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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

MENDING MADE EASIER

BY LORENE DRYDEN

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PLAN YOUR MENDING.....	2
MODERN MENDING BASKET.....	2
PATCHING AND DARNING POINTERS.....	3
STRAIGHT TEARS	
Washable Clothing.....	4
Dry-cleanable Silks, Rayons, and Lightweight Wools.....	6
Wools.....	7
Corduroys and Velveteens.....	9
THREE-CORNER TEARS	
All Materials Except Wool.....	9
Wools.....	10
SNAGS OR SMALL HOLES	
Woven Materials.....	10
Knits.....	10
DIAGONAL CUTS	
All Materials but Wool or Wool-like Spun Rayon.....	13
Wool or Wool-like Spun Rayons.....	13
WORN SPOTS	
Reinforcement.....	13
Miscellaneous Mends.....	14
FASTENINGS	
Buttons.....	14
Buttonholes.....	14
Snaps, Hooks and Eyes.....	14
Pinholes.....	14
SMALL REPAIRS	
Lingerie.....	14
Glove Mending.....	15
Pulled-out Seams.....	15
Worn Shirt Sleeves.....	15
Worn Shirt Collars.....	16
HOSIERY	
Darning.....	16
Press-on Patch.....	16
Mending Runs.....	16
REFERENCES.....	16

PLAN YOUR MENDING

Check all ready-mades before they are worn. It is easier to "prevent" by strengthening weak spots with a stitch or two than to "cure" with many more stitches later on.

Look over clothing regularly with an eye to needed mending. If you catch breaks before they grow, you'll cut down a great deal on mending time.

Take a stitch in time. Once you've found a place that needs mending, mend it before the garment is worn again.

MODERN MENDING BASKET

Whenever you do your mending, you'll find a mending basket a big help. This may be a basket, box, bag, large drawer, or any place where you can keep supplies for mending gathered together. With materials all collected, you'll find it easy to pick up bits of mending in your spare time—not have the chore of hunting for your equipment each time.

Keep in the mending basket different sizes of fine needles, different sizes and colors of thread, darning cotton, scraps of patching material for everyday clothes, buttons, bits of net, tape, snaps, hooks and eyes, a stocking darner if you use one, perhaps little patches you press on to mend some materials, and any other mending helps you use often.

MENDING MADE EASIER

PATCHING AND DARNING POINTERS

PATCHES

Cut the patch on the straight of the goods. Sew it on so the crosswise and lengthwise yarns in the patch will match crosswise and lengthwise yarns in the material.

If the material has a design, match each detail perfectly. That helps to hide the mend.

If the garment is old and faded, try to get a matching patch from a hem or some spot where you can spare old material.

Always shrink new material before using it to patch a wash garment, or it may shrink and pucker when the garment is laundered.

DARNS

Plain darms are suitable for mending small holes, snags, and worn places.

Use thread that blends with the material. Pull yarns from a scrap of the same cloth if you have saved any. Or ravel them from straight-cut seams where they may be spared. Use lengthwise yarns for darning lengthwise, and crosswise yarns for crosswise darning.

If you can't get self yarn, use dull matching sewing thread that blends with the fabric.

Study the weave of the fabric. Repeat it as closely as you can. Work under a strong light.

Use a fine needle and short thread. Long thread pulled back and forth across a tear or hole tends to pull and stretch a darn out of shape.

Work for flatness. If the yarns are pulled up tight, the finished darn puckers and looks drawn. Too loose stitching, on the other hand, will make the darn look "puffy."

Run the stitches unevenly into the cloth around the edge of the darn, so you won't be able to see a definite line where the darn starts.

Pull ends of darning yarns to the inside of the garment and cut them off. Be sure that all raw edges of the hole or tear are on the underside of the darn.

Usually it's better to darn on the right side of the material, because you can see how well you are blending the darn into the fabric.

Press the finished darn. Steam press on the wrong side. Brush darms on wool to lift the nap.

STRAIGHT TEARS

WASHABLE CLOTHING

Clothes which must go through many tubbings need sturdy mends—so do those that fray easily even though they are dry cleaned. Three most suitable patches for this type of clothing are the *hemmed patch*, *machine-stitched patch*, and *pressed-on or thermoplastic patch*.

