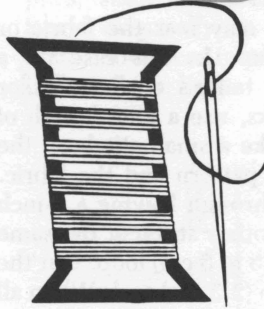


FACT SHEET



CORDUROY FABRICS LOOK ALL SEWN UP

Beverly Rhoades and Barbara Field*

Corduroy is a popular pile fabric widely used in today's fashions, with both woven and knitted versions available. Some wovens have stretch capability with the addition of spandex; this type is especially appropriate for active sportswear or casual wear. Knit corduroy has a soft drapable hand and excellent wrinkle resistance.

Corduroy is attractive, durable and comes in a variety of rich colors, patterns and prints. It is available in the traditional wide to narrow wales, sculptured with rich texturized patterns and as a luxurious suede-like, ribless fabric. In fact, some varieties may not resemble corduroy at first glance.

Simple or tailored designs are most appropriate for corduroy. And because it is particularly sturdy, it is a favorite for children's wear. Check pattern envelopes for fabric suggestions to be sure a pile fabric is suitable.

Fabric

Look for yardage requirements under "with nap" on the pattern envelope. If not given, add 3/8 to 3/4 yard (35 to 70 cm.) for cutting pieces one direction and matching designs. The pile direction affects the color. Brush your hand lightly over the surface. When the pile runs up (feels rough), the color looks deep and rich. When the pile runs down (feels smooth), the color looks soft and muted. Choose the effect desired and create the entire garment in one pile direction. Pre-shrink all fabrics, zipper and washable trim.

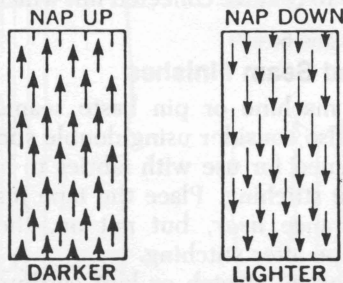


Fig. 1

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Interfacing

Either woven or non-woven, fusible or sew-in interfacings are appropriate for use in corduroy. When considering fusible interfacings remember the heat and pressure of the iron may flatten the pile. Always make a test sample before applying fusible interfacing, and follow the manufacturer's directions for fusing. Refer to the pressing section for general guidelines for pressing corduroy.

Choose an interfacing with care requirements suitable for the fabric and the garment to be made. For example, a tailored jacket will most likely be dry-cleaned, while you may wash a frequently worn pair of slacks. Coordinate interfacing with the weight of the fabric; however, it may be desirable for interfacing to be crisper or softer to create desired effects (e.g. a crisp notched collar or a softly rolled shawl collar). For waistbands in pants or skirts, a heavy-weight, non-roll type waistbanding works particularly well.

Preshrink interfacings as the garment will be cared for. If the interfacing shrinks after application, the garment section will wrinkle permanently.

Cutting Preparation and Marking

Lay the pattern pieces on the wrong side of the fabric. The top of each piece should point in the same direction. Match ribs in wide wale corduroy as stripes. Use only a lengthwise fold when cutting two pieces at a time.

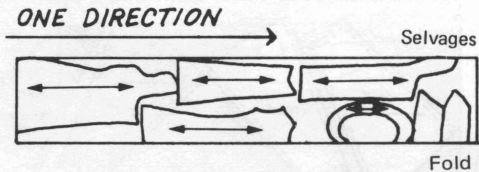


Fig. 2

If the pattern piece is too wide for the width of fabric when folded, measure the length of fabric needed to cut one thickness and cut the fabric crosswise at this point. Turn one layer around so that the bottom becomes the top, matching pile to pile. The nap on both pieces will then run the same direction allowing two layers to be cut at the same time. Consider using weights instead of pins to hold pattern pieces in place, as pinning may be difficult on thick pile.

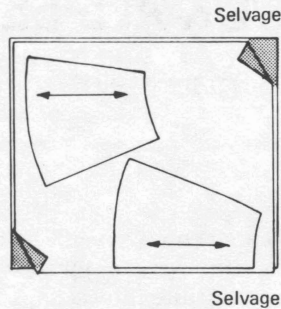


Fig. 3

You may want to position certain pattern pieces diagonally to form a chevron design. To plan a V-shape or chevron at a seamline, the pattern must have a bias grainline. Some patterns are designed to be sewn on the bias. But you can create a chevron in a pattern that is not bias. Fold the front and back pattern pieces from the center seam to the side seam so the grainline arrow forms an "L" or right angle to itself; crease. Unfold the pattern piece and draw a new bias grainline along the crease.

