

Jacket Making

KWIK•SEW 3485

By Martyn Smith

Martyn's made hundreds of jackets over the years and still loves making them. He finds that every one sets its own challenge, be it fabrication, style or the interruptions during the process by those not as devout. This article is about the salient features of jacket construction, not a step-by-step process as this pattern has a great construction sheet that is easy to follow.



Photo 1

have pre-shrunk the fabric by either washing or pressing). The iron, press and pressing surface should be totally dry as well. The addition of moisture during the fusing process seems to diminish the bond between the interfacing and the fabric. The resin or glue may look like it's adhered but it will eventually delaminate, sometimes even before the construction process has been completed.



Photo 2

First, the most important thing is the interfacing of a jacket. Not all interfacings are born equal so it's important to purchase a product that is in keeping with the finished look of the style. The main job of an interfacing is to retain the shape of the garment and to support areas such as pockets, facings, lapels and shoulders. Interfacing can also give a lighter fabric more body or weight, but it shouldn't remove the drape and handle of the cloth. For this reason I have mainly used weft inserted interfacing that looks like a knit; but isn't.

Testing several different types of interfacings on your fabric before starting is very important. If you're not sure about this, buy some samples of interfacing, do some testing for yourself, and determine which gives you the best results. There is nothing worse than turning a beautiful fabric into a piece of cardboard. Never apply steam when fusing an interfacing to fabric, the fabric should be completely dry (especially if you

Photo 3

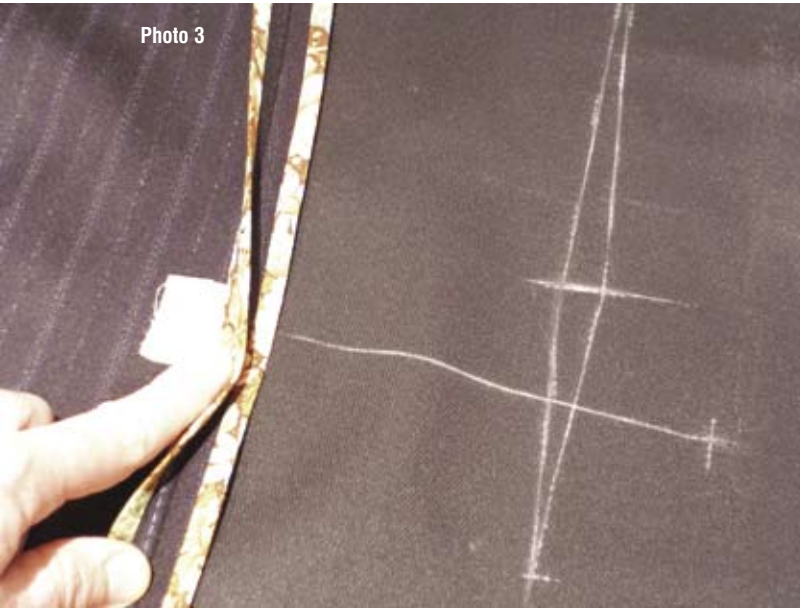


Photo 4



Photo 5

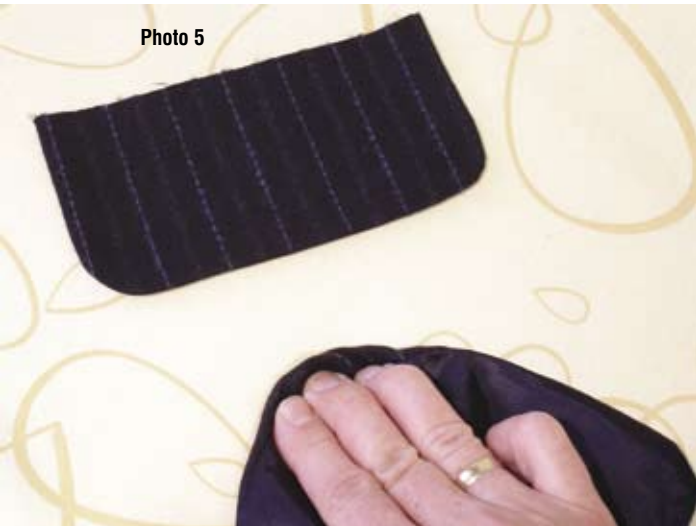
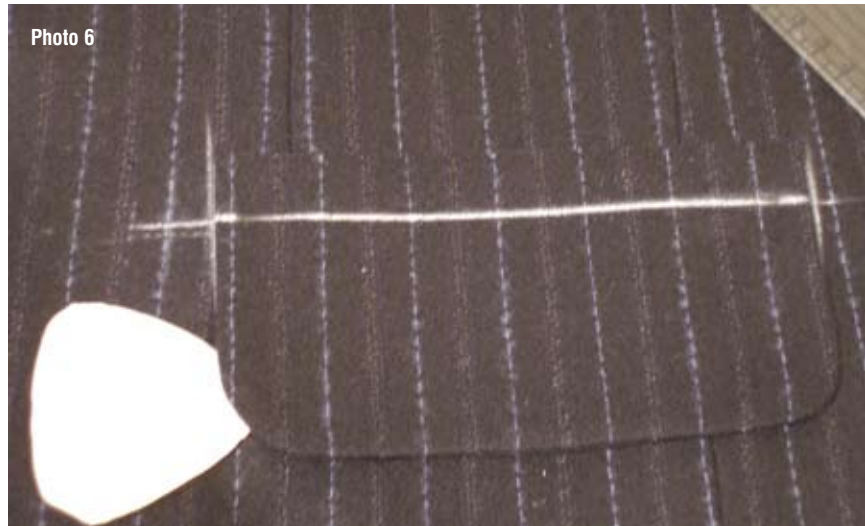


