

Sew Confident!  
CLASS IN A FLASH

# Installing Invisible Zippers

By Linda Lee

THE SEWING WORKSHOP



# Handy Notions to Have on Hand

Know Your  
Notions

Having some special tools and notions by your side helps the installation of an invisible zipper go more smoothly.



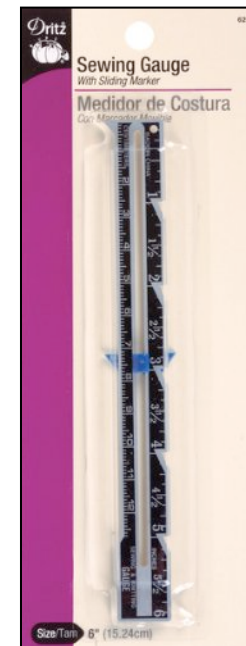
*Fusi-Web (fusible web tape)*



*Tailor's Ham*

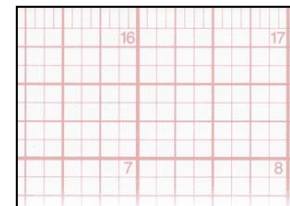


*Chakoner*



*Sewing Gauge*

*Straight Edge  
with Grid*



# The Right Presser Feet

Know your  
Notions

Purchase a special invisible zipper presser foot for your brand of machine, or buy the generic brand of plastic accessories that fit most machines.

If your brand of sewing machine has a zipper foot that moves from side to side, you are in business. If not, purchase a generic sliding zipper foot that will fit on a shank that fits your sewing machine.

*You want to be able to move the zipper foot completely out of the way of the needle to complete the second step of the installation successfully. Just moving the needle position is not sufficient.*



**Invisible Zipper Foot**



**Plastic Version to Fit Any Brand**



**Shank Adaptor**



**Sliding Zipper Foot**



# Stabilize the Seams

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- Use tailor tacks to indicate the length of the zipper opening.
- Cut two strips of fusible interfacing 1" wide by the length of the zipper opening.
- Fuse the strips in the seam allowance and beyond the stitching line on the WRONG side of each zipper opening.
- Serge finish the raw edges of the seam allowances.



*Use a soft, tricot type fusible interfacing such as Ultrasheer Fusible Interfacing from The Sewing Workshop or Sof-Knit or Fusi-Knit.*



# Apply Fusible Web

- On the RIGHT side of the fabric, fuse narrow strips of fusible web tape within the seam allowance for the length of the zipper opening.

*Fusible web tapes are paper covered strips of “glue”. Cut the width of the tape in half and fuse to the seam allowance. Let set a minute and remove the paper cover.*

***Note: The seam is not completely sewn until the installation of the invisible zipper is complete.***



***Fusi-Web (fusible web tape)***

# Mark Seamlines

- Using a chalk marker, mark the 5/8" seamline the length of the zipper opening on the RIGHT side of the fabric.
- Also mark a horizontal line 3/4" down from the top of the garment.

*The horizontal line indicates the match for the zipper stop at the top of the zipper. The amount of excess zipper tape above the zipper stop varies with different brands of zippers. By matching the stop, you are consistent in placing the zipper correctly in relationship to the top of the garment.*



**Chakoner**



# Open the Zipper Coils

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- Open the zipper.
- On the wrong side of the zipper, using a warm temperature, press the zipper coils slightly open, making sure not to melt the coils. This will make it easier to feed the coils into the channels of the zipper foot.



*It is better not to press the coils than to overpress them, so this step is optional. With the proper invisible zipper foot, the stitching will still work.*



# Fuse One Zipper Tape

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- With the front side of the zipper to the right side of the fabric, place the zipper tape along the garment edge, aligning the coils on the marked  $\frac{5}{8}$ " seamline.
- Place the top zipper stop at the horizontal chalk mark.
- Fuse the zipper tape in place.



*Widths of zipper tapes vary with brands, so it is important to place the coils on the  $\frac{5}{8}$ " marked seamline.*

# Sew the Zipper Tape

- Using an invisible zipper foot, position the right groove of the foot over the coil and stitch until either the foot touches the slider or to the length of the zipper opening as marked.
- Make sure the coil fits firmly into the contour of the groove. The stitching will automatically be in the correct position.

*Continue to mark the end of the zipper stop through the zipper tape for perfect alignment at the top.*





# Position the Second Tape

- Lay the garment on a flat surface with the right side up.
- Open out the zipper so you see the right side of the slider.
- Place the corresponding garment piece over the remaining zipper tape with right sides together.
- Temporarily pin in place in preparation for the next step.



