



Zipper Basics:

Zippers are available in a range of lengths, weights, styles, and fabrications to install in garments and home decor projects. Use separating zippers for jackets and coats, zippers with metal teeth and pulls for heavyweight articles, and lightweight or hidden zippers in fashion clothing.

If the zipper tape is not 100-percent polyester, preshrink the zipper as you would fabric. Press the zipper tape with a hot iron, avoiding the nylon coils.

Set the machine stitch length at 6–8 stitches per inch and baste the garment seam from the bottom of the opening to the top. The zipper opening should equal the zipper coil length plus 1 inch. Press the seam open.

Use a sewing machine zipper foot to baste and stitch the zipper in place. In lieu of machine basting, hold zippers in place until they are stitched by applying double-sided fabric basting tape or fabric glue, allowing the glue to dry a few minutes before stitching.

Note: After stitching through fabric glue, wipe the machine needle with a piece of cotton lightly soaked with alcohol before continuing to sew.

Use masking or transparent tape on the right side of the fabric as a stitching guide, stitching along the tape edge but not into the tape. Or use a ruler and water- or air-soluble markers to draw a stitching guide on the fabric. Be sure to test the markers on a scrap piece of fabric to ensure that markings will dissolve from your fabric.

Stitch the zipper from the bottom stop, along the zipper tape guide line, to the tape extension. Stitch in the same direction along both sides of the zipper tape to eliminate puckers in the finished installation.

To avoid stitching around the pull tab, which is bulky and sometimes difficult to maneuver around, purchase a zipper longer than required. Position the zipper with the bottom stop in place and the zipper extension beyond the top garment edge. Sew in the zipper, slide down the pull tab, and cut off the leftover extension. Leave the zipper open until the facing or waistband is applied. Stitch across the top of the zipper to create a stop.

Lapped Zipper Installation:

Use lapped zipper installations on dresses, skirts, and slacks to conceal the zipper within a side seam.

1. Baste the garment seam closed and press the seam allowance open.

Zipper Basics continued:



2. Place the open zipper facedown on the seam allowance with the coils along the seam line. The garment will be folded back away from the seam allowance (see Diagram A). Stitch through the seam allowance only, not through the garment. Baste, pin, or use fabric glue to keep the left hand side of the zipper in place. Using a zipper foot, stitch from the bottom stop to the top stop along the zipper tape guide line.
3. Close the zipper and turn the zipper face up with the garment still folded to the back and the zipper teeth along the fold (see Diagram B). Attach the zipper foot and move the needle to the opposite side of zipper foot. Starting at the bottom of the zipper, stitch along the folded fabric edge from the zipper bottom stop to the tape extension, sewing through the seam allowance and zipper tape.
4. Pin or tape the zipper to the opposite seam allowance so it is laying flat on the seam. Turn the garment to the right side (see Diagram C). Adjust the needle with the zipper foot. Using 1/2-inch masking tape as a guide, stitch along the edge of the tape. Beginning at the seam line, stitch across the bottom of the zipper beginning at the seam, pivot at the edge of the tape, and stitch to the top of the raw edge.
5. Remove the tape and machine basting. Using a pressing cloth, lightly press the zipper area of the garment.

Centered Zipper Installation:

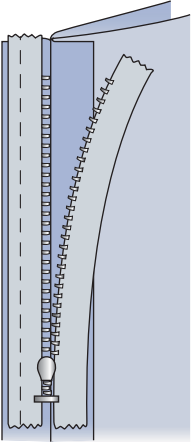
Use centered zipper installations for center back and center front garment closures. Select a zipper tape color to closely match the garment fabric.

1. Baste the seam closed and place the zipper flat, facedown on the seam allowance. Pin or glue the zipper in place (see Diagram D).
2. With the garment right side up, center 1/2-inch-wide masking or transparent tape the length of the zipper over the seam line.
Note: Do not use tape on napped or delicate fabric. Rather, use a basting line or sewing machine guides.
3. Using a zipper foot and the edge of the tape as a guide, starting at the bottom of the zipper, stitch on the right side of fabric across the bottom edge of the tape without backstitching (see Diagram E). Pivot at the corner of the tape and stitch to the top. Move the zipper foot to the opposite side of the needle. Stitch the opposite side of the zipper as described above. Pull the threads at the bottom of the zipper to the wrong side and tie off.
4. Turn the garment to the right side. Remove the tape and open the seam by removing the machine basting. Press.

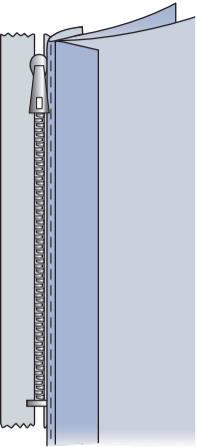
Skill Level: No experience needed

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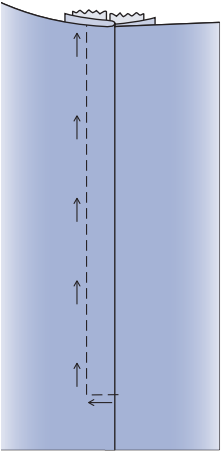
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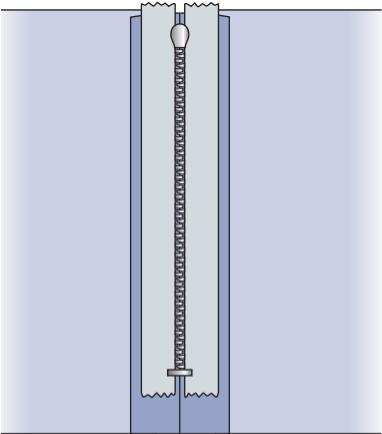
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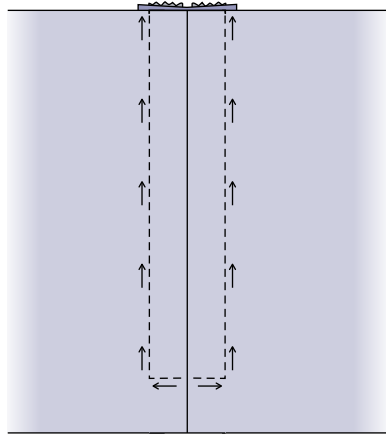
B



C



D



E