



Northern Nevada HOPES

A Guide to Healthy Tucking

Gender Affirming Care Program





Introduction

Tucking is a practice used to minimize the appearance of the bulge in clothing created by external genitalia. It typically involves inserting the testes into the inguinal canals and securing the penis and scrotum back toward the buttocks area. A variety of people choose to use tucking to create a visually smooth crotch contour, including transgender and gender diverse individuals and drag performers. Tucking can reduce feelings of gender dysphoria related to the appearance of the genitals and make some clothing such as pants, shorts, and skirts fit more comfortably.

There has not yet been much research on the health effects of tucking. Some studies indicate that tucking may result in low sperm quality, reducing fertility. These studies suggest that this could occur because the testes get warmer when they are tucked up into the inguinal canals (de Nie et al., 2022). At least one case study has shown that taking a break from tucking may result in improved fertility rates for those affected by a reduction in sperm quality (Trussler & Carraquillo, 2020). Other health impacts can include itching, rash, and testicular pain. Tucking may be mildly uncomfortable, but it should not be painful. If you have concerns about the health impacts of tucking, you should discuss this with your medical provider.

This guide provides info to help you better understand healthy tucking.

People of diverse genders have the body parts discussed in this guide. This guide uses the terms testes, scrotum, and penis to refer to body parts for clarity since they are generally well understood. We recognize that these may not be the words you use, and we respect and honor the language you use for your own body.

Every individual is different, and tucking methods that work for one person might not work for another. For everyone, it is a matter of trial and error to find what works best for you. Our goal is to provide evidence-based information that will help individuals make the best decisions for their personal health, needs, and lifestyle.



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Methods of Tucking *General Steps*

Prepare

Gather the supplies that you will be using, including what you'll need to secure the tuck. Some people use gauze, cloth, or tissue to cover the tip of the penis to help prevent bacteria from entering the urethra from the anus. Some people also apply antifungal cream or powder to help prevent skin infections. See Methods of Securing for more info on preparing to tuck based on what method of securing you use.

Tuck The Testes Into The Inguinal Canals

The testes descend from the pelvic area into the scrotum from two tubes called the inguinal canals. To find each canal, use a finger to push one testis aside and feel up toward the body. Gently search the area until you find a spot where you can push into your body slightly. This is the entrance to one of the inguinal canals. Some people find this easier to do while lying down.

The resources by Callen-Lorde, Fenway Health, and Folx Health found in the Resources section of this guide have diagrams that may be helpful to reference for this process.

Once you've found the entrance to the inguinal canal, use two or three fingers to slowly and gently push the testis on that side up into the canal. Take your time with this step. It may take some practice to get just right. This should not be painful. If it hurts, stop and try again after a break.

Some people prefer not to tuck the testes into the inguinal canals, and that is okay! This step can be skipped and the testes pushed back with the penis in step 3. It might be a little trickier to get everything secured if you choose this option. You might need to use some extra tape or check that your underwear or gaff is wide enough to prevent any side spillage.

Tuck The Penis And Scrotum Back

Pull the penis and scrotum back between the legs and toward the buttocks. Some people find it easier to manage the scrotum by wrapping the extra skin around the penis before tucking back. If you tucked the testes into the inguinal canals, this step helps hold the testes in place. If you do not tuck the testes in to the inguinal canals, the testes can also be tucked back with the penis in this step. In this case, the testes may fit best if they are tucked back and to the sides around the penis. Again, while this process may be a bit uncomfortable, especially when first trying it out, it should not be painful. If you're experiencing pain, stop and take a break before trying again.

Secure

Continue onto next page for methods of securing.



Methods of Securing

Tight Underwear Or Control Briefs



Control briefs are usually made of strong, compressing elastic materials, and are often marketed as shapewear. Underwear that are tight fitting or a size down than you would typically wear might work for you too. Some people like to layer a couple pairs of underwear. The overall goal is to find clothing that will hold everything in place.

When preparing to tuck with underwear or control briefs, prepare by pulling the garment up to your knees before beginning to tuck. This will make it easier for you to hold everything in place with one hand while you pull the underwear up with the other hand. The tuck might slip over time, so you may need to make adjustments throughout the day with this method.