The **hemmed patch** is a sturdy mend done by hand or machine. This patch is good for housedresses, play and work clothes, or any garment that is washed regularly or frays in dry cleaning.

1. Cut the smallest square or rectangle that will remove the snag, hole, or tear. Cut along crosswise and lengthwise yarns.

2. Clip this hole diagonally at each corner for about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch.

3. Turn under about the distance of a yarn or two beyond the edge of these clips. Crease sharply, being careful not to stretch the edges.

4. Cut a patch about 1 inch larger all around than the hole, matching the pattern carefully.

5. Pin and baste the patch in place.

6. Hem on the right side with very fine stitches. Let the stitches catch in the very edge of the crease.

7. Turn the garment to the wrong side.

8. Turn the patch piece under about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch. Snip off the corners diagonally to avoid thick lumps.

9. Baste and then hem with tiny stitches with the thread of the material so they will not show on the right side.

10. For silks and rayons, hem the patch only on the right side of the material. Merely tack the patch with loose stitches to the garment on the wrong side so it will not fold or wad when pressed.

11. For sturdy work clothes, the patch might be hemmed on the machine instead of by hand.

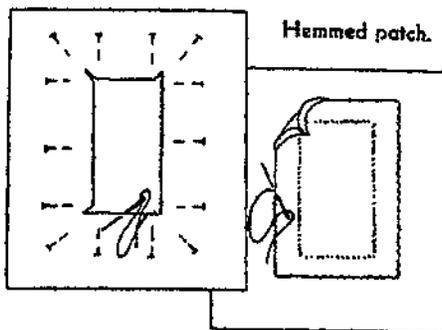
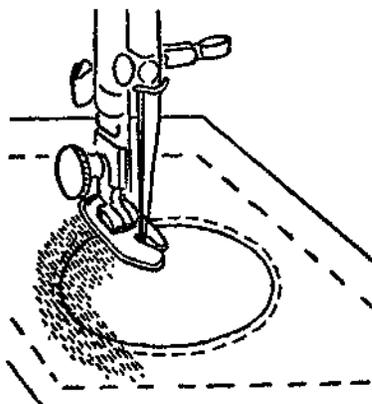


Figure 1



Machine-stitched patch.

Figure 2

The **machine-stitched patch** is sturdy and is quickly made, but on some materials it is more noticeable. This patch is best suited to garments such as men's overalls, work shirts, and children's play clothes, where appearance is not all-important.

1. Cut the torn spot to make a circular hole.
2. Lay a matched piece of fabric under the hole and baste it in place.
3. On the right side, stitch by machine back and forth over the cut edge until it is firm and secure with no rough edges.
4. Trim away any extra material on the underside so the patch will not be bulky.

A **quick machine patch** may be made on *overalls* or *work clothes*. This is an adaption of the minute-and-a-half overall patch.

1. Trim the hole to make square corners.
2. Crease $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch seam allowance on all sides.
3. Cut diagonally at the corners to the crease.
4. Turn to the wrong side.
5. Cut a patch 1 inch larger on all sides than the hole.
6. Fold the overall back along the crease. Pin the patch in place, matching the edge with the cut edge of the overall. (See Fig. 3a.) Then stitch the two pieces together along the crease at the top and bottom of the patch. (See Fig. 3b.) Stitch the outer edges together to keep them from raveling.
7. Fold the overall along the side of the patch and stitch the side seams as above, except for catching the fold of the overalls about 1 inch beyond the edge of the patch. Double stitch this 1 inch on the fold to make the corner more secure. (See Fig. 3c.)

Press-on patches may be bought at many notion counters. They are made of various types of materials treated on one side so they may be pressed on to the right side of the material. They are best suited to hosiery, men's shirts, work clothes, housedresses, sheets and pillow cases, and underwear.

