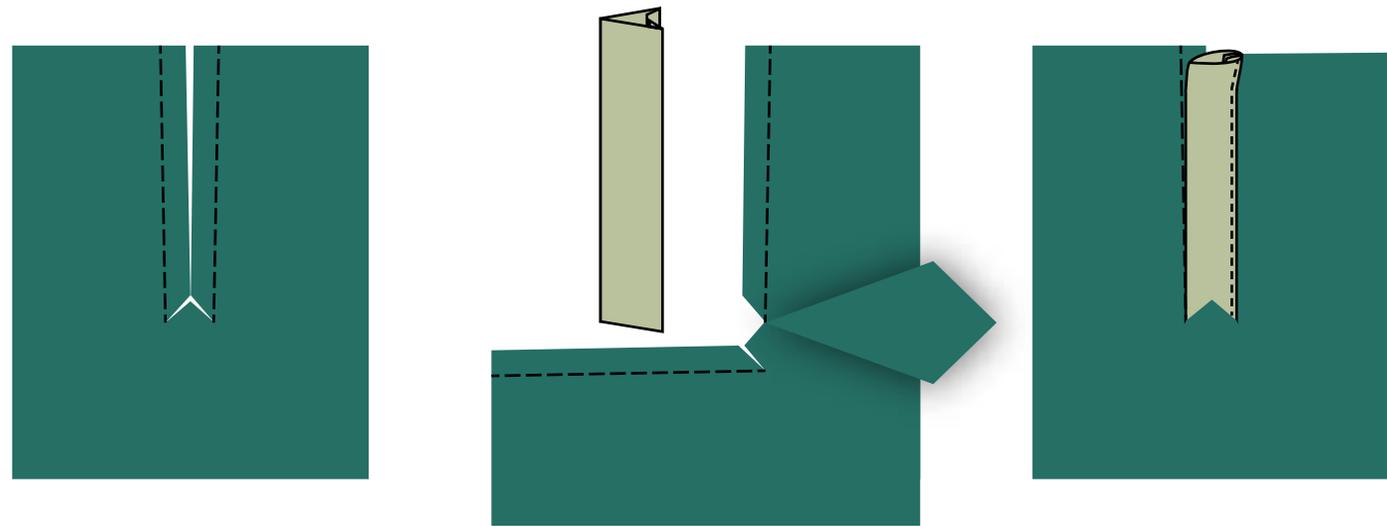


# Placket Construction Options

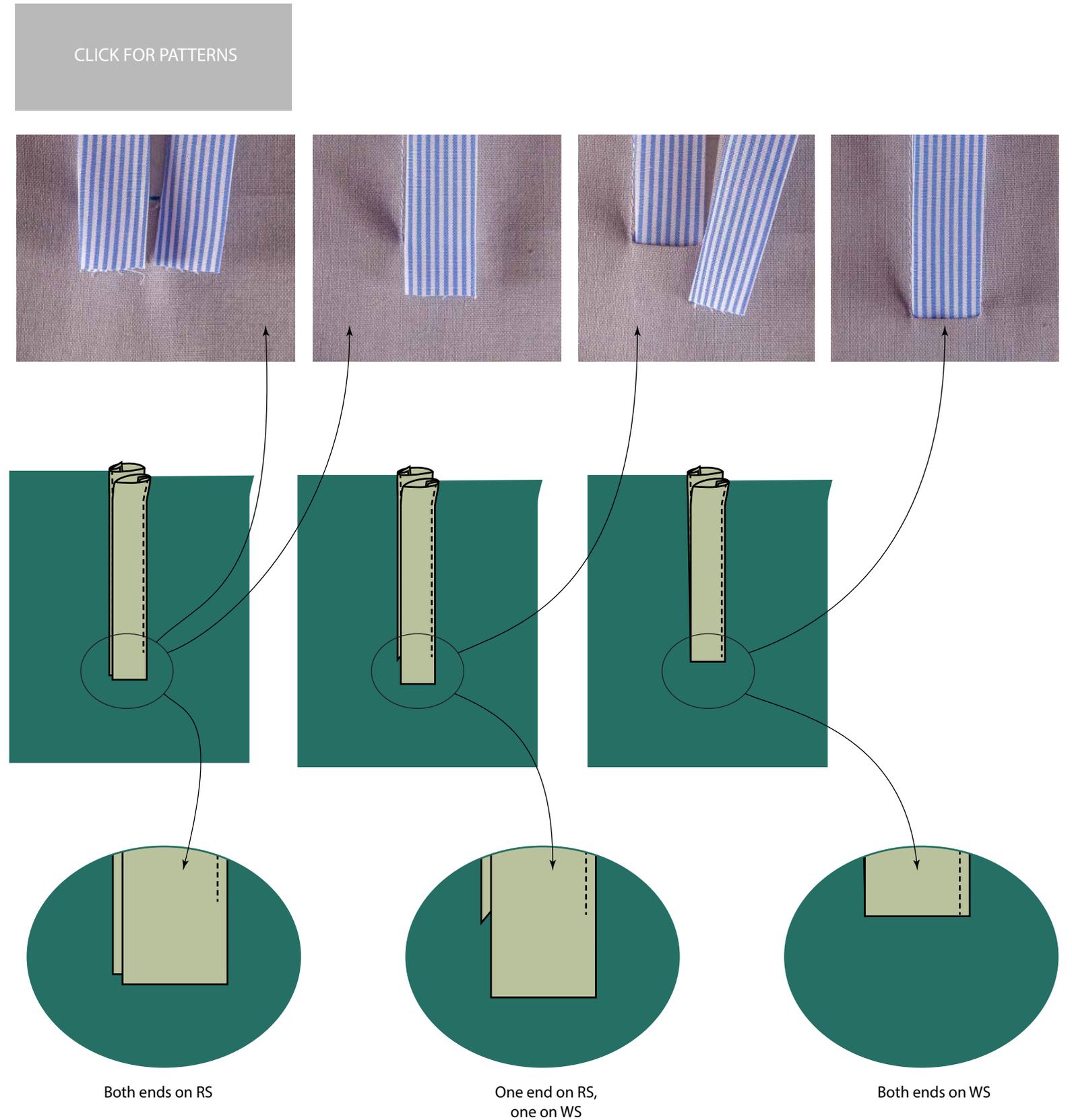
## 1 Type1: Two Separate Bound Edges on a rectangular stitching box

The key to this structure is that the bindings are initially stitched only to the seam allowances on each side, and NOT stitched across the end, of the clipped box, which means that they, and the clipped triangle at the bottom, remain loose and can be arranged before the final finishing to go on either side of the fabric, as well as either over or under the other, after joining them at the sides. The widths and lengths of the bindings and the space between the sides of the clipped box determine all the other options available in this most flexible of all the placket types I know of.

### Variation 1: Both bindings fit inside the stitching box



If you cut the bindings so the finished, folded widths of both are equal to or smaller than the space between the initial stitching lines, as shown above, you can arrange both ends at the clipped corners to all go on one side of the fabric (right or wrong side), along with the clipped triangle on the garment. You'll get the best results if the underlapping binding is slightly smaller than the overlapping one. This can be managed by taking slightly deeper seam allowances when you join this piece, so they can initially be cut from the same strip. Or, you can place one end on each side with the triangle sandwiched in between. In any event, how you shape and topstitch to finish the ends is totally your choice.

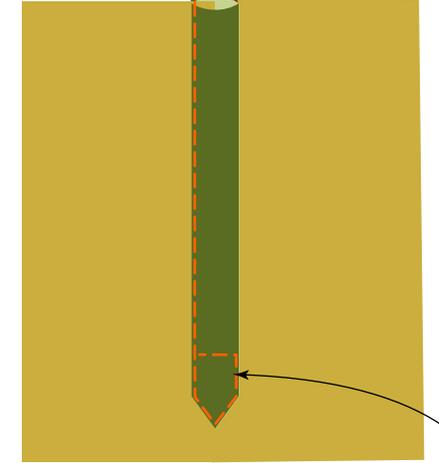
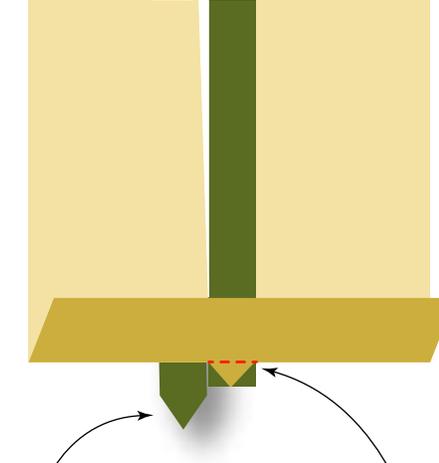
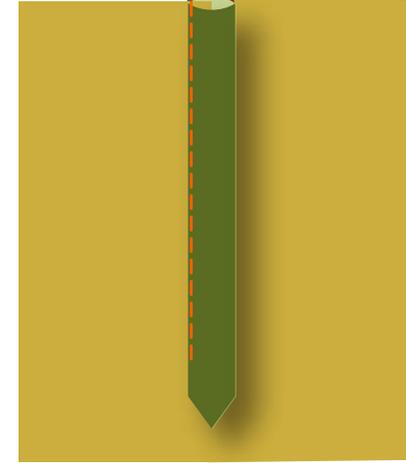
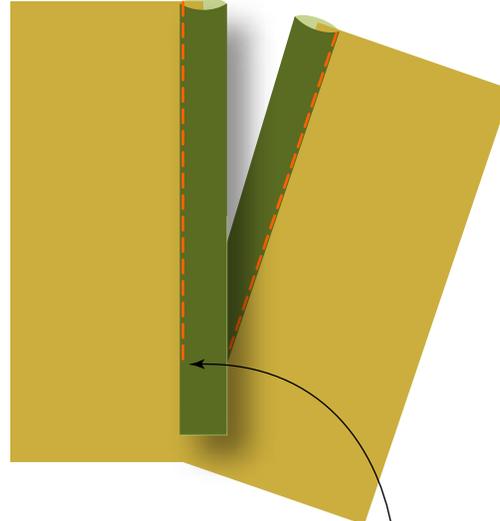
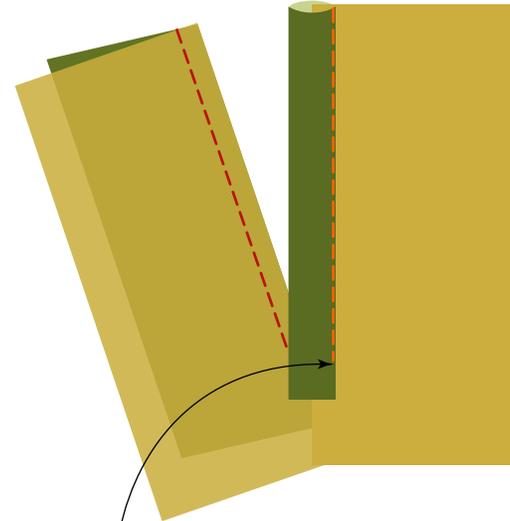
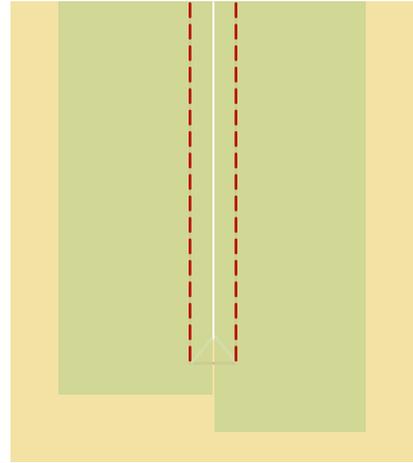


# Placket Construction Options

## 1 Type 1: Two Separate Bound Edges on a rectangular stitching box

### Variation 1A: Both bindings fit inside the stitching box, ends to right side (classic "Tower" shape)

This example creates the typical narrow and pointed-end sleeve or front placket, with overlap and underlap bindings close to the same width.



1. Cut bindings 3 times the width of the stitching/clipping box (2 seam allowance widths equals 1 stitching-box width) and longer as shown.

With garment and bindings both face down, join bindings to sides of box only (box needn't be pre-stitched in this case). Slash garment, then clip to ends of stitching.

2. Wrap each binding to the right side, pressing under the seam allowance on the free edge so the bindings fill the box and the overlap is slightly wider than the underlap when the step-1 stitches are concealed.

Stitch to secure the edges only as far as the end of the box.

3. Shape and press the overlap end as you wish, so it covers the underlap.

4. With the overlap folded out of the way, flip the whole thing to the wrong side, and tuck the clipped triangle in between the garment and the underlap as shown.

Stitch across the triangle to secure the underlap.

5. Fold the overlap back in place on the right side and stitch around the end through all layers.

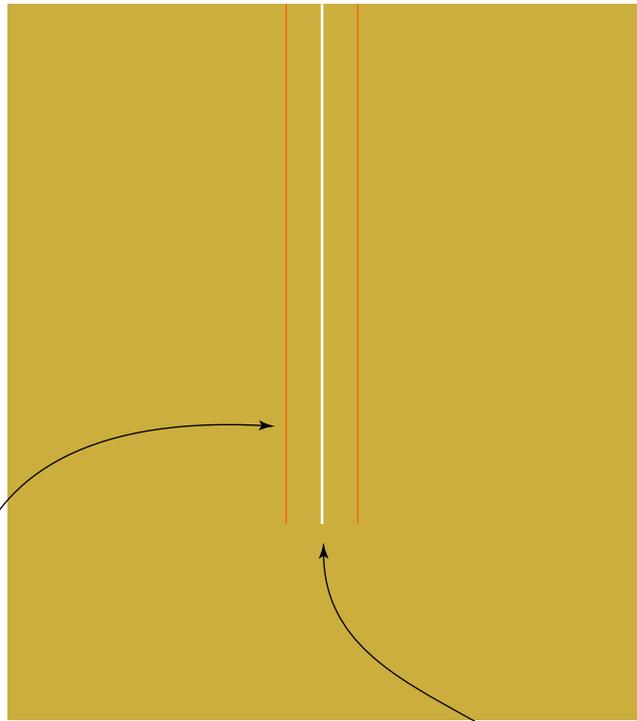


# Placket Construction Options

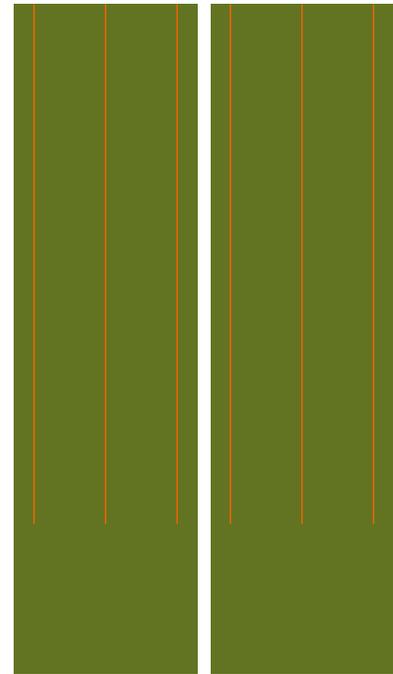
## 1 Type 1: Two Separate Bound Edges on a rectangular stitching box

## Variation 1B: Both bindings pre-formed and identical, no stitching box, ends on opposite sides

This example creates a placket with both bindings identical, no clipped triangle at the slash end, and each binding end staying on its respective side, with no option for changing that. It's reversible as a neckline placket, but not as a sleeve placket.

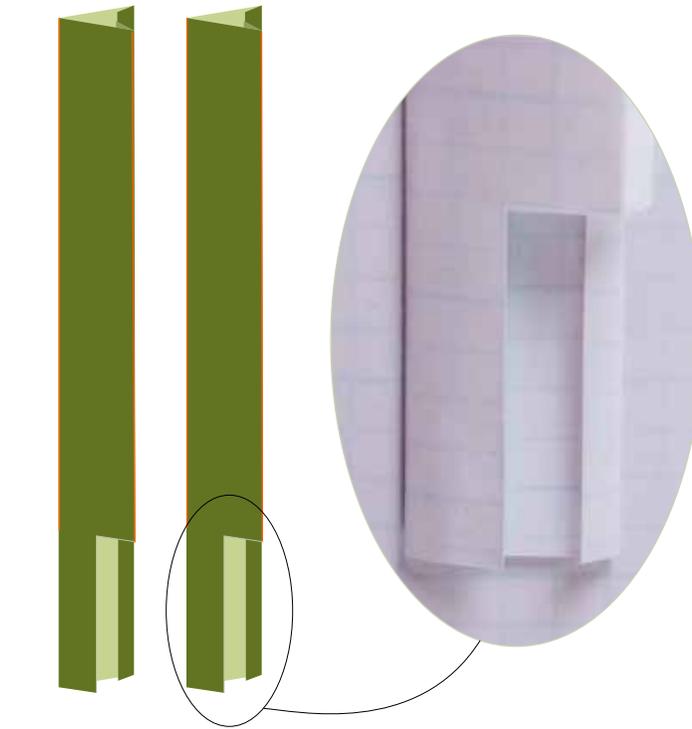
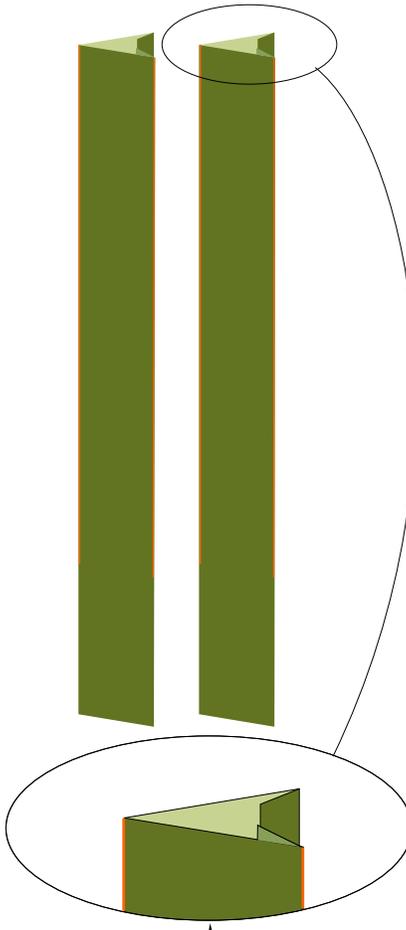


1. Mark the finished width of your placket, centered on the placement line.  
Slash in the center between the marks, all the way to the mark ends as shown, without clipping diagonally out to the ends of the lines.

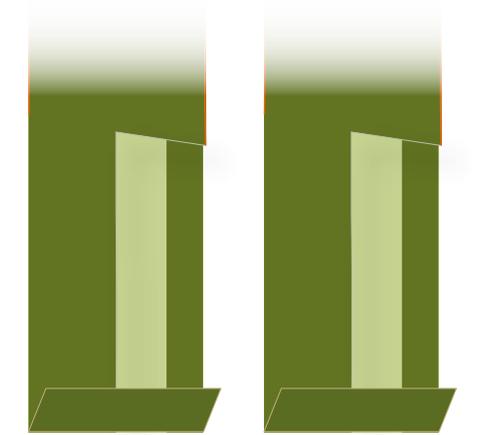


2. Cut two binding strips twice the placket width plus seam allowances, longer than the slash by the amount you need for the placket-end finish.

Fold and press seam allowances to the wrong side, then fold and press each strip in half, right sides out.



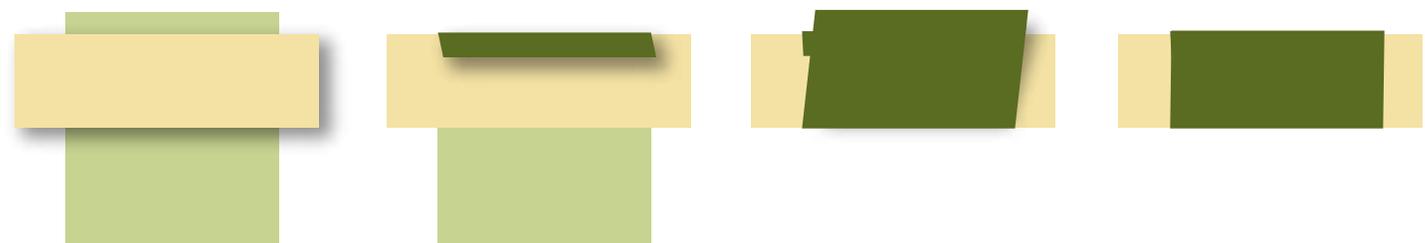
3. Trim away exactly half of one side of each strip as shown, starting just below the slash-length portion of the strips. Note that each strip is identical, NOT a mirror of the other.



4. Fold and press each trimmed end identically in whatever shape you want for the placket ends.



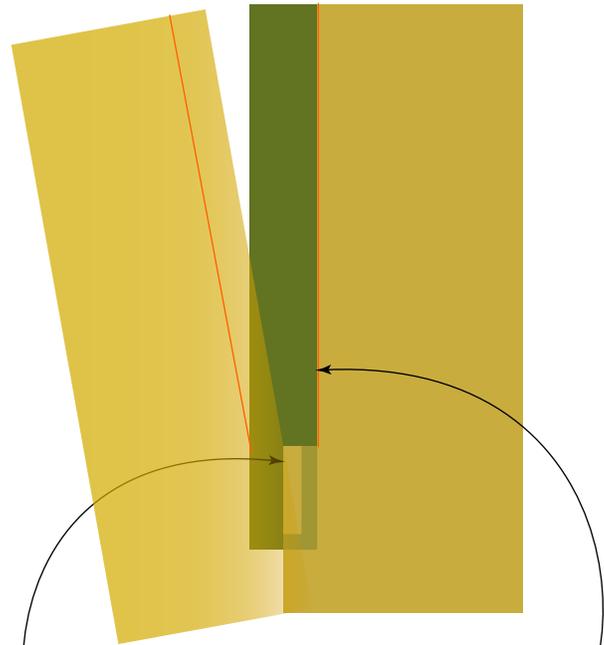
*Folding tip:*  
Make a template from stiff paper or card stock the exact finished width of your strip, and a little longer. Wrap your fabric around it as shown at right and the outer seam allowance fold will automatically come out slightly wider than the inner one, so it will easily be caught when stitching through all layers at once along the edge of the inner fold. In step 3 above, trim the side with the slightly narrow edge.



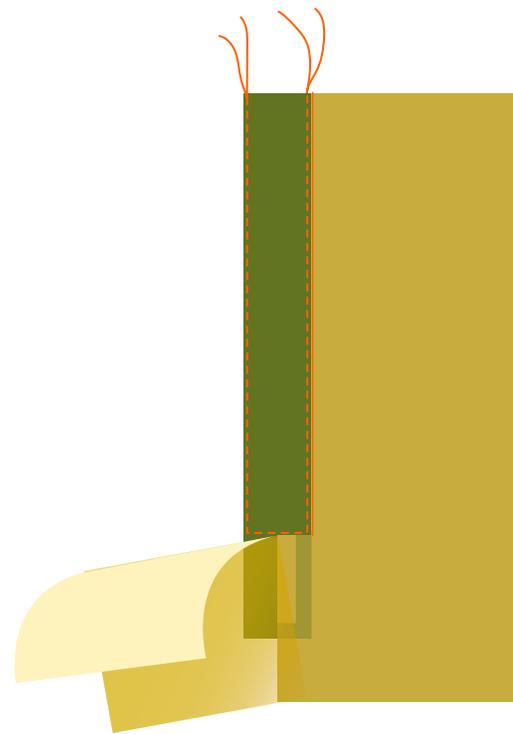
# Placket Construction Options

## 1 Type1: Two Separate Bound Edges on a rectangular stitching box

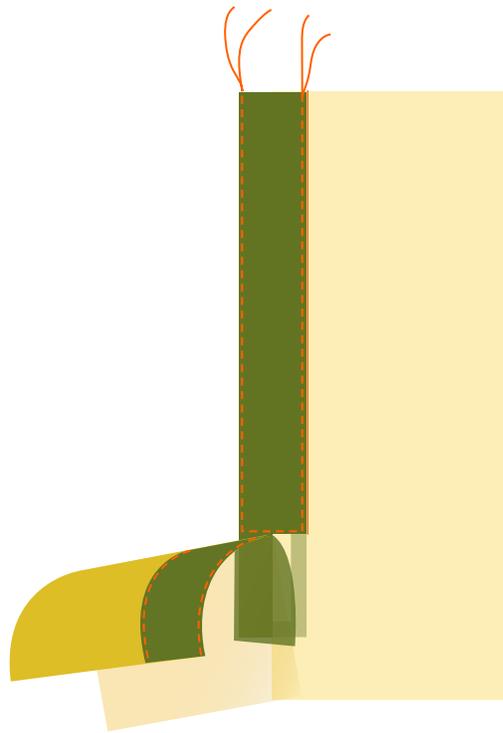
### Variation 1B continued: Both bindings pre-formed and identical, no stitching box, ends on opposite sides



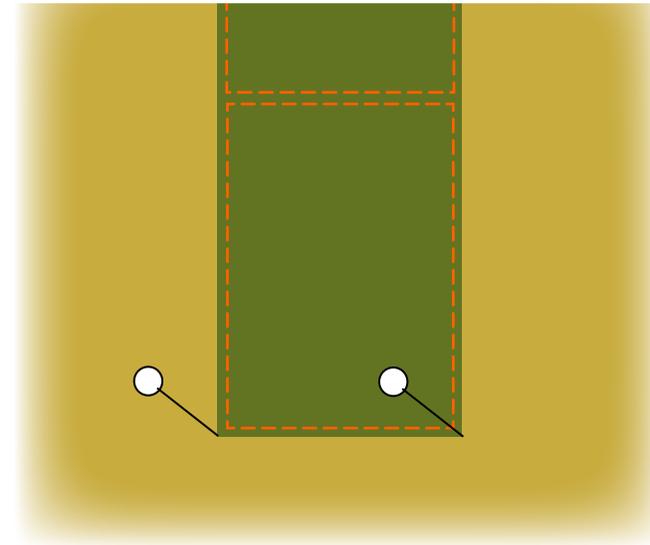
5. Slip one placket over the slash as shown, so it aligns exactly with the marked placket line on that side. Ideally, the trimmed-away edge will align with the end of the slash, too, but matching the marked line is most important. **Pin or glue-baste to hold for stitching.**



6. Stitch all around the untrimmed placket edges as shown.

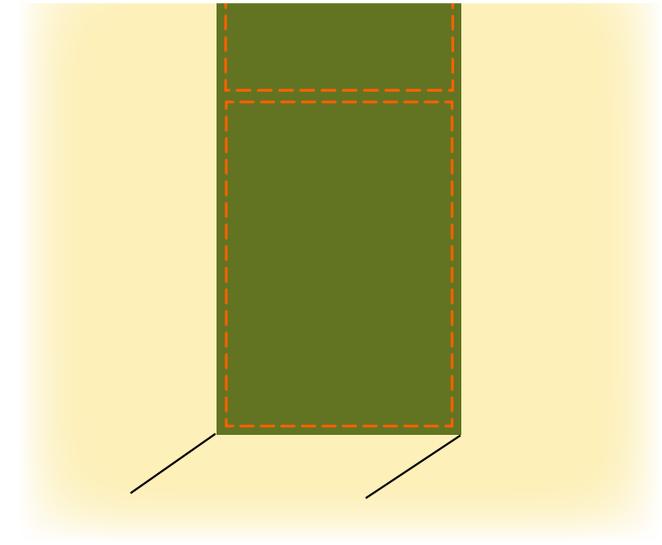


7. Flip the garment over and repeat the placement and stitching of the remaining placket on the other slash edge, making sure that the second placket piece and its end is aligned as precisely as possible underneath the first.



8. With the ends matched on either side, stitch through all layers to close and secure them.

Pins pushed through at the corners and edges, along with glue basting, can help with the alignment at this and earlier stages.

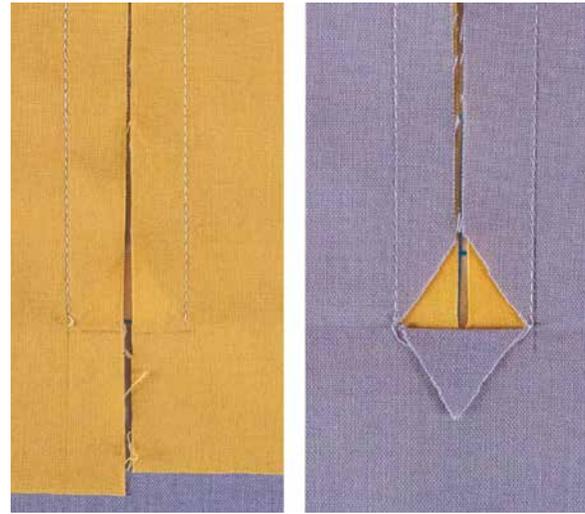


*Make sure as you stitch in step 6 that you catch the full placket width above the trimmed portion as marked, as I didn't in the sample at left, unless your planned stitching design will be catching these ends in step 8 when you secure the placket ends.*

*Also note that I didn't shape both ends before placing them here, thinking it would be easier to shape the second after stitching; not so! It's easier, I think, to be sure they're identical before stitching, so all you have to manage is aligning them at this stage.*

# Placket Construction Options

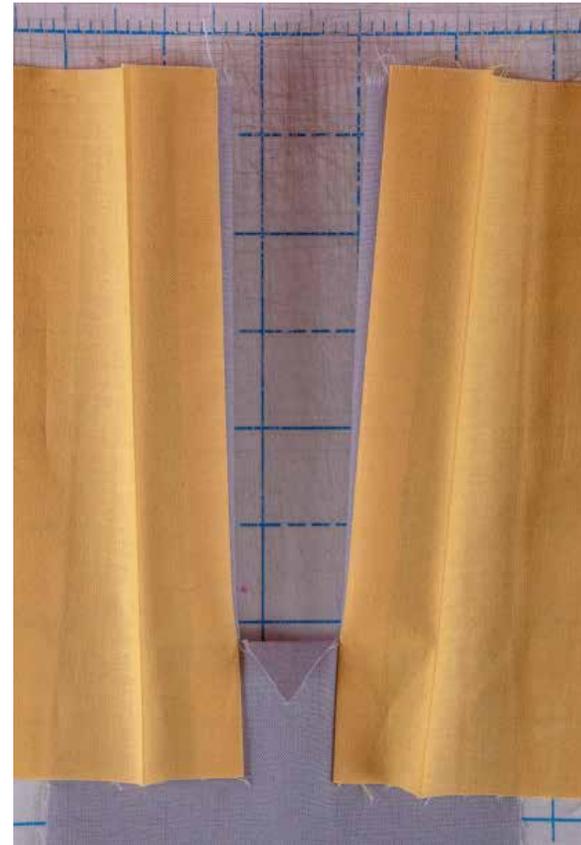
## 1 Type 1: Two Separate Bound Edges on a rectangular stitching box



1. The width of the plackets visible on the right (or stitching) side will be the distance between the stitching lines.

Cut the bindings twice the width between the stitching lines, plus as wide as you want them to extend beyond them on the other side, with seam allowances half the width between the stitching lines plus enough room to finish the extended edges.

Butt the binding edges together along the center of the stitching box as shown at left above, right sides together with the garment (typically). Stitch the lines and clip the garment as shown at right above.



2. (Above) Fold bindings to the other side, along with the triangle.

3. (Right) Press the seam allowances either towards the center as shown or open if desired.

Fold and press each binding so it will fill the opening between the stitching lines.



## Variation 2: Bindings folded to match stitching box on one side only, ends and triangle to the other side

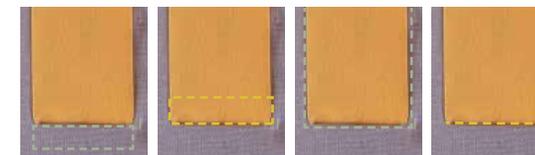
This example creates a simple band placket on one side (usually a buttonhole strip the right side), but a completely different shape on the other (usually an extended neckline facing on the wrong side). Other options are of course possible.



4. Decide which layer you want to be the overlap and arrange it over the opening first, with the other layer folding on top of it from the side shown.



5. Secure the binding ends and triangle by lifting the garment below the opening and stitching across the triangle fold through all layers below. The sides can be secured in the same way for a finish with no visible topstitching if the seam allowances were pressed open in step 3, as indicated above.

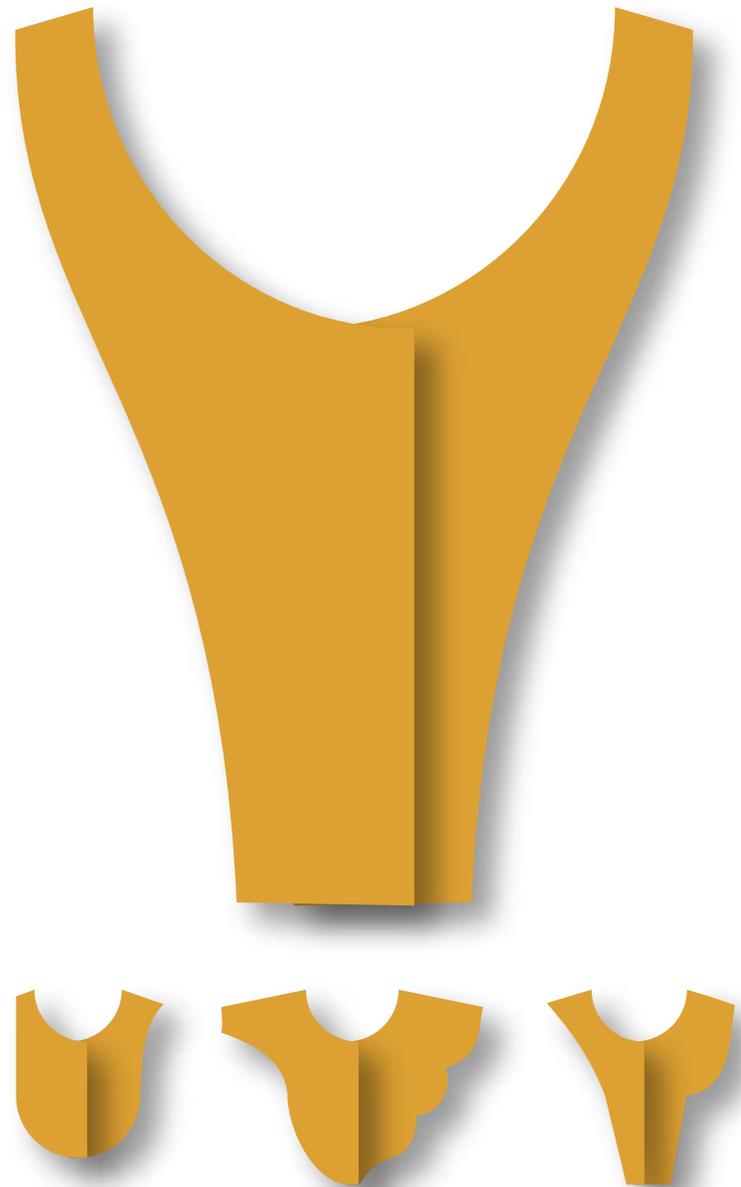


Many other options are possible with visible top- and/or edge-stitching, or hidden-in-the-ditch stitches.

# Placket Construction Options

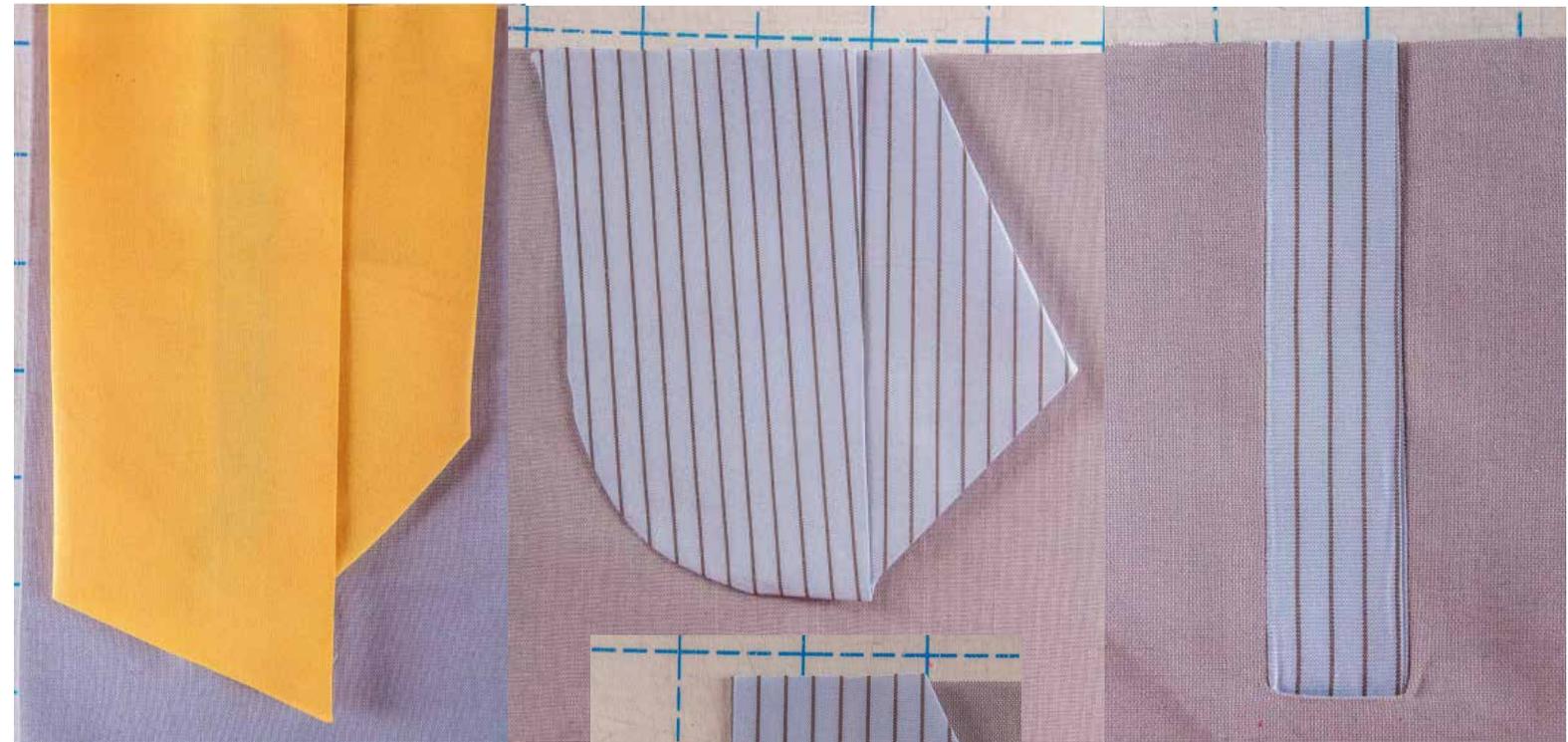
## 1 Type1: Two Separate Bound Edges on a rectangular stitching box

Here's a typical shaping for the non-rectangular side of this structure: Into a neckline facing, ending at the shoulder seams or attached to a back-neck facing, usually shaped and cut before joining, rather than afterwards. Lots of other shape variations are possible, whether the extensions serve as facings, or remain on the wrong side, or not.

