



# APPAREL AND TEXTILES

## Clothing Care & Repair

### ADJUST THE LENGTH: How to Hem Pants

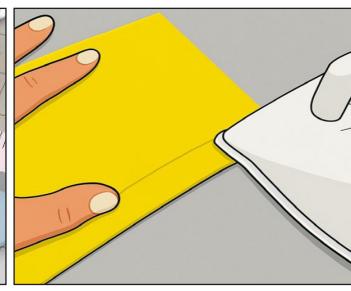
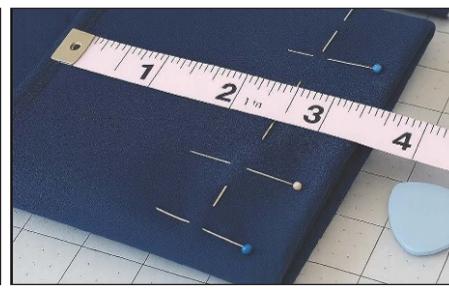
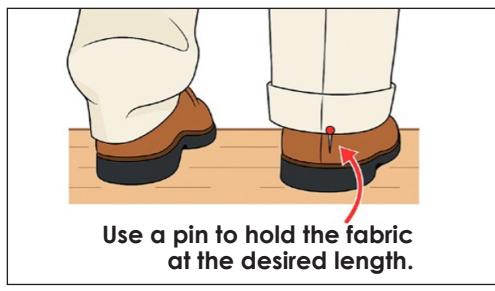
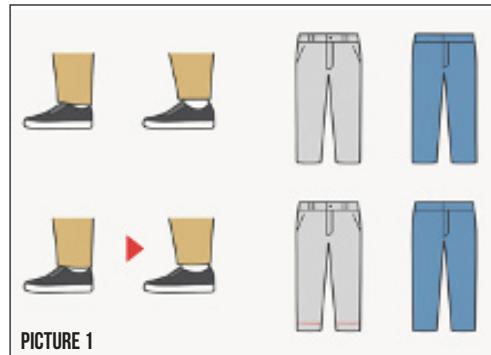
Hemming pants shortens the length to fit properly. You can hem pants by hand or with a sewing machine. Here is a simple guide to a basic hand-sewn hem, along with tips for machine hemming

#### YOU WILL NEED:

- Needle & matching thread
- Scissors
- Measuring tape or ruler
- Straight pins or clips
- Iron (for crisp folds)
- Chalk or fabric marker
- Seam ripper (optional)

#### STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Try on the Pants:** Wear the shoes you will wear with the pants. Fold the hem up to your desired length. Pin in place or mark with chalk (picture 1).
2. **Mark and Cut (if needed):** Take off the pants and lay them flat. Mark a line below the fold for seam allowance. Cut off the excess fabric if the pants are very long (picture 2).
3. **Press the Fold:** Fold the raw edge up once (1/2 inch), press, fold the fabric over again, and press (picture 3-4).

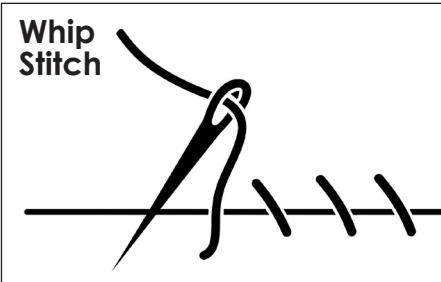


4. **Sew the Hem (Blind Stitch or Whipstitch):** For a blind stitch (invisible hem), take small stitches through a couple of threads of the pant fabric above the folded hem, then go into the hem fold. Repeat this stitch all the way around. For a whipstitch (easier but visible), stitch over the hem edge and catch a bit of the pant fabric each time in a spiral motion (pictures 5-6).

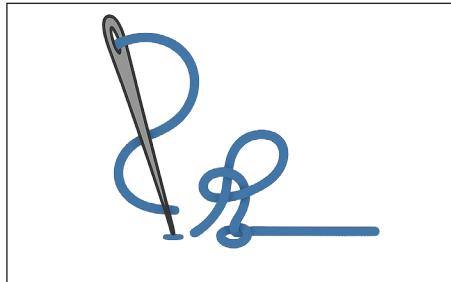
5. **Finish:** Knot the thread when finished. Iron the new hem flat for a polished look (picture 7).



PICTURE 5



PICTURE 6



PICTURE 7

### EXTRA TIPS:

- Use the right stitch for the pants material. A blind stitch works well for most pants.
- For jeans, use a needle designed for denim and a contrasting thread to replicate the original look.
- If using a sewing machine, select the blind hem stitch setting and attach a blind hem foot to your machine. Place the pant leg around the free arm of the sewing machine to sew the hem. Walk over the seam with a walking foot to manage fabric bulk (photos below).
- Finish the raw edge with pinking shears or a hand overlock stitch.



**A WELL-HEMMED PAIR OF PANTS SHOWS POLISH.  
MASTERING THIS SKILL WILL KEEP YOUR PANTS  
WARDROBE IN TIP-TOP SHAPE**

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**References:** Bowers, S. & Bowers, D. (2021). *Home Ec for Everyone: Practical Life Skills in 118 Projects*. Workman Publishing Co., Inc. Bowers, S. & Bowers, D. (2016). *The Useful Book: 201 Life Skills They Used to Teach in Home Ec and Shop*. Workman Publishing Co., Inc. York, D. (Ed.). (2002). *New Complete Guide to Sewing: Step-by-Step Techniques for making Clothes and Home Accessories*. Reader's Digest.