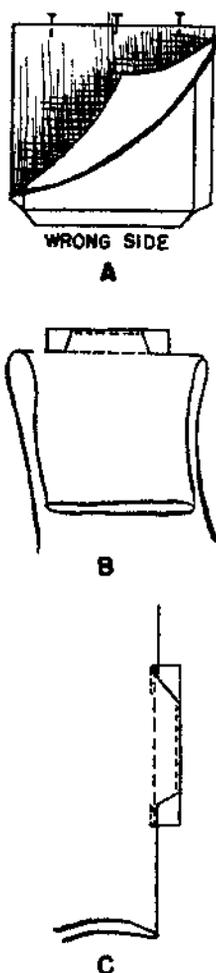


Figure 3.—Quick machine patch

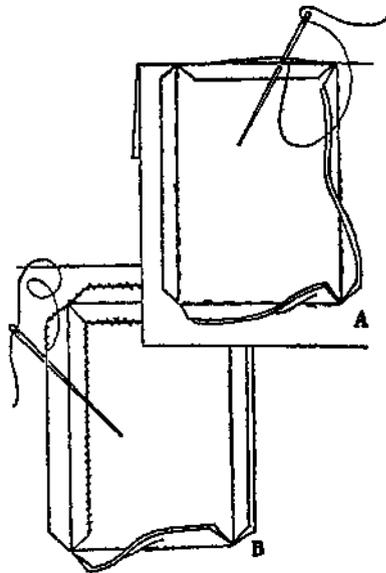
1. Cut the patch to make the corners rounded rather than sharp. They stick better and more smoothly.

2. With the adhesive side of the patch down, press with a warm iron.

3. If patch material matches garment, it may be pressed on the right side.

4. If patch does not match garment, cut a patch from material matching the garment and exactly the size of the hole. Hold the patch in place with the press-on patch put on the wrong side.

5. For a tear which is not frayed, place edges together and hold in place by the press-on patch put on the wrong side.



Inset patch.

Figure 4

DRY-CLEANABLE SILKS, RAYONS, AND LIGHTWEIGHT WOOLS

The inset patch is best suited to dry-cleanable silks and rayons and lightweight wools. (See Fig. 4.)

1. Trim the damaged place with the thread of the material so that it forms a square or a rectangle.

2. Clip the corners diagonally to the same length.

3. Turn the edges under evenly and exactly with the thread of the material all around.

4. Press. (Do not crease with the fingernail because it stretches soft material.)

5. Lay a matched piece of the fabric under the hole and pin it in place.

6. Using contrasting thread, baste the patch to the garment with small slip stitches taken in the fold and directly below on the patch. Be very careful, for if the patch is not basted in exactly to fit and on a straight line of thread, it will pucker and look drawn. On the wrong side the stitch should appear as a running basting stitch holding the edge of the hole that is folded back and the patch together without being caught in the body of the garment.

7. Turn the garment to the wrong side and cut off excess material, leaving a seam allowance. Cut the corners diagonally.

Finish for silks and rayons

8. Press the seam open on the line of basting, being careful not to stretch or pull at the corners.

9. Fold back on the line of basting, placing the right side of the garment and the right side of the patch together.

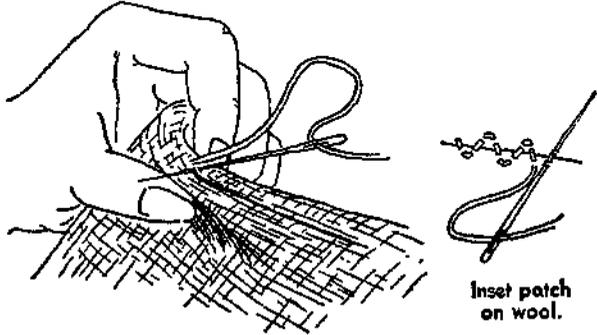


Figure 5

10. From the wrong side overhand the patch into the hole with tiny

stitches caught through the two folded edges. Have stitches go straight with the thread of the material. Be careful to make corners smooth and durable.

11. Press the patch flat with seams open.

12. Overcast raw edges of the seams.

Finish for lightweight wools or spun rayons

13. Stitch on the line of basting with a backstitch or by machine. Regulate tension of machine or hand stitching so that patch will be smooth.

14. Press the patch flat with the seam open.

15. On the right side, pinch the seam line between the thumb and finger. (See Fig. 5.)

16. Stitch back and forth under a thread or two on each side of the seam, pulling the threads of the material up close to hide the seam line. However, keep patch flat and smooth.

17. Steam press.

WOOLS

A plain-weave hand darn is the best way to mend most small tears in wool material. If the darn will be strained when the garment is worn, give it added strength by darning over a piece of the same cloth or a lightweight material basted to the underside.

