

Zip through the waistband

Extend the closure all the way up for a clean finish

Used to alter ladies' designer suits and, from examining some nice examples by Valentino and Dior, learned a great way to create a smooth zippered closure for the backs of skirts and trousers. Rather than zipping up to the waistband and closing the waist with a button or hook, this method continues the zipper through the waistband, stopping at the top. There's no need to find a flat button or to stitch a buttonhole through many fabric layers, or add a hook and bar.

This streamlined closure is slightly different from typical zipper installation. It finishes the waistband ends at the same time that the lining is attached at the waistline, saving you a few steps. I encourage you to give this technique a try in your next skirt or trouser project.

Martyn Smith of North Lakes, Queensland, Australia, has wide-ranging experience in the sewing and embroidery fields.

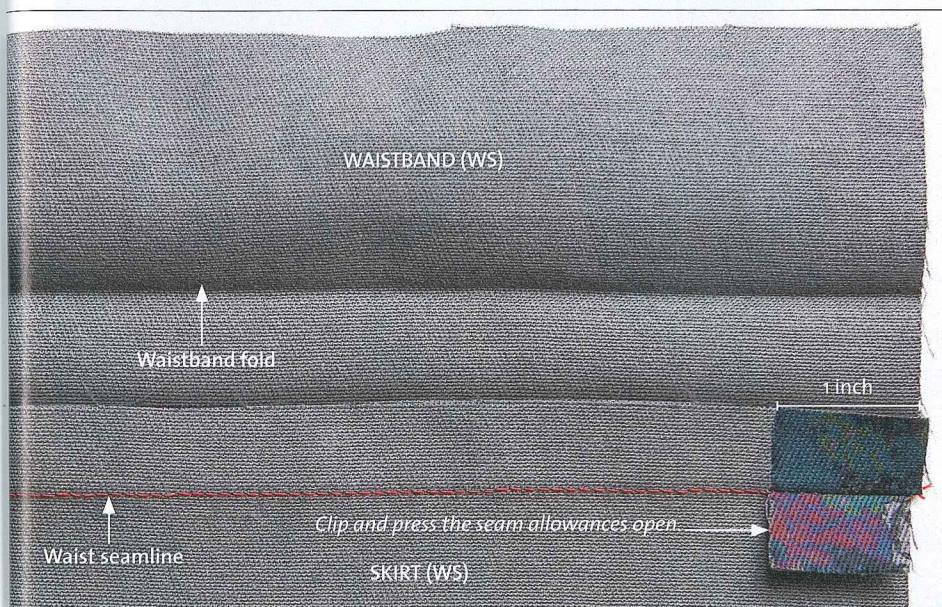
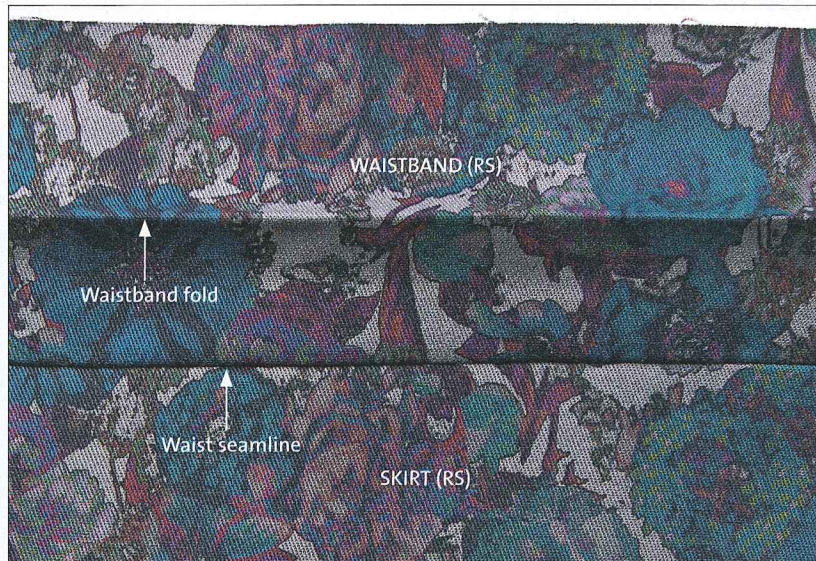


Avoid bulky buttons and hooks by extending a skirt zipper to the waistband's upper edge.

