

# Create a Teal Wool Coat Using the Applaud Serger

by Chris Tryon, Baby Lock Product Development & Quality Assurance

## Supplies Needed:

[Baby Lock Sewing Machine](#)

[Applaud Creative Top Cover Stitch Serger](#)

[Vintage pattern Vogue V1977, or similar](#)

Yarn- 4oz /#3 (light) acrylic & polyamide blend or similar

[Polyester overlock thread](#) for the chain looper

[28 wt cotton thread](#) in the needle

Wool or wool blend for the coat body

Faux fur (teddy bear) fabric for the collar

[Sewing](#) and [serger](#) needles

Marking instruments such as a small safety pin, chaco liner or wax tailor's chalk

## Introduction

Baby Lock serger expert Chris Tryon guided us through creating this gorgeous teal coat with rows of intersecting decorative serger stitches! You may recognize this iconic look from our informational Applaud videos. Chris used a vintage pattern for reference but modified it to her desired look. Select a similar pattern and follow her tips below. This project is best for an experienced sewist, but an intermediate maker can try it too. Don't feel too frustrated if it takes a while; try to enjoy the process!

## Chris's Planning Process

The inspiration for this sample was the pattern, **Vogue V1977, a vintage (1955) coat pattern**. It was the collar and sleeves that got me. In addition to my obsession with vintage sewing patterns!



Pattern along with a copy of the pattern jacket and my notes on changes and fabric ideas.

Selecting the perfect fabric can be difficult for me! In addition to being rather specific in what I want, I was set on a wool or wool blend for the coat body, and a faux fur (teddy bear) for the collar. Why spend hours searching online when I could rummage through my “carefully curated collection” cataloged in boxes and bins? I found this beautiful wool blend and happened to have a faux fur in the same color range! The best part, I had enough for both the coat and collar and extra for testing! Isn't that the best feeling?

If you want to match the color fabric I used, the closest colors on the **Pantone Color Chart** were **#325 & #326** a blue-green, teal color.



Pantone Color #325



Pantone Color #326



Wool and Faux Fur

Now that I have the Top Cover Stitch on the Applaud, I'm always thinking of ways to customize existing patterns with unique decorative stitches. I decided on the **chain stitch (C2 needle position)** and the **narrow cover stitch (C1 & C2 needle position)**. My goal was to create a statement piece with subtle detail and visual texture for the body of the coat.



Photo #1: Narrow Cover decorative thread in the left wiper. Photo #2: Narrow Cover with decorative thread in both wipers. Photo #3: Chain stitch with yarn in left wiper.

After testing each stitch type with my thread in the left wiper, I decided the chain stitch was the way to go. With the stitch selected, I had to choose the best thread to use. Before the Applaud launched, I tested a variety of threads, and even yarn, and kept samples to refer to later.



Stitch sample of chain stitch and various yarns.

I decided that a yarn in the wiper would be ideal to create that visual texture I was after. I ended up testing numerous yarns and found one that worked, a **4oz /#3 (light) acrylic & polyamide blend** with an **overlock thread (polyester) thread** in the chain looper and a **28wt. cotton thread** in the needle. Since I could not find a needle thread color that worked with the yarn, my thread color selection was a light-medium gray, which works perfectly as a neutral in these situations. Using a cotton thread in the needle adds flexibility and doesn't put any strain on the yarn. I ended up choosing a yarn that you would use for baby blankets, soft to the hand and supple.



Thread (needle & chain looper) colors used with the yarn.

The hardest part was determining which stitch pattern I wanted to create, singular rows of stitching creating a grid/crosshatch pattern, or multiple rows of stitching. I tested the two stitch patterns along with the distance between each row of stitching, 1" (singular row pattern) or 2 ½" (multiple – 3 row pattern).

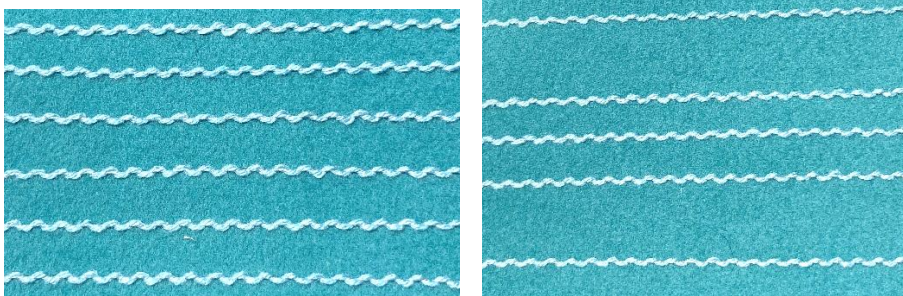


Single row of stitching – using an off-white yarn.



