

Palmer/Pletsch Interfacing Slide Presentation

Perfect Fusing: The Latest Solutions to Professional Garment Shaping

For a shorter presentation, leave out slides #18-22.

1. Title slide. (Cover of the DVD on Perfect Fusing.)
2. We used to apply all interfacings with basting threads like you see in this jacket front.
3. Shape and body was added to the lapel of a jacket by using tiny stitches to anchor the interfacing to the fabric.
4. Then along came fusible interfacings. They were introduced in the late 60's and we often had bad results. We used to call them iron-ons. Today's fusibles are wonderful—they don't bubble, they fuse well, and they are so soft and pliable that you can fuse to an entire piece, such as a jacket front as shown here.
5. To shape the lapel of a jacket today, you simply first fuse FLAT to the entire front, then roll the lapel over a washcloth and steam it. When it cools, the roll is permanent. This is because the fusing agent on the back of the interfacings is "thermoplastic." It can be reheated into any shape you like. When it cools, it remembers that shape. (AND, with fusibles, this shaping can be done when the jacket is completed.) We even like the QUALITY of the finished jacket better than when we hand tailored. The best new interfacings are called WEFTS. They are knits with a crosswise or weft yarn woven in for stability.
6. Pati Palmer and Marta Alto were quite frustrated over all of the interfacing confusion, so several years ago they began a journey to make interfacing selection and use more USER FRIENDLY TO THE HOME SEWER. The result is a new line of interfacings called Perfect Fuse. They wanted fewer choices, so narrowed the range to only 4 items that accomplish 90% of interfacing needs. in four weights—SHEER, LIGHT, MEDIUM, AND TAILOR ULTRA. I will tell you the uses for each later. Each of the four come in both ecru-white and charcoal-black. Each package is a distinctly different color so you can quickly tell which is which. The package will protect the interfacing from soiling or snagging. The packages include individual instructions that applied to each type.
7. They also wanted interfacings to be visually different so you could tell them apart. This closeup of the 4 shows PerfectFuse Sheer to the upper left, PerfectFuse Light to the upper right, PerfectFuse Medium to the lower left, and PerfectFuse TailorUltra to the lower right.

8. They also wanted wider widths so you'd never have to piece an interfacing. TailorUltra is the widest at 66" wide and as you can see, you can cut 4 jacket fronts out of 1 yard, as well as have room left for the under collars.
9. Shirts are easy to make once you have made a few and you can save money as you can see from these shirts in a catalog at \$98 each. The collars and cuffs always need interfacing. If the front is a band, it can be self-interfaced. If it is a facing, interfacing is needed to support the buttonholes.
10. Can you see the dots on this shirt collar? This is a problem we had in the past with fusible interfacings. The fusing agent would show through.
11. Can you see the bubbling on this shirt collar? It is near the seam. This means the interfacing has shrunk. This has been another problem we faced in the past.
12. If you use ***PerfectFuse Sheer***, these things will not happen. It won't shrink and it won't show through on lighter weight shirting fabrics. Sheer won't bleed through like a nylon knit fusible. It is a polyester weft. Sheer provides crisp body.
13. Let's talk about where to put the interfacing in shirts. We always interface the UPPER collar as the interfacing cushions the seam allowances so you won't see them around the edges and firms up the collar you see. Since you see both bands depending on whether you where the shirt buttoned or unbuttoned, we interface both. The band will also then support the collar better. We always interface the UPPER side of the cuff to about 1/4" past the roll line to add durability to that fold.
14. Of course, there are always the exceptions. Here we have a lightweight silk print on a white background. See through is a problem. Therefore we fuse all pieces and the entire cuff.
15. The collar on top only has interfacing on the upper collar and the lower one has it on both layers. Look how much more transparent the one on top is.
16. Not only did we fuse to both, you can see there are TWO layers of fusible on the upper collar. It is fine to fuse on top of a fusible if you need to for opacity or for body. We staggered the layers to reduce bulk.
17. There are a lot of sheer fashion fabrics on the market today. Perfect Fuse SHEER works well. Here we've used black on the black sheer fabric. The lower collar is shown from the right side.
18. If the front has a cut on band, then the interfacing is self-fabric as you just fold the front into a band and it is enough to give support to the buttons and buttonholes. No extra interfacing is needed.

