

Welcome

The primary purpose of the 4-H program is the personal development of youth in rural Ontario.

THE 4-H PLEDGE

"I pledge:

My Head to clearer thinking

My Heart to greater loyalty

My Hands to larger service

My Health to better living

For my club, my community and my country."

Glad You Joined Us

Congratulations for making the decision to join a 4-H Sewing Club. It's going to be a lot of fun.

This sewing project is not like other sewing projects. The members' manual is presented in a different way and you'll be asked to do things a little differently, too.

One of the ways you could help your leaders is to start collecting! Your club will be putting together a remnant box and you will need lots of fabric, interfacing and trim scraps to practice your new sewing skills on. Do you know someone who sews? Does your household have a bag of rags? These are great places to get fabric scraps - and don't forget the buttons on the rags!

You could also find thread, needles, scissors, a tape measure, pins and anything else that you think you might use. Don't rush out and buy these items, especially if you are a beginning sewer. Wait and see what supplies the club is able to get together. Then talk to your leaders about what it is necessary to buy.

Objectives

The general objectives of this 4-H sewing project are:

1. To improve your sewing skills,



2. To give you a chance to gain more knowledge and more problem-solving skills, particularly relating to the purchasing and care of fabric and clothing, and
3. To have fun.

General Requirements

A member will complete a project satisfactorily by:

1. participating in at least 2/3 of his/her own club meeting time;
2. completing the project requirements to the satisfaction of the club leader(s);
3. taking part in an achievement program.

Specific Requirements

During the project you will complete a minimum of one sewing craft or an article of clothing. If you are a beginning sewer select something simple to sew. If you are an intermediate sewer select a more detailed pattern to use. If you are an experienced sewer, consider the challenge of a pattern style or fabric that you have never used. Your leader will be able to give you some pointers in selecting a pattern that matches your sewing skills.

Information Sheets

This project envelope contains a number of information sheets. Each sheet focuses on a sewing technique or other information you will need to know to sew a great project. Here's what you will find.

Preparing to Sew (Yellow Sheets)

Measuring Up
How to Measure
Fine Tuning the Fit





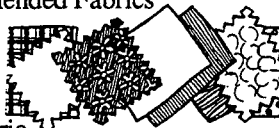
Pattern Power

- Selecting a Pattern
- Reading a Pattern



Fabric Facts

- Natural, Man-made and Blended Fabrics
- How Fabric is Made
- Patterned Fabric
- Interfacing
- Buying and Preparing Fabric
- Knits
- Fabric Terms



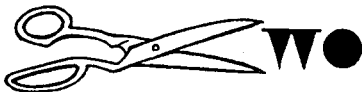
Inside the Envelope

- Pattern Piece Pictures
- The Cutting Layout
- Folding the Fabric
- What is Nap?
- Matching the Fabric Pattern
- Laying Out
- Sewing Directions



Making Your Mark

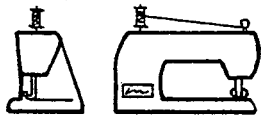
- Pattern Markings
- Cutting Out
- Making Your Mark



Sewing Basics (Blue Sheets)

Machine Matters

- Machine Parts
- Fill the Bobbin
- Raise the Bobbin Thread
- How Stitches are Formed
- Needles
- Cleaning and Oiling



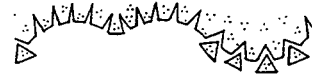
A Stitch in Time

- Tension
- Stitch Lengths
- Plain Seams
- Guiding the Fabric
- Straight and Narrow



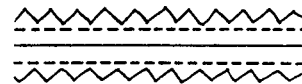
Seams Alright

- Seams
- Perfect Corners
- Stitching Terms
- Basting Methods



Seam Finishes

- Finishing Plain Seams
- Self-enclosed Seams
- Serged Seams
- Seams in Interfacing



Pressing Pointers

- What is Pressing?
- Pressing Equipment



Sewing Extras (Green Sheets)

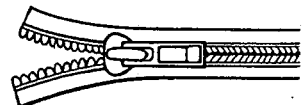
Essential Extras

- Sewing With Your Iron
- Thread
- Design an Applique
- Creative Mending
- Sewing With Flair



Closing Details

- Beautiful Buttonholes
- Buttons
- It's a Snap
- Hooks and Eyes
- Velcro®
- Let 'er Zip



Serging Basics

- Standard and Optional Features
- Buying a Serger
- Thread, Threading and Tension
- Serge Ahead
- Beware of Pins
- Securing Tail Chains
- Oops





MEETING	DATE	TIME	PLACE	THINGS TO BRING TO THIS MEETING	TH
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
ACH. PROGRAM					



Measuring Up

Patterns come in standard sizes, with standard measurements. In order to choose the right pattern size and to make any adjustments, you have to know your body measurements.

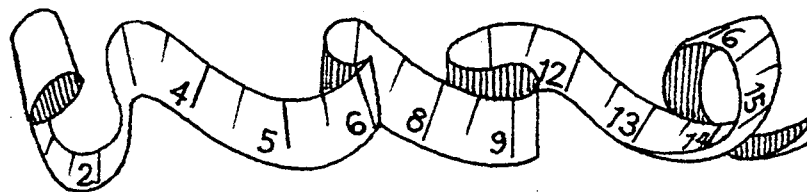
Unless you are a contortionist - or at the least, very flexible - you should get someone to help you take your measurements. Measure yourself in your underwear, without any shoes on.

Don't worry if your measurements aren't exactly the same as those on the pattern. All patterns allow some "ease" or extra room in them so they fit a range of body shapes. Choose the pattern type and size closest to your measurements.

When sewing a top, jacket or dress select the size that is closest to your chest (for men and children) or bust (for women) measurement. Use hip and waist measurements when sewing pants, shorts or skirts.

If your "top" is one size and your "bottom" another size, look for multi-size patterns. Several sizes are printed on the pattern tissue, so you can use one set of cutting lines for the "top" portion and another set for the "lower" portion. If a multi-size pattern isn't available, it's easier to adjust the hips and waist than the bust and shoulder.

Remember that your pattern size may not be the same size as clothing you buy in a store. Check your measurements. Don't just buy a pattern the same size as your ready-to-wear clothing.



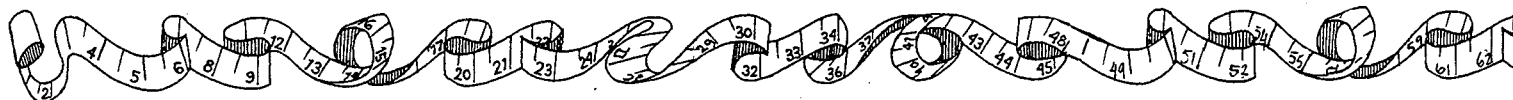
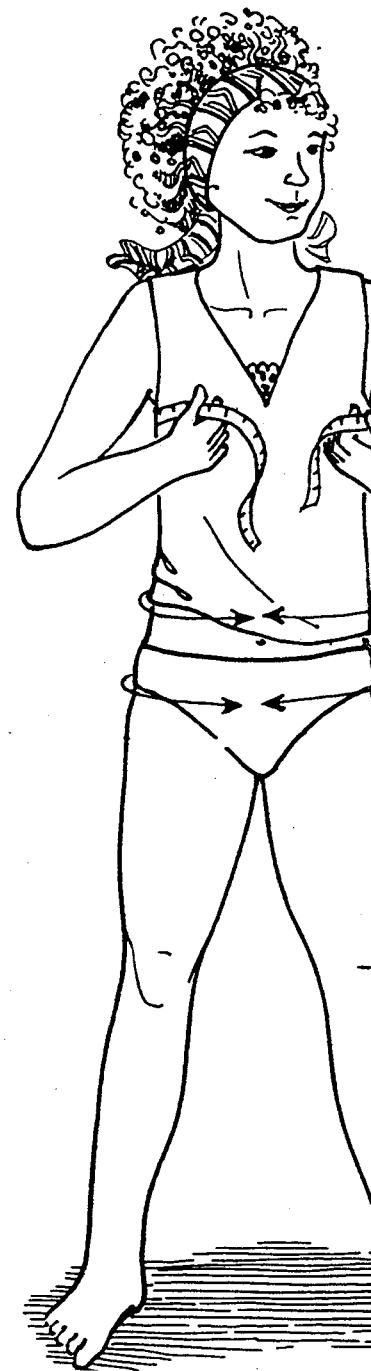
How To Take Six Basic

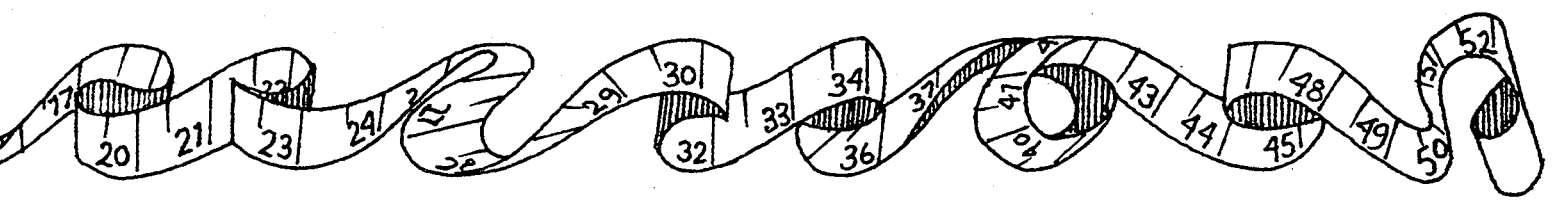
Bust (female) or **Chest** (male and child) - measure around the fullest part, usually right over your nipples.

Waist - to find your natural waistline, bend over to one side. The crease that forms is your waist! Or tie a piece of elastic at the waist and let it fall into its natural position. This will be the waistline.

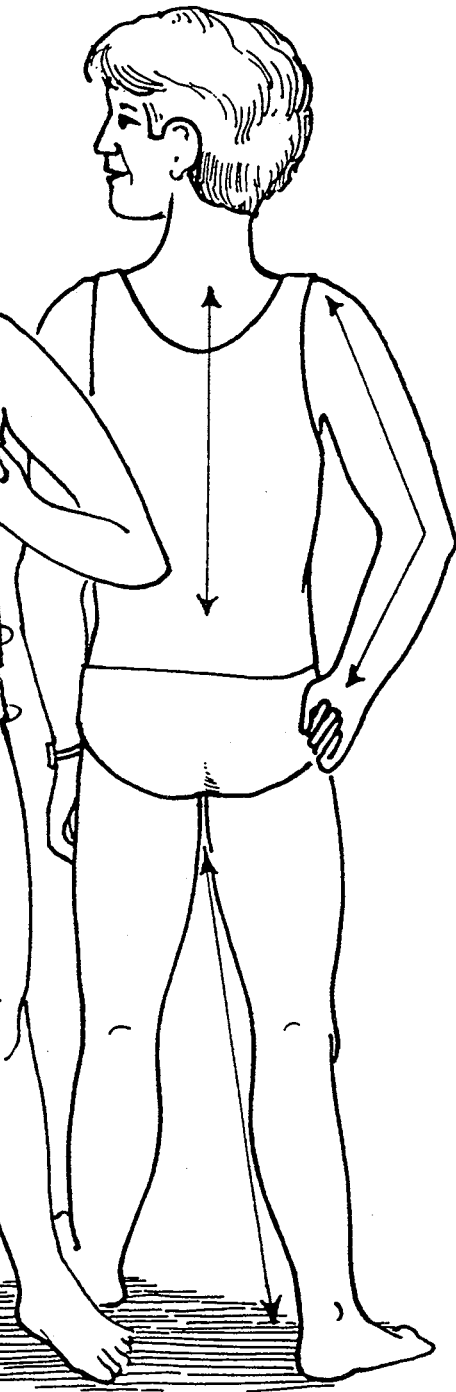
Hips - stand with your legs together and measure the widest part between your waist and crotch.

Distance hips are below waist:
Misses, Women, Jr. - 23 cm
Miss/Jr. Petite, Teen Boys, Half - 18 cm
Men - 20.5 cm
Girls - 14-18 cm
Boys - 15 cm





Body Measurements



Back Waist - find the little bone at the base of your neck and measure from it to your waist.

Sleeve Length - bend your elbow a little bit and measure from your shoulder, over the curve of your elbow to your wrist.

Inside Leg - measure from your crotch to your ankle.

My Measurements Are:

Bust/Chest _____

Waist _____

Hips _____

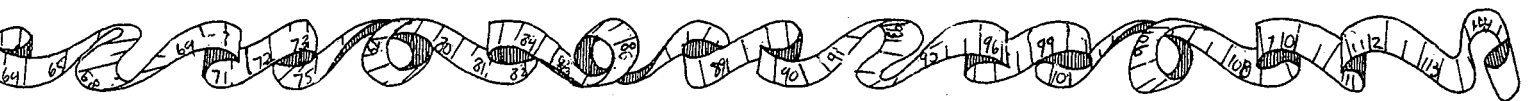
Back Waist _____

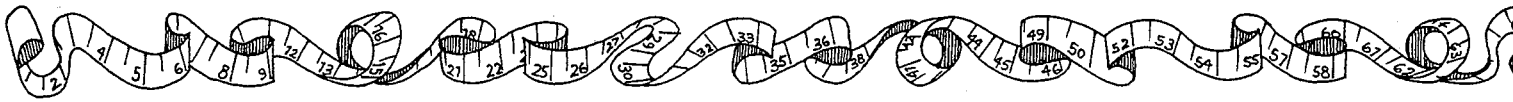
Sleeve Length _____

Inside Leg _____

My Size Is:

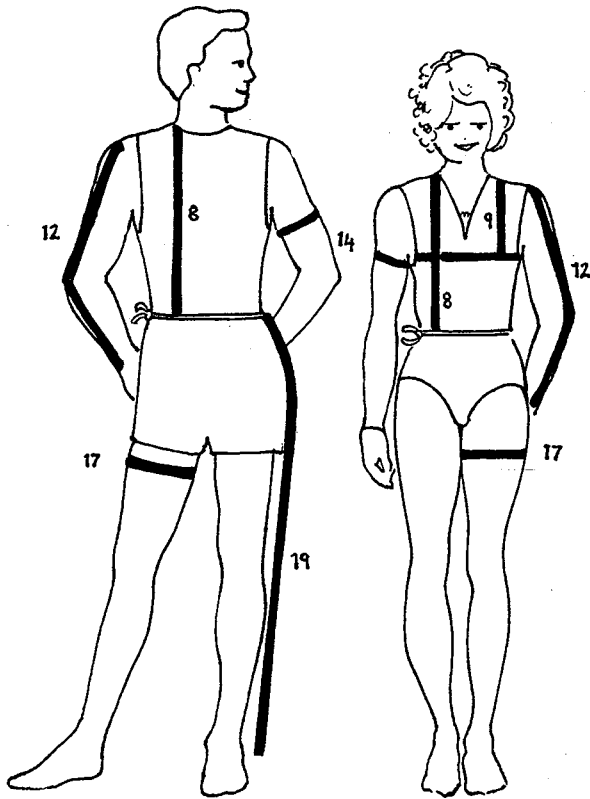
If you are still growing, be sure to keep your measurements up-to-date.





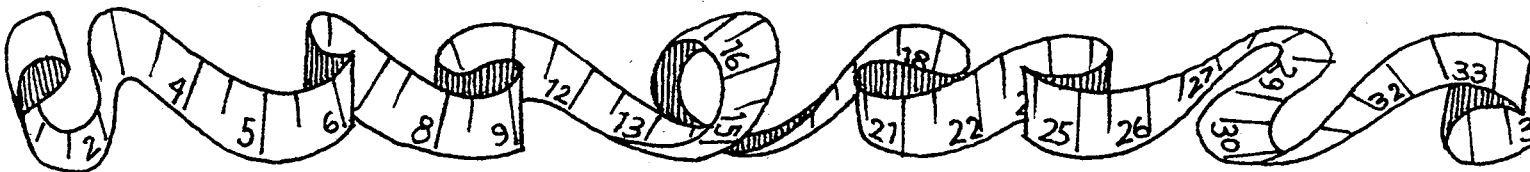
Fine Tuning The Fit

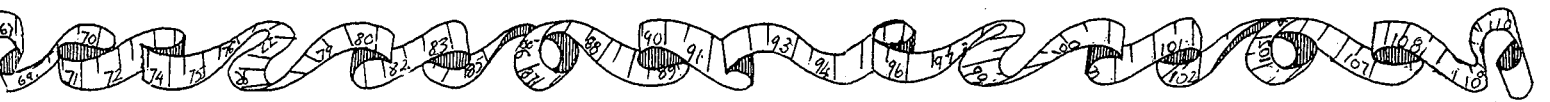
If you are sewing very tailored clothing, you may want to take more measurements to help you fit the pattern more closely to your shape. Here are the measurements you would want to take to get a more tailored look.



Personal Measurements

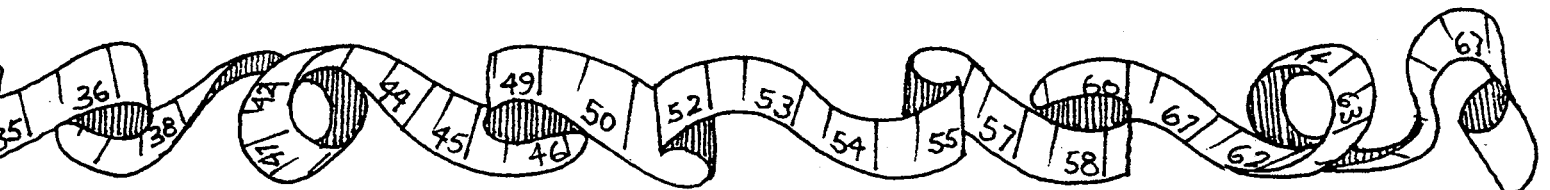
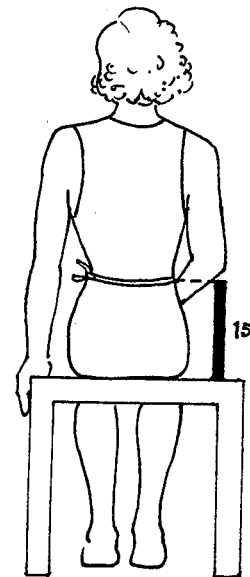
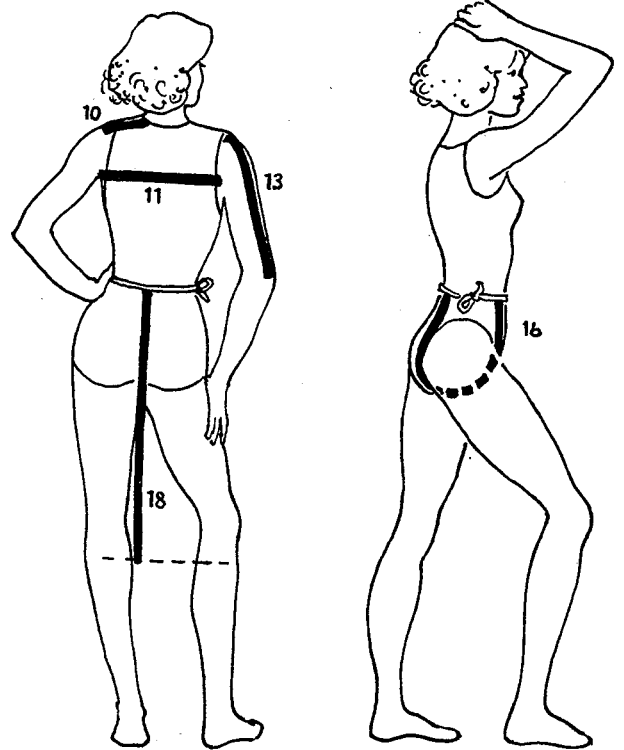
What to Measure	Yours	Pattern Standard	(+ or -)
1. HEIGHT (without shoes)			
2. BACK WAIST LENGTH			
3. NECK (males) at the Adam's apple. Add 1/2" (1.3 cm) to neck body measurement.			
4. HIGH BUST (females) directly under the arms, above the bust and around the back.			
5. BUST (females) CHEST (males & children)			
6. WAIST			
7. HIPS/SEAT			
8. FRONT WAIST LENGTH from shoulder at neck base to waist (over bust point on females)			
9. SHOULDER TO BUST from shoulder at neck base to bust point			



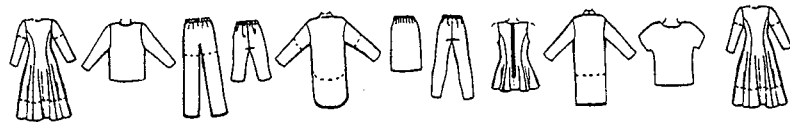


Measurement Chart

What to Measure	Yours	Pattern Standard	(+ or -)
10. SHOULDER LENGTH from neck base to shoulder bone			
11. BACK WIDTH across midback			
12. ARM LENGTH from shoulder bone to wristbone over slightly bent elbow			
13. SHOULDER TO ELBOW (females) from end of shoulder to middle of slightly bent elbow			
14. UPPER ARM around arm at fullest part between shoulder and elbow			
15. CROTCH DEPTH from side waist to chair. Sit on a hard, flat chair and use a straight ruler.			
16. CROTCH LENGTH from centre back waist, between legs, to centre front waist			
17. THIGH around fullest part			
18. BACK SKIRT LENGTH from center back at waist to desired length on outside of leg			
19. PANTS SIDE LENGTH from side waistline to desired length along outside of leg			



Pattern Power



Selecting a Pattern

Patterns are like road maps: they tell you how to take a piece of fabric and turn it into a great vest, a terrific T-shirt, or a dynamite pair of pants. Or perhaps you want to get creative with a craft pattern.