1. Start and finish the darn about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch beyond the tear.

2. With matching thread and a fine needle, stitch back and forth across the tear on the right side with fine stitches. If the tear is



Figure 6

frayed, weave over the loose yarns so the broken yarns go to the underside.

3. Keep the rows exactly in line with the yarns in the cloth. The darn will show less if the rows of stitching are extended unevenly at the sides.

4. Pull the thread only as tight as the weave of the material. When turning each time to stitch in the opposite direction, let the thread go in easily.

The tailor's patch is particularly good for flannel-like wool or tweeds.

1. Select a matching patch which extends 1 inch beyond the edge of the hole.

2. Draw out threads to fringe all sides of the patch approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.

3. On the right side of the garment baste the patch in place along the edge below the fringe, being careful to match the pattern exactly.

4. Insert a fine crochet hook from the underside and pull one yarn of the patch through to the wrong side. At each corner in turn pull through two or three yarns of the patch to hold it firmly in place while you work. Continue pulling all the yarns through. Be sure the yarns are pulled through on a straight line directly below the edge of the patch.

5. Pull the yarns up tight to the garment on each side as the work is done.

6. Press both right and wrong sides, using a damp pressing cloth.

7. The yarns will hold the patch without fastening in many materials.

8. If the material is not closely enough woven to hold the yarns in place, fasten the yarns by overcasting or by a small running stitch on the wrong side at the edge of the patch. Do not pull sewing threads too tightly as the line of patch will show. Also, the yarns may be darned down or drawn through the weave of the material on the wrong side. The edges of the hole may be darned to the underside of the patch.

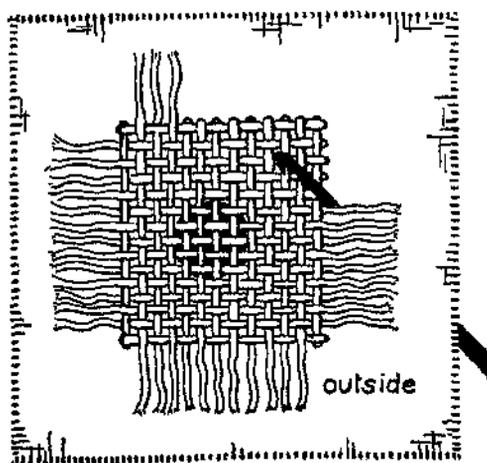


Figure 7—Tailor's patch.

A **darned-in patch** is better for thick wools and worsteds. It is used where a plain darn or a set-in patch or tailor's patch would not look well. It is fairly sturdy and not so easily noticed on thick wools.

1. Trim the hole so it is either square or rectangular.

2. Cut the patch to fit the hole exactly and to match the pattern and grain of the material.

3. Baste the patch to net or thin material.

4. Fit the hole down over the patch and baste to the net or thin material.

5. Using dull matching thread, darn each of the four sides of the patch as if they were straight tears (see Fig. 8). Let the darn overlap at the corners.

Insert patch (See page 6.)

CORDUROYS AND VELVETEENS

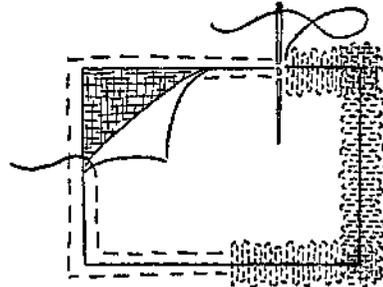
A darned-in patch (see above) may be used to mend garments of pile materials. The darn should be worked from the wrong side of the material instead of from the right side. When finished, brush well on the right side to lift the pile.

THREE-CORNER TEARS

ALL MATERIALS EXCEPT WOOL

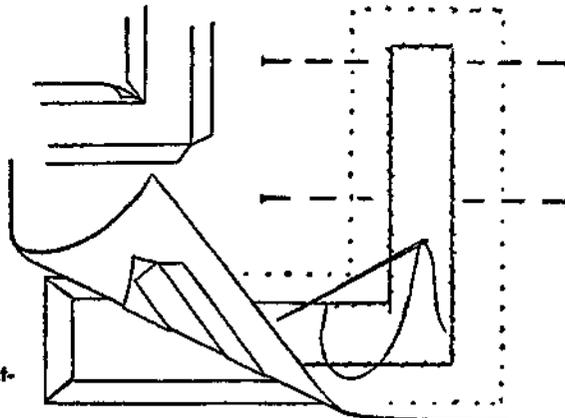
Patch small three-corner tears as you would a straight tear. (See page 4.)