19. If the fabric has no right or wrong side, you can topstitch the folded edges for a true band look.
20. Be sure to try on the shirt and put a pin right at your bustline. You definitely need a button at this point so your blouse or shirt won't gap. Ignore the markings on the pattern.
21. The Palmer/Pletsch book *Painless Sewing*, now in the 4th revised edition, shows many shirt and blouse techniques from interfacing to the "painless placket" sleeve.
22. Some fabrics are ravelly in the buttonhole area. Before you open your machine buttonhole, dip a pin in Fray Check and run it through the center of the buttonhole. After it dries, open the buttonhole using a buttonhole cutter. (Show one.)
23. Palmer/Pletsch always has a classic shirt in the McCall's catalog. This is the current popular three hour shirt from Palmer/Pletsch. It has not only great instructions, but built in alteration lines for the common fit areas. It is number 9579. Pati Palmer had her 4-H club test the instructions by sewing a shirt following her rough draft. If this gets discontinued (inevitable) show a new numbe.)
24. The second interfacing is ***PerfectFuse Light***. Light is about the same weight as Sheer, but will fuse to textures better than sheer. It is also a loose open weave making it a nice underlining.
25. Designers use Light as an underlining in 3-ply silk crepe de chine jackets. It makes a great underlining in any jacket where a little extra body is needed. Its open weave adds breathability. The entire front and back is underlined with this interfacing. (ALWAYS fuse a test sample. In come cases, Sheer may show through less than light on some smooth fabrics. We will talk about making test samples later.)
26. We underlined this loosely woven silk suiting with Light to give it support.
27. This "V" facing is stabilized with Light. We cut the V edges on the lengthwise grain to keep the bias facing from stretching. We had to cut it in 2 pieces to do so. We lapped them at the center front. We like to make the back neck facing deeper than we find the pattern piece so it stays inside a blouse.
28. In this blouse we fused Light to the facing. You always go a little past the fold to make sure interfacing is in the fold for a crisper press on that edge and for more durability. Test first to make sure it won't show through to the right side. Sheer is most commonly used on blouse weights, but if the blouse is a medium weight fabric like a rayon or 3 or 4-ply silk, Light works well. Also if the surface has texture, Light is better. We fuse the interfacing so the lengthwise "stable" direction is going in the same direction as the buttonholes. (Hole up the interfacing and show how the crosswise stretches and the lengthwise is stable. Say that both Sheer and Light have crosswise stretch.)

29. In hems of jackets we cut the interfacing on the bias. Here we are using Light, but Medium is an option for fabrics that need more support. Again, you can go 1/4" past the fold line for better wear on the jacket hem edges.
30. A patch pocket generally will be interfaced. Here we've used Light throughout the entire pocket.
31. Now, let's move on to the interfacings most commonly used for jackets. This is ***PerfectFuse Medium*** which is a little lighter than Tailor. It has rayon in it for softness, so needs to be preshrunk.
32. If you are making a shirt jacket out of a medium weight fabric, Medium would add just the right amount of body.
33. This knit cardigan has medium fused to the facing to give the edges stability and to keep the buttonholes from stretching.
34. Medium also is used in Ultrasuede jackets. This is a photo from the Palmer/Pletsch *Ultrasuede* book.
35. The book has a companion video in which Marta Alto makes an Ultrasuede jacket from start to finish.
36. Now to one of our favorites ***PerfectFuse Tailor Ultra***: This is our main jacket interfacing. Recently, we replaced our original Tailor with a wonderful new product that is our heaviest interfacing, but so soft it feels like cashmere. It is called PerfectFuse Tailor Ultra. It has a little crosswise give making it work with even stretch wovens. It is the heaviest, but soft like cashmere. It is still 66" wide so it can accommodate fusing to the entire front in ANY size jacket. We use it in the entire front and under collars.
37. This tweed jacket is fused with Tailor Ultra. It adheres really well to textured surfaces.
38. This silk satin jacket is \$1,070 and the skirt is \$410. You can accomplish this same look by using TailorUltra on the front and under collar and Light on the back.
39. We are generally fuse to the front and under collar with a heavier weight interfacing and to the under collar and facing with a lighter weight.
40. This McCall's jacket pattern is outstanding for learning to make a jacket. It is number 2341. It includes detailed tailoring tips, fits well, and offers two classic styles. (NOTE: When this jacket is discontinued, Palmer/Pletsch will have another. You can scan the envelope and replace this slide or e-mail patipalmer@aol.com and ask for the newest jacket image.)