Companies like Vogue, Butterick, McCall's, Simplicity, Style and Burda put out catalogues showing all their patterns. It's fun to look through these catalogues but with so many patterns to choose from it can be hard to make up your mind!

It's best to have an idea of what you want to make before you start looking in a pattern catalogue. This can really be a lot of fun. Go into your favourite clothing store and try on everything you think might be suitable — from great buys to expensive garments. Pay attention to fit - whether the clothes you like are loose fitting or very tailored - as well as fabric and colour. Be honest with yourself and see yourself as you really are, not what you would like to be.

Once you have made up your mind about what looks good on you and what you want to sew, flip to the section in the catalogue that includes the kind of project you want.

Now you have to choose a pattern that you won't find too hard to sew! Most pattern books have special sections with patterns for beginners. They may be labelled "easy to sew" or "learn to sew." Another way to check out the difficulty of a pattern is to check the number of pattern pieces. Usually the more pieces a pattern has, the harder it is to sew. This is not always the case, though.

Also check the fabrics that are suitable for a pattern. Some patterns are made especially for stretch knits. If you don't want to sew with a knit fabric then don't select one of these patterns. There may also be some fabrics listed that aren't suitable for the pattern — such as striped, plaid or diagonal fabric.

If you are on a budget be sure to check the price of the pattern. Some of them are very expensive. Watch for pattern sales.

Some patterns include instructions for a regular sewing machine and a serger. If you are just learning to use a serger these patterns can be a great help.

Also check for the amount of styling the finished garment or craft needs. If the garment is very fitted - that is if it follows the contours of your body fairly closely - you will need to be an experienced sewer to get the result you are hoping for. A loose-fitting garment such as a painter's smock, some vests or a box jacket will not require such careful fitting. Finishing touches, such as topstitching, set in pockets, linings and pleats also call for some sewing experience.

Take out the instruction sheet and look it over before you buy a pattern. If there are more new techniques than you want to learn right now, pick a simpler style.

Patterns are not returnable. Be sure you have the style and size you want before you pay for it.





Reading a Pattern

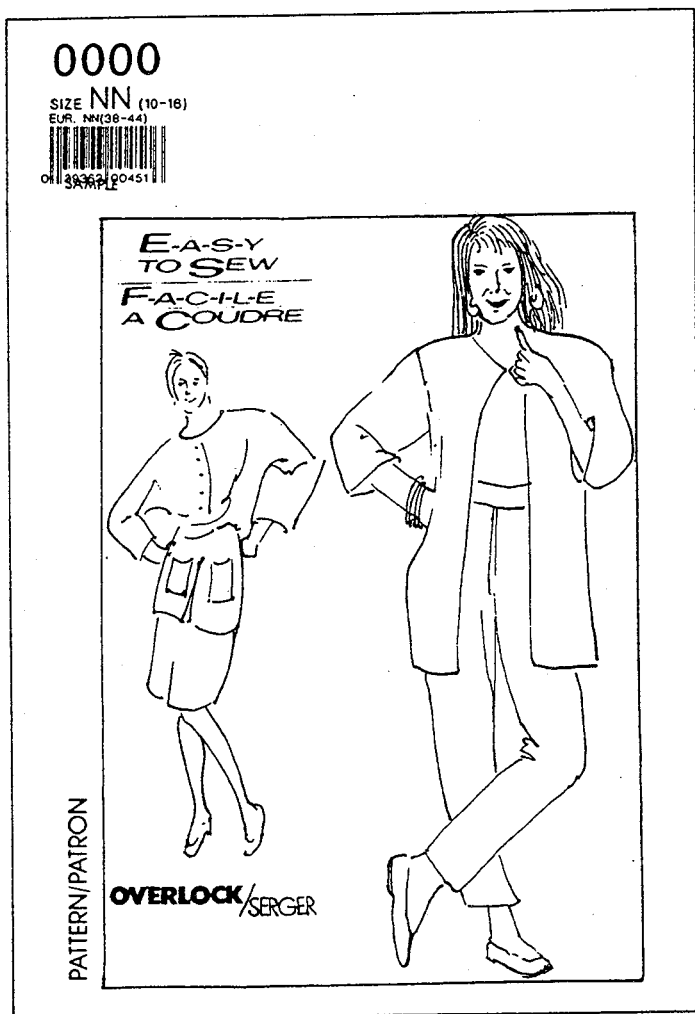
Now that you've chosen your pattern, let's look at it more carefully. Each pattern company will have slight differences in their envelope layout. They all use the same standard sizing and basically offer the same information. The information may appear in different areas of the envelope and instructions. Here is a general guideline of what you will find.

THE FRONT

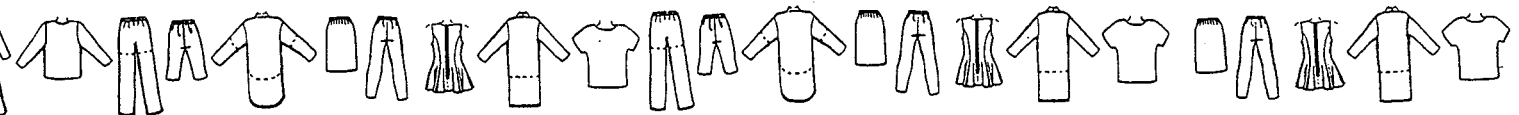
The pictures on the front of the pattern envelope show the different outfits you can make with this pattern. These are called "views." They show the general look of the garment. Read the envelope description and instructions for specific fit details.

Remember, though, that the fabric you choose can make the outfit you sew look different from the pictures on the pattern envelope. What you are looking at when you look at the views on the envelope are the choices you have when sewing up the pattern. You may have a choice of length of sleeves or hem, different collars you can use and different combinations of pattern pieces.

There will also be a pattern number, the size and the price on the front of the envelope.



- views
- pattern number
- size
- price





PICK-A-KNIT[®] RULE
REGLE "CHOISISSEZ-UN-TRICOT"

FOR THIS PATTERN—4" (10cm) OF KNIT FABRIC MUST STRETCH CROSSWISE FROM HERE
POUR CE PATRON—4" (10cm) DE TRICOT DOIVENT S'ETIRER EN TRAVERS D'ICI

TO HERE
JUSQU'ICI

0000
 10 PIECES

2

MISSES' SLIM-FITTING PULL-ON PANTS AND SKIRT AND LOOSE-FITTING UNLINED JACKET
 ... SIZED FOR STRETCH KNITS ONLY: Jacket with patch pockets has extended shoulders, above wrist sleeves and front button or snap closing. Skirt and cropped pants have triple elastic waist casings. Skirt has back hemline slit.

Fabrics—Cotton interlock, lightweight double knits, Cotton and wool jerseys, ribbed knits, sweatshirt knits. (SEE PICK-A-KNIT[®] RULE for pants and skirt.) Extra fabric needed to match plaids, stripes or one-way design fabrics. For pile, shaded or one-way design fabrics, use with nap yardages/layouts. Not suitable for obvious diagonals.

Notions: Thread. Skirt or Pants: Two pkgs. 3/8" wide elastic. Jacket: Seven 1/2" buttons or decorative snap fasteners, 3/8" thick shoulder pads or make your own; see Simplicity 7021.

BODY MEASUREMENTS

Bust	30 1/2	31 1/2	32 1/2	34	36	38	Ins.
Waist	23	24	25	26 1/2	28	30	"
Hip—9" below waist	32 1/2	33 1/2	34 1/2	36	38	40	"
Back-neck to waist	15 1/2	15 3/4	16	16 1/4	16 1/2	16 3/4	"
Sizes U.S.A. ONLY	6	8	10	12	14	16	
Sizes	6	8	10	12	14	16	

Pants							
52" / 54***	1 1/2	1 3/4	1 7/8	2 1/4	2 1/2	2 3/4	Yds.
58" / 60***	1 3/4	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 3/4	2	"

Skirt							
52" / 54" or 58" / 60***	3/8	3/8	3/8	3/8	3/8	3/8	Yd.

Jacket							
52" / 54***	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	Yds.
58" / 60***	1 3/8	1 3/8	1 3/8	1 3/8	2	2 1/8	"

Interfacing—1 yd. of 22" to 25" light to mid-weight fusible

Pants side length	37 1/2	37 3/4	38	38 1/4	38 1/2	38 3/4	Ins.
Pants leg width	11 1/2	12	12 1/2	13	13 1/2	14	"
Skirt length	22 1/2	22 3/4	23	23 1/4	23 1/2	23 3/4	"
Skirt width	35 1/2	36 1/2	37 1/2	39	41	43	"
Finished back length from base of neck							
Jacket	30 1/2	30 3/4	31	31 1/4	31 1/2	31 3/4	Ins.

*without nap **with nap ***with or without nap

PANTALON-PULL AMINCISSANT ET JUPE ET VESTE NON-DOUBLEE AMPLE POUR JEUNE FEMME. . . PREVIS UNIQUEMENT POUR TRICOTS EXTENSIBLES: La veste avec poches plaquées à épaules prolongées, manches au-dessus des poignets et boutonnage au devant ou fermeture de boutons-pression. La jupe et le pantalon court ont triple coulissés de taille avec élastiques. La jupe a fente au niveau de l'ourlet au dos.

Tissus—Interlock de coton, tricot doubles légers, jerseys de coton et de laine, tricot milleraies, tricot molletonné. (VOIR LA REGLE "CHOISISSEZ-UN-TRICOT" pour le pantalon et la jupe.) Prévoyez davantage de tissu pour raccorder les tissus à rayures, écossais ou à motifs uni-directionnels. Pour les tissus à poil long, de différents tons ou à motifs uni-directionnels utilisez métrages et plans de coupe "avec sens". Ne conviennent pas aux tissus à diagonales apparentes.

Fournitures: Fil. Jupe ou Pantalon: Deux paquets d'élastique de 1cm de largeur. Veste: Sept boutons de 1.3cm ou boutons-pression de fantaisie, épaulettes de 1cm de largeur ou faites-les vous-même; consultez Simplicity 7021.

MESURES NORMALISEES

Poitrine	78	80	83	87	92	97	cm
Taille	58	61	64	67	71	76	"
Hanches (23cm au-dessus de la taille)	83	85	88	92	97	102	"
Dos (encolure à taille)	39.5	40	40.5	41.5	42	42.5	"
Tailles/Sizes	6	8	10	12	14	16	
Tailles-Europe	34	36	38	40	42	44	

Pantalon							
135cm**	1.40	1.60	1.70	1.90	1.90	1.90	m
150cm**	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.30	1.60	1.80	"

Jupe							
135cm**, 150cm**	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	m

Veste							
135cm**	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	m
150cm**	1.70	1.70	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.90	"

Entoilage—0.90m en 55cm à 64cm léger à moyen fusible

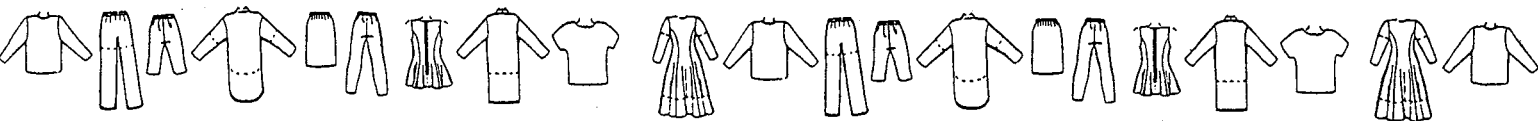
Longueur de côté du pantalon	95	96	96.5	97	98	98.5	cm
Largeur de jambe du pantalon	29	30.5	32	33	34.5	35.5	"
Longueur de la jupe	57	58	58.5	59	59.5	60.5	"
Largeur de la jupe	90	92.5	95	99	104	110	"
Longueur du dos fini depuis la base du cou de la:							
Veste	77.5	78	78.5	79	80	81	"

*sans sens **avec sens ***avec ou sans sens

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- back views
- garment description
- standard body measurements
- suggested fabrics
- notions
- yardage
- finished garment measurements





THE BACK

There is a lot of information on the back of a pattern envelope so review it carefully. This is what you will find on the back.

1. Back views of the garments - so you know what you'll look like coming and going! Line drawings of the front may also be included.
2. Garment description - which explains design details such as linings, topstitching and pockets and gives a brief description of fit. The silhouette or overall shape of the garment is the most important part of the description.
3. A chart of standard body measurements - helps you figure out the right pattern size for you.
4. A list of suggested fabrics - helps you choose the type of fabrics that will give you the best results.
5. A list of notions - like buttons, zippers, elastic, thread, snaps, hooks and eyes, seam bindings, shoulder pads, lace or other decorative trim - needed to make your project.
6. A yardage chart for each pattern view. Here's how to find out how much fabric you need:

- find the view you are making on the left side of the yardage chart;

- find the width of your fabric;

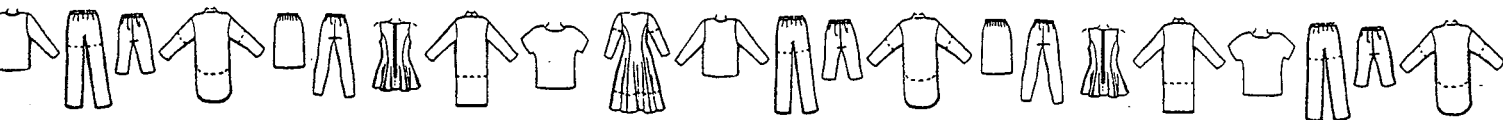
- find your pattern size at the top of the chart;

- follow the pattern size column down until it meets the fabric width line. This is the amount of fabric you will need. The amounts are listed in Imperial and metric measurements.

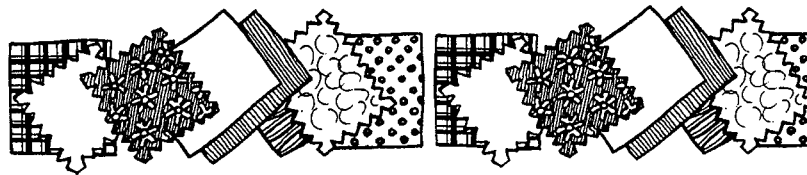
If you need contrasting fabric or interfacing, the yardage chart will tell you how much to buy.

7. Finished garment measurements - can be helpful if you need to make any pattern adjustments. Sometimes these are printed on the pattern tissue.

Sizes	6	8	10	12
Pants				
135cm	1.40	1.60	1.70	1.90
150cm	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.30
Skirt				
135cm	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80
150cm	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80
Jacket				
135cm	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90
150cm	1.70	1.70	1.70	1.80

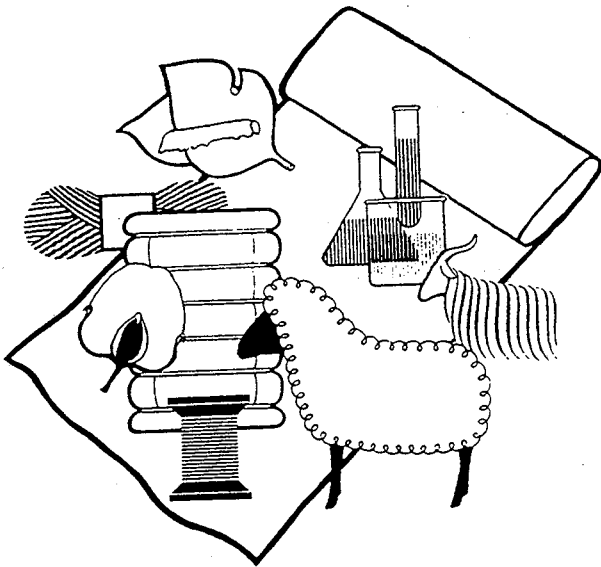


Fabric Facts



Fabric is made out of fibres which look like fine threads. Some fibres are natural while others are made in a laboratory.

There is usually a tag attached to the roll of fabric that tells you what the fabric is made of. It will also give you care instructions, as well as width and price per metre.



Natural Fabrics

Natural fibres include cotton, flax, silk and wool. These four fibres have been used to make cloth for thousands of years. Natural fibres are generally more comfortable, more durable, and more absorbent than those made from 100% synthetic fibres. They usually wrinkle more than man-made fabrics.

Man-made Fabrics

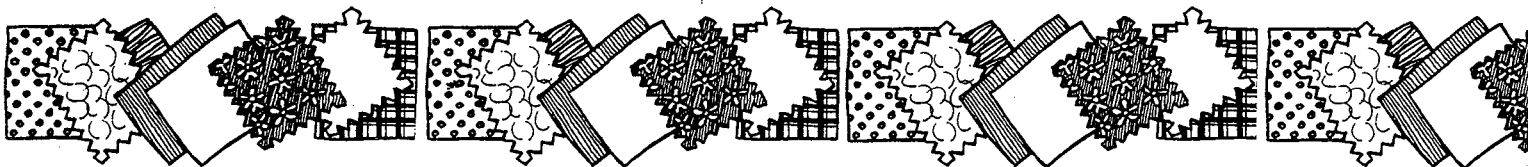
Man-made fibres are also called synthetic fibres. They are usually made from chemical mixtures containing oil-based products. Some synthetic fibres you probably have heard of are nylon, acrylic and polyester. Rayon is a man-made fibre produced by adding chemicals to the natural cellulose found in wood.

