

# Faux leather fixes

Avoid punctures and meltdowns when handling synthetic skins

In my job as *Threads*' seamstress, and in my years as a custom clothier, I've sewn many different textiles. Some are straightforward to work with, and others have idiosyncrasies that I discover along the way. Then I solve problems by trial and error.

A recent assignment was the Lupin jacket, by Deer and Doe (Deer-and-Doe.com), a waist-length blouson style with wide lapels and double-welt pockets (See *Threads* no. 190, "Pattern Review"). The fabric: a caramel-colored synthetic leather. Although the textile was soft and lightweight enough to gather at the waistband and cuffs, it was difficult to press into shape elsewhere. Here are a few tricks I used to turn this material into a versatile jacket, without special tools or supplies.

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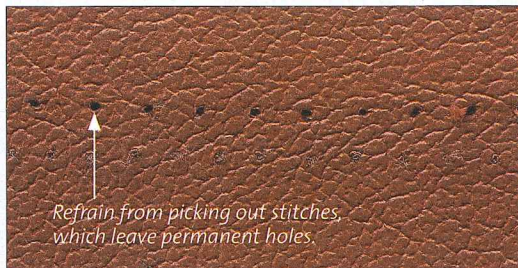
*Edgestitching keeps edges crisp and seamlines flat.*



*Double welt pockets come out neat and precise with help from fusible web.*

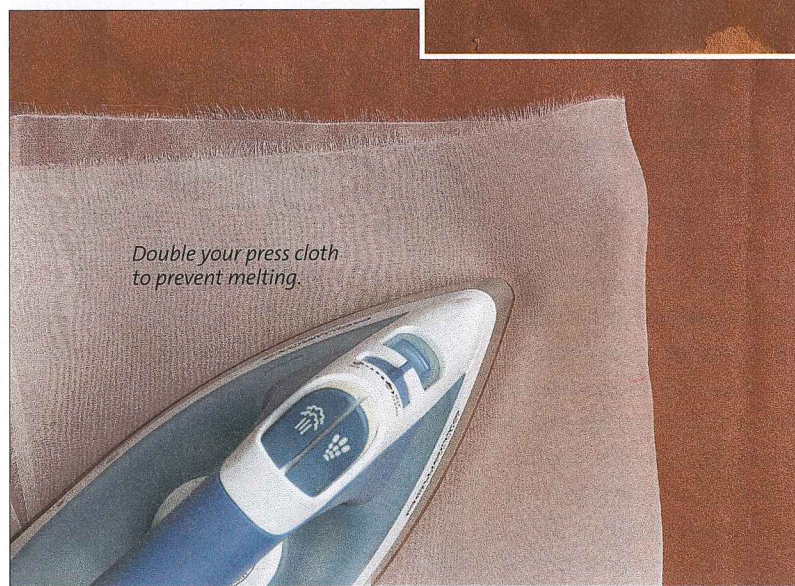
## Stitch judiciously

Every pinhole and needle hole is permanent in faux leather, so pin layers together only within the seam allowances. Alternatively, use small clips. To control seam allowances along edges and seamlines, try a neat row of edgestitching.



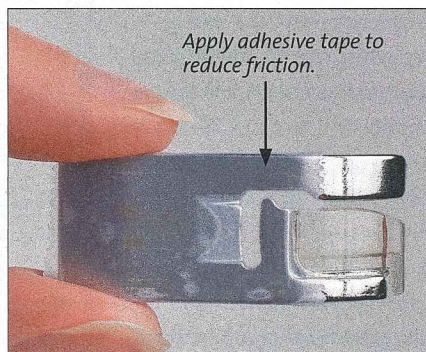
## Press with care

Faux leathers are likely to melt under the iron's heat. Avoid touching this material directly with the iron. Use a double or triple layer of silk organza as a press cloth. Test on scraps to determine the temperature that sets a crease without melting the surface.



## Sew smoothly

A Teflon-coated presser foot is often recommended for sewing materials like faux leather, which can balk at moving evenly under the presser foot. If you don't have a Teflon foot, place a strip of matte-surfaced adhesive tape over the sole of a standard presser foot. This reduces friction for easier stitching.



## Fuse it in place

In cases where you need to keep two layers aligned without pinning, as in the pocket welts on the jacket at the far left, try using a fusible adhesive web on the wrong side. Fusing the welt into its folded position prevents the layers from shifting in subsequent stitching passes.