How to mend holes in garments

A comprehensive guide to mending. Whether it’s darning, patching or reinforcing, you’ll find what you need here.

How to mend a small hole using hand-sewing

**YOU WILL NEED**

- Thread to match your garment
- Hand-sewing needle
- Scissors

**DIFFICULTY**

- EASY

**METHOD**

1. Use a length of doubled thread that matches your garment as closely as possible.

2. Work on the inside (wrong side) of the garment.

3. Either tie a knot in the end of the thread, or do a couple of small stitches to secure.

4. Work small, uniform stitches that go across the hole, then pull the stitches to close the hole shut.

5. Try to be sparing with the stitching, otherwise your stitches might become a more obvious blemish than the hole itself!

6. Do a few stitches to secure the end of the thread and trim the end.
HOW TO DARN A HOLE IN A WOOLLEN GARMENT

This method tackles moth holes or other small, worn areas and is ideal for use on knitted and woven garments.

YOU WILL NEED

- Darning or knitting wool to match your garment – or a contrasting colour if you want to make your darning a decorative feature
- Darning needle
- Scissors

DIFFICULTY

EASY

METHOD

1. Thread the needle once through the wrong side of the garment and tie a double knot to secure it – this is a great trick as the knot could otherwise slip straight through the garment.

2. Use a single thickness of yarn.

3. Working on the right side of the garment and starting at the edge of the hole, sew a 'bridge' horizontally from one side to the other without pulling the yarn tight.

Note:
- You're not closing up the hole, just attempting to rebuild the fabric.
- Avoid putting the needle in too close to the edge of the hole where the knit is fragile - you're likely to unravel more of the knit and make the hole bigger.

4. Once you’ve covered the hole with horizontal stitches, you’ll need to change direction and work vertical stitches – at a right angle to your original stitches.

5. Weave through your first stitches by wiggling the needle in and out of them until you get to the opposite side.

Repeat until the hole is covered.

You should have created a strong woven panel of a similar weight and strength to the body of the garment.

Securely fasten the thread off on the wrong side, and trim the end.
HOW TO REINFORCE A TEAR

This is a great way to mend jeans.

YOU WILL NEED

- ✓ Thread to match your garment
- ✓ A small amount of fabric to use as a patch – try to match the original fabric if you can
- ✓ A small piece of bondaweb - available from all haberdashery shops, this is used to join two fabrics together with the heat of an iron
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Sewing machine
- ✓ Iron and ironing board

DIFFICULTY

EASY

METHOD

1. Source a patch of fabric, 1cm longer and slightly wider than the tear, and which roughly matches the fabric. The fabric weight is key, but if you can match the colour as well, all the better.

2. Cut a piece of bondaweb the same size as your patch.

3. Fuse the patch to the back of the tear – on the inside of the garment.

Here’s how:

- Check the garment care label so you know what iron temperature you can safely use. Bondaweb needs a fairly high heat to work so you might need to use a pressing cloth between the iron and the bondaweb/garment.
- Place the sticky/shiny side of the bondaweb over the patch and press. Be careful not to get bondaweb on your iron as it will stick on the surface.
- Remove loose threads from the tear and then remove the backing paper from the patch/bondaweb and place centrally over the tear.
- Carefully press until all three layers are glued together.

4. Thread your sewing machine with a matching thread and select a medium length straight-stitch.

5. Sew and reverse over the tear continually until you’re happy that it’s strong and secure.

Note:

This is not an invisible repair, but it will strengthen the fabric and prevent further tearing.

If you want it to look more discreet, you can hand-sew across the tear and through the patch with small neat stitches.
HOW TO PATCH A HOLE

YOU WILL NEED

✓ Thread to match your garment
✓ A bought patch/patches, available from haberdashery shops, OR a tightly woven or felted fabric to make a patch
✓ Scissors
✓ Either a hand-sewing needle and thimble or a sewing machine

DIFFICULTY

EASY

METHOD

1. Working from the right side of the garment, place the patch centrally over the hole.
   You'll need to ensure there's plenty of space around the hole so that you won't be sewing over any weak spots.

2. If the patch is one of a pair – like the elbows of a jacket, for instance – ensure they’re placed symmetrically.
   Pin them securely in place – try on the garment to check they’re correctly placed.

3. If the patch/patches are in a fiddly place, such as on sleeves or trouser legs, you might find it easier to hand-stitch them all the way round using a small back stitch.
   Please be very careful with the needle and wear a thimble to protect your fingers.

4. Alternatively, machine-sew in place using a matching thread and a straight-stitch with a medium to large stitch length.

   Note:
   • You’ll want the garment/patch to move easily through the sewing machine – a small stitch could hinder this.

5. Tie off the loose threads on the inside of the garment to keep a neat finish on the right side.