The **hemmed right-angle patch** may be used to mend larger three-corner tears on all material except wool. This patch may



Darned-in patch.

Figure 8.



Hemmed right-angle patch.

Figure 9

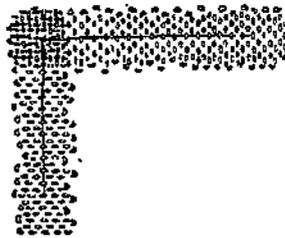
also be used on smaller three-corner tears when material for patching is scarce. Except for its shape, this patch is made the same as a plain hemmed patch. (See page 4.) To make neat corners, clip them as shown in Figure 9.

WOOLS

A **three-corner hand darn** may be used to mend most three-corner tears on wool. For strength this may be worked over net, lining material, or a piece of matching cloth laid on the underside.

1. Darn as though each side were a straight tear.

2. At the corner the two straight darns will lap over each other. This overlapping should be worked with special care or the mend may be bulky and show plainly.



Three-corner hand darn.

Figure 10

SNAGS OR SMALL HOLES

WOVEN MATERIALS

These materials may be *hand-darned* or mended by *reweaving*. Reweaving is nothing more than a darn done carefully with matched yarn so that it almost exactly reproduces the original.

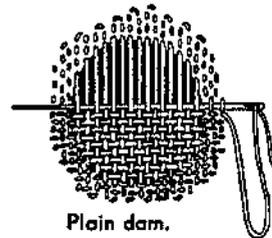
1. Leave the hole in the original shape, which is usually round. Trim out only the most ragged edges.

2. Select matching thread for a darn. For reweaving, ravel yarns from seams and hem of garment or from a piece of self material. Use lengthwise threads for lengthwise stitches and crosswise threads for crosswise stitches.

3. Check weave of material carefully in order that the darning or reweaving will duplicate the original.

4. Work on the right side. Put in lengthwise stitches first, keeping the darn flat.

5. After all the lengthwise stitches are in, weave or darn in the crosswise stitches.



Plain darn.

Figure 11.

KNITS

Try to mend while snags or small breaks are still small. For any type of mend select matching yarn. Ravel out a pocket or some other part of the garment which you can do without, or you may be able to buy a matching skein.

The **knit-stitch mend** may be used to copy a plain knit stitch. This mend hardly shows and it will "give" as much as the rest of the garment.

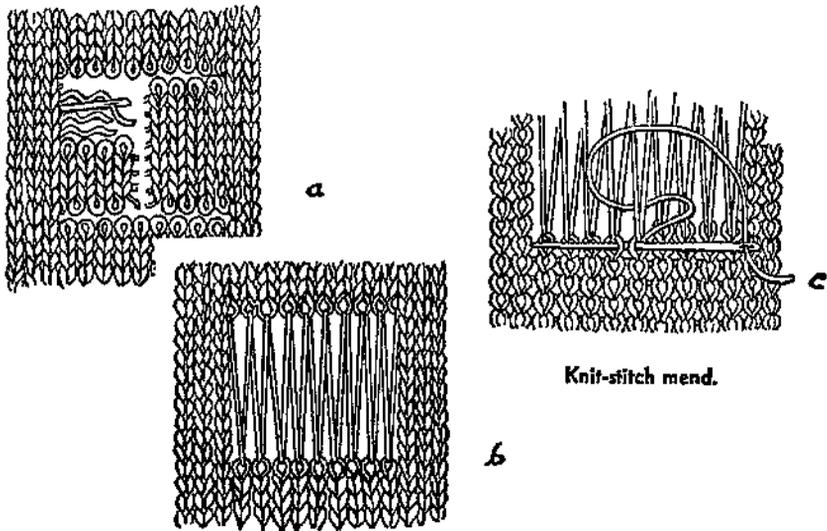


Figure 12

1. Ravel the knit ends of the yarns so there is an even row of loops above and below the hole and the sides are straight with the line of knit stitches.

