

Sewing a Button

Practical skills

The step that makes a button last, and that most people skip.

Two minutes, and it outlasts the original.

1

Mark the position

Do up the other buttons to line it up correctly.

2

Anchor with small stitches

A few stitches on the spot, no knot on the outside.

3

Sew through the holes

Four to six passes. Over a pin or matchstick laid on top.

4

Remove the pin

This leaves the slack that becomes the shank.

5

Wind the shank

Wrap the thread around the threads under the button, five or six

6

Finish underneath

Several small stitches, then knot on the wrong side.

WHY THE SHANK

It gives room for the fabric thickness

Without it the threads take all the strain

A shankless button pulls off within weeks

Four-hole buttons on shirts are usually sewn in parallel bars, not a cross. Either works; parallel is the traditional finish.