

The Davidow edge

A designer's patented facing alternative

A fold-and-stitch finish economized on fabric.



On November 7, 1942, Melville Davidow applied for U. S. Patent 2,318,295 for an innovative jacket construction method. With the goal of saving as much material as possible, Davidow invented a way to eliminate the facings from a tailored-style ladies' jacket. His finishing process kept the hand of the fashion fabric and maintained the structural integrity of the collar and lapel without the facing.

A full description, with drawings, is shown online under the patent number granted on May 4, 1943. Davidow turned the seam allowance normally used to attach the facings to the wrong side, then machine-sewed three parallel rows of stitching to stay, support, and secure the edge. His method relied on

meticulous pressing, stitching, and trimming. It works best in a fabric with a textured, open weave—not a hard-finished, tightly woven suiting material. The fabric's weight should be able to support a collar and lapel without requiring interfacing or a sewn-on or cut-on facing.

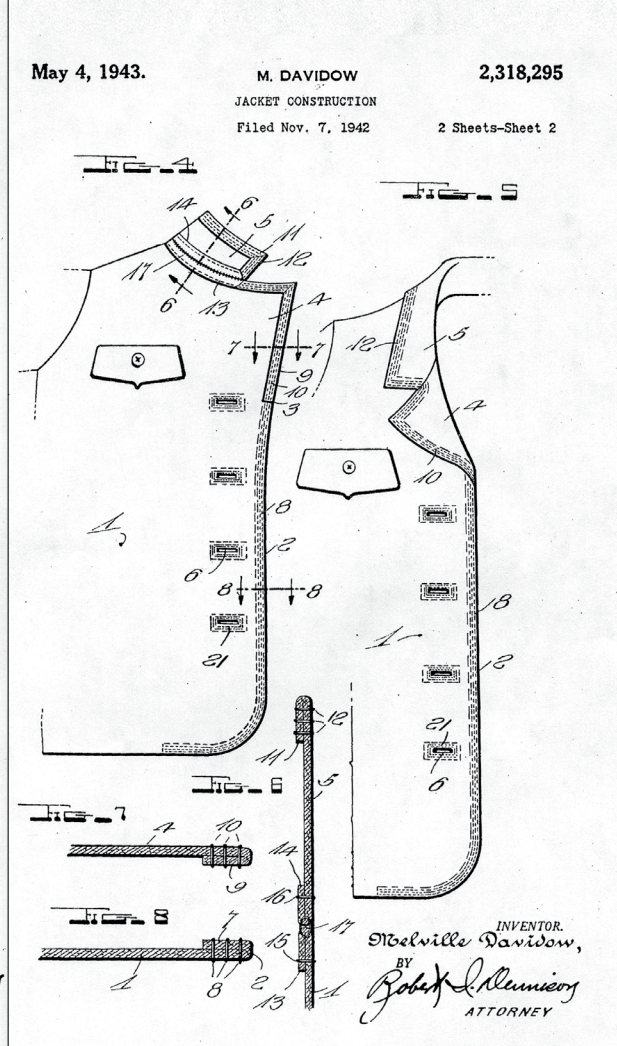
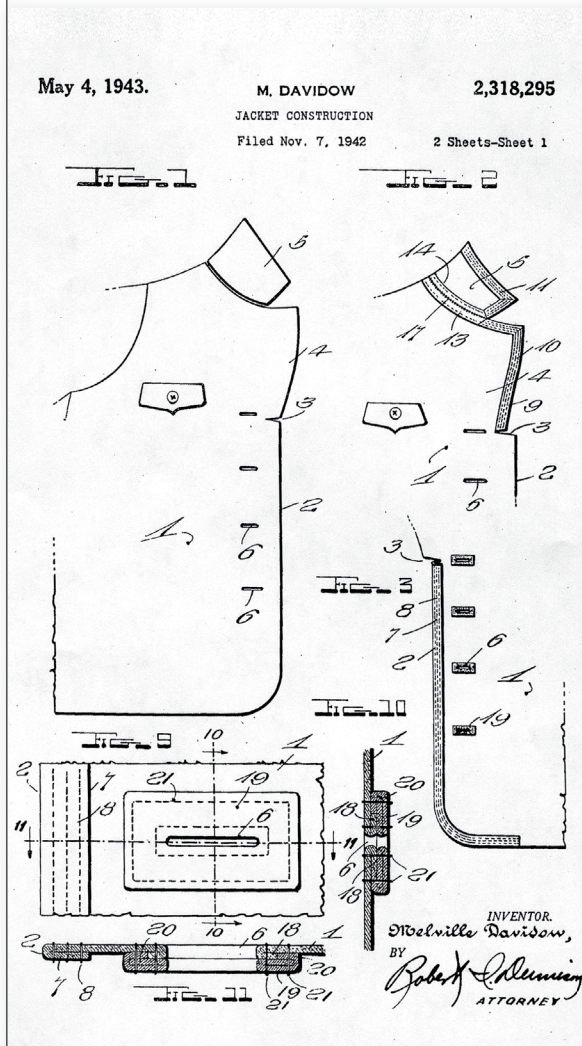
For years, the Davidow method was used to finish jackets and is seen in many garment collections of the time. The steps for emulating this method are shown on the next page. Find additional information on this technique in David Page Coffin's "One-Layer Tailoring," *Threads* #60, Aug./Sept. 1995.

