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Clothes for independent living-- undercover convenience

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Quick Facts

Underclothes and outerwear should be comfortable and easy to put on and take off, especially for those with physical disabilities.

Slips are easier to put on and take off if they wrap or zip instead of slipping over the head.

Slips with built-up straps often are more comfortable to wear because they don't bind or slip off the shoulders.

Regular back-closing bras can be altered to open in front, but they must be the kind that can be taken apart at the center front.

Altering Slips to Wrap Style

A full-length slip is easier to put on and take off if it wraps instead of slips over the head.

1. Cut a woven fabric slip down the center front.
2. Add a double-fold strip of fabric to each side to make a 1- to 2-inch overlap. (See Figure 1.)
3. Fasten with spaced strips of hook-and-loop pressure tape.
4. Stitch wide nylon lace hem tape down the overlap to add a decorative touch.

A half slip also can be changed to a wrap style:

1. Cut the slip apart lengthwise down the center front or slightly off to one side.
2. Add a wide fabric extension to one side for an underlap.

Underclothes and outerwear should be comfortable and easy to put on and take off. Larger sizes will help if they are not too bulky. Cotton and cotton-blend underclothes are more absorbent and comfortable. Here are a few ideas for altering underclothes for those persons with limited physical disabilities.

This information provided by:

1. Reviewed by Kathy Williams, Colorado State University apparel and textiles specialist, design merchandising and consumer science. Information from Michigan State University Bulletin E-1205, *Undercover Convenience*. Reprinted with permission. 9/92. ©Colorado State University Cooperative Extension. 1994. For more information, contact your county Cooperative Extension office.

3. Finish off the other edge with a narrow hem.
Sew lace along the edge if desired.
4. Fasten with strips of hook-and-loop pressure tape at the waistline to make the slip adjustable.

Zippering a Full-length Slip

Set a lightweight zipper into the slashed center front of a slip. This method is suitable for knit slips. Use a soft, flexible nylon or polyester coil zipper that is at least 20 inches long.

1. Sew the zipper in with a small seam so that it is exposed. Then the slip will not be made smaller in size. (See Figure 2.)
2. Add a fabric facing (wide twill tape can be used) underneath the zipper to protect the skin.
3. Make a thread chain loop at the zipper pull tab to make it easier to grasp. (See Figure 2.)
4. Add another thread chain (about 1-1/2 to 2 inches) beside the bottom of the zipper. The wearer can slip several fingers into the loop to hold down the fabric for easier zipping. (See Figure 2.)

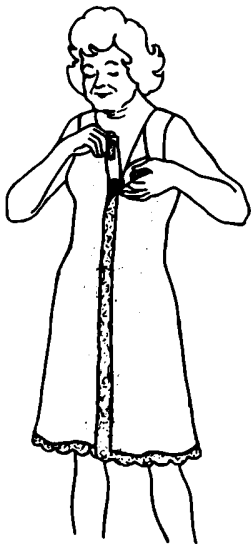


Figure 1.

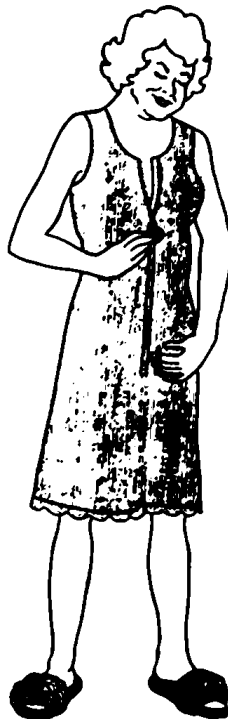


Figure 2.

Slip Straps

Slips with built-up straps often are more comfortable to wear because they don't bind or slip off the shoulders as easily. Narrow straps can be made more comfortable by sewing them on to a wider ribbon or tape.

Opening Bras in the Front

Some front-closing bras can be purchased. Regular back-closing bras can be altered to open in front, but they must be the kind that can be taken apart at the center front. The method will depend somewhat on the style of bra.

Supplies Needed

- * A 24-inch strip of twill tape (1-inch wide).
- * 3 to 4 inches of white hook-and-loop pressure tape (1-inch wide).
- * One large tailor's hook and eye.
- * One plastic curtain ring (1 inch in diameter) or metal belt ring.

Method I

1. Remove stitching that holds center front of bra together.
2. Sew the edges of the twill tape together to make a 12-inch long strip. (See Figure 3.)
3. Insert into lower right bra seam and machine stitch.
4. Attach plastic ring to lower left side of bra with a strip of material (about 1/2-inch wide and 2 inches long when finished), loop over the curtain ring and sew to bra (as illustrated in Figure 3).

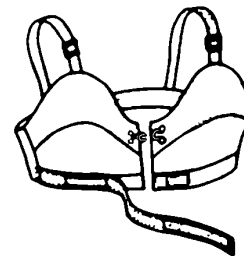


Figure 3.

5. Place tailor's hook and eye (as illustrated) and make sure the bra is brought over to the original

stitched position. Hook on right--eye on left. (See Figure 3.)

6. Put bra on; bring strip through plastic ring and fold to determine placement of hook-and-loop pressure tape strips. Attach pressure tape, stitch all four sides. (See Figure 4.)



Figure 4.

7. Remove hooks and eyes from the back of the bra and sew it shut. **Note:** If a person is lefthanded, the above steps should be on opposite sides.

Method II

1. Open up the center front of the bra.
2. Sew in a bra repair package that can be purchased.
3. Sew the hook section to one side and the eye section to the other so that they join without adding any width at the center front.
4. Remove the hooks and eyes at the back and sew the back opening shut.