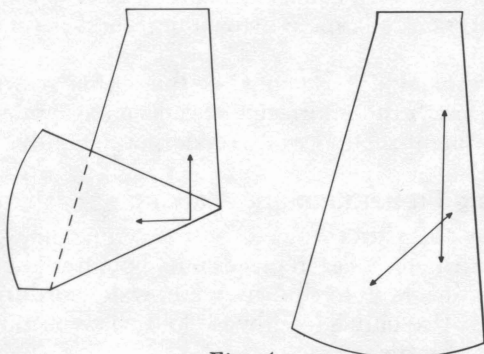


Fig. 4

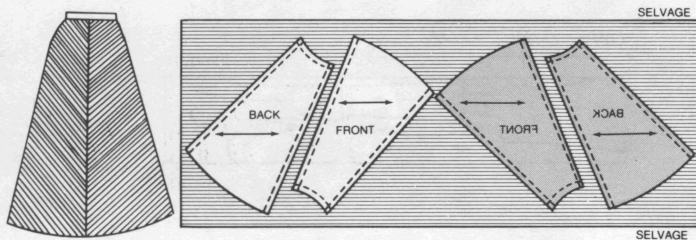


Fig. 5

Note: When the garment is sewn, alternating pieces will appear dark and light because of the nap going in different directions. The amount of variance may differ with heights of pile or in knit corduroy. If this trait is undesirable, cut samples to determine the amount of shading.

A serrated tracing wheel may mar the fabric or may not successfully show up. In this case try a smooth edge tracing wheel, tailor's chalk or tailor tacking. To make tailor's tacks, use a long length of double unknotted thread. Take a small stitch on the pattern marking through the pattern and the fabric. Pull the needle and thread through leaving a 1-inch (2.5 cm) thread end. Take another stitch at the same point leaving a 1- to 2-inch (2.5 to 5 cm) loop. Cut the thread leaving a second 1-inch (2.5 cm) end. When all symbols have been marked, lift the pattern off, separate the fabric layers to the limits of the thread loops, then cut the thread between the two layers of fabric.

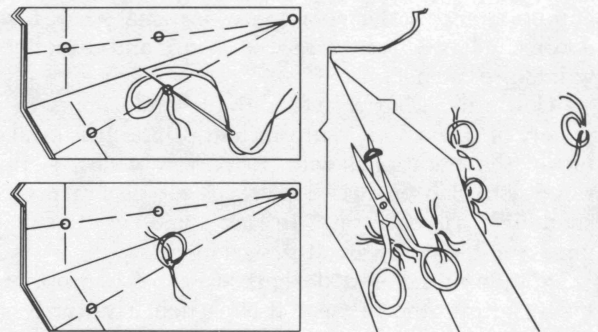


Fig. 6

Machine Preparation

Use a balanced tension on the machine. Set stitch regulator for 8 to 10 stitches per inch. Reduce pressure on the presser foot to prevent crushing the pile and to help prevent the fabric layers from shifting during stitching. A roller or even-feed foot will also help eliminate shifting of the fabric layers. Use a size 11 (80) or 14 (90) needle, sharp for wovens, ball point for knits, or universal for either. Thread the machine with matching all-purpose cotton covered polyester or polyester thread. Clean frequently under the throatplate to remove collected lint which may impair stitching.

Seams and Seam Finishes

Hand, machine or pin baste seams to prevent slippage. Also consider using double stick tape especially designed for use with fabrics to hold fabric in place while stitching. Place the tape just within the seam allowance *near*, but not on, the seam line. Remove tape after stitching.

If sewing on stretch or knit corduroy, a narrow zigzag will provide the extra "give" needed for the fabric. Or, use a built-in stretch stitch if your machine

has one. Stitch in the direction of the pile when possible. Lift long pile caught in seams with a needle. Grade all enclosed seams. Trim so that the widest side of the seam allowance lays against the right side of the finished garment. To eliminate bulk in heavier piles, slash and press open darts and trim excess fabric diagonally at intersecting seams. Also, trim seam allowances inside hem fold to avoid overlapping bulk and use lighter weight fabric for facings.

