

# Options to Clean Finish an Edge

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# 1. THE HONG KONG SEAM FINISH



Beautiful on an unlined jacket. Use prepackaged wide bias strips, or cut your own.

The Hong Kong seam finished is applied **BEFORE** the seam is constructed



**Tip:** Some soft fabrics have too much stretch when cut on the bias. Remove some of this extra stretch by pressing the strip first.





Press binding strip away from fabric.

With right sides together, place bias strip on garment section, cut edges even. Stitch  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to  $\frac{3}{8}$ " from cut edge. Use presser foot as a guide.



Wrap binding tight around  
towards back. Do not press.



Stitch in the ditch close to binding.



Trim excess binding from back.



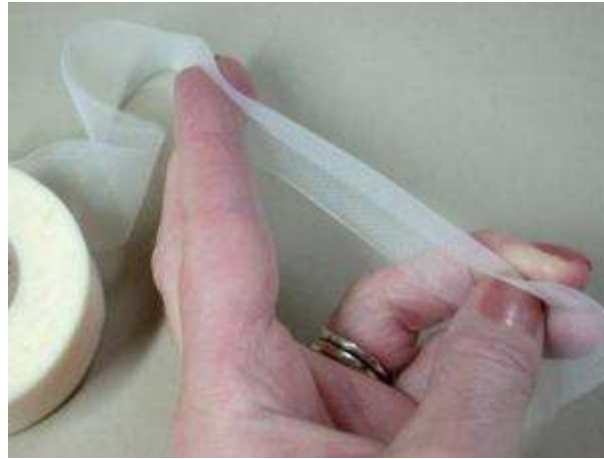
Both of these jackets are unlined and finished with Hong Kong seams.



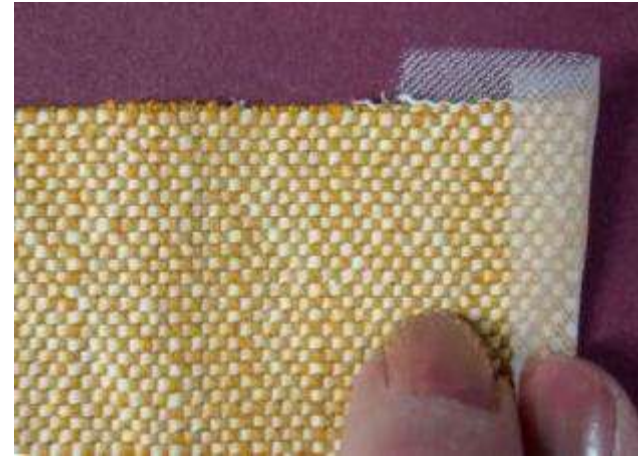
## 2. NYLON TRICOT BINDING/ SEAMS GREAT®



A terrific finish, lightweight, sheer, adds no bulk. Seams Great® is a bias cut 15 denier Nylon Tricot that is no longer available, but 15 denier Nylon Tricot by the yard is available. See link below.



Cut into bias strips 1-1¼".  
When stretched, bias knit strips curl in one direction.



Insert fabric into the curl.  
Fold carefully with the bottom half larger than the top half.

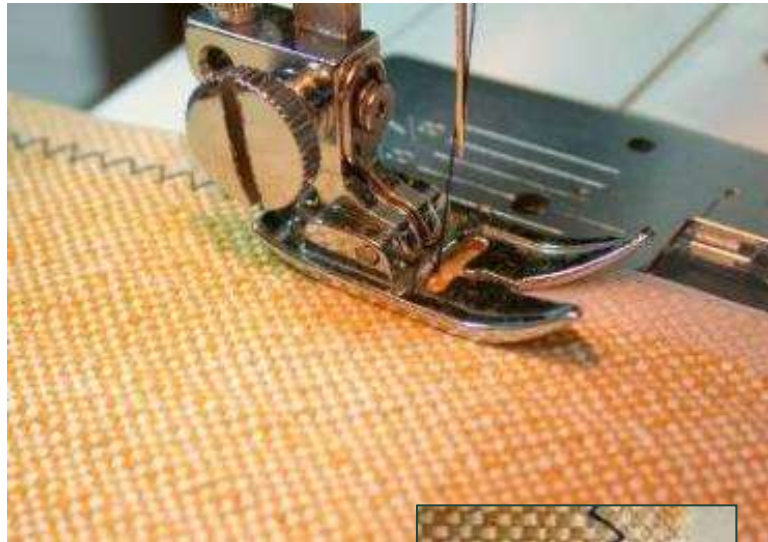
<https://www.weaversew.com/shop/15-denier-nylon-tricot.html>