2. A thread may be run through the loops to keep them from raveling.

3. Thread each loose end of yarn and run it back through the fabric on the underside. (See Fig. 12a.)

4. With matching yarn, zigzag across the hole lengthwise, picking up the loose loops and one or two loops on each side of the opening to give added strength. (See Fig. 12b.)

5. Baste or pin a piece of stiff paper under the mend to hold the material in place while the knit stitch is being put in.

6. Weave in the stitches with matching yarn, working horizontally from right to left. From the underside, bring the needle through the first loop and around under the first two lengthwise yarns and back into the same loop from the right side. (See Fig. 12c.) Continue in this manner from loop to loop and around each group of two lengthwise yarns until the hole is completely reknit.

7. Remove the paper and steam press lightly.

The chain-stitch knit is easier to do than the knit stitch, but it shows more.

1. If runs extend from the hole, repair them first. Slip a crochet hook through the loop at the end of the run and pull the next thread of the ladder through the loop. Continue pulling each thread of the ladder through the loop until the hole is reached. Fasten the loose loops with a safety pin or thread to keep them from slipping back while the mending is being done.

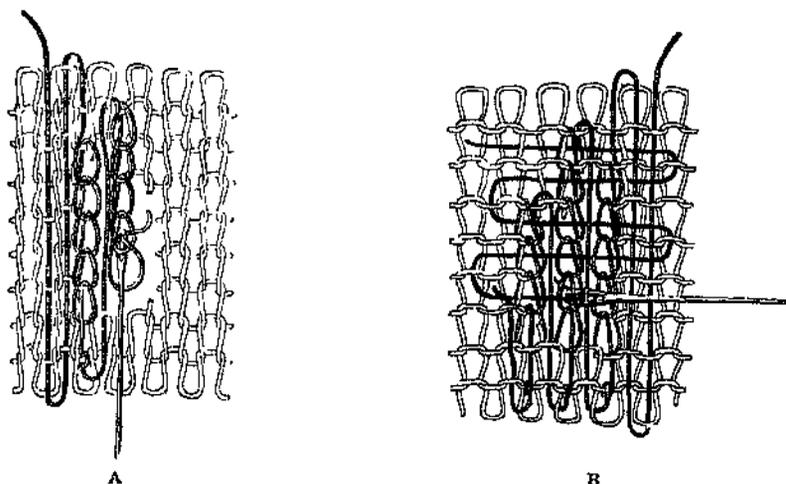


Figure 13.—Chain-stitch knit.

2. Baste or pin a stiff piece of paper under the hole to hold the fabric in place while it is being repaired.

3. Work on the right side. With matching yarn begin near the side of the hole and take a few running stitches at the side to reinforce any thin area (see Fig. 13a); or bring the needle up to the right, making a series of chain stitches to cover the thin ribs.

4. When the hole is reached, continue making a chain of exactly the same number of stitches across the hole as the number missing. When you reach the end of the hole, fasten the chain into one or two loops. Repeat this until all ribs are replaced. Several loose chains will lie parallel over the hole. (See Fig. 13a.)

5. Still working from the right side, slip the needle to the underside and with short crosswise running stitches fasten the loose lines of chain stitching together. (See Fig. 13b.) These stitches should not show from the right side.

6. Remove the paper and steam press lightly.

The **stockinette patch** is suitable for knitted underwear or stockings when the hole is too large to darn neatly. This patch is elastic enough to stretch with the knit material.

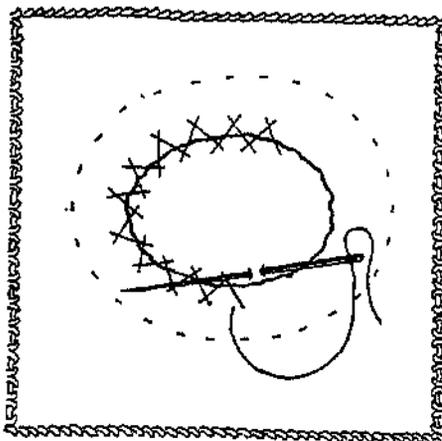


Figure 14.—Stockinette patch.

1. Trim the hole round or oblong.
2. From old underwear or stockings cut a patch large enough to cover all weak places around the hole.
3. Pin and baste the patch under the hole with the ribs of the patch matching those of the knitted garment. Do not turn under a seam.
4. Catch stitch the patch in place on both the right and the wrong side. (See Fig. 14.)