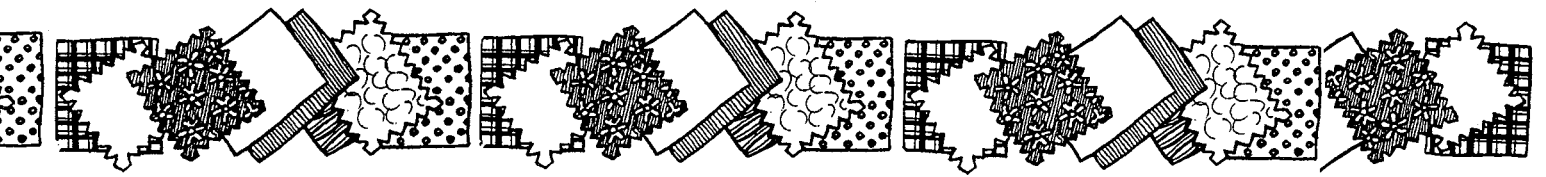
Man-made fibres can be less expensive than natural fabrics, but not always. Synthetic fibres are much easier to care for than natural fibres and usually they are wrinkle resistant.

Micro-fibres are the newest addition to the range of fabrics available.

Fabric Blends

Some fabrics are made of natural and synthetic fibres woven together. As a rule, the fibre that is present in the highest percentage dominates the characteristics of the fabric. That means if a fabric is 65% cotton and 35% acrylic, it will feel and hang like cotton fabric.





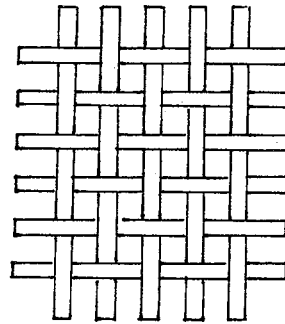
How Fabric is Made

Fabrics are made in three ways: they are woven, knit or nonwoven.

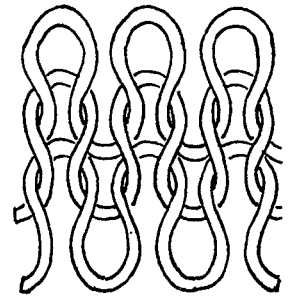
Woven: the threads go over and under one another. The threads that run from top to bottom are called warp threads. Those that run from side to side are called weft threads. Denim, corduroy and broadcloth are woven fabrics. Wovens don't have much "give" or stretch.

Knit: just like with knitting needles, one loop of yarn is pulled through another loop. Most knits stretch. Interlock, sweatshirt fleece, and sweater knits are examples of knit fabrics.

Nonwoven: heat, moisture and pressure are applied to fibres, forcing them to close together. Sometimes chemicals are added to hold the fibres together. Many interfacings, polyester fleece and felt are examples of nonwoven fabrics.



Woven

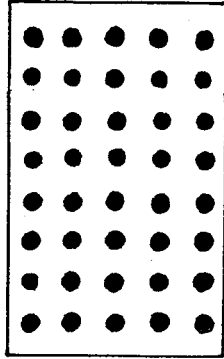


Knit

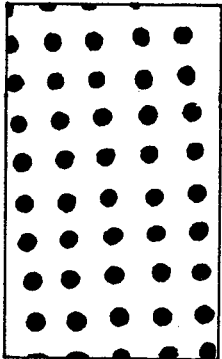
Patterned Fabric

Some patterns are woven or knitted into the fabric, others are printed on. If a pattern is printed, the pattern is fainter on the wrong side.

If fabric has a printed design arranged in rows, be sure the design is printed straight, both across and up and down the fabric.



Straight

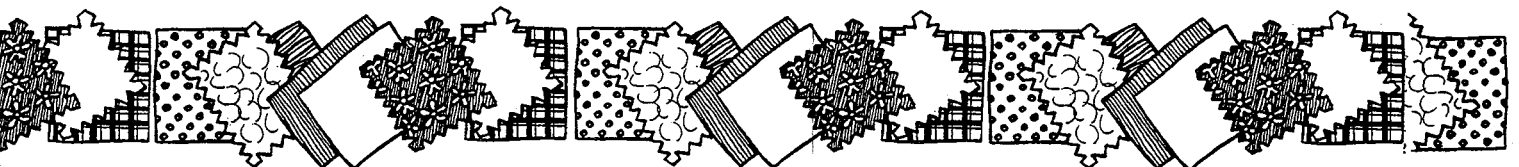


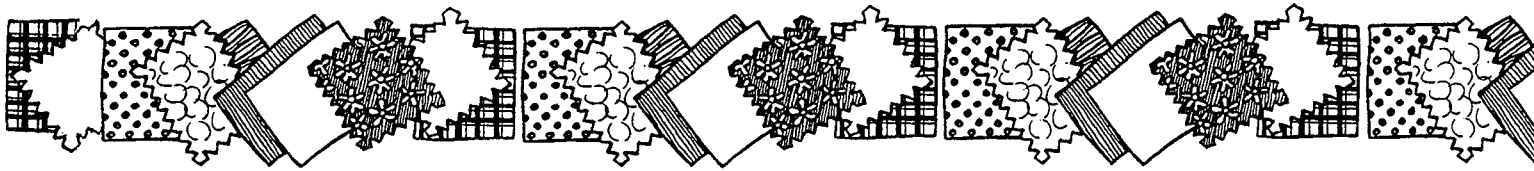
Not straight

If the pattern pieces are cut straight on the grain, and the design isn't printed straight, the design will be crooked on the finished garment. If you move the pattern pieces so the design is straight, then the pieces won't be cut on the grain which may affect the hang of the garment. (The hang of knits and synthetics is less likely to be affected by this than natural fibre fabrics.)

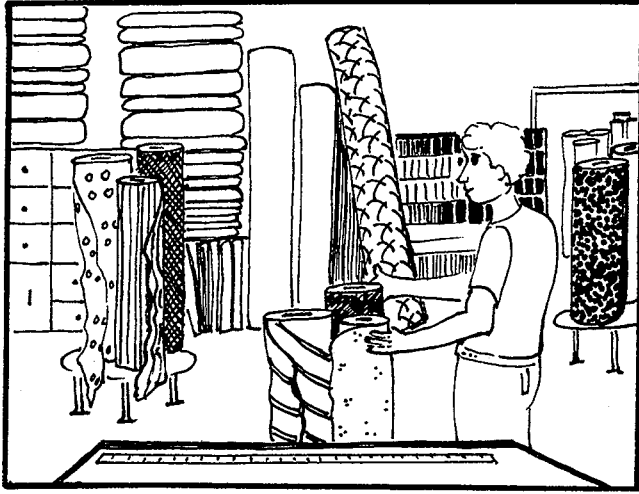
Interfacing

The pattern will note if interfacing is needed. Interfacing adds shape, stability and strength to your fabric. It comes in many different weights and you match it to the weight of your fabric and how much crispness you want to add to the garment. You might select different weights for different parts of the garment. Sew interfacing into a seam to hold it in place or iron it to the wrong side of your fabric. The type you choose depends on where you are going to use it and which type you like to use. Interfacing is often used in collars, cuffs, lapels, necklines, pockets, waistbands and opening edges.





Buying Fabric



Sizing is a starch or resin added to the fabric for extra body that disappears when you wash the fabric. "Bargain" fabrics may be sized to make them look and feel like more expensive fabrics. Before you buy, look at your fabric carefully: if the weave is loose but the fabric feels firm and crisp, it's the sizing.

Take your pattern with you when buying fabric. Fabric comes in different widths. The pattern tells you how much of each width you would need. It also suggests suitable fabrics for the garment.

Make sure you choose the right type and weight of fabric for the time of year. Cotton is good for making shorts and summer tops but you might want wool for winter pants and shirts.

Check the care instructions. All fabric isn't machine washable.

Also check that the colour or the pattern on the fabric suits you. Stand in front of a mirror and hold the fabric up to your face. If the colour has to match other clothes, take them to the shop with you. A fabric will look different inside a store under the lights than it will outside in the sunlight. Ask the sales clerk if you can take the fabric to a doorway or window to look at it in daylight.

Wildly patterned fabrics are usually best in simply styled garments. Solid colours or tame patterns are great for garments with a lot of styling details.

Be sure to check the quality of the fabric before it is cut off the bolt. Look for flaws in the printing or weaving. Measure the width of the fabric too. It may be different than what's on the hang tag.

Knits

Knits vary in stretchability. If the pattern you have chosen is marked "for knits only," it will probably supply a gauge like the one below. Use the gauge to make sure the fabric has enough stretch for the pattern.

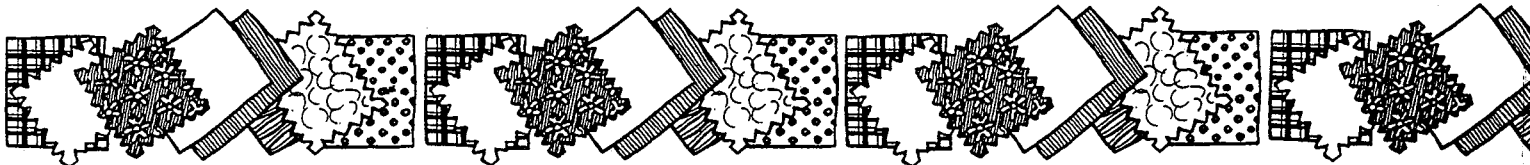
PICK-A-KNIT RULE

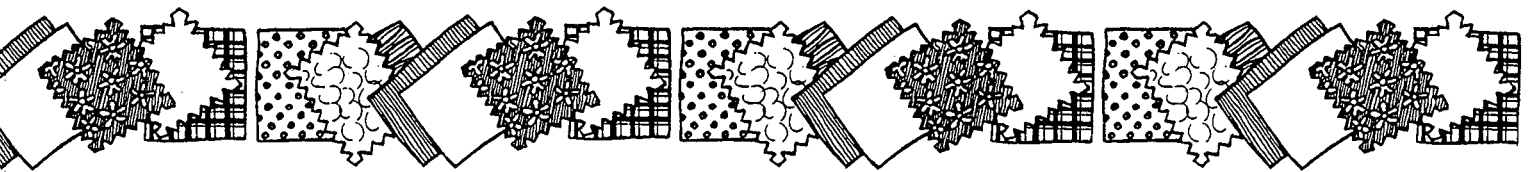
FOR THIS PATTERN—4" OF KNIT FABRIC MUST STRETCH CROSSWISE FROM HERE →

← AT LEAST TO HERE →

Preparing the Fabric

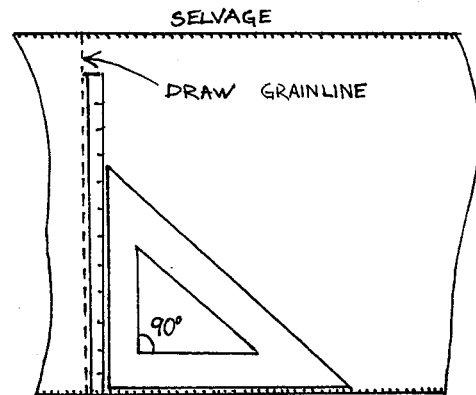
If your fabric is washable, always prewash the fabric before you cut out the pattern. This way, if the fabric shrinks, the shrinking will happen before you sew your project. Press the fabric well. Steam from the iron can be used to help straighten the fabric. Stretchy fabrics should be left spread out overnight so they can 'relax.' Interfacings should also be preshrunk.





If your fabric has not been cut off the roll in a straight line, straighten the edge using one of the following methods.

- Put a set square flat along the selvage and hold a ruler along the top. Draw a chalk line across the fabric and cut along it. Fold your material right sides together, matching the crosswise line at selvages.
- For a woven piece of material, like cotton or wool, straighten it by choosing one thread and pulling it out right across the fabric. This will leave a space all the way across the material. Cut along that space and you will have a straight line.
- If your fabric has a woven plaid, check or crosswise stripe just cut along one of the crosswise bars of the design to straighten the fabric.



Fabric Terms

Selvage - the tightly woven finished edges of a piece of fabric. Selvages do not ravel. If you are using the selvages in your garment, clip them (about 15 cm apart) after sewing the seam. Otherwise they will tighten up when you wash your garment and alter the hang of the garment.

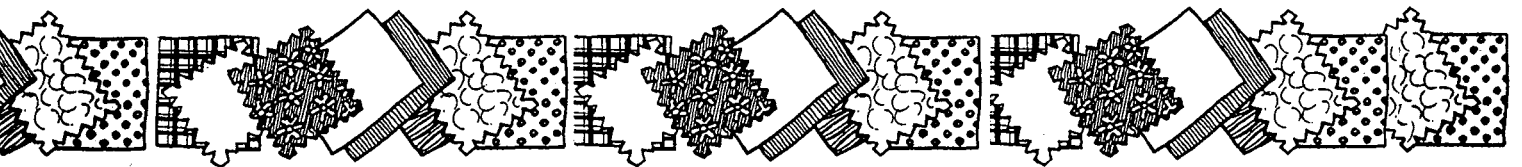
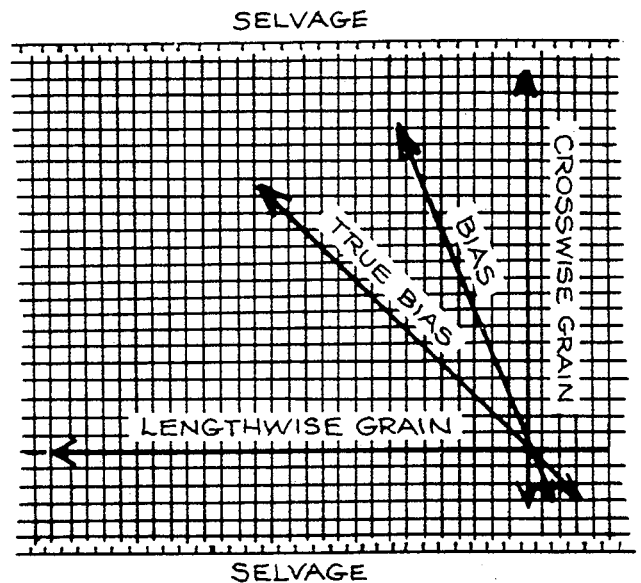
Straight or Lengthwise grain - yarns that run in the same direction as the selvages. Lengthwise yarns (warp) are usually stronger and heavier than crosswise yarns (weft). Most garments are cut with the lengthwise yarns going up and down the body.

Crosswise grain - yarns that run across the fabric from one selvage to the other. Crosswise yarns stretch more than lengthwise yarns. Most garments have the crosswise yarns going around the body.

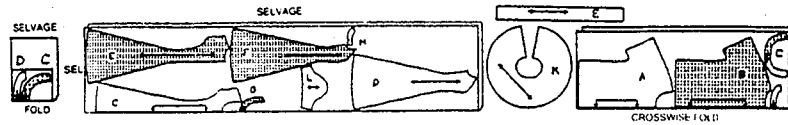
Bias - any diagonal direction.

True bias - a diagonal line between the lengthwise and crosswise yarns. To find a true bias, begin at a corner of the fabric. Measure the same distance along the selvage and across the crosswise grain. Connect those points. This makes a 45° angle. This is a true bias. Fabric has its greatest amount of stretch along the true bias.

Bolt - a roll of fabric is called a bolt.



Inside The Envelope



Select Pattern Pieces

15 pieces given

A-SKIRT FRONT V.1	J-SKIRT SIDE BACK V.2
B-SKIRT SIDE FRONT V.1	K-FLOUNCE V.2
C-SKIRT BACK V.1	L-SKIRT FRONT V.3
D-SKIRT SIDE BACK V.1	M-SKIRT SIDE FRONT V.3
E-WAISTBAND	N-SKIRT BACK V.3
F-SKIRT FRONT V.2	O-SKIRT SIDE BACK V.3
G-SKIRT SIDE FRONT V.2	P-FLOUNCE V.3
H-SKIRT BACK V.2	

There's more than just the pattern pieces inside your pattern envelope. Along with it is a very important piece of information - your Pattern Guide Sheet. It will show you pictures of all the pattern pieces for the different pattern views, tell you how to lay out your pattern pieces on your fabric, give you step-by-step sewing instructions on how to make your project and gives definitions of the sewing terms used throughout.

Pattern Piece Pictures

The first thing you have to do is find the pieces you need to make your project. Depending on the pattern and view you have chosen, you may not be using all the pattern pieces that are in your envelope. This section helps you choose the pieces you will need.

As you unfold your pattern pieces, you will notice that there may be several pieces printed on one big sheet. Before you start you have to cut these pieces apart. It's also a good idea to press the pattern pieces with a warm, dry iron. This will help you when you are cutting them out.

You may also notice that the pattern pieces only look like half a garment! Don't worry. Because garments are usually the same on the right and the left side, most pattern pieces are only half a garment section and are placed on a folded fabric or sewn together with a seam.

The Cutting Layout

On the first page of your Pattern Guide Sheet you will find a number of cutting diagrams or layouts. To find the one you need, look for:

- the pattern view you are making;
- the fabric width which is the same as yours; and
- your pattern size.

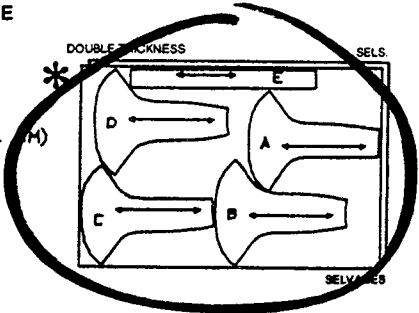
Once you've found the right layout diagram, circle it so you can refer to it easily.

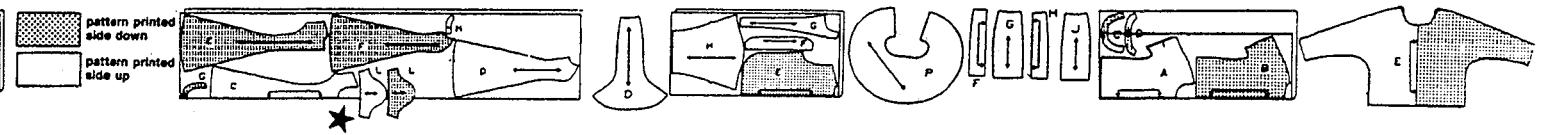
VI SKIRT

USE PIECES A B C D E

39"/40" (100/102)
WITH NAP
ALL SIZES

CUT ONE E





If your garment has interfacing or lining there will be separate layouts for them.