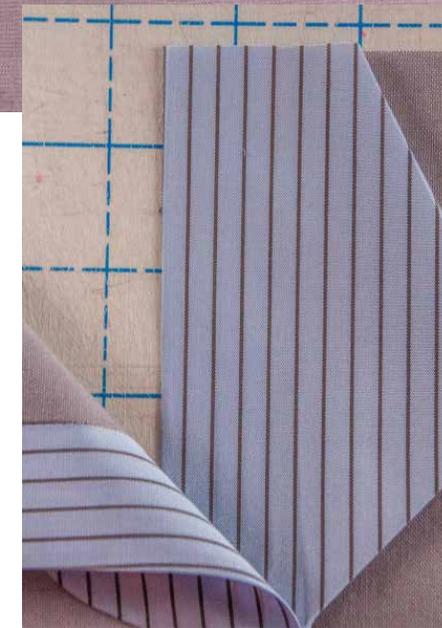
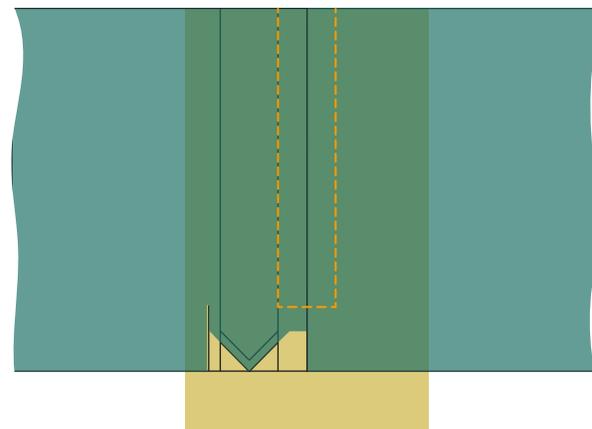


## Variation 2 OPTIONS: Bindings folded to match stitching box on one side only, ends and triangle to the other side

Here's a few more not- typical options you may enjoy exploring:



With just a few folds, I found it easy to pull the overlap layer's end from the sample just shown to the right side and form it into a classic "tower" placket end. The inside layers could still be extended into a facing or any other shape wanted. Here's the clipping pattern:



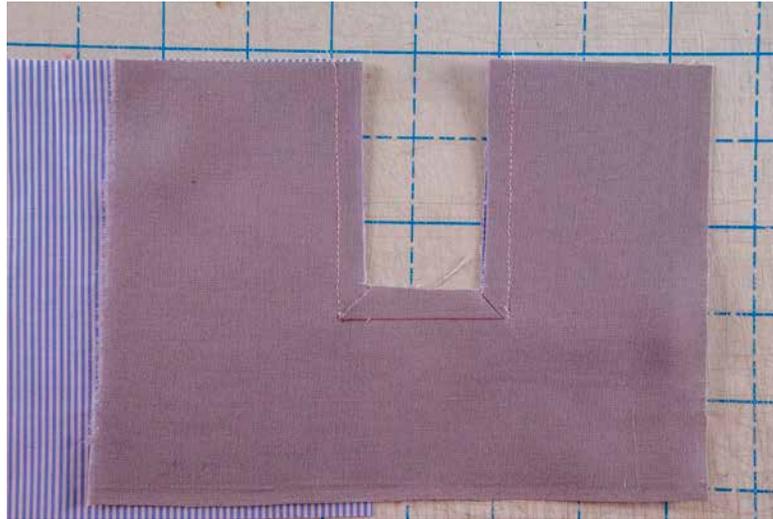
If you stitch the binding initially to the wrong side, you can then shape the extensions into many other shapes for unique non-rectangular plackets, based perhaps on the conventional or unconventional facing shapes at far left, or something else entirely. Whatever you come up with, the finish on the inside will already be as neat and simple as the rectangles originally shown here as the outer placket shapes. I'd lift the extensions and tack down the garment triangle unobtrusively underneath before top or edge-stitching to finish any of these shapes.

# Placket Construction Options

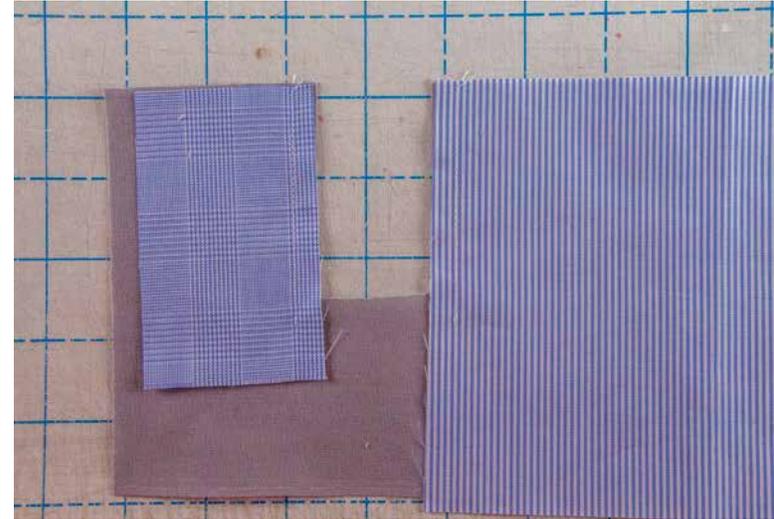
## 1 Type1: Two Separate Bound Edges Variation 3: Bindings that don't match the stitching box

It's entirely possible to fold the bindings with no regard to the size or shape of the initial stitching box. The diagrams on page 143, in the Folk Block chapter, show how to manage an overlap binding that's wider than the width of the initial stitching box and an underlapping binding that's smaller than the box—in which case, the underlap ends and the clipped triangle or wedge can all go to the right side of the garment and be hidden under the wider overlap end(s) which have to stay on the outside. Here's a photo sequence of the little test I made in fabric in order to prep the drawings in the text.

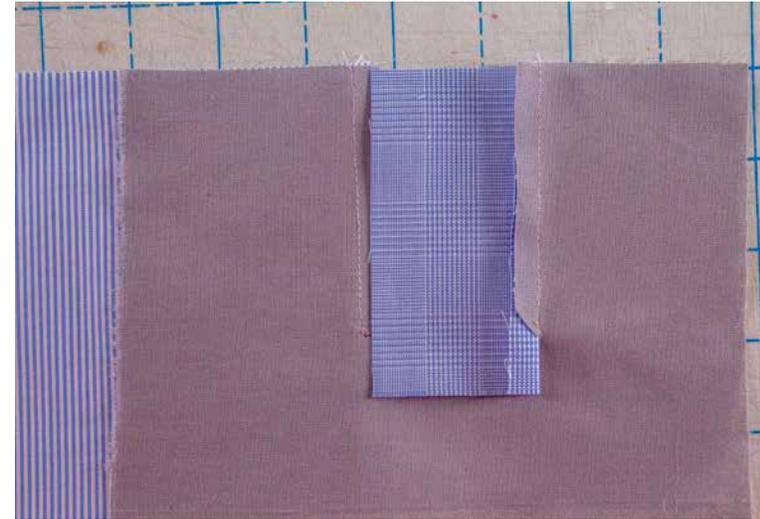
1. The stitching box marked and trimmed on the garment right side, then stitched to the bindings, also right-side-up underneath, then clipped to the ends of the stitching.



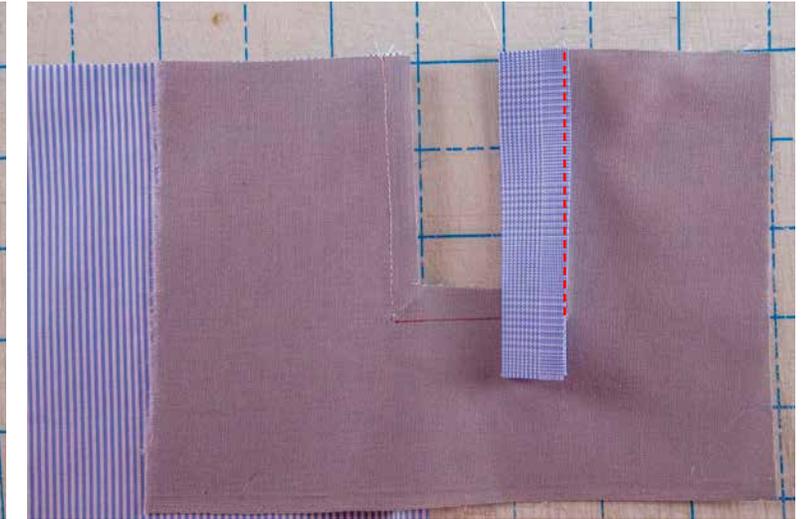
2. The wrong-side view of step 1.



3. The underlap binding turned to the right side.



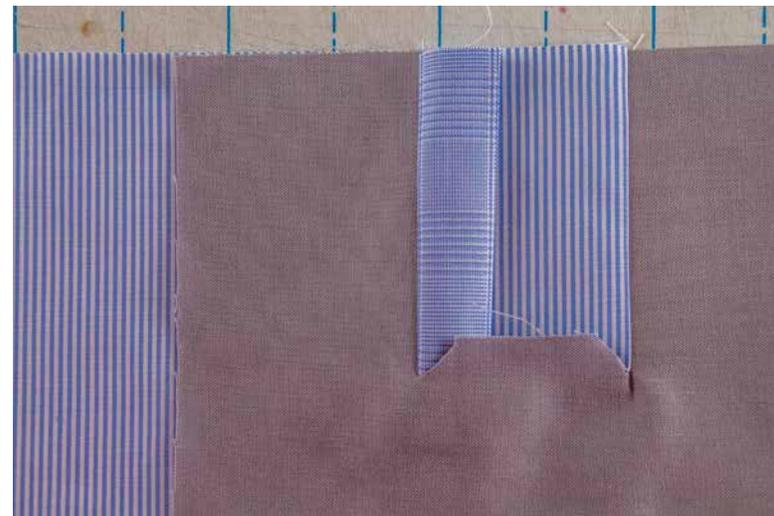
4. The underlap binding folded and pressed to cover its stitching. Next would be stitching the seam allowance edge to the clipped corner as shown.



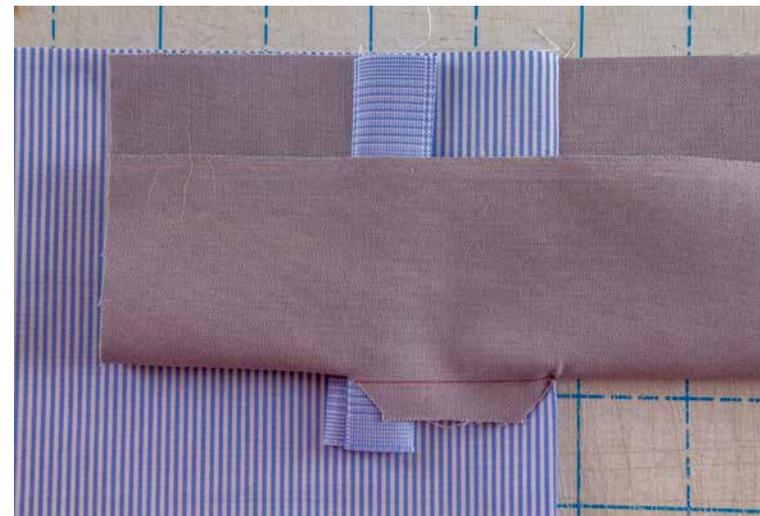
5. The overlap binding turned to the right side.



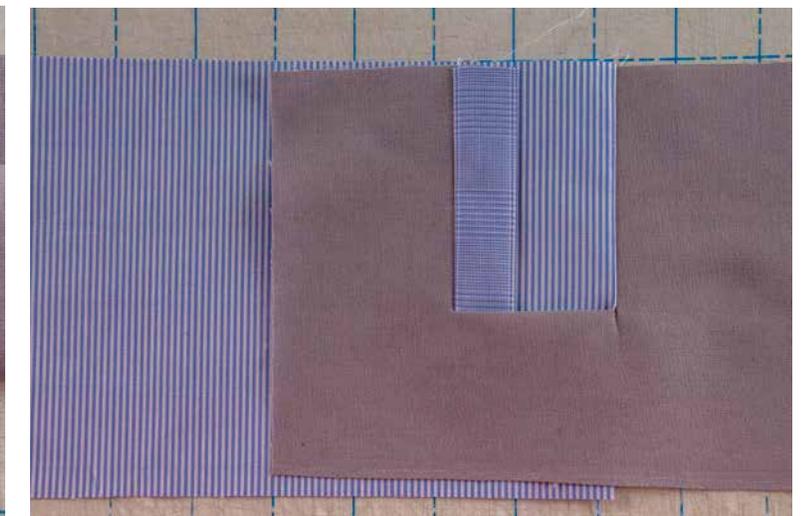
6. From the wrong side, the clipping wedge ready to be tucked under for stitching.



7. The clipping wedge prepped for stitching, which could be done now, or after shaping the overlap further.



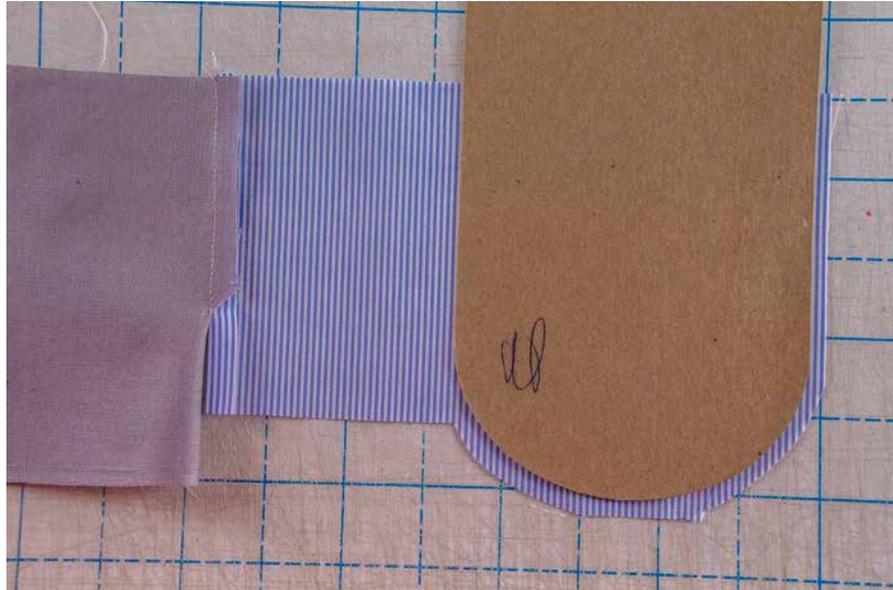
8. The garment pressed over the stitched wedge from the wrong side.



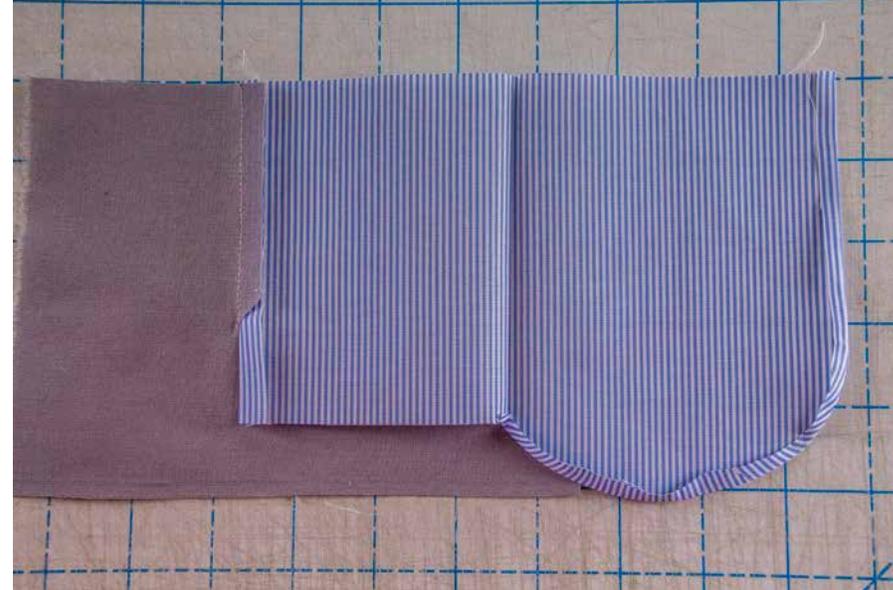
# Placket Construction Options

## 1 Type1: Two Separate Bound Edges Variation 3: Bindings that don't match the stitching box

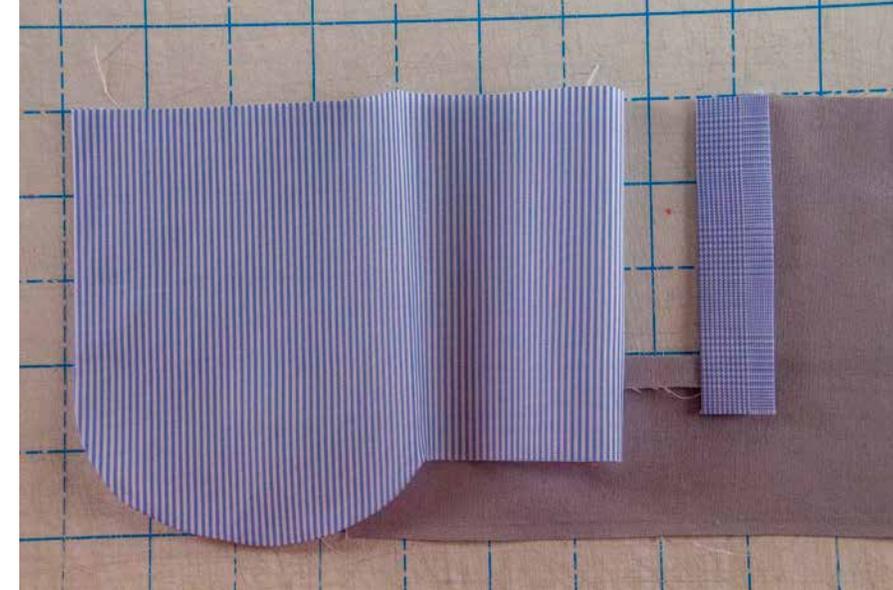
9. The overlap prepped for further shaping with a pressing template.



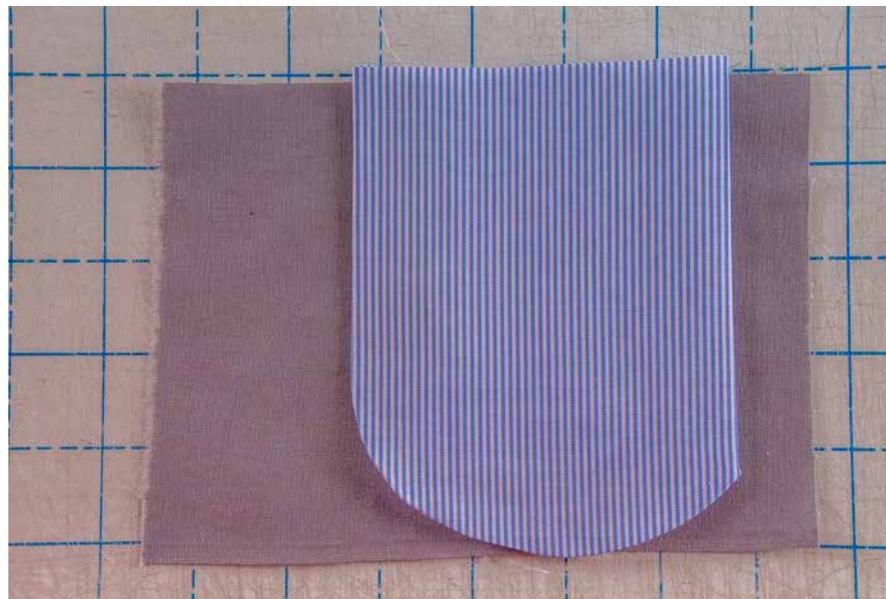
10. The overlap shaping complete, wrong side.



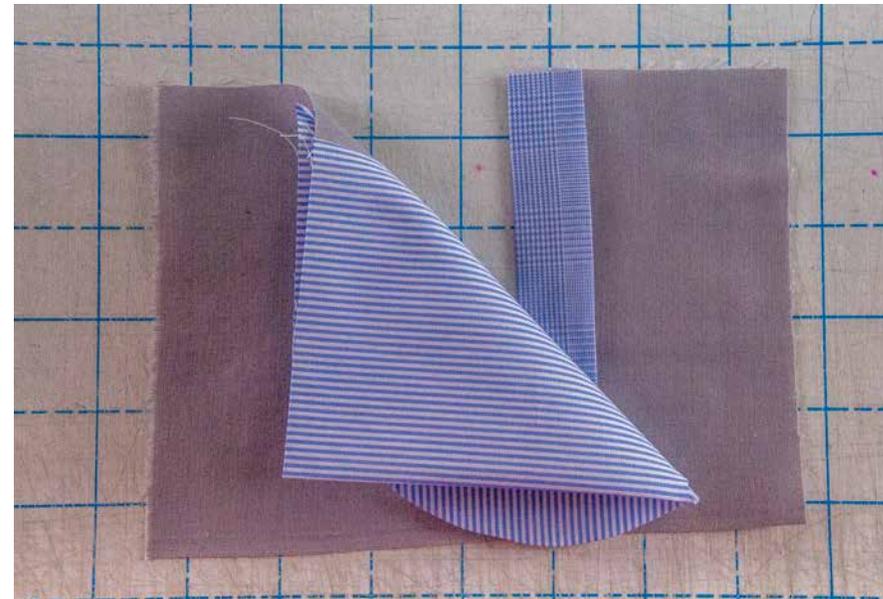
11. The overlap shaping complete, right side.



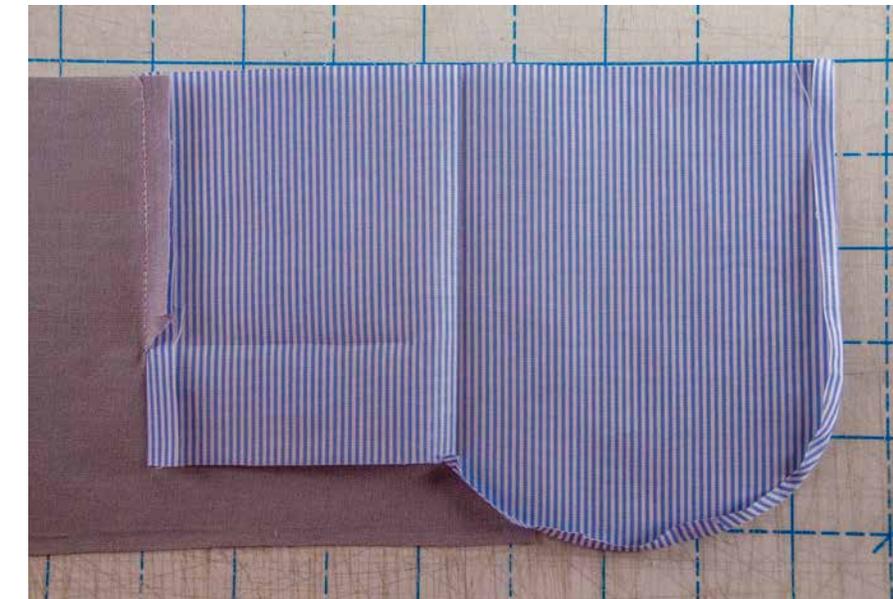
12. The overlap in final position, right side.



13. The overlap in final position, folded back to show the underlap.



14. The overlap unfolded in preparation for stitching the clipping wedge to all layers except the outer overlap face. As you can see, all the binding-folding and -shaping can be done and tested before any final stitching is done.



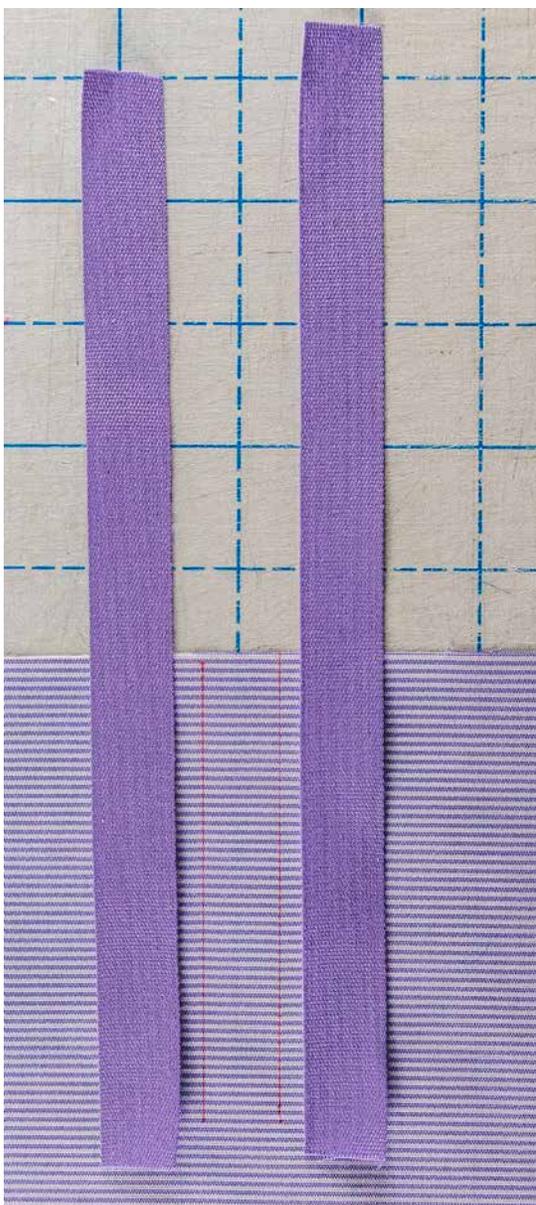
# Placket Construction Options

## 1 Type1: Two Separate Bound Edges Variation 4: Bindings made from Tape

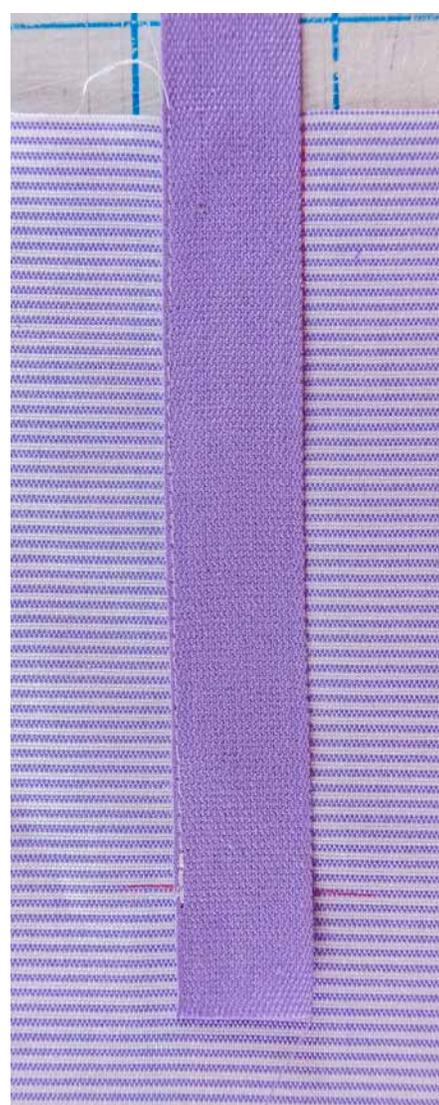
Twill tape and other woven ribbon-like notions are versatile additions to any sewist's binding arsenal, especially if you ever gravitate towards utility garments and finishes.

My reference for this sample was a knit shirt, but the idea's equally pertinent for wovens, I think. Be sure the tape's content matches your garment, so pressing's easy.

Note that like many other Type-1 structures, the right and wrong side, and which is the overlap and which the underlap, remains flexible until the final closing of the ends.



1. Start on either side with a marked stitching box equal to the tape width, and two lengths of tape twice the box's length plus plenty of extra length for finishing the ends as you prefer. Even if you're going to add another finish at the top, like a collar or cuff, folding over the tape there is easier than working with four pieces, I find. I like to cut the lengths slightly different as shown so they don't all end up ending at exactly the same point when you're done, making a distinct lump, but are sort of automatically graded.



2. Mark the box length on the garment, then edge-stitch as close as possible to the tape edge when it's placed exactly over the box side marking. I prefer to use glue stick to hold the tape at the start instead of pins.



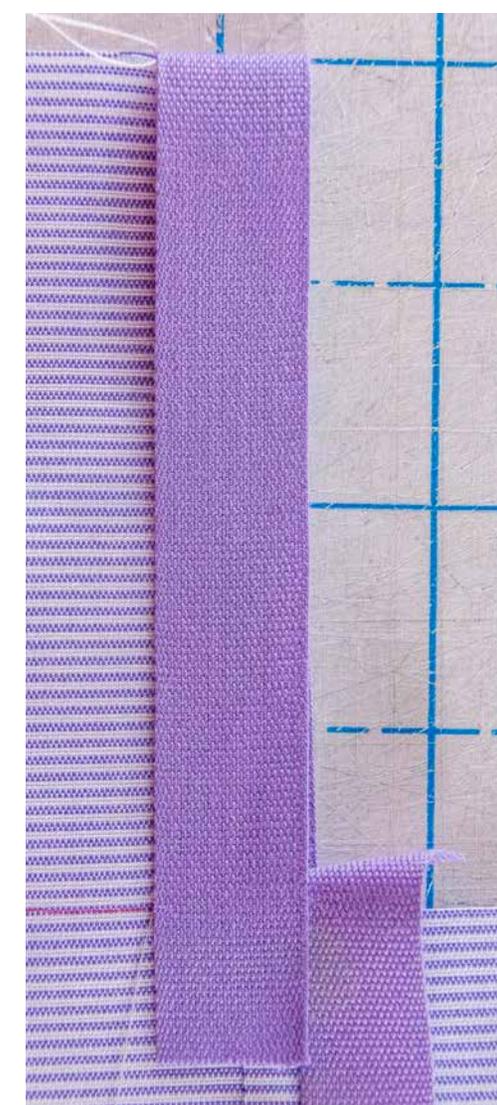
3. Press the first tape out of the way and repeat to stitch the other one to the marks on the other side.



4. Press both tapes out of the way to slash and clip to the ends of the stitching.



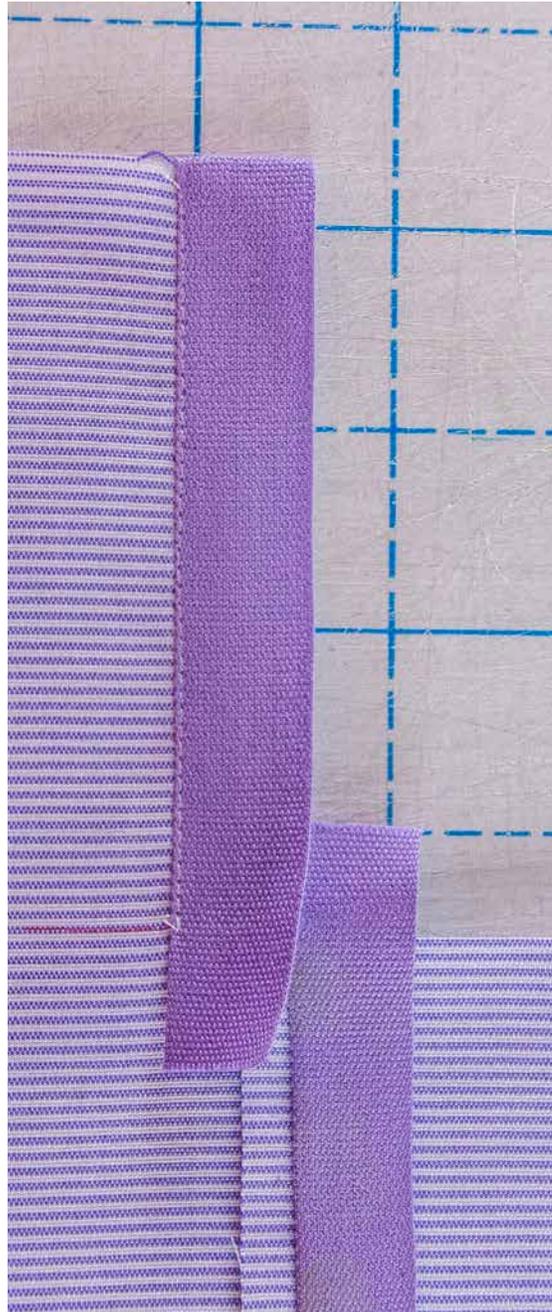
5. Here one tape has been pressed back into place and the work flipped to the other side, then the triangle and the still pressed out of the way tape are folded down to make way for stitching the other end of the first tape along the same edge...



6. ...as arranged here.

# Placket Construction Options

## 1 Type1: Two Separate Bound Edges Variation 4: Bindings made from Tape



7. With the slash-end mark added on this side, the stitching can proceed.



8. Here the first tape ends have been arranged to both go on the other side of the garment so they can more easily be folded out of the way when doing second edge pass on the remaining tape.



9. Now also pressed back to its original position, the second tape is ready to be...



10. ...folded over for stitching again.



11. Now both tapes are secured on both sides but only on one edge, and not at all at the ends, ready for deciding how you want these to be arranged. This is perhaps a good time for stitching together other edges on each tape, depending on your design for the other stitching, and if you even want to close these edges. Right now, the overlap at least is already a ready-made covered-button structure; worth considering, I think.

# Placket Construction Options

## 1 Type1: Two Separate Bound Edges

### Variation 4: Bindings made from Tape



12. If you've followed my steps, right now each tape's two ends are arranged on opposite faces of the garment, which is the set-up that creates the least distortion to the garment, since the tape bulk is equally distributed on either side, sandwiching the garment with no difference between the layer-stacking above the triangle and below it—unlike on my reference garment, shown at right, on which the ends are all positioned to the garment's wrong side below the placket-end stitching.

If I were to finish the ends in this equal-on-both-sides arrangement, with topstitching through all layers, I'd most likely first trim the concealed tape ends on each side short enough so I could fold up the longer visible ends as shown in the cut-away, thereby creating no change in overall thickness:



Here's my reference garment for this placket, inside and out above, with a close-up of the serged finish it's got catching all 4 tape ends on the inside. Honestly, I never notice the bulk of this when I wear the shirt, but its lumpy bulk bothers me as I examine it as a sewing nerd. Notice how the simple folded-rectangle collar was added first before the tape placket, so a fold-over tape at the top was perfectly suited to the design. Also note the same twill tape, narrower, is finishing the neckline seam on the inside.



If I were going to lift up the garment front to secure the triangle to the tape layers, I'd fold away the lower two ends, as shown above, rather than stitching through all layers here, both to keep the layers even for easier stitching, and so the distortion of the garment would be minimized, perhaps an imaginary notion, but it makes sense to me. Also I'd simply stitch a few times with a tiny stitch length across the raw tape ends on the inside as shown, rather than serging or overcasting them, as the un-equal ends are already nicely graded and taper away softly, which will be enhanced as the ends ravel a bit...



Instead, I followed the example of the reference garment and simply topstitched a little box at the base of the tape, slightly overlapping it onto the garment to catch the triangle fold, which is quite unobtrusive and flat despite the bulk below. The distortions in the sample garment fabric on either side of the placket come from pressing just the "garment" there, which stretched a bit, being unshrunk scrap and not a prepped garment fabric, which I'd have both shrunk and stretched when pressing before cutting. Might have helped!

