

How to Make Hand Worked Buttonholes

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<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/how-to-make-hand-worked->



This is a technique I've done on a few different garments and even though I haven't yet perfected their art, I've still found them to be extraordinarily beautiful. I've picked up tips and tricks here and there from various sources on the best way to do these for the home seamstress, so my info is a mish mash of this and that. And much of it is based on what is available to us nowadays. For instance, finding true buttonhole gimp...I've looked high and low and have never been able to find any, so I've listed my best substitute.

Step 1 — Step 1



Start by measuring your button. You'll need to get the diameter plus the thickness of each button. For example, my button diameter is 3/4" and my thickness is 1/8" so I need to create a buttonhole that is 7/8". Transfer this marking onto your fabric.

Step 2 — Step 2



You now need to create a boundary for your buttonhole with your machine. Machine stitch a scant 1/8" on each side and across both ends of the buttonhole marking. Carefully slash the buttonhole down the middle and add a little fray check to the slash.

Step 3 — Step 3



While the fray check is drying, cut a 15 - 18" length of buttonhole twist and run it through your beeswax. Press the thread with a hot, dry iron allowing the beeswax to more thoroughly coat the thread.

Step 4 — Step 4



Once fray check is dried, take a long length of your buttonhole gimp (either a strand of the twist or the button and craft thread) and tie a knot in one end. About 1/2" away from the buttonhole, thread your buttonhole gimp through the fabric and up through the bottom end of the buttonhole.

Step 5 — Step 5



Taking the buttonhole twist in hand, begin the buttonhole by back tacking the reverse side of the buttonhole to secure the thread in place (this is in place of a knot). Thread your buttonhole twist up through to the right side of the buttonhole in the corner opposite the slash. Allow the gimp to lay across the buttonhole and start working the buttonhole across one of the long edges. The buttonhole stitch is like a blanket stitch in reverse. Hold the thread along the top edge of the material, with the end pointing in the direction you are going to sew. Make a loop, with the top of the loop pointing upward. Inserting the needle through the loop, then into the fabric from the wrong side and then through the large loop left on the right side of the material. Tighten your stitch, keeping the purl on top by see-sawing the thread and using your fingernail. Tip - the key to a well worked buttonhole is even stitching along with keeping the purl (the small braid that forms on the inside lip of the buttonhole flat against the edge)

Step 6 — Step 6



As you near the first opposing end of the buttonhole, begin to fan the stitches to round the corner. Now this fan is only going to be on one end and a bar tack on the other, alright? Alright.

Step 7 — Step 7



To finish off the buttonhole, you'll need to bar tack the end. To make a bar tack, take 3 or 4 long stitches across the width of the buttonhole and then blanket stitch over the top of the those long stitches catching a bit of the fabric underneath. This forms a rather beautiful braid at the end of the buttonhole and gives it a very sturdy and long lasting effect. Pull the thread through to the reverse side of the buttonhole and back tack in place to secure the end the thread. Cut the knot in the gimp and bring both gimp threads through the reverse side of the buttonhole. Trim all threads close to the buttonhole.

Step 8 — Fun Tips and Ideas



A few tips: • when working the buttonhole, allow a small space in between each stitch. the buttonhole stitch is not meant to be a satin stitch • make sure that the buttonhole area has been interfaced • use a similar color gimp as the color of your fabric • use a slightly different shade of buttonhole twist from the color of your fabric to really make the buttonholes stand out • Try using different stitch lengths - one

short, one long, one short - for a different, more "starry" effect â‡† Have a blouse calling for vertical buttonholes? Bar tack both ends instead of fanning one of the ends â‡† Keyhole buttonhole? Punch an awl through the keyhole end first, then slit the buttonhole. Fan the threads at the keyhole end, leave out the bar tack at the other and instead satin stitch the end together. â‡† What about eyelets? Totally! Now how cool would these be on a belt?

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