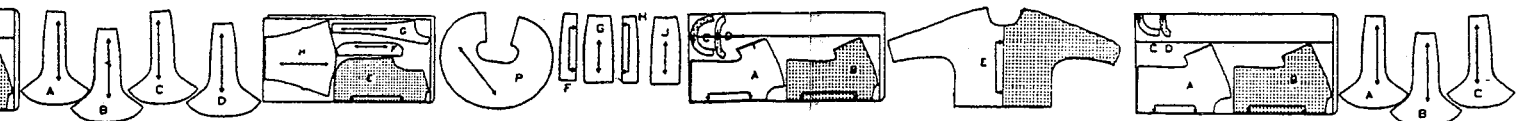
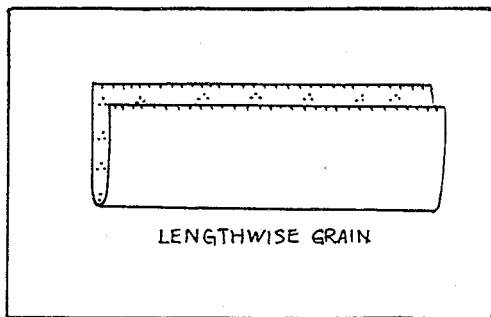
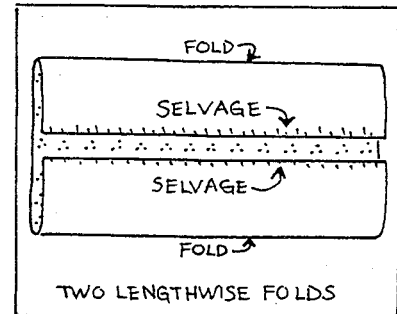
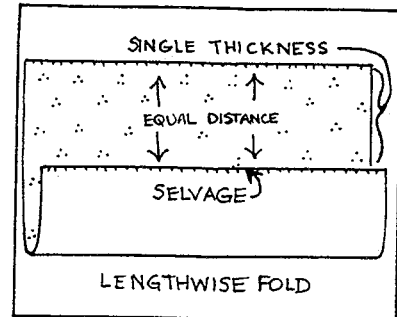
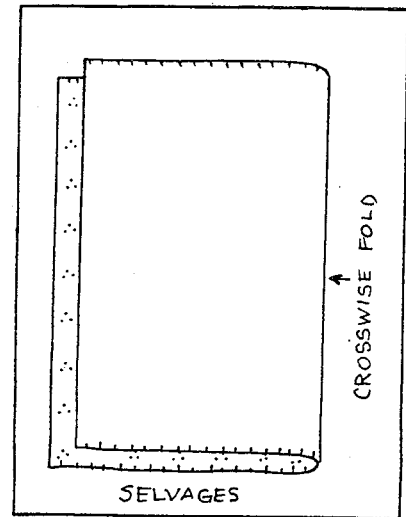
Folding the Fabric

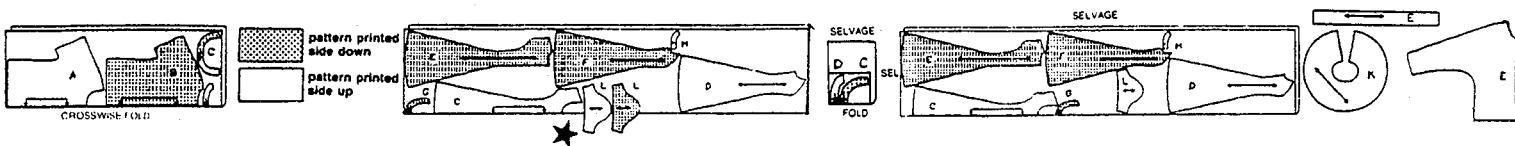
Your layout diagram will tell you how to fold the fabric before you cut out your pattern. The usual way is to fold the fabric along the lengthwise grain, matching the selvages, and then lay the pattern pieces on the wrong side of the material.

However, sometimes the layout diagram will tell you to fold the fabric on the crosswise grain. This is used only for fabrics that do not have a nap or a one-way design. For an explanation of nap, see the other side of this sheet.

You may also be asked to fold your fabric with two lengthwise folds, cut out on a single thickness or fold your fabric some other way. All these different folds are used because the pattern layouts are designed to make the most efficient use of the fabric.

Once the fabric is folded correctly, pin the selvages in place. This will help to stop the fabric layers from shifting as they are cut.





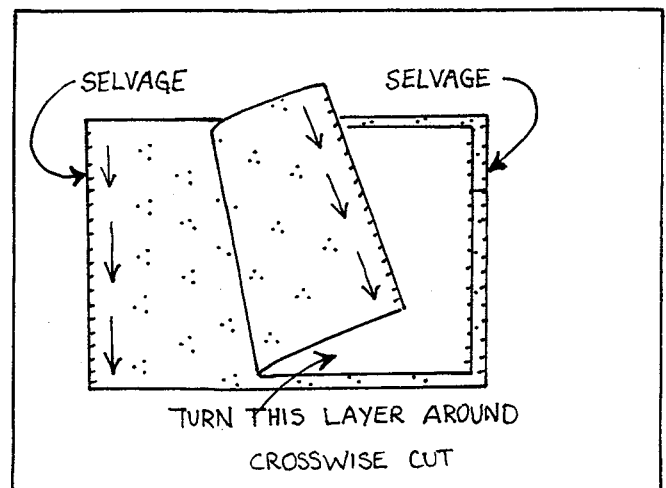
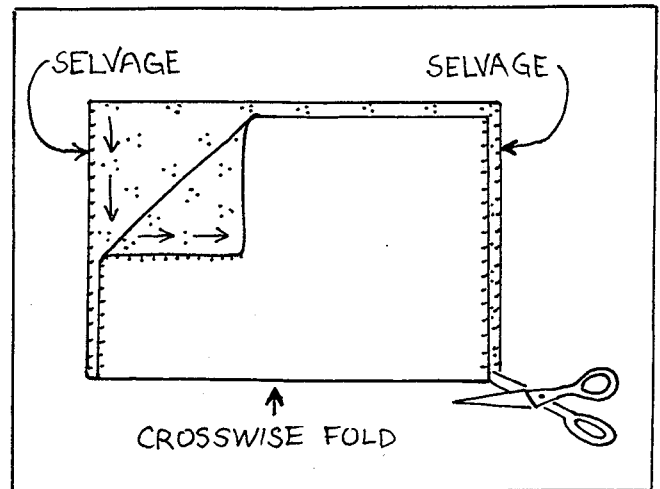
WHAT IS "NAP?"

Some fabric has a furry surface, or "pile" that feels smooth if you stroke it one way but rough if you stroke it the other way. This is called a "nap." Some fabrics will change the way they look depending on which way you hold them. These fabrics also have naps.

Fabrics with naps include:

- pile fabrics such as velvet, velour and corduroy
- fuzzy fabrics like brushed flannel and fake fur
- shiny fabrics like satin, damask and knits
- plaids and stripes with an uneven repeat (tricky to cut out)
- printed or woven patterns with a "this end up" look, such as flowers all growing one way.

When you are looking at the pattern layout section, make sure you choose the nap layout if you are sewing with a fabric with a nap. It may ask you to use a crosswise cut. To do this fold the fabric in half along the crosswise grain. The fabric is then cut in two pieces along the fold. The top piece is turned around 180° so that the nap runs in the same direction on both pieces. If your fabric has a thick nap, you should probably cut the pattern out using a single thickness. Otherwise the layers might shift as you pin and cut the fabric.

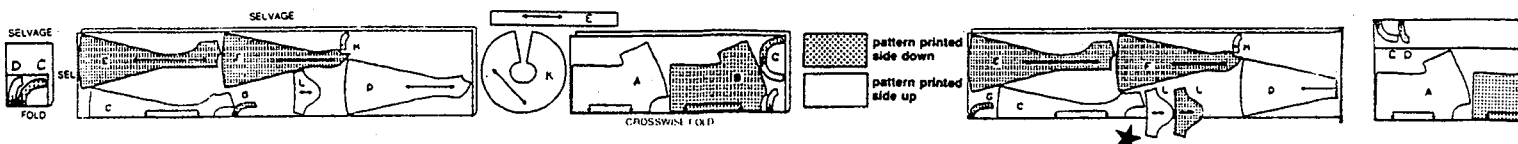


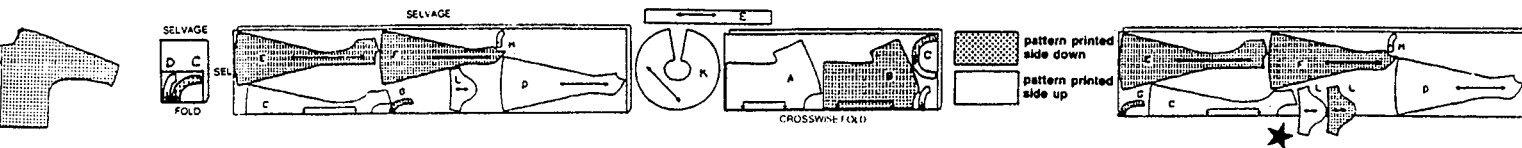
Matching The Fabric Pattern

Most sewers like to fold the fabric right sides together because it makes it easier to transfer the pattern markings to the fabric and the centre seams are automatically matched, ready for sewing. But if you are using a fabric with a strong pattern that you want to match, it is easier to fold the fabric with the wrong sides together so you can see the pattern more easily.

If you are matching plaids, bold stripes, checks, border prints or some other design you will probably have had to buy extra fabric. You will almost certainly have to figure out your own pattern layout.

Before you begin, look at the pattern on your fabric and decide where you want the most prominent bar or motif to fall on your body. Once you have decided that you lay out your pattern, starting with the main front section. Remember, the design has to match vertically as well as horizontally and you should be matching the seamlines, not the cutting lines.

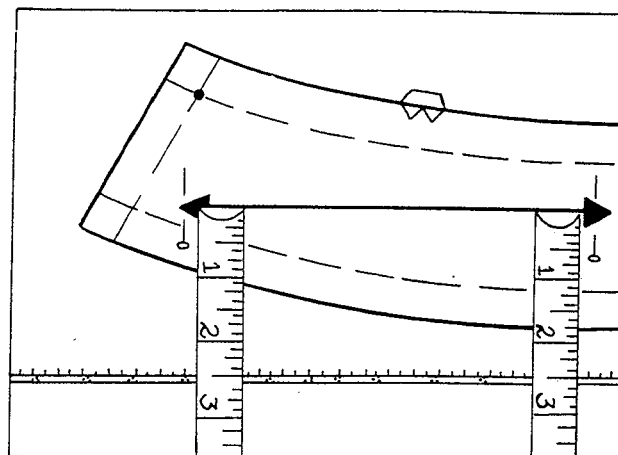




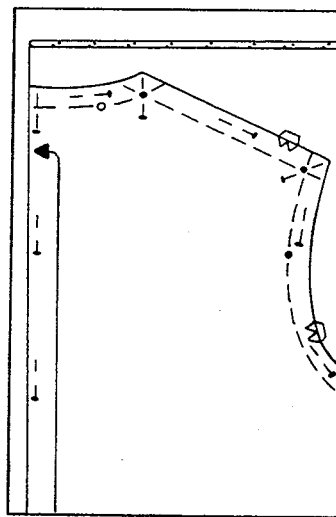
Laying Out

The cutting layout also shows you where to put the pattern pieces on your fabric. Here are some tips on laying out your pattern properly.

- make pattern alterations if needed.
- position all pattern pieces so that the grainline arrow is parallel to the selvages or to the lengthwise fold. You will have to measure this with a tape measure. Start by putting a pin in at both ends of the grainline arrow and measuring either to the fold or to the selvage. Move the pattern piece until the measurements are equal.
- position the larger pieces first, starting with those that go on a fold. Put the "place on fold" line exactly on the fold of the fabric.
- once you have laid out your fabric, don't move it around unless you have to refold it to cut a special piece. It's best to lay out your fabric on a table. Don't let the fabric hang over the table edge or it will pull the fabric out of shape. If you don't have a table that is big enough, just lay it out on the floor. If there is a carpet or rug on the floor, make sure you don't pin the fabric to the rug and cut it by mistake!



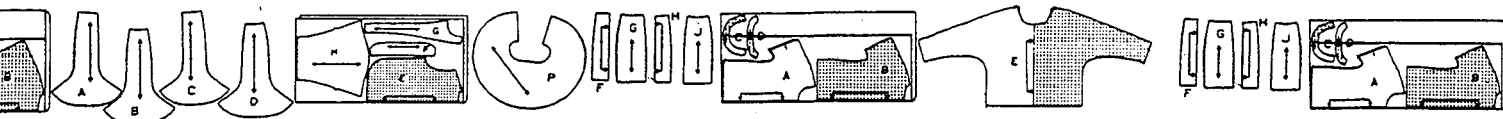
When you have laid out all your pattern pieces, you have to pin them. At corners, put pins in diagonally. The rest of the pins should lie in the same direction as the cutting line, placed every 5-7.5 cm (2-3 inch). Be sure to pin through all layers of fabric. When you get to be more experienced you can skip the pinning and hold the pattern down with pattern weights or tuna cans.



Sewing Directions

This sheet will give you step-by-step instructions on how to put your garment together. It is a good idea to read through the instruction sheet before you begin sewing.

As you become more experienced at sewing you will learn some short cuts to take and new techniques to use. In the meantime, the pattern instruction sheet will be a good guide.



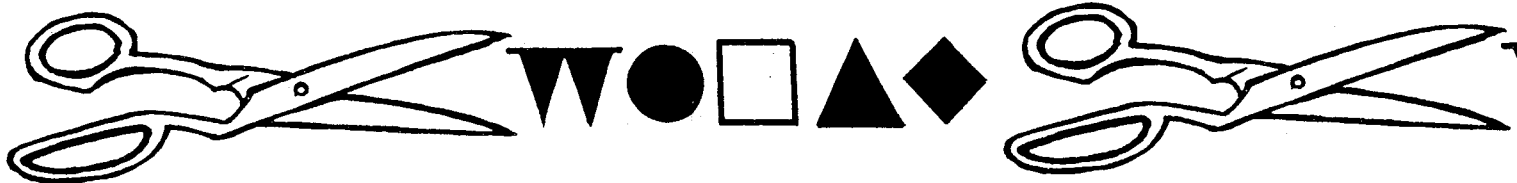
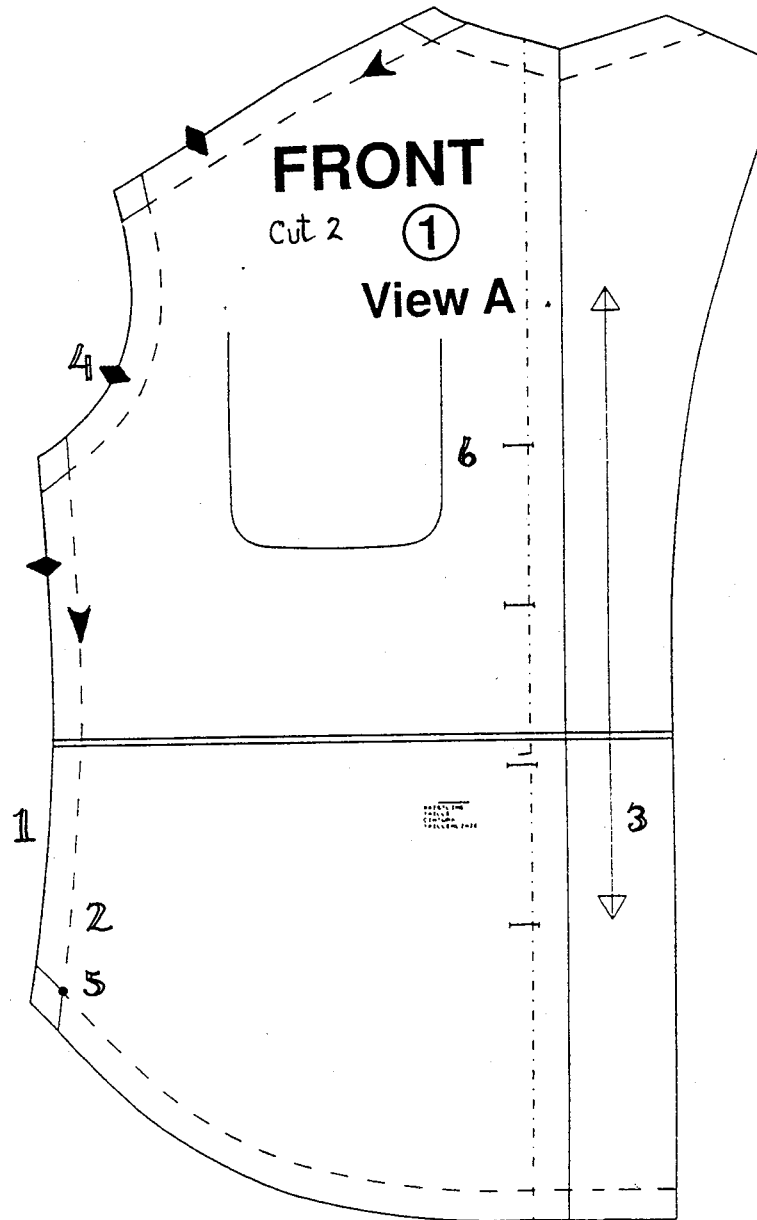
Making Your Mark

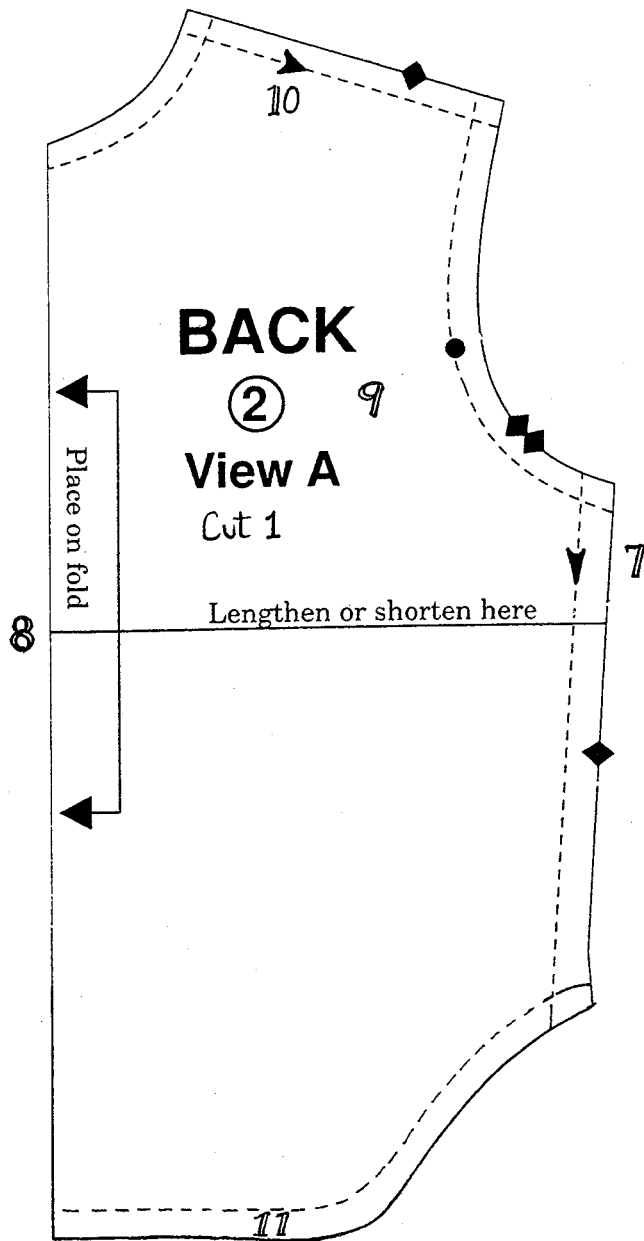
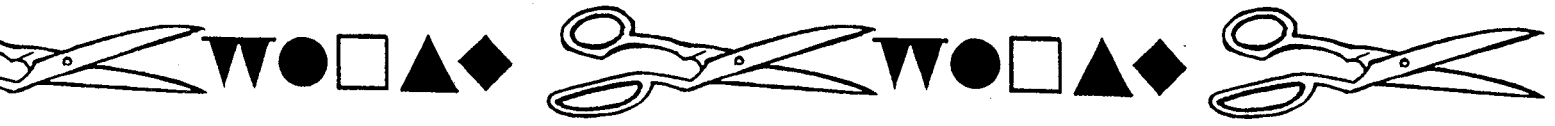


Pattern Markings

There are a lot of different marks on pattern pieces. You may find some or all of the following marks on your patterns.