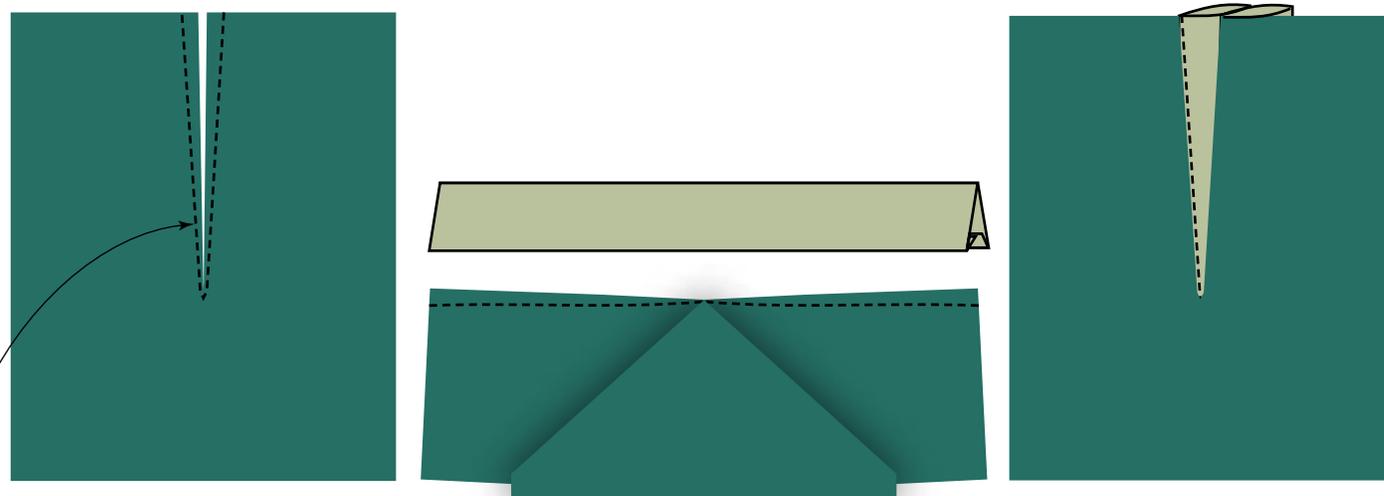
# Placket Construction Options

CLICK FOR PATTERNS

## 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash

The key to this structure is the way it “does the splits” to open a single slash so it can be attached to a single strip of fabric twice the original length of the slash, requiring some very close-to-the-edge stitching at the point(s) of the slash. If you’re up for the tricky stitching, the pay-off is the speed with which you can complete the basic structure, and how soft and non-bulky the tiny seam allowances make it.

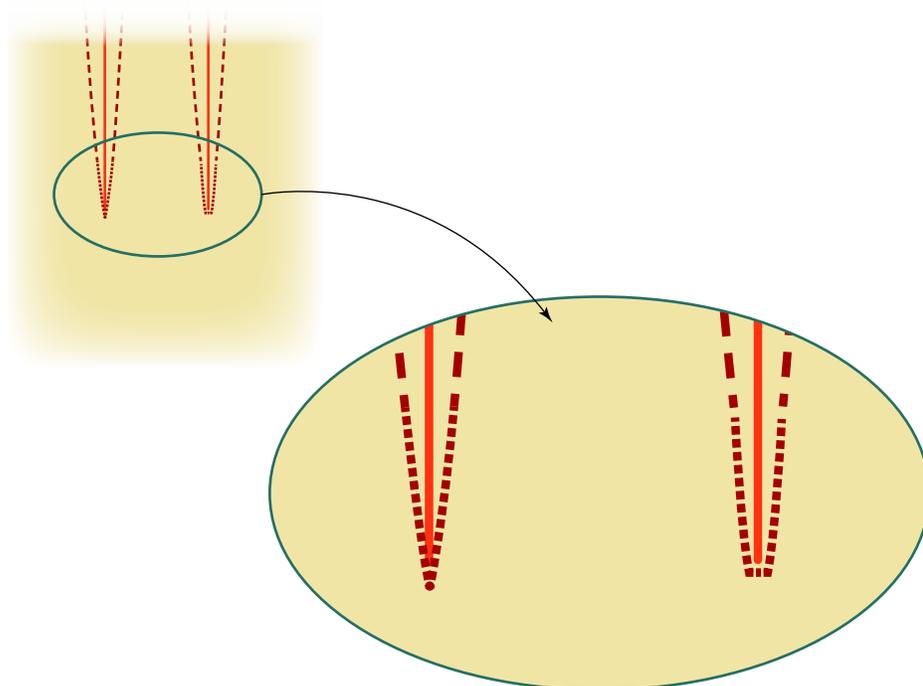
### Variation 1: Simple binding



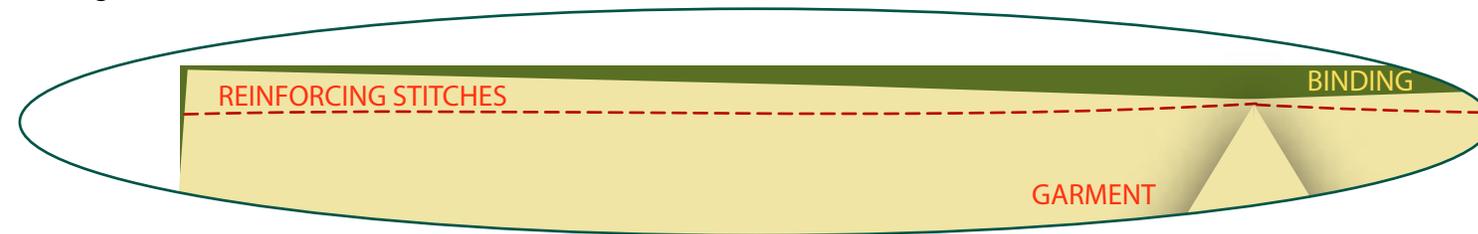
The basic steps are much as shown above, except you don't stitch the binding-strip edges both at once. First, you mark the slash line, then stitch around it to **reinforce it before actually cutting**.

**At the start**, your reinforcing stitches should be a narrow seam-allowance width away from the slash mark, such as 1/4-inch (6mm) or even 1/8-inch (3mm), which will also be the seam allowance on the placket strip along the edge that will join the slash. You'll taper evenly from this width down to almost nothing (a thread's width away) by the time you get to the slash line's end, as shown in the diagram above.

**When you cut the slash**, you must cut right to the very tip of the stitching, where you pivoted and where there should be either no corner stitches or only one very small one, and where you should dial down the stitch length to something tiny anyway, a few stitches before and after the pivot, as shown at right.

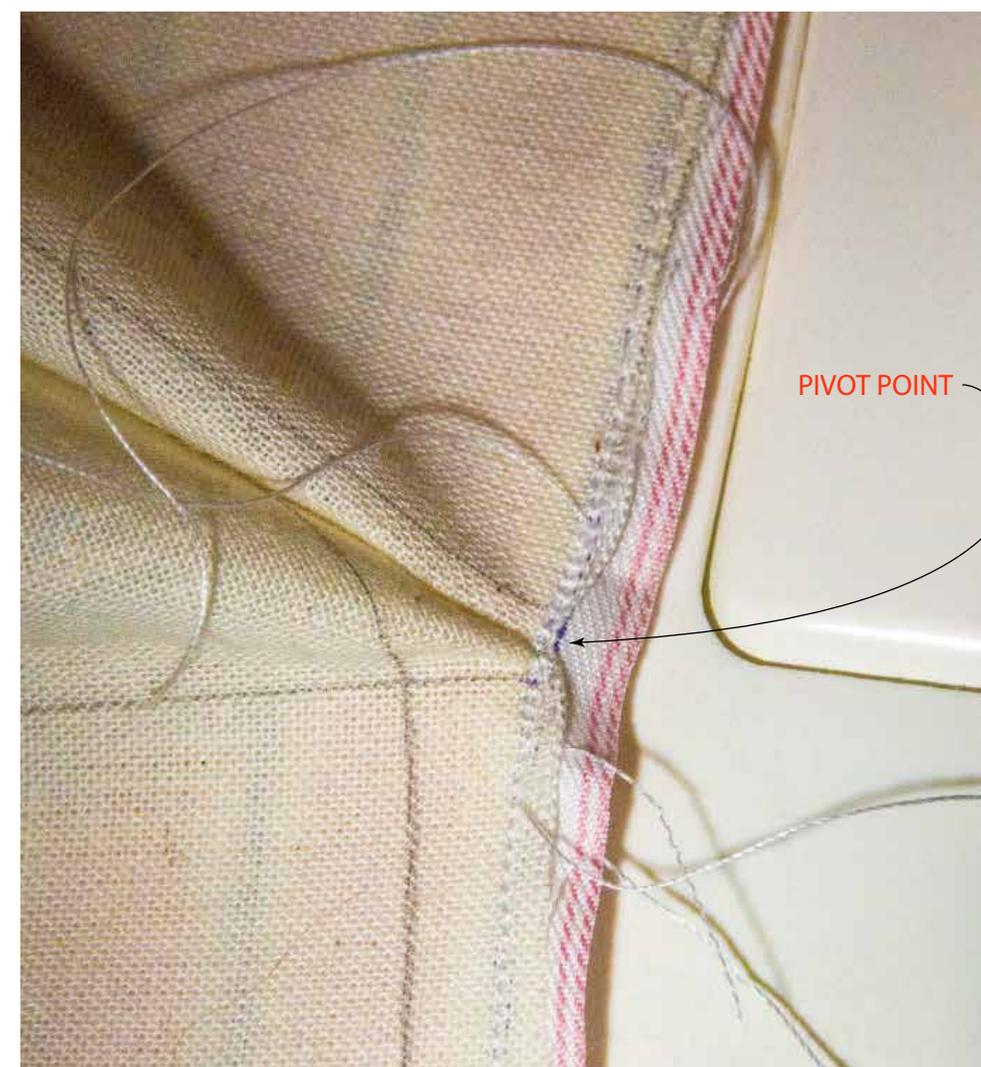


When you align the binding strip to the split-open slash (right sides together), you **arrange the reinforcing stitches, not the slash edges**, so they follow the binding's stitching line, maintaining the seam allowance width on the binding, but not on the garment, like so:



**When stitching**, stitch exactly on top of the reinforcing stitches or exactly against them on the garment side. I usually simply hold the layers together, without pins, from the start to the pivot point, not spreading the slash edge to meet the binding beyond the pivot point until I get there and have stopped needle down right at the pivot. (The slash edge is way too fragile to use glue stick.) I also switch to tiny stitches again just before the point, and switch back just after pivoting.

In the picture at right, I forgot to switch stitch lengths until I was already at the point, so I went back after and stitched again across the point with tiny stitches. That's why there are thread ends coming off the seamline on either side of the point.



# Placket Construction Options

## 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash Variation 1: Simple binding, continued

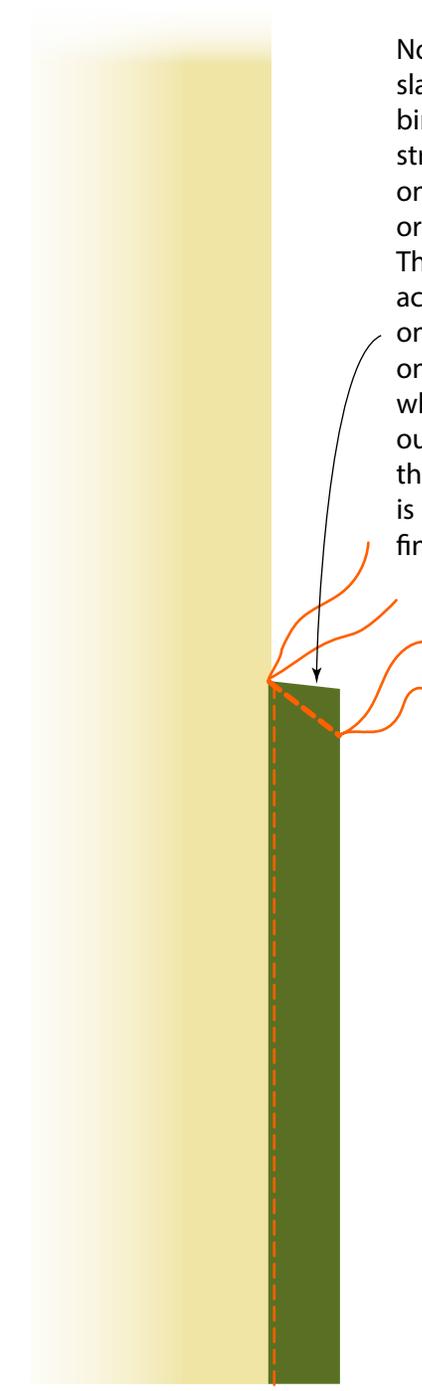
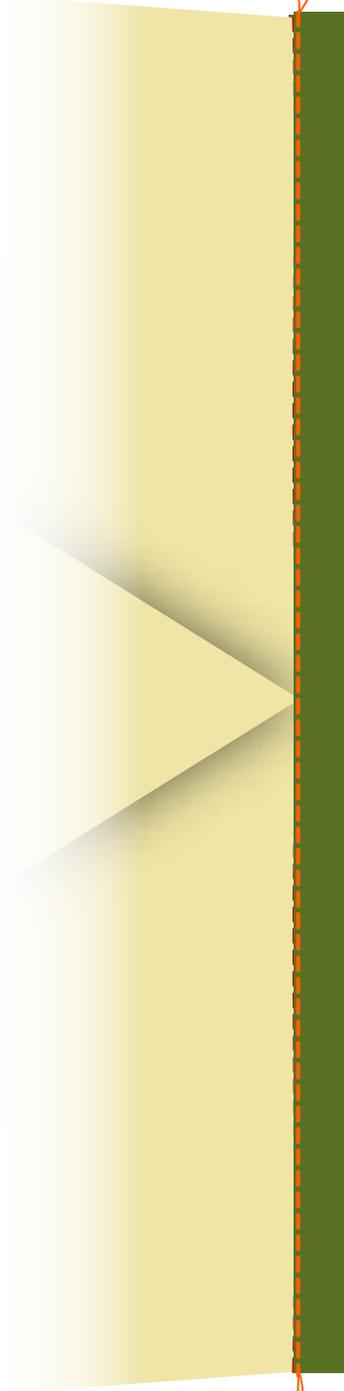
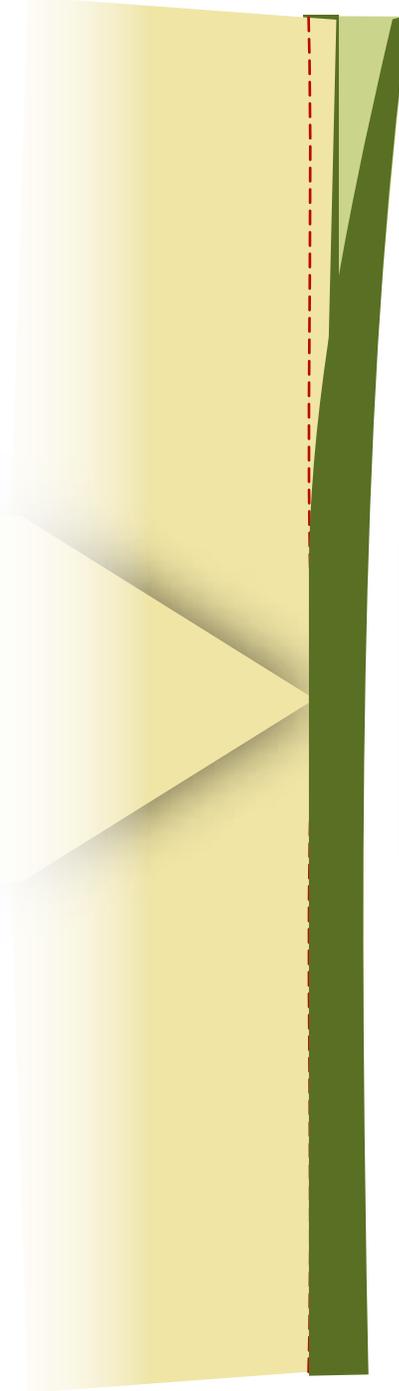
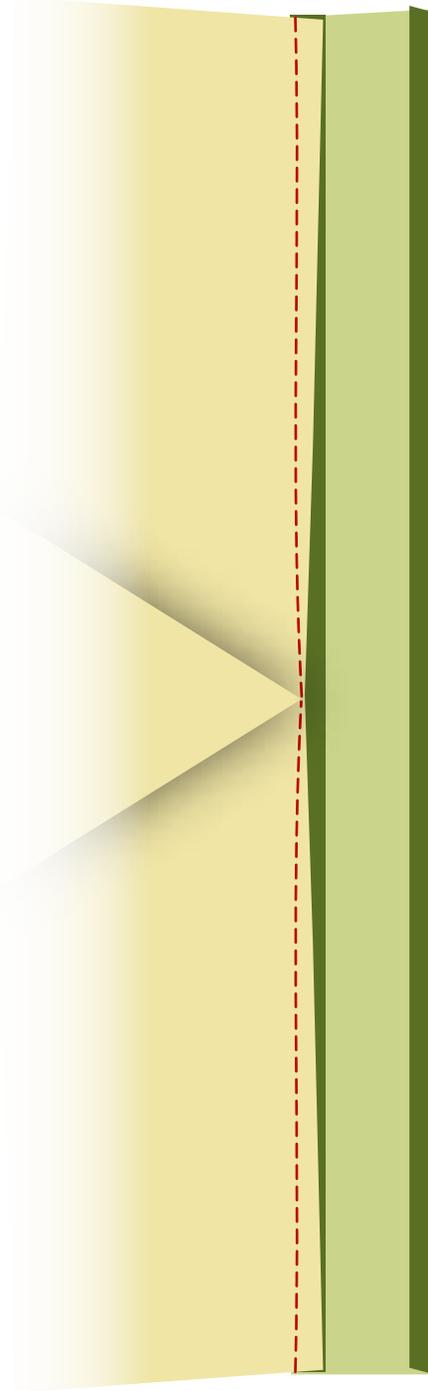
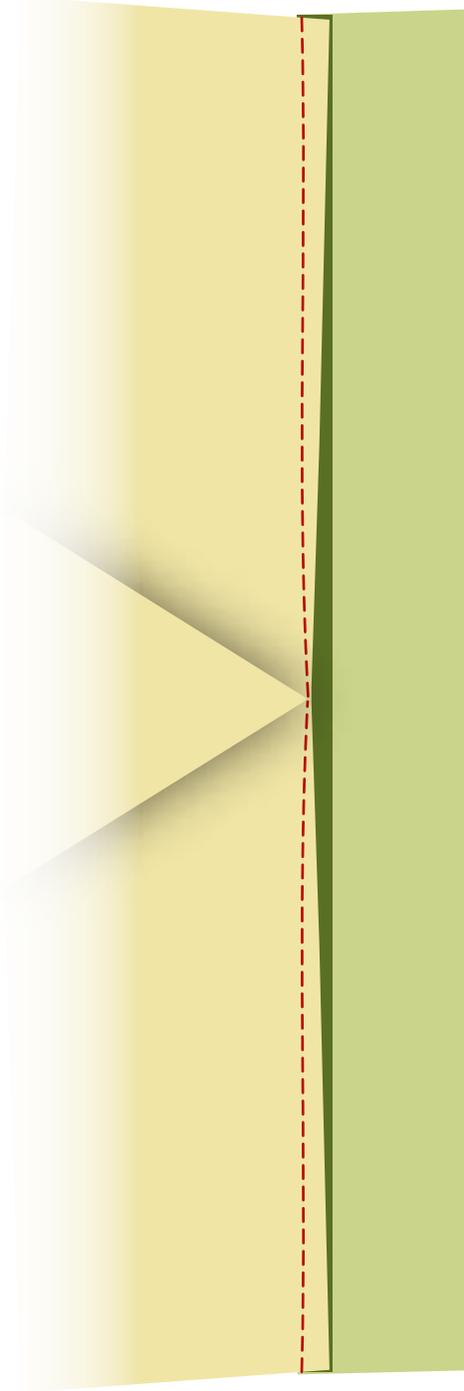
Once the binding is attached to the slash, all that remains is to wrap it around the raw edges and close it.

1. Press the binding over the joining seam.

2. Press under the seam allowance on the free edge.

3. Fold the binding in half just barely covering the existing seam. Glue stick is helpful here.

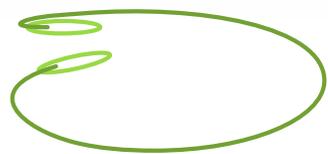
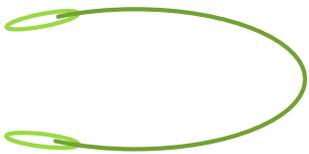
4. Edge-stitch to close the binding.



Note that there's nothing about the slash that determines the width of the binding, nor anything about the structure so far that places the binding on one side of the garment or the other, or sets an underlap and overlap. The most common next step is to stitch across the folded end of the binding only, as shown at left, with it arranged on the wrong side of the garment, which tends to keep it from flopping out to the right side, but the main thing that keeps a placket of this type in place is how it's set into a cuff or neckline finish.

- Placket RS
- Garment WS
- Placket WS

It's not actually necessary to set an overlap/underlap relationship, or even to position the binding to the wrong side, as you can see on this reversible cuff, which simply makes the placket overlap the result of which cuff end you choose to button on top of the other, which will be switched when the shirt's reversed.



More typically, the overlap is set by folding the binding to the wrong side of the garment as shown above, then securing it with the cuff or neckline detail. Even so, as you can see in the knit example above, simply tacking across the fold at the other end doesn't keep the whole thing from popping out. If you want to keep that from happening...



...much better to stitch through the garment, too, when you tack, as in the plaid example here.

While you're at it, why not stitch the entire overlap part of the binding to the garment, as also done here? That will certainly keep the bindings in place, and give the whole thing a more defined air.

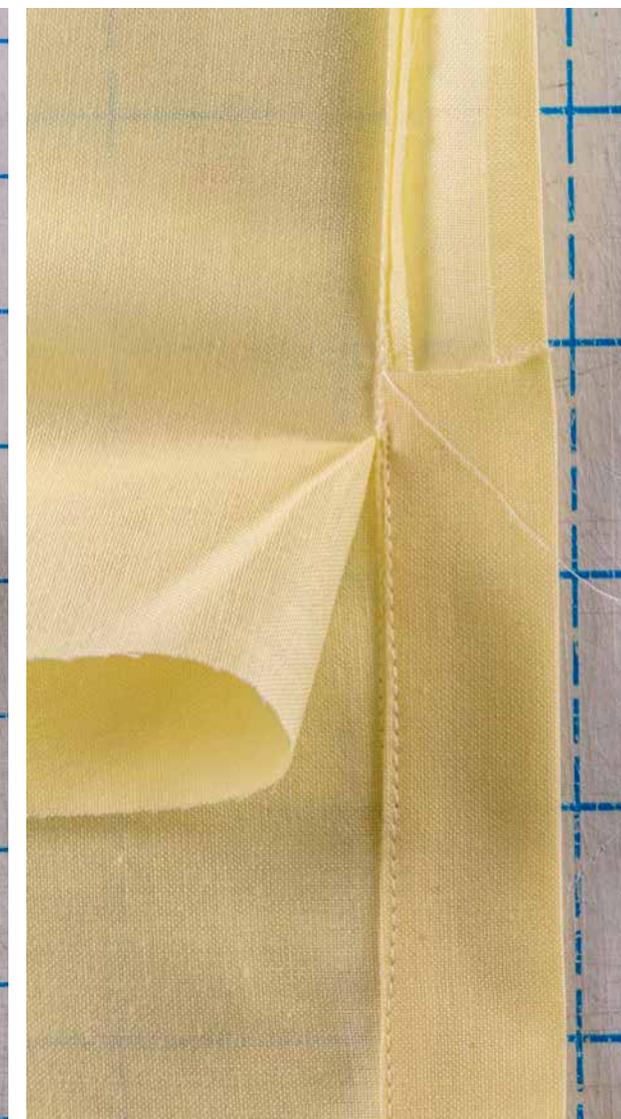
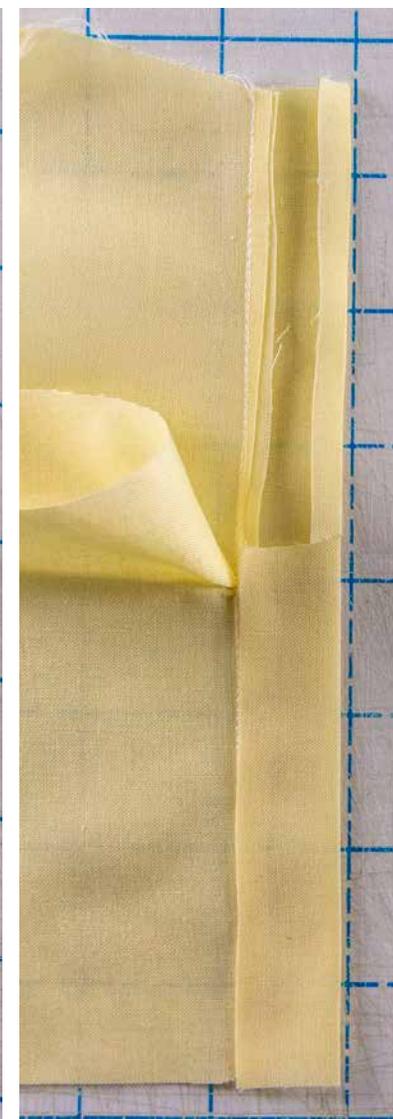
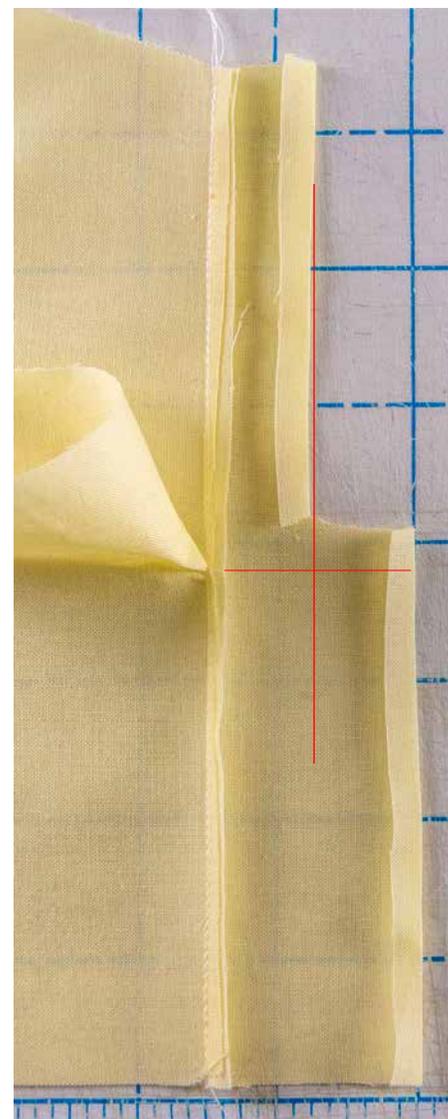
If you're going to all that trouble, why not prepare the binding itself for this extra topstitching, by trimming away the part of the binding that will never again see the light of day? Less bulk!...

## Placket Construction Options

### 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash

#### Variation 2A: Binding trimmed and topstitched to garment

This simple hack turns an otherwise basic continuous strip into an even less bulky structure, and a more formal one at the same time.



1. All that's needed for this variation is to trim away one side of the binding after joining it, starting slightly above the pivot/folding point, marked in red above. You don't even need to clip to facilitate folding the new seam allowance as I've done here, as that will happen automatically, and exactly where needed in the next step.

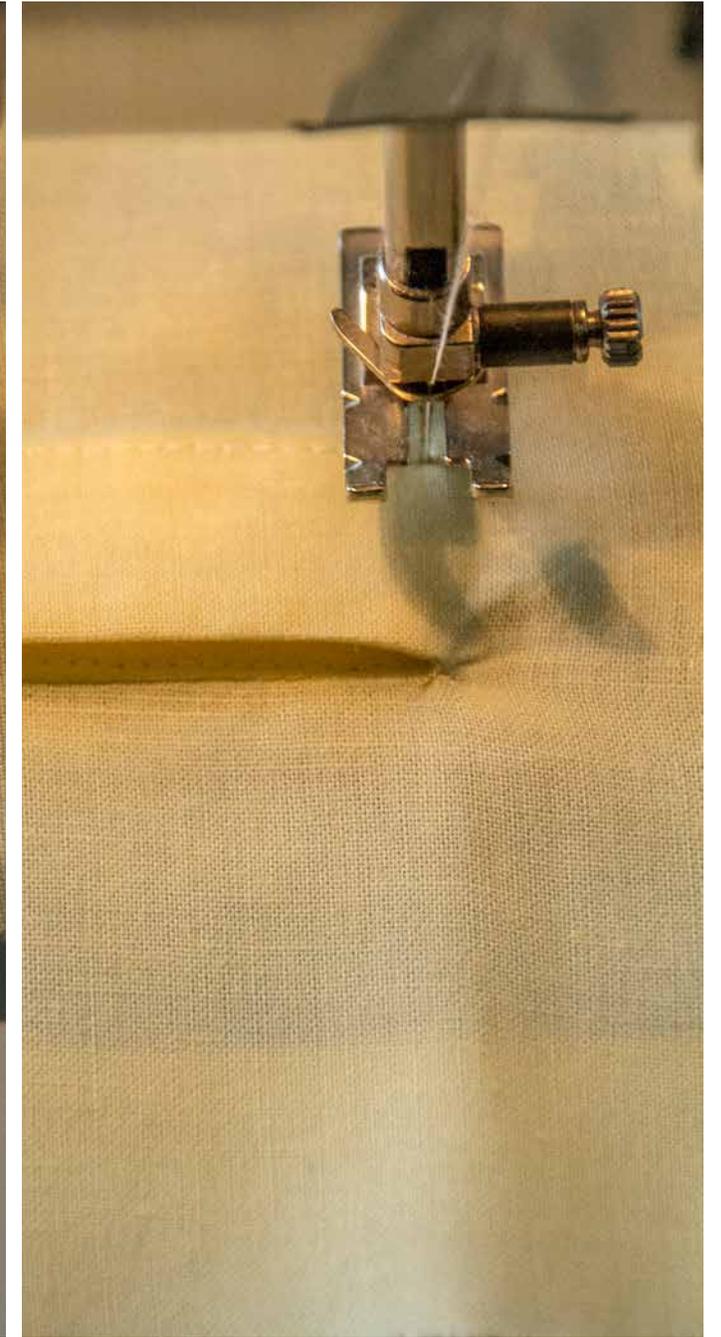
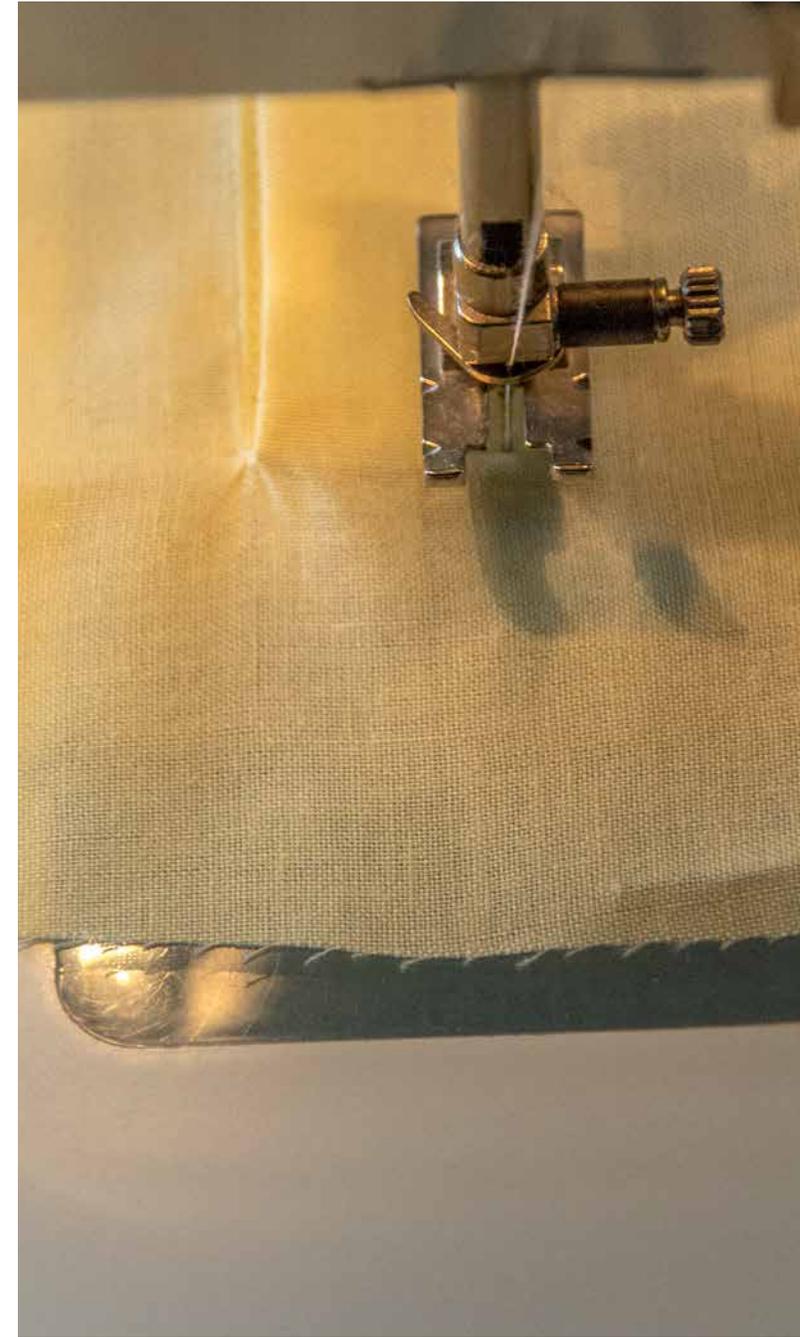
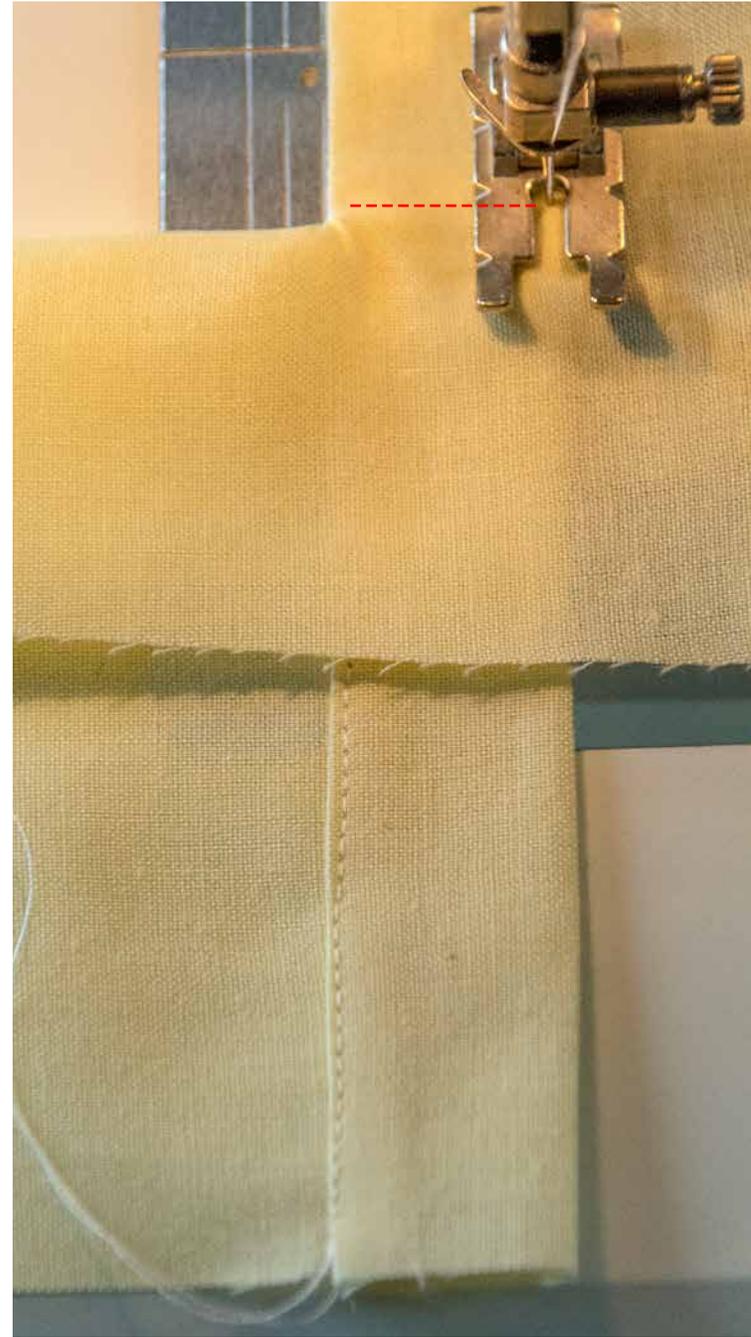
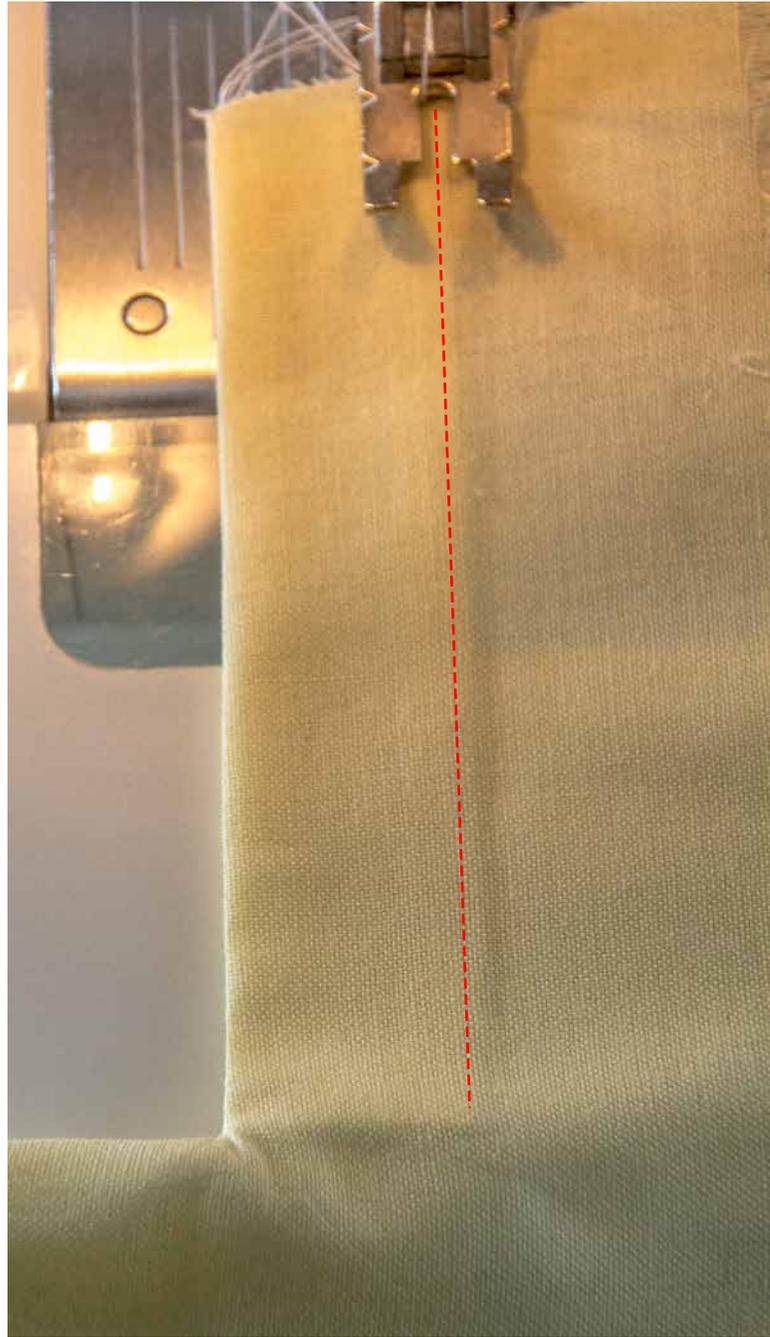
2. Press the binding in half, bringing the untrimmed half over the previous stitching. Clearly, it's important to trim in step 1 so you leave enough width behind to allow for a seam allowance on the narrowed part. So, don't trim closer than a seam allowance width from the center fold line, also in red in the previous image.