*Right side of slider.*

*It is easy to twist the zipper in this step, so check before stitching.*



# Sew the Second Tape

- Match the zipper stop to the horizontal marked line and the coils along the marked seamline.
- Fuse zipper tape in place.
- Position left groove of the foot over the coil and stitch until either the foot touches the slider or to the length of the zipper opening as marked.



*Zipper stop matches horizontal chalk mark.*

# Complete Zipper Opening

- Close the zipper. Check to make sure there is no zipper tape “grin” showing on the right side of the garment.
- Pull the bottom of the zipper out of the way.
- Change to a sliding zipper foot and move the foot away from the needle.
- Insert the needle **exactly** into the previous stitching about 1/2” from the end of the stitching.
- Using the handwheel, walk the needle for 1/2” to make sure the stitches are on top of the previous stitches.



*Hand walk the stitches through the difficult area. This prevents that famous pucker at the end of an invisible zipper.*



## Stitch for 2"

- After hand walking for 1/2", continue to stitch regularly for about 2" or until you are out of the way of the zipper.



*Be sure and stitch evenly along the 5/8" seam allowance.  
Chalk mark the seam allowance if necessary.*



# Complete the Seam

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- Change to a regular sewing presser foot.
- Starting at the end of the previous stitching, stitch to the bottom of the garment.



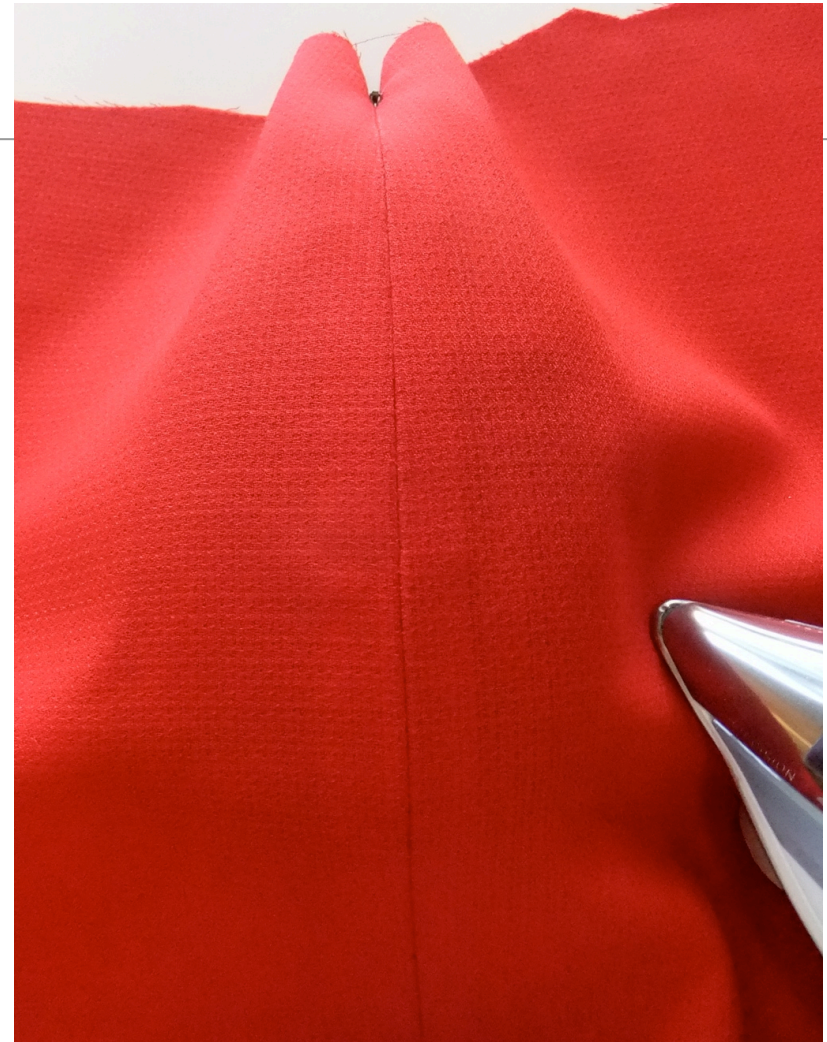
*Using a clear presser foot allows you to see exactly where to start stitching.*

# Steam Press the Seam

- Place the completed seam over a tailor's ham.
- Lightly steam and hand press the zipper seam. You do not want it to look too hard-pressed, so a light touch, please.