41. Generally the undercollar will always have Tailor Ultra on it and the upper collar will have nothing, Light, or Medium, depending on desired body. This wool flannel needs nothing on upper collar.
42. However, this wool crepe uses Tailor Ultra on the under collar and Light on the upper collar.
43. If the fabric is stiff like this jacket made out of upholstery fabric, you wouldn't fuse to the upper collar or facing.
44. You would interface only the front and undercollar only.
45. This jacket is made from a lighter weight fabric.
46. Tailor was used on the front and under collar and Light on the side panel, back, upper collar and facing.
47. You can fuse on top of a fusible when you need even more body like in this jacket with a peaked lapel.
48. You would just fuse to the roll line and trim the top layer a little smaller to reduce bulk at the edges. This idea works in collar points as well. If they need more body, fuse another layer in the point area.
49. We prefer not to use a fusible across the back of jackets. Even if the edge of the interfacing doesn't show immediately, it inevitably does after cleaning. Use a sew-in interfacing. It can be cotton, cotton-poly, or even muslin. The purpose of this "back stay" is to add strength across the shoulders, give the armhole body, and give you something to attach the shoulder pads to. Note that we have used bias strips of the fusible in the hem.
50. Use a fabric glue to attach a sew-in interfacing. Use small dots in the seam allowances.
51. If your fabric needs more body, you can underline the ENTIRE back by fusing Light to each piece, then sew the back seam and add the sew-in interfacing across the top.
52. There are some fabrics you can't fuse to such as seersucker or velvet. The fusible would take the puckers out of the seersucker. Instead, underline them with silk organza and glue it to the edges.
53. Or, for more body, fuse an interfacing to organza, then glue the unit to the jacket front.
- 54. TEST!!!** Always make a test sample before you select your interfacing. Put a heavier interfacing on one piece and a lighter or two on the other. Sew a seam so you can feel them together as if they were in the front of your jacket. Later, this becomes your machine buttonhole TEST SAMPLE!

The following could be said now or later while fusing to a jacket front before the class when you need to be talking while fusing. You could show an assortment of test samples here.

PRESHRINKING AND CARE: In general, the polyester weft interfacings (SHEER and LIGHT) will not pucker when the finished garment is washed, even when used on silky polyesters. These interfacings do NOT need to be preshrunk. They do not even seem to shrink when iron is held above them and steamed as we used to do for some knit interfacings. However, preshrink your fashion fabric if planning to launder or presteam it if planning to dryclean the finished garment. For interfacings high in rayon content (MEDIUM and TAILOR), Preshrink. Soak in hot water for 10 minutes. Blot in a towel (don't wring). Hang over a towel rack to dry. These interfacings dryclean well. However, if you want to wash the finished garment, make a TEST sample to make sure you like the end result. If you get minor puckers, they will generally press out. Wash **finished** garments gently by hand or in a gentle cycle in the washer. Nice clothing looks new longer if hangar dried. NEVER over dry any fabric in a dryer, whether it is fused or not. Over drying can cause pilling, puckering of interfacings, and that worn out look. After preshrinking, place back in the plastic bag. Write Preshrunk on bag. For washables, "face" the sample by stitching fashion fabric over the top, then wash as you plan to wash the garment. How did the sample launder? Always make an 8" square test sample. Does the interfacing adhere well? Does the outside of the fabric look good? Do you like the amount of body added? (Feel with all layers that will be used together.) Use ecru_white when possible. It's easier to see markings you've transferred from pattern onto interfacing. If using machine buttonholes in dark fabrics, use charcoal black. Or, use white and "paint" any white that shows with a colored permanent marker.

