

How to Make a Collar on a T-Shirt

by Pamela Fay

T-shirts are versatile enough to wear most seasons and are inexpensive to buy. Plus, they are always in style. However, sometimes t-shirts are not very stylish. In department stores, the fancier ones can cost a bundle. With basic sewing skills, you can jazz up a basic t-shirt by adding a collar and turning it into a work-appropriate button-front. You don't even have to buy anything new. Just look through your closet—or a thrift store—for garments you can repurpose.

Select a T-Shirt

Find a nicely fitted t-shirt without stains or holes for the project. Don't be afraid to use a plain white shirt; you can add a colored collar to it. You can also use a shirt that has a logo on it. This will just add to the design interest. Do not use a tissue-thin t-shirt. The material must be substantial enough to support the collar without pulling or drooping.

Select a Collared Shirt

Find a coordinating collared button-up shirt. If you have several choices, experiment with different color combinations and types of collars. The shirts do not have to match. You can even use two different patterns or contrasting colors like pink and green. Ensure that the collared shirt fits you approximately the same as the t-shirt, particularly through the shoulders and neckline. The collar and the placket of the shirt must be in good condition since you will need to sew it to the t-shirt.

Remove and Mark Collar

Fold the unbuttoned collared shirt in half along the center back with the right sides facing. Pin the right placket to the left placket and the collar together with the right side and left side seams aligned. Pin the side seams together. Mark a line along the center back of the collar. Mark a cutline on the collared shirt starting at the hem 3/8-inch away from the placket seam. Continue up the placket curving the cutline out to 1-inch. Circle around the collar to the center back seam. Cut the collar and placket off in one continuous piece.

Mark Center Backs

Fold the t-shirt in half along the center back with the right sides facing out. Mark a line on the center back with tailor's chalk. Pin the shirt to keep it from shifting. Cut along the center front line.

Stitch

Pin the right side of the collared shirt to the right side of the t-shirt matching the center back lines. Sew the shirts together using a 1/8-inch seam allowance. Turn so that the right side is out and press the seam toward the center of the garment. Serge or sew a zigzag along the raw seam edges. To complete your t-shirt project, hem the bottom edge.

References

Born-Again Vintage”; Bridgett Artise, et al.; 2008.