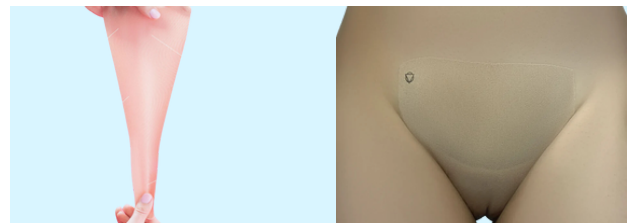
Gaff



A gaff is underwear that is designed specifically for tucking and creating a smooth crotch contour. Like shapewear, they are typically made out of strong elastic materials that hold everything in place.

Like when preparing to tuck with tight underwear, prepare by pulling the garment up to your knees before beginning to tuck. This will make it easier for you to hold everything in place with one hand while you pull the underwear up with the other hand. Since gaffs are designed with tucking in mind, people often find that they hold everything in place a bit more reliably. However, you still might need to make adjustments throughout your wear as needed.

Tape



Medical-grade tapes can be used to hold the tuck in place. Avoid using tapes that are not designed to be used on skin, such as duct tape or packing tape. These tapes can tear the skin, cause skin irritation, and generally increase risks of injury and infection.

To prepare, it is recommended that you shave or trim the area before using tape to tuck, since removing tape can rip out hair. Shave 1-2 days before tucking – don't apply tape on freshly shaved skin, as this can cause more irritation and damage.



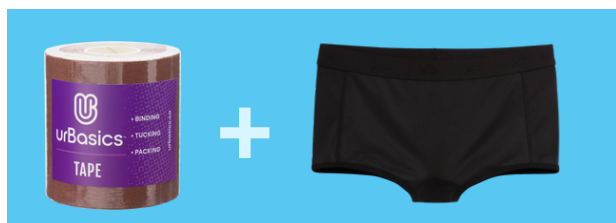
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Methods of Securing

It is best for tape to be applied to freshly clean, dry skin. When tucking, it will be helpful to have the desired number of strips of tape to be pre-cut and nearby. How much tape you need and what configuration to place them on the body will vary from person to person; it is a matter of trial and error for everyone.

When first tucking using tape, you can try securing tape to your lower abdomen, around where your underwear would sit. Then, pull the tape back over the penis and up the buttocks toward the tailbone. Some people also like to place tape across the penis and under the left or right butt cheek and over to the left or right hip. It might take practice and multiple tries to figure out what works best for you!

Combo Methods



Some people like to use both tape and a tight undergarment in combination to secure their tucks. There's no one right way to tuck - people should go with whatever works best for them!





Tips for Healthier Tucking

Start slowly, tuck gently

Taking your time when tucking will lead to better results, greater comfort, and often a longer-lasting tuck. It might be tempting to tuck as tightly as possible in order to create as flat of an appearance as possible, but be careful about constricting blood flow.

Once you've secured a tuck, monitor the area for a few minutes to ensure you're not experiencing any blotchiness or color changes of the skin around your tuck. This could indicate that you have restricted blood flow, and you should undo the tuck immediately and try again after a break. You can think of it like Goldilocks – you want to secure the tuck “just right”: tight enough to hold but not so tight that you're causing damage.

Take Breaks

Give your body some rest from tucking periodically. It is especially important to take breaks if you are experiencing any discomfort, irritation, soreness, pain, or overheating. Try not to tape for longer than 4-8 hours at a time.

Tucking for longer periods is more likely to foster a warm, moist environment that can lead to bacterial or fungal infections. When you are not tucked, wearing looser clothing such as skirts or dresses can both help hide a bulge and allow for better airflow to the area. Don't sleep while tucked, either!

Practice before tucking in public

It can take some trial and error to determine which methods of tucking work best for you. Before tucking in public, you might want to experiment with different methods or practice getting your tuck snug enough to hold without constricting too much. Practice will also allow you to tuck more quickly, which can be helpful when you need to use the bathroom while you're tucked outside of your home.