55. Use a see-through press cloth. They come two to a package.
56. A tip—write with a permanent marker—"Fusibles, this side up" on one and "Regular Press Cloth, No Fusibles" on the other.
57. This cartoon from *Mother Pletsch's Painless Sewing* book may hit home. She needs to clean her iron.
58. Keep a tube of hot iron cleaner handy and clean your iron often.
59. There are many irons on the market today, but most of them are automatic shut off irons. Those will drive you crazy if you like to leave your iron on while sewing. The iron in the sewing room might be different than the family iron. Ideally, you need an iron with a burst or surge of steam. Your sewing will improve tenfold. Rowenta and Black and Decker make models that are in the \$80 to \$120 price range. If your store doesn't have one without auto-shutoff, you may have to ask to special order one. The new generation of irons are the steam generator irons. They are like a teapot. The water is heated to boiling in the tank to create steam. Just like a teapot, it takes about 5 minutes to heat up. The steam passes through the cord to the iron. This allows you to continuously steam holding the iron in any direction. If the iron sits for awhile, the steam left in the iron will condense and can drip with the first use. Therefore, steam the iron to the side first, then place it on your fabric. Always set the iron at the wool steam setting. You may set it at a higher temperature if your fabric can take it or is heavy. TEST FIRST!!

60. Professional and steam generator irons often have steam vents in the front only, so you will fuse a little differently. You will move the iron forward, not backwards, while fusing. That way you will add steam to your interfacing first and the back of the iron will dry it and continue fusing as you move the iron forward.
61. **FUSING SURFACE** - Our favorite is a large flat cutting surface like the one on top of the chest in this sewing room. Do not use a Teflon coated ironing board cover. It causes shine and overheating. Cotton covers are best. Make sure metal ironing boards have lots of holes in the surface to allow steam to penetrate when fusing. A large surface is best for fusing.
62. Make A CUT 'N' PRESS BOARD using wood covered with cotton or wool padding and then wrapped with muslin which is then stapled to the underside. An old wool army blanket or wool coating works for padding also. The Palmer/Pletsch book *Dream Sewing Spaces* includes instructions.
63. **CUTTING**—There are several tips we need to give you about cutting fusibles. With today's soft weft fusibles, you really don't need to cut them smaller than your fashion fabric to reduce bulk, but we do just to keep them off our pressing surface. Here is how we cut a collar.
64. Cut the longest edge first.
65. Then slide the pattern toward the cut edge 5/8" and.....
66. cut the other 3 sides.
67. Now, the interfacing is smaller than the collar.
68. If the fabric is wiggly like charmeuse or some of the sandwashed rayons, fuse to the entire piece of a small section of fabric first. Then place the pattern pieces on it and cut.
69. Now, let's cut out a jacket front. Cut the front and top edges first.
70. Scoot the pattern up and over toward the cut edges 5/8" and.....
71. Finish cutting the other sides.
72. Place the pattern back on top of your fabric to make sure it is straight before placing the fusible on top. TIP: Always include fusible interfacings in darts and collar points for added crispness, sharper edges after pressing, less raveling, and smoother, pucker-free dart points.
73. Long pieces like this facing can easily get distorted when you handle them. If you fuse to a piece that is distorted, it will always be distorted. Place the pattern back onto the piece and make the piece fit the shape of the pattern before placing your interfacing on it.