**NOTE:** nylon is a synthetic protein. It can be dyed with any acid dye including RIT.

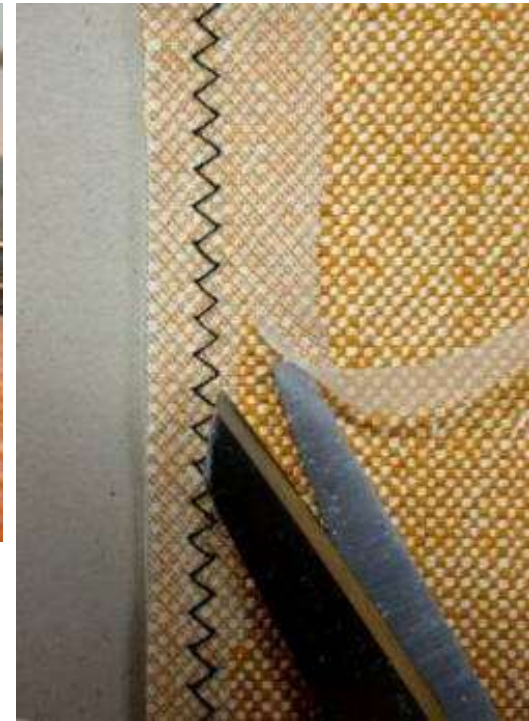




Fold nylon strip carefully over raw edge, don't pull or stretch.



Use a zig zag or straight stitch to secure.



Trim back of nylon strip, sew seam and press open. **Be careful with iron, nylon melts easily!**



Tricot sheer seam finish. Nearly invisible...





# BINDING A CURVE

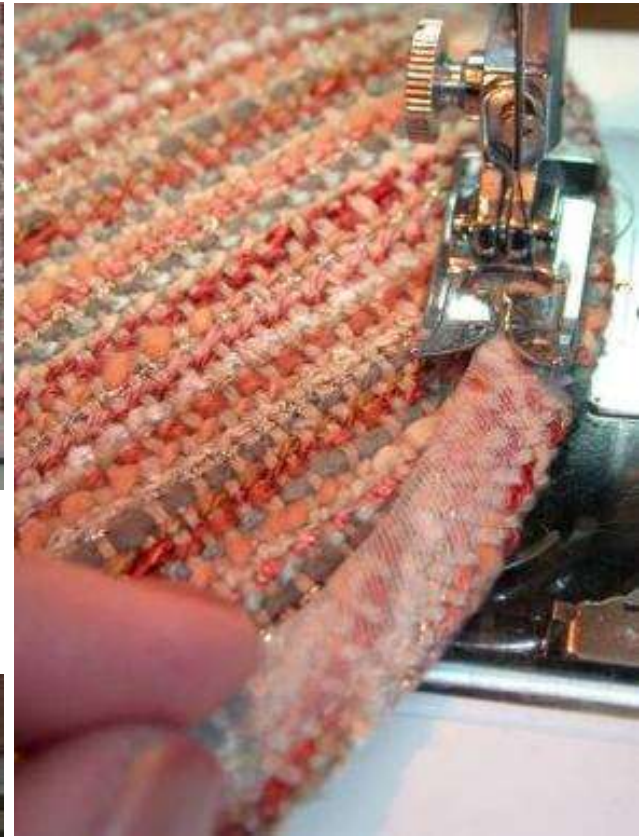


Finished binding won't lie flat, it should curl forward.

