

## *Sewing Suspender Buttons into Pants*

You have a few options if you need suspender buttons sewn into your pants:

- 1) Take your pants to your tailor.
- 2) Sew the buttons in yourself
- 3) Have someone you know sew them in for you. Share this information for button placement.

### **Tailor**

Obviously, taking your trousers to a tailor is the easiest way to go. A tailor will know the correct placement and techniques for adding suspender buttons to your pants. This service will likely cost you about \$10-\$15. If you are buying new trousers and having them hemmed, ask the alterations department to add the buttons to the waistband, too. You could also ask at your favorite neighborhood dry cleaner if they would sew your buttons on your pants. You may want to share these placement guidelines with your dry cleaner if they are not familiar with how to place buttons for suspenders.

### **DIY**

If you are sewing the buttons in for yourself, here is a list of supplies you will need and directions on where to place and how to sew the buttons:

- 6 Suspender Buttons
- Your trousers, of course!
- A ruler or measuring tape
- Chalk or pins to mark button placement
- A hand sewing needle
- Thread in a color that matches the pants and /or the lining of the waistband
- Scissors to snip the thread

Your goal in sewing the buttons on is to have the button stitching be invisible on the outside of the pants (unless you are sewing the buttons on the outside of your pants), have the spacing of the buttons look right and symmetrical when the suspenders are attached, result in trousers that are comfortable to wear, and allow the suspenders to support the pants while allowing them to fall nicely.

Decide whether you want your buttons on the inside or outside of your waistband. The current style is to sew them on the inside of the waistband, but some people like them on outside, particularly on blue jeans. The next step is button placement.

### **Placing the Four Front Buttons**

#### *Drape Method*

- If you already have a sense of what looks and feels best on your body, drape your suspenders over your shoulders while trying on your pants in front of a mirror. Move the

straps until they are in the position that looks and feels best to you. Mark those spots so where you will sew the button pairs so they are 2 ½" to 3" apart and are equidistant from the center front of the pants and about 1" down from the top of the waistband.

#### *Measurement Method*

- If the pants are pleated, the first two buttons will be placed directly above the pleat/s, which is also the top of the crease. If the pants are not pleated, the first button will go directly above the the front creases, or where the front crease *would* be if the pants do not have actual creases. Mark that spot on the left and right with chalk or pins about 1" down from the top of the waistband. On both sides, measure 2 ½" to 3" towards each side seam from that first spot and place another mark, also about 1" down from the top of the waistband.

#### **Placing the Two Back Buttons**

For the two back buttons, measure 1¼" to 1½" on either side of the center back and mark both spots about 1" down from the top of the waistband so the resulting buttons will be 2½"-3" apart on center.

#### **Sewing**

Now for the actual sewing of the buttons. Cut a length of thread about 30" long. Thread the needle and pull the thread so that the two ends are even, and you have a doubled thread length of 15" or so. Like you are tying a knot in a blown up balloon, tie several knots in the end of your doubled thread so that the end won't pull through the fabric when you start to sew.

*There are generally three layers to the waistband: the outer layer which is what shows when you wear the pants, the lining, which is what is against your waist, and a layer of stabilizer in between those two layers and keeps the waistband from folding over on itself. Preferably, your button sewing thread will be going through the lining and the stabilizer.* That said, if you can access between the lining and the waistband, start by going between those two layers with the threaded needle and pushing the needle from between the layers, through the stabilizer and lining (if there is stabilizer) of the waistband towards the inside of the trousers at the marked spot, resulting in the knot of the thread secretly hidden between the layers of the waistband. Pull until the knot catches. If you can't access between the two layers, or it seems more work than necessary, simply insert the needle into, and then out of, the lining and stabilizer at the marked spot. Do not allow the needle to come all the way through to the front of the waistband or the thread will show on the outside of the pants. Pull until the knot catches. When you have the threaded needle attached to the pants, put the needle through one of the holes of the button and snug the button close to the lining. Making an X pattern with the thread, insert the needle down through the diagonally opposite hole and back up through the adjacent hole, again catching the stabilizer and lining but not the front of the waistband. Complete the X pattern. Repeat this stitch eight to ten times, and tie off the thread with a double knot. Repeat this process for all six buttons. Voila! You have sewn on your own suspender buttons!