1. On a single-size pattern the *cutting line* is a solid, dark outer line. Sometimes there will be a pair of scissors printed along this line to let you know this is where you should cut. On multi-sized patterns the cutting line can be a solid line, short broken lines or long broken lines. Be sure you check before you cut. To help you remember which line you are following, you might want to use a highlighter pen and mark it before you cut.
2. *Stitching line* is a dotted line, usually 15 mm (5/8") inside the cutting line. This is the line on which the seams will be stitched. The space between the cutting line and the stitching line is called your seam allowance. Multi-size patterns don't show the stitching line.
3. *Grainline arrow* is a straight line with an arrow at each end. You use this arrow to make sure your pattern lies straight on your fabric. Usually the grainline arrow runs up and down and follows the warp thread of the fabric. See "Pattern Layout" for instructions on placing the arrow on the grain.
4. *Notches* are diamond shaped symbols. They can be single, double or triple. When you are sewing two pieces of a pattern together, you match the notches that are the same.
5. *Circles, squares, triangles and large and small dots* also help you match garment pieces. Sometimes circles tell you where you should start or stop stitching.
6. *Hemline, centre front and back, fold line, zipper, button, buttonhole and pocket placement* markings show the position and/or suggested sizes of finishing and construction details.





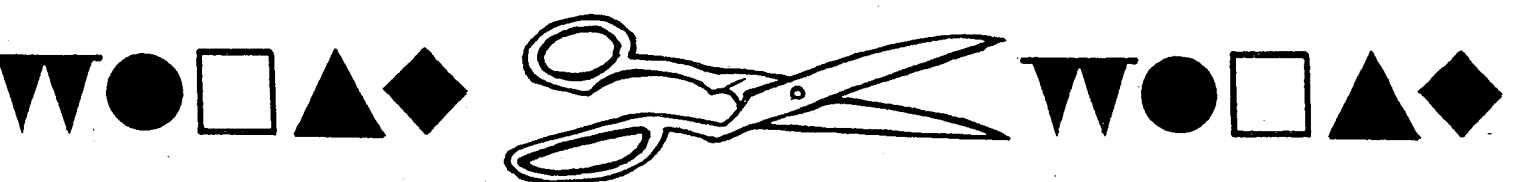
7. **Lengthen and shorten lines** help you adjust the pattern. We don't all come in the standard sizes so these lines help you get a better fit.
8. **Place on fold line** is a solid narrow line with the words "place on fold" printed alongside. There is often another line with arrows at each end turned to point at the fold line. It is usually placed on the lengthwise fold.
9. **Letters or numbers** and the **name** of each piece and **how many to cut**, are printed on each pattern piece.
10. **Directional arrows** or sometimes little presser feet are shown to tell you that you should sew the seam in this direction. This will help to prevent the fabric from stretching as you sew. It is not always possible to do this but you should try.
11. **Seam allowance** is the area between the stitching line and the cutting line. Multi-size patterns will not show the seam allowance.
12. **Darts** are shown as V-shaped broken lines with dots. These are the stitching lines. Darts can be marked on the fabric by using tracing paper or tailor's tacks.

Cutting Out

Take a deep breath. It's important that you don't make a mistake now. But, if you've followed all the directions up to this point, everything should go well.

Cutting and marking your pattern properly will make your sewing job a lot easier. The first step is cutting clean, straight lines. Use sharp dressmaking shears or a rotary cutter and cutting mat. Use your free hand to hold the edge of the pattern flat as you cut.

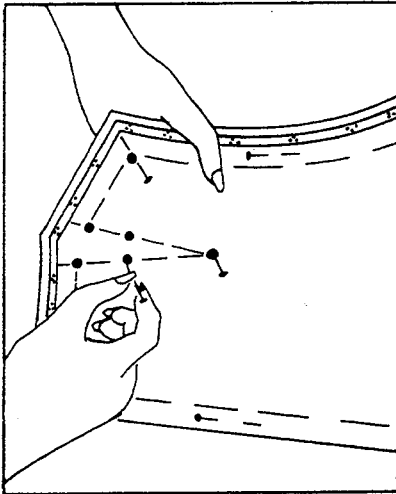
When you come to a notch cut around it so it points away from the garment. Some people cut the notches out of the seam allowance. This can cause problems if you need to let the seam out.



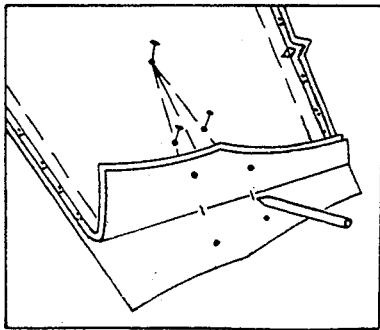


If you are using a multi-size pattern you can alter the size of your garment as you cut. If your waist is one size and your hips a larger size, cut the waistline at the smaller size and gradually move to the cutting line for the larger size in the hip area.

Do not use pinking shears to cut out fabric. They will not give you a good edge to follow for accurate stitching. Pinking shears can be used for finishing seams after sewing. Keep your shears and cutters in good working order. Use them only for cutting fabric and be careful not to drop them. Shears will need sharpening from time-to-time and rotary cutters will need cutting wheels replaced.



Stick in Pins



Fabric Marking Pen

Making Your Mark

To transfer the marks from the pattern onto your fabric you can use one of these methods.

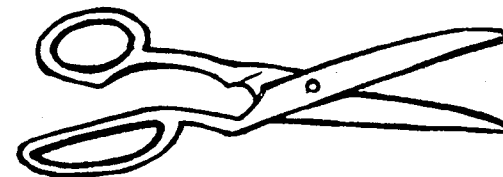
Fabric marking pens - one of the fastest and easiest ways to mark. They contain disappearing ink so you can mark on the right side or wrong side of the fabric. As with everything, some brands work better than others. A quilter's pen seems to be fairly reliable.

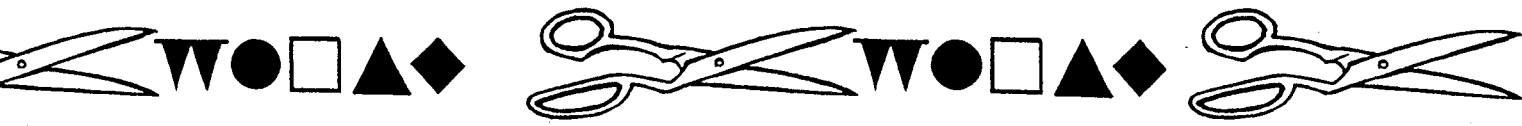
You can use a water-soluble fabric marking pen, which means the blue ink disappears when washed, or an evaporating or air-soluble marking pen, whose purple ink evaporates from the fabric in less than 48 hours. If you are using one of these pens make sure you will be sewing before the ink disappears or store the pieces in an airtight bag. No matter which kind you choose, always test the pen on a scrap first to make sure it really does disappear!

To mark with one of these pens, stick pins straight through the pattern tissue and both fabric layers at all marking points. Starting from the outside edge, carefully separate the pattern piece and the fabric layers just enough to put an ink dot where the pin is. Remove the pin as you go along.

If you are using a lightweight fabric, you can mark directly on the pattern piece. If you press hard enough, the ink will blot through the tissue and the fabric.

Dressmaker's marking pencils come in two types. One has a lead sort of like a regular pencil but this can be washed out. The other has a softer centre that is like chalk. Use the special brush on the end of this pencil to erase your marks from the fabric. Mark the dots the same as you would with a fabric pen.





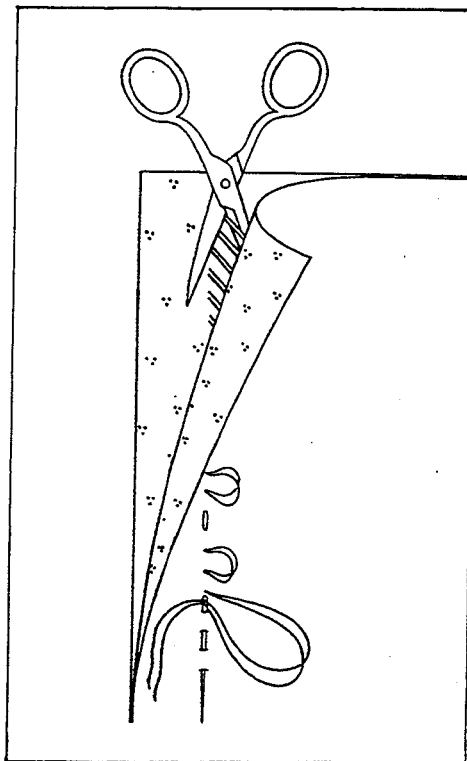
Tracing paper and tracing wheels are also useful marking tools. With "disappearing" tracing paper you can wipe the markings off with clear water - although, as always, you should check first.

You can usually mark both layers of fabric at once, although with heavy fabrics it is better to do one layer at a time to get clear marks. You may have to protect your working surface from the teeth of the tracing wheel. Use a ruler as a guide when marking straight lines.

Hand or machine basting is a good way to transfer markings from the wrong side of the fabric to the right side, especially for showing where pockets, pleats or buttonholes are to go.

Once you have marked position lines on the wrong side of the fabric, separate the layers and hand- or machine-baste along the marking points.

To hand baste, or make tailor's tacks, you need a needle with a doubled length of unknotted thread. Take a series of long stitches through the pattern and both layers of fabric, leaving 2.5 cm (1 inch) loops of thread between the stitches. When the entire line has been marked, gently separate the layers of fabric and cut the threads between the layers. To remove the pattern from the fabric, snip the top loops of thread without pulling out thread tufts.



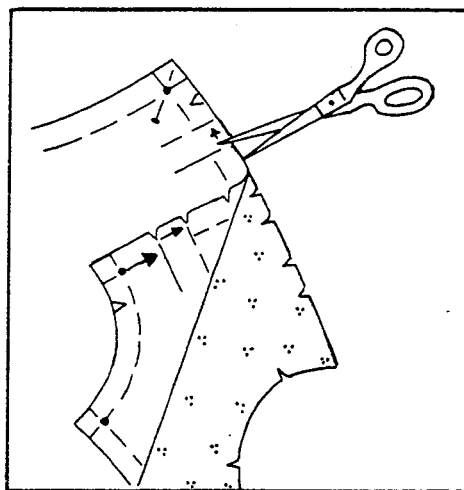
Tailor's Tacks

Press marking is a shortcut marking method that you use along with snip marking. It is best used to mark foldlines for details such as extended facings, folded casings and pleats. Once you have marked the edge of the foldline with a snip, remove the pattern pieces. Match the snips and press along the foldline.

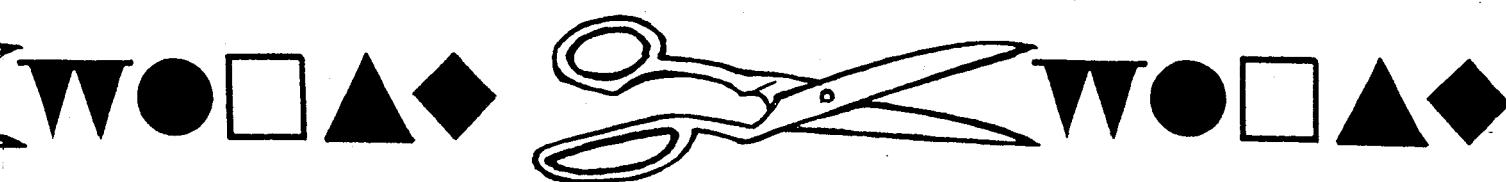
Always mark the following:

- dots, including those that indicate dart stitching lines;
- solid lines that indicate foldlines as well as position lines for pockets and buttonholes;
- centre front and back lines, unless they are on seamlines;
- stitching lines for pleats, tucks or fly-front zipper openings.

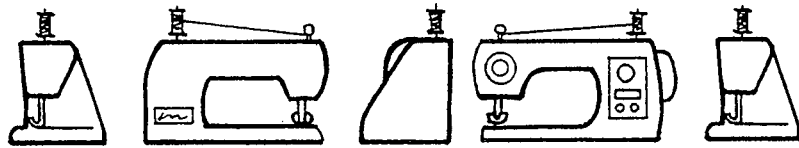
Snip marking is making a small cut in the seam allowance. It is a fast way to mark the ends of darts, foldlines, pleats and tucks, as well as centre front and back. You can also use it to mark notches. But make sure before you snip that you won't want to let the seams out or make any alterations when sewing.



Snip Marking



Machine Matters



Machine Parts

Even though they may look different, all sewing machines are basically the same. If you have a machine that does both straight and zigzag stitches, it will have all the parts that are labelled on the machine here. It may even have more.

All sewing machines come with an instruction book or an operating guide. This book describes your machine, all the different parts and what it can do. It will show you how to thread your machine and how to take care of it. Read your instruction book for helpful sewing hints, too.

Thread Guides are the hooks and loops that hold the thread in line as it travels from spool to needle. They help prevent the thread from getting tangled as you sew.

Needle has a hole in the middle through which you put the upper thread.

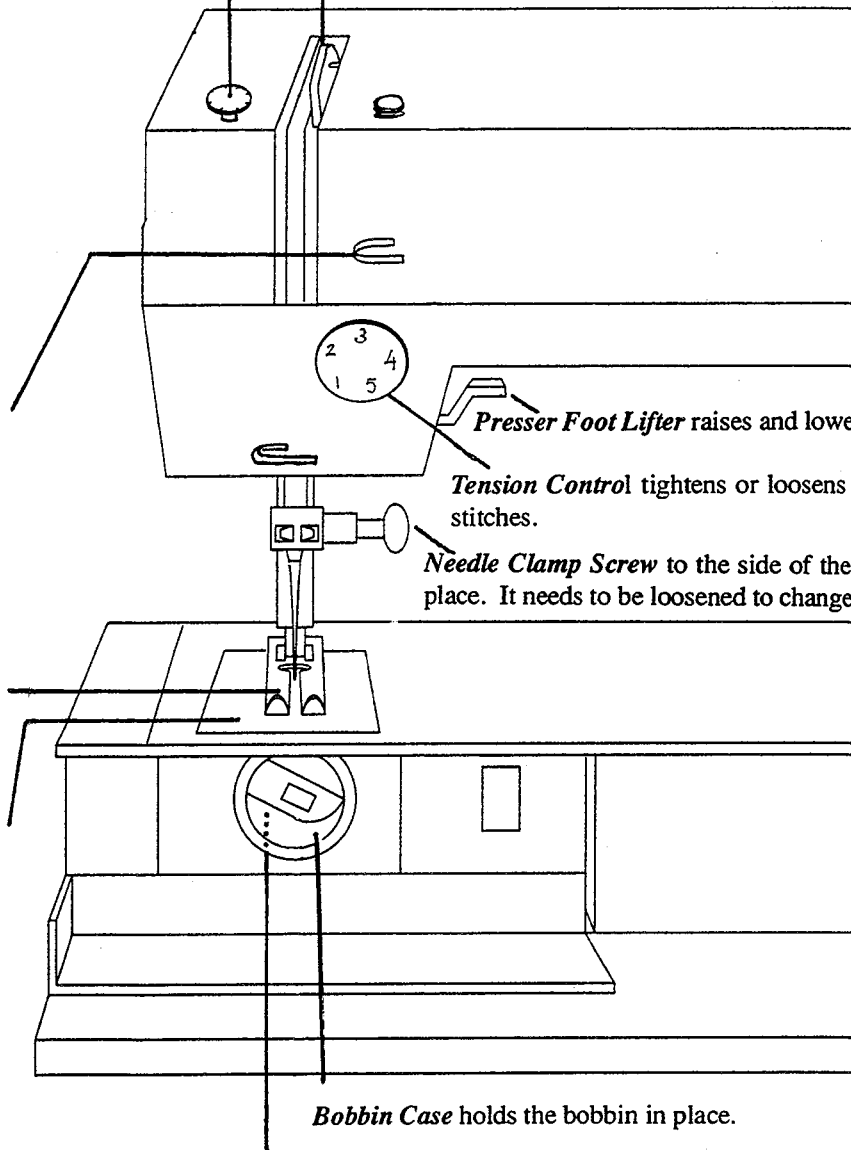
Presser Foot holds the fabric in place against the throat plate. You may need to change the presser foot for certain types of sewing. Your machine may have different feet for straight stitching, zigzag stitching, decorative stitching and sewing a zipper.

Throat Plate is a metal plate under the presser foot. The threaded needle passes through a hole in the throat plate to pick up the bobbin thread.

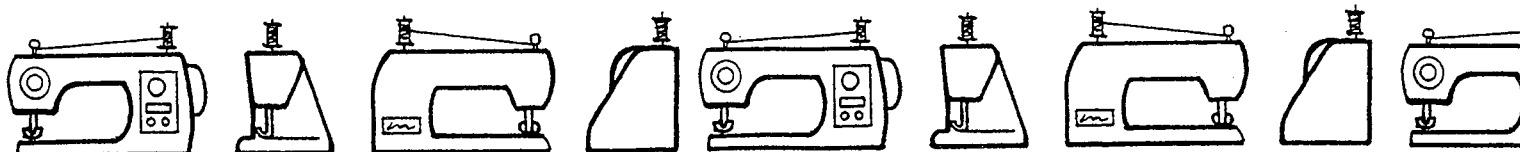
Feed Dogs are the metal teeth under the presser foot. They move the fabric along as you stitch it.

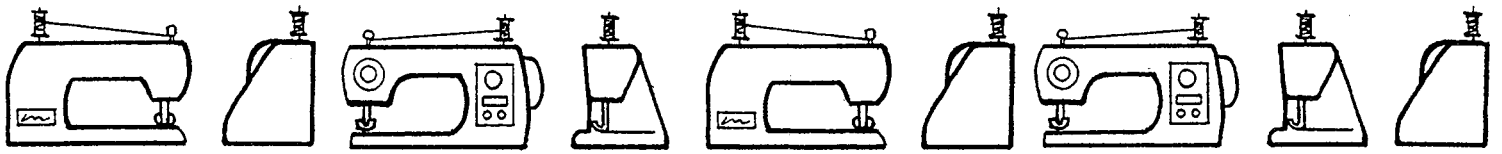
Pressure Control sets up the amount of force on the pressure control for different weights of fabric.

Thread Take-up moves up and down with the needle to the highest point whenever you begin stitching.



