

Facings Made Easy

Cooperative Extension Service
College of Agriculture and
Home Economics



Guide C-233

Revised by Susan Wright, Extension Specialist,
from a publication by Lenda Jo Anderson, Alabama Cooperative Extension Service

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A facing is a piece of fabric used to finish raw edges of a garment at open areas, such as the neckline, armhole, and front and back plackets or opening. There are three basic types: shaped facings, extended facings, and bias facings.

SHAPED FACINGS

A shaped facing is a separate piece of fabric cut from a pattern to the same shape and on the same grain as the garment edge it will finish.

Applying a Neckline Facing

If you are using a fabric where a fusible interfacing will make a ridge if applied to the body of the garment, apply the fusible interfacing to the facing before sewing the pieces together. If using a sew-in facing, apply the interfacing to the body of the garment when staystitching is done. Do this before proceeding.

1. Staystitch the neckline of the facing pieces and the garment (fig. 1).

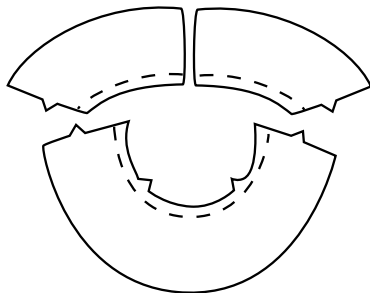


Figure 1

2. Prepare the facing by stitching the pieces together, pressing, and finishing the edge (fig. 2).

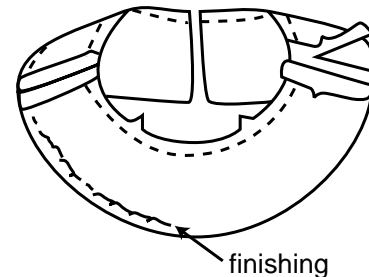


Figure 2

3. Place the right sides of the facing and the garment together. Match seams and notches.
4. Stitch facing to the garment with facing side up (fig. 3).

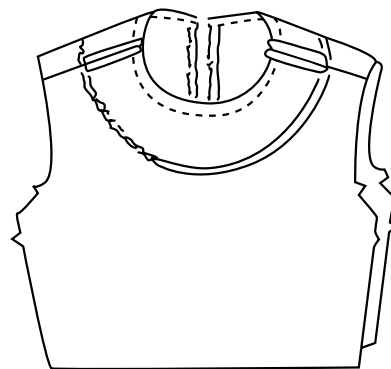


Figure 3

5. Grade the seam allowance by trimming the facing narrower than the garment seam allowance (fig. 4). Clip the seam allowances on the inward curve every $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.

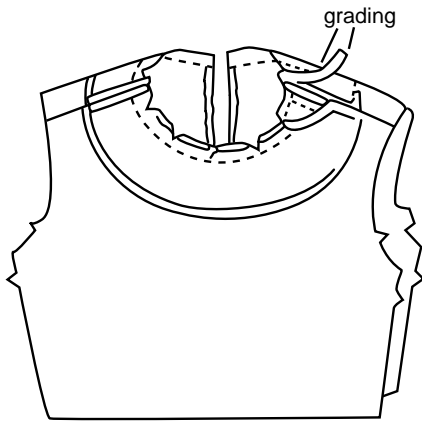


Figure 4

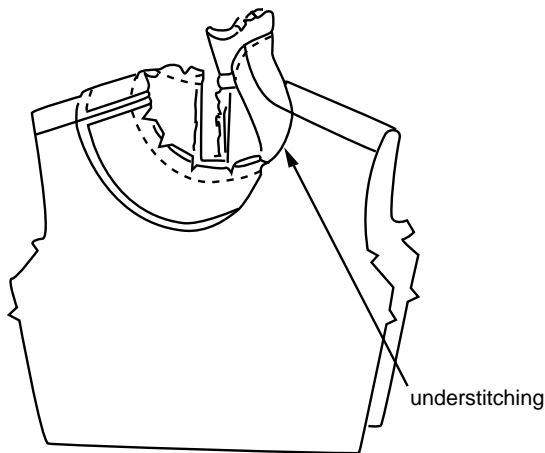


Figure 5

6. Press the seam allowance toward the facing and understitch (fig. 5).

Applying a Combination Facing

A combination facing is a shaped facing in which both the neckline and armholes are finished by the same facing unit.