3. Edge-stitch to secure the lower part of the binding to the original seam allowances, stopping a little beyond the pivot point. It's always wise, I think, to drop the stitch length a little near and across the point, as I've done here.

## Placket Construction Options

### 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash

### Variation 2A: Binding trimmed and topstitched to garment, continued



4. With the untrimmed portion of the binding folded out of the way, stitch along the edge of the trimmed part, from the right side, marking if necessary. Of course, this step would be exactly the same if you haven't bothered to trim away any of the binding, as doesn't seem to have been done on the green plaid shirt from the previous page.

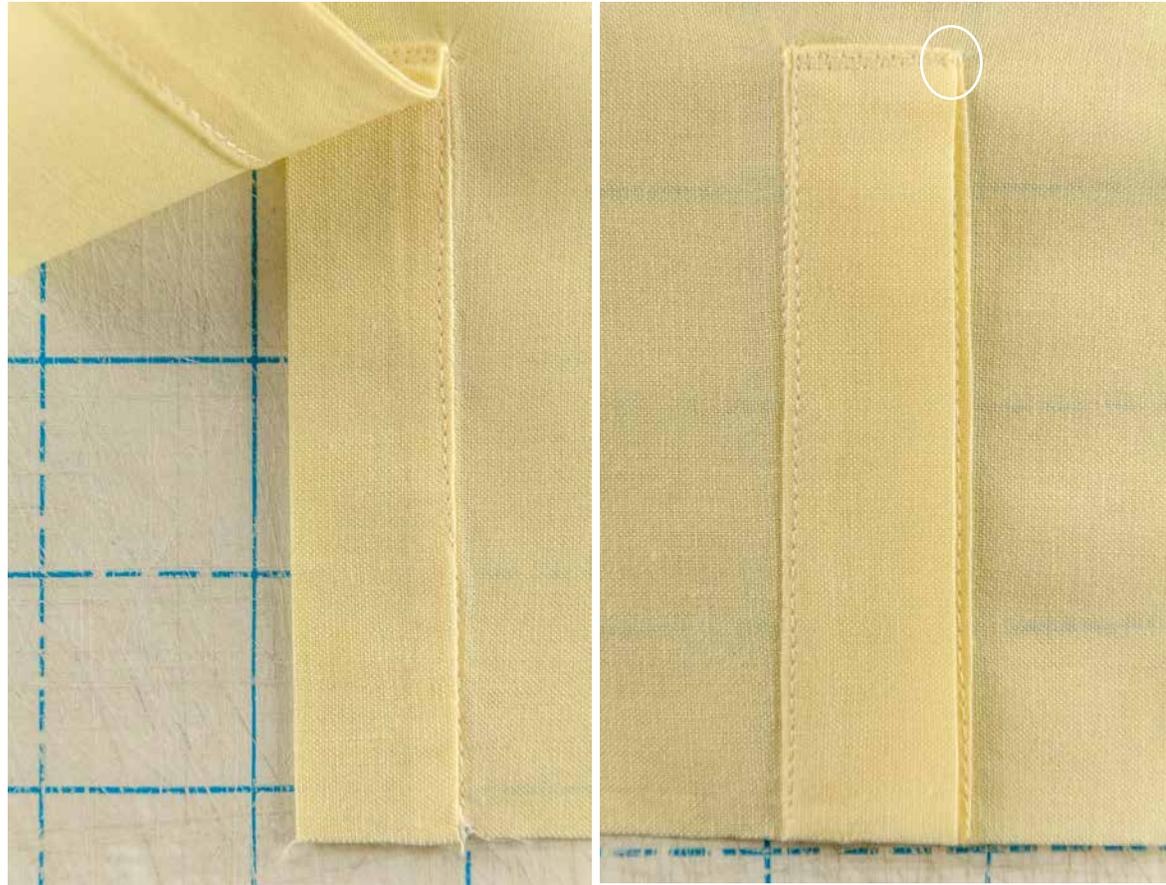
5. To duplicate the way the green plaid shirt placket is stitched, simply pivot at the fold and stitch across just these layers, and back-stitch/tie off. This is the least bulky, most flexible—and most common—option.

6. To stitch across all layers as I'm choosing to do, stop needle-down and fold the other half back into position. If you're right on the edge of the binding underneath as I am here, you'll have no trouble, but if you're in a bit from the edge, you'll be better off just tying off at this point and topstitching through all layers as a separate step.

7. Whether you stitch here now or later (or not at all), this is what will determine the final position of the overlap edge as it sits above the underlap edge at the pivot. In other words, this is when you make sure, by subtly pushing the underlap out of sight as you stitch, that the slash end looks like it's doing the impossible: Letting you stitch a binding to a seam allowance that has no width, and without a pucker! This is easier on knits and other soft fabrics, but it's impressive how close you can often come with any fabric using this continuous strip method.

## Placket Construction Options

### 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash Variation 2A: Binding trimmed and topstitched to garment, continued



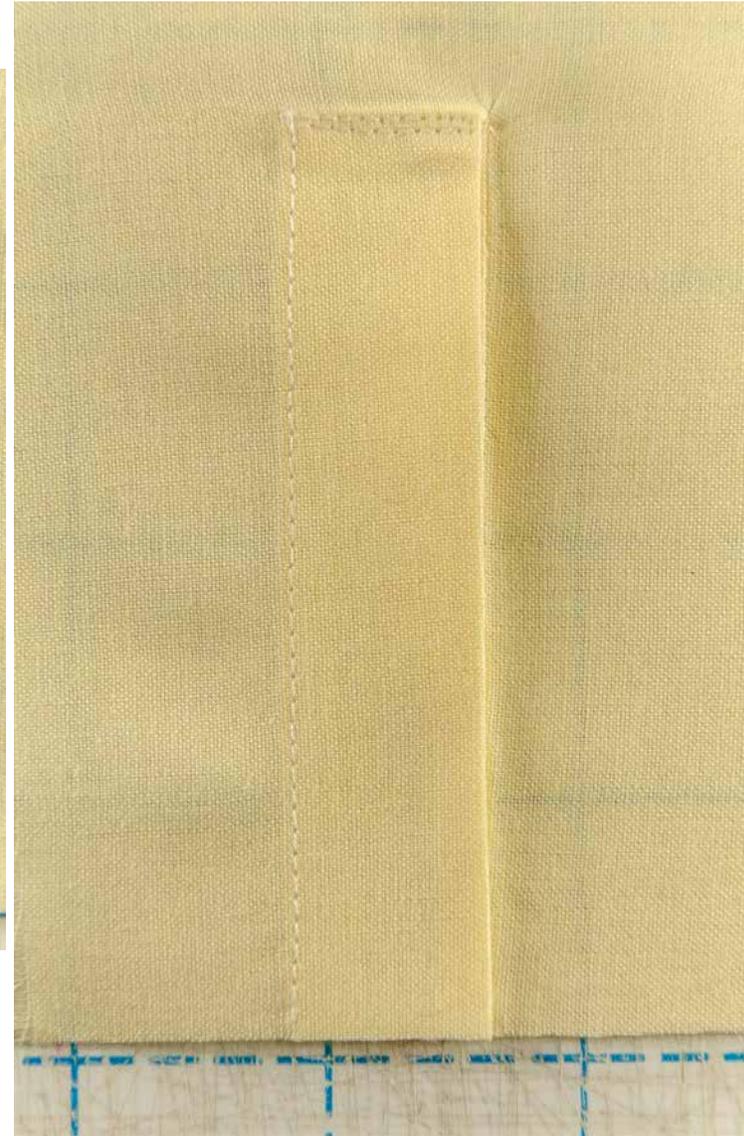
Here's the finished sample, open, from the back, and from the front.

Open, above, you can see how my edge-stitching to close the untrimmed part of the binding in Step 3, two pages back, slips off the edge on the other side of the binding, which is what's showing from the right side, here.

The problem stitching is visible on the left edge of the binding in the middle image above: At the start (bottom), I was taking care to cover

the previous stitching and staying close to the edge, but seem to have relaxed that care and swooped a bit off. Either way is fine structurally, since the edge is secure regardless. But consistency pays!

From the back, above, you can see the little twist that happened when I repositioned the under-layer with the needle down, Step 6, previous page, circled above...barely noticeable, since I was so close to the edge.



Compare the effect I got stitching through all layers across the top on my sample, above, to just stitching through the garment and half the binding as on the earlier green plaid shirt, and on the Pendleton 49er at right (see Step 5). To my eye, the main difference is that stitching through all layers at Step 7 really keeps the placket nailed down and firmly closed, with none of the tendency for it to spread apart the way it's doing on the lower cuff at right.

In general, I think the main virtue of these continuous-strip plackets is their speed and lightness, and the main defect is how often and easily the bindings pop to the right side or force the slash open—fine for casual wear, no doubt. But with these extra few steps, easily rectified for a more formal result whenever that's what you'd prefer.



Note how the grain on the garment parallels the placket opening on the overlap side, at left, but on the underlap side, below, it's not parallel.

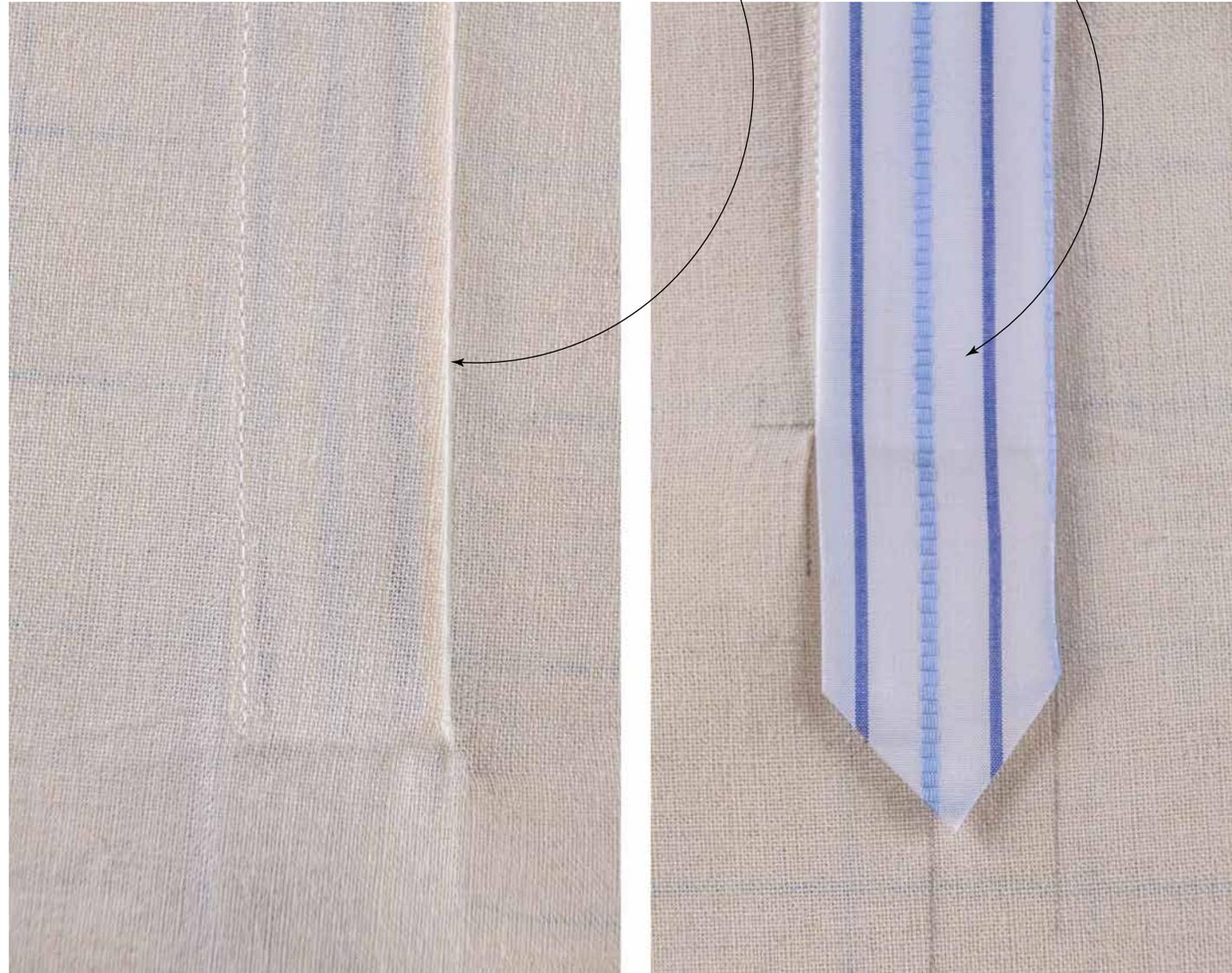
That's because the stitching at the sides of the single slash tapers from the edge to the pivot, and the designer here has cleverly tilted the slash to adjust for that, setting the tapered stitching line to be on grain, NOT the slash.

# Placket Construction Options

## 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash

## Variation 2B: Preshaped binding edge-stitched to the right side of the garment (classic "Tower" shape)

How to make a classic binding-wrapped-to-the-outside, triangle-ended placket...  
...on a hidden-binding, continuous-strip foundation.



The two placket structures above would seem to be polar opposites in the placket universe. The one on the left is clearly a continuous strip, delivering the opening itself as unobtrusively as possible, with the added binding layers completely hidden inside it.

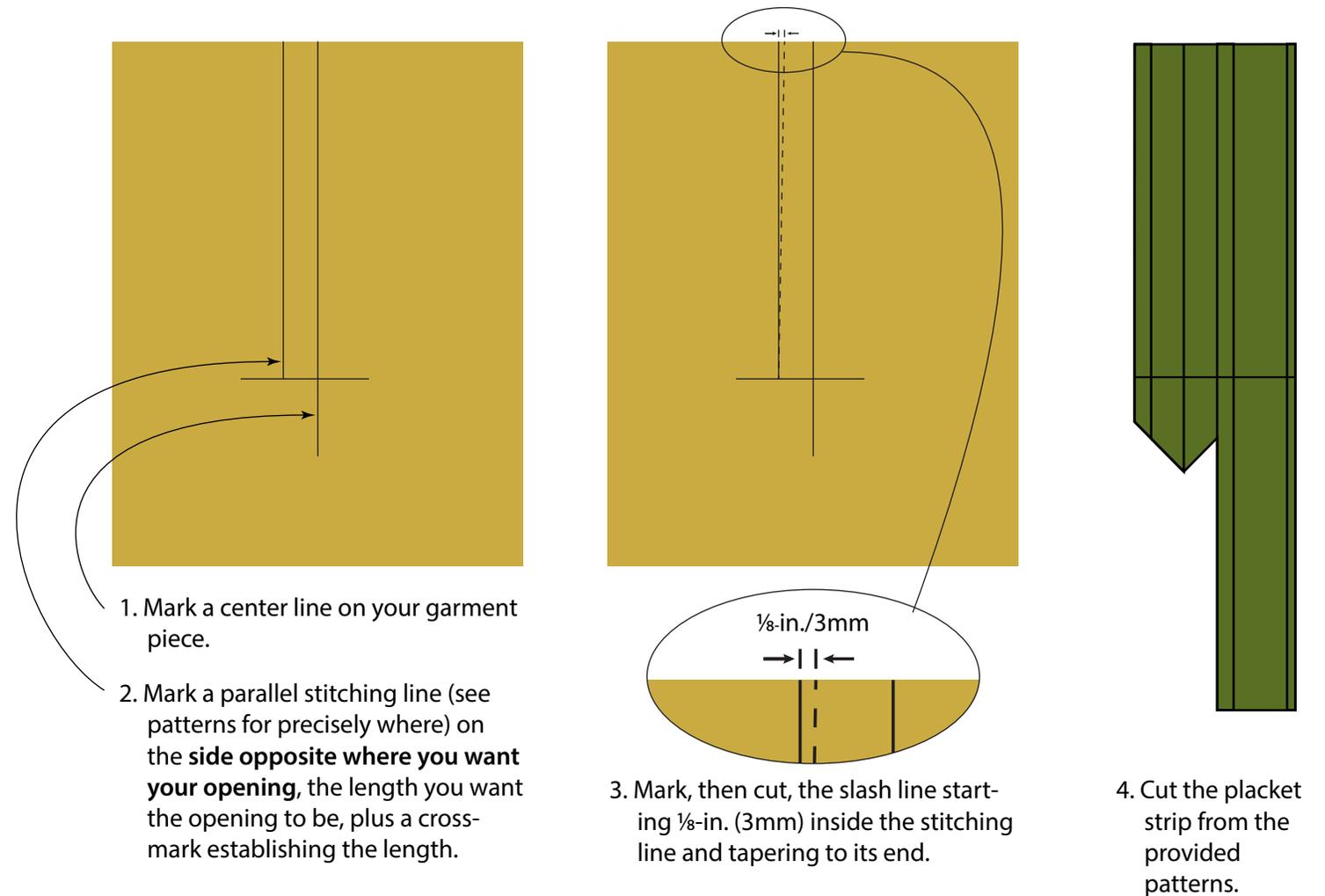
On the right is apparently a classic "tower"-shaped wrapped-binding placket that puts both the fact of an opening and the layers that bind it out front and prominent, a very visible detail on the garment.

So, perhaps you'll be surprised to learn that these images are the two sides of a single placket structure, made in a very similar fashion to the previous Type-2 variation (2A), with a single shaped binding strip applied to both edges of a single slash. The key differences are: This strip is initially sewn face down against the wrong side of the garment, not right sides together with it, and when finished, the part of the structure showing on the right side here is the part hidden on the wrong side for the continuous-strip variations previously shown.

Found in my all-time favorite vintage sewing book, Evelyn Mansfield's 1953 **Clothing Construction**, (it's in the 1973 2nd edition, too) this mash-up of placket effects should forever dispel any idea that the continuous strip is a one-trick pony. I had to slightly rework her pattern to get exactly what I wanted from it (a little more length for the triangle-ended face and some way of resizing it without losing the placement of the final center), but the genius is all her's, or whoever originally saw deeply enough into placket origami to pull this out of a continuous strip in the first place. Once seen, it's all pretty simple, but there's more here than just a folding trick, This version of a classic placket retains all the bulk-free weightlessness of a hidden continuous strip along with the formal durability of a wrapped and topstitched binding.



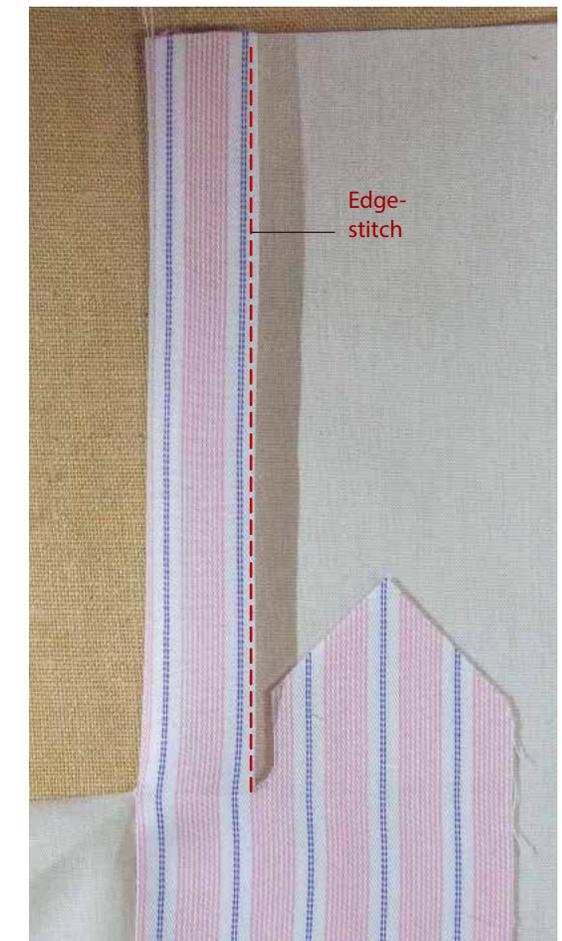
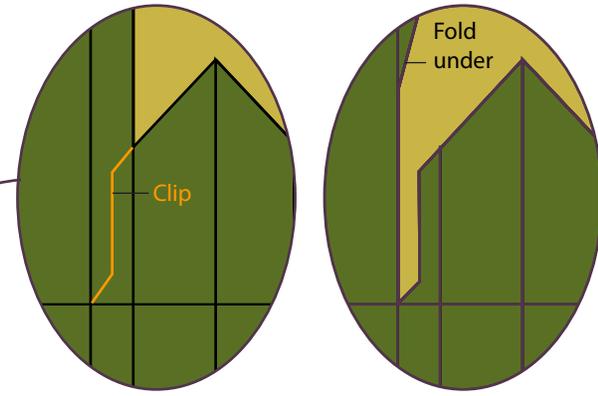
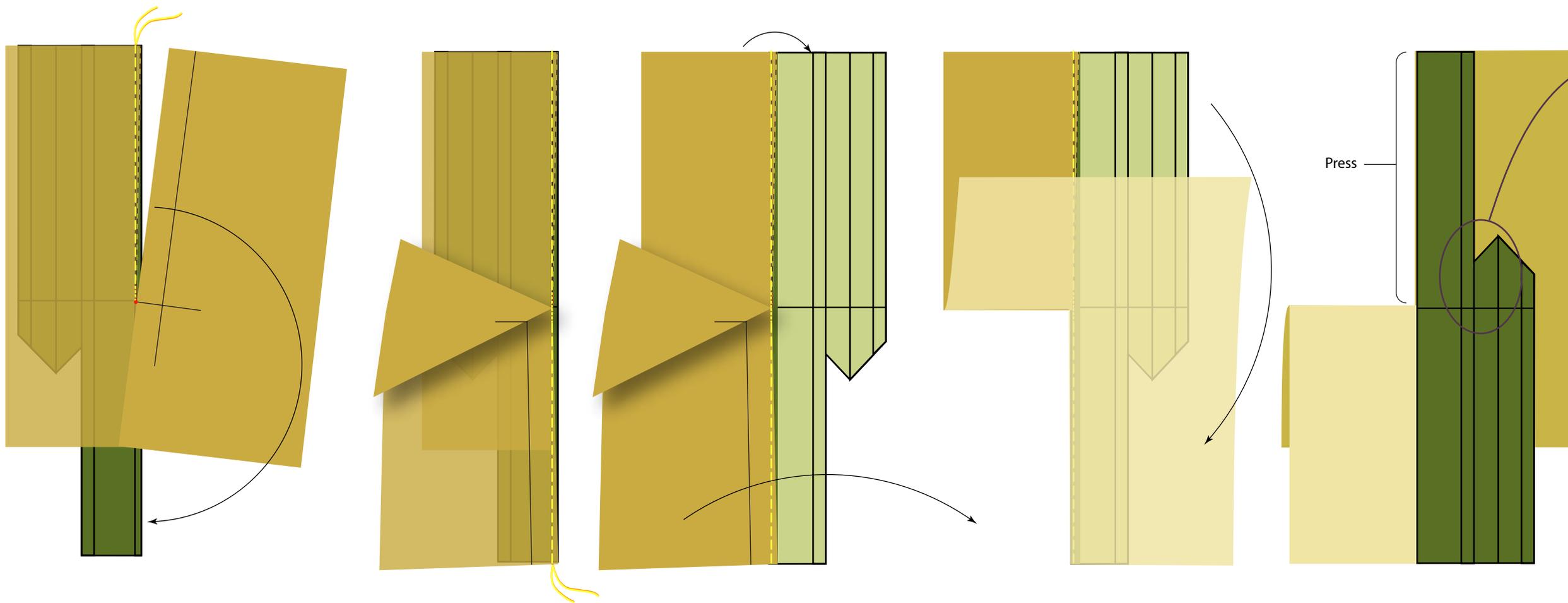
Here's how to do it:



# Placket Construction Options

## 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash

### Variation 2B: Classic "Tower" shape, continued



5. With both garment and binding right side up, align the stitching lines as shown, letting the slash edge only taper to almost nothing at the half-way point on the binding (red dot above). Stitch to that point (remember to shorten your stitches when near) and stop, needle down, and pivot the other side of the slash as the arrow above shows...

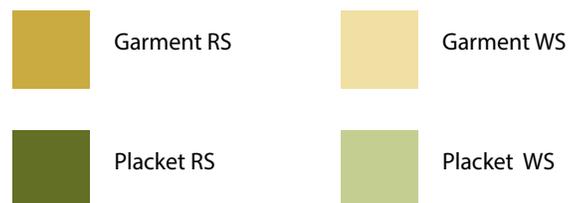
6. ...aligning it with the lower half of the binding edge. Stitch with shortened stitches for a short distance, then with regular stitches to the other end.

7. Press the binding over the seam just stitched (top arrow), then fold the garment over the binding and first half of the slash seam as shown (bottom arrow)...

8. ...creating flat folds at the pivot point instead of the comes-to-a-point fold used up to now.  
Flip the whole thing over to show the binding's right side with the triangular tip pointing up...

9. ...and press the garment/binding seam above the half-way point so the binding's edge is just barely inside the crease.

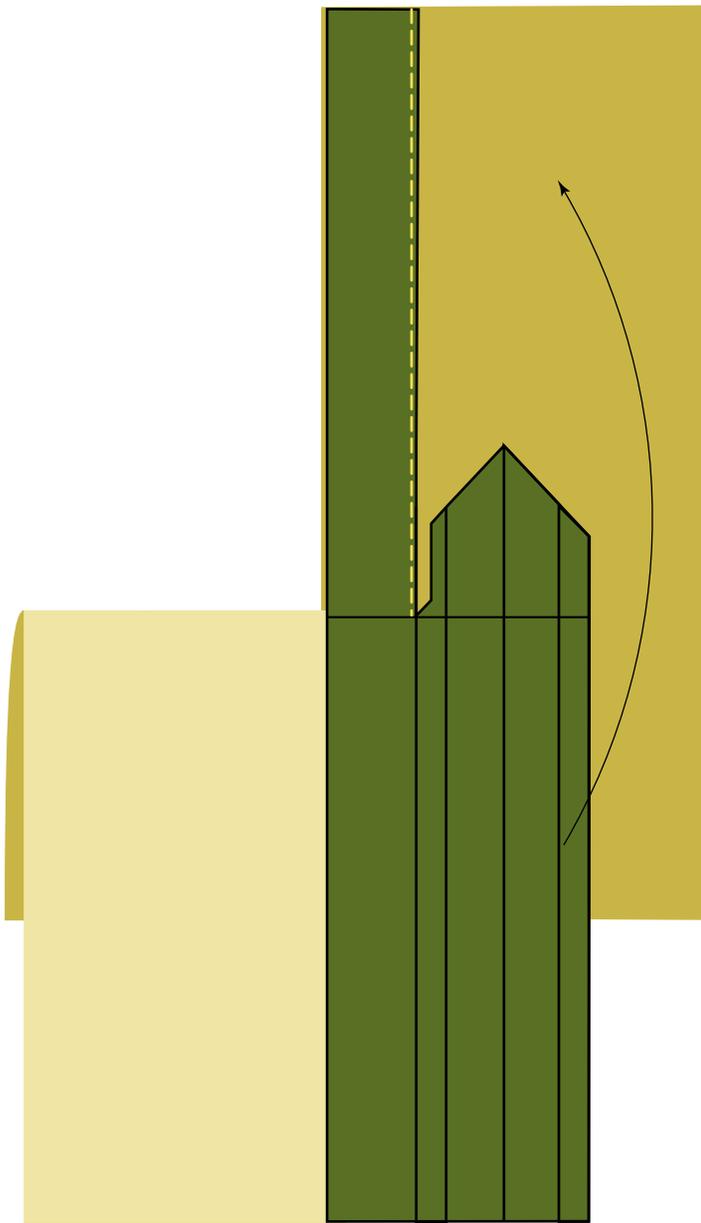
10. Clip following the orange line in the first zoom-in image above so you can fold and press under the entire seam allowance along the binding that extends above the half-way line, and then edge-stitch it as shown in the photo.



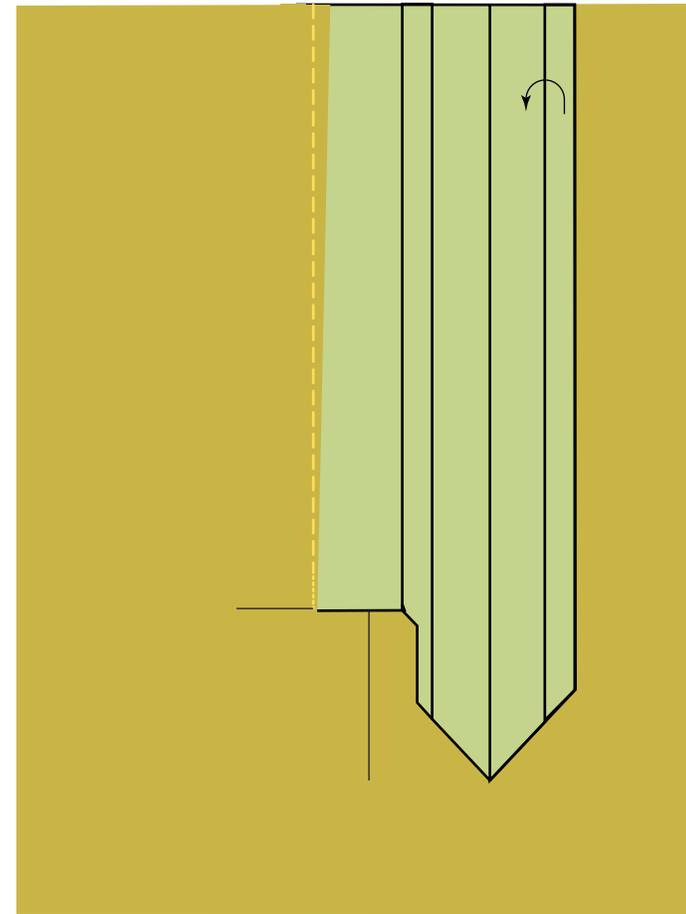
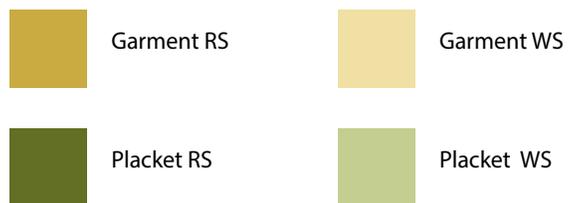
# Placket Construction Options

## 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash

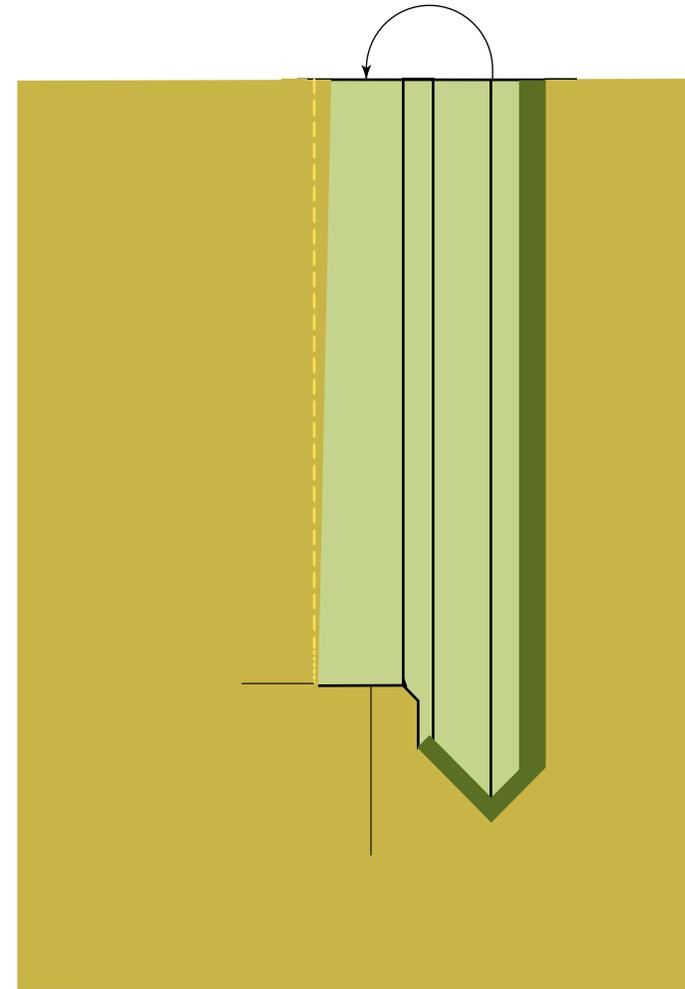
### Variation 2B: Classic "Tower" shape, continued



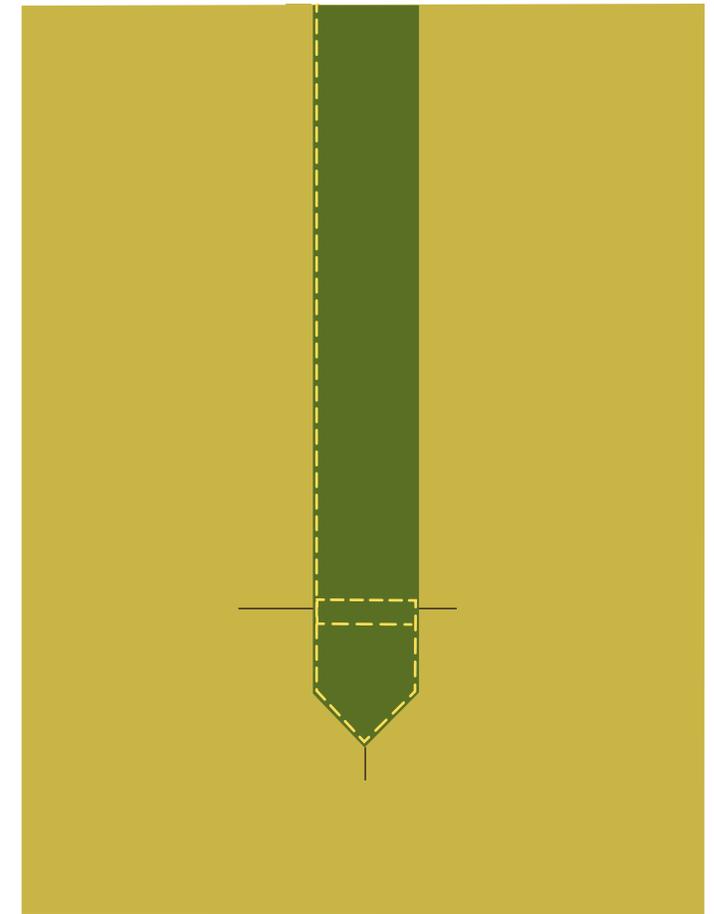
11. Fold the lower half of the binding up and over the part just stitched so the pointed end points down...