Multiple rows of stitching – using the selected yarn.

Typically, I like to use a longer stitch length when working with decorative threads. I found that a shorter stitch length gave me the look I was after, back and forth, small curve on both the left and right side of the stitch. The **stitch length that I used was 3.0**, but this will change based on the yarn or thread used in the wiper. This is why testing and playing with the selections is important.



Tested various stitch lengths using yarn and threads on the coat fabric.

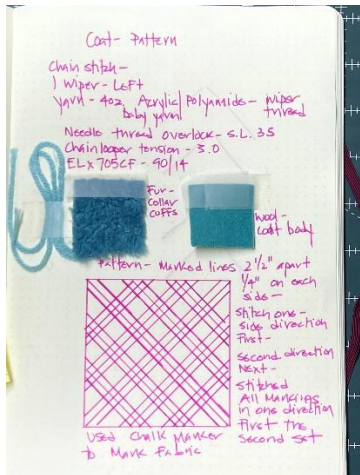
I ended up going with the multiple row pattern. I felt it showed off the **top cover stitch** and **chain stitch** the best.



Multiple row pattern was the pattern that I selected.

### **Making Some Changes to the Pattern**

There were a couple of changes that I made to the selected pattern (**Vogue V1977 view A**). First was the coat length. Since I wanted a shorter coat, more of a car length I needed to remove 12 ½" from the length. Using this measurement, I marked each of the pattern pieces and placed them on my dress form to ensure this was my desired length. Because I wanted to make a statement with the collar, **I added 2" to the length.**

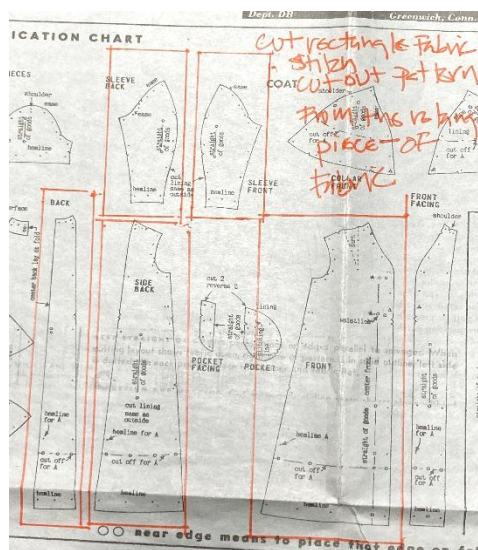


Notes that I made on my plan for the coat. Marked the pattern jacket to show the changes to the coat.

### Serger Stitching on the Main Pieces

I did not cut each individual pattern piece for the coat. Even if you decide to use another coat pattern, **don't cut out the individual pattern pieces**. What I did instead was use the pattern piece as a guide and cut out a geometric shape, i.e. rectangle adding to the length and width. For me it was easier to create and align the pattern (marked lines) to ensure the marked lines match/connect to create the pattern from the front (left & right) to the side back piece (left and right) and the back piece.

With each pattern piece cut (front, side back, back, sleeve front and sleeve back), the next step was marking.



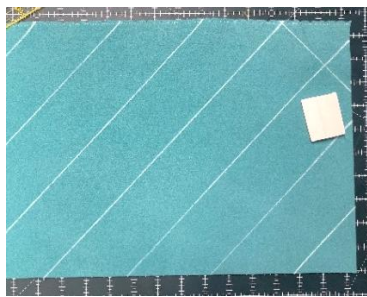
The orange shapes drawn around each pattern piece is how I approached cutting out each pattern piece.

The wool fabric that I used did have a right and wrong side, and I needed to make sure to mark the right side on each of the fabric pieces. Typically, I use either a long pin or small safety pin. For this project, I decided to use a small safety pin. Prior to marking the fabric, I tested several marking tools that I typically use; chaco liner and disappearing chalk/wax tailor's chalk.

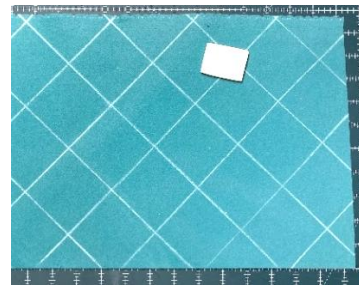


Marking tools – wax tailor's chalk and chaco liner.