1. Staystitch the neckline and armholes of the facing pieces and the garment. Apply fusible interfacing to the facing, or sew sew-in interfacing in place when staystitching.
2. Prepare the facing by stitching the back and front pieces at the underarms. Leave the shoulders open. Finish the lower edge of the facing (fig. 6).

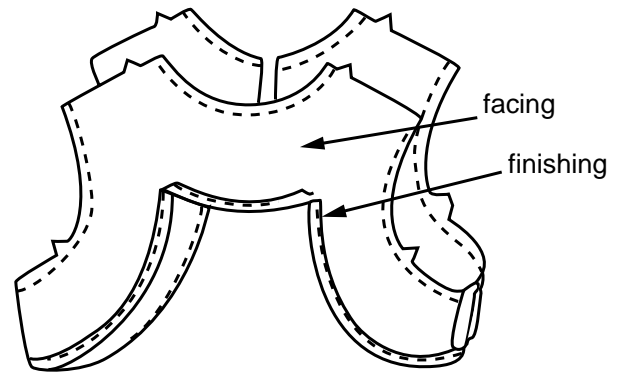


Figure 6

3. Pin a narrow tuck in the front and back of the garment shoulders (fig. 7). This tuck will ensure that the facing and seams will not show on the outside of the garment.

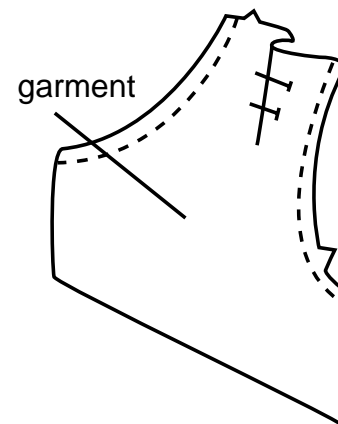


Figure 7

- Place the right sides of the facing and garment together, matching the notches. Stitch the facing to the bodice at the neckline and armholes. Stitch with the facing side up. Do not stitch the shoulder seams (fig. 8).

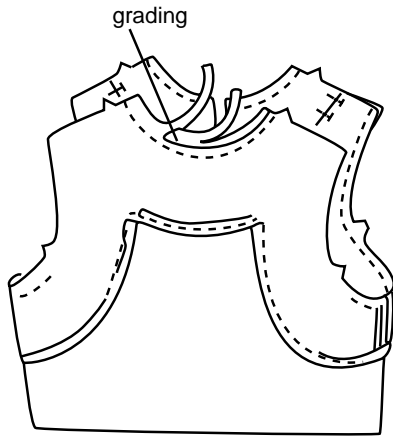


Figure 8

- Grade and clip seams. Understitch where possible.
- Turn the facing to the inside and press the seams.
- Release the shoulder tucks. Fold the shoulder seam of the facing down. Stitch the garment shoulder seam together (fig. 9).

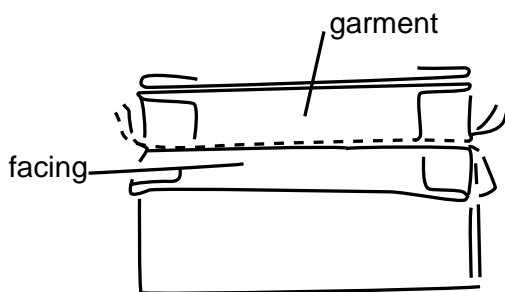


Figure 9

- Press the garment shoulder seam open. Then turn in the facing shoulder seam $\frac{5}{8}$ inch and slipstitch over the inside seam (fig. 10). Tack the facing to the underarm seam.

