

This is an excerpt from the book

Embellish Chic

by Connie Long

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Zipper Teeth

Forget the useful aspect of zippers and use them to add a zippy edge to necklines, collars, and hems. Brass zippers and chunky, colorful plastic separating zippers are the most fun to work with because the bold teeth really stand out along the edge of a garment.

Use zippers to enliven the edges on:

- Collars, pockets, and flaps on jackets and shirts
- Hems on tops, skirts, pants, and dresses
- Along all the outer edges of a simple jacket or vest

Zipper “piping”

In place of piping, try using zippers to accentuate the edges on sporty garments. Use brass or nickel zippers to give edges a heavy-metal appeal, or create playful edges using colorful plastic zippers. Zippers are readily available and easy to attach using each half of the zipper along the garment edge. Since metal and plastic separating zippers are stiff, use them on garments that have body or the zipper will overpower the garment. Standard zippers are lightweight and suitable for lightweight garments.

Brass zipper teeth and large eyelets enhance the collar and flaps of this cotton poplin coat. The zipper tape is simply placed under the collar edge, then sewn in place by hand or machine.



For a sporty but glittery trim, stitch a half zipper to jeans or a jacket; be sure to use a zipper foot so you can sew close to the teeth. Trim the zipper tape away next to the stitching and sew again using a zigzag stitch.

MATERIALS

Metal or plastic zipper at least 2 in. longer than the edge to be trimmed

Pliers

Zipper foot

Thread, all-purpose

1. Position and pin the zipper tape behind the garment so that the zipper teeth extend beyond the edge to be trimmed.
2. Once you establish the length of the zipper you need, remove a few teeth at each end so that you can finish the tape ends neatly. Use pliers to pull the teeth away from the tape.



3. Cut away the excess zipper, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. seam allowances at each end, then fold both cut edges toward the garment. If you are applying the zipper all the way around a closed circular edge—for instance, a trouser hem or pullover neckline—allow $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of excess tape at each end so the teeth will meet at the join and the tape will overlap.

4. Using a zipper foot, sew the zipper in place from the right side of the garment.



TIP To avoid scratches on your skin or blouse, be sure to select

zippers with smooth edges. This is especially important when attaching a zipper to a neckline where the teeth will lie against your skin or where it will rub against a delicate fabric.

Grommets

DESIGNER IDEA

There are many fun ways in which you can use zippers to jazz up a garment.

- Instead of separating the zipper, keep it intact and attach it in the open position to the wrong side of a boat neckline or V neckline. Place the zipper pull at the shoulder seam of a boat neckline or at the point of a V neckline. Adding the zipper in a permanent open position to the inside V of a notched collar makes the zipper look as though it could possibly close.
- Add a zippy edge to the collar of a plain jacket by positioning and stitching a heavy-gauge brass zipper so that just the teeth show along the edge of the collar and the zipper tape faces the under collar.
- Sew zipper halves at rakish angles randomly over a pair of jeans. To make the tape less prominent, first stitch next to the teeth, then trim the tape near the stitching and stitch again using a narrow zigzag to cover the raw edges.

in areas that need to stretch or on very elastic knits because the hole will stretch and the eyelets will pop out of the fabric. You can use them on knits with little to moderate stretch if you first stabilize the area with fusible woven or nonwoven interfacing. Cut circles of interfacing just slightly larger than the hardware.

To set grommets and eyelets, you'll need a cutting tool and a setting tool, which will either be included in the package of grommets or sold separately in the same section of the store. The size of the grommets and the tools must be compatible, just as the weight

Insert grommets or eyelets along darts or seamlines. Single rows are strictly decorative, but double rows can also be laced to slightly modify the width of the garment.

and Eyelets

Grommets and eyelets have a functional use, but don't let that stop you from using them decoratively to create some spirited designs. They have a bold and sassy look.

Grommets and eyelets are available in sizes ranging from dainty to sturdy and having diameters of $\frac{1}{8}$ in. to greater than 1 in. Most are gold or silver tone, but you occasionally see small, enameled eyelets in colors such as red, blue, and black. With the exception of a hammer or mallet, you can buy supplies at fabric stores, craft stores, or through mail-order sources.

TIP Don't use grommets or eyelets



and thickness of the grommet must be compatible with the weight and thickness of the garment fabric.

Setting grommets and eyelets

Setting small or medium eyelets is straightforward: Punch a hole in the garment, then insert the eyelet and flatten the back. Grommets and large eyelets are secured with a washer on the back. The washer creates a neat and more finished edge and reinforces the hole. To set grommets and eyelets, you'll need a special punch and die, which are sized to correspond to the grommet and eyelet sizes; large grommet setters also include a cupped base.

Small eyelets can be applied using a plierlike tool, which will punch the holes and set the eyelets. However, plierlike setters can only be used if you are attaching eyelets near the edge of a garment because their jaws are too short to accommodate much fabric.

MATERIALS

Fabric marker or pencil

Wooden cutting block or a thick stack of newspaper

Hole cutter, plier type or die cutter

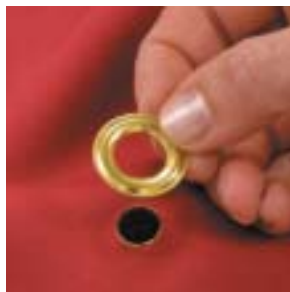
Mallet or hammer if using die tools

Eyelets or grommets

Setting tool, plier type or die setter and base

1. Mark the eyelet/grommet placement using a fabric marker or pencil, then put the cutting block or newspaper under the mark. Place the cutter over the mark, and strike it with a mallet or hammer to cut each hole.

2. Insert the eyelet/grommet shaft through the hole from the right side of the garment, and place the garment on your work surface with the eyelet/grommet side down. If the



eyelet/grommet requires a washer, slip it, rounded side up, over the shaft.

3. For small eyelets, insert the setting tool into the center of the shaft, and strike the tool with the mallet until the shaft flattens and spreads over the cut fabric edge.



For eyelets/grommets with washers, slide the setting base under the garment until it cups an eyelet/grommet, insert the setter into the center of the shaft, and strike the setter with the mallet or hammer until the shaft flattens and spreads over the washer.

TIP Practice setting eyelets and grommets on fabric that has the same thickness as the garment you plan to embellish to get used to the tools and to be sure that you like the results.

DESIGNER IDEA

Grommets and eyelets can be arranged in myriad decorative ways.

- Use grommets and eyelets to make a decorative and finished path, particularly along necklines, hemlines, and edges, then weave a trim or a cord through them like a drawstring or whip the trim through the grommets and over the edge.
- Grommets and eyelets can appear in any area on garments or accessories. Try placing the grommets randomly to create a Swiss-cheese effect over entire items, such as shirts, tops, dresses, vests, skirts, pants, purses, totes, belts, hats, and gloves, or on selected sections of the garment, such as collars, cuffs, and pockets.
- Combine different-sized grommets and eyelets on the same project. Or use a more systematic approach by placing the grommets along a marked design to create openwork borders or patterned designs within the garment.