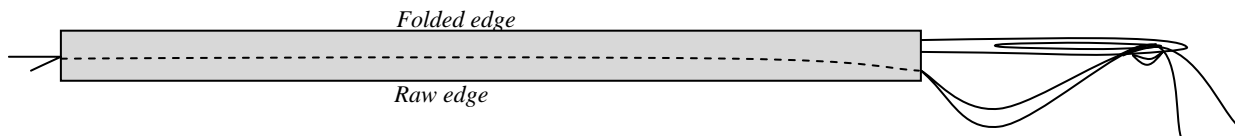


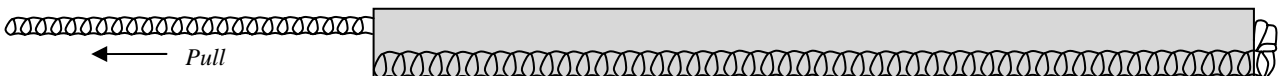
Sew Like a Pro: Couture Techniques

Self-made tubing can be used for spaghetti straps, ties, and loop closures. It can be made several ways. Choose one of the following methods depending on the resources available and desired look. To make turning easier, use a strip of continuous bias. For instructions on cutting continuous bias strips, see **CT-MMB.723**.

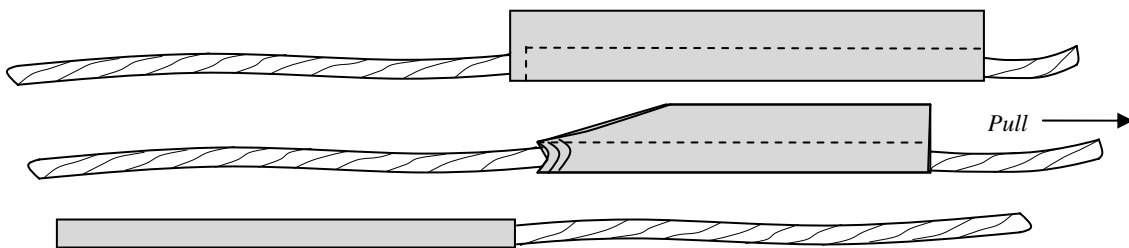
Method 1: Cut bias strip twice the width of desired tubing plus $\frac{1}{2}$ inch for seams. Fold bias strip in half lengthwise, right sides together, and machine stitch using $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch seam allowance. Stretch the fabric as you sew. As you approach the end of the bias strip, angle your stitching out slightly to the raw edge, and back stitch. Leave a thread tail with the machine thread about 4 inches long. Depending on the width of your tubing, trim seam allowances if needed. Using a tapestry needle or other bunt ended needle, thread tails through needle eye and tie end to needle. Insert needle into tubing, push needle and pull fabric tube right side out.



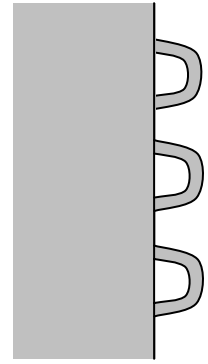
Method 2: Use the serger to create the tube. Cut bias strip twice the width of desired tubing plus $\frac{1}{2}$ inch for seams. Set serger for three thread seam. Run a chain two inches longer than finished tube length. Bring thread chain under the presser foot and to front of serger. Fold bias strip over thread chain and place under presser foot to begin serging. Keep thread chain inside against the fold completed, remove from serger and carefully pull thread chain to turn tube right side out.



Method 3: Add cording for stability and firmness. Cut cording two times the finished length plus two inches. Cut bias strip the finished length. The fabric width should be equal to the cord circumference plus 1 inch. Starting at middle of the cord, fold the bias strip around the cord (right sides together) matching raw edges. Using a zipper foot, stitch across end of bias strip through cording, pivot at seam line and continue stitching close to cording to the other end of the bias strip. Trim seam allowances. Hold cording from open end of bias tube; begin pulling fabric at the center of the cord from covered to uncovered end of cording. This will turn the fabric right side out and enclose the cord. Cut off stitched end of fabric and excess cording.



Button loops may be substituted for buttonholes and are sewn into the seam line. Button loops are a good choice for lightweight fabrics and lace. If the garment has been designed for button holes, adjustments will need to be made to the pattern to eliminate the overlap and allow for the loops to be placed along the center line. Button loops work best for ball or shank buttons and are usually about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide. Cord/tubing should be compatible with the button size. Button loop should be big enough to allow easy fastening of button. Always check length by sewing a sample.



Chinese ball buttons can be made of purchased cord, braid, or self-made tubing.

