

CLOTHING ALTERATIONS



Disabled Living recognises that the clothes available in the high street do not always meet the particular needs of disabled people. It is often difficult to find garments that fit well, are comfortable and do not restrict movement. The daily practicalities of dressing and undressing are often time consuming and can limit a persons' independence. Small buttons, back zips and narrow openings all make dressing more difficult than necessary and can often be overcome with simple alterations.

With this in mind Disabled Living has developed a series of leaflets showing how to do simple alterations to clothes to improve fit and enable independence. They give clear step by step instructions so a previous knowledge of dressmaking is not always necessary. If you do not feel able to tackle a task yourself maybe a friend/relative/colleague will help. Alternatively the telephone number of a local dressmaker can usually be found in the telephone directory.

REPLACE BOTTONS ON SHIRTS/BLOUSES WITH VELCRO SPOTS



- ✂ Remove each button from the front of the garment and make a small pencil mark where the buttons have been removed.
- ✂ Sew the looped side of the velcro on to the pencil marks, this can be done by hand or machine.
- ✂ Replace the buttons by sewing them on top of the original buttonholes on the right side of the garment.
- ✂ The furry side of the velcro is now sewn behind the button, on to the other side of the button hole.
- ✂ Ensure that the garment fastens together neatly by matching the velcro spots.

Buttons & holes

Looped velcro

Furry velcro

Replaced buttons

EXTEND THE OPENING ON TROUSERS FOR EASE OF DRESSING



✂ Remove the zip and unpick the continuing seam for approximately two inches below the zip opening.

✂ Cut a strip of velcro to fit the length of the new trouser opening. The looped side of the velcro is pinned to the underside of the trouser opening where the zip has been removed. (On women's trousers this will be the left side, on men's the right)

✂ Sew the velcro in place by hand or machine. Match the other half of the velcro to the first piece so that they are stuck together along the length.

✂ Fasten the button or hook at the waist. Ensure that the fly of the trouser is lying flat. Pin from the right side of the trouser through the furry side of the velcro taking care not to pin through the other half of the velcro.

✂ Unfasten the trouser and carefully pull apart the velcro. The furry side of the tape can now be sewn in place, this is best done by hand to give a neater finish.

✂ If necessary the button can also be removed and replaced with velcro in the same way.

MANAGING CUFFS WITHOUT UNDOING THE FASTENING



✂ Remove the button from the cuff and mark with a pencil the position it left.

✂ Use shirring elastic to sew the button back in position. Place a pencil between the button and cuff as you sew. Doing this will produce a shank when the pencil is removed.

✂ Wind the elastic around the shank for a couple of turns and fasten off.

ALTER HEMLINE ON A STOOPED OR ASMMETRICAL FIGURE



- ✚ Try on the shirt to be altered, making sure that it is hanging correctly from the natural waistline.
- ✚ Ask the wearer to stand as they feel comfortable (if they stand up straight or in an unnatural posture then the alteration will not hang correctly).
- ✚ Using a meter rule measure vertically up from the floor to the required length of the hem (this must be no longer than the shortest point on the skirt). Mark the position with a pin and take a note of the measurement on the ruler.
- ✚ With the ruler upright (ensure that '0' is at the floor) measure around the skirt using the measurement from the first pin. Mark the position with pins until the first pin is reached.
- ✚ Remove the skirt and join all the pin positions with a chalk line on the wrong side of the fabric. This is the finished length.
- ✚ Cut around the skirt below the chalk line leaving at least 2.5cm hem allowance. Sew the hem by hand or machine.

DROP FRONT TROUSER OPENING



- ✂ Make a neat cut through each side of the waistband to the side seam.
- ✂ Unpick the side seams to a depth of 25 cm.
- ✂ Using a colour that matches the trouser cut two strips of fabric measuring 30 cm by 6 cm.
- ✂ Fold each strip of fabric in half and sew neatly to the back of the trouser along the unpicked seam from the top of the waistband to the bottom of the opening. Do this on both sides of the trouser.
- ✂ Cut two pieces of velcro approximately 25cm long and sew the looped side on to the right side of the new extension openings.
- ✂ The seam allowances on the front should be pressed under. The furry side of the velcro is pinned in position on the wrong side of the trouser opening. Ensure that the velcro is positioned over the seam allowance so no raw edges are showing.
- ✂ Press the velcro together to be sure of a smooth fastening, adjust the position if necessary. Sew the velcro in place on the trouser front.
- ✂ Slip stitch the new back extension to the front of the trouser at the bottom of the opening.
- ✂ Elastic attached to each back waist and fastened at the front will stop the trousers falling down when they are open.

CREATE AN OPENING FOR ACCESS TO A LEG BAG



- ✚ Try trousers on with the bag in the position it is usually worn.
- ✚ Mark on the trouser leg the position needed for the opening.
- ✚ Unpick the seam either side of the marked opening to create an opening of about 20cm.
- ✚ Position the zip on the under side of the opening. Pin in place so that the two edges of the seam meet neatly.
- ✚ Sew zip in place by hand or machine

