

Twill Tape

By: Roseana Auten

<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/twill-tape--2>



Twill tape is one of the most useful and versatile notions you can have in your sewing box. We need it to reinforce a seam in a garment â such as a shoulder seam, and or waist seams. But don't count it out for its decorative possibilities.

Step 1 — What's Twill Tape?



Twill tape is a sort of "ribbon" that's woven in such a way that the yarns form a herringbone or diagonal pattern. It's often made of cotton, but can be made of almost any fiber, depending on what it's going to be used for. In home sewing, we find cotton twill tape in the notions section of the fabric store, usually prepackaged in 3-yard lengths. It can come in lots of different widths, but for us, a width of 1/4" or 3/8" is the most useful. You'll find it in white, and sometimes, black. (But on my last trip to a great notions place in New York, I saw it in dozens of colors.)

Step 2 — When Do I Need To Use Twill Tape?



If you're making a top with a fabric that seems flimsy, slippery, or "stretchy," twill taping the shoulder seams is a good idea. Cut a length of twill tape that's 4" longer than the length of the shoulder seam of the garment you're making. Pin it to the wrong side of the fabric on your **BACK** bodice piece. Sew on the twill tape, using a longer stitch length (3.0 or 3.5). Cut off the excess tape. Then, switch back to your regular stitch length and join the front piece to the back piece at the shoulder seams, right sides together. You'll have a **VERY** strong shoulder seam that won't ripple or stretch. A lot of better manufacturers twill tape the shoulder seams in their men's T-shirts. This man's shirt is twill taped at the shoulders in black, and there's matching twill tape on the back neckline â€” two areas of stress on a garment, especially with men.

Step 3 — Another Version of Twill Tape



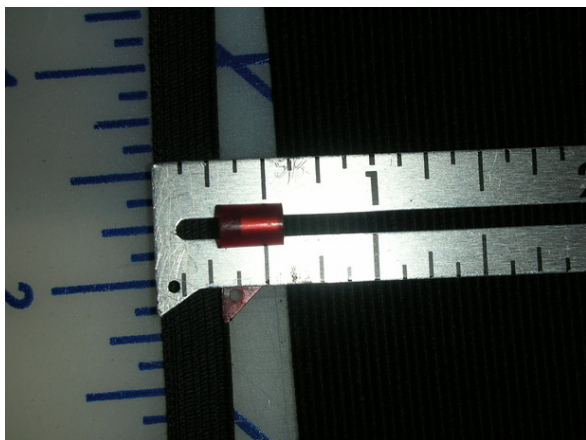
This is Japanese fusible stay tape, sometimes called fusible twill tape. It doesn't have a twill weave, however. It's really just plain, woven fabric that's been treated with heat-activated adhesive, cut into narrow lengths, and rolled on reels. It comes in black and white, and better sewing supply stores may carry it. (Also, check Nancy's Notions online.) It's fairly strong, but not as beefy as a piece of sew-in twill tape. It's really convenient, because you use the heat and steam of your iron to apply it, and you don't get any distortion of your fabric. Place it, and press it.

Step 4 — Easy Twill Tape



Sometimes, you realize midway through a project that you'd like to stabilize a seam, but you don't have any twill tape on hand. So whenever you're cutting out a garment, save the long, selvage edges of your fabric scraps. (The selvages are those thin edges that run along the length of your fabric. They keep the fabric from coming UN-woven, and they are strong.) Use sharp scissors or a rotary cutter to cut these off. Instant twill tape.

Step 5 — My Selvage Becomes Twill Tape



It's 1/4" wide, just right. I need it to stabilize the waist seam of a skirt I'm making.

Step 6 — Attaching the Twill Tape



Whenever you apply twill tape, whether fusible or sew-in, place it evenly over your stitching line. You may need to mark your stitching line to accomplish this, using a marking pen or chalk.

Step 7 — Twill Tape Can Be Decorative



This dress no longer fits me, but I've never wanted to part with it because I love its details, including this length of twill tape applied at the hem. You could do this on any skirt!

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