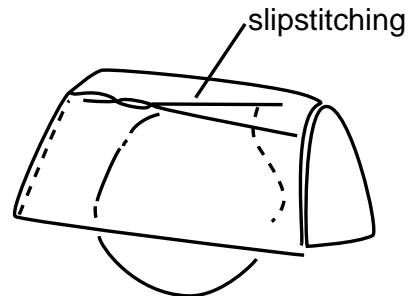


Figure 10

Applying a Slashed V-Neckline Facing

Finish a slashed shaped facing the same as any shaped facing except at the point. Apply interfacing as recommended above.

- Clearly mark the slash lines on the facing.
- Sew the facing pieces together and finish the edges (fig. 11).

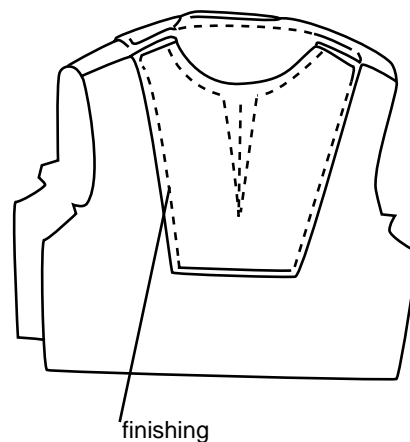


Figure 11

3. Pin the facing to the garment with right sides together.
4. Stitch the neckline seam to within 1 inch of the point. Shorten the stitch length and stitch to point. Raise the presser foot and turn the fabric so you can take one stitch across the base of the point. Raise the presser foot again and turn the fabric to stitch up other side. Stitch 1 inch with small stitches. Then change to regular stitch length and continue stitching the neckline seam.
5. Grade the seam allowance by trimming the facing seam narrower than the garment seam allowance. Cut the opening to, but not through, the stitch at the point.
6. Clip the seam allowance on the inward curve every $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. Turn the facing to the inside and press (fig. 12). Understitch where possible. Tack the facing at the shoulder seams.

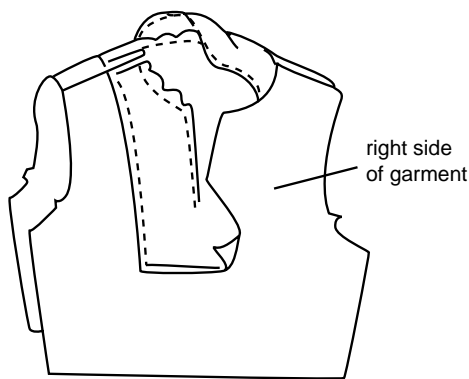


Figure 12

EXTENDED FACINGS

An extended facing is cut as an extension of the garment and then folded back along the edge it finishes (fig. 13). Extended facings often are used on garments with front or back openings cut on a straight line. The neckline of an extended

facing is a shaped facing and should be applied using the same techniques as other facings.

Fusible interfacings may be applied to the facing side of an extended facing. Conventional interfacing may be used. It is applied to the body of the garment and catchstitched in place. If you use fusible interfacing, apply it before proceeding.