12. ...and press under the raw edges at the point and along the far edge.



13. Fold the binding extension over onto the centerline, making sure that its long folded edge covers the seam at the slash edge...



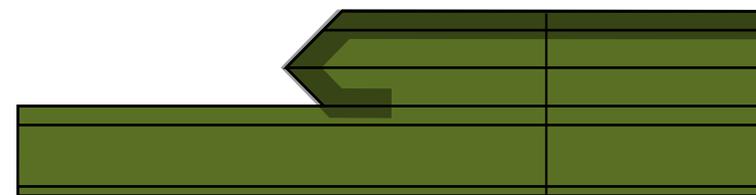
14. ...and when all looks right, press, glue baste and edge-stitch to secure it through all layers.

Note that these extended edges you just edge-stitched (shown in grey at left) could all be shaped differently (into curves or rectangles, or anything else you wanted) with no impact on the basic structure on the inside so long as they don't expose that or alter any of its seam or fold lines.

It is important that the fragile initial seam along the slash edges get reinforced, usually by being caught again in the extension edge-stitching as it does here, so if you're changing the position of that edge-stitching it would be wise to come up with

some other way to reinforce that seam, such as with a fusible, or some stitchable inner mini-layer.

Also note that if you reduced the extension to a simple rectangle slightly longer than half the length of the entire binding, you'd be looking at the exact same shape used in the previous variation (2A). All the extra and different steps used here, compared to the earlier process, are simply to allow a center line to be matched, and to put the extension shaping and edge-stitching at the end, because here they're on the garment front and need to be done carefully.



## Placket Construction Options

### 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash

### Variation 2C: Binding topstitched to garment right side with a buttonhole strip added



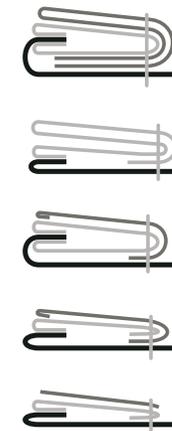
Most polo and rugby shirts that I've seen use a Type-4 placket, on which more later. But here's one interesting example that's not just a Type-2, but one with an extra, easily adapted feature: A hidden buttonhole strip, made in this case from a separate, turned, two-layer strip half the length of the binding, wrapped around the overlap half of the binding, and caught when that part of the binding was topstitched to the garment front just as described for variation 2A, previously.

As you can see in these close-ups, the crosswise reinforcing stitches at the base of the opening catch and secure the buttonhole strip, too, but only go through the overlap layers, not through the entire garment, allowing the binding to open out to its full original length when unbuttoned, revealing its one-strip nature and adding a certain rugby-ish quality to the look, a fully-relaxed but built-for-whatever-you've-got feel quite different from plackets that are completely held together with a seam at the end—a seam that could, I suppose, be more easily torn open than a single binding strip could be ripped apart, in a no-holds-barred rugby scrum, etc.

Still, from the construction angle, this double-layered extra strip, that appears to extend almost the full width of the binding underneath it as well as above, is clearly a very bulky, or at least a super-heavy-duty, solution. For less-stressed but still sporty garments and situations, consider the one-layer-only buttonhole-strip option provided by twill tape, for example, as on the Type-4-placketed rugby shirt shown at bottom right, which doesn't even need to wrap under the original binding at all, since its edges are already finished.

Or what about a wrapping in a single layer add-on, cut so there's a selvedge on the opening side, or a rolled-hem finish?

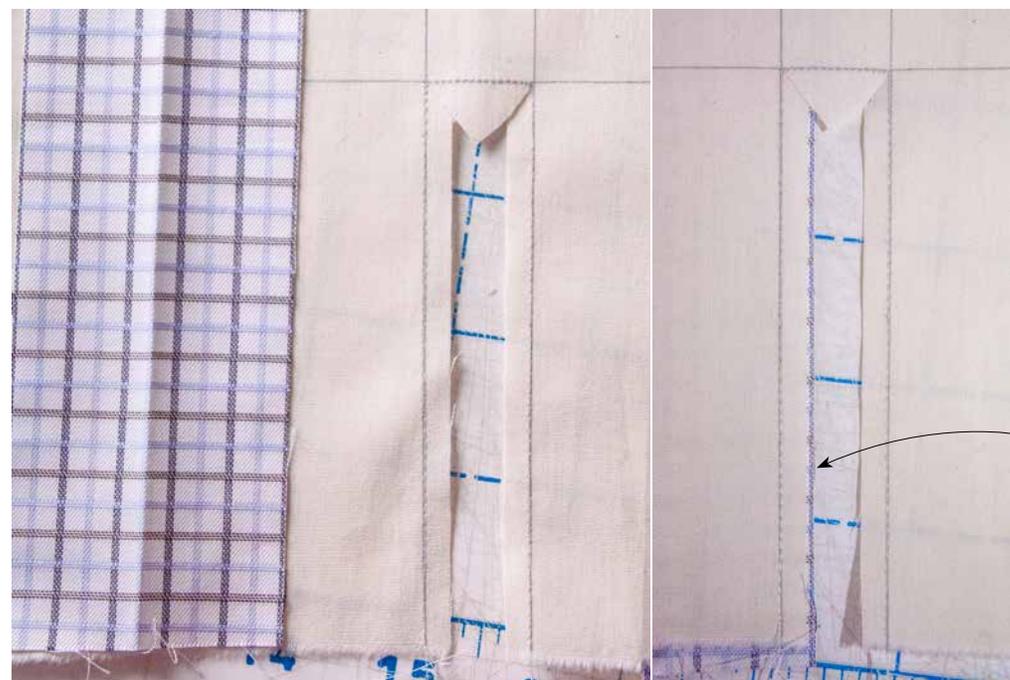
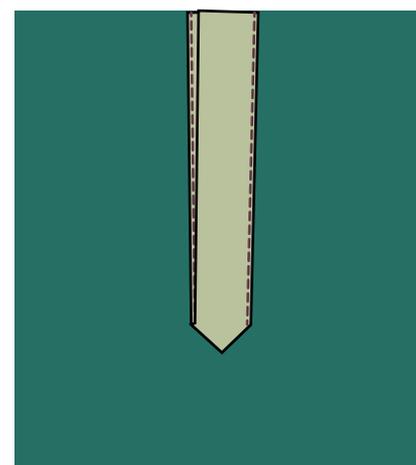
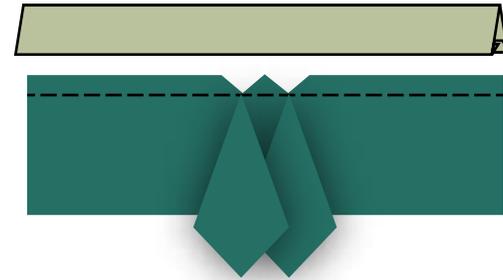
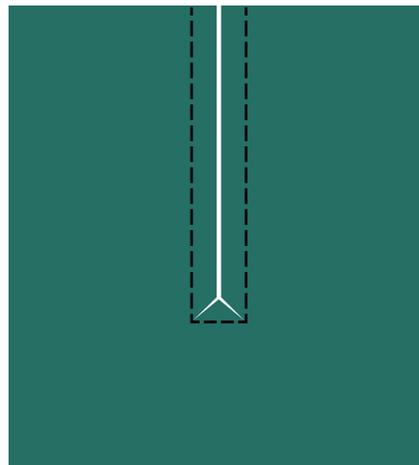
Any type of placket overlap-binding can be cut double or trip wide to allow it to be accordion-folded into a hidden buttonhole layer without requiring a separate piece to be made, which also eliminates the need for an extra seam to join it. The extra fold is simply caught in and covered by whatever stitching would be holding down a single-layer overlap along that edge.



## Placket Construction Options

### 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash Variation 3: Simple binding on a rectangular slash

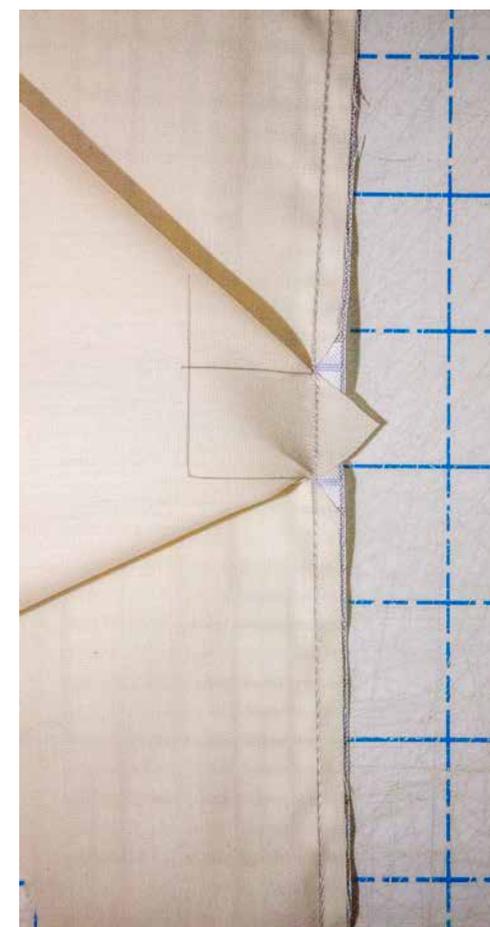
This variation also winds up looking like a classic triangle-ended, exposed-binding placket, but it's much faster and also lots bulkier than the previous variation. It's clever, but quick and dirty compared to all the others here, in my opinion, with no easy way to refine it...and it's also very commonly found on ready-to-wear shirts.



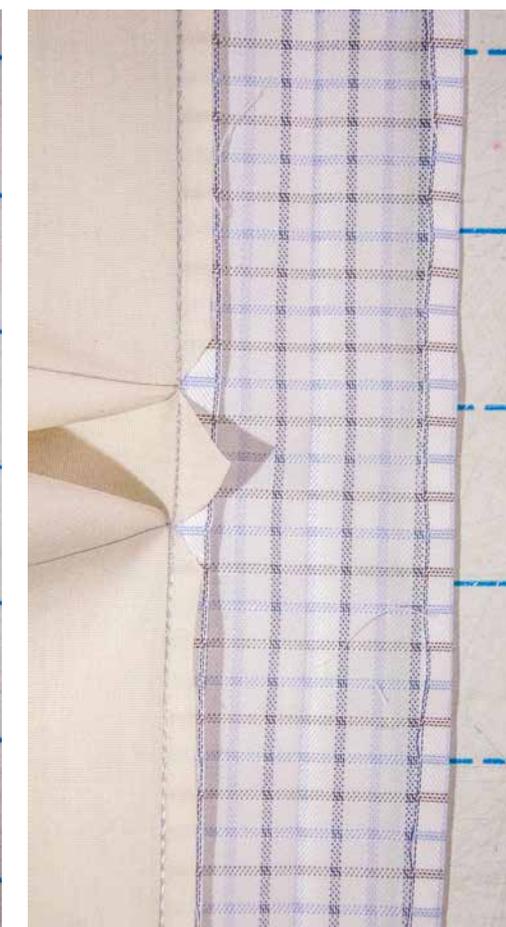
Align the binding edge to one slash edge, right sides together with garment on top so you can see and stitch on top of the box stitches.

The basic set-up is simple: Draw and stitch around a stitching box that's the width you want for the finished placket, then cut a binding strip twice that width plus seam allowances (usually 1/4-in/6mm), and twice the box length plus the box width long.

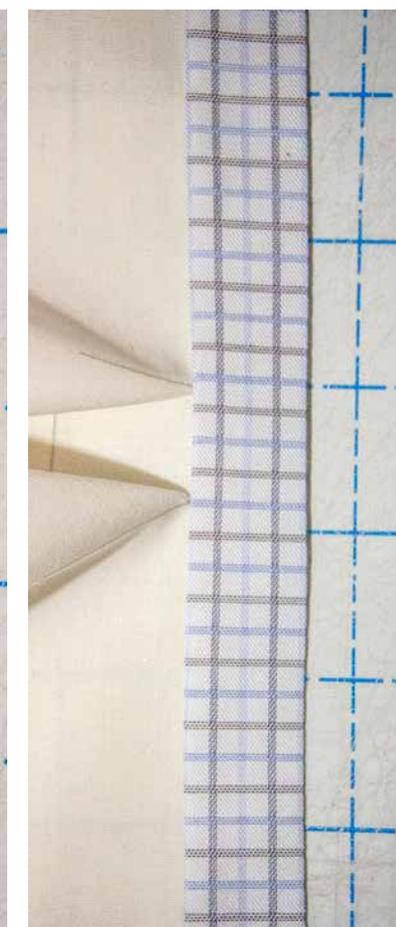
Trim at least the long seam allowances on the garment to match the binding's seam allowance, and clip all the way into the box corners so they will easily split open as you stitch the binding to them, pivoting at each corner just as with the single-slash methods.



Stitch almost up to the first corner and stop needle down so you can shorten the stitch length for the corners coming up. At each corner, stop again and pivot, needle down, aligning the garment with the binding for the next straight section.



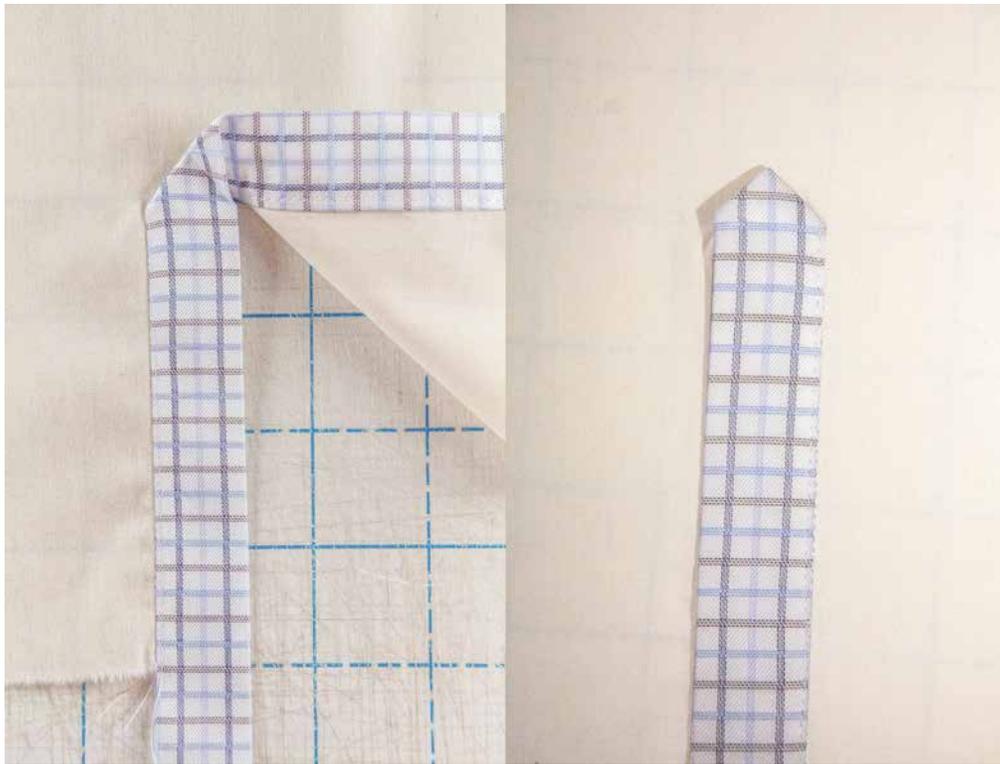
Press the binding over the seam to the other side, and press under the opposite seam allowance.



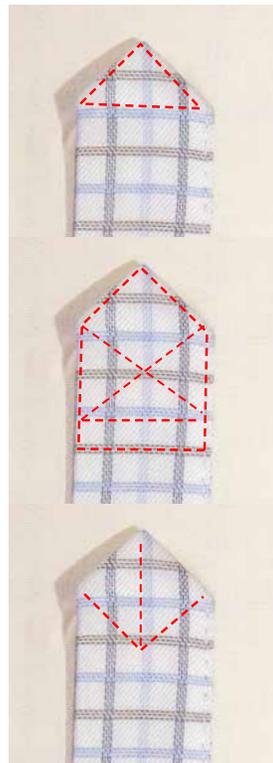
Press the binding in half, just barely covering the previous seam with the free edge. Edge-stitch through all layers to finish the binding.

## Placket Construction Options

### 2 Type 2: Continuous strip on a slash Variation 3: Simple binding on a rectangular slash, continued



All that remains to do now is to fold the binding at each corner of the box so the garment goes back to being flat, then to stitch the end to hold all the layers. As the binding and seam allowance layers are quite heavy here, regardless of the fabric weight (eight stiff layers, not counting the seam allowances—I've tried to figure out a way to trim something away at this point, but haven't yet), the shaping step can take some determined iron-sculpting as you force the triangle that automatically forms into something symmetrical, but it's always quite doable. Don't bother to imagine other shapes for the binding here; what you see is what you get.



You can of course make the stitching that holds that lumpy triangle down go in any way you can imagine, and as far down on the band as you like, regardless that the opening originally goes all the way to the start of triangle base. The long edges are already fully secure, so nothing else is needed there, but you could certainly add more; one side is simply a fold and could be edge-stitched.

This image and the next one over compare the results when you make the binding wider (by accident or design) than the slash box, compared to my stepped-through sample on the muslin, for which I was very careful not to do that.

As you can see, the wider bindings folded and got stitched symmetrically quite as well as the more careful one, even if they stick out a little on the wrong side. The main price was all the added distortion around the tip, as the garment fabric strains to accommodate the too-wide binding. How high this price feels is up to you, of course, but it does at least seem clear that too-narrow bindings would be nowhere near as forgiveable, so I haven't bothered to try that!

# Placket Construction Options

CLICK FOR PATTERNS



Garment RS



Garment WS



Placket RS



Placket WS

## 3 Type 3: A single binding piece on a rectangular stitching box



The key to this structure is that the binding (usually a one-piece shape) is initially stitched to all 3 sides of the stitching box surrounding the placket opening, unlike Type-1 plackets which are stitched only to the sides of the box. This means that there are no options about where the placket layers or the triangular garment clip will wind up when you're done, because the entire binding must eventually be turned to the opposite side of the garment. That's invariably the right side, so the initial stitching must be done on the wrong side of the garment with the binding's right-side face placed down on the garment. This also means that it makes sense to stitch around the box at the same time as you stitch on the binding.

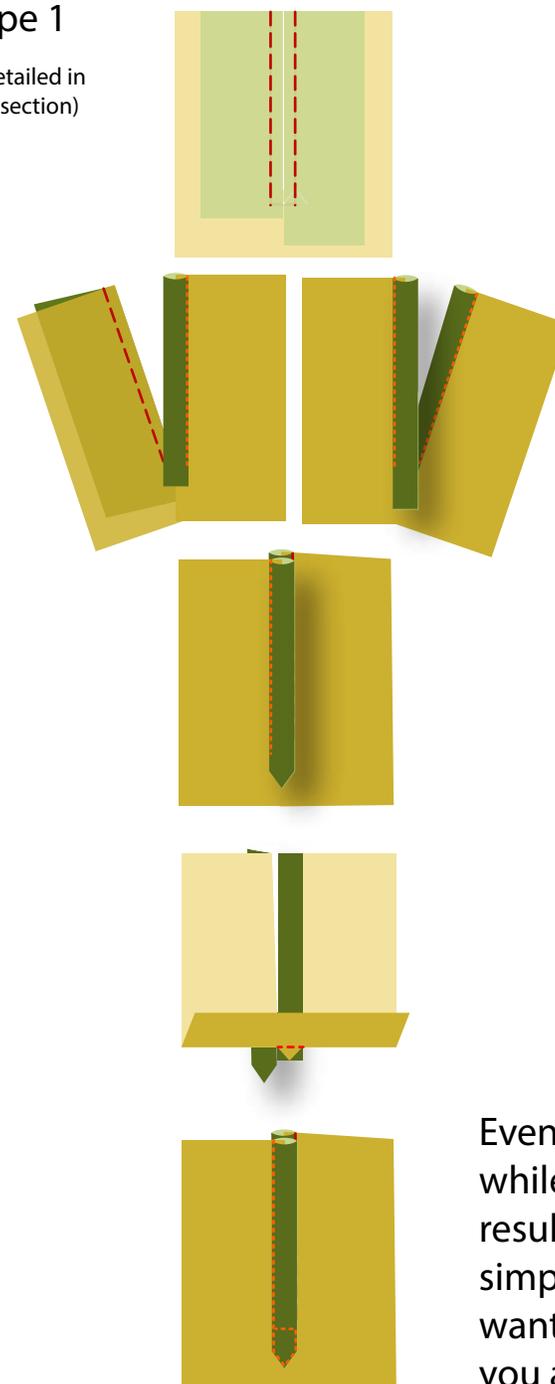
Despite the differences, an easy and useful way to think of this placket type is to see it as a streamlined variation on a Type-1 placket in which many of the available options from that type of structure have been eliminated in favor of the most typically useful choices. In other words, if you whittled down the type-1 options to give you the results you'd most often want for a standard shirt placket, then worked out all the ways you could simplify or refine getting just those options, this is what you'd come up with. But if that makes it sound like you'd have limited options when choosing this type, don't worry; that's not at all the case, as you'll soon see. To me, it feels more as if, having taken care of the basic over-and-under structure in an efficient, effective way, I'm the more free to play with the shapes themselves.

## Type 1 vs. Type 3

Let's compare the two types as they each make a classic "tower" placket.

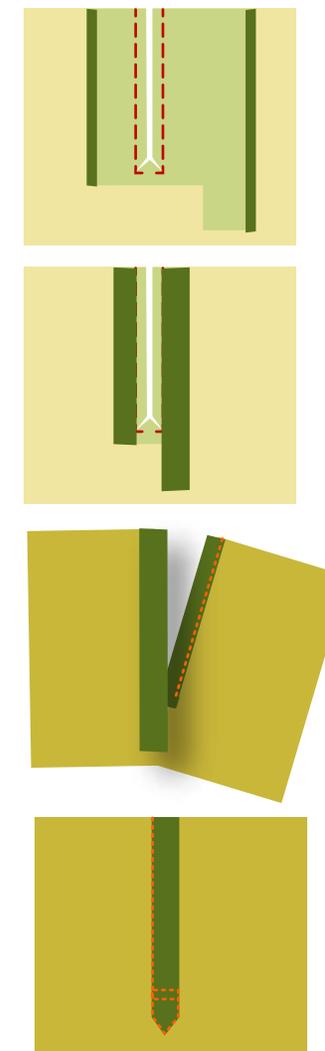
### Type 1

(as detailed in that section)



### Type 3

(as detailed on the following page)

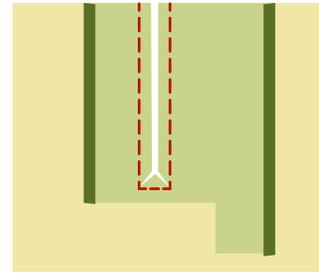


Even from this cursory comparison, hopefully it's clear that while these steps are often quite similar, and the end results basically identical, the Type 3 is overall considerably simpler, to the extent, I think, that if typical is what you want, there's no point in availing yourself of Type-1 options you aren't going to use. Let's look more closely at how the Type 3 steps work, and how the pattern is initially laid out.

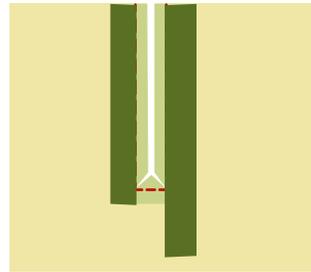
# Placket Construction Options

## 3 Type 3: A single binding piece on a rectangular stitching box

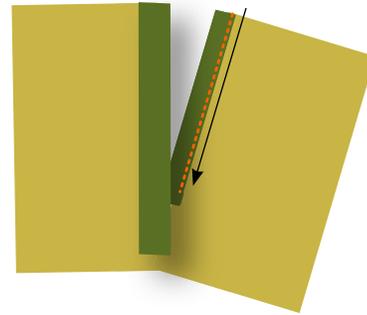
### Variation 1: The classic one-piece sleeve placket



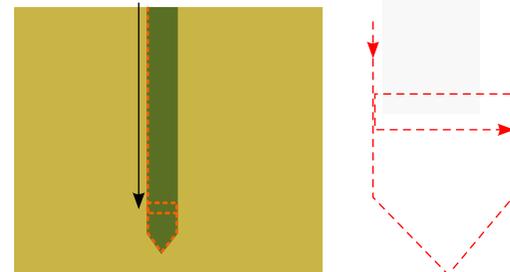
1. Place placket right side down over slash mark on garment WS. Mark stitching box, stitch around it and slash, clipping exactly into corners. Fold up and press outer seam allowances as shown.



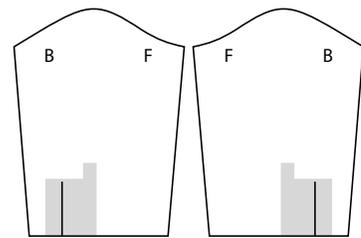
2. Fold and press each side of the binding fabric in half, bringing the outer edges over to exactly cover the stitching box sides as shown above. Turn placket entirely to the RS as shown below.



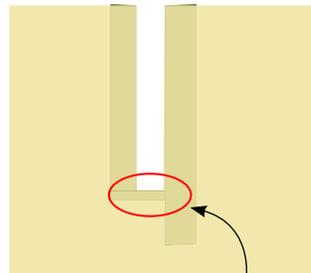
3. On the RS, fold the underlap binding over the opening, making sure its free edge covers the stitching-box stitches, and edge stitch as shown.



4. Fold the overlap binding over the opening, making sure its free edge covers the stitching-box stitches on the other side, and edge stitch as shown, holding the underlap out of the way until you're clear of it. Position the rectangular part of the edge-stitching so it encloses the top edge of the stitching box, holding the seam allowances there securely inside.



Lay out placket pieces like so on your sleeves; remember: BOTH are WS up.

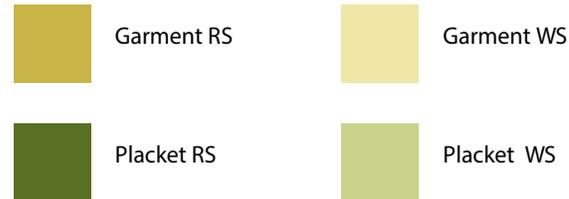


Make sure these corners turn perfectly. If they don't, go back and clip into them more deeply, then turn again and press the corners only, when they're well turned.

Here's how the placket pattern is worked out: It all starts with the placket widths you want. Say you want a typical sleeve placket that's got a 1 1/8 in. (or 3cm) wide overlap. Call that width "B". Whatever it is, the underlap width just needs to be a little smaller...or a lot smaller, whatever you prefer. Let's say you don't need this placket's underlap to be any particular width, just wide enough for easy handling, adding a button if you want that, and not wasteful of fabric, so you choose 3/4 in. (or 2cm). Call that width "A" and you're ready to start drafting your pattern.

You can see all the details we're about to describe if you roll your mouse over the diagram at right and click on it. You'll need to be viewing this in Adobe Reader for that to work. Lay out a rectangle (graph paper is helpful) exactly your "A" width wide and as long as you want the placket opening to be; 5 or

6 inches (or around 13-14cm) is typical. Right next to it on either side (it's a sleeve placket so it'll need to be flipped anyway), draw two more identical rectangles, also A-width wide, no spaces between the rectangles. On the other side, lay out two identical B-width rectangles in the same way. Extend the outer B rectangle so it's about 2 inches (or 5cm) longer than the other rectangles. Next, add seam allowances all around the joined rectangles, except at the top of the longer one—I always use 1/4-in allowances (6 or 8mm)—and you're done. Use the first A rectangle as your stitching box. And if you want to match the placket to the sleeve fabric's pattern or stripes, draw a line half the A width away from the taller B rectangle's outer edge, then when you're cutting out the plackets, arrange that line so it matches the sleeve fabric at the slash line, over which you'll center the placket stitching box. That's exactly how I drafted the full-size pattern at right.

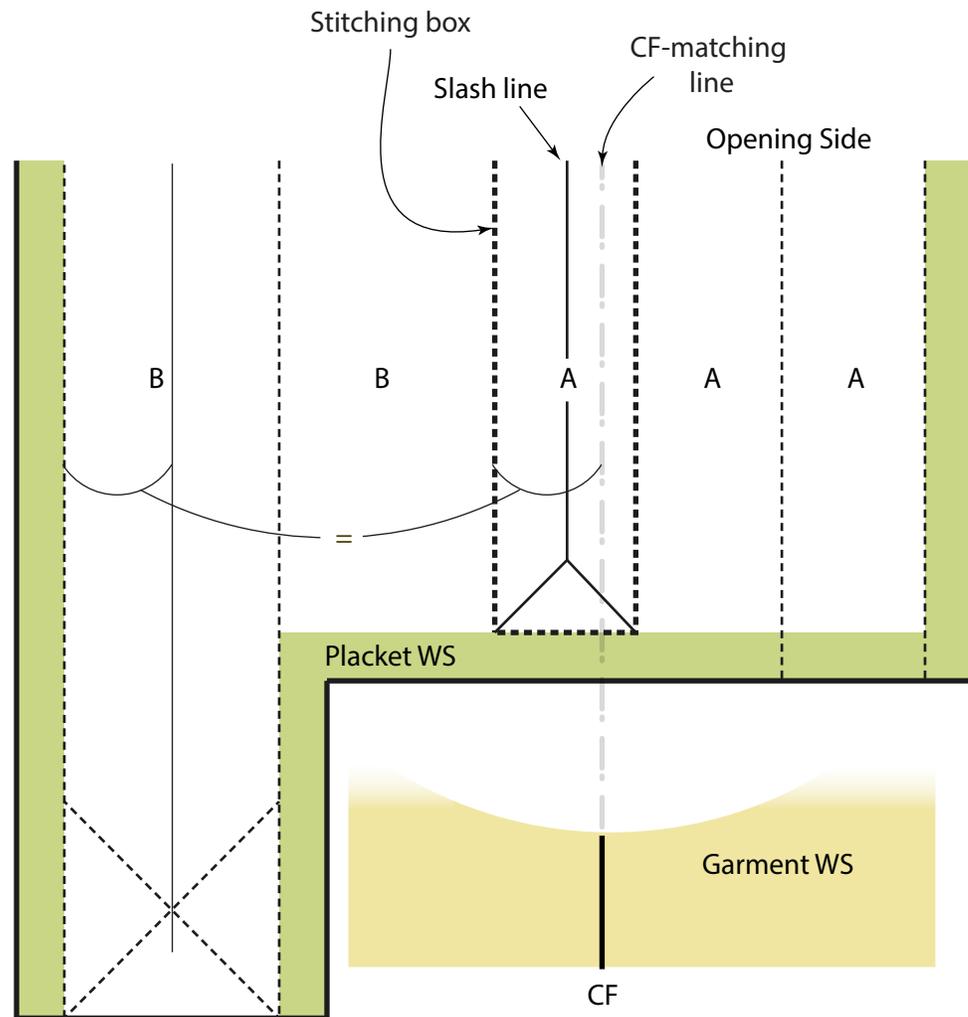


# Placket Construction Options

## 3 Type 3: A single binding piece on a rectangular stitching box

If you want to rescale the pattern we just made to make a center-front neckline opening placket, just choose different widths for A and B (1.25-1.5 in. or 3-3.3cm is typical for B, 1 in. or 2.5cm for A—measure a shirt you like to decide), same seam allowances. Cut so when face-down, the A-width rectangles will be on the side of the placket piece you want the opening to be on when it's done.

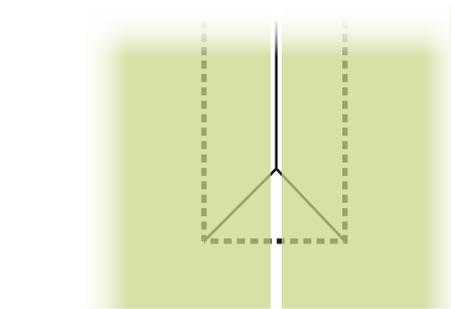
To locate the slash placement line that will center the overlap on the garment's center when everything's folded into final position, draw a line half the B width away from the B-edge of the stitching box and line that up with the garment CF, like so, for a right-opening placket (reverse for left-opening):



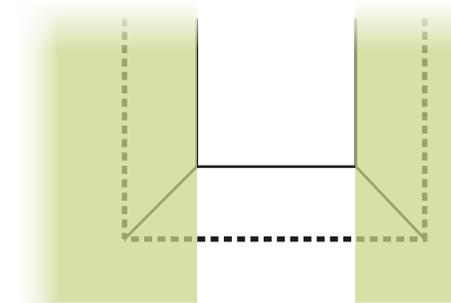
## Variation 1: The classic one-piece sleeve placket, continued

Any other packet widths for either overlap or underlap are built up in exactly the same way.

Note that it's not necessary that the two sides of the binding be cut into one piece, as it makes no difference to the structure if there's a split between the two placket-piece sides right above the slash line, like so:

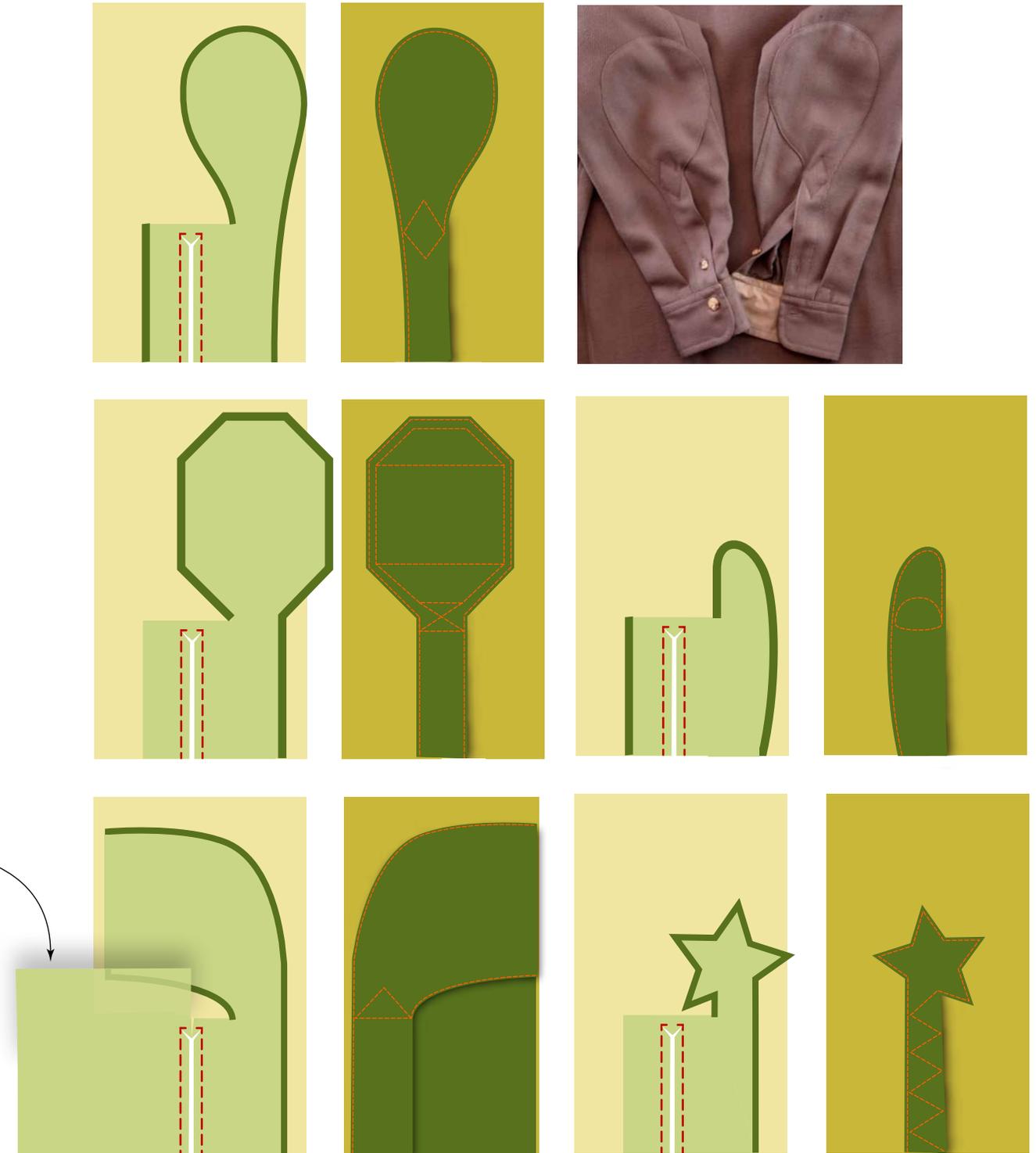


Nor do the seam allowances there need to match the width of the stitching box:



And as you can see in the example at right, there's no need for the underlap to always be hidden underneath the overlap. If you want it to stick out for any reason, just make the outer A-width rectangle as much wider as you need. Same for the B-widths; the inner rectangles define the amount of underlap and overlap, but the outer ones can be wider by any amount you want.