DIAGONAL CUTS

Diagonal cuts stretch, lose shape, and spread easily, so they should be mended immediately.

ALL MATERIALS BUT WOOL OR WOOL-LIKE SPUN RAYON

If there is patch material, mend with a hemmed or an inset patch. Cut into a square or a rectangle exactly on the crosswise and lengthwise threads of the material. See directions on page 4.

Small cuts may be mended with a reinforced darn. (Fig. 15.)

WOOL OR WOOL-LIKE SPUN RAYONS

A **reinforced darn** is best for these materials, since they stretch out of place easily.

1. Baste a piece of net or thin material under the cut.

2. With a fine needle and matching thread or yarn of the material, work from the right side and darn back and forth across the cut, catching the reinforcing material. The stitches should follow the thread of the material and not necessarily be at right angles to the cut.

3. Keep the material flat and do not draw the stitches any more tightly than the thread of the material.



Figure 15.—Reinforced darn.

WORN SPOTS

As soon as you see worn spots on the elbows of a garment or in other places that receive wear, do some preventive darning to make the garment wear longer and save yourself more mending later on. Use matching thread—weave it in and out to look as much like the material as possible.

REINFORCEMENT

Reinforce the underside of the thin spot with a piece of matching, similar, or lining material. Sometimes you can cut a piece from the hem if no scraps are available. Darn back and forth, through, and slightly beyond the thin spot with tiny stitches. Keep the rows of stitching parallel with the lengthwise and crosswise yarns of the fabric. Sometimes it is enough to stitch back and forth with matching yarns raveled from the seams or from a scrap of material without reinforcing material under-

neath. On knits, darn or chain stitch thin places on the inside of the garment.

MISCELLANEOUS MENDS

If elbows of sweaters and knitted dresses are worn through, make short sleeves and move the wristlets up to finish them off. Before cutting, stitch along the line desired for the short sleeve to keep it from raveling. When you sew on a wristlet, stretch its cut edge to fit the sleeve. Seam and finish so it can't ravel. If elbows on children's, men's, and boys' sweaters wear through sew oval patches of felt or leatherlike materials on the outside. Old gloves, old handbags, felt hats, or ready-made patches sold at novelty counters can be used.

FASTENINGS

BUTTONS

Sew on buttons with a thread shank to prevent strain on the cloth. To make the shank, lay a couple of pins across the top of the button and sew over them. Pull out the pins, lift the button, and hold it while the thread is wound around underneath.

If the cloth underneath the button has been torn, make a patch and sew the button on again with a shank.

If a button has to stand much pull, stay it on the underside with a piece of tape, ribbon binding, or a piece of selvage of the same material. On coats, jackets, and heavy cottons, sew a tiny stay button on the wrong side directly beneath the button which you are sewing on the right side.

BUTTONHOLES

In ready-made clothes, buttonholes often ravel. Fasten off any part not raveled, then rework with buttonhole or blanket stitch. If the hole has raveled out completely machine-stitch around it, close to the edge. Then rework the buttonhole.

SNAPS, HOOKS AND EYES

Sew these fasteners on through every little hole with as strong a thread as will match the weight of the dress material. Save old fasteners on clothing you discard.

PINHOLES

Heavy pins or brooches worn on dresses and blouses sooner or later catch yarns, leave ragged holes. A good thing to do is to work eyelets at the places where the pin goes through the material.

SMALL REPAIRS

LINGERIE

Net or lace wears longer if you machine-stitch back and forth over torn or worn places. If broken places are large, baste to a piece of net, then stitch by machine. Mend broken edges of

lace with a short blanket stitch in thread of matching weight.

Pulled-out shoulder straps on slips and brassières often take a piece of the garment with them. Mend these by setting in little patches. Try to make them an attractive part of the garment. Put them on in diamond-shaped or triangular pieces and finish with Bermuda fagoting. Bermuda fagoting is hemstitching without pulled threads.

GLOVE MENDING

Split seams in fabric or leather gloves may be sewed together with the same kind of seam, stitching, and thread that were used in the construction of the glove.