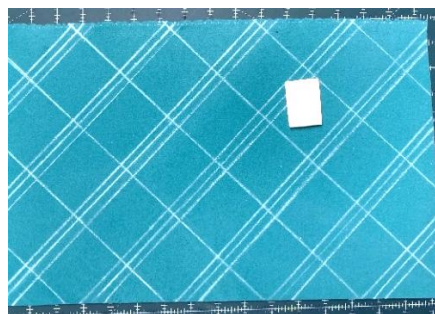
**Make sure to read the manufacturer's notes on usage.** Because my fabric was wool and I needed the markings to remain on the fabric while stitching, I ended up using the disappearing wax tailor's chalk. One of the notes from the manufacturer was that the "dust" may be irritating and that statement was correct! The wax chalk is set to disappear after several hours so I only marked what I could stitch for that moment, which was one piece at a time, i.e. right front. I thought I would get ahead and marked another piece and found out the next day that the packing was correct, it does disappear! The stitch pattern was a **center marking using the spacing of 2 ½" and adding ¼" on each side.**



First set of markings in one direction.



Second set of markings to create grid pattern.

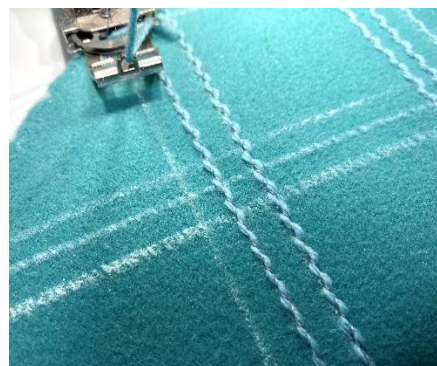


Final set of markings.

The last step to creating the pattern was stitching on the fabric piece, right front and the left front, right back side and finally the left front side. The Applaud was set-up using my selected thread, yarn and stitch length from my previous testing. Starting with the center mark I stitched on each of the marked lines. Next was the marked line on the left (or it could be the right) and then the right (or left) marking.

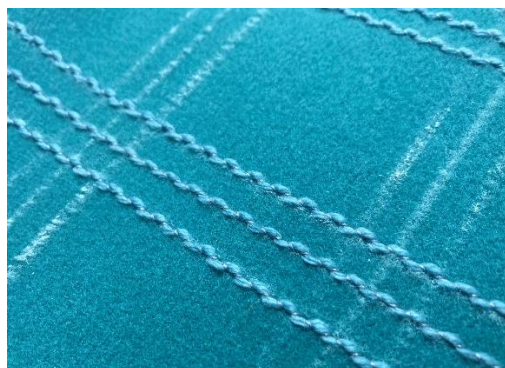


Stitching on center marked line on each set of markings before stitching on the second marked line.



Stitching on the second marked line, either to the right or left.

Stitching on the third or remaining marked line.



Final stitch look – three rows of stitching.

Because a chalk marker was used to mark the stitching line on the fabric, I found that I needed to clean the insert due to the dust created by stitching. Even though the chalk I used was a wax chalk, I

did have to remark or darken the markings while stitching. With stitching completed, I pressed this piece, both front and back.

With the right front completed, I marked the left front, center marking first. Before adding the additional markings and stitching I placed (aligned) both the right and left side fronts side by side to ensure the center marking and center row of stitching were aligned. With the center marking and stitching aligned both markings ( $\frac{1}{4}$ " ) were added to the left front. Next step stitch on each marked line to create the pattern. I then pressed this piece, front and back.

The right and left side backs were the next two pieces to mark and stitch. After confirming the alignment of the front pieces with the side back pieces, I begin stitching.

Before cutting out the pattern pieces, piece was pressed, both front and back. The first piece that was cut out was the right front, then the left front. I made sure the stitching aligned. Then I cut out the right back and the left back and checked the alignment.

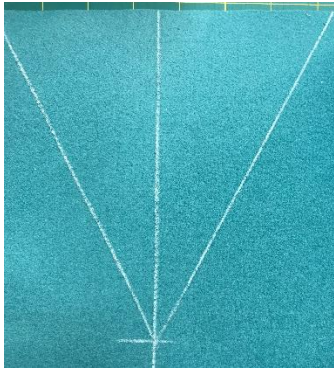
There are two pieces to the sleeve in this pattern. I followed the same steps for marking, alignment, stitching, and alignment. With alignment confirmed, I cut out each sleeve piece.



Sleeve front and back basted to check alignment and then stitched.

## Pattern Modification

The coat back was the last piece, and I decided to make a change to the pattern. The stitch did not change, only the pattern. With the fabric piece for the back cut out, I marked a line down the center and determined the spacing for my design, which was an exaggerated "V". The center "V" shape for each section was drawn. The next step was to stitch each marked line and pivot at the center position. I used the needle up/down button to place the needle and wiper in the ideal position for turning corners. I set the needle at the top in the "up" position before stitching. You can use my photos and steps below to proceed. This took me a couple of times to get right, so practice and practice until you feel comfortable with the technique.



Marked pattern – "V".