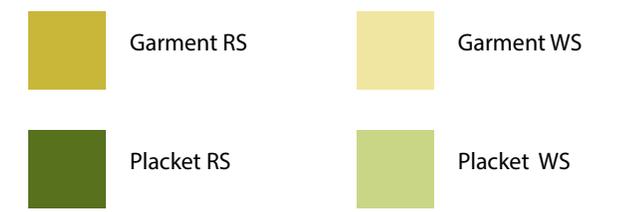
Even more interesting is that the outer-edge shapes of the bindings needn't be limited to rectangles or straight lines (just as with all other types, but very easy here):



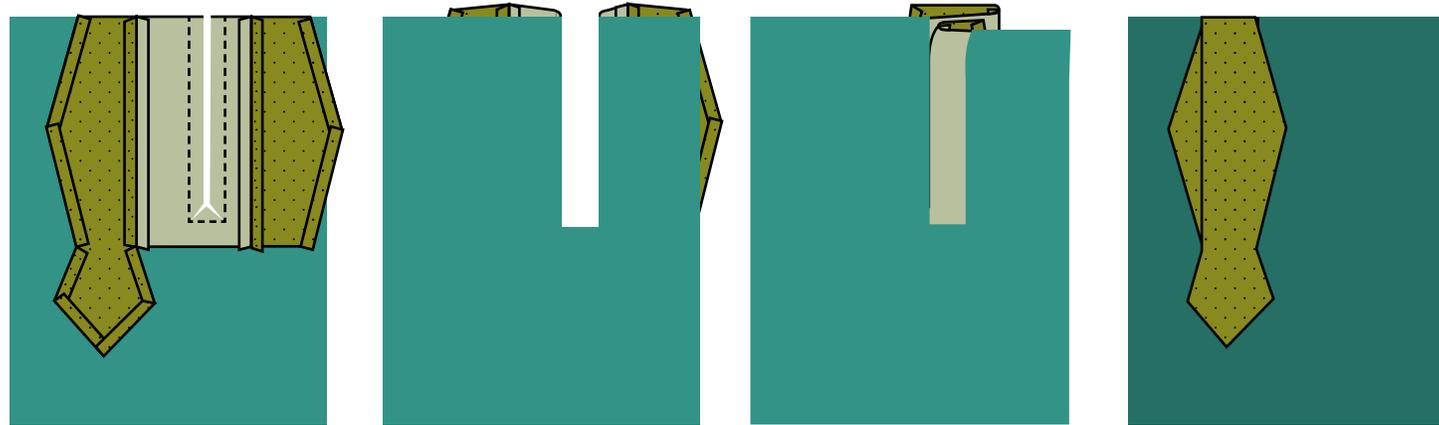
	Garment RS		Garment WS
	Placket RS		Placket WS

# Placket Construction Options

## 3 Type 3: A single binding piece on a rectangular stitching box Variation 2: Pieced outer binding layers



Here's the diagram from page 42 in the book, which introduced the idea of converting the folds between the A and B rectangle pairs to seams, which hopefully makes the basic idea clear enough. In this and the next several panels I'll expand on the idea, showing how the seam itself can be shaped and detailing how to extend it into a placket/cuff combo (as on cowboy shirts) and into a pocket.

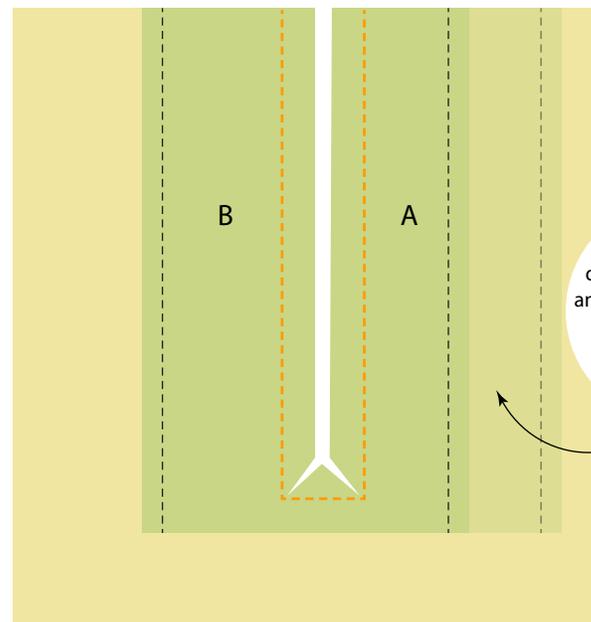


The core of the idea is contained in this step, not shown on its own before. This is simply the basic Type-3 structure including only a single A and a single B rectangle, plus seam allowances. As mentioned on the previous page, this is all you need to provide a basic under- and over-lap structure and to define its internal widths. And on this foundation you can build pretty much ANY outer shapes, any width, any height, any fabric.

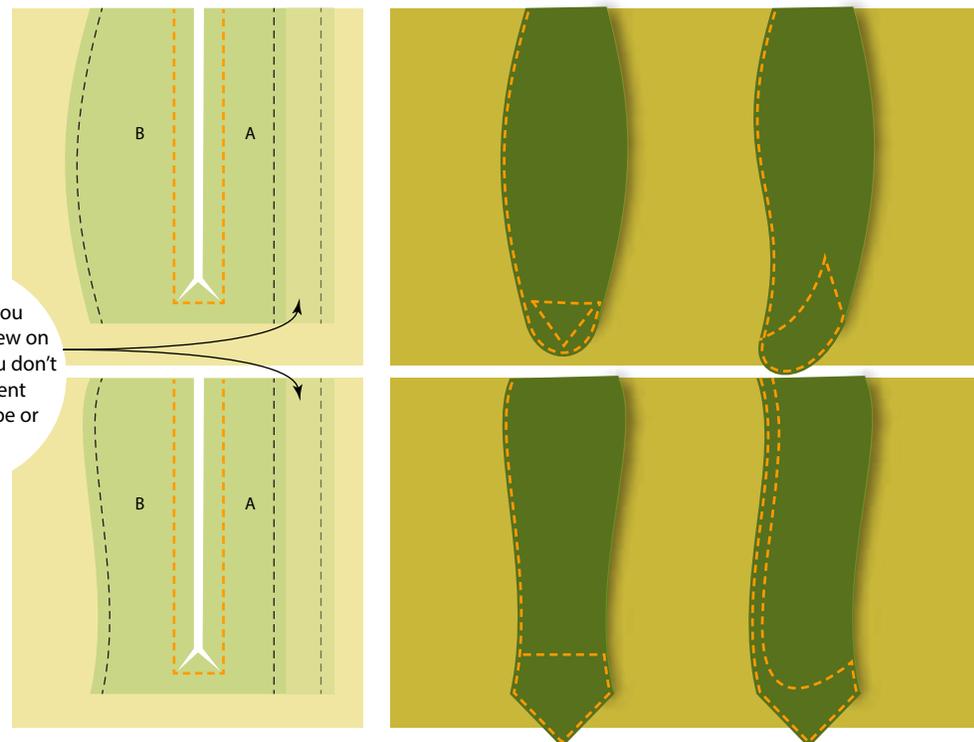
But it's not necessary to limit the outer seamlines to straight lines. In all the examples so far, seamed or folded, the opening edge is a straight line, but the main advantage of a seam over a fold, of course, is that it can be easily

shaped, and if you join two identical shaped seams back to back, they'll still lay flat after turning face out. So if you'd like none of your outer placket edges to be straight lines, this is the way.

All the previous examples are shaped only on the overlap edges. Here's one in which the underlap edge benefited from a curve, while the curved overlap didn't need one:



Of course, you don't have to sew on an A-width if you don't need a different underlap shape or fabric.

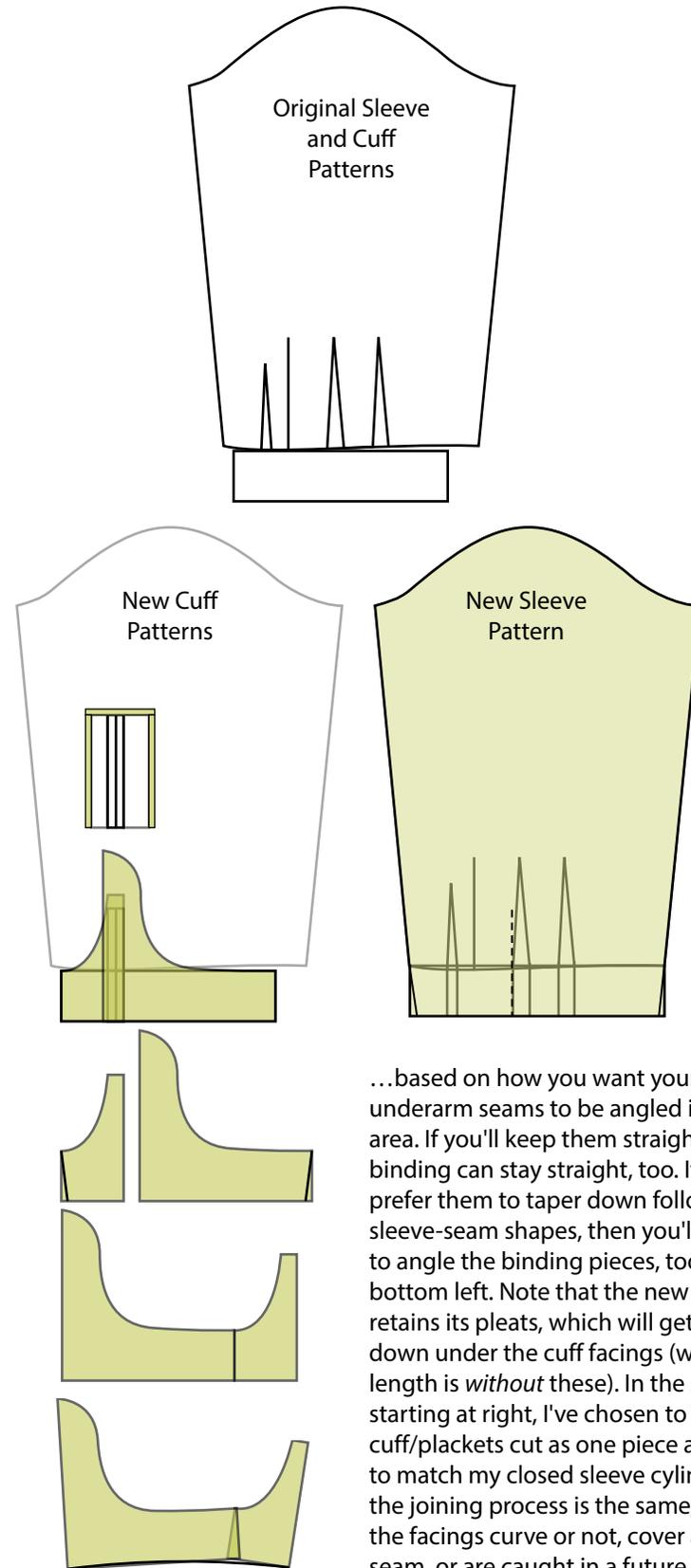


# Placket Construction Options

## 3 Type 3: A single binding piece on a rectangular stitching box

### Variation 2A: Pieced outer binding layers with a faced cuff

In which we build a cowboy cuff on the core of a Type-3 placket.



These things are much simpler than they may look, being nothing more than extended placket bindings for Type-3 plackets, extended in this case into full cuff facings, meaning that the cuff part is just an outer layer, covering a sleeve that's also been extended, in length, by the cuff width, because there's no separate cuff band or other structure involved here, just a sleeve lengthened to do duty as a cuff, too, then dressed up on the outside to look like a cuff that blends into a sleeve placket, as in the tinted pattern at center right. To its left are the tinted placket parts, starting at the top with the Type-3 core, based directly on the original sleeve's placket

slash, around which a stitching-box rectangle, then an A and a B rectangle have been drawn, and seam allowances added. Below that, using the original cuff length, have been drawn an over- and underlap outer layer, overlapping by the A and B widths from the core above.

Below that, there are some variations on the cuff/placket shapes, based on whether you want to attach these before or after you turn the sleeve into a cylinder by closing the under-arm seams. If before, the two pieces will remain separate. If after, you'll merge the two pieces into a single piece, and you may want to shape that further...

...based on how you want your sleeve's underarm seams to be angled in the cuff area. If you'll keep them straight, the binding can stay straight, too. If you'd prefer them to taper down following the sleeve-seam shapes, then you'll want to angle the binding pieces, too, as at bottom left. Note that the new sleeve retains its pleats, which will get stitched down under the cuff facings (whose length is *without* these). In the step-outs starting at right, I've chosen to have my cuff/plackets cut as one piece and angled to match my closed sleeve cylinder, but the joining process is the same, whether the facings curve or not, cover an existing seam, or are caught in a future one.



Note that the RS of the placket is joined to the RS of the placket core and that the sleeve pleat is pinned closed at the hem.

# Placket Construction Options

## 3 Type 3: A single binding piece on a rectangular stitching box

## Variation 2A: Pieced outer binding layers with a faced cuff, continued



The facing continues to wrap around the sleeve edge and is about to meet up with the underlap rectangle on the placket core.

The facing edge is aligned with the edge of the underlap rectangle.

Comparing the just-pinned sleeve with the other, already stitched, one, note that the placket rectangles are always folded out to extend over the stitching box when they join with the facing...

...which is why the stitched and turned facing-ends overlap as planned.

Note that the placket core doesn't need to extend any farther than the stitching box in the usual way, even though the facing goes much farther. To avoid having to topstitch through the facing, the seam allowances at the top of the box are tacked down now, before the facing is folded over.

Note that the sleeve pleats were left unstitched, except at the sleeve hem, until getting caught in the facing edge stitching, so the exact position for the pleat fold could be decided at the last minute.



# Placket Construction Options

## 3 Type 3: A single binding piece on a rectangular stitching box

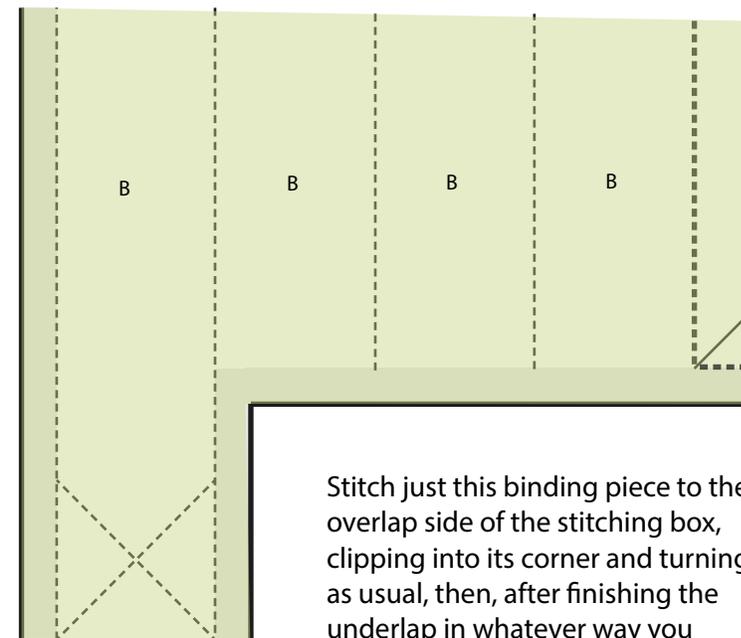
A RTW example that looks completely ordinary on the outside, but reveals intriguing options on the inside.



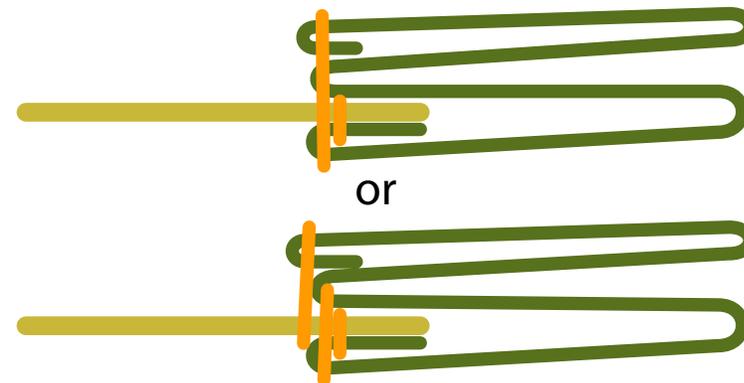
## Variation 3: Rolled-edge underlap and hidden-button overlap

Both these details are easily copied, and while they make sense together (extra layers on the overlap balanced out by fewer layers underneath), there's no reason to think of them as a pair, or as limited to sleeves. The rolled-edge underlap alone would be a good choice on any heavy fabric.

The hidden-button layering was already mentioned in the Type-2 discussions, and much of what was suggested there could be applied with this type-3 structure as well. But the easiest approach is what was done in the example here, which is simply to double the number of fold-over B-width rectangles, like so:

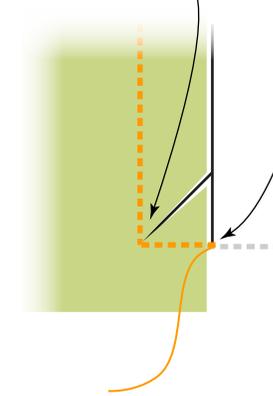


Stitch just this binding piece to the overlap side of the stitching box, clipping into its corner and turning as usual, then, after finishing the underlap in whatever way you prefer, fold the overlap layers over one another and stitch them all together, as shown.



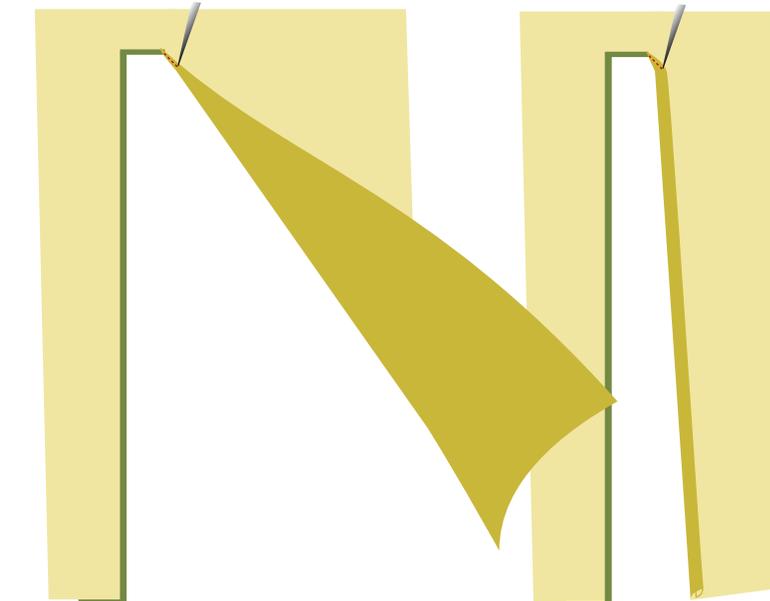
Turning the edge of the other side of the slash is easier than it looks, requiring no special presser foot, just a slightly different clipping at the top of the stitching box, like so:

The overlap binding is stitched and clipped as usual, but only part-way across the box:



The underlap side is not clipped into a corner, it's left alone while the center slash continues to the end of the box, which is not marked or stitched beyond that. I'd stitch the overlap binding on first, clip it, then roll the underlap, then arrange and edge-stitch the overlap on the right side.

To roll the remaining edge, fold it out at an angle to the wrong side, right at the top of the slash, drop the machine needle into the very start of the fold and take a few small stitches along it...



...then with needle down, fold the edge back straight while rolling it under once, pulling against the needle, then while holding the roll, stitch along the rolled edge to the end. And that's it.



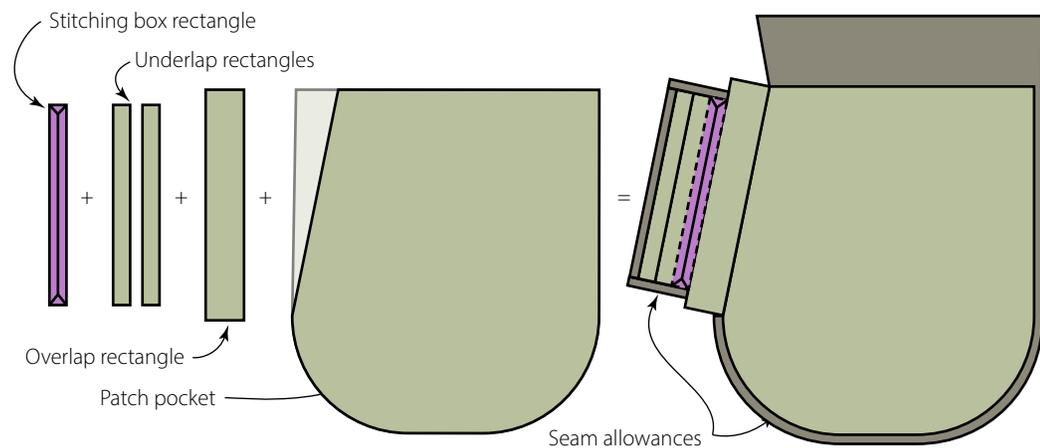
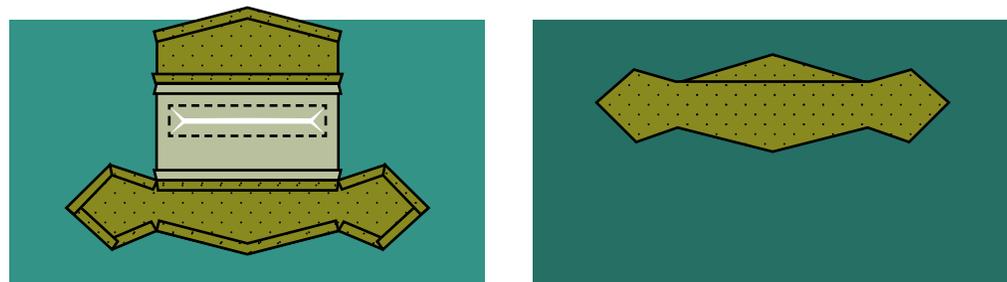
The overlap on my RTW example of a rolled-edge slash appears to have been stitched on with a straight seam, without turning at the top to make a partial box as I've done here. Feel free to refine your own way of doing this if you like the idea.

# Placket Construction Options

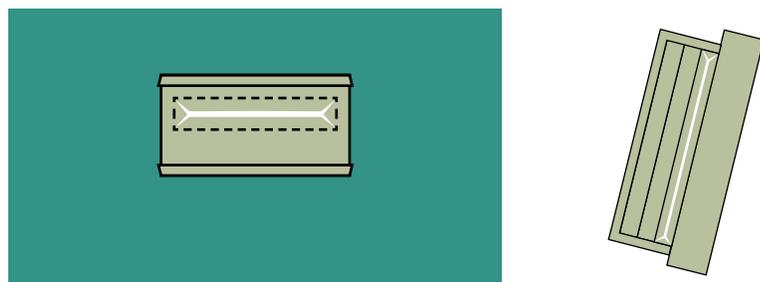
## 3 Type 3: A single binding piece on a rectangular stitching box

While adaptations of a placket structure to pocket-making are far from common, I find them intriguing, as much because of the stylistic unity they promise on garments with both plackets and pockets, as because of how they illuminate both placket and pocket structures as part of a larger universe of bound-edge sewn things one can make or imagine. Just noticing that some sorts of pocket are “cousins”, as it were, to some placket types seems worthwhile, to me anyway!

Here are the two examples given in the book, one a sort of welt pocket, the other the same thing, but hiding under an overlap reshaped into a patch pocket.



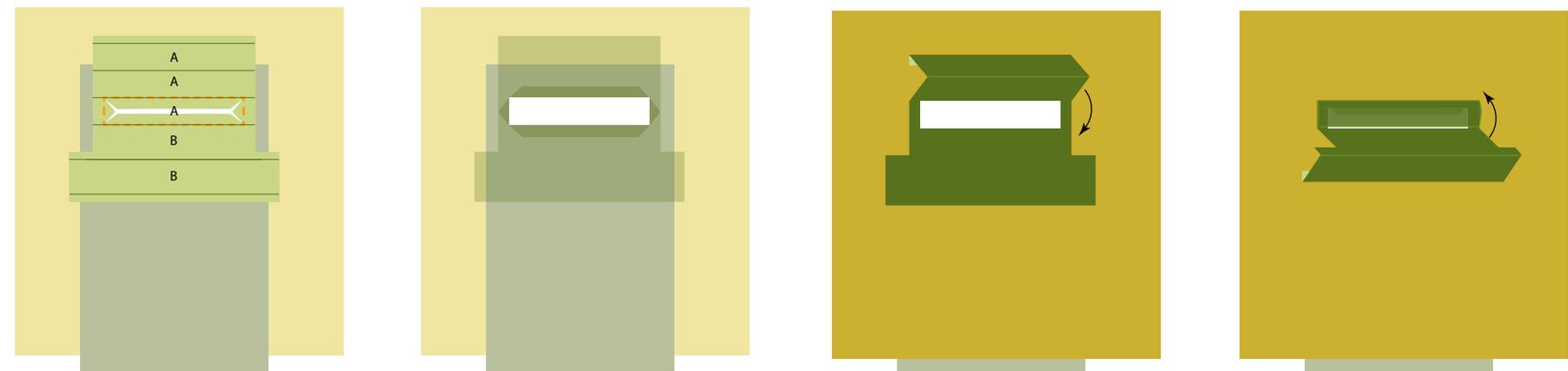
Making a patch out of the overlap is nothing new, structurally; it's the same thing we've been doing all along when extending plackets. The new part is that now, we're building the same basic Type-3 elements (A and B rectangles, etc.) around a **fully 4-sided stitching box**, so the rectangles fold into welts, not into a placket:



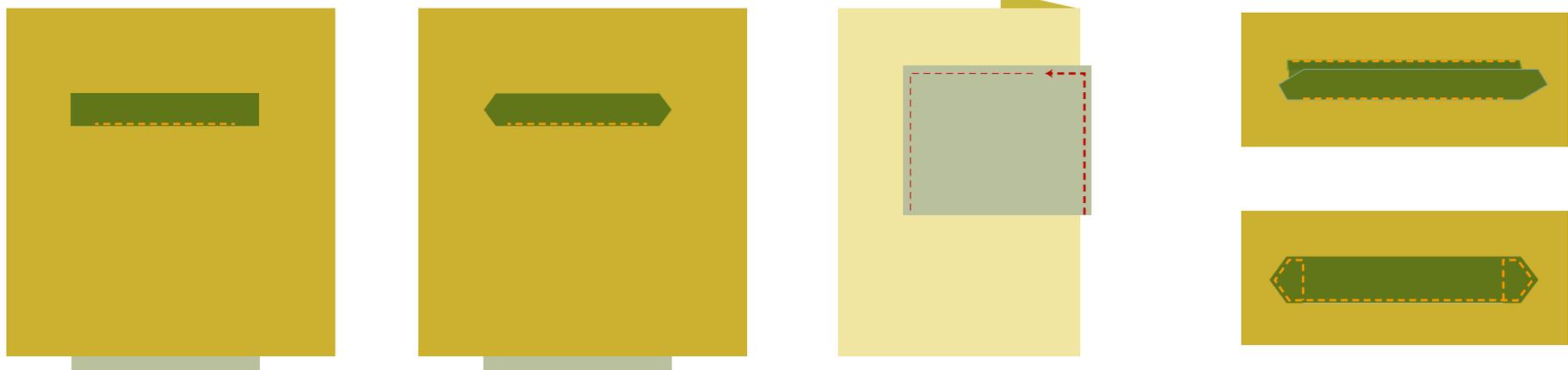
[CLICK FOR PATTERNS](#)

## Variation 4: Placket-based pockets

Welts alone do not a pocket make, so we need to add a pocket bag. The easiest way to do that is to layer a piece of pocket fabric between the “placket” and the garment before joining them together, like so:



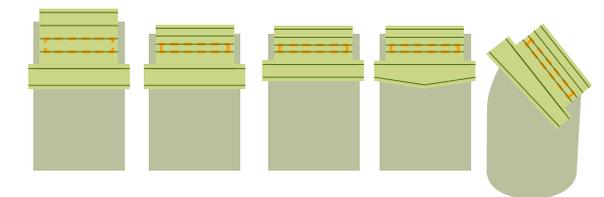
1. As always with these Type-3s, the opening will be on the A-rectangle side.
2. The bindings turn to the RS as usual, but not the pocketing fabric.
3. The A binding folds over the opening first, again as usual, but just glue-baste the seam allowance edge down for the time being.
4. Fold up the B binding and stitch its seam allowance-edge down, but...



5. ...don't stitch the ends of either binding yet.
6. First, shape and press the B-binding ends...
7. ...then, on the other side, fold the pocketing up and over the welts to align with itself above them, and stitch around it, not catching the garment.
8. Finally, fold the B-binding out of the way on the front and stitch across the basted A-binding edge (top), then around the shaped B-binding ends (bottom), both through all layers—and you're done.

So, that's the most basic method, with a plain placket shape. Of course, lots of variations are possible, including setting the bindings at any angle you want into the pocketing, facing the pocket bag instead of folding it double, or creating the pocket bag with a patch on the wrong side, perhaps not even attached to the bindings, which would function as simply an opening to the garment inside...

Go ahead and make up something new!



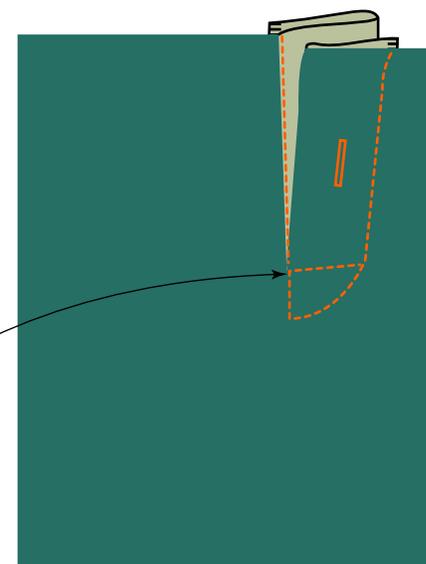
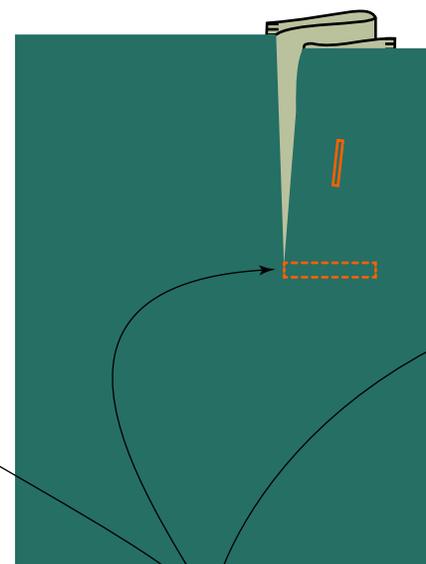
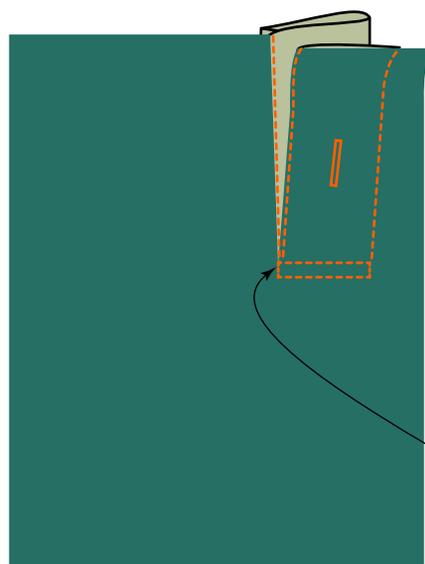
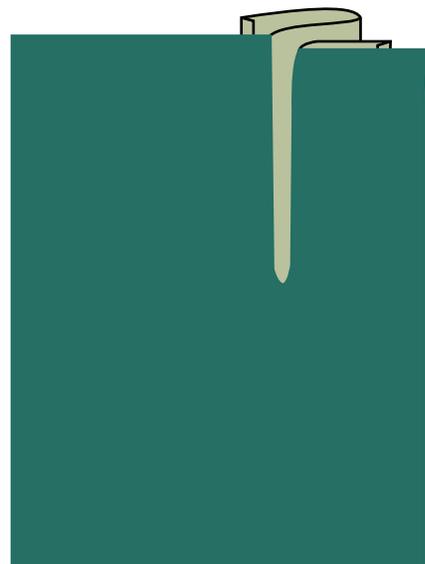
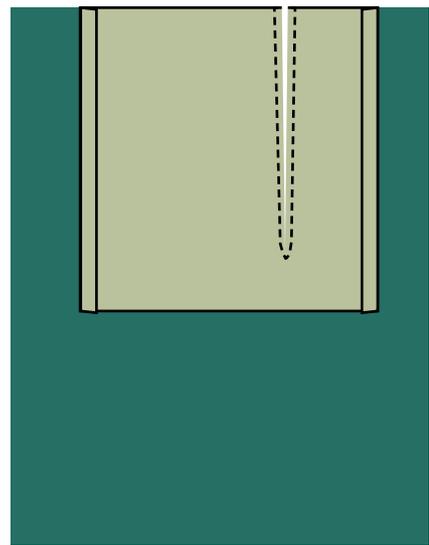
# Placket Construction Options

## 4 Type 4: A single binding piece on a slash Variation 1: Classic Polo-Shirt Neckline

The key to this structure is, I think, to regard it as a cross between a Type 2 and a Type 3 placket. It's very much like a Type-2 in having a slash instead of a stitching box (no "splits" here, though) and in having the bound slash usually set to be the right side, rather than the bindings, but it's also very like a Type-3 in having the bindings on a single piece that must be completely turned to the other side around the initial stitching, where they're

folded over it to create the under-and overlaps. So it should be no surprise to see that it's easy to form Type-4 bindings into the traditional "tower" shaped placket if you want to, and want to put these on the garment right side, as described here later, but that's not by any means the typical usage, which I'll describe first, below. That's what you see at most knit polo-shirt necklines, but it's suitable for wovens, too.

[CLICK FOR PATTERNS](#)



The single-piece binding is stitched right sides together with the garment, on both sides of a single slash-line marking, tapering the stitches from a small seam allowance at the edge to nearly no seam allowance at the pivot point, where both layers turn around the needle. As with a Type-2 slash, it makes sense to switch to a very short stitch length at and near the pivot point. **As usual, the narrow side goes on the opening side.**

The binding is turned to the wrong side completely and pressed...

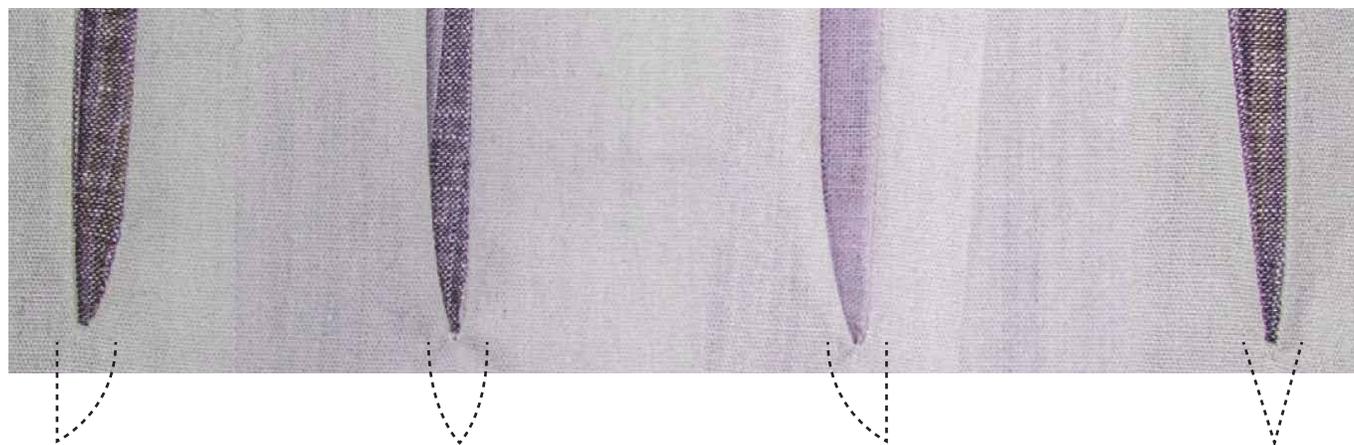
...then folded into an underlap and an overlap.

Of course, there are various ways of stitching the layers down, depending on their shape, their edge finish, personal preference,

buttons/holes... In every case, just as with Type-2 slashes, bringing the slash edges together at the pivot point is the rule before

stitching through all layers there to hold all secure. Serged edges all around are the usual thing for finishing the bindings.

I've seen various shapes advocated for stitching to the point, including these shown here, but a straight taper seems best to me for the overall shape, when you're pulling the edges together prior to topstitching. This is definitely worth playing with, though, on different fabrics, and at a much smaller scale right at the tip with your stitch length way down low.



The trade-off is between catching enough seam allowance to ensure a strong seam, and catching as little as necessary to allow the gap to close smoothly. Definitely a little tricky, especially on less-forgiving fabrics; make some tests!

## Placket Construction Options

### 4 Type 4: A single binding piece on a slash

Based on the interesting RTW knit-neckline treatment shown below, this approach incorporates finished-edge twill tape into the

### Variation 2: Separate bindings on a slash

Type-4 structure, but it could as easily be used whenever you wanted to use different fabrics on the two sides.



Note how the underlap tape is stitched directly to the garment, but the overlap tape is simply an inserted hidden-buttonhole strip, presumably added after the basic placket structure was in place. This seems clearly to have been done as two separate bindings, since the overlap facing that's stitched to the garment isn't a tape. It's a twill fabric, like the backing on the inside of the underlap. What I'll be showing is a tape applied to one side, and cut fabric to the other. Of course, there's lots of variations possible, and lots of ways to layer and combine different fabrics.