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Prep the pieces

The original patent documents illustrate the seam and edge configurations in detail and from every angle. If you want to give the whole jacket a try, take a close look at the diagrams. They cover the entire construction process, including the bound buttonholes.

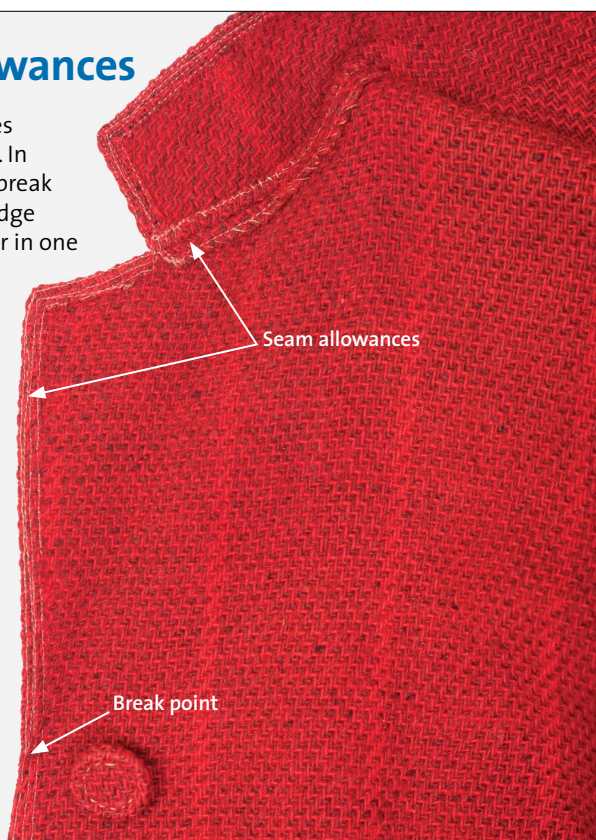
To finish a garment's outer edges à la Davidow, cut them with a $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch-wide or $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-wide seam allowance. If desired, staystitch along the edges within the seam allowance to prevent fraying and distortion. This refinement occurs on the jacket but is not mentioned in the patent.



Press the allowances

Press the seam allowances to the fabric's wrong side. In some places, such as the break point below a lapel, the edge needs to be pressed under in one area, and out for the rest of the seam. To fold the fabric in opposite directions, cut across the seam allowance, perpendicular to the edge and between two fibers.

Hand-baste the fabric's raw edges to the garment.



Machine-stitch to finish

Apply three closely spaced, parallel rows of straight stitching along the pressed-under seam allowances. Space them evenly, with one row near the fold, and the others spaced about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch apart. These secure the seam allowances, support the edges, and prevent stretching and fraying.

After stitching, remove the basting, trim the excess seam allowance close to the stitching, and press to finish.

