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Clothing for Independent Living – Comfort for Wheelchair Travel
Michigan State University Extension Service
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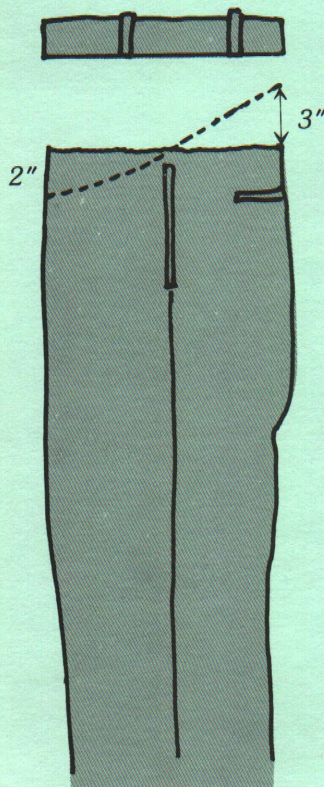
CLOTHES FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Comfort for Wheelchair Travel

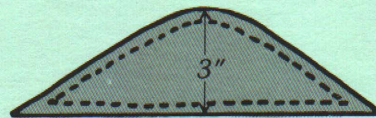
Slacks

Most clothes are designed for the standing figure. Sitting shortens the front torso and lengthens the back. People who sit quite continuously can have a more comfortable fit by shortening regular slacks in the front and adding fabric in the back.

- 1 Remove the waistband and belt loops.
- 2 Cut off about 2 inches at the center front at the zipper area, and taper up to the original side seams of the slacks.



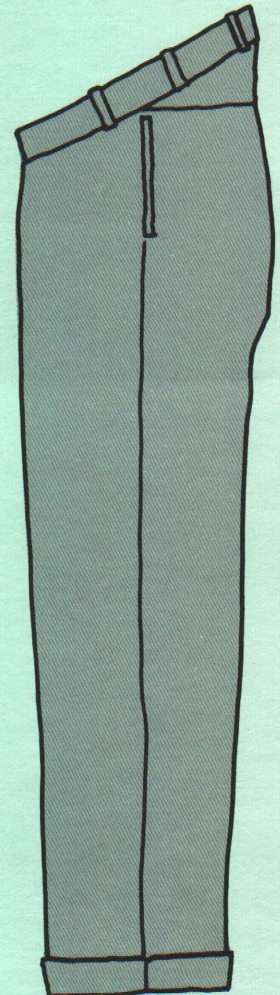
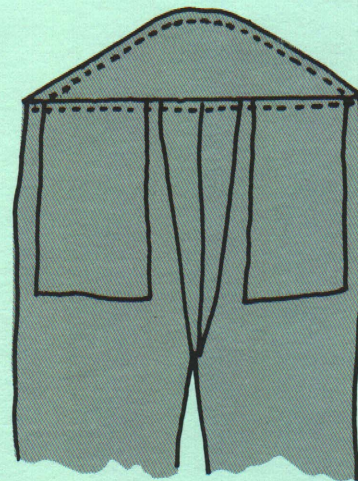
- 4 Sew the base of the triangle fabric section to the back waistline of the slacks.



- 3 Using a matching or near matching medium weight knit fabric, cut out a triangular section which is 3 inches deep at the center, the width of the back, and tapers to the slack side seams. Add $\frac{5}{8}$ inch for seams.

Slacks and skirts can also be made more comfortable around the waist by removing the waistband, setting in a V-shaped fabric section at the center back, and then replacing the waistband.

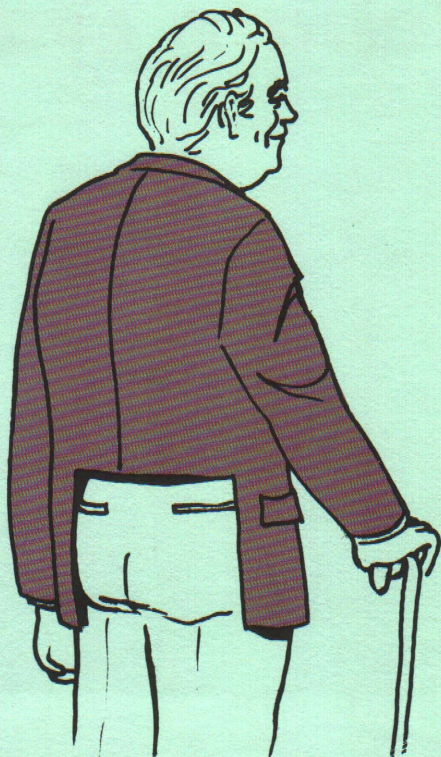
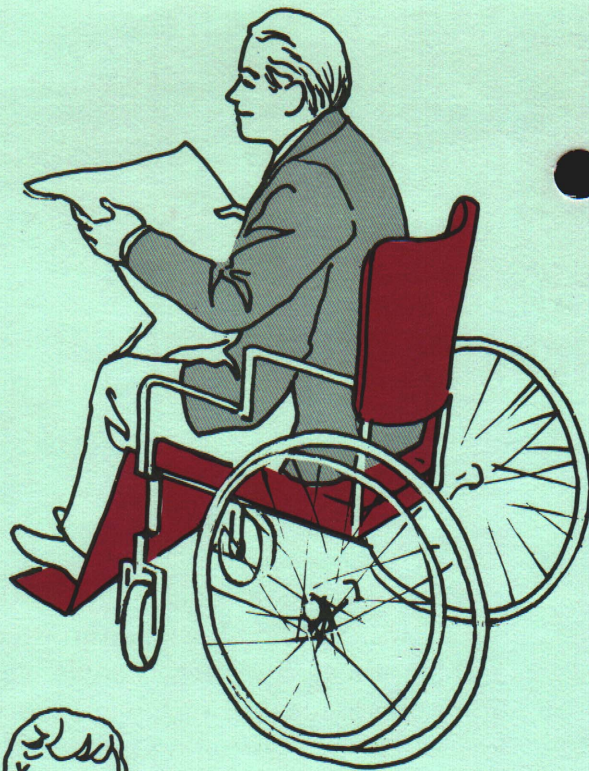
- 5 Stitch the waistband and belt loops back on. (This alteration can also be done to skirts.)



Jackets and Coats

Excess fabric can be uncomfortable to sit on, especially for long periods of time.

- Lengthen the side vent of jackets or open up the side seams from the bottom of the jackets to hip bone level. This will help to prevent “bunching up” of fabric when sitting.



- Shorten the backs of jackets and coats to the back length of the person when seated. The back of the coat need only reach to the seat of the chair.
- Shorten jackets in front to eliminate excess fabric.
- Shoulder action pleats can also be put into jackets and coats for freer movement.
- Collarless styles are often more comfortable and don't “ride up.”



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