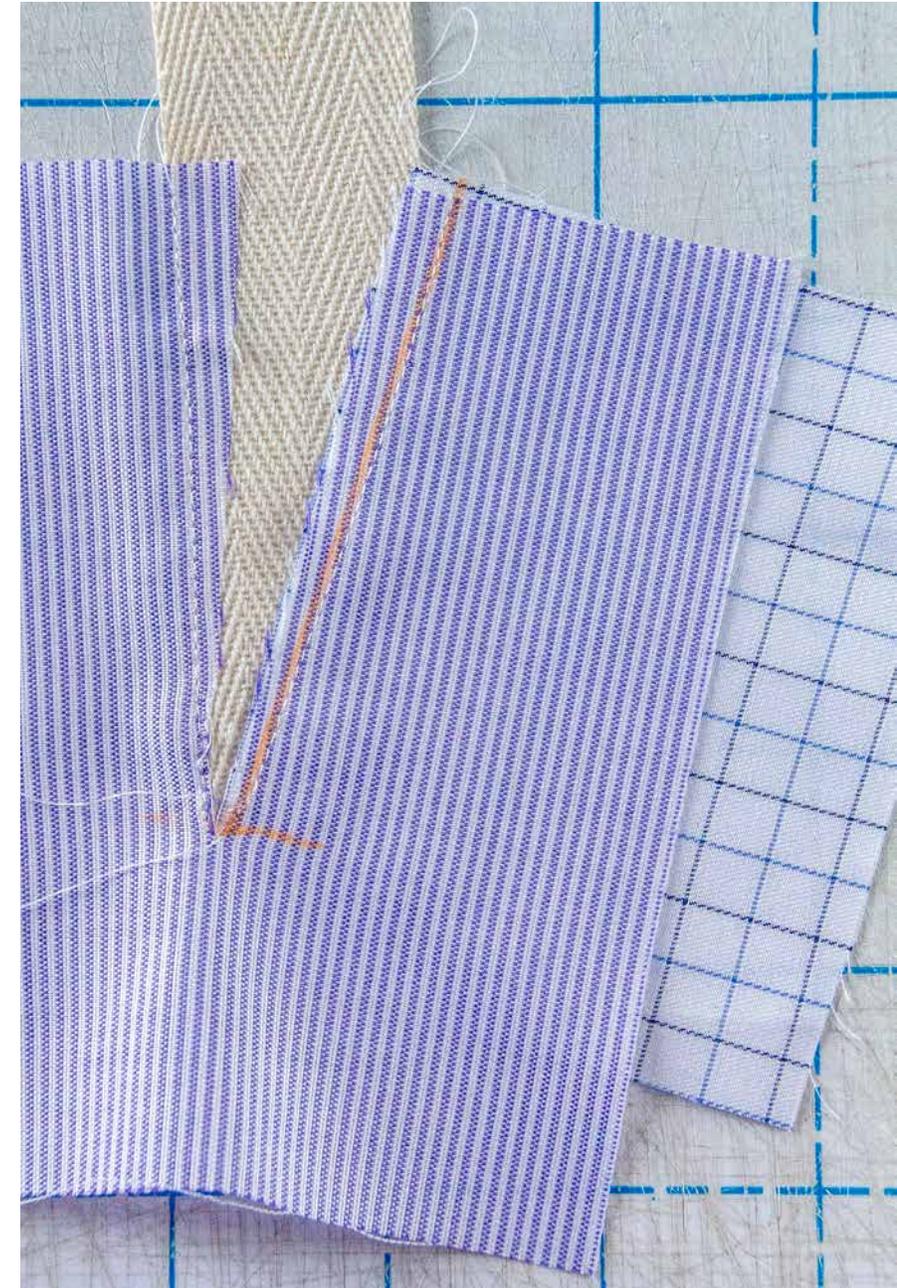
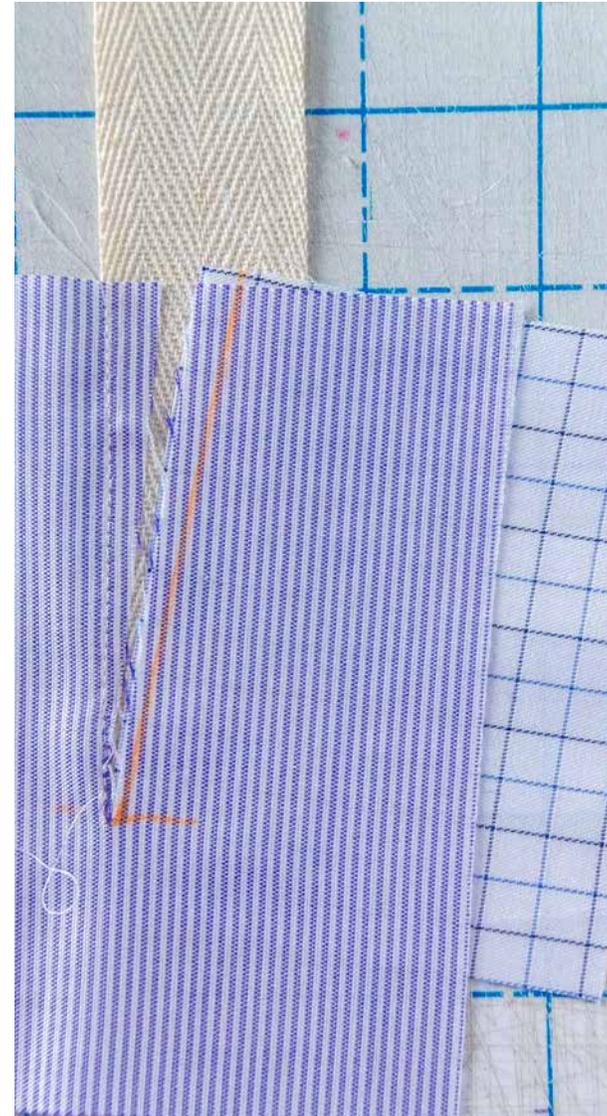


I'm also experimenting in this demo/test with the angle of the slash, since I'm using obviously striped fabric, so the grain will be evident in every step and shot. Specifically, I've made the initial slash so that the stitching line for joining the tape will be parallel to the fabric grain, so we'll clearly see how that decision works out with all the subsequent stitching.

# Placket Construction Options

## 1 Type 4: A single binding piece on a slash

## Variation 2: Separate bindings on a slash, continued



Slashing at an angle to the garment grain lets me align the tape to the grain along a tapering seam allowance that ends at the marked pivot point I want.

I've edge-stitched along the tape selvage and back-stitched at the marking, stitching from the tape side. I glue-basted the tape in place so I could flip to its side without losing the precise alignment to the slash I needed.

The fabric side is cut on grain, and aligned to the other side of the slash, which is NOT on grain, and glue-basted to hold it so I can flip to the other side...

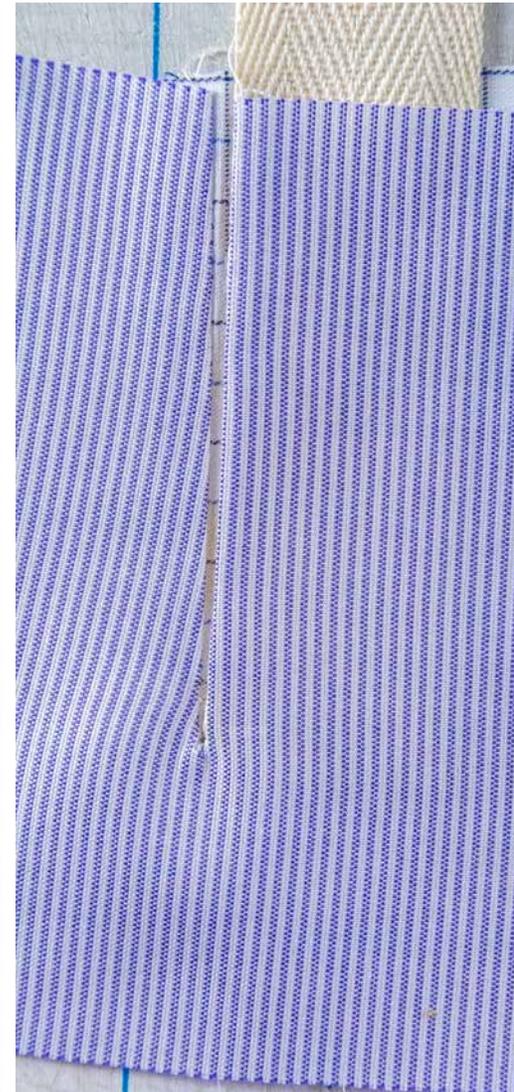
...and mark the other tapering seam allowance, then stitch along it, shortening my stitches right at the end of the tapering seam line, and slightly curving in to hit the pivot point already established by the previous stitching.

Note that I could have arranged the fabric binding so its seam allowance didn't taper, even though the garment's has to, and that would probably be a slightly stronger, if less-common, choice, and maybe reason enough to choose separate bindings, but that wouldn't fix the grain offset.

# Placket Construction Options

## 1 Type 4: A single binding piece on a slash

## Variation 2: Separate bindings on a slash, continued



The tape edge was originally positioned right side up against the garment right side, since it didn't need turning, but the cut fabric does, so it was arranged right sides together to allow for that when covering the stitching.

After turning, the fabric/garment seam is pressed to just cover the tape and to bring the slash sides together, which reveals the grain difference very clearly, both on the garment right side and...

...on the inside. Still, the structure does clearly allow for separate bindings, which was the original point! One could even choose tape for each side.

Pressing with the taped side as the overlap doesn't help with the grain mismatch, but at least puts the on-grain edge up front.

Letting the grain relax reveals the size of the tapering I chose, which could have been narrower, but still would have been obvious with these grain-visible fabrics.

And note how off-grain the relaxation throws the fabric. I think it's obvious that stripes and checks are not the best choice for structures like Type 2 and Type 4 that require angled seam lines and tapering seam allowances.

Note, too, that even if there were just a single binding piece, because of how all layers fold in the same direction below the opening, it'd still be easy to insert that extra-layer buttonhole strip from the original reference.

## Placket Construction Options

### 4 Type 4: A single binding piece on a slash

So far I've stuck with the idea that the closer you can come to a perfect, tiny V of stitches at the pivot point at the end of the slash with these Type-4 plackets, the easier you'll find it to bring the finished edges together for that "no-seam-allowances!" effect at the very tip of the opening.

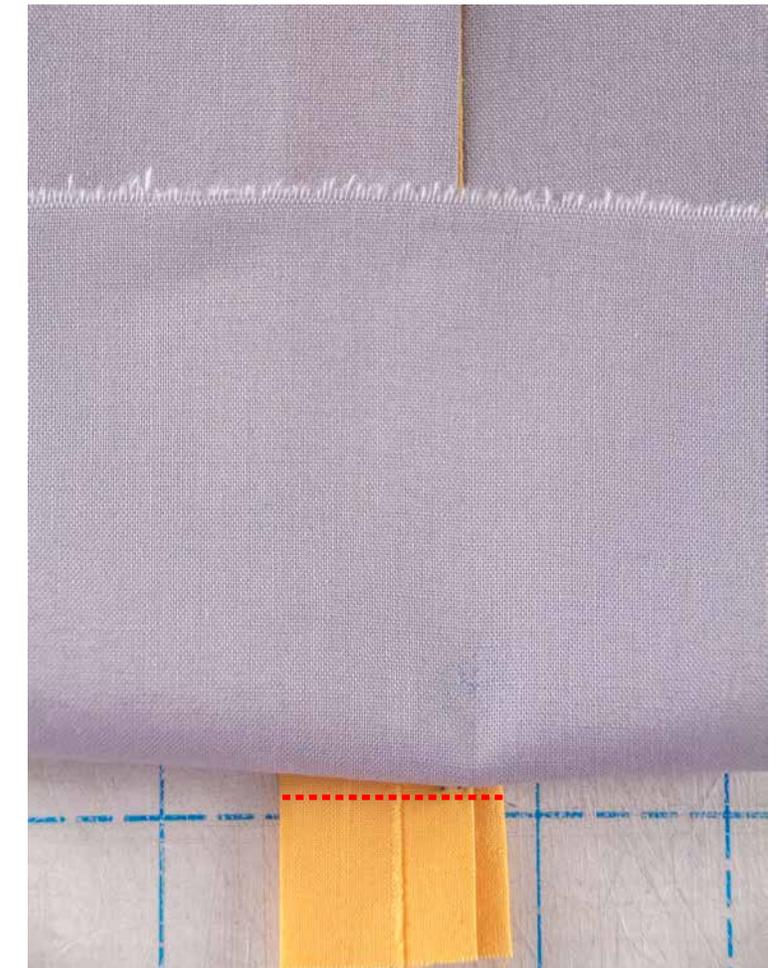
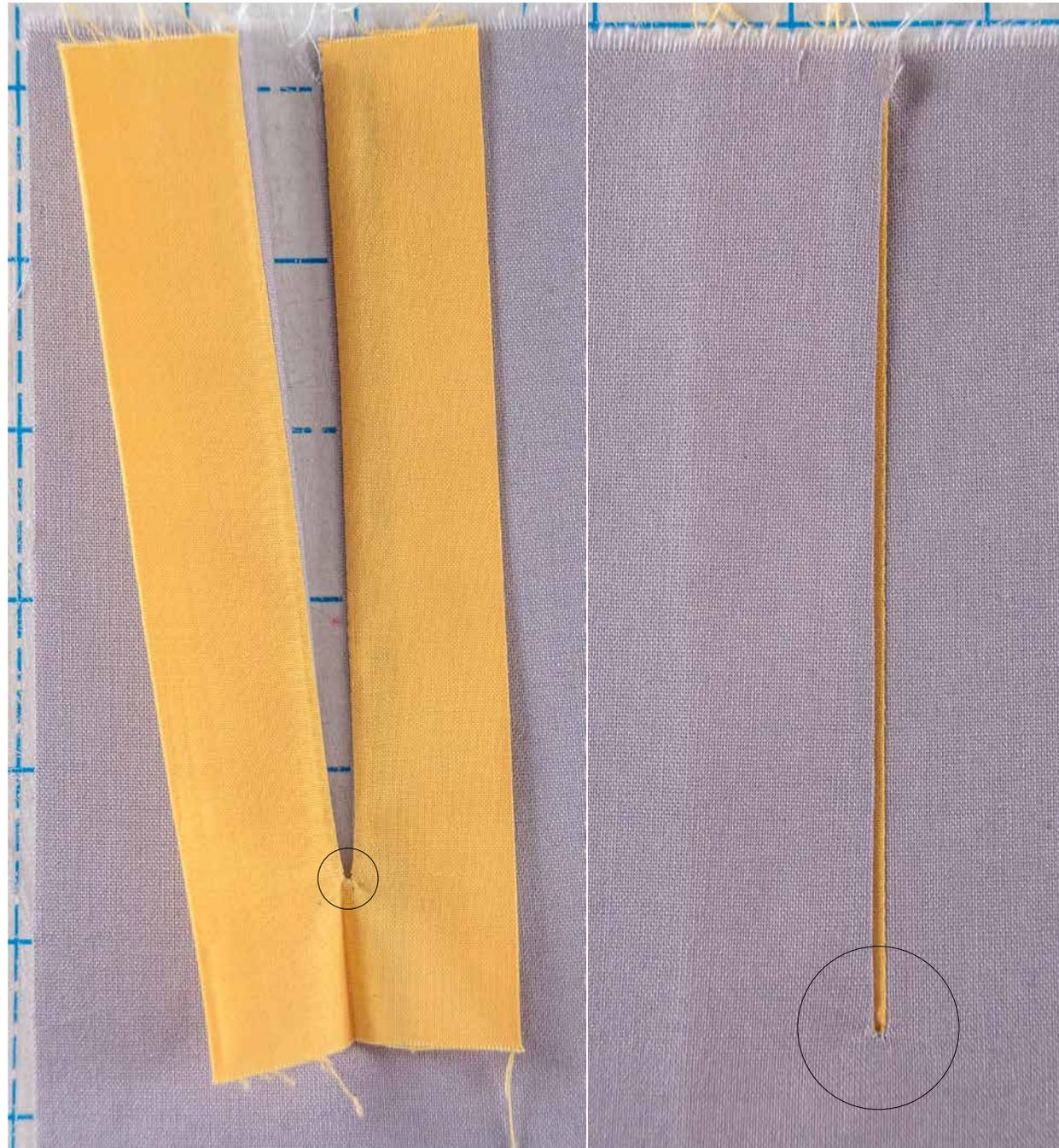
### Variation 2A: Single binding on a slash, with crossing stitches at the slash end

But if your fabric is very unforgiving, consider this option: Take one or two tiny cross stitches at the slash end instead of pivoting, and simply give up on bringing the finished edges together. In other words, make a so-called "Designer Feature" out of NOT bringing them together, but precisely, for

the sake of a perfectly smooth garment at the tip. Combine this with very narrow seam allowances on either side, as in the example shown here, and you'll have, I think, a good strategy for working with Type-4 plackets on crisp, un-trick-able wovens, or at least an approach perhaps worth trying.

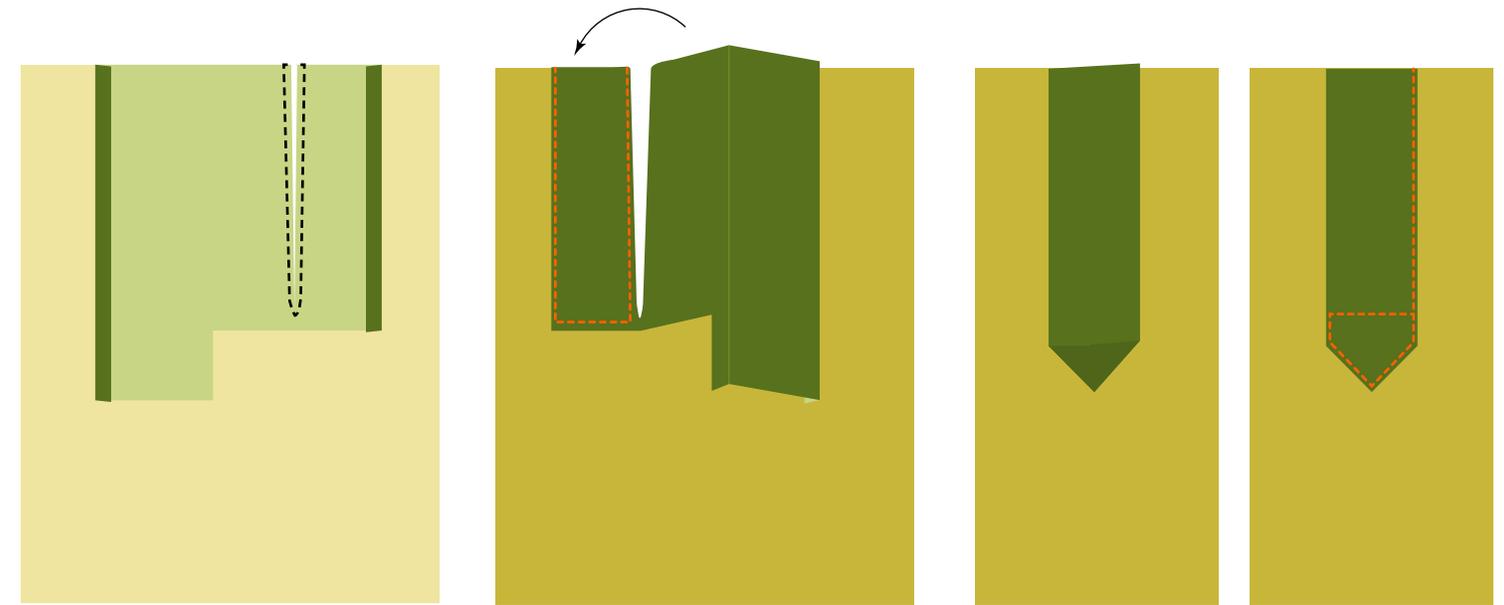
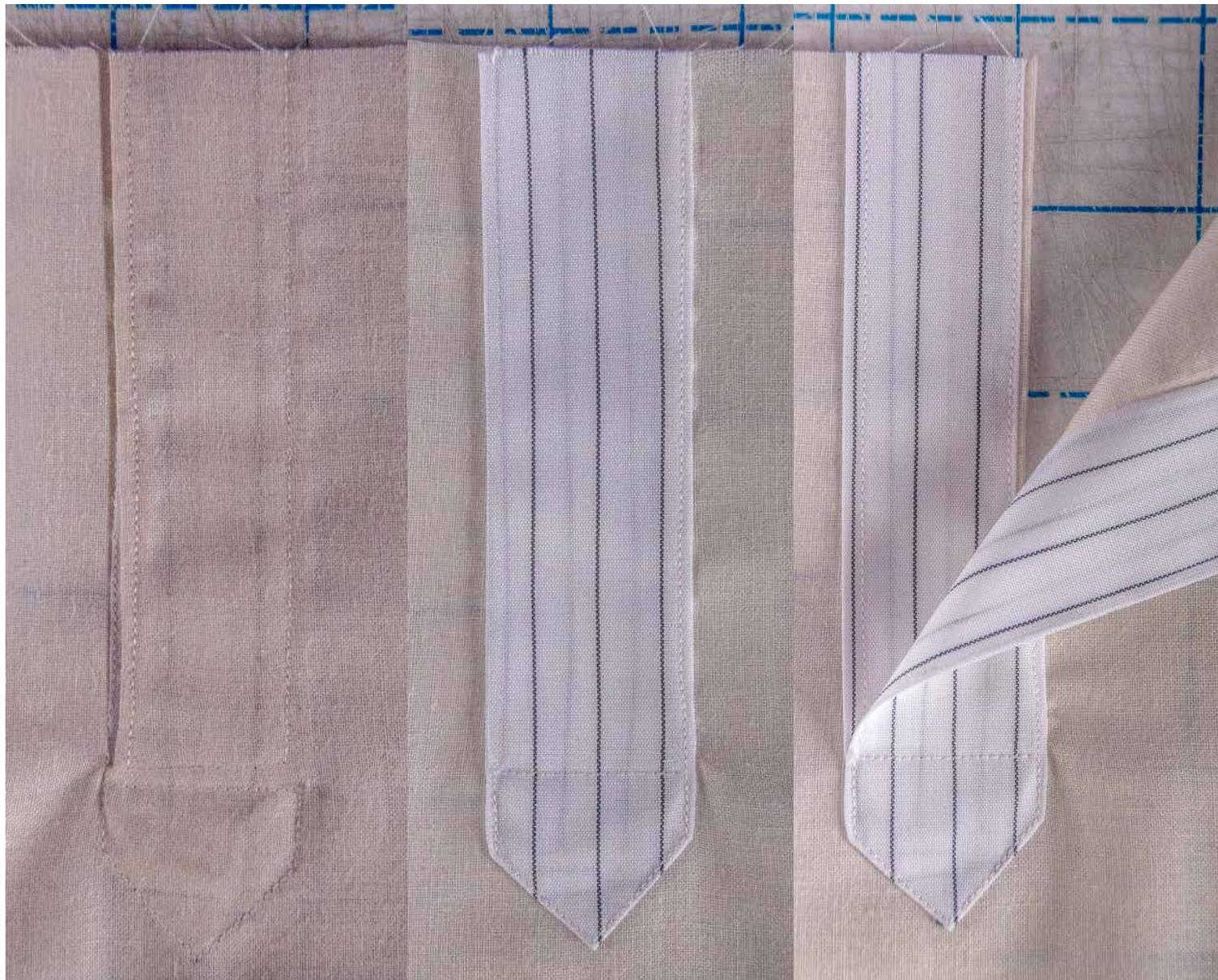
The little circles in the first two images at left show what it looks like after turning when you've taken one or two tiny crossing stitches instead simply pivoting at the slash end. Any more and you'd have to clip into the corners created (about which more to come...). But keep it short and you'll find you can turn with no problem and very little distortion on the front. Look closely within the larger circle and you'll see there is still enough distortion that a striped fabric would instantly reveal it, along with the grain-tilting still clear along both sides of the entire slash, even given the very narrow allowances I took (middle two images).

One final observation: If you like the clean simplicity of the unstitched front in the second circled image, you can keep it by lifting the garment as shown below and stitching the bindings together without catching the garment front. This is easy at the bottom as shown, but can also be managed at the sides, with care or stitching in the ditch, or stitching only within the binding inside the opening, or it can be skipped if you let the buttons hold the underlap; lots of options, including adding a hidden buttonhole tape.



4 Type 4: A single binding piece on a slash

Variation 3: Classic "Tower" Placket



This version is exactly the same as the previous one, except it starts on the garment WS and the placket is extended longer on the wider, overlap side, in the same way as the tower type-3, with the placket also face down as before (and as for the type-3).

If this is for sleeves, lay out each sleeve/placket pair just like for the type-3. If it's for a neckline, lay it out just as you'd wear it: underlap on the opening side you want when raising the piece to your own neckline, WS in.

Turn the whole thing to the RS and press, then edge-stitch the underlap side to the garment, as shown, or in some other pattern, so long as you catch the whole free, seam-allowance edge away from the slash.

Fold and crease the overlap side so its folded edge covers the underlap and its seam-allowance edge covers the slash, creating a narrow seam allowance on the inner edge of the extended part, as shown—again, just like a type-3 overlap.

Turn under the lower corners of the extension, forming a tower-triangle tip, then edge-stitch as shown, or in whatever pattern you prefer, so long as you catch this side's long seam-allowance edge.

Just like the type-2 version of this tower shape, this structure is perfectly reversible, but only at the neckline; since sleeves swap sides when reversing, this won't do for reversible sleeves.

## Placket Construction Options

### 4 Type 4: A single binding piece on a slash

The main—if not only—reason I can think of to bother with making a “tower” placket out of Type-4 structure, besides the rare-to-never need for reversibility, is that the underlap in this case (as also with the Type-2 tower version) is actually a facing and not a binding; in other words, it’s not really a binding because it doesn’t wrap around both sides of the garment there. It only wraps to one side, like a facing does, so it’s one less layer than a Type-3 structure with its double bindings, and thus noticeably lighter/thinner.

But, wait: Couldn’t you re-arrange a Type-3 structure so its underlap was a facing instead of a binding? Well, yes, sure—so long as it was so narrow that it also didn’t stick out beyond the overlap if you didn’t want that, which would also be a rare-to-never want for most of us.

And, oddly enough, a shirt with exactly this treatment just crossed my path, a beauty by Lanvin courtesy of Carl Goldberg at CEGO Custom Shirts (thanks Carl!); see its placket at right:

Note that the underlap stitching isn’t holding down a binding, just a facing, visible only from the right side. Also note how narrow both the facing and the gap that separates it from the overlap binding are... Wait: Gap? Neither Type-3 nor Type-4 structures have gaps, right?

### Variation 3A: Classic “Tower” Placket with a Clipped Slash



Right: NO gaps.

But if they DID...?

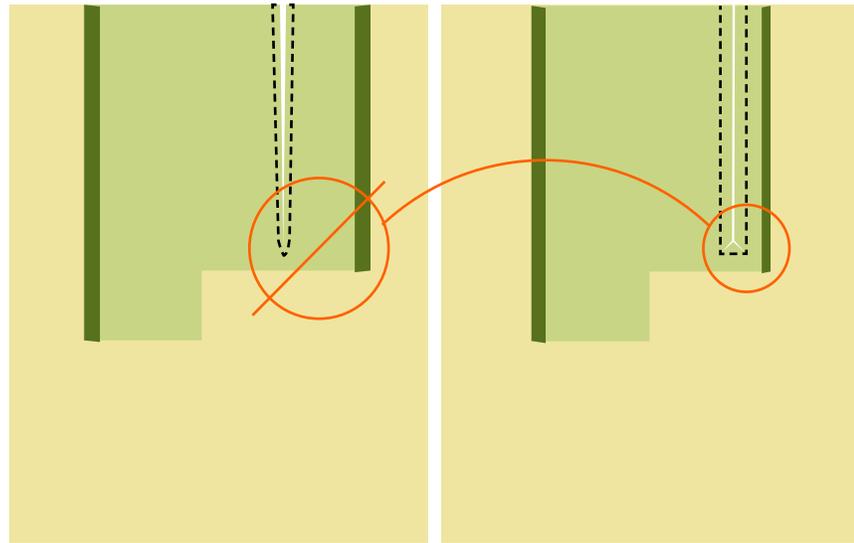
That would be...  
Variation 3A.

Which is even more of a mash-up between types 3 and 4 than type-4s already are. One could argue, I suppose, that this gap (and the switch to the binding on the RS) effectively turns a 4 into a 3. Unless you want to propose that the essential difference is that 3s are all-bindings, all-the-time, while 4s are always faced-underlappers; which maybe I do want to do...

I'll let you decide on that, and if it matters... Let's just make some.

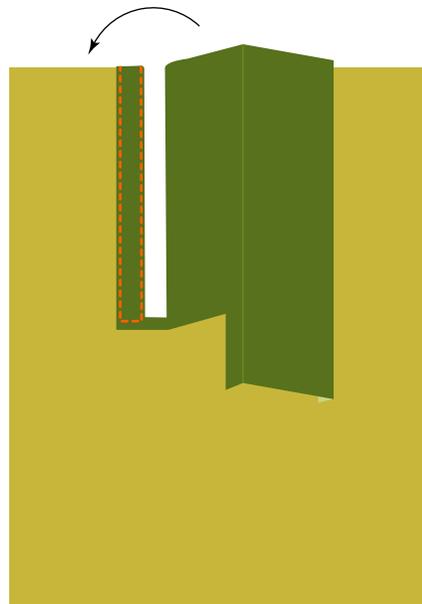
# Placket Construction Options

## 4 Type 4: A single binding piece on a slash

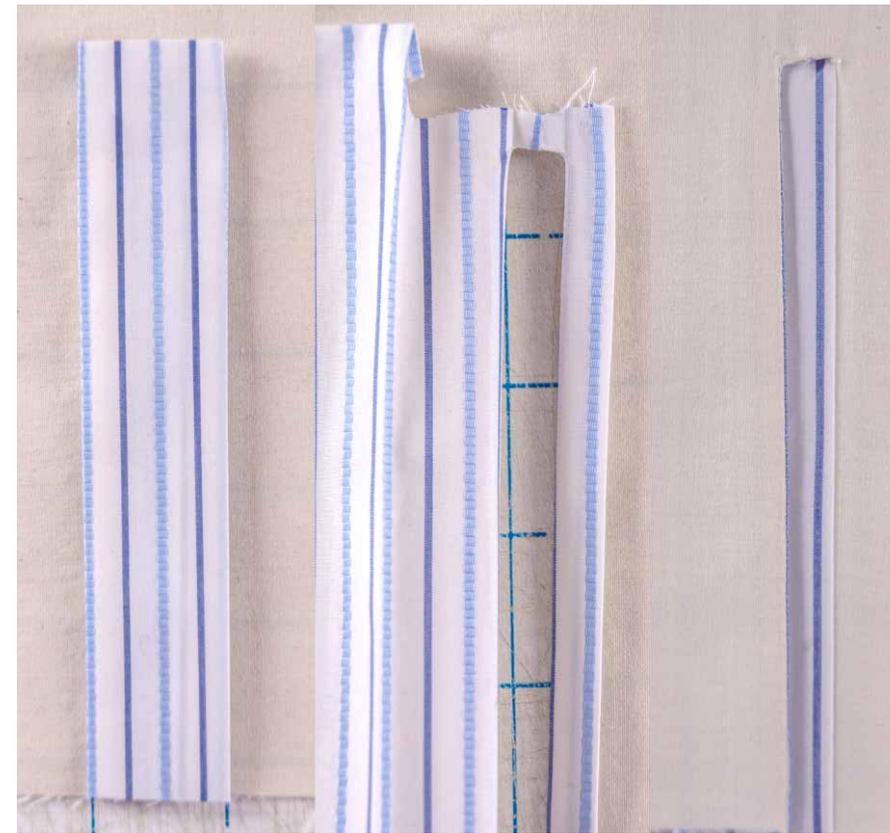


This variation differs from the the previous one only as shown in the diagrams above: The initial stitching is a narrow box, clipped into at the corners, not a tapering shape on a single slash, and the underlap is narrowed, so that together they fit under the overlap when the underlap's stitched.

From there on out, it's exactly the same.

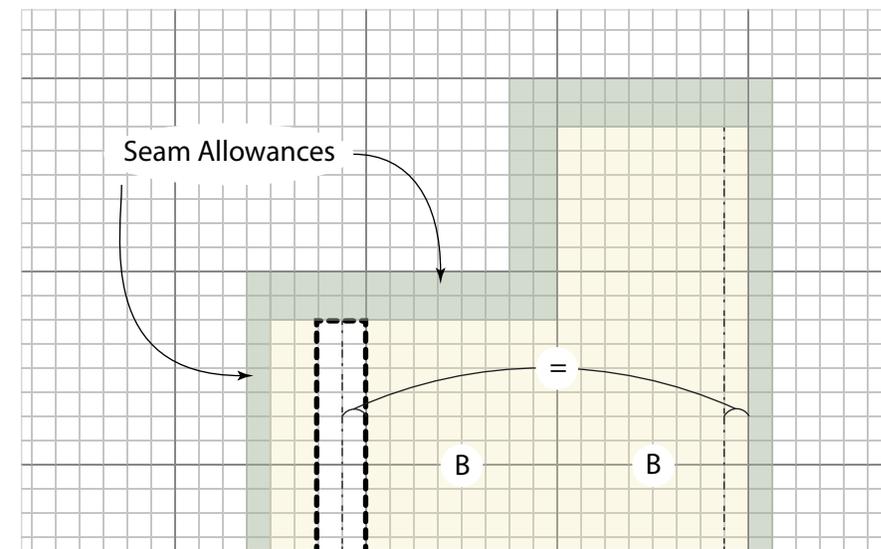


## Variation 3A: Classic "Tower" Placket with a Clipped Slash, continued



Here it is in fabric, cut more or less exactly like the Lanvin placket.

And here's a quick pattern for it, with a pattern-matching line: =



Note that I've used terms and notations from the Type -3 pattern, since they're so similar and the comparison is so useful. Note that this pattern has no **A** width marked, which is because the width of the stitching box has no necessary relationship to the underlap width, since the underlap doesn't fold over the box and therefore doesn't need to fit over it. Instead, the stitching box merely sets the gap width, which you'd generally want to have as narrow as makes for easy stitching and clipping and no wider, as in the Lanvin example...unless, perhaps you'd like to turn this whole thing back into a slash-(gap)-in-front sort of thing...

...in which case, use whatever width you want your visible gap to be, along with whatever top- and edge-stitching design suits your design. Note how in this example, the underlap facing is much wider than the gap.

I'm liking this exposed-gap idea myself, and I especially like the pocket-mouth potential I see in it.

## Placket Construction Options: Sleeve Plackets on a Seam

### Preamble: Articulated Elbows!

I was never much interested in cutting a seam through my sleeve above the placket, preferring the concept of the placket as a way of avoiding specifically that...until I tried on the shirt shown partially here and discovered how completely wonderful it is to have little horizontal tucks added to your sleeves at the elbows, creating what's known

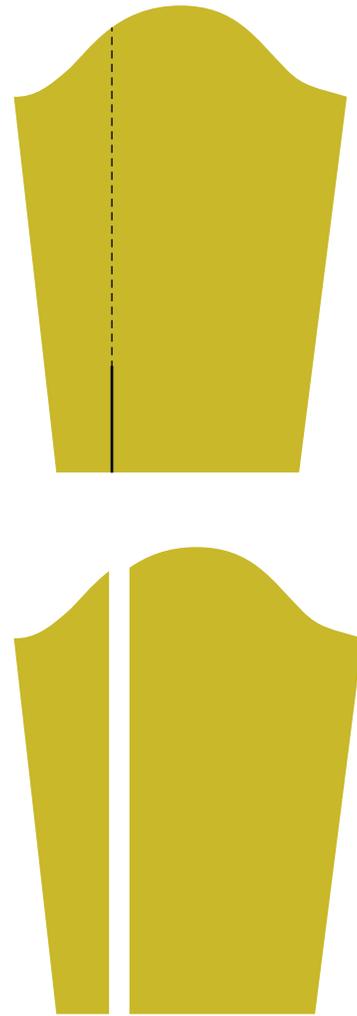
as an "articulated" elbow. They sit there relatively unobtrusively, doing nothing, until you bend your elbow and find that they almost magically **expand the sleeve length, just when you need it and not before**. This particular shirt had slightly shorter sleeves than I prefer...but the elbow tucks completely made up for that,

to my great surprise and pleasure, meaning that I could cut my own sleeves with a little less blousing length, yet still get the same comfort! So, in addition to inspiring me to explore the placket implications of the split sleeve (which are many), I can now recommend this easy alteration as a greatly useful one to all those always looking for new shirt details to try.



## Placket Construction Options: Sleeve Plackets on a Seam

The patternmaking could hardly be simpler: To start, you just divide any sleeve pattern you want to try this on at the existing placket slash line, from the cuff to the sleeve cap, and set aside the larger piece.

