

South Dakota State University

Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange

SDSU Extension Fact Sheets

SDSU Extension

1968

New Life for Old Clothes

Cooperative Extension South Dakota State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_fact

Recommended Citation

South Dakota State University, Cooperative Extension, "New Life for Old Clothes" (1968). *SDSU Extension Fact Sheets*. 1085.

https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_fact/1085

This Fact Sheet is brought to you for free and open access by the SDSU Extension at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in SDSU Extension Fact Sheets by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact michael.biondo@sdstate.edu.

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



For current policies and practices, contact SDSU Extension

Website: extension.sdstate.edu

Phone: 605-688-4792

Email: sdsu.extension@sdstate.edu

SDSU Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer in accordance with the nondiscrimination policies of South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Board of Regents and the United States Department of Agriculture.

New Life for Old Clothes

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



New Life for Old Clothes

By ELIZABETH K. EASTON, extension clothing specialist

There are all kinds of reasons for making over clothes:

- Alteration for change of body size
- Meet an actual need
- Supplement wardrobe of family members without undue strain on family budget
- Update the garment, fashion-wise
- Challenge creativity of the individual

Durable fabric, time, energy, imagination, and creativity, plus intelligent use of the materials at hand are needed to justify the expenditure of resources required to make-over, re-style or alter clothing.

In make-overs the greatest advantage, overall, comes from working with coats or suits of wool or wool-like blends. Before tackling such a project, however, consider the following questions:

- Can the garment be worn "as is" by the original owner, some other member of the family, a relative or friend?
- Is the garment worth the required expenditure of time?
- Do you have the necessary sewing skills?
- Can your time, energy and skill be used to better advantage in some other way?
- Will the finished product satisfy the wearer and have a fashionable appearance?

Answers to these questions will depend on the condition of the fabric.

- If there are thin spots, can they be eliminated or mended?

- If there is apparent color loss, can the fabric be reversed, or can it be dyed? (Check commercial dye package for color change recommendations. Consult commercial dry cleaner for a professional dye job.)
- If it is necessary to piece the garment, can you work the seam into the design? Locate the seams in areas where they will not show? Capitalize on it as a decorative feature?

STEPS TO SUCCESS

- 1** Remove buttons, zippers and other fastenings and trim. Save for re-use.
- 2** Rip all necessary seams, using scissors or a ripper designed for this purpose. Cut threads and pull them out from both sides to prevent damage to the fabric. Brush lint and dirt from opened seams.
- 3** Wash, dry clean, or spot-clean garment as required, using appropriate methods.
- 4** Press separate pieces with the grain of the fabric, using a steam iron or a dry iron and damp press cloth.
- 5** Clean, wash, and press all linings and interfacings that may be re-usable.

6 If the garment has been completely ripped apart, lay out all of the pattern pieces of the proposed new garment before cutting. Observe grainline, nap or "up and down-ness" of the fabric. Make uniform seam allowances whenever possible, otherwise, mark stitching lines.

7 Treat fabric as though it were new. Stay stitch. Press as you sew.

How does the finished garment rate?

- Does the finished garment look like a new one?
- Is the garment appropriate for the wearer in color? Texture? Pattern? Design?
- Is the new wearer satisfied?

Fabrics that combine well

- Plaid wool with plain wool or corduroy
- Plaid or plain wool with rib knit
- Corduroy with plain knit
- Velvet, velveteen or satin applied to light weight wool
- Machine-knitted material from sweaters for cuffs, fronts, pockets, etc., on wool dresses or wool jackets
- Leather with wool or corduroy
- Velveteen and wool jersey or corduroy and wool jersey

HINTS FOR HAND KNITS OR SWEATERS

Separate knitted material by pulling a thread if a straight edge crosswise is needed. This separates the material neatly, leaving edges with loops that can easily be overhanded together. A single edge may be finished with a single crochet or a shell-stitch crocheted edge.

The kind of seam to use will depend upon the knit and the garment. If the knit is too heavy for

seaming, first machine-stitch the cut edges and cover them with single crochet. Then join the edges by overhanding or crocheting.

Plain seams may be used on lightweight knits if they are finished securely. To keep the raw edges from fraying or curling, hold and cover with blanket stitching or single crochet stitch.

A strong, flat, tailored finish for lightweight and medium-weight knits is made pressing a plain seam open and then machine stitching on the right side about 1/16 inch on each side of the seam line.

Knitted garments may often be re-knit to good advantage. If the garment is out of fashion and not worn, it may be ripped and made into a similar size garment. Or, if there are worn places, perhaps enough yarn could be salvaged to make a smaller garment. As the yarn is ripped, wrap it loosely in a skein on a cardboard or piece of board. Dip the yarn thus in lukewarm water and dry before winding loosely into balls. This will take the kinks out of the yarn, and, as a result, the new garment will be more accurate in size. If the kinks are left in the yarn, the garment will be too large when blocked.

WORKING WITH FUR

The following suggestions may be helpful when repairing or remodeling a fur coat. These basic procedures may be used to restyle a fur garment or to replace a worn spot with good fur in the form of a patch.

First, unless the pelt is pliable and strong, abandon the project. Before attempting to make over any fur, test its strength. Pinch and crease the fur. If the skin crackles, it is probably not worth remodeling. Wet a sample thoroughly and stretch it. If the fur comes apart easily, it cannot be wet in the remodeling process, and it is usually necessary to wet fur to shape it and make it lie flat. If the fur is weak, do not wet it further.

Work with the pelt, skin side out, to cut. Lay tracing paper over the marked area on the fur

and draw an arrow to indicate the direction in which the fur lies. This is just as important as keeping the direction of the pile uniform in cutting velvet or other pile fabrics.

A single-edged razor blade is a good tool for cutting fur. Cut slightly outside the line of the pattern and allow a little for the seam. To avoid cutting the hair, lift the fur from the table, holding it taut by pressing the heel of one hand down while stretching the pelt with the other hand. Cut straight downward through the skin.

Sew the seams together with a buttonhole or overhand stitch, making the stitches close together. Those who are skillful in using a zigzag machine stitch find that a short zigzag with a narrow bight works very well.

To re-design a collar or some other part of a fur garment, cut a pattern in muslin and baste the pattern to the coat to check the fit. All edges of the cut fur should be "stayed" to keep them from stretching. Do this by sewing 1/2 inch cotton twill tape along the edge, using a fine needle and fine thread, and barely catching the thread into the pelt. Finish all other edges of the fur with 3/4 inch cotton twill tape. Lay the tape on the fur side, and with a small overhand stitch, sew the edge of the tape to the edge of the fur. Try not to sew any of the fur into the seam.

Collars and cuffs are usually underlined with cheesecloth or thin muslin. Lay the underlining over the underside of the collar. Turn the tape to the wrong side, bend the fur back 1/4 inch all around the edge, and catch-stitch through the tape and lining into the pelt with a small stitch.

Use heavy duty thread to attach collars or cuffs to the garment. Slip stitch by hand, being careful not to pull the stitch so tight as to pucker the edge.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the USDA. Hollis D. Hall, Director of Cooperative Extension Service, South Dakota State University, Brookings. Educational programs and materials offered without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, handicap or national origin. An Equal Opportunity Employer

File: 13.8-2-3M-75-3,000 reprinted at estimated 5 cents each-3-79mb-3692A