When stitching a shirt tail hem or other curved area, stretch binding as you stitch.



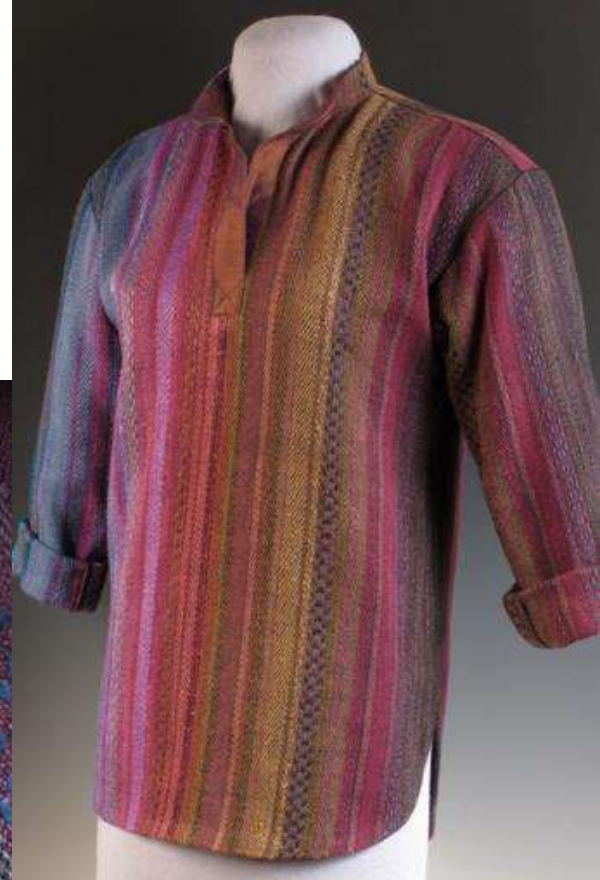
Turn to wrong side and press.  
Nylon can melt!



Topstitch or handstitch binding from the wrong side of garment.



**USE ON OUTSIDE CURVES...**



The finished curve  
lies smooth and  
flat!



## ... AND INSIDE CURVES



Hand baste the tricot down, and hand stitch to garment with a catch stitch underneath the tricot.

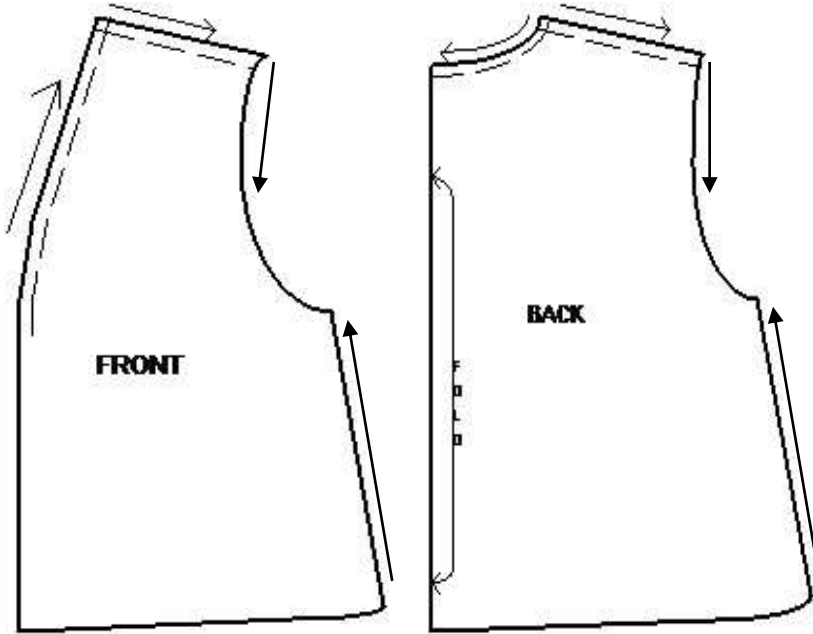




### 3. STITCHING ON THE EDGE

To prevent raveling.