Use the bathroom if you need to

Don't hold it; use the bathroom when you need to. Holding it can lead to more problems, such as urinary tract infections. Practice tucking will make it easier and faster for you to tuck, making it more reasonable to tuck in public. You will have to remove your underwear, gaff, or tape and untuck in order to use the bathroom. Most tapes can handle 2-3 applications before the adhesive wears out too much to reuse.

Stop if you have pain

Some discomfort is okay, especially if you're not used to tucking. However, it should not be painful. Pain is a sign that there is something wrong and you should stop tucking. After untucking due to pain, take a break and try again later.



Tips for Healthier Tucking

Use body powder to reduce chafing

Applying body powder to the skin around the tuck can help absorb moisture and reduce chafing. Some people like to use over-the-counter antifungal powders to help discourage the development of fungal infections. You can apply these to the creases in the area.

Wash your underwear and gaffs

Like all clothing and undergarments, regularly launder your tucking underwear and gaffs. These garments can collect dirt and germs as you wear them that can lead to skin irritation or infections if not cleaned often.

Follow the instructions on the tag or wash in cold water on a delicate cycle. Tucking underwear and gaffs can also be washed by hand with a little bit of laundry detergent. Most gaffs should be hung or laid flat to dry, but you can check to see if the tag says it is safe for the dryer.

Monitor your skin & know when to seek medical advice

Before, during, and after tucking, monitor your skin for any bruising, extreme paleness, irritation, rashes, or other changes to the skin.

Extreme paleness indicates a lack of blood flow, and you should untuck immediately. If you have any irritation or rashes, you might want to take a break from tucking until your skin returns to normal. Also monitor the area for any changes in smell, which could indicate an infection.

If any of these changes persist, or if you're experiencing pain or numbness that continues after untucking, it's time to see a medical professional.

How to Untuck

When you're ready to untuck, follow the reverse process of the steps you used to form the tuck. Like when tucking, take things slow and be gentle. It is a good idea to wash the area after you untuck to remove any sweat or germs that might have built up. A warm bath or hot shower can also help soften the adhesive on tapes and make it easier to pull the tape from your skin.

Brands to Try Out

Northern Nevada HOPES is not affiliated with any of these brands. This is simply a list of reputable companies that sell tucking supplies, as recommended by our transgender and gender diverse staff and patients!



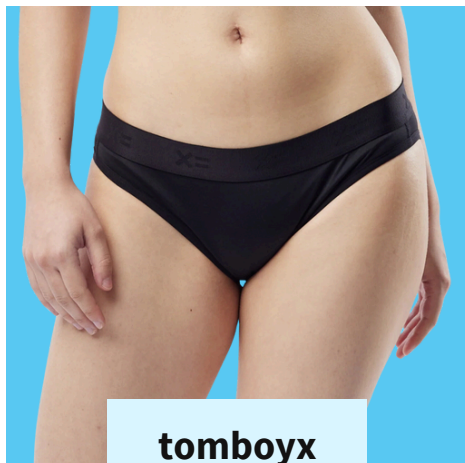
LeoLines

[LeoLines-Etsy](https://www.etsy.com/shop/LeoLines)

LeoLines is a small, woman-run business that handcrafts underwear for trans women, with over 10 years of experience. The shop offers padded and unpadded underwear, as well as swimsuits designed specifically for trans women and girls.

- **Styles:** bikini, brief, waist high, thong
- **Colors:** large variety (solid colors of the rainbow, patterns, black, white, skin tones)
- **Price:** \$20-40

AL Bikini LYCRA Brown Panties Underwear by LeoLines



tomboyx

tomboyx.com

Tomboy X is a queer owned and operated underwear and clothing brand. They have been making underwear specialized for tucking since 2019.

