

Clothing and TEXTILES

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAMMING

Sewing Technique: Lapped Zipper

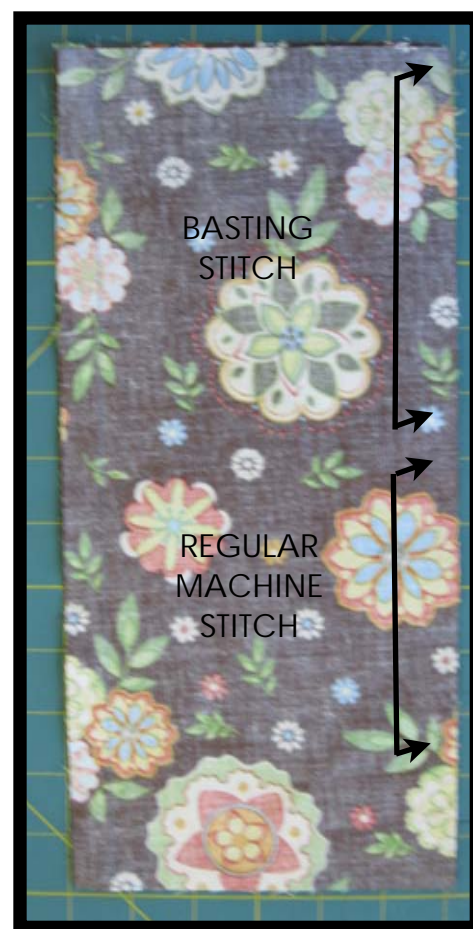
Lapped zippers are often found on skirts at the waistband. A lapped zipper is constructed so that the zipper is not visible. The zipper will remain closed throughout the process of inserting the zipper. All sewing is done on the inside of the garment except for topstitching. Remember to always keep the needle positioned between the zipper foot and the zipper teeth when sewing. NOTE: Throughout this tutorial, the term “placket” will be used. A placket is the fabric that surrounds and reinforces fasteners in a garment. In this instance, the fastener referred to in this tutorial is a zipper.

STEP 1: On the wrong side of the fabric, measure and mark the placket opening where the zipper will be placed. Do this by measuring from the top of the garment down along the seam to



the zipper bottom stop. Take into consideration the composition of garment and if there will be a waistband or any other special feature at the top of the zipper. Mark the placement of the bottom stop with a marking pencil.

STEP 2: While sewing the seam, machine stitch the seam closed until the marked point of the bottom of the zipper, backstitch, then switch to a basting stitch for the distance of the placket seam. Press seam allowance open.

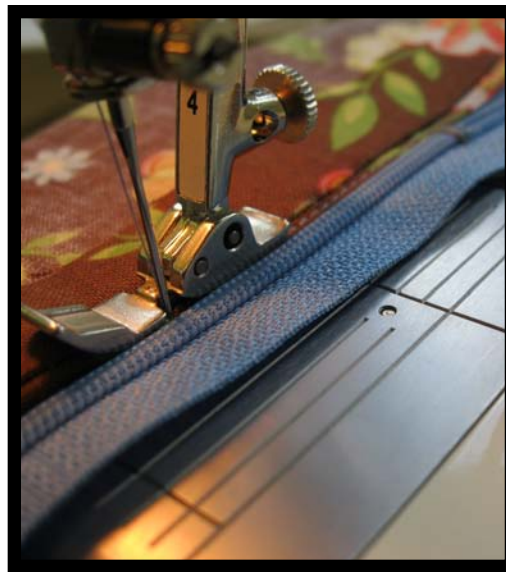




STEP 3: Replace sewing machine foot with a zipper foot. Place zipper face down with the teeth centered on the pressed open seam on the inside of the garment, matching top and bottom stops with marks.

STEP 4: Beginning at the bottom and sewing only on the zipper tape and seam allowance, machine baste along the stitching guideline on the zipper tape (approximately in the center of the zipper tape).

STEP 5: Turn the zipper face up, creating a small fold in the same seam allowance that you've just sewn. Lightly press to define the fold, which should be close to yet not touching the teeth. Topstitch from bottom to top going through the right side of the seam allowance, back side of same seam allowance, and zipper tape along the edge of the fold.



STEP 6: Turn the garment right side out. Hand baste across the bottom of the zipper and up along the un-sewn side of the zipper, making sure to catch the garment, seam allowance and the zipper tape in the stitch. The basting stitch should be centered along the zipper tape.



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STEP 7: Now using a regular machine stitch, and still working from the right side of the garment, topstitch through the garment, seam allowance, and zipper tape, backstitching at each end. Follow close to the basting stitch, beginning from the bottom seam. Sew several stitches along the bottom, turn and stitch up the side to the top of the garment.



STEP 8: Remove machine and hand basting stitches and open the placket to reveal the zipper.

Industry Standard for a Well-Constructed Zipper:

- Correct type of zipper is used for intended design and use
- Stitch length and tension are correct
- Zipper enhances overall design and function of garment
- Zipper is applied so fabric patterns are matched
- Zipper lies flat and smooth with no puckering
- Threads are secure and trimmed
- Zipper opens and closes smoothly

Industry Standards for a Well-Constructed Lapped Zipper:

- Zipper is hidden when zipped up
- Lap is the same size from bottom to top
- Topstitching is even and straight

References:

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- Brackelsberg, P., & Marshall, R. (1990). *Unit Method of Clothing Construction*, 7th ed. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Cole, J., & Czachor, S. (2009). *Professional sewing techniques for designers*. New York, Fairchild Publications, Inc.

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