Install the zipper

Attach the waistband and set the zipper. Be sure to use an invisible zipper with a supple cloth tape rather than a stiff nylon mesh tape.

1 Attach the waistband. Cut the waistband the desired length, with a seam allowance at each end; omit any underlap. Press the band lengthwise along its finished foldline. Sew the band to the garment waist edge.



2 Clip and press the seam allowances. Clip the seam allowances 1 inch from the zipper opening. Press this inch-long section open; press the remaining seam allowances toward the waistband.

3 Insert the zipper. Using your favorite invisible zipper-installation method, sew the zipper to the garment. Position it so the top stop is close to but slightly below the waistband's fold. Baste if necessary to ensure that the waist seamline intersection is nicely matched across the zipper opening. If the seam is open below the zipper, complete it now.

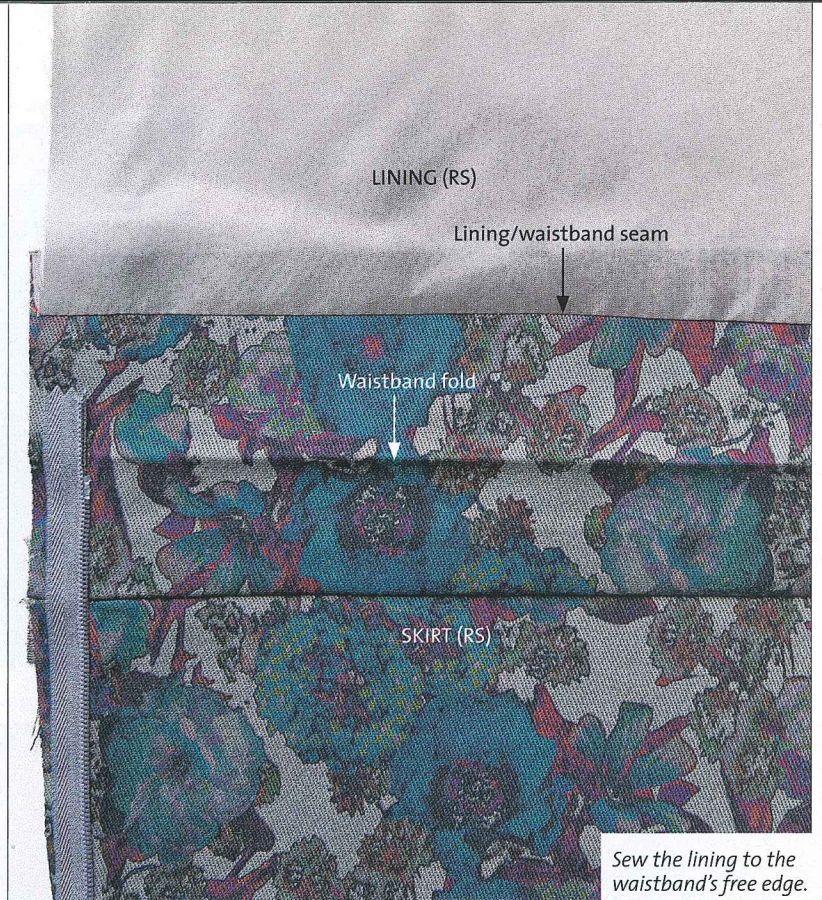


Install the zipper with its top stop at the waistband fold.