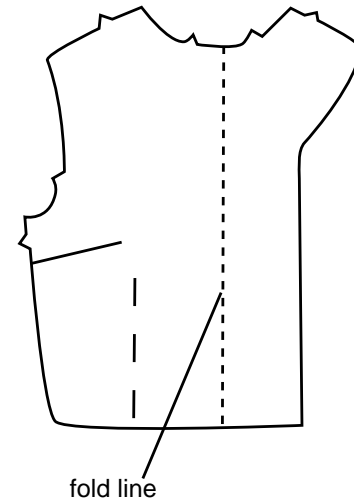


Figure 13

1. Staystitch the neckline of the garment and the facing pieces (fig. 14).

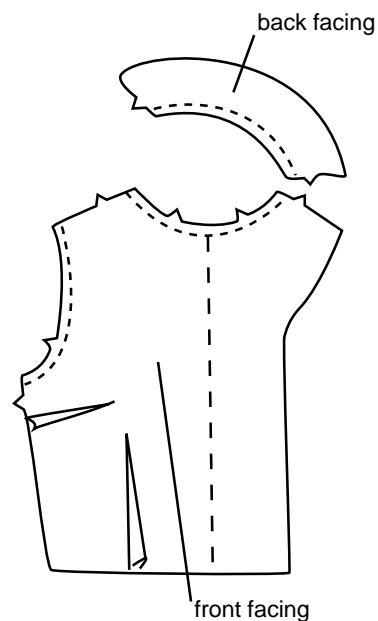


Figure 14

2. Prepare the facing by stitching the pieces together, pressing, and finishing the edge. If using conventional interfacing, catchstitch it along the fold line (fig. 15).



Figure 15

3. Fold the facing along the fold line to match right sides together. Stitch along the neckline seam. Reinforce stitch near the folded edge (fig. 16).

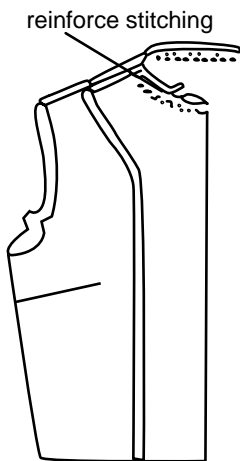


Figure 16

4. Grade the neckline seam allowance by trimming the facing narrower than the garment seam allowance (fig. 17). Clip the seam allowance on the inward curve every $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.
5. Turn the facing to the inside and press. Understitch the seam allowance where possible.

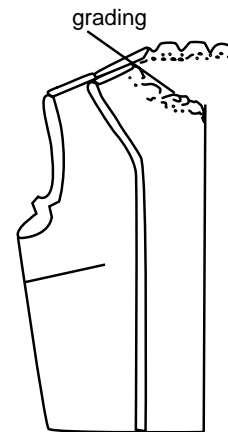


Figure 17

BIAS FACINGS

A bias facing is a narrow strip of lightweight fabric cut on the bias so that it can be shaped to conform to the curve it will finish. Bias facings often are used on sheer fabrics to eliminate a wide facing that may show through. Bias facings also are used on children's garments. A bias strip of lining fabric can eliminate heavy shaped facings on bulky fabrics. A bias facing should be about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide when finished.

1. Cut the bias strip twice as wide as the desired finished width plus the width of two seam allowances (fig. 18). The length should be the length of the edge at the seamline plus 2 inches (fig. 19).

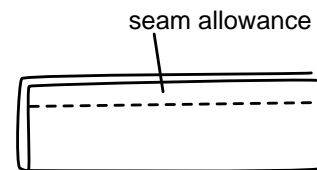


Figure 18

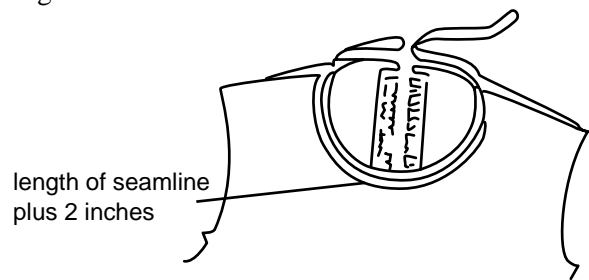


Figure 19

2. Fold the strip in half lengthwise with wrong sides together. Press with a steam iron to shape the strip the same as the edge it will fit. Keep the raw edges even (fig. 20).

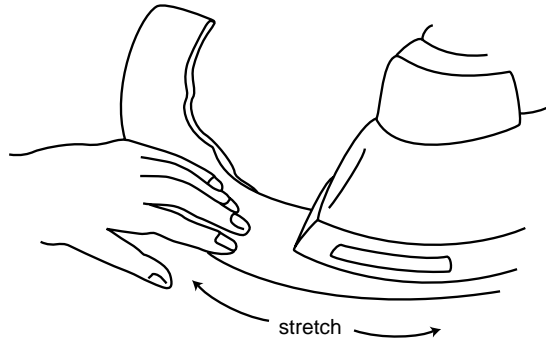


Figure 20

3. Baste the strip to the garment, keeping the edges even (fig. 21). Then stitch, easing the bias strip on the inward curves and stretching on the outward curves.

