is put into a new coat.

If a coat is not warm enough, an extra interlining may be made and attached either inside or outside the lining. When it is put inside, follow the lining as a pattern. Make lapped seams in the new interlining, or sew the new interlining to the old interlining or the coat. If an extra interlining is needed only across the back, it may be tacked or quilted to the inside of the lining back and the lining sewed in place.

If it is decided to make over an old coat entirely, be sure that the material is worth the work. Rip up the old coat, and clean and press the pieces. Some materials may be turned and made wrong side out, and so look like new. Study the pieces, and then choose a pattern which will fit them. Avoid any worn spots, or work them in where they will not show or unduly weaken the coat. Be sure that the new pattern pieces can be cut exactly on the thread of the material, otherwise the coat will not hang properly.





10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65  
66  
67  
68  
69  
70  
71  
72  
73  
74  
75  
76  
77  
78  
79  
80  
81  
82  
83  
84  
85  
86  
87  
88  
89  
90  
91  
92  
93  
94  
95  
96  
97  
98  
99  
100