

A NEW COAT

This is spy style at its best, as KELLY DOUST customises a trench coat and shares secrets on how to give an old classic a new twist.

YOU WILL NEED

- A trench coat
- About 2 metres of lining fabric in a contrasting design – pure silk or cotton works best
- Quick unpick or seam ripper
- Pins
- Dressmaker's scissors
- Sewing machine
- Beige cotton thread
- Buttons in a current style
- Needle for hand-stitching
- Cotton thread to match buttons

TO MAKE

STEP ONE: Remove the old lining

Use your seam ripper to unpick the lining fabric from inside the trench coat, then unpick the label and put aside. You can cut the lining from the coat with your scissors instead, as long as you snip as close to the seams as possible without chopping into the exterior.

STEP TWO: Create a new length

Try on your trench and decide on the new length you want. The best way to do this is to simply pin up the hem and see how it looks in the mirror, removing the pins and applying them again until you're happy with the result. If your new length varies by a small amount, you could fold the remaining fabric over and stitch it in place, just in case you decide to take the coat down again later. If there's quite a bit of excess fabric, chop it off, or the coat will be too bulky, but leave at least 4cm for your new hem's seam allowance as I have done here. Roll the raw edge under and stitch along the hem line with your beige thread.

STEP THREE: Affix your new lining

Lay out the lining you've just removed to get an idea of the measurements for the new lining and cut out the shape required with scissors, using the original as your pattern. I left a few centimetres seam allowance on each side. Roll under the raw edge of the bottom hem and stitch in a straight line. Turn the trench coat inside out and pin the lining to the inside, in place of the removed lining. If your sleeves are lined with silk that is still in good condition, as this coat is, stitch the main lining to the sleeve lining around the armholes. Sew the rest of the lining to the interior of the coat, making sure there's no tension in the thread to pull the lining out of shape. If you're having trouble getting your machine to sew around all the tricky corners, use your needle and thread to stitch difficult areas into place.

STEP FOUR: Re-affix the label

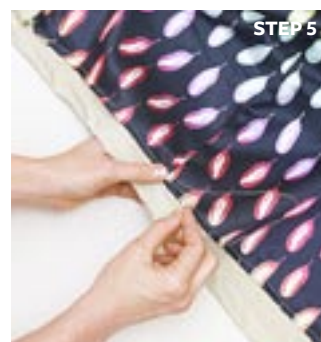
There's nothing wrong with being proud of its provenance – pin the original label back in place and stitch it to the lining, either with the machine or by hand with needle and thread.

STEP FIVE: Correct the drape

Attach the bottom hem of the lining to the exterior of the coat with a few small stitches at each vertical seam. This will ensure your lining sits flat, but doesn't pull when you sit down.

STEP SIX: Button makeover

Unpick all the existing buttons and sew on the new ones with matching thread. Here, I removed 10 large and four smaller buttons, finding ones in a bright red to replace them. ■



Kelly Doust is the author of *The Crafty Minx* and *The Crafty Kid*. For more hints, tips and supplier details, visit thecraftyminx.com.au.

Customise a classic trench coat with a fresh lining, bright new buttons and a different length. It will feel like a brand new coat.