To stabilize areas cut “off grain”, before any other construction steps, stitch in the direction of the grain,  $\frac{1}{8}$ ” away from the **cut edge**. Use a regular machine stitch length. Think “Widest to Narrowest, Highest to Lowest”.



Pay careful attention to the direction of the grain. By stitching against the grain, warp threads skew and additional length can be added to a garment seamline.

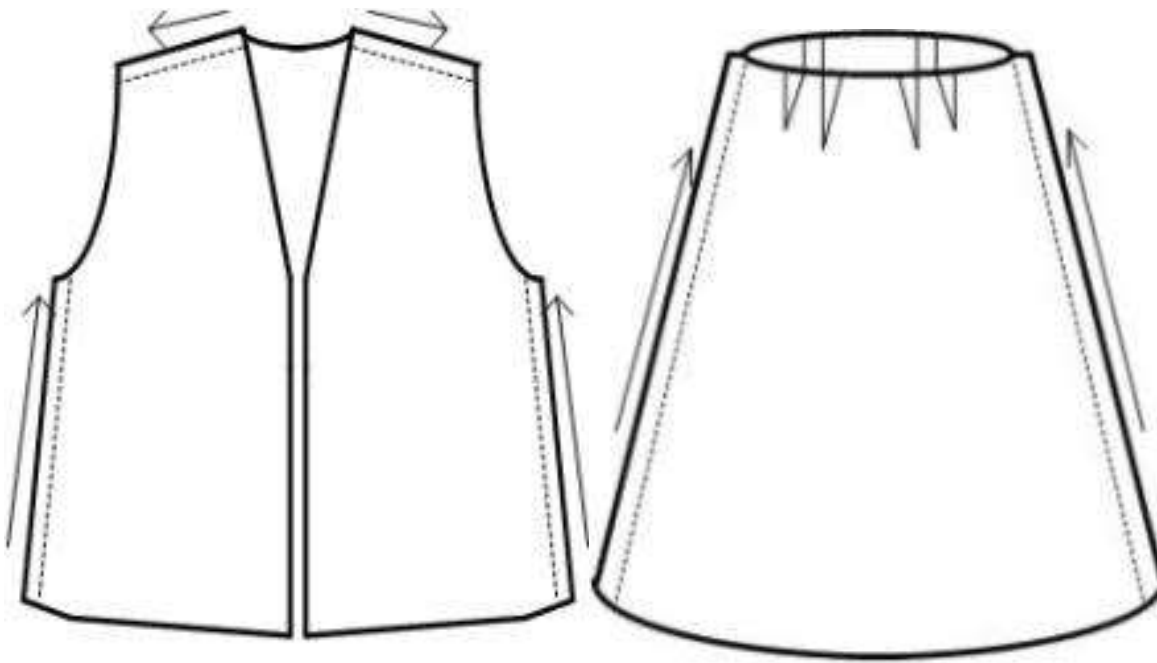


WITH THE GRAIN

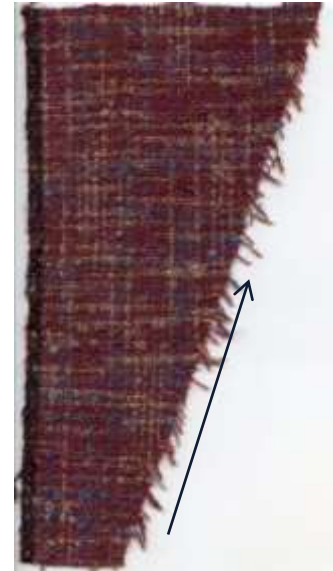


AGAINST THE GRAIN





With grain



Against grain

And while we're on the subject...