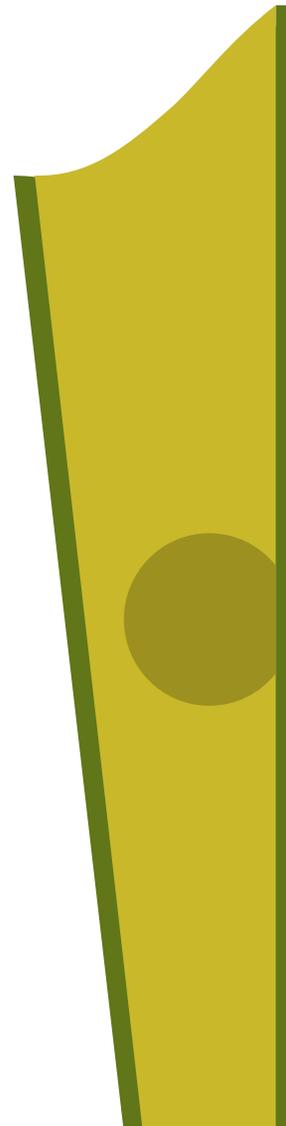


Ideally you'll have a shirt or muslin already made up in the pattern the sleeve comes from, so you can establish and mark the area (about a 3-in./8cm circle) where the point of your elbow presses against when you raise your arms, wearing the shirt/muslin. There's little point in guessing, so don't try this on a pattern you can't test. Mark the elbow area on your split sleeve's smaller piece.

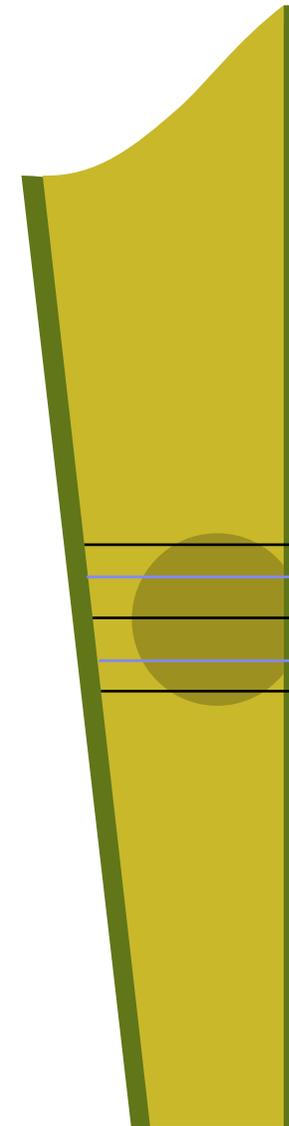


## Preamble: Articulated Elbows! Continued...

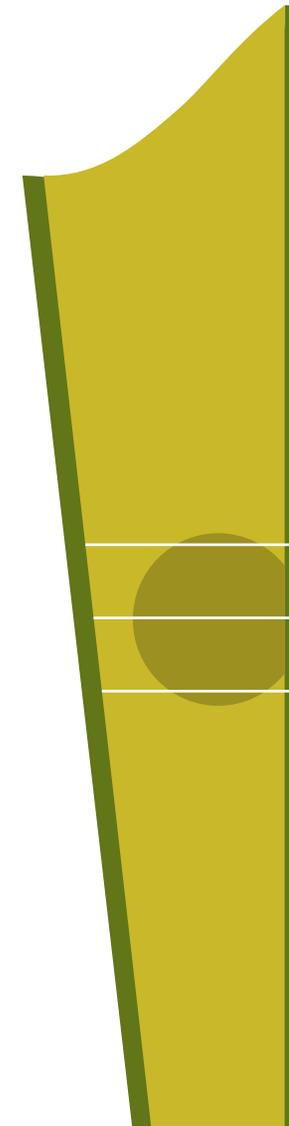
If you need to add seam allowances, do so now, to the long sides only, as shown. The width of these doesn't matter, as they're only there at this point to simplify the pattern alteration. You can definitely change these to suit any particular project you're working on in the future.



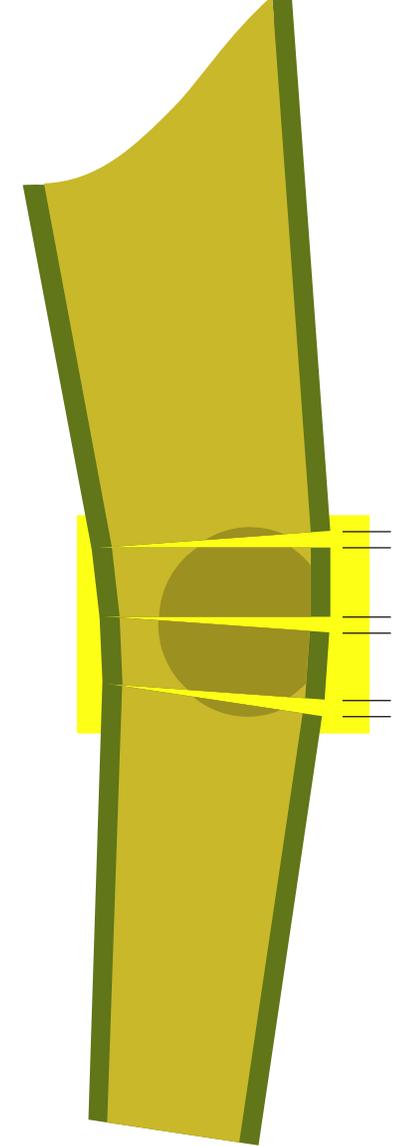
Draw three (or two, shown in blue, if you prefer) lines across the elbow area as shown (the placement isn't critical, just approximate), perpendicular to and crossing the front edge and stopping at the underarm seam line.



Cut along each line, stopping at the underarm seam line, which will be your pivot point for the next step, which is to spread the pattern at each cut, by about 3/8-in/1cm, measured at the pattern edge. Of course, you'll fold and pin back the spread tucks when joining your sleeves along the split, so the now-curved fabric edge will straighten out for sewing.



Slip a piece of paper under the slashes as you spread them, so you can tape the spread pieces in place as you adjust them. It's not critical that these each be identical spreads, so eye-balling to match them is good enough, once you measure the first one. And of course, feel free to try different spread amounts with muslins. These worked for me, but you may want something a little different.



That's basically all there is to this. I trimmed away the extra paper and seam allowances and traced off mine onto tag board so I can trace it fresh from that, for each new project, adding whatever seam allowances I want, plus any other shaping I might need, such as adding cuff lengths, as we'll soon see.

Whether you articulate your elbow or not, there are certain styles and results that having a full-length seam instead of a placket slash allow, which is what we'll explore next. But the first question is, what sort of seam and allowances do we want here? For me, there's really no question: This should be a flat-felled seam, like all the others joining main body pieces, and not just because I like them, but because they so perfectly set us up for what I consider the easiest and most flexible way to finish open seam edges at the cuff.

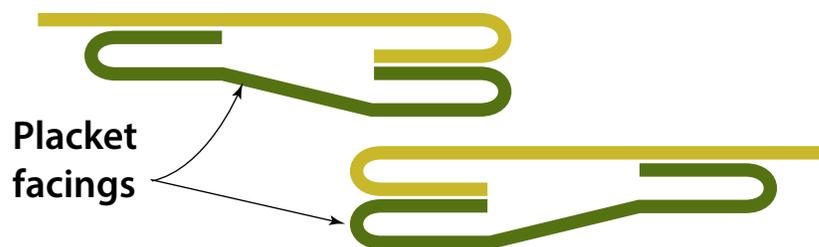
Here's what I mean. If you look at a flat-felled seam from the end, as in this cut-away diagram, you see this:



If you stop stitching the seam together at some point short of the end of your fabric (such as where you want your seam to end and your placket to start), with one tiny clip into either one of the seam allowances you can rearrange the seam allowance pair to sit like this:

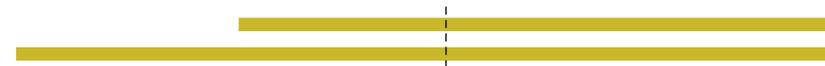


Then, simply flip the clipped allowance to the other side and you're all set up to produce this:

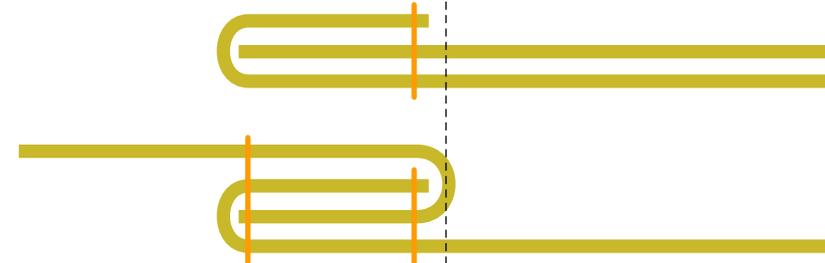


This simple rearrangement is a bit more complicated than it may appear, because it involves not just changing the layer arrangement of these folded seam allowances, it also changes their width.

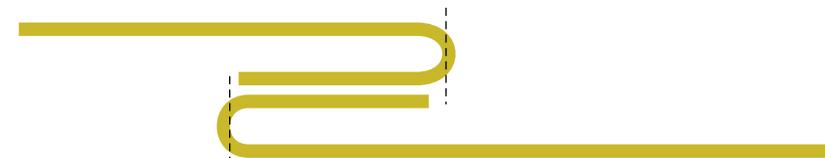
Here's how. The standard arrangement of seam allowances for a flat-felled seam is like this, with the lower allowance **twice the width** of the upper one, like so:



After sewing, these **unequal** seam allowances both wind up pressed to one side of the original seam line, like so:

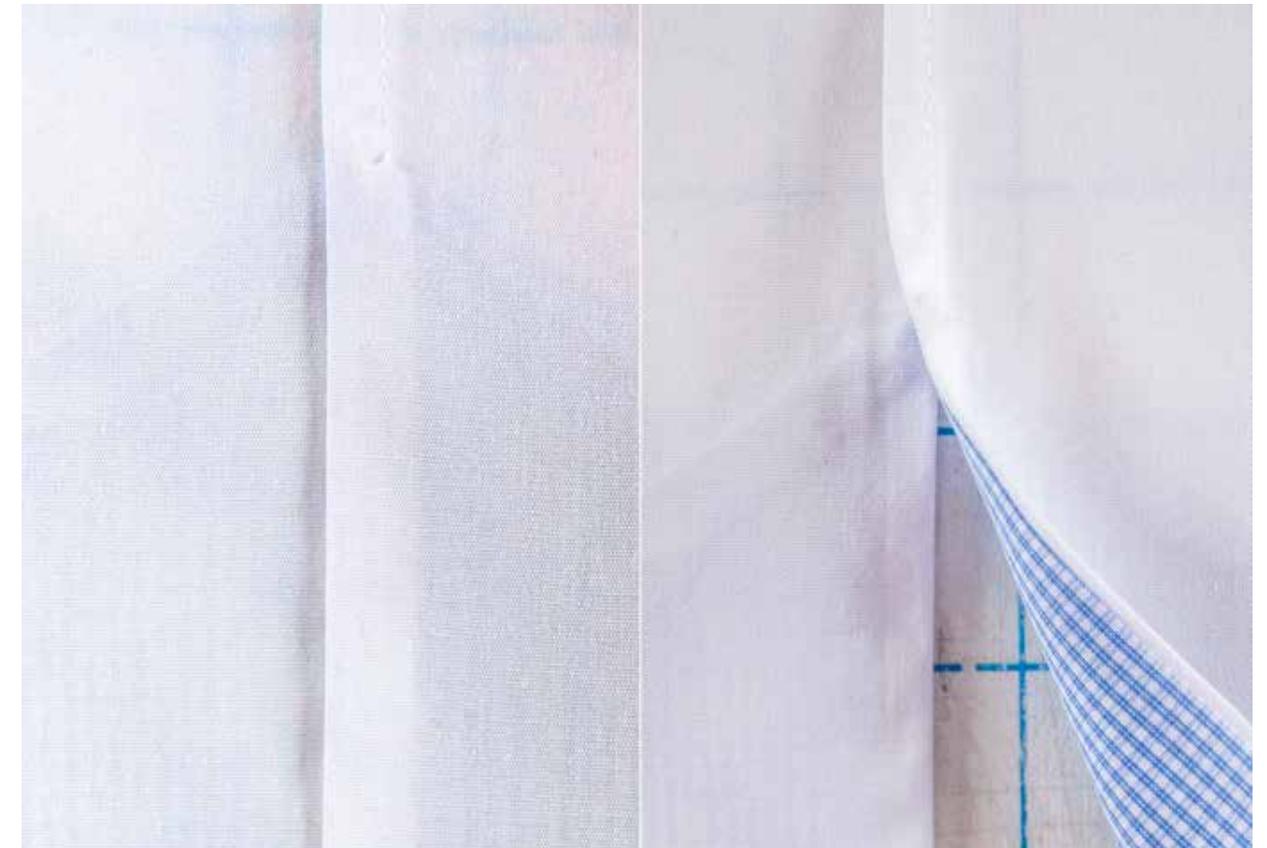


Once clipped and separated, though, what you have is two **equal** seam allowances, each one the width of the flat-felled's narrower allowance, like so:



The most important difference is that now these allowances **overlap**, by the narrow seam allowance width, instead of lining up along the same seam line, as the flat-felled ones do, which is great! Just what you want for the placket part of your seam.

The point of all this is simply that, with two overlapping seam allowances as described already set up below your flat-felled seam, there's no end to the options for adding extra material for placket facings on each edge, and on either side of the garment, and with every one, you'll still also have an uninterrupted, perfectly smooth transition on the other side from seam to placket, like so:



So, if you'd like to do your sleeves with a flat-felled seam instead of a slash as described here and in the following pages, here are the rules:

1. Cut the **wider** sleeve piece with the **narrower** seam allowance and the narrower piece with the wider one, and sew them **right sides together** if you want **one** line of stitches visible on the right side.
2. Cut the **wider** piece with the **wider** allowance, sewing **wrong sides together**, if you want **two** lines visible on the right side.

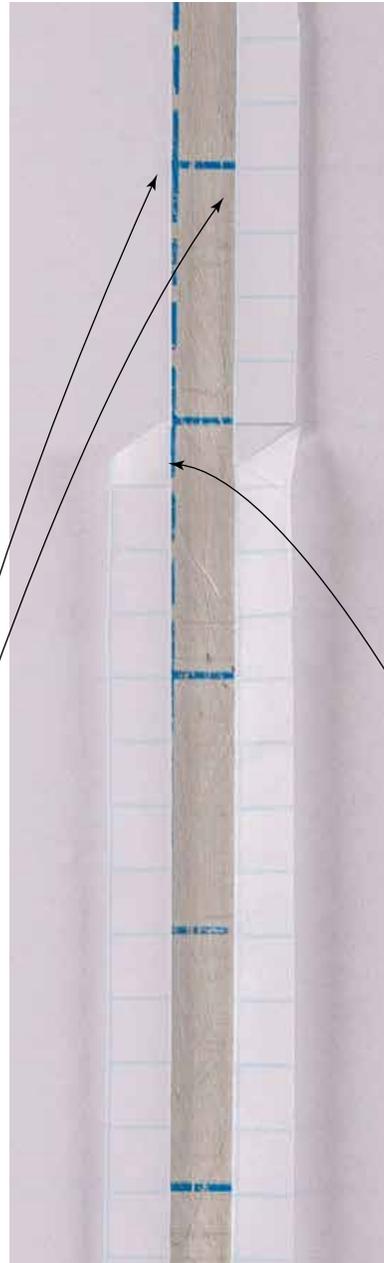
*Either way, you'll be able to face either right or wrong sides as you please.*

*As for the narrow width, I usually choose 1/4-in./6mm, but 1/8-in./3mm works, too.*

## Placket Construction Options: Sleeve Plackets on a Seam

I find graph paper an ideal medium for exploring various facing arrangements on these edges that switch from felled seams to facing seam allowances, so I'll be showing some of my folding tests, in hopes of encouraging you to do the same. It's certainly faster than sewing with scraps, and easier to make notes on. (Not so good with curves, tho...)

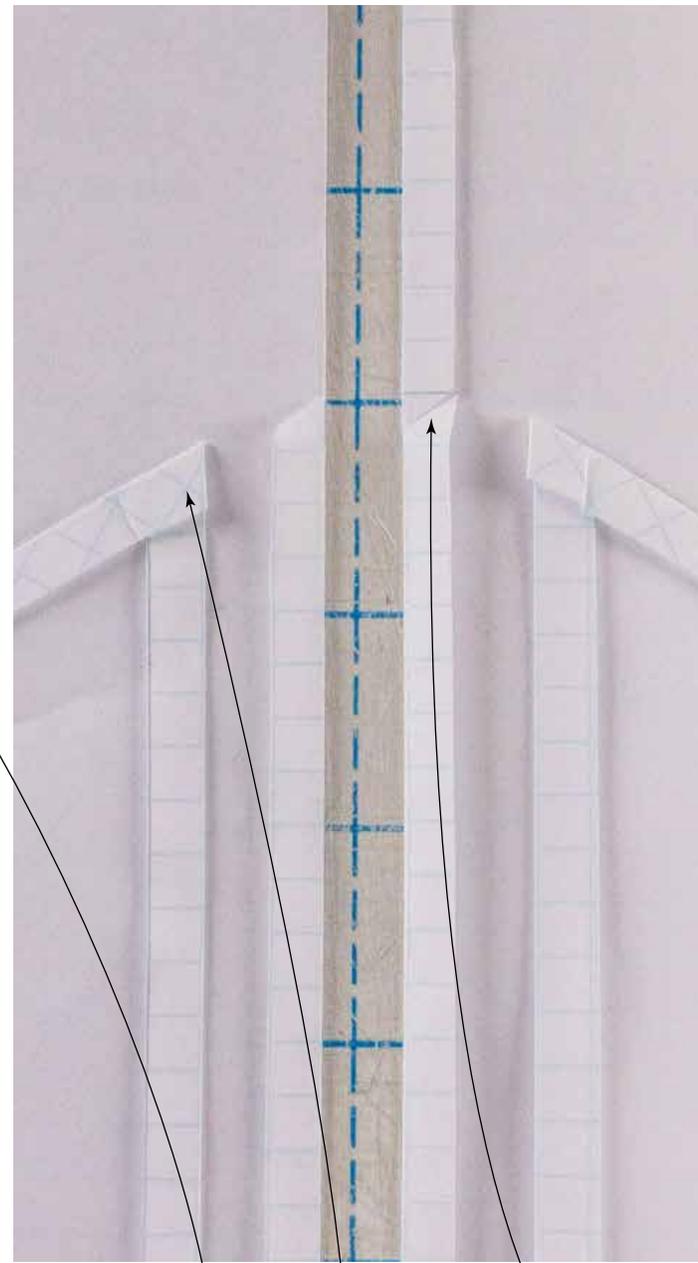
The idea is simply that any edge along which I can fold over a narrow, seam-allowance-like edge in any shape I can then match with another piece of paper folded into the same shape but with edges folded in the opposite direction, and thus I'll have a structure that I can sew if I follow the fold lines.



I start with narrow matching folds along two facing straight edges, to simulate the flat-felled part of the seam...

...then clip one fold so I can flip it to the opposite side and begin folding a shaped match for it.

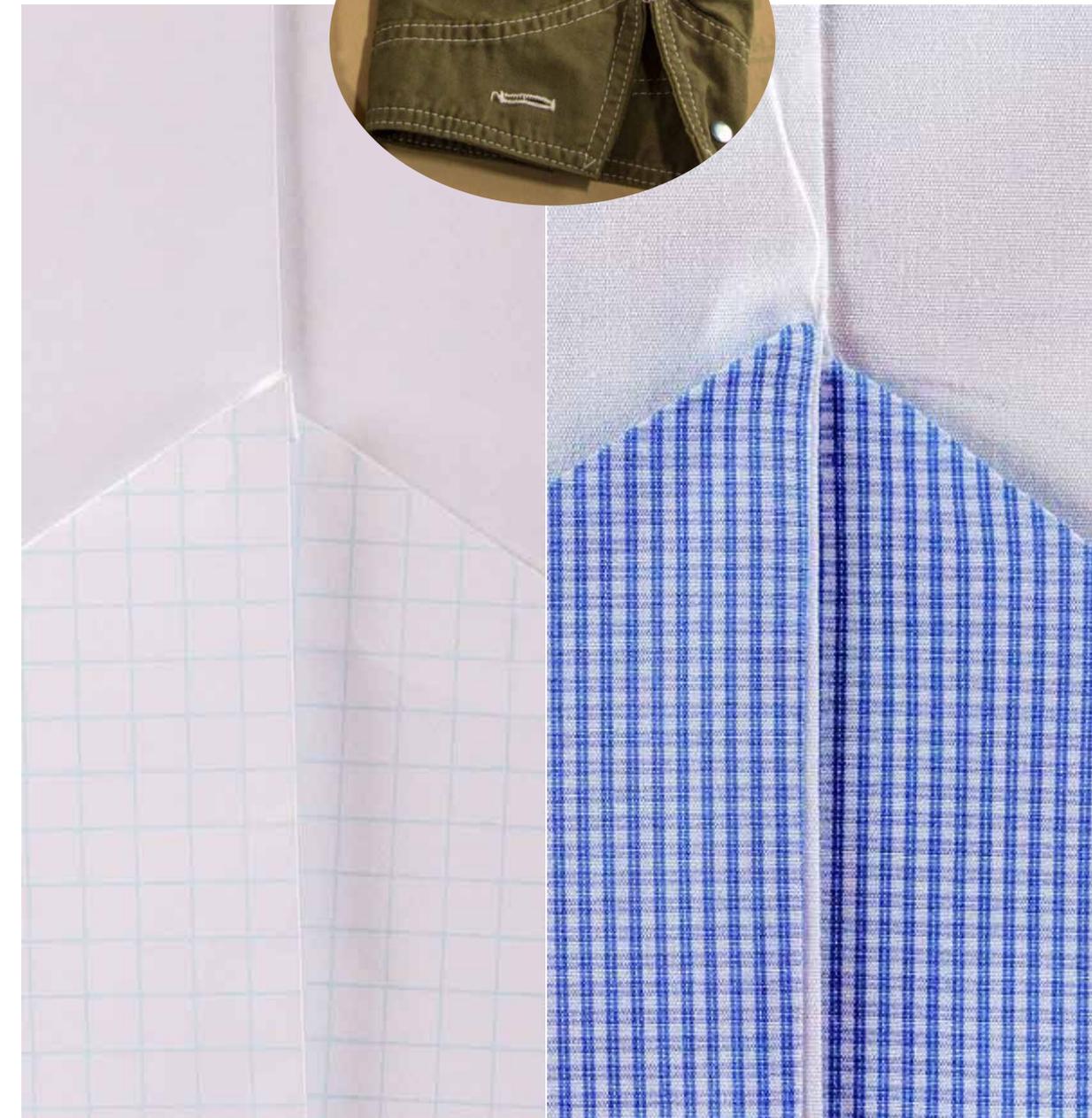
## MORE Preamble: Testing Ideas with Graph Paper



By playing with the paper folds I invariably find some arrangement for both the clips and folds that's ideal, yet would have been trickier to explore playing with fabric, such as the narrow points above and the angled clip that best matches them. Once discovered and I know where I'm going, it's easier to get the fabric to do what it needs to in the scrap-sewn and pressed test, which in this case is only sewn to the straight edges below the felled edges, not yet edge-stitched along the pressed diagonal edges, nor does it need to be: Test Passed. Topstitching designs can come later...



The inspiration for the shape I'm testing here. Clearly, this garment has a less-elegant solution than a felled seam for merging the facings into the seam above.



## Placket Construction Options: Sleeve Plackets on a Seam

## Variation 1: Classic "Tower" Placket on Straight Edges

(BTW, I'm repeating this "tower" shape over and over because it makes for easy comparison, I think, between the various methods for making it, not because I recommend sticking with it, or defaulting to it. Altho, for some recipients, it'll be the wisest choice, no doubt.)

With this variation, we're seeing how, without any change to the basic, straight split-sleeve edges, you can still create extensions to increase and reshape the underlap and/or overlap. And if you revisit the Type-3 change-a-fold-to-a-seam variations, I think you'll see how they all apply here, too.



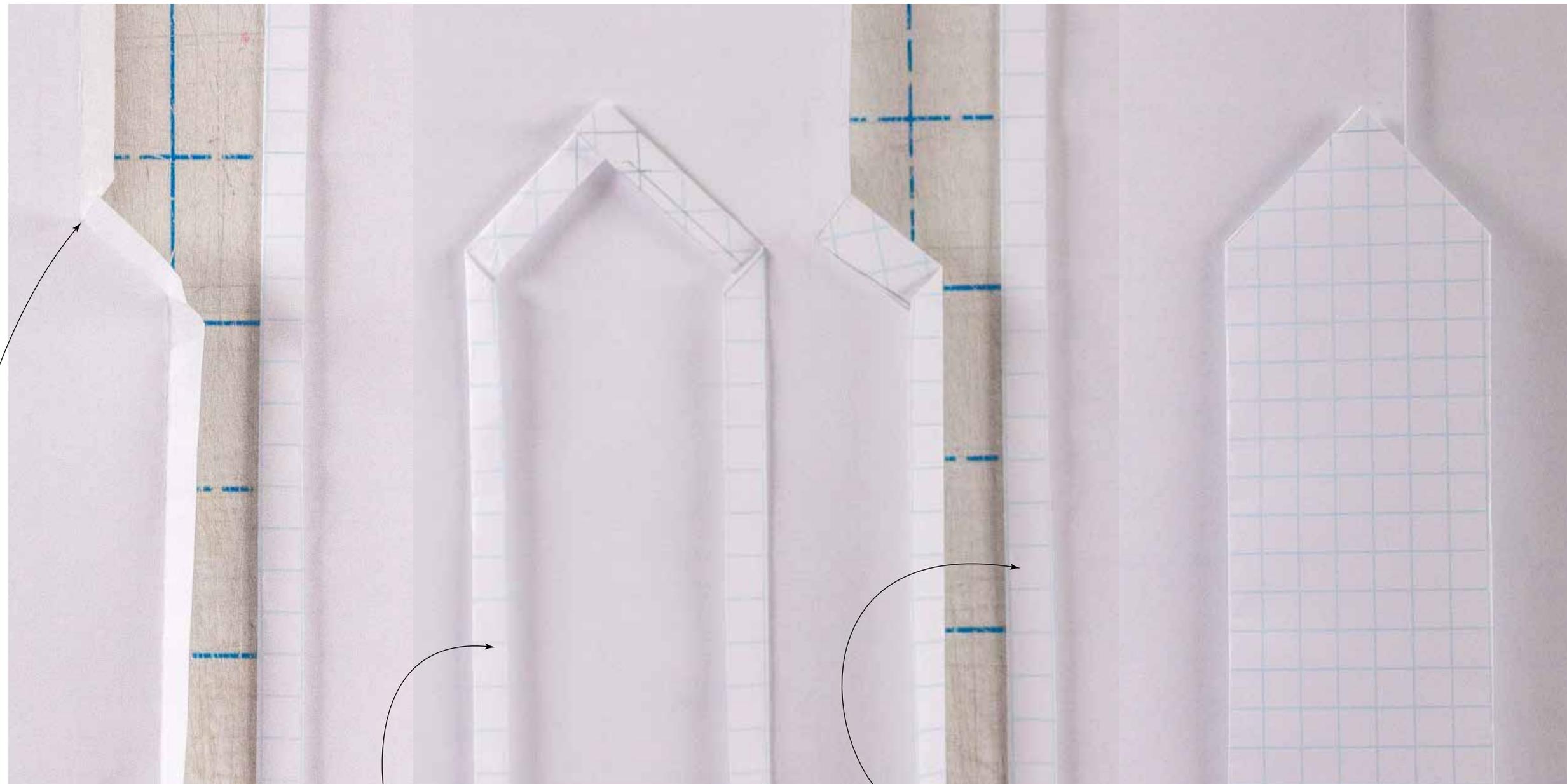
A placket facing can also fold over itself to create an extension, so long as it's wide enough to extend back over the initial seam that you join it to the sleeve with. Note that even though the outer (tower) face of this example is equal to the inner face plus the pressed-open seam allowances (which don't *need* to be pressed open as shown), this face could just as easily be wider, hence the greater-than-or-equal sign. The underlap facing shown here is about as narrow as can be easily handled, and again, it could be any other width you prefer.

Above, the "sleeve" sides are joined above the placket, and at right, the placket tower is folded into place, above a cut-away of the basic structure at play. The next obvious design change to make here, I'd say, would be to move the tower point over, to line up with the seam edge above it.



Here, we take the next logical structural step: Cutting an extension onto the sleeve edge, either for the underlap or overlap, or both; here, it's for an overlap only.

Note that the facing joined to it can itself extend into any size or shape wanted; it's not confined to the extension shape except where the two edges meet.



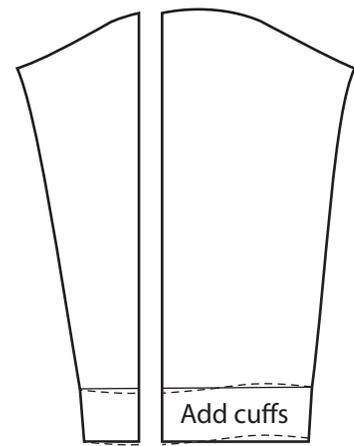
The extension seam allowances above are creased but not yet folded over. Note the clip needed at the top corner.

The extension seam allowances folded over, and the facing shaped to match.

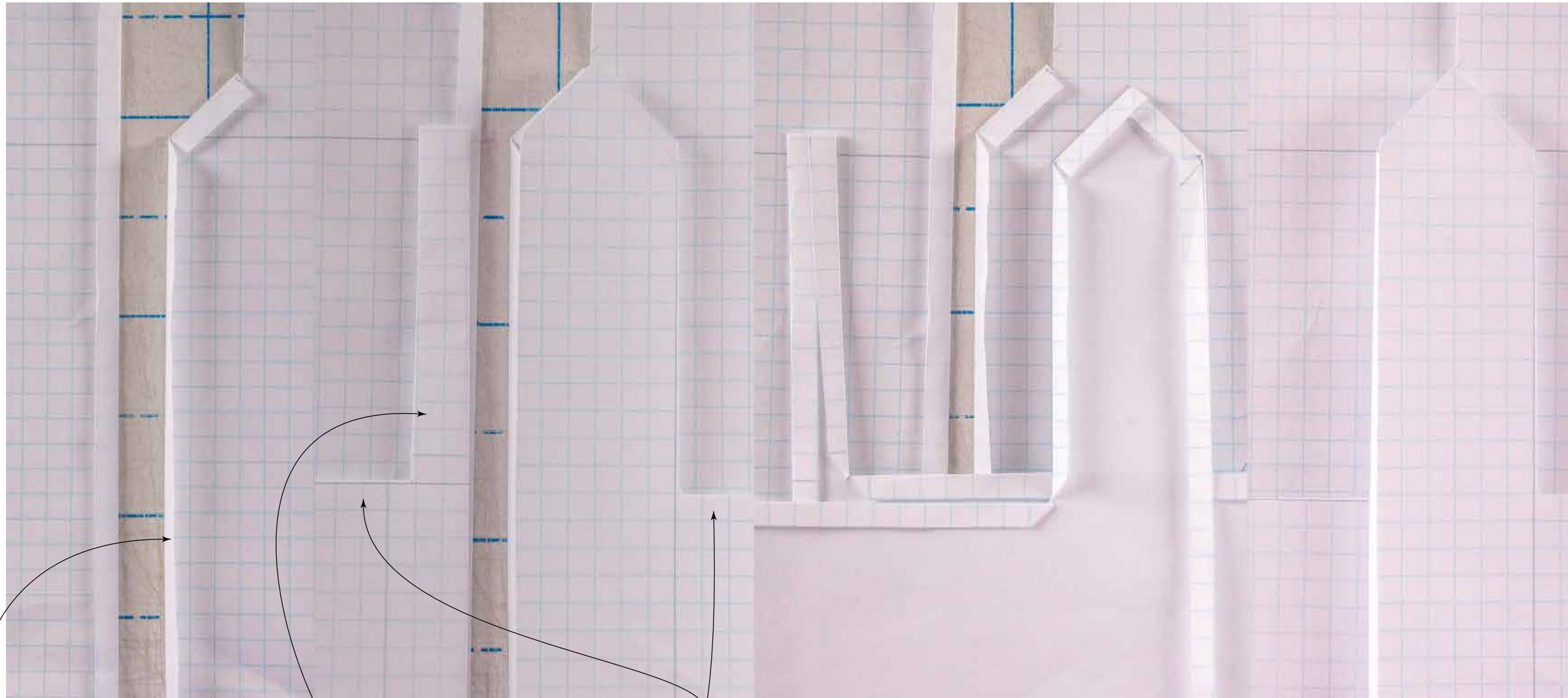
The unextended underlap could get the same narrow facing as in the previous variation.

The overlap facing in place...

As long as we're reshaping the sleeve edges, why not also extend the hem (and the placket) to include a faced cuff, rather than having to add one as a separate band, and separate step?



The results don't have to look like cowboy cuffs, but all the options discussed for those would apply here, in an even easier to manage structure.



Except for the added length, the sleeve-edge extension here is identical to the one in the previous example...

...as is the underlap facing on the unextended edge, but both facings have the extra cuff length cut on.

Here they are wrong side out...

...and in final position.

I probably don't need to keep on saying that the shapes in this structure could be anything you want, as could be the choice of placing these facings either on the right or wrong side of the sleeve, but it's true...

## Placket Construction Options: Sleeve Plackets on a Seam

### Variation 3A: Curved "Tower" Placket on Extended Edges, with Cut-On Cuff Facings

As an example, here's a project in progress, based exactly on the prior example's pattern, with just an added curve between the tower and the cuff parts.

Note that I've put off topstitching the point of the tower until the last minute, to be sure that everything it will cover and secure is in place and trimmed. It's useful to have a largish shape to lock down and cover everything at the critical transition point between seams and facings.

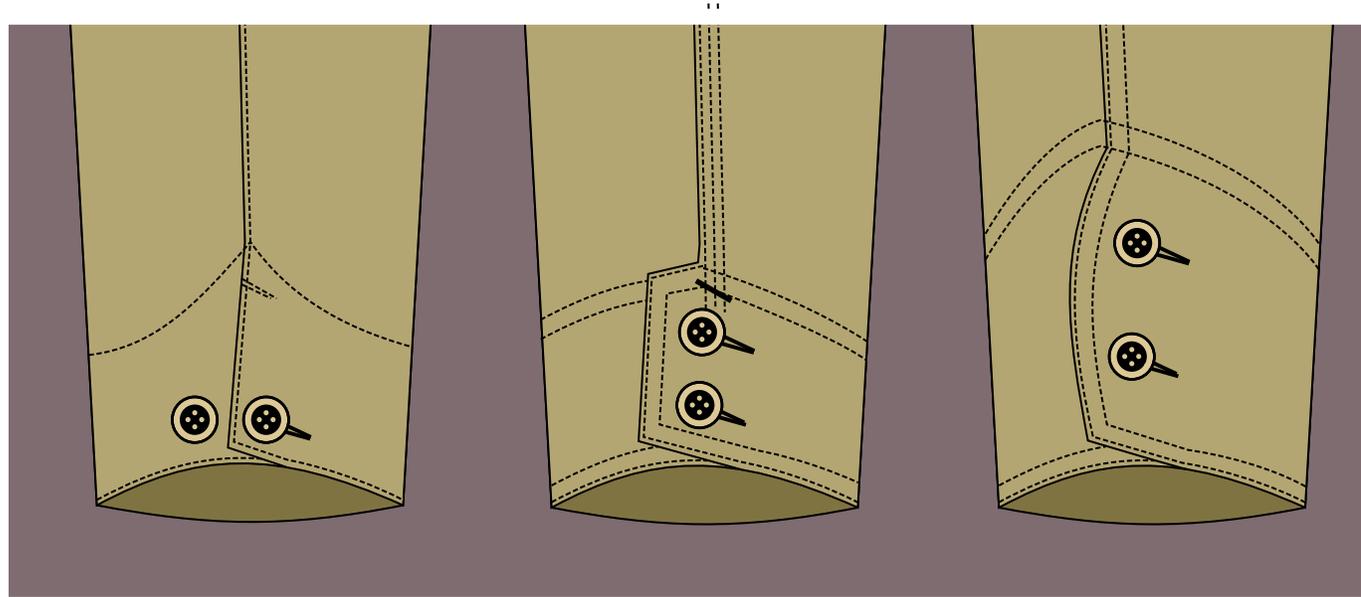
The sleeve's flat-felled seam could have been done first, but it seemed easier to deal with the sleeve parts separately for as long as possible.

I precut and used a card-stock pressing template to ensure that my four curved placket sections were identical. PLEASE take the time to cut these invaluable tools; you WON'T regret it.



## Placket Construction Options: Sleeve Plackets on a Seam

### Variation 4: Cuff Facings with No Obvious Placket



Despite the quasi-cowboy feel to the two previous examples, the most common use for structures like these that I know of, is on the cuffs of work-wear, hunting, and barn coats, set up like those drawn above, with no placket shaping above the cuff, and the facings almost always on the wrong side. Often, the facings are cut from a contrasting fabric, such as corduroy on a denim or canvas garment. Still, the structure's the same.

The coming-to-a-point at the seam line design at right above is the most common of these, with no extensions and the overlap increased simply by placing the buttons so they pull the layers closer together as wanted. It's also common to see these openings placed not on a second sleeve seam as I've been describing, but simply on the underarm seam.



Above are some RTW variations. The blue example has the cuff facings sewn on completely before stitching the seam above, which simply catches the top edges of them, because the cuff edges are cut to taper away to create the opening. The others are hopefully self-explanatory. Except for the one at far lower right, which is simply a fake, no opening under that fold at all, and no buttonhole, and the cuff pieced in, too. I don't know the explanation for that.