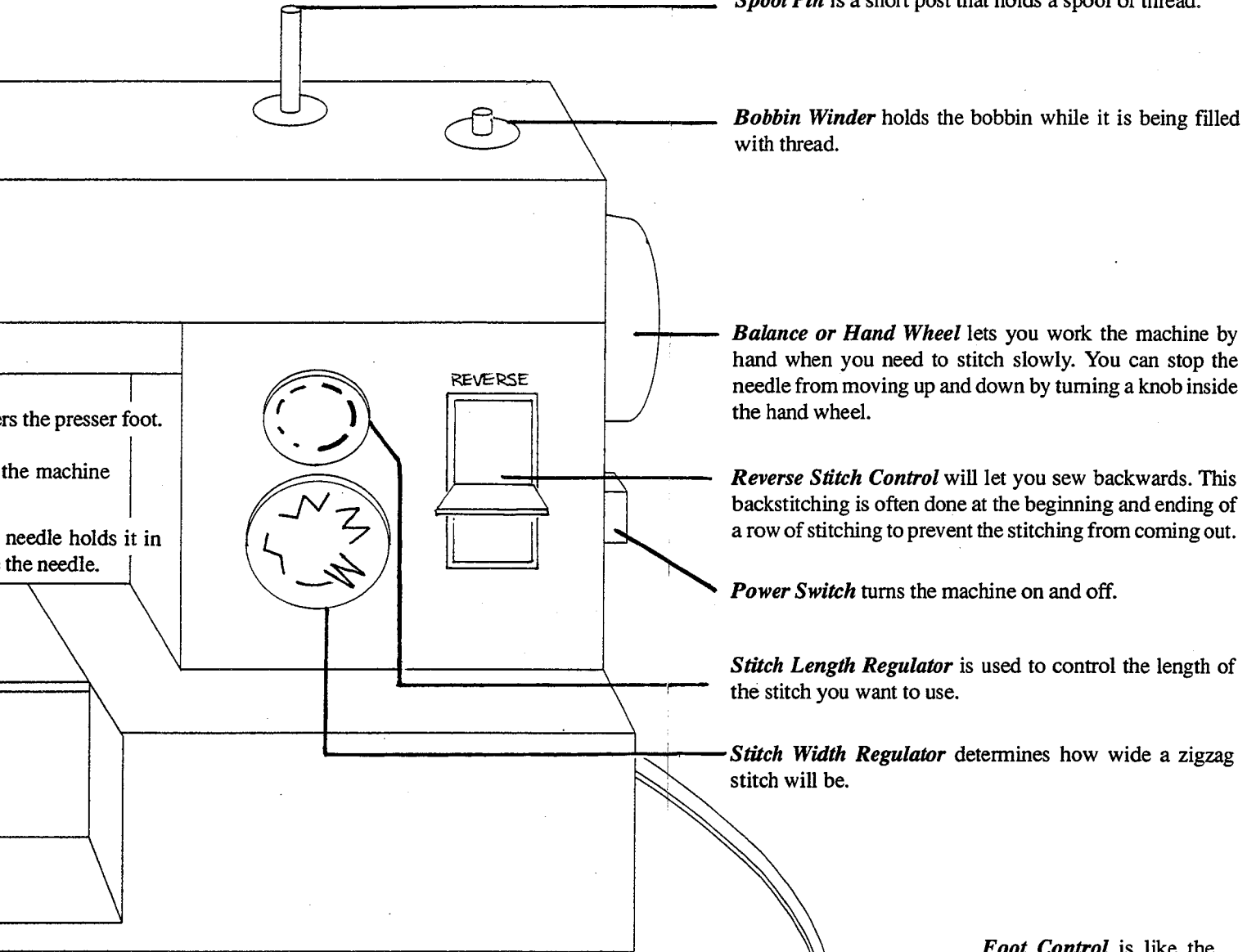
Bobbin is a small metal or plastic spool you fill with thread. The bobbin sits under the throat plate and holds the lower thread.





presser foot you will need to hold your fabric in place. You adjust the

needle, keeping the thread tight. This lever should be at its



Spool Pin is a short post that holds a spool of thread.

Bobbin Winder holds the bobbin while it is being filled with thread.

Balance or Hand Wheel lets you work the machine by hand when you need to stitch slowly. You can stop the needle from moving up and down by turning a knob inside the hand wheel.

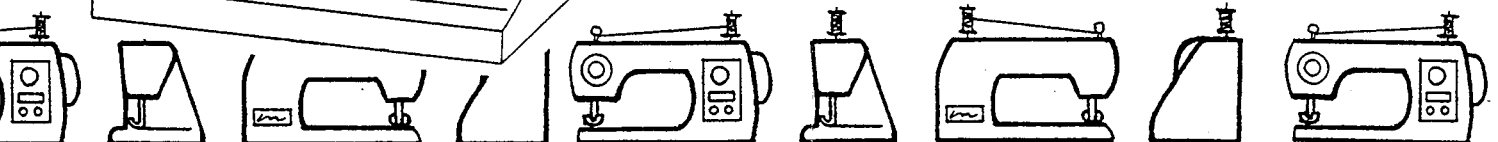
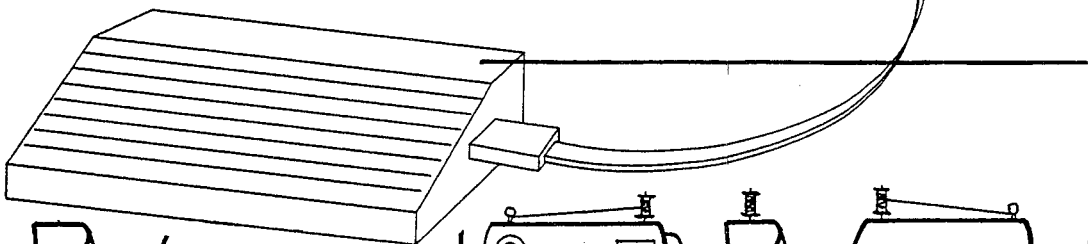
Reverse Stitch Control will let you sew backwards. This backstitching is often done at the beginning and ending of a row of stitching to prevent the stitching from coming out.

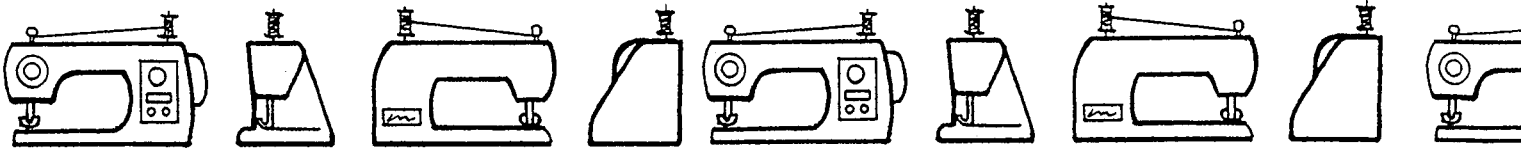
Power Switch turns the machine on and off.

Stitch Length Regulator is used to control the length of the stitch you want to use.

Stitch Width Regulator determines how wide a zigzag stitch will be.

Foot Control is like the gas pedal in a car: it controls how fast or slow the machine sews. Some machines may have knee controls as well as or instead of foot controls.

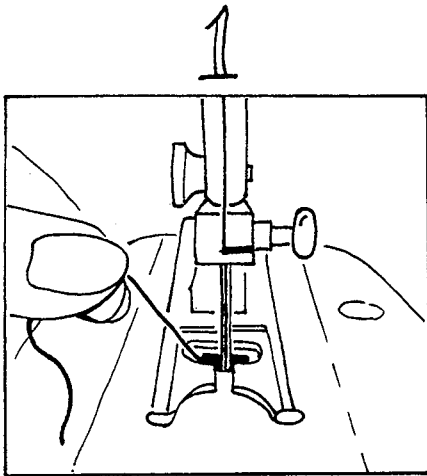




Fill the bobbin

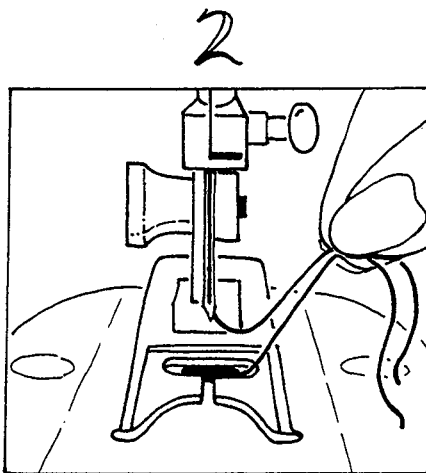
This is a general guideline. Be sure to check the instruction book for directions on filling a bobbin for your machine.

1. Put a spool of thread on the spool pin and pass your thread through the top guide.
2. Put the thread through the hole in the bobbin and wind it around the bobbin a few times. Place the bobbin on the bobbin winder.
3. Loosen the hand wheel to stop the needle from moving and run the machine until the bobbin is full. Cut the thread and tighten the hand wheel.



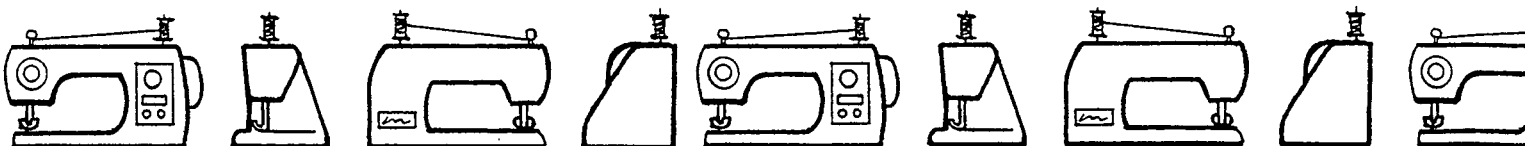
Raise the bobbin thread

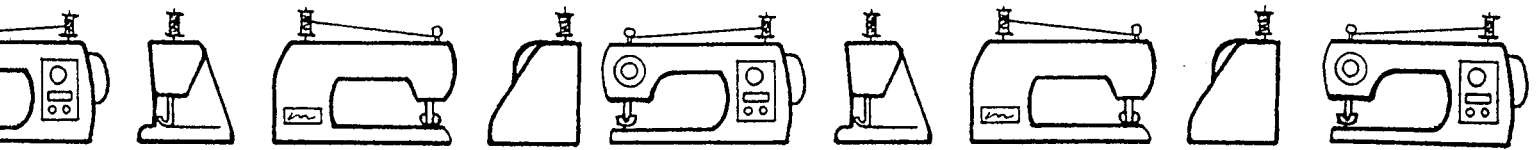
1. After you have threaded your machine, hold the needle thread in your left hand and slowly turn the handwheel with your right. The needle will go down through the throat plate and all the way back up again, picking up the bobbin thread.
2. Gently pull both threads to the side and push them under the presser foot, leaving ends about 10cm long.



How stitches are formed

1. Needle goes through the fabric, taking the upper thread into the bobbin area.
2. As the needle starts to go up again, the thread is caught by the shuttle hook of the bobbin assembly.
3. The shuttle hook carries the thread loop around and under the bobbin case.
4. The loop of thread slides off the shuttle hook and goes around the bobbin thread.
5. Both the upper thread and the bobbin thread are pulled up and set into the fabric.





Needles

Sewing machine needles come in different sizes, from size 9 the finest to 18 the thickest. (Sizes 70-110 in metric.) You have to match the weight of your fabric with the size of your needle and the lighter the fabric, the finer the needle you should use.

There are also speciality needles. You use a ballpoint needle for sewing knits and a special, heavy-duty needle for sewing leather. Twin and triple needles are used for decorative stitching.

To change the needle on your machine, loosen the needle clamp screw and remove the old needle. Push the new needle, with the flat side of the needle facing away from you, upwards as far as it will go. Tighten the needle clamp screw.

It's a good idea to put in a new needle each time you begin a new project. Your stitching will look better and there will be less chance of snagging your fabric or having skipped stitches.

Cleaning and oiling

Your sewing machine is a finely tooled piece of equipment and should be cleaned and oiled regularly. But some manufacturers ask that oiling only be done by trained service people.

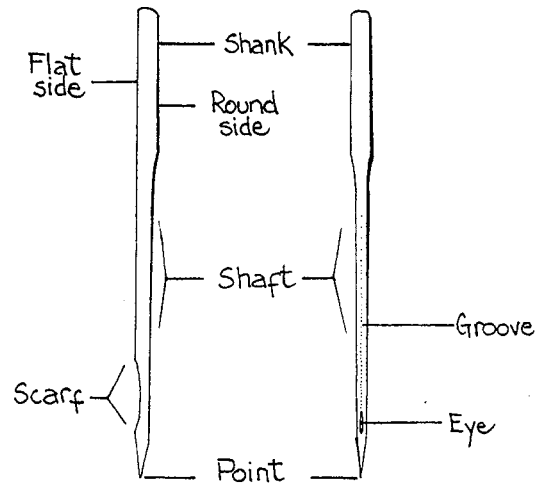
Bits of fluff and thread collect under the needle plate and should be cleaned out. Open the bobbin compartment and use a small brush to clean it out. On some machines you can remove the cover plate to clean the feed dogs.

After about 30 hours of sewing, you should oil your machine. Use clear sewing machine oil only. Don't use too much oil because it can run off and stain your material. After oiling, sew several rows of stitching on a fabric scrap to remove any excess oil.

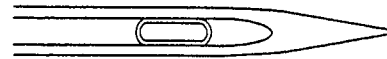
The spots you will have to oil are usually marked in some way (perhaps by a red dot) on your machine or shown in a diagram in your instruction book. Check under the top cover of the machine and under the throat plate for places that need to be oiled. If you aren't sure what to oil, call a sewing machine dealer for help.

Take your machine to a dealer for regular servicing — perhaps once a year depending on the amount of use.

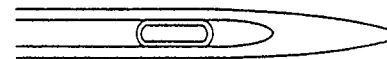
SIDE AND FRONT VIEWS OF A NEEDLE



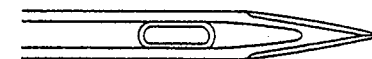
NEEDLE TYPES



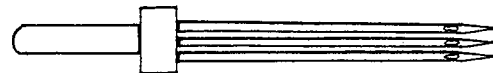
A sharp-point needle is used most often. It is recommended for all types of woven fabrics.



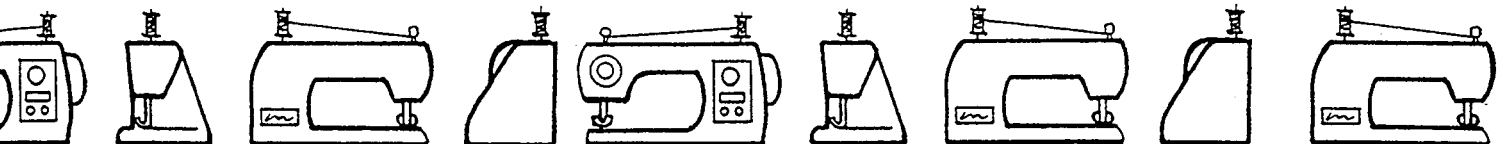
A ball-point needle has a rounded point that makes it ideal for sewing knits.



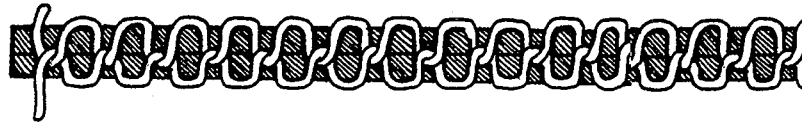
A wedge-point needle is designed for use on leathers and vinyls.



A twin or triple needle is used for decorative stitching. To use these your machine will need two or three spool pins to hold the thread.



A Stitch in Time



Whether your sewing machine is a basic straight-stitch variety, a computerized model, or something in between, you can sew a perfect stitch if you understand the basics of sewing and stitching.

Tension

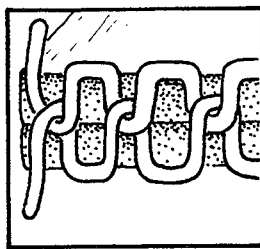
The first step is to find the right thread tension. Tension is the amount of "give" in the bobbin and needle threads. If the tension isn't set properly, seams may pucker, threads can break or seams may not hold together. Different weights of fabric, numbers of layers of fabric being sewn and types of stitching may need a different thread tension.

When the tension is correctly set the stitches will look the same on both sides of the fabric. If the needle thread lays on the fabric, the needle thread or upper tension is too tight. If the bobbin thread lays on the fabric, the needle thread or upper tension is too loose.

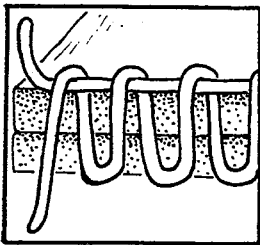
The needle thread tension can be adjusted by turning the tension control knob on your machine. Test the tension on scraps of fabric from your project before you begin to sew.

Here's an easy way to test your machine's tension.

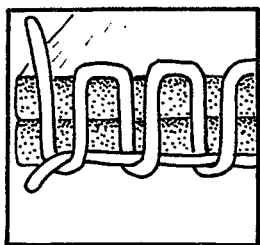
1. Take a 12.5cm (5 in.) square of the fabric you will be using and fold it along the bias.
2. Make a line of stitching about 13mm (1/2 in.) from the fold.
3. Pull the fabric with a snap until a thread breaks.
 - If both the bobbin and needle thread break, then the tension is fine.
 - If only the bobbin thread breaks, that means that the bobbin tension is tighter than the needle tension. Tighten the needle tension to match the bobbin tension. Turn the tension control to a higher number.
 - If only the needle thread breaks, that means that the needle tension is tighter than the bobbin tension. Loosen the needle tension to match the bobbin tension. Turn the tension control to a lower number.



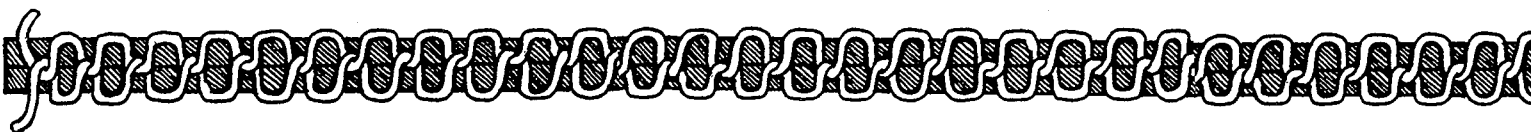
needle and bobbin thread
tension correct



needle thread
tension too tight



needle thread
tension too loose





The needle thread will be the stitching that is on top while you are sewing. The bobbin thread is on the underside. An easy way to tell the needle thread from the bobbin thread is to use two different colours of thread for the test.

Most tension problems can be solved by adjusting the needle tension to match the bobbin tension. Some machines have a screw that controls the bobbin tension but most manufacturers do not recommend adjusting the bobbin tension.

SEW IT RIGHT

Don't confuse tension problems with stitch length problems. If the fabric puckers, use a shorter stitch length. If the fabric "waves" out of shape, the stitches are too dense for the fabric. To correct, lengthen the stitch.

Some machines have a differential feed to correct these problems.

Stitch Length

You will want to adjust the length of stitches depending on what you want them to do and the thickness of the fabric. The higher the number selected, the shorter the stitch will be.

Here are the most commonly used stitch lengths.

Regulation - depending on whether your machine is marked in imperial measurements or metric, the regulation stitch will be 10 to 15 stitches per inch or 2.0mm to 2.5mm long. This is the length used for most general sewing, including stitching seams.



Basting - the longest stitch on your machine, usually 6 to 8 stitches per inch or 3.0mm to 4.0mm long. Since this is temporary stitching, the longer stitch is easier to remove.



Reinforcing - the shortest stitch length, usually 18 to 20 stitches per inch or 1.0mm to 1.5mm long.

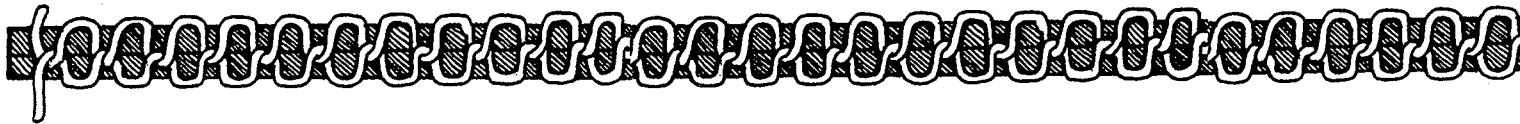


Easing or Gathering - 8 to 10 stitches per inch or 2.5 to 3mm long.