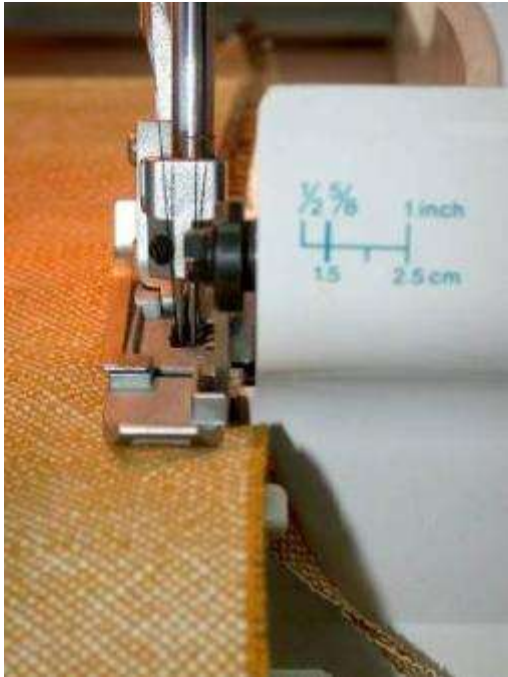
Stitch all seams in the direction of the grain, including side seams and shoulders.

Because of the flexibility and often instability of handwoven fabric, many steps in garment construction can aggravate areas cut off grain. In a more stable commercial fabric, often these steps are overlooked, and seem unimportant.

For a more in-depth discussion of **Directional Stitching**, please watch my video at <https://www.threadsmagazine.com/2019/08/23/staystitching-basics-video>



## 4. THE SERGER



Pair of knives trim  
seam allowance  
before serger  
overlocks the edge.

Red: Left Needle

White: Right Needle

Aqua: Upper Looper

Blue: Lower Looper (should only  
be visible on the wrong side!

Serging against the grain  
can result in a rippled and  
skewed edge.

Careful use of the  
differential feed is  
necessary here, or apply a  
row of straight stitching,  
with the grain first before  
serging against the grain.





The traditional serged seam, approx.  $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide when trimmed and finished. Seam is trimmed, stitched and overlocked in one pass.



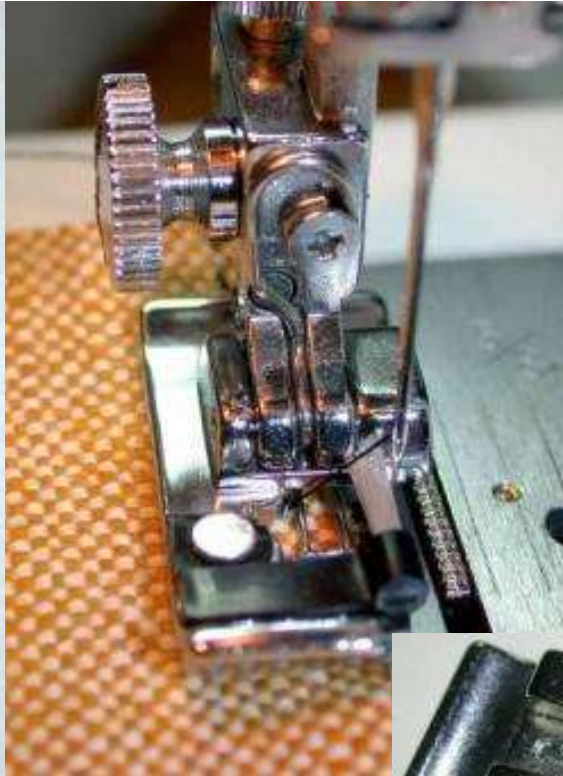
This seam finish is too narrow for loosely woven fabrics, it may pull away at the seams after a couple wearings.



On loosely woven fabrics, serge the edge instead, don't trim the seam allowance, and sew a normal seam. Press open.



## 5. OVERCASTING OR ZIG ZAG



Zig Zagging or machine overcasting will compress a seam allowance making it inaccurate.

Try using an overedge foot, available for most machines, it has a special stitch “finger” and/or a brush to help loosen stitches and keep them spread over the entire seam allowance.





This unlined motorcycle jacket was fused around the perimeter first with 3/8" strips of fusible tricot.

<https://www.weaversew.com/shop/htcw-fusi-knit-interfacing.html>

The visible seam allowances were then serged.