- **Styles:** bikini, hipster, boy shorts, thong
- **Colors:** black, gray, tan, some other solid colors of the rainbow
- **Price:** \$25

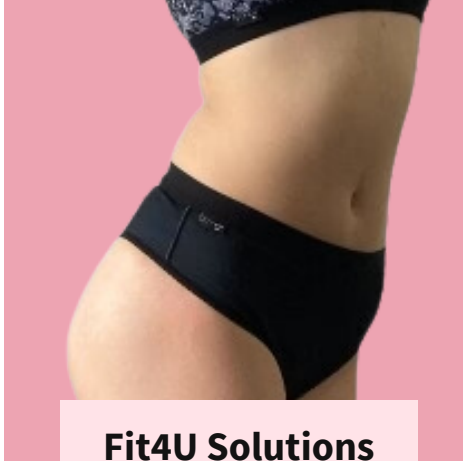
Tucking Bikini in the color Chai from tomboyx





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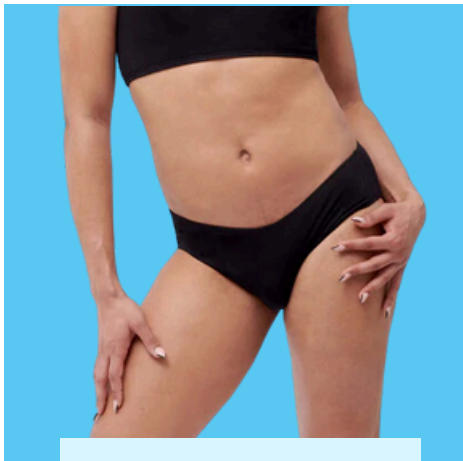
Fit4U Solutions

fit4usolutions.com

Fit4U Solutions was developed by the mother of a transgender daughter who struggled to find the right underwear for her. They make a few styles of compression underwear with different levels of compression, and they have some swimsuit options.

- **Styles:** Active, comfort, cheeky, thong
- **Colors:** black, white, skin tones, patterns, solid colors of the rainbow
- **Price:** \$45-55

Cheeky Active Fit underwear- New Black -tucking underwear



Origami Customs

origamicustoms.com

Origami Customs is a trans-owned and operated underwear and swimwear company. They offer free custom sizing if you don't fit well into one of the categories on their sizing chart

- **Styles:** hipster, cheeky, boyshort, high waist, thong
- **Colors:** black, white, tan
- **Price:** \$30 – 45

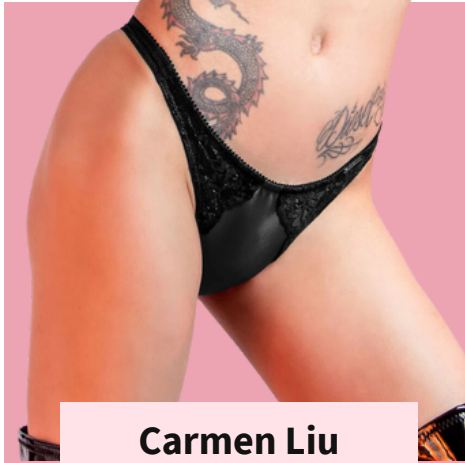
Hipster Gaff 3 Pack by Origami Customs





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**Carmen Liu
Lingerie**

carmenliulingerie.co.uk

Carmen Liu is a trans designer based in the UK. The brand has been making and selling tucking underwear since 2019.

- **Styles:** brief, thong
- **Colors:** black, red, pink
- **Price:** \$25-35

Devotion Satin Tucking Thong Purple Passion
by Carmen Liu



Urbody

urbody.co

Urbody is a trans owned and operated clothing brand. They make gender affirming functional clothing for people across the gender spectrum.

- **Styles:** thong, brief, bikini, high-waisted, bodysuit. They also have compression shorts and leggings designed to help keep you tucked.
- **Colors:** black, skin tones, solid colors of the rainbow
- **Price:** \$25-70

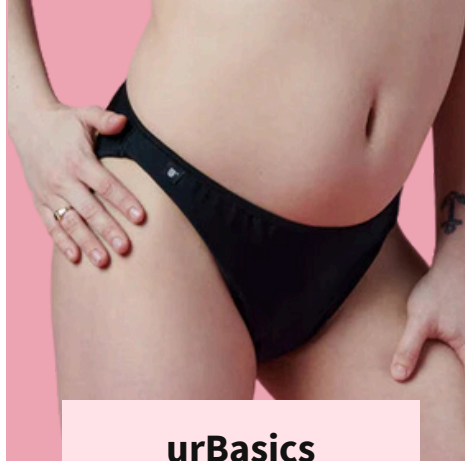
Cotton Hip Brief in Slate, by Urbody





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urBasics

urbasics.ca

urBasics is a brand developed by a trans woman and her mom based out of Toronto, Canada. They sell gender affirming clothing items for people of diverse gender expressions.