Complete the waistband

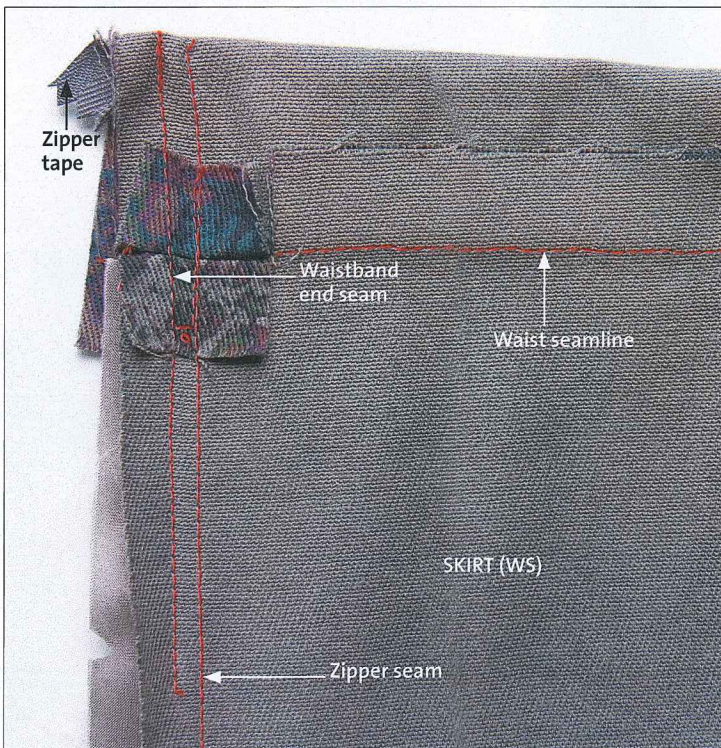
Finish the waistband ends, attach the lining, and secure the waistband. When sewing the lining seam below the zipper, make the lining zipper opening $\frac{1}{2}$ inch longer than the skirt zipper opening.

1 Attach the lining. With right sides together, sew the lining to the waistband's free edge. Press the seam allowances toward the lining.

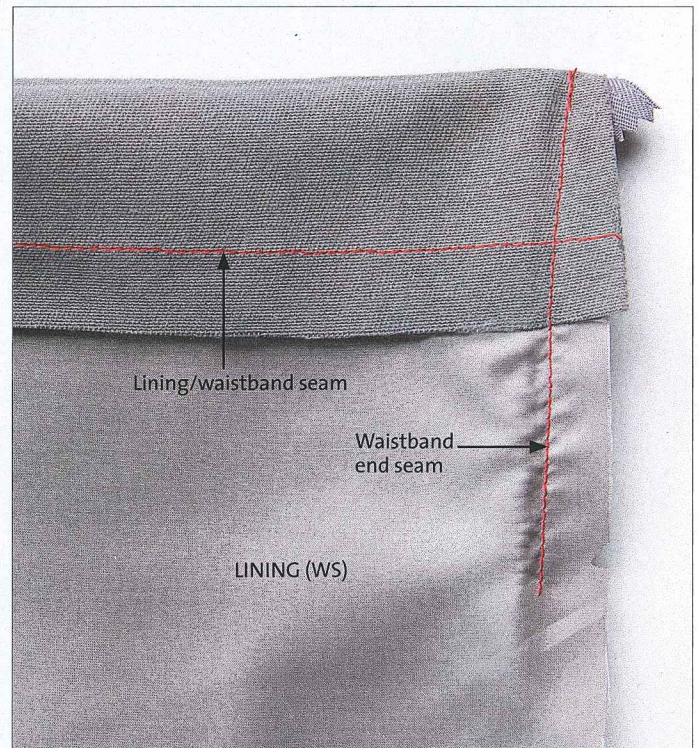


Sew the lining to the waistband's free edge.