1. Buttonhole or blanket stitch around the edge of the rip or split seam. (See Fig. 16a.)

2. Catch the two edges together with an overhand stitch. (See Fig. 16b.)

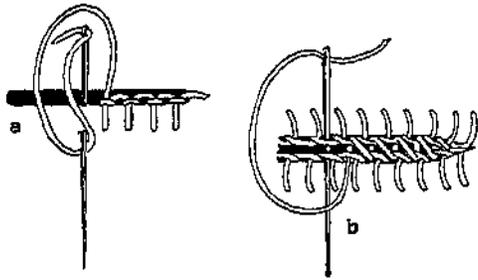


Figure 16.—Glove mending.

PULLED-OUT SEAMS

When a seam pulls out, the garment usually is already too close fitting to allow for deeper seams. On a tailored dress with outside stitching you can mend pulled-out seams with an outside-stitched seam. First, reseam the garment—even though there is scarcely any seam. Then lay a piece of narrow matching tape on the underside of the seam. Stitch on the outside along both sides of the seam line so the finished effect looks right with the rest of the garment.

If you have extra scraps of material, you can sometimes mend broken seams with small insets. Put the insets in to look as though they were part of the original dress design. Thus you can enlarge the garment at the same time you mend the seams.

Pulled-out seams of slips may be mended by ripping the entire seam, turning under each edge, and then fagoting the edges together to make the new seam. Buttonhole twist is the best type of thread to use for the fagoting.

WORN SHIRT SLEEVES

The worn edge of a single cuff may be repaired with a bias binding. That shown in Figure 17 is inconspicuous if carefully stiched near the edge. In repairing colored shirts in this way, several narrow bias strips may be taken from the corners of the tail of the shirt.

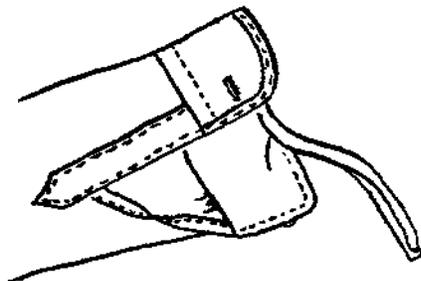


Figure 17.—Mending shirt sleeves.

WORN SHIRT COLLARS

Rip off the collar, turn and resew it.

HOSIERY

DARNING

Use only as many strands of the darning yarn as you need to match the weight of the stocking. The darn will look better and wear longer if you use yarn of the correct weight and color.

To darn a hole in the stocking foot, leave the hole in the round shape it took as it developed. Snip away the ragged edges. Then, with a darner or your hand in the stocking, work with small stitches back and forth across the hole and far enough into the fabric around the hole to strengthen the thin, weak spot there. Darn in one direction, then the other—weaving in and out to make a plain weave. (See Fig. 18.)

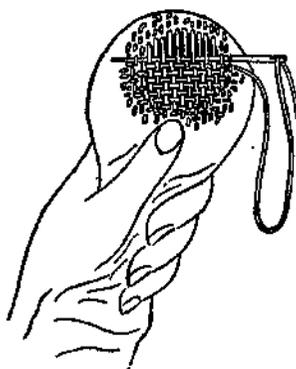


Figure 18.—Darning hosiery.

PRESS-ON PATCH

Pressed-on patches may also be used to reinforce thin places and to make some of your older stockings wear a little longer. These patches are most suitable for holes or weak places in the stocking feet where they will not show. See page 5 for directions on applying the press-on patch.

MENDING RUNS

When new hose run, they may be mended to look like new at shops that specialize in this work. If you mend your own, take a fine needle and fine matching thread. First catch the stitch that is making the run. Then, using the overhand stitch and working from the wrong side, mend the stocking a little beyond the ends of the run. Tie your mending thread securely when you finish. A special hook is available for reknitting runs, but it requires much patience to develop skill in using it.

REFERENCES

1. A.B.C.'s of Mending, *Farmers' Bulletin* No. 1925, United States Department of Agriculture, November, 1942.
2. Keeping Clothes Wearable, by Gladys L. Butt, *Cornell University Bulletin for Homemakers*, No. 536, October, 1942.
3. *Better Dressmaking*, by Ruth Wyeth Spears, published by M. Barrows & Co., 1943.

Figures 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, and 18 were taken from "A.B.C.'s of Mending"; figures 7, 13, 14, and 16, from "Keeping Clothes Wearable."