Gaffs

- **Styles:** panty, high waisted, thong
- **Colors:** black, tan, some solid colors of the rainbow
- **Price:** \$25 - 30

Soft Cotton Gaff in Aqua, by urBasics



Tape

- **Colors:** skin tones
- **Price:** \$13-16 for single rolls (16.5 ft)

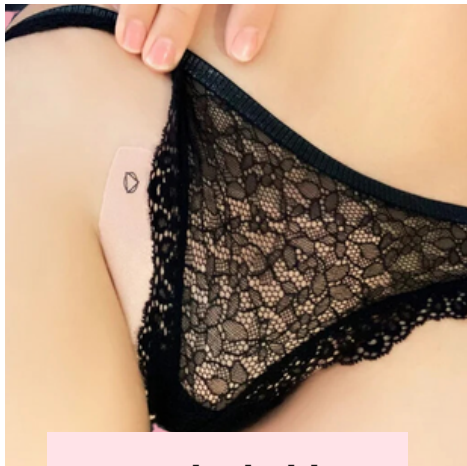
Skin Tone tape (large) by urBasics





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Unclockable

unlockable.com

Unclockable is a trans-owned and operated brand. They sell tucking kits that include a specially shaped tape designed for tucking and a cotton pad to protect the sensitive parts from the adhesive. Their website has instructional guides for using this product

- **Colors:** skin tones
- **Price:** \$20-30 for a kit with 7 adhesive strips

Unclockable
Tuck Kit



TransTape

transtape.life

TransTape is a trans-founded and operated brand that offers medical-grade tapes specifically designed for gender affirmation. Their website has instructional guides for using the tape for tucking.

- **Colors:** skin tones, black, white, solid colors of the rainbow
- **Price:** \$15-18 for single rolls (16.5 ft)



TransTape in the
tone #003



TransTape "Ultimate Kit"
in the tone #002



Measuring for Sizing

When trying to find the right size for tucking underwear or a gaff, it is best to consult the brand's sizing chart. Given that these garments provide compression, they tend to fit snug. If you are between sizes, it is best to try the size up. Most brands will ask for your hip measurement to determine your size, and some also want the waist.

Some brands have nice guides for how to find these measurements; a couple helpful ones are linked below. The same methods shown in these can be used to find your measurements for sizing charts of other brands.



[Origami Customs](#)



[urBasics](#)



Select a product and scroll down to find their sizing guide.

Free Gaffs and Transition Grants

Point of Pride Free Femme Shapewear Program

- Provides free gaffs from Origami Custom.
- Anyone who identifies as transgender or gender non-conforming and expresses hardship about obtaining a gaff can get one. They are current on a long wait list (a few months wait between requesting one and the gaff getting shipped to you).
- They also have grants for medical transition costs.



[pointofpride.org](#)

Genderbands Transition Grants

- Accepts applications every year between October 1st through November 30th for grants to support your gender transition.
- They have multiple grants available each year that cover either social transition needs (clothing, legal record and name changes, haircuts, hair removal, speech therapy) or medical transition needs (HRT, surgeries and procedures, travel for healthcare).



[genderbands.org](#)

Citations and Helpful Resources

Callen-Lorde. “Safer Tucking” https://callen-lorde.org/graphics/2018/09/HOTT-Safer-Tucking_Final.pdf

D.A.P. Total Care. “Safer Tucking: A resource guide to tucking” <https://www.daphealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Safer-Tucking-Brochure.pdf>

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Robyn Withawhy. (March 4, 2021). “How to tuck: A no nonsense guide from a Drag Queen” <https://www.robynwithawhy.com/index.php/2021/03/04/how-to-tuck-a-no-nonsense-guide-from-a-drag-queen/>

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