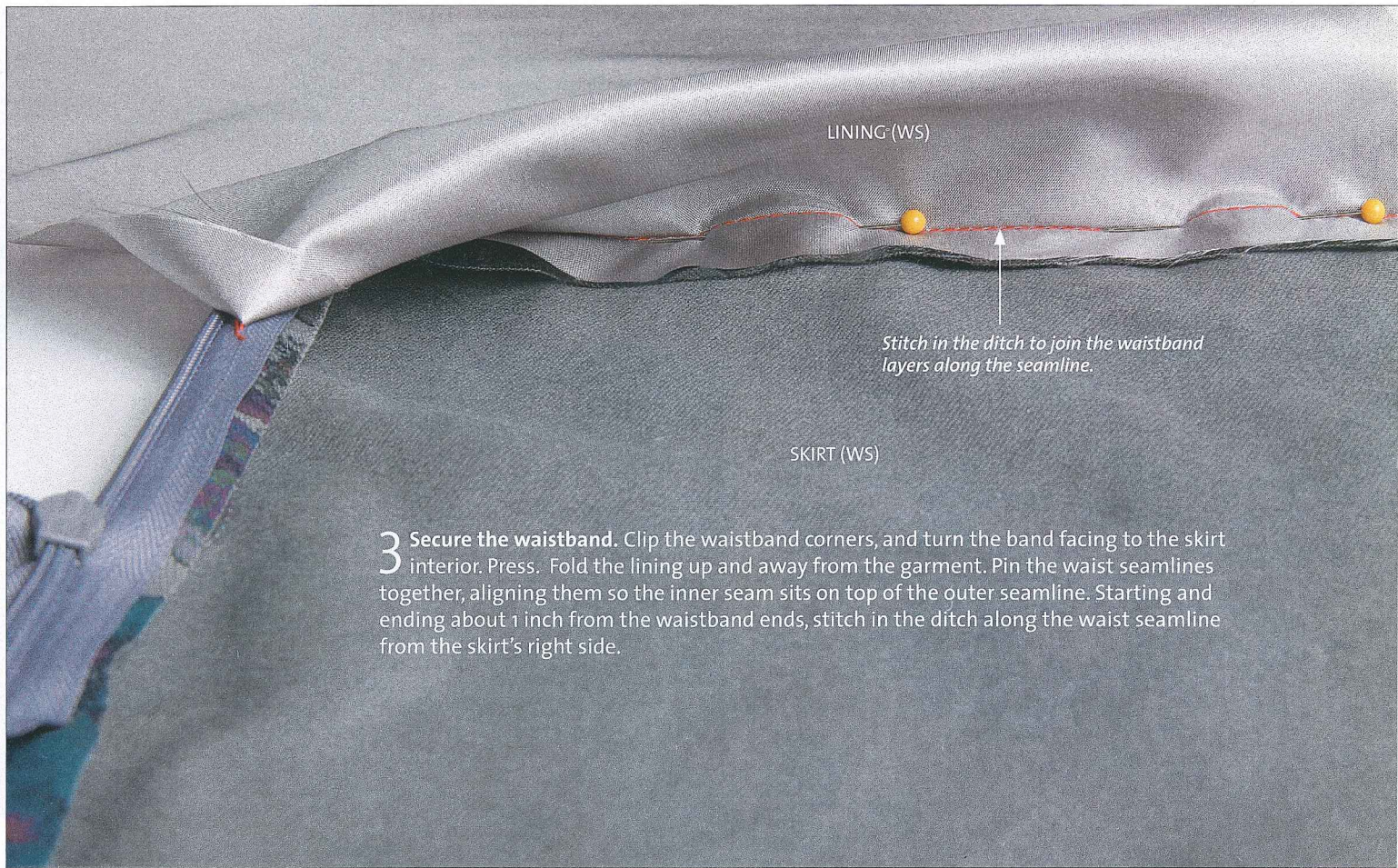
2 Sew the waistband ends. Extend the zipper opening seam allowances flat, and fold the top zipper tape toward the allowances. Fold the waistband on its foldline, with right sides together, sandwiching the zipper between the layers. Align the short ends, then shift the inner end (the one with the lining attached) outward about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch at the waist seamline. This prevents the band from fluting when completed. Sew from the waistband fold to about 2 inches past the waist seam, stitching close to the original zipper stitching.



On the skirt side, press the waist seam allowances up.



On the lining side, press them down.



3 Secure the waistband. Clip the waistband corners, and turn the band facing to the skirt interior. Press. Fold the lining up and away from the garment. Pin the waist seamlines together, aligning them so the inner seam sits on top of the outer seamline. Starting and ending about 1 inch from the waistband ends, stitch in the ditch along the waist seamline from the skirt's right side.

4 Sew the lining to the zipper tape by hand or by machine. If you're machine-sewing, place the lining against the feed dogs to ease it slightly to the zipper tape.