74. After fusing, place the pattern back onto the piece and do your marking. Here we are marking the roll line on the collar.
75. If your fabric needs more body, fuse a smaller piece just to the stand area of the collar below the roll line. This will help the collar stand up better.
76. **Add markings to jacket front:** Place pattern tissue back onto the fused fabric to mark darts, roll lines, buttonholes and pockets. For accuracy when sewing a jacket with a collar, also mark the neckline seam. This assures a perfect lapel/collar seam. Also, you can check to see if any shrinkage occurred during fusing so you can compensate when sewing. Re-mark seamlines and hemlines if the fabric has shrunk. (Recommend markers, hold them up and talk about your personal favorites.)
77. **FUSING--**You can fuse the rayon content interfacings like Medium and Tailor Ultra without a press cloth. If you find it sticking to your iron at all, then do use a press cloth.

Place fabric wrong side up. Press fabric to eliminate wrinkles. Do the accuracy check mentioned in “before fusing.” Place interfacing fusible (rough) side down. Smooth it in place without stretching it. Cover SHEER AND LIGHT with a see_through cotton press cloth to protect your iron. A press cloth is optional on the rayon content interfacings (MEDIUM AND TAILOR).

TIME--The heavier the interfacing and the fashion fabric, the more time it will take to get a good fuse. See fusing time recommended on back of each package. Use continuous steam; and if it is not fusing well, cover with a damp press cloth and try again.

AFTER FUSING--Test the Bond: After your fabric completely cools and dries (5 to 10 minutes), check to see if interfacing is sticking well. Gently try to separate it from the fabric. It can be difficult to get a strong bond on gabardines, especially microfibers. We still use the interfacing, but may have to fuse longer, or accept a strong attraction, but not a permanent bond (not unlike some relationships). Fabrics with a silicon coating resist fusing. Use a sew-in interfacing.

For heavier fabrics, you may need to also fuse again from the right side. For example, if you are fusing TAILOR Ultra to a wool tweed, turn the fused fabric to the right side. Using a dry press cloth, fuse again. (Slide showing right side of fabric being fused.) TIP: Hold in stomach every time you put the iron down. We call this “isometric fusing.”

Fuse each interfacing according to the specific directions written on the outside back cover. Begin at one end of the piece and work your way to the other. Be sure to lap iron positions as you fuse. Fusing the entire time in one place could leave an iron imprint. Fuse 10-15 seconds then move the iron and fuse another 10-15 seconds. (See package back for recommended fusing time for each interfacing.) Each area will receive its full fusing time, but in two iron placements. If iron only has holes in front of soleplate, be sure steam holes touch all areas of the interfacing. Give lots of steam to a larger area, then fuse as described previously. Marta calls this “zonal fusing.”

78. The book **Jackets for Real People** was written in the order you would make a jacket. It includes all the fusing options for different style jackets.
79. What about waistbands? Use Tailor with the lengthwise grain going around the body for the least stretch.
80. Or, try the Perfect Waistband Interfacing from Palmer/Pletsch. It is a non-roll mono-filament nylon. It comes 5 yards to a package.
81. Now, I'll conclude with a few fun things. Embroidery is really in now in ready-to-wear like on this beautiful suit. Notice the random placement.
82. Here is another example. It's very sophisticated.
83. Machines today can do everything from monogramming to elaborate embroidery designs and even combine the two as show here.
If your fabric is washable, Perfect Sew can be used to prevent puckers.
84. If your fabric is washable, Perfect Sew can be used to prevent puckers.
85. It is excellent for sheers as after the fabric is washed, there is no trace of a stabilizer.
86. **Bridal Gowns** gives lots of tips to machine embroidery and special occasion sewing as well as fitting and sewing a wedding dress. NOTE: The book is now available on CD on the Palmer/Pletsch Web site.
87. And, a fit reminder—ALWAYS try on your tissue before cutting out your jacket to check the fit and make necessary alterations.
88. Fit For REAL People, the best fit book on the market now has a companion DVD!
(PROMOTE YOUR UPCOMING FIT CLASSES!!)