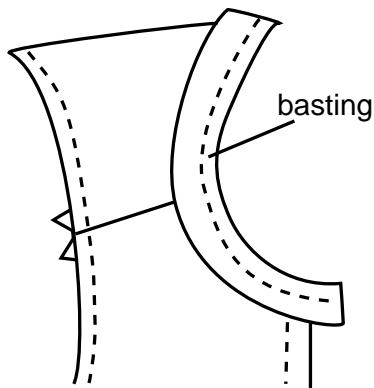


Figure 21

4. Grade the seam allowances by trimming the facing narrower than the garment seam allowance (fig. 22). Clip the seam allowance on the inward curve every $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.

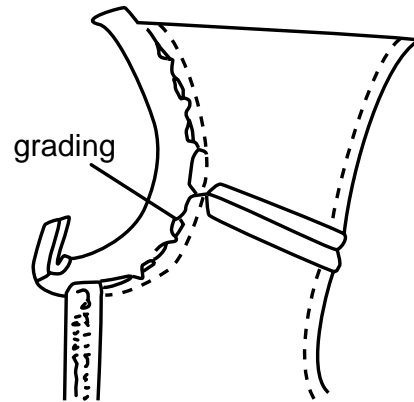


Figure 22

5.
 - Turn facing to the inside and understitch.
 - This will let the seamline roll slightly to the inside.
 - Trim ends and turn under $\frac{1}{4}$ inch at the garment opening.
 - Slipstitch the edge of the facing to the inside of the garment (fig. 23).

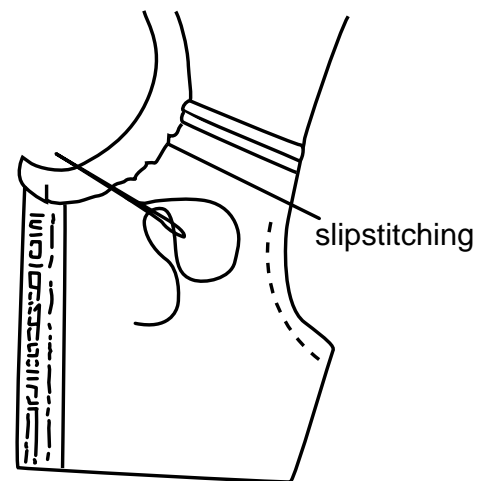


Figure 23

TIPS FOR APPLYING FACINGS

- Both shaped and bias facings can be cut from a fabric lighter in weight than the garment to reduce bulk.
- If you have to alter the pattern, be sure to alter facings and interfacings to match.
- Interface a facing that will have buttonholes in it.
- Reduce bulk in the facing seam by trimming and grading. The seam allowance next to the facing should be the narrower one.
- Make facings smooth and flat by clipping inward curves and notching outward curves.
- Understitch shaped and extended facings to keep facing from rolling to outside of garment.
- Finish outer edge of facings. Generally, the same finish that is applied to seams can be used to finish facing edges. Use the least bulky seam finish that will prevent raveling.
- Tack facings only at seams such as the underarm seam or side seam. Do not hand stitch the outer facing edge to garment all the way around. This gives garments a puckered and unprofessional look.
- Finish neckline facings over zippers as illustrated in figure 24. Then sew a hook and eye or flying snap to hold edges closed.

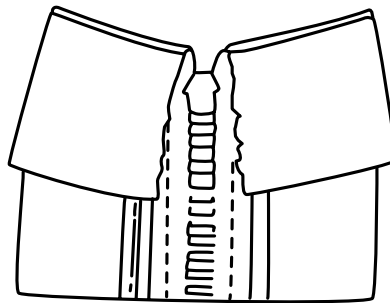


Figure 24

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