

Chapter 9

Flat Felled Seams

“Flat felled” is the industry term for the double stitched seams commonly found on jeans and western wear. The traditional sewing method is complicated, frustrating and often has inconsistent results. Garment factories that produce large quantities of items employing flat felled seams have specialty machines that complete the process in one step. The following two-step method was developed for small garment factories and is easily duplicated for home sewing because there is no need for special equipment.

**Pattern Pieces needed for
the exercises in this chapter:
#17 (cut 2)**



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Flat Felled Seam

Start by threading the machine, both needle and bobbin, with the same color thread and check to see that the tension is evenly adjusted on both sides. It is important that the bobbin stitching looks identical to the topstitching because they will be side by side on the outside of the garment when completed.

Using a 5/8 inch seam allowance, and with wrong sides together, offset the top layer of fabric slightly more than 1/4 inch to the left of the lower layer.

Topstitch exactly 1/4 inch from the fold.



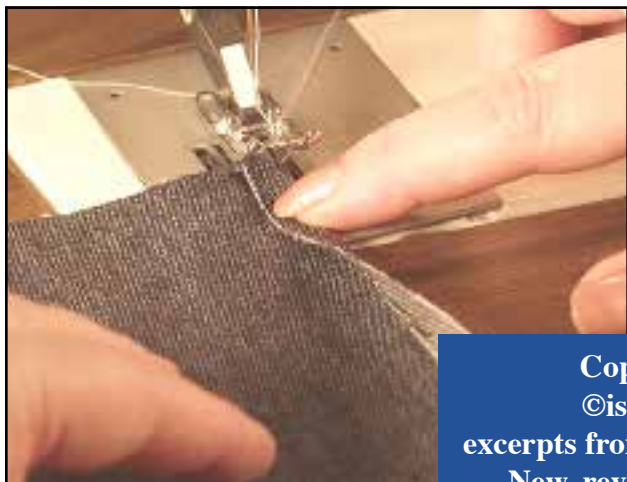
Stitching should be very close to the cut edge.



Fold the bottom layer over the top layer.



Open the layers out right side up and stand the seam up. Fold the seam over to cover the raw edge.



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Topstitch a “needle width away” from the fold.



The finished seam will have taken up exactly a 5/8 inch seam allowance.



Press the seam flat. In most cases the seam is pressed toward the back of the garment.

Armscye Seams

To make flat felled seams on an armscye, the first step must be performed with the sleeve as the lower layer against the feed dog. However, the following mock flat felled armscye will look the same and take less time.

Mock Flat Felled Armscye

Sew the armscye at 5/8 inch, serge finish the raw edge, then fold the seam allowances back toward the body. Clip the seam at the lower curves so that it will lie flat. Turn to the right side of the garment and topstitch a needle width from the seamline. Topstitch again 1/4 inch from the first stitching.

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