Alignment of center mark on insert with marking on fabric.



Stitch the bottom of the "V".



With the needle up and wipers closed, raise the presser foot and turn the fabric. Align the marking on the insert and lower the presser foot. Stitch to the top of the "V".

Additional rows of stitching were added to the "V" design using a **spacing of ¼"**. With the stitching on the back piece completed this piece was pressed, front and back, and the pattern piece was used to cut out the back piece.

## Assembling the Pieces

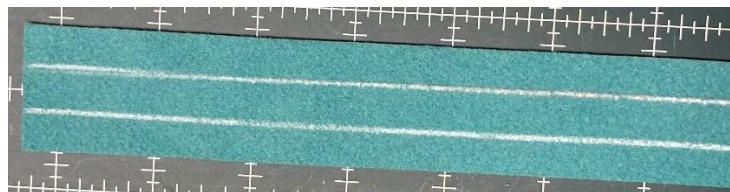
I started by stitching the two sleeve pieces and the front and side back pieces together. Due to the alignment of the stitch, I decided to **baste** the pieces together first and then stitch using a **stitch length of 2.5**. This step was used for each of the seams. It just made it easier to make adjustments if needed.

Next I moved on to the back to the side back pieces. Because the stitch pattern on the back was different than the rest of the coat pieces, the alignment was not accurate. **To bridge the back to the rest of the coat, I created a strap/belt technique on the back.**



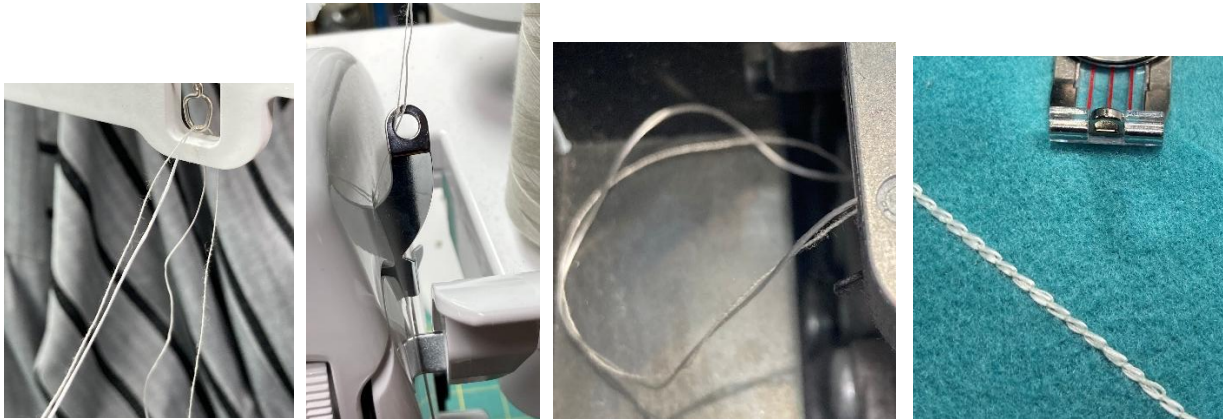
Fabric strips along seamline with vintage mother of pearl buckles.

To do this I cut **two 1 ¼" wide strips** the length of the coat. Each **stitch line was marked ⅜"** from each fabric edge the length of the fabric strip.



Markings ⅜" from fabric edge on each side of the fabric strip.

I added a decorative chain stitch on each of the marked lines. I used the same stitch settings and set-up as what I used for the coat pieces, with one exception. **In addition to the overlock thread in the chain looper, a fusible thread was added.** This allowed the strips to be fused to the coat body for placement, and then hand stitched in place, hiding the stitching under the fabric strip. I added vintage bone buckles to each back strap to add interest and help visually break up the stitching. The buckles were positioned before the straps were fused in place.



Both fusible and overlock thread are placed in the guide on the antenna, through the chain looper guide and tension disk with both threads passed through the chain looper port using the “push to thread button”. Stitching with the fusible thread (white) visible on the underside of the fabric.

### **Follow the Pattern for the Collar, Front facing, Lining, and Hem**

From this point on, I followed the pattern instructions for construction, creating the collar, adding the collar, front facing, lining and hem. Rather than create buttonholes, I decided to use a vintage belt buckle as my closer. I could have done buttonholes, but I would have used large vintage buttons and bound buttonholes.



Vintage brass buckle from my collection.

While this project took me a while to create, I loved every second, every change and every challenge. It amazes me that I can change a stitch so much just by adjusting the thread, stitch length, or needle position! The Applaud Creative Top Cover Stitch allows me to modify a stitch to my style, and to my creative vision. This is why this machine is perfect for challenging my creative growth, even after years of sewing and serging.