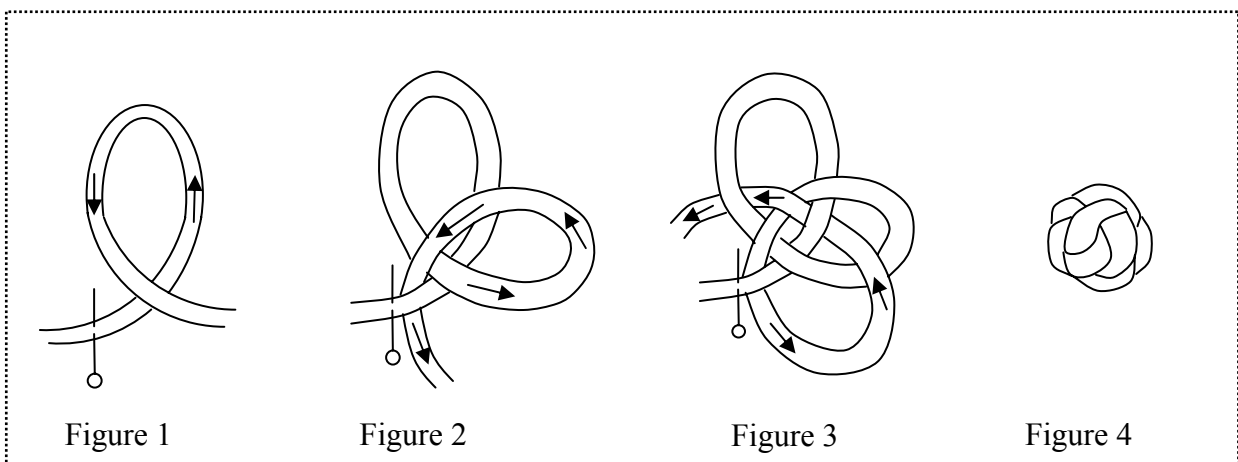
- Supplies needed:
- $\frac{1}{2}$ yard (approx.) cord, braid, or tubing per button
 - 1 yard (approx.) cord, braid, or tubing per 2-piece frog closure
 - Matching thread
 - Hand sewing needle
 - Straight pins
 - Surface to pin to, such as a piece of paper

It is important to make a test button to check procedure and size. For a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch button, use $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch cord; for a 1 inch button, use $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch cord for correct proportions.

Cut a piece of cord or tubing 16 inches long.

Follow directions and diagrams for forming loops:

- Pin one end of cord to a piece of paper; loop cord one time. If using tubing, keep seam down (Figure 1).
- Loop a second time over first loop, then under the pinned end (Figure 2).
- Make a third loop and weave end through previous two loops (Figure 3).
- Gradually tighten all loops into a ball; trim and sew ends to underside of button (Figure 4).

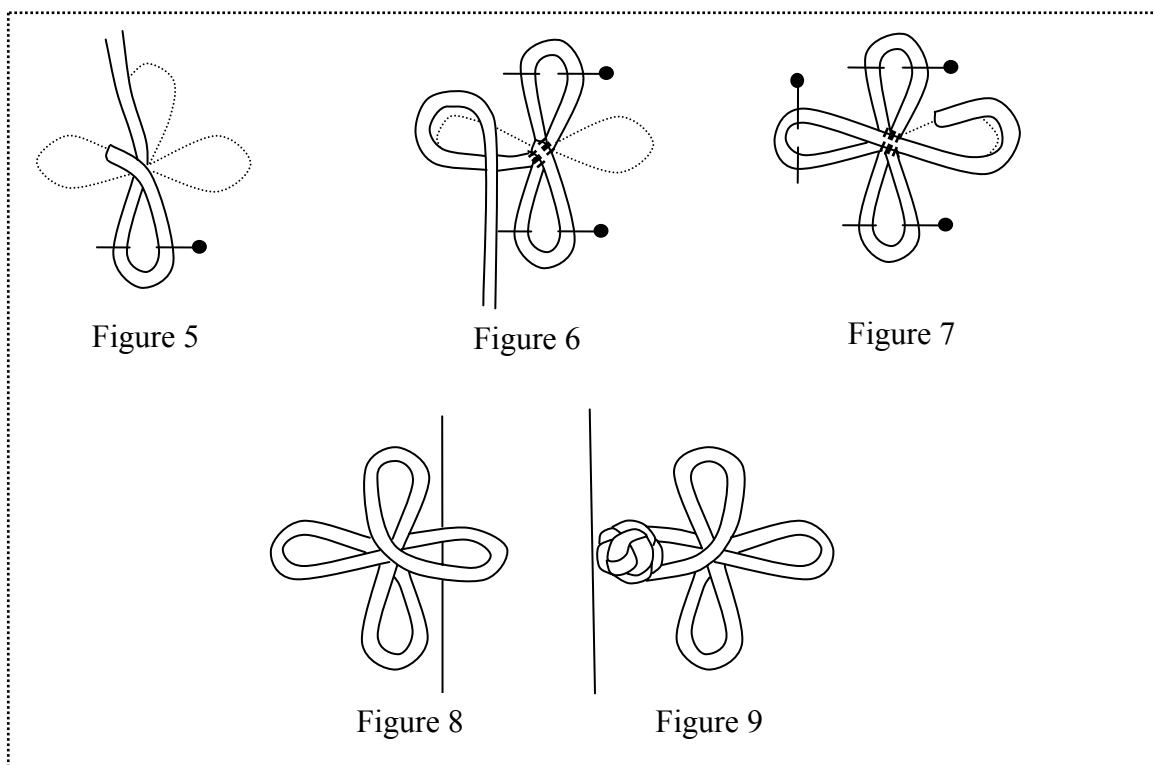


Chinese ball buttons may be combined with frogs to provide detail for both dressy or casual clothes and purses.

Frogs can be custom made using tubing or purchased cord.

To make a frog:

- Draw the design for the frog on paper (Figure 5). Be creative with your design.
- Beginning at the center of the design, leave a ¼-inch end of cord (Figure 5).
- Pin cord to paper following the drawn design. When using self-made tubing, be sure to keep seam up or toward you; this will be underside when frog is completed.
- Securely whipstitch at all crossings on top and do not let stitches show on the side against the paper (Figures 6 and 7).
- Remove frog from paper pattern and place right side up on garment with the loop for button extending over the edge (Figure 8).
- Whipstitch back side of frog to garment, keeping seam of tubing against the garment.
- Complete a second frog for the button; attach at button position.
- Attach Chinese ball button to complete the closure (Figure 9).



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