

trench with a twist

PAM ARCHER



McCall's
5060,
View D

Who says home-dec fabrics are only meant for the home? **Create a fashionable trench coat** out of home-dec fabrics with the following tips as your guide.

THE TRENCH COAT FIRST MADE ITS APPEARANCE during WWI. Designed and named for the troops in the trenches, this coat style was pretty practical for bad weather and mobility—now it offers practically pretty fashion. And when teamed with fabric from the home-dec department, this garment is an incomparable winner.

Home-dec fabrics come in a variety of weights. Select fabrics with some body to them for apparel choices. Stay away from stiff fabrics when making garments. Firmly woven or heavy-weight fabrics also last longer and ensure warmth. Given the added weight of this type of fabric, monitor the pattern size as denser fabric will absorb some of the ease.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Fabric

- Home-dec fabric, lining and interfacing in yardage required (purchase extra fabric if matching prints or patterns)

Other

- Trench-coat pattern (such as McCall's 5060, view D)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ yard of 54"-wide coordinating polyester microfiber suede (for contrast sleeve facings)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ yard of bias binding
- 3 magnetic closures or 3 sew-in snaps (size 4)
- Six 1"-diameter buttons
- Size 80/12 needle
- Marking pencil or air-soluble marking pen
- Seam sealant
- Rotary cutter and mat
- Matching thread

Cutting Tips

If the selected fabric is dense or prone to raveling, such as chenille, add an additional $\frac{1}{4}$ " to the seam allowance. The deeper seam allowance accommodates any loose threads that may shed, leaving ample seam allowance for construction.

Refer to the pattern instructions and adjust the layout to accommodate home-dec fabrics, adding extra seam allowances and using the with-nap layout if necessary.

If fabrics are bulky, cut one layer at a time for more accurate results.

When laying out the pattern, position the pieces to match major design points where possible. Be mindful of large design placements that may draw attention where it's not needed, such as a large circle over the bust point.

If contrast is desired:

- Cut one undercollar and one belt from the microfiber suede.
- Cut $1\frac{3}{4}$ "-wide bias-binding strips from the microfiber suede for the upper collar, lapels and coat front to large dot. Cut each strip 1" longer than the pattern.
- Cut two microfiber suede sleeve facings, measuring $2\frac{1}{2}$ " from the lower edge of the sleeve pattern (1).

Construction Tips

When sewing home-dec fabrics, use a sharp needle. It moves through firmer fabrics easier.

Follow the pattern guidesheet to construct the trench coat.

To make a contrasting sleeve facing, begin with the facing and sleeve right sides together. Position the facing lower edge $1\frac{3}{4}$ " from the sleeve lower edge;

pin (2). Stitch through both layers 2" from the sleeve lower edge. Press the facing toward the sleeve hem.

Serge- or zigzag-finish the sleeve hem.

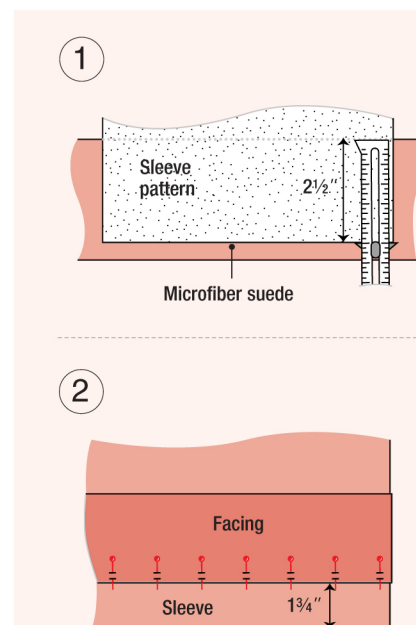
Stitch the sleeve seam following the pattern guidesheet.

Turn up the hem, leaving $\frac{3}{8}$ " of the contrasting hem facing exposed at the lower edge. Pin and stitch along the seamline from the right side and through all layers.

Trim the seam allowance and clip where the stitches end. Turn the coat right side out and gently press the seam.

Reducing Bulk

When sewing with home-dec fabrics it's easy to bulk up. Here are a couple of ways to trim away the excess, especially when there's a lot of fabric trying to fit into a snug space, such as a collar or lapel.



One way to minimize bulk is to select a second lightweight coordinating fabric for undercollars and facings. The lighter fabric will have a slimming effect and the coat can be entirely constructed as the guidesheet directs.

A second option is to trim the edges and bind them with a coordinating trim.

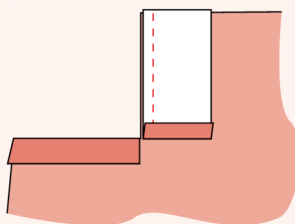
To bind the edges, sew the lapel, facing and collar edges with wrong sides together using a $\frac{3}{4}$ " seam allowance. Trim away the original $\frac{5}{8}$ " seam allowance.

Fold under $\frac{1}{4}$ " on each short end of the precut bias-binding strips. Position one strip on the underside of each lapel edge, with right sides facing. Pin and sew using a $\frac{3}{8}$ " seam allowance (3).

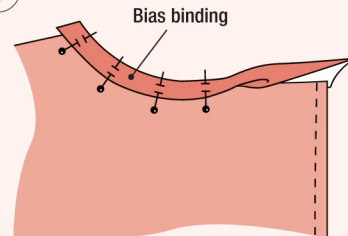
Fold under the remaining long edge $\frac{3}{8}$ " and finger-press. Fold the edge over the trimmed seam, encasing the raw edges. Pin in place on the garment right side. Edgestitch along the pinned edges.

Repeat for the remaining lapel edges, collar and upper facing areas, allowing the longer binding to overlap the shorter ones (4).

3



4



Closure Options

Placing buttonholes in dense double fabric layers can be challenging. In general, the more dense the fabric, the deeper and longer the buttonhole needs to be. Test a buttonhole on the fabric to find out what changes may be required and to see how well the buttonhole will navigate the button. If this task appears daunting, consider the following alternative closure methods.

Use either a large-size snap (size 4) or a magnetic snap in lieu of a dense buttonhole. Position the alternative behind each suggested buttonhole and sew in place.

Sandwich magnetic closures between the coat and the facing. Test to determine the magnet strength through all layers. If too many fabric layers obstruct the magnet strength, clip out a small

section of interfacing the size of the magnet to house it and allow a more direct contact.

For a double-breasted coat version, opt for a large snap in lieu of a buttonhole. On the inside, lap the left front over the right, aligning the center fronts. Use the buttonhole marking on the left as a guide. Sew the snap at the markings. ➤



Pam Archer lives, sews and teaches in the greater Portland area. A long time fiber fanatic, Pam shares her love of sewing through classes and freelance writing for several sewing publications. She's the author of *Fast, Fun and Easy Fabric Bags* and *Fast, Fun and Easy Home Accents* (C&T Publishing).