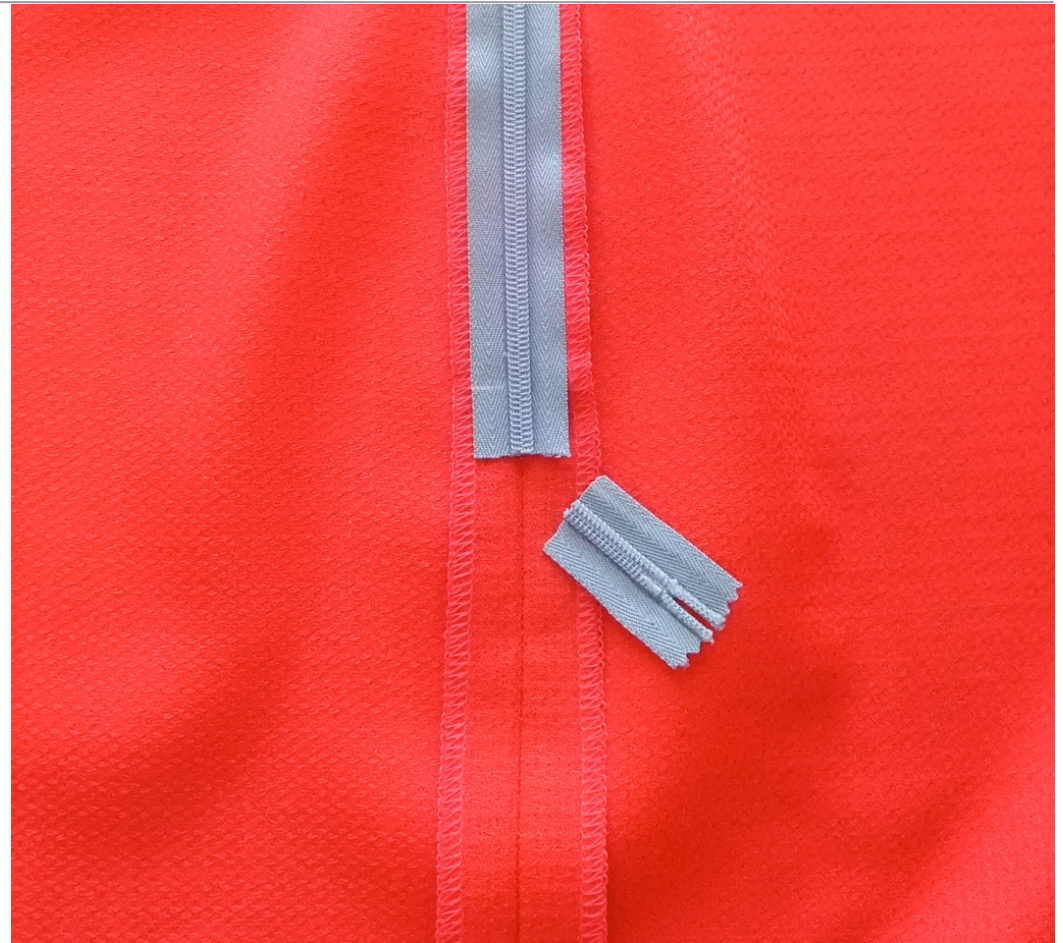
*Tailor's Ham*





# Remove Excess Zipper Tape

- If you have used a zipper that is longer than the opening, simply cut off the excess portion.

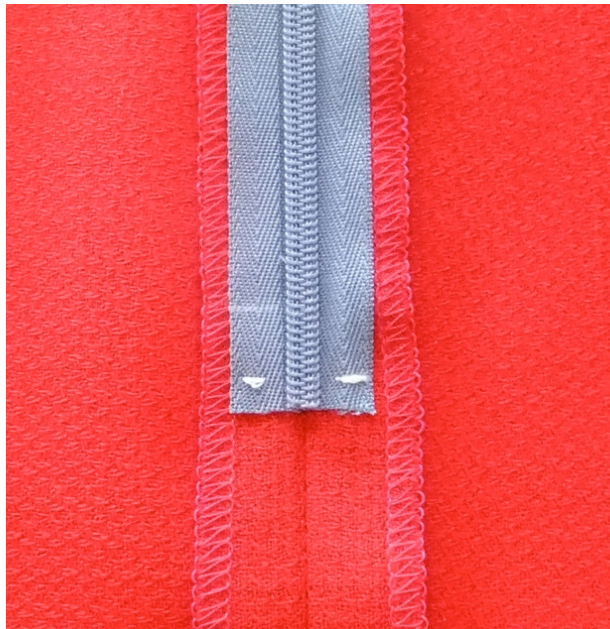


*Any length invisible zipper can be used. Sometimes you can't find the exact length in the right color. It is no problem to shorten them after the installation.*



# Anchor the Zipper Tape

- Bar tack the zipper tape to each seam allowance only. Make sure the garment is out of the way.
- Or hand stitch in place.



*To sew a bar tack, drop the feed dogs to zigzag a few stitches in place.*

***And now you have a pucker-free zipper installation!***

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