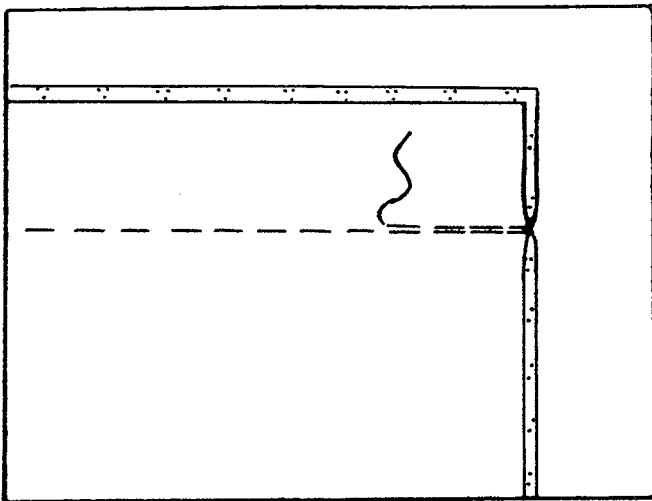
(These stitches are drawn at twice their actual size.)





How to Stitch a Plain Seam

1. Hold the needle and bobbin threads in one hand and put them under and then behind or to the side of the presser foot, which is in the raised position.
2. With right sides together, put the fabric under the presser foot so that the cut edge lines up with the correct marking on the throat plate. Most of the fabric should be to the left of the presser foot.
3. Turn the hand wheel to lower the needle into the fabric near the beginning of the seamline.
4. While still holding the threads, lower the presser foot. (See Step 7 for instructions on backstitching.) Begin stitching.
5. Continue holding the threads until you have stitched for about 2.5cm (1 in.) then let go.
6. Continue stitching to the end of the seam.
7. Thread ends should be secured at the beginning and the end of the seam by backstitching for 2-3 stitches or tying the threads. To backstitch insert the needle a little bit in from the start of the seamline, set the machine to stitch in reverse and backstitch to the edge of the fabric. Set the machine to stitch forward and complete the seam. At the end of the seam backstitch again by setting the machine to stitch in reverse.



To tie the threads, leave thread tails 10cm (4 in.) at the beginning and end of the seam. Bring both threads to the same side of the fabric, using a pin to pull one of the threads through. Tie them off and clip the threads.

8. Raise the presser foot and pull the fabric towards the back of the machine.

Cut the threads close to the fabric (unless tying threads), leaving 5-7.5cm (2-3 in.) of thread coming from the machine needle. Trim the thread ends at the beginning of the seam, close to the fabric.

9. Press the seam flat, then open and finish the seam allowances with the appropriate finish.



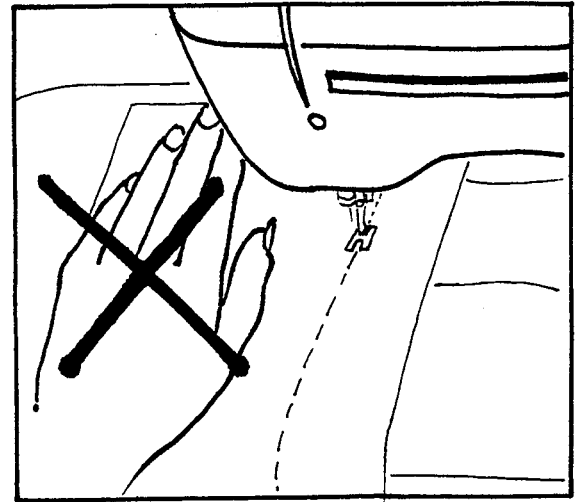
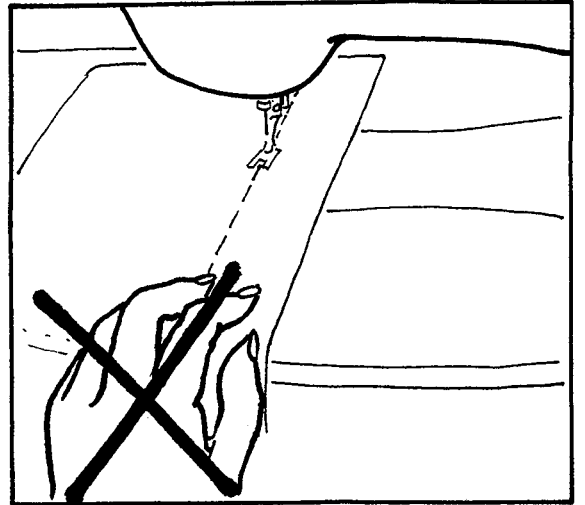
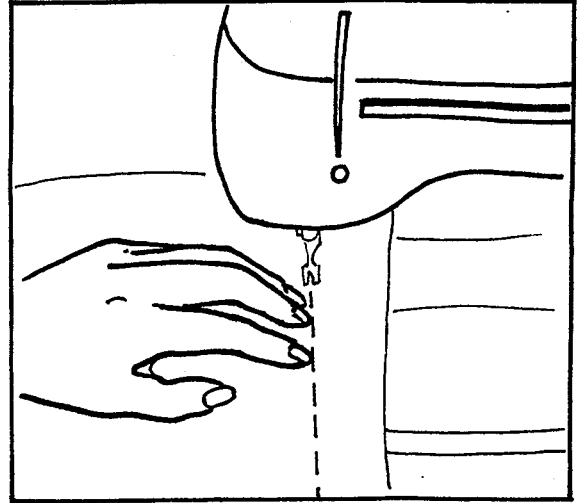
Guiding the fabric

Rest your left hand on the fabric to the side of the presser foot and the right hand to the front of the presser foot. Use both hands to gently guide the fabric through the machine as you stitch. Your hands will guide, but the feed dogs should make the fabric move. Don't push or pull the fabric with your hands. At the same time, keep your eye on the cut edge of the fabric, rather than on the needle. This will help you keep your stitching straight.

Keeping It On the Straight and Narrow

The easiest way to keep your stitching accurate is to line up the right edge of the fabric with the lines permanently marked on the throat plate of many sewing machines. These lines are placed 3mm (1/8 in.) apart.

If you don't have lines like this on your machine, you can make your own seam guide with tape. Lower your sewing machine needle by hand until it almost touches the throat plate. Using a ruler or tape measure, measure your seam allowance and mark with a piece of sticky tape on your sewing machine. The edge of the tape will act as a guide when you are sewing.



Seams Alright



Seams

Seams are the backbone of sewing but they are easy to learn. A seam is a line of stitching that joins two or more layers of fabric. Seams are stitched on the seamline. The seam allowance is the distance between the seamline and the cut edge. The standard seam allowance is usually 15mm (5/8 in.) wide.

Here are some techniques for sewing great seams.

Directional stitching: means to stitch the way the arrows on the pattern point, in the direction of the fabric grain. Directional stitching helps keep fabrics, especially knits and napped fabrics from stretching out of shape or curling.

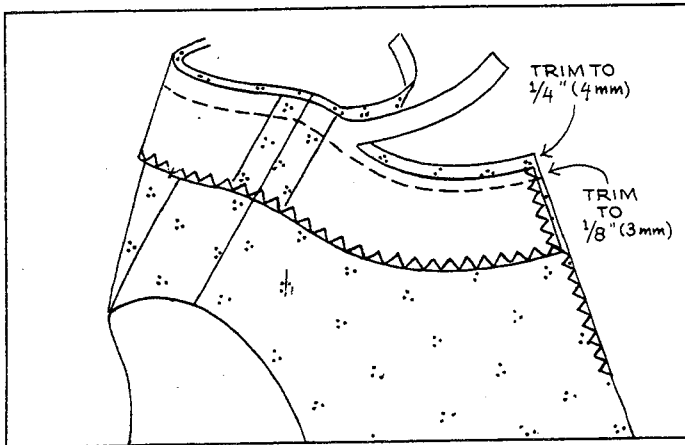
Intersecting seams: mean two seams are crossing one another. For example, when a side seam is crossed by a waist seam. To reduce bulk, you should trim the ends of the first seam allowance.

Trimming and Grading: are ways of reducing bulk along seams. Trimming means to cut away some of the seam allowance. Usually you trim a seam before you finish it (see "Seam Finishes" sheet).

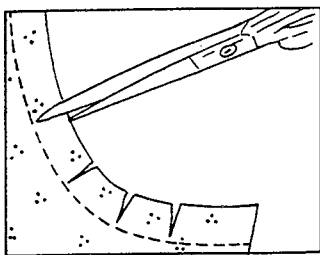
Grading is a special way of trimming. Trim each seam allowance to a different width so the layers won't create ridges on the outside of the garment. Grading is most often used on enclosed seams and on medium to heavy weight fabrics. Lightweight fabrics usually don't need grading. When grading, the seam allowance that will be closest to the inside of the garment is trimmed to 3mm (1/8 in.) and the seam allowance closest to the outside is trimmed to 6mm (1/4 in.). The wider seam allowance acts as a cushion for the narrower one.

Clipping and notching: are techniques used to make curved seams lie flat. On inside curves, make little clips, or snips, in the seam allowance just to, but not through, the stitching. On outward curves, cut wedge-shaped notches from the seam allowance to eliminate excess fullness when the seam is pressed open.

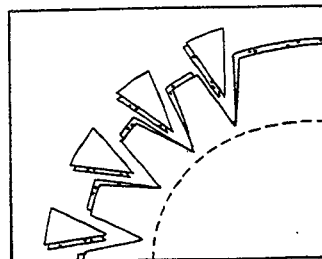
Gathered Seams: are used when one piece of fabric is much longer than the other. The longer piece is gathered to fit the shorter piece. When sewing always stitch with the gathered side up. Guide the fabric with your hands to prevent unwanted tucks or puckers.



Grading



Clipping



Notching





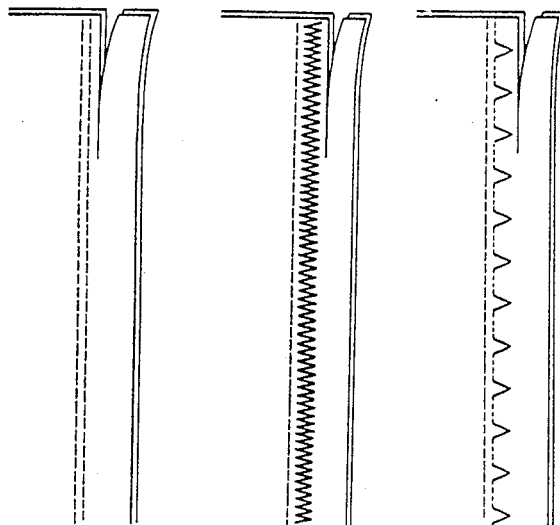
Eased Seams: are necessary when joining two pieces of fabric that aren't quite the same length. This can happen when joining a sleeve and armhole. It is similar to gathering but there isn't as much difference in the lengths so you can't see gathers or folds when the seam is finished. Stitch with the longest piece of fabric on top.

Bias seams: to join two bias edges, hold the fabric in front and in back of the presser foot and stretch it gently as you stitch. Although this allows the seam to "give" as you stitch, it will also relax into a smooth seam when you are finished.

Double-stitched seam: this is a combination seam and edge finish that makes a narrow seam that is especially good on sheers and knits. To prevent the fabric from ravelling, it's stitched twice.

1. stitch a plain seam
2. stitch again, 3mm (1/8 in.) away, towards the seam allowance, using a straight or zigzag stitch.
3. trim close to the second row of stitching.

Corners: to strengthen seams at corners, shorten the stitch length for about 25mm (1 in.) on either side of the corner. This reinforcement stitching helps prevent the corner from fraying after it is trimmed and turned right side out.

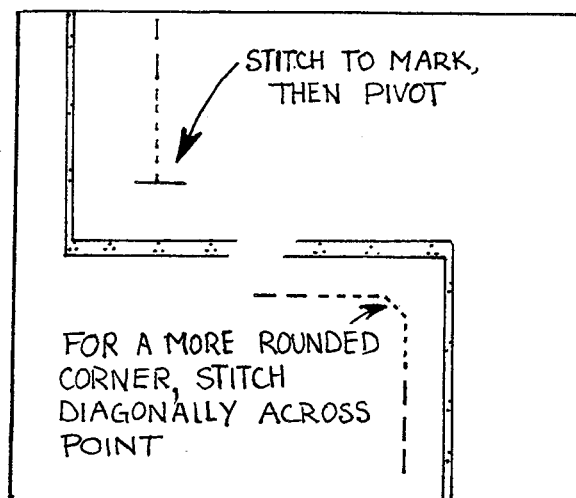


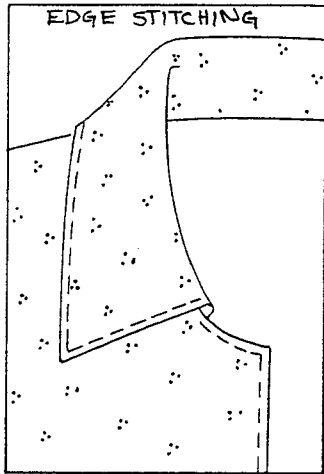
PERFECT CORNERS

The trick to perfect corners is knowing just where to pivot the fabric. The easiest way to do this is to make a mark at the point the two seamlines meet. Stop the machine within a few stitches of this mark. Use the hand wheel to form the next few stitches until the needle is exactly at the mark.

With the needle still in the fabric, raise the presser foot. Pivot the fabric to bring it into the correct position for stitching the seam on the second side of the corner, lower the presser foot and continue stitching. (Take 1-2 stitches diagonally across the point for a more rounded corner.)

If your fabric frays a lot, seal the corner with a dot of liquid seam sealant after you've trimmed it and before you turn it.



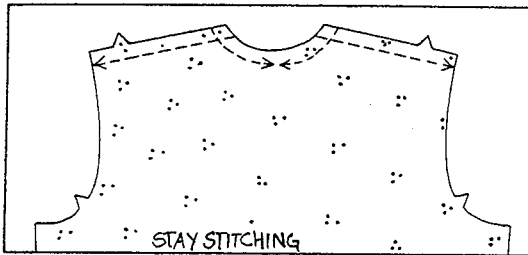


Stretch knit seams: need to be supple enough to “give” with the fabric. You can double stitch the seams with straight stitches or zigzag stitches, one of the stretch stitches built into many conventional machines or you can use a serger.

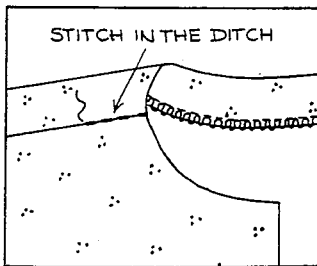
Stitching Terms

Edgestitching is an extra row of regulation-length stitches that is visible on the outside of the garment. It’s placed about 3mm (1/8 in.) away from the edge of a seamline, a fold line or a finished edge.

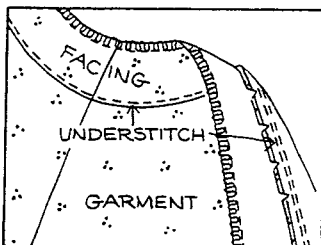
Reinforcement stitching strengthens the stitching in areas that will be closely trimmed, such as corners or along deep curves that will be clipped or notched at frequent intervals. To reinforce these areas you shorten your stitch length for about 2.5cm (1 in.) on either side of the area to be reinforced.



Staystitching stops curved or bias edges from stretching out of shape as they are handled or sewn. It should be the very first line of stitching you do on a garment. Staystitching is done 1.3cm (1/2 in.) from the edge of the fabric and in the same direction as the fabric grain. Clip, if needed, up to the stitching line.

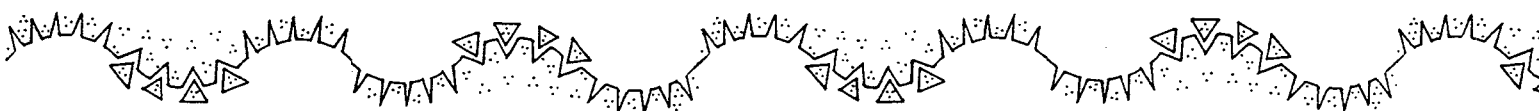


Stitch-in-the-ditch is a quick way to hold layers of fabric in place at the seams, especially along necklines, armhole or waistband facings and fold-up cuffs. Stitch on the outside of the garment in the groove formed by the seam. Catch all the layers. Sew by hand for shoulder pads on the shoulder seam.



Topstitching is usually added as decoration, although it can also be used to attach patch pockets and to help keep seam allowances flat on hard-to-press fabrics. Use a matching or contrasting thread, depending on how good your topstitching technique is and how noticeable you want the stitching to be. A slightly larger stitch than regulation size is usually used.

Understitching prevents an inside layer of fabric, usually a facing, from rolling to the outside of the garment. It is done after the seam allowances are trimmed, graded and clipped or notched. To understitch, press the seam allowances toward the facing and, on the right side of the garment, stitch 3mm (1/8 in.) from the seamline, through the facing and seam allowances only. It doesn’t show from the right side of the garment.



Basting is a way to temporarily join layers of fabric until they are permanently stitched together. You can baste with pins, paper clips, fusible web, by machine or by hand or using double-faced basting tape or a glue stick.

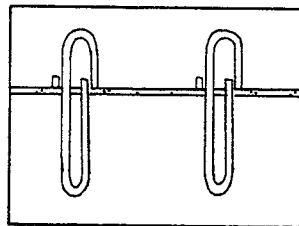
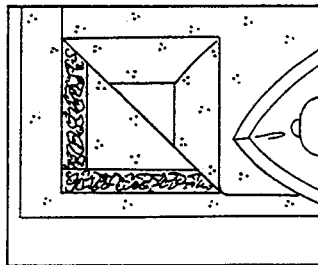
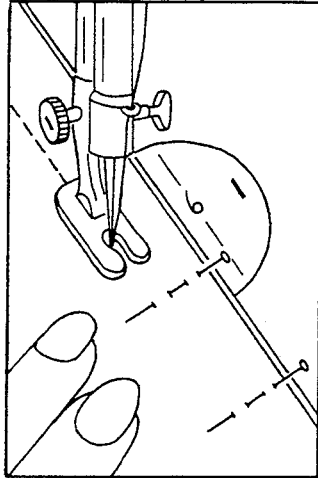
Basting Methods

Pins are the most common basting method. The heads should be towards the cut edge of the fabric. It's not a good idea to sew over the pins as you could damage your machine or break a needle.

Machine basting is a fast way to put the garment together to check fit. Don't worry about securing the threads at the ends of seams. On a sewing machine your basting stitch is your longest stitch.

You can use paper clips to hold bulky fabrics like fake fur and they don't leave holes in fabrics like leather, suede and vinyl. Never sew over top of a paper clip.

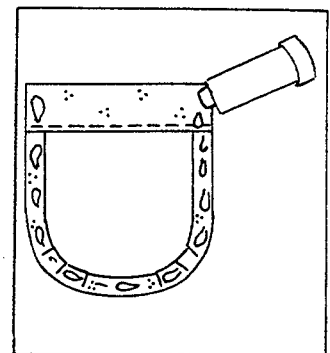
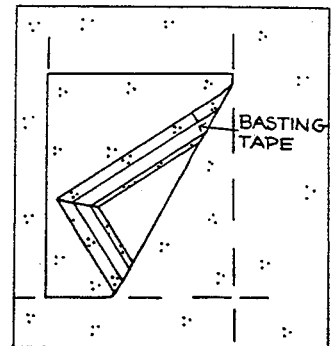
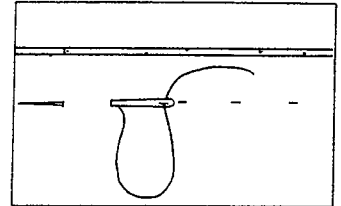
Fuse basting is fast and easy. Cut a strip of fusible web the desired length and place between the two layers of fabric to fuse baste in place. Follow manufacturers' instructions regarding placement, heat and steam.