Photo 6



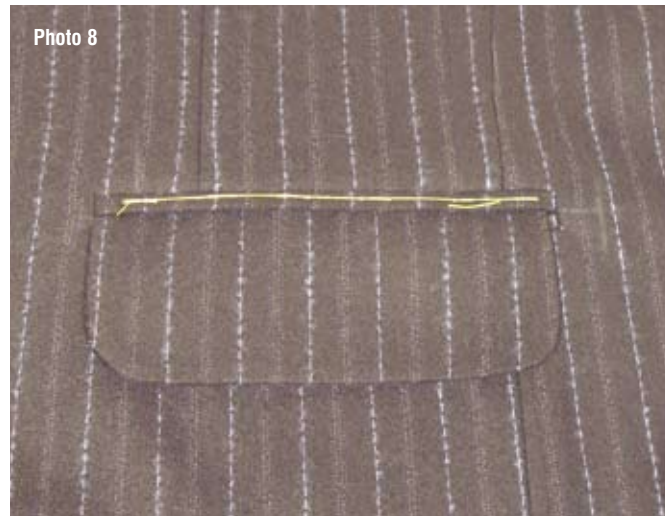
In saying all of this, I am aware of a couple of jacket interfacings on the market that DO suggest using moisture when applying them. I have never used these products so I do not know if the information above would apply to them. All I can say is that the fashion industry goes to great lengths to ensure perfectly dry conditions when applying interfacing to their garments, as the main reason for a tailored jacket being returned by a consumer is due to the delamination of the interfacing (coming unstuck). All the big suit manufacturers throughout the world run their fabric through big roller ironing presses to remove any trace of moisture before the cutting and interfacing starts. (I will be writing an article on interfacings and their application in the not too distant future).

Photo 1 shows the placement areas on the main body of the garment. The top of the back has been reinforced to add some stability for the shoulders and back neck area. If the fabric is lightweight, use some pinking shears to feather the edge of the

interfacing so there is no ridgeline where the interfacing finishes at the cross back.

A little support underneath the arm on the side-body helps when putting the sleeve in and the hems should have a strip of lightweight knit interfacing 1.5 – 2cm deeper than the hem turn-up. This will ensure that the hem fold (crease) stays in and it also prevents the hem from dropping if the blind hemming should come adrift for any reason. Do the same thing for the bottom of the sleeves too. See photo 2.

The front of the jacket has been interfaced completely (I've used black in this case) and because the fabric feels like it will fray I have taken it all the way into the seam allowances. On a thicker fabric I would usually cut the interfacing away from the seam allowances, hem area (of front only) and the neck/collar area. This reduces the bulk when turning out the seams and gives a much thinner appearance when pressed. In addition to doing all of this, I've placed a shoulder shield of interfacing (cut on the bias) with the shoulder seam allowance removed. This



acts as an extra layer to prevent the front of the shoulder pad from showing through when the garment is on and to also give a more structured appearance and stops any drooping.

Transferring the markings for darts, pocket placement and stitching lines is very important. I've given up on tailor's tacks and use a tracing wheel and dressmaker's carbon paper. If a sharper line is needed, re-draw with tailor's chalk for a firmer line to follow. See photo 3. You will also notice I have a small piece of interfacing under the seam allowance where the pocket will be stitched through on the side-body. This is to ensure that no stitches go awry when making the jetted pockets in the next stage.

Photo 4 shows how I like to bind my seams in a tailored unlined jacket. I usually use a 'fat quarter' of lightweight quilting fabric for a severe contrast as the Europeans do. Cut bias strips at 3cm (1¼ in) wide and have the bias raw edge sitting under the pressed seam allowance as it doesn't fray and is a much finer finish. There is nothing less attractive than bulky bound seams that show through when the garment has been pressed.

Make up the pocket flaps BEFORE the jetted pockets are sewn in. This ensures that the pockets' mouths are the correct length for the flaps to fit. There is nothing worse than finding your jetted pockets are either too big or too small for the flaps.

In photo 5 you can see that I am rolling out the curved corner of the flap, just like you would with bread dough, as this will break the grain of the corner and give you perfect curves. The seam allowances inside the flap have been trimmed to 6mm (¼in) for this purpose and there has been NO clipping or dovetailing. I use this method for curved fronts, lapels and anything else that needs to be perfectly formed.

Photo 6 shows the finished flap with its depth line chalked in and the end markings for the jetted pocket placement. Use the pattern markings as a guideline only. Slide the tailor's chalk along the edge of the flap when marking as it gives a little ease in the jetted pocket as they always get tight or slightly shorter during the making. Slide the flap up into the jetted pocket and make sure the flap depth line is just hidden by the top jett. See photo 7.

Photo 8 shows the flap basted into place and ready to be stitched in place on the original jett stitching line. The pocket bags are then stitched on to complete the pocket. See photo 9. As this pocket has a flap there is no need to cut the back pocket bag in the outer fabric (as the pattern suggests) as it will never be seen and makes the pocket much thinner. See photo 10.

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