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Clothing for Independent Living – Convenience Fastenings
Michigan State University Extension Service
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CLOTHES FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Convenience Fastenings

Easy slipover or slip-on clothing styles of knitted fabric and especially with large openings for the arms, head and legs may eliminate the need for fastenings or keep them to a minimum.

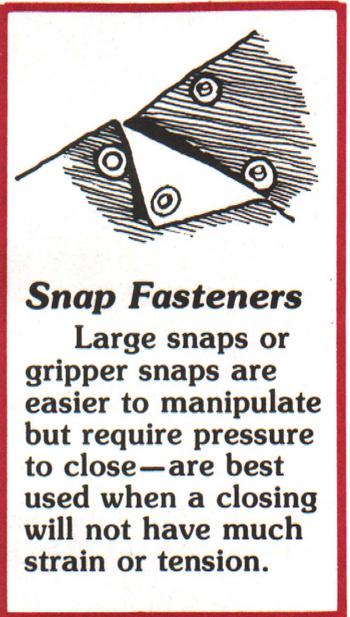
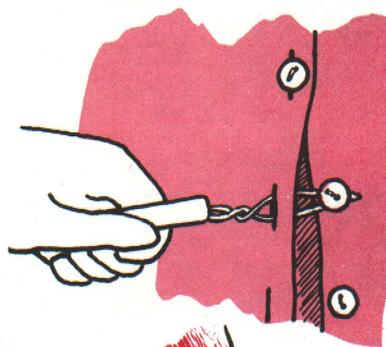
Clothes with side or front opening, longer openings and fasteners within easy reach and easy to grasp can make dressing and undressing easier. The following types of fastenings offer such possibilities. Their usefulness will vary with individual preferences.

Buttons and Buttonholes

- Large somewhat textured buttons are easier to grasp.
- Buttonholes should be large enough to easily slip over the button. Sometimes vertical buttonholes are more easily managed. A buttoner, purchased or made, can assist when finger movement is limited.
- Elastic loops sewed into a seam or on the edge of an opening can be easily slipped over buttons.
- Sew buttons on with elastic thread to slide the hand through without unbuttoning.
- Make a slip-through cufflink type sleeve by sewing a button on both ends of the cuff (on the right side) and then attaching an elastic thread chain between the buttons.

Hooks and Eyes or Bars

Use large, trouser type hooks and bars on waistbands, several bars on the band can make it adjustable. Large hook and eye fasteners are easier to manage. There are several types of bars used with hooks.



Snap Fasteners

Large snaps or gripper snaps are easier to manipulate but require pressure to close—are best used when a closing will not have much strain or tension.



Zipper Slide Fastenings

- Zipper weight and flexibility should coordinate with the weight of the fabric and any strain the fastening will have.
- Zippers should lock securely and slide easily; a lubrication wax can help to make “zipping” easier.
- Fasten a plastic or metal ring or a thread loop to the zipper pull tab to make it easier to grasp.
- A thread chain loop on the garment at the bottom end of a zipper will help the person with limited hand functioning to stabilize the zipper when closing it.
- Separating zippers can completely open a seam such as the sides of slacks or skirts. Zippers which will be next to the skin should be backed with an underlay of fabric or tape.



Hook and Loop Pressure Tape

(A tape with synthetic fiber hooks on one side, loops on the other which grip together and peel apart)

Hook and loop pressure tape can be used in small pieces or a continuous strip. A continuous strip may create a stiff, non-pliable line which could be uncomfortable for the wearer.

The holding strength of such tape is dependent upon the amount of tape used and the amount of pressure applied in closing.

- Waistband on clothes can be made adjustable with hook and loop pressure tape.

- Hook and loop pressure tape can replace buttons and buttonholes. To keep the “buttoned” look, the buttons can be removed and sewed on top of the buttonhole.
- Hook and loop pressure tape can be used to partially or completely open seams on clothes (seams of slacks or skirts) or to insert full length front, side, or side openings to clothes.
- Keep hook and loop pressure tape closed when laundering clothes so lint doesn't collect and lessen the effectiveness of the grip.

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