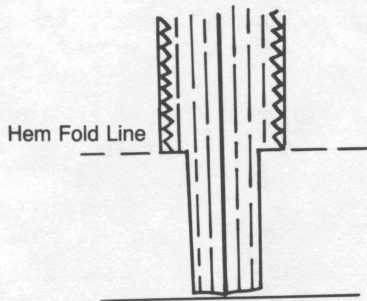
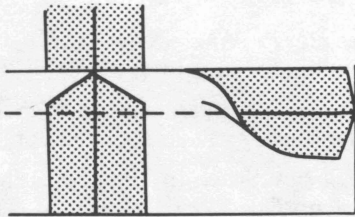


Fig. 7

Knit corduroys, as with all knits, need no seam finish but are sometimes zigzagged or machine overcast. Appropriate seam finishes for wovens include: the bound edge, for unlined tailored garments; zigzag; hand or machine overcast; or pink and stitch.

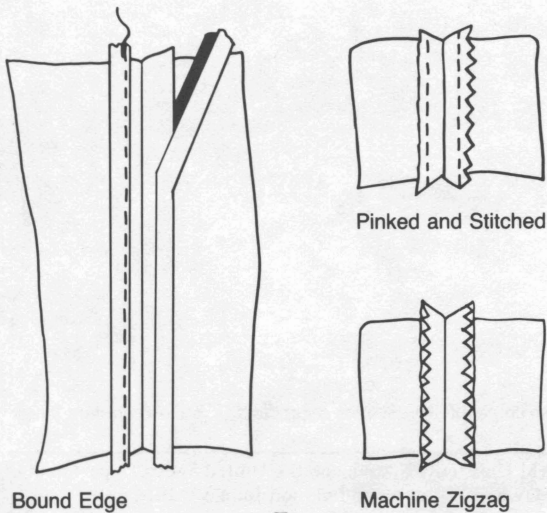
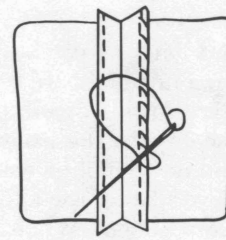


Fig. 8



Hand Overcast

Closings

Tailored or machine buttonholes may be used. Cut lips for bound buttonholes in narrow wale or ribless corduroy on the bias; corded bound buttonholes are also appropriate. Avoid bound buttonholes in wide wale varieties because the lips are too bulky to handle easily. Zippers applied by hand or machine blind stitched in the last step may be more attractive. Leather or vinyl trims, buttons, and button loops add interest.

Hems

On tightly woven corduroy, machine stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (6 mm) from the edge and pink. Machine zigzag or overcast stitches are also appropriate. If fabric raveling badly, apply seam tape or seam binding. Machine stitch tape to the garment to control raveling of raw edge underneath. Knit corduroy needs no finish but may be zigzagged. To hem with an inside hemming stitch by hand or machine, fold garment down at hem stitching line and stitch just below hem edge as shown in Illustration 9. An outside catch stitch is also appropriate as shown in Illustration 10. A fusible webbing product used in the hem may be suitable with some fabrics.

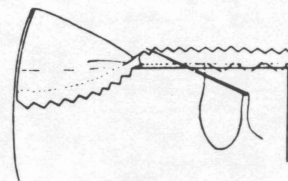


Fig. 9

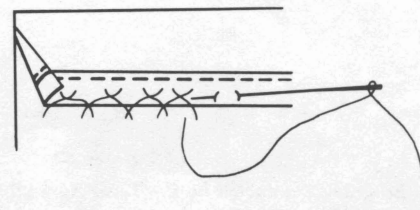


Fig. 10

Pressing

Press seams and darts as you sew. To press, lay fabric face down on a needle board or similar flexible product, heavy terry towel, or on another piece of corduroy placed face up on the ironing board. Press with a gentle up and down motion using a steam iron. If only a dry iron is available, use a lightly dampened press cloth to create steam. When pressing seams open, use only the tip of the iron. Use a seam roll or place brown paper strips underneath seam allowances to prevent imprint of the seam allowance on the top side of the garment.

Care

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning. Corduroy usually may be laundered by hand or by machine; however, tailored garments are generally dry-cleaned because of their construction. For home laundering, use warm suds and no chlorine bleach. Turn garments inside out to prevent lint from clinging to the pile. Wash with similar colored gar-

ments. A fabric softener added to the last rinse cycle fluffs up the pile. Line or tumble dry. If line dried, do not wring or twist. Tumble dry at medium heat setting and remove garment while slightly damp to prevent wrinkling. Pull seams taut to prevent puckering. When dry, brush pile in one direction to fluff.

References

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