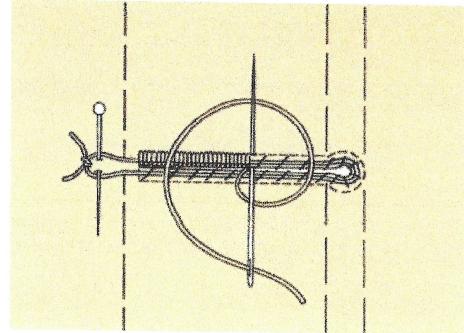
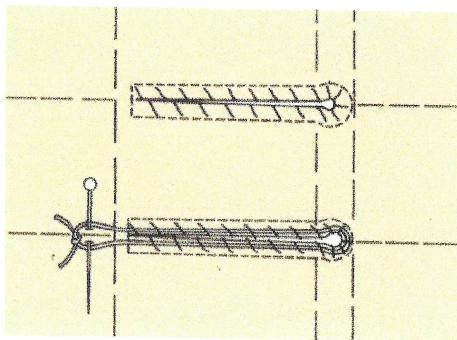


## Hand Worked Buttonholes

### Few Facts/Hints/Information about Buttonholes:

- The Button Placket/area extension from Center Front (CF) is  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 times the diameter of the button. The diameter (1X) is a good universal metric and starting point.
- The start of a horizontal buttonhole is  $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the CF toward the Finished Edge of the garment.
- The length of the buttonhole is approximately  $\frac{1}{8}$ " longer than the diameter of the button. This length is the Cut/Hole part of the buttonhole. The end Bar Tacks and/or Fan are not included in this measurement. Always test! Even Hand Worked Buttonholes. Smaller or domed buttons may need more, Larger or flat may need less.
- Fan or Keyhole buttonholes have the Fan or Keyhole at the CF for horizontal buttonholes, with a bar tack on the other side. Vertical buttonholes always have the same style on each side of the buttonhole – usually two Bar Tacks. Doing a Fan on the Finished Edge Side of the buttonhole is less work than a second Bar Tack.
- How much thread is needed? Rule of thumb from Claire Shaeffer. Length of thread needed for a button hole is approximately the same number of yards to the number of inches for the buttonhole. i.e. a one inch long buttonhole needs a yard of thread. A three fourths inch buttonhole would need 21 inches.
- Which Thread to use? Question of the moment. Most Buttonhole thread marketed today is for Machine Buttonholes! Back in the day, buttonhole twist was used. It had the tightest twist, was silk, 3 ply, heavier than machine thread and did not need to be waxed (because of the tight twist). It is not generally made anymore. There are some Japanese threads available on the web. Mom used 'Regular' thread. It was there and already matched to the fabric. You may want to wax it if you use 'Regular' thread.
- A Tailor's Buttonhole (Jackets/Coats) has cording in the stitching and has a Keyhole versus the Fan on the Finished Edge of the Buttonhole. Cording can be made from several threads of your buttonhole thread, or small string/cording. Cording is on the top of the garment. Tailor's buttonhole would use the heavier buttonhole thread rather than regular thread. Use an awl to make the 'Key hole' before you slash your hole.



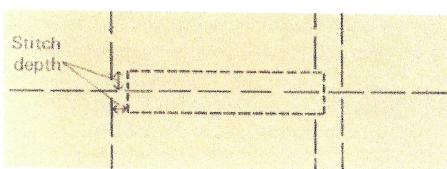
# Hand Worked Buttonholes

## Sequence of making Hand Worked Buttonholes

1 – Like Machine Buttonholes, Hand Worked Buttonholes are done near the finishing of the garment. After the interfacing, facings, etc. have been done. Bound Buttonholes are started after interfacing & under linings, but before facings and linings.

2 – Measure & Mark the Placement of your Buttonholes. Thread markings (Machine in samples) work best for me.

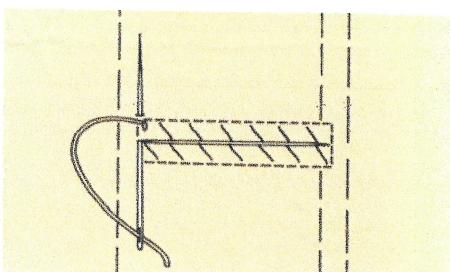
3 – Stitch around the buttonhole marking line (by Machine or Hand) approximately 1/16" on every side. This will be a box. Find the spot on your presser foot for guidance and use a 2.0 stitch length if using a Machine. You will use this stitch line as a reference point when applying the buttonhole stitch and it holds all the layers together.



Stitched Box Line is length of buttonhole  
Horizontal Line is Placement of Buttonhole  
End lines are 1/16<sup>th</sup> inch each side of box  
Middle Vertical Line is CF/Button Placement Line.

4 – Slash within the box on the marked line with sharp scissors. C-A-R-E-F-U-L-L-Y!

5 – Hand Overcast the raw edge(s). No knots. Whip around the tail as you go.



