
service in ACTION

Clothes for independent living-- comfort for wheelchair travel

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no. 8.545

Quick Facts

Most slacks are designed for the standing figure; sitting shortens the front torso and lengthens the back.

People who sit continuously, such as in a wheelchair, can have a more comfortable fit by having regular slacks shortened in the front and lengthened in the back.

Excess fabric in the back of jackets can be uncomfortable to sit on for long periods of time.

Jackets may be shortened in the back so the length reaches only to the seat of the chair.

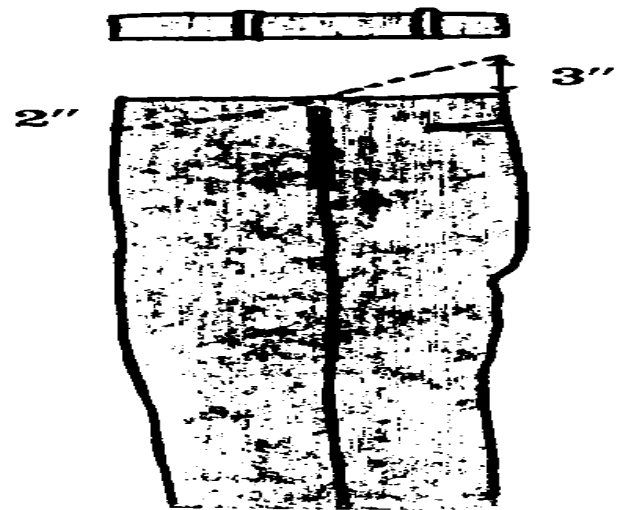


Figure 1:

This information provided by:

Slacks

Most clothes are designed for the standing figure. Sitting shortens the front torso and lengthens the back. People who sit continuously can have a more comfortable fit by shortening regular slacks in the front and adding fabric in the back. (This alteration also can be done to skirts.)

1. Remove the waistband and belt loops from the pants to be altered. (See Figure 1.)

1. Reviewed by Kathy Williams, Colorado State University Cooperative Extension apparel and textiles specialist, design merchandising and consumer sciences. Information from Michigan State University Bulletin E-1202, *Comfort for Wheelchair Travel*. Reprinted with permission. 9/92. ©Colorado State University Cooperative Extension. 1994. For more information, contact your county Cooperative Extension office.

2. Cut off about 2 inches at the center front at the zipper area, and taper up to the original side seams of the slacks. (See Figure 1.)



Figure 2:

3. Using a matching or near matching medium-weight knit fabric, cut out a triangular section that is 3 inches deep at the center, the width of the back, and tapers to the slack side seams. Add 5/8 inch for seams. (Figures 1 and 2.)

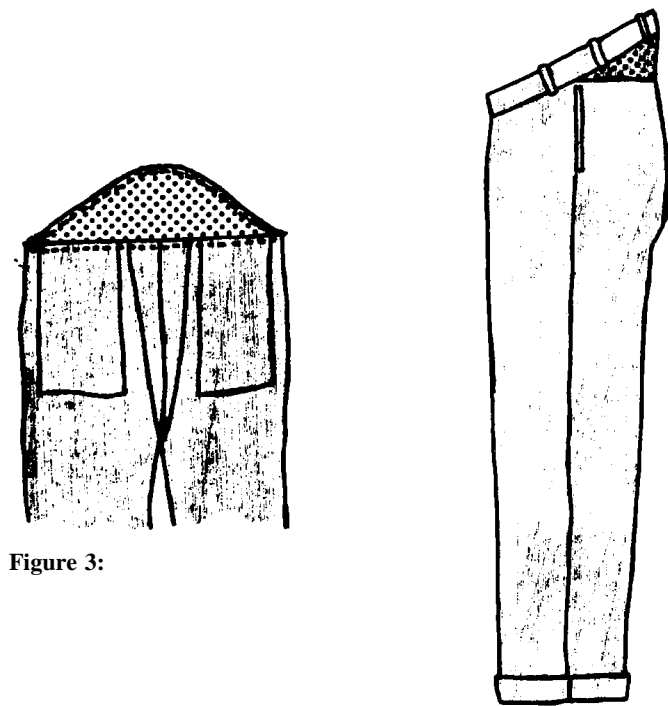


Figure 3:

Figure 4:

4. Sew the base of the triangle fabric section to the back waistline of the slacks. (See Figure 3.)

5. Stitch the waistband and belt loops back on (see Figure 4).

Jackets and Coats

Excess fabric can be uncomfortable to sit on, especially for long periods of time.

* Lengthen the side vent of jackets or open up the side seams from the bottom of the jackets to hip bone level. This helps prevent "bunching up" of fabric when sitting.

* Shorten the backs of jackets and coats to the back length of the person when seated. The back of the coat only needs to reach to the seat of the chair. (See Figures 5 and 6.)

* Shorten jackets in front to eliminate excess fabric. (See Figure 7.)

* Shoulder action pleats also can be put into jackets and coats for freer movement. (See Service in Action sheet 8.543, *Clothes for independent living--action pleats for greater comfort.*)

* Collarless styles often are more comfortable and don't "ride up."

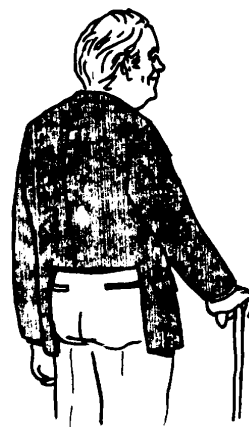


Figure 5:



Figure 6.



Figure 7.