6 – Use Button Hole thread or wax regular thread. If waxing, tie a knot at the cut end of your thread so that you know where it is. (you will cut this off before sewing)

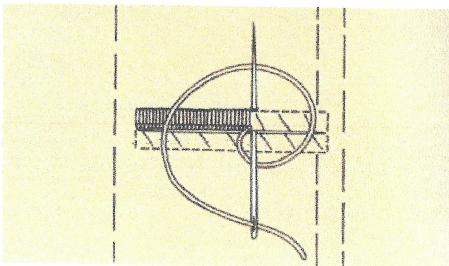
7 – Start at the Bar Tack edge (interior of garment). Take a few running stitches under the overcast area to the Bar Tack area to anchor your thread. No knots.

8 – Using a Button Hole Stitch (LOL), start at the Bar Tack edge (interior of garment). Work to the Fan end. Left to Right. (Left Handers – as usual mirror. Flip the garment around and work Right to Left.) The Loops of the Button Hole stitch should sit on the overcast raw edge of the slit. Not inside or outside. The Loop is on the Eye side of the needle for the **Buttonhole** stitch. (Blanket is opposite)

Don't worry if you stitches are not as tight as these illustrations show (next page).

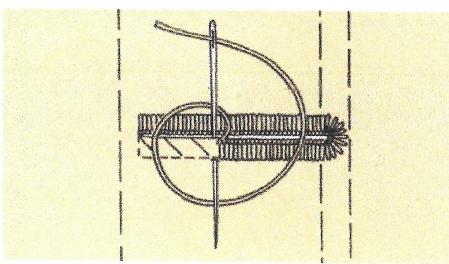
**It is more important to be Consistent in the spacing & length than making them tight & tiny!**

## Hand Worked Buttonholes

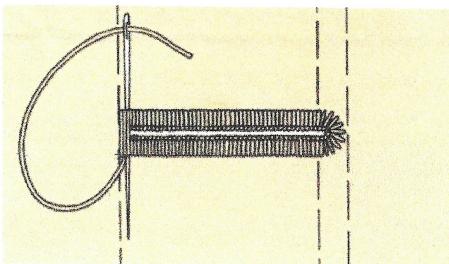


9 – Fan around the Finished Edge side of the Buttonhole. Use around 5 to 9 stitches.

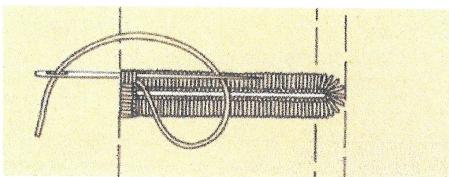
10 – Continue on straight to the end of the Buttonhole.



11 – Now you do the Bar Tack the beginning/end. Start with 3 to 5 “vertical” stitches.



12 – Using the **Blanket** Stitch go over Bar Tack. Loops are to interior of Buttonhole. Notice the different placement of needle & thread. Loop is at the end of Needle.



13 – Take your thread to the back and weave in under the Bar Tack & Buttonhole Stitches to anchor, then cut your thread. No Knots.

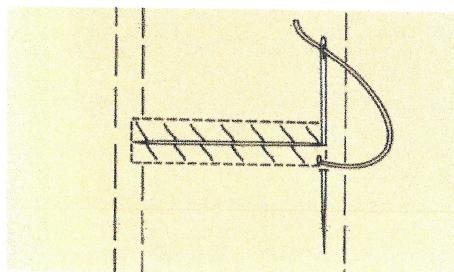
## Hand Worked Buttonholes

**Greater Detail on how I do the Buttonhole Stitch.** Don't be worried if your style is different. Use what works best for you!

I hold the buttonhole with my thumb on top and fingers below. This allows me to use my index finger to open up the buttonhole for stitching.

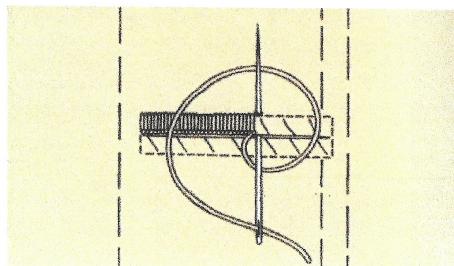
When using the same thread for the overcasting as the buttonhole (i.e. regular thread), I start at the Bottom Left of the Buttonhole. I turn the garment so that the garment edge is on the *left*.

Then I Overcast/Whip stitch toward the garment edge and then Overcast/Whip stitch to the Upper Left of the Buttonhole. I do not cut the thread.



I then turn the garment 180 degrees so that the garment edge is on the *right*.

I put the needle thru the Hole and then thru the Fabric, starting at the Upper Left.



I do not pull the needle thru yet.

I wrap the non-needle thread end down, to the right under the eye end of the needle, up and then to the left under the point of the needle.

Holding the thread and needle lightly – thumb on top and fingers below – I pull the needle & thread thru.

Then I pull the thread down to set the knot at the buttonhole edge.

Continue:

I usually use 5 stitches in my fan area.

I end with sliding the thread under the Bar Tack and then some of the Buttonhole stitches before cutting off.