Hand basting is used most often in detail areas like collars, where machine basting is too difficult and pin basting is not accurate enough.

Double-faced basting tape is great for matching plaids or strips at the seamline. It's also useful when putting in zippers or patch pockets. Don't stitch through the tape because it may gum up your needle.

Fabric glue can be used instead of basting tape and you can sew right through it, as long as you have allowed it to dry for a few minutes after applying it. Fabric glue comes as a stick or liquid and is nontoxic, odorless and washes out. Use it to position lace and other decorative trim before you sew or for attaching underlinings.



Seam Finishes

Finishing Plain Seams

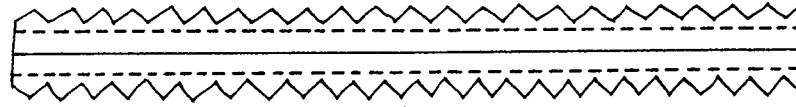
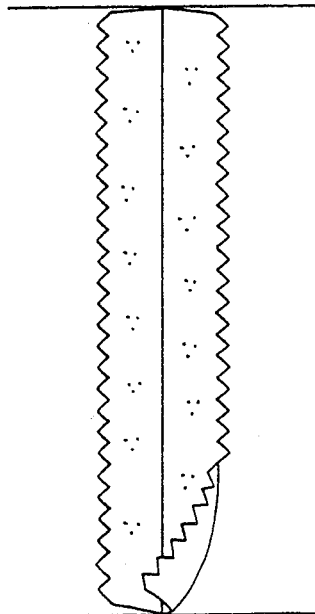
A seam finish is a way of stopping the seam edge from fraying and making it look neater.

There are many different ways of finishing a seam. Which you choose depends on:

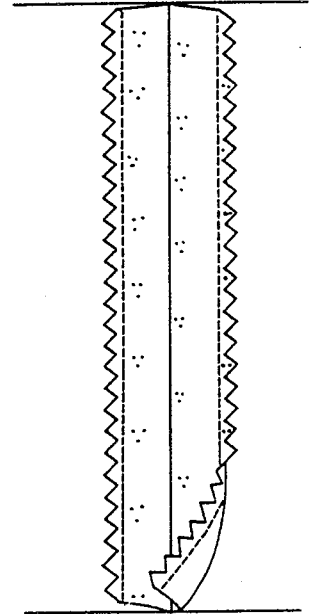
- whether the material frays a little, a lot or not at all;
- if you will be wearing this garment a lot and need the durability of a finished seam; and
- whether or not the seams will be seen.

Plain straight seams are finished after they have been pressed open. Plain curved or cornered seams are finished immediately after stitching, clipped or notched then pressed open.

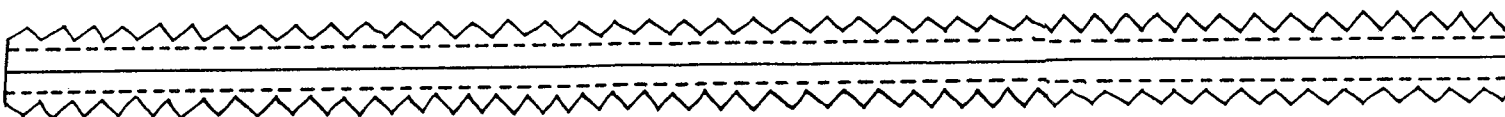
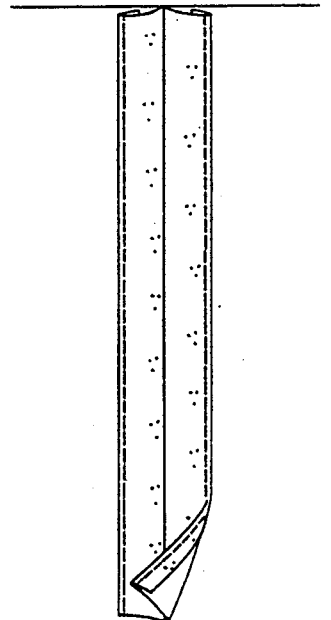
Pinked: Cut along the edge of the seam allowance with pinking shears. Pinking is attractive but will not prevent fraying by itself.

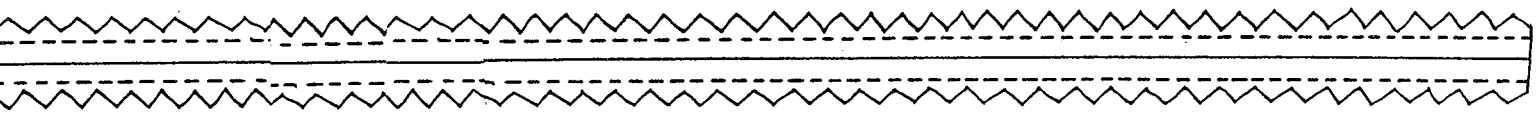


Stitched and pinked: Using a short stitch, stitch 6mm (1/4 in.) from the edge of the seam allowance then pink the edge.

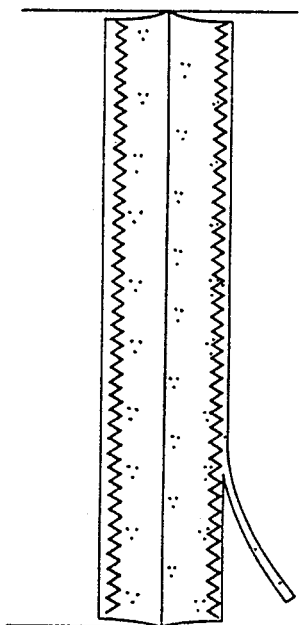


Turned and stitched (clean finished): Turn under the edge of the seam allowance 3mm (1/8 in.) or 6mm (1/4 in.) if fabric frays a lot. Press. Stitch along the edge of the fold. This is a neat, tailored finish for lightweight to medium-weight fabrics and is suitable for an unlined jacket.

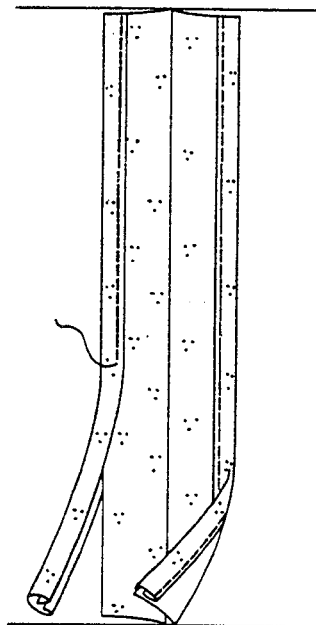




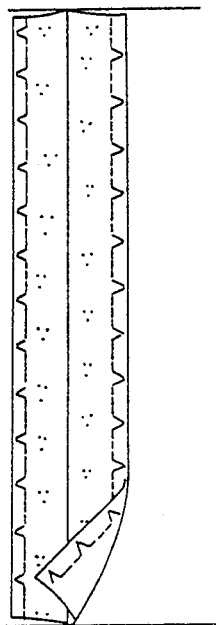
Zigzagged: Set stitch for medium width and short length (about 1.5mm). Then stitch near but not on the edge of the seam allowance. Trim close to stitching. This is one of the quickest and most effective ways to finish a fabric that frays.



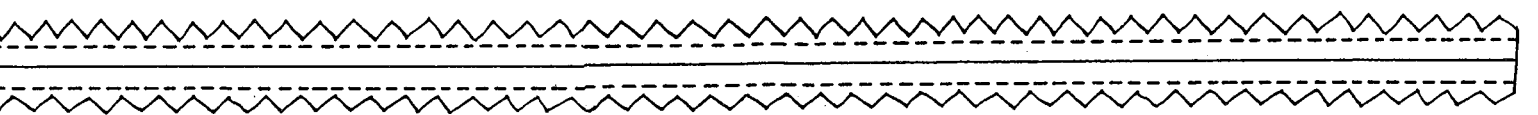
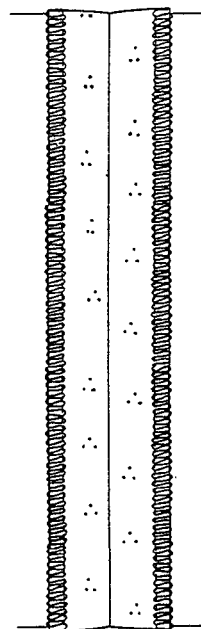
Bias bound or tricot bound: Trim notches from seam edge. Wrap double-fold bias tape or a sheer, lightweight tricot seam binding such as Seams Great® or Seams Saver® around it, with the wider side of the tape on the bottom. Stitch close to the edge of the top fold, catching the bottom fold as you go. Bias binding is especially good for finishing seams in an unlined jacket or coat.



Machine overedged: Done with overedge or blindstitch setting (a special stitch pattern of 4-6 straight stitches and 1 zigzag). The point of the zigzag should fall on the edge of the fabric.



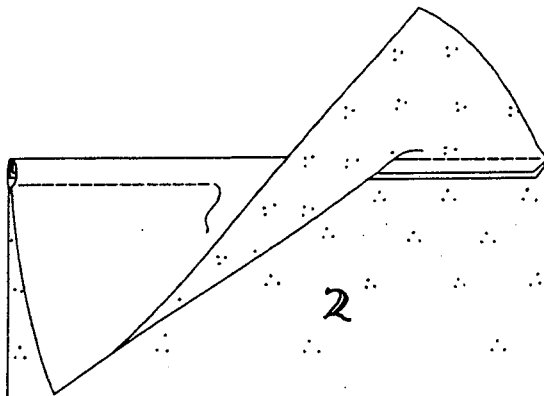
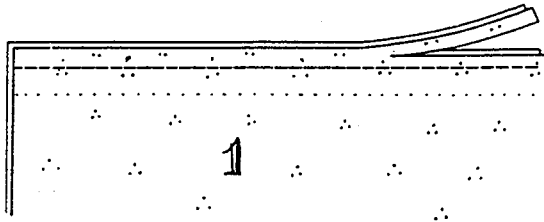
Serge: Use a 3 or 3/4-thread serged overlock stitch on each seam edge.



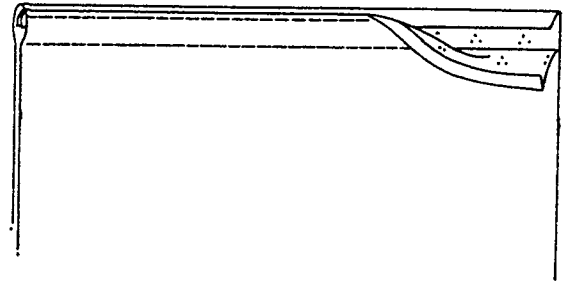
Self-enclosed Seams

Self-enclosed seams are those in which all seam allowances are enclosed within the finished seam. They are good for visible seams in sheer fabrics and in unlined jackets. They are also good for sports or work clothes. Proper trimming and pressing are important if you want the seams to be sharp and flat rather than lumpy and uneven.

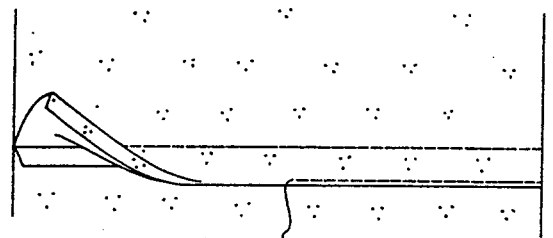
The French seam: is stitched twice, once from the right side and once from the wrong side. It is the classic seam for sheers and looks best if the finished width is 6mm (1/4 in) or less. With the wrong sides of the fabric together, stitch 10mm (3/8 in.) from the edge. Trim the seam allowances to 3mm (1/8 in.) Press seam open. Fold right sides together, with stitched line exactly on the edge of the fold; press again. Stitch on the seamline, which is now 6mm (1/4 in.) from the fold. Press seam flat and then to one side.



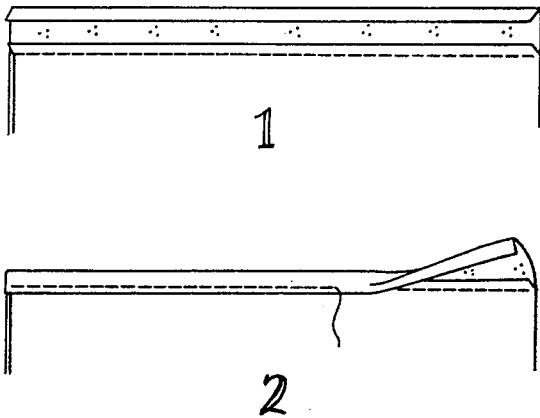
The mock French seam: can be used in place of the French seam, especially on curves, where a French seam is difficult to do. With the right sides of the fabric together, stitch on the seamline. Trim seam allowances to 15mm (5/8 in.). Turn in the seam edges 6mm (1/4 in.) and press, matching folds along the edge. Stitch these folded edges together. Press seam flat and then to one side.



The flat-felled seam: is a very sturdy seam and is often used for sports clothing and children's wear. This seam is stitched on the right side of the fabric and can be very decorative. With wrong sides of the fabric together, stitch on the seamline. Press seam open, then to one side. Trim the inner seam allowance to 3mm (1/8 in.). Press under the edge of the outer seam allowance 6 mm (1/4 in.). Stitch this folded edge to the garment. Be careful to press like seams in the same direction (e.g. both shoulder seams to the front).



The self bound seam: works best on lightweight fabrics that do not fray easily. Stitch a plain seam. Trim one seam allowance to 3mm (1/8 in.). Turn under the edge of the other seam allowance 3mm and press. Turn and press again, bringing the folded edge to the seamline so that the trimmed edge is now enclosed. Stitch close to the fold, as near as possible to the first stitching.



Seams in Interfacing

Edge to edge seams: are one way of removing bulk from interfacing seams. Trim off seam allowances, bring two edges together and pin or tack them to an underlay of seam binding or twill tape cut slightly longer than seams. With a short stitch length, stitch either 3mm (1/8 in.) from each edge with straight stitches or through centre of seam with wide zigzag. For zigzag method, edges should be aligned with centre of presser foot so that stitches catch each side equally.

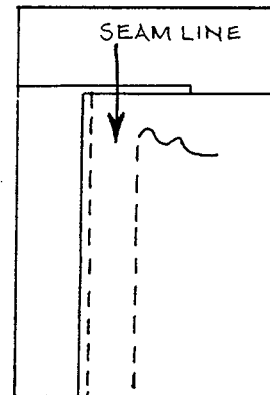
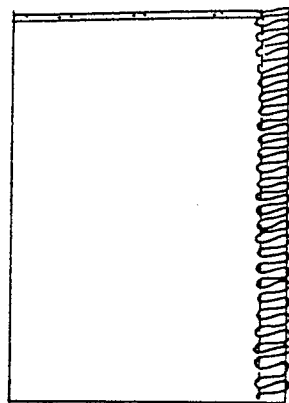
Lapped seams: are also used to eliminate bulk, especially on interfacing and interlining. Mark seamlines. Lap one edge over the other with seamlines meeting in the centre. Place a row of straight stitching on either side of seamline or stitch with wide zigzag through centre. Trim both seam allowances close to stitching.

Serged Seams

A serger can be used on knit or woven fabrics. A serged seam is stitched, trimmed and finished in one step. Serged seams aren't suitable in all cases.

Use serged seams:

- for most knit fabrics
- for loose fitting garments where seams don't need to be pressed open or lie flat
- when you are sure the seams won't need any altering
- when fabric is not too bulky
- when you don't need a wide seam allowance for a zipper or pocket.



Pressing Pointers



What Is Pressing?

Pressing is not the same as ironing. When you press something you gently lower the iron on to the area to be pressed and then lift it off again. Do not slide the iron back and forth across the fabric. It may pull the fabric out of shape.

Your iron has a range of temperatures. Select the temperature that is best for the fabric you are working with. Test the iron on a fabric scrap before trying it on your sewing project.

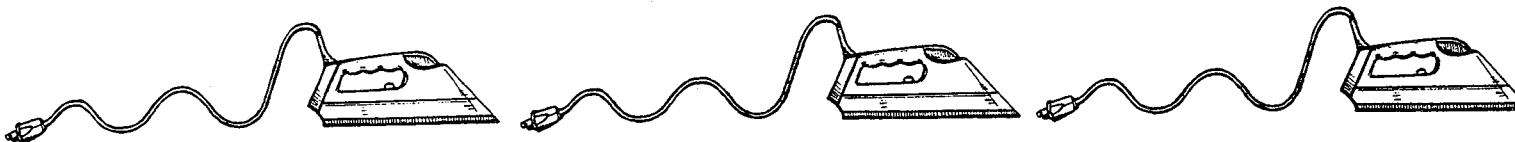
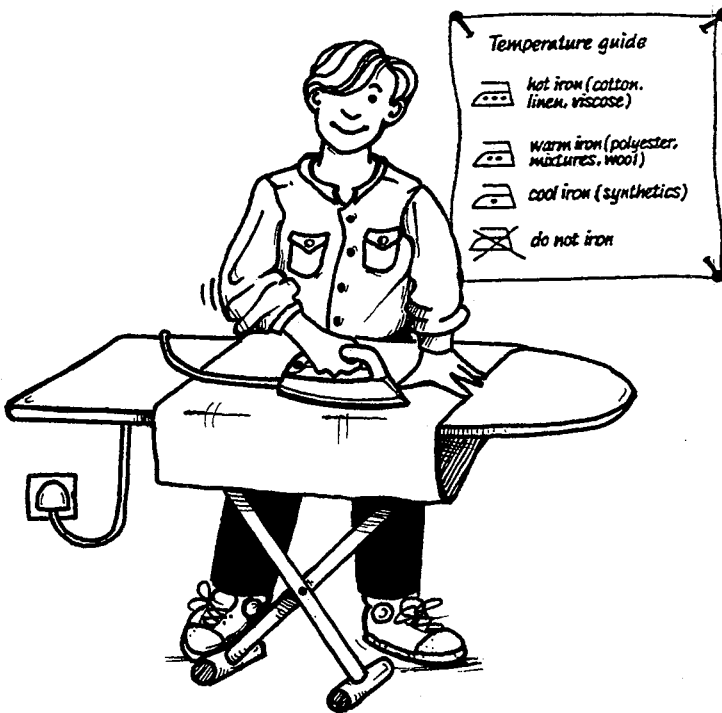
There are three basic steps for correct pressing.

1. On the wrong side, press flat along the stitching line to blend the stitches.
2. Press the seam allowances open or to one side, depending on what the pattern instructions say. Use the tip of the iron to open up seams and to get into corners.
3. Press the seam or detail area from the right side, protecting the fabric with a press cloth or attach a sole plate to the face of the iron.

Pressing is a very important part of sewing. Each piece of stitching should be pressed right away. This will give you a very professional looking outfit when you are done.

As you become more familiar with sewing you can organize your work to make efficient use of your pressing time. Sew as far as you can on each section of the garment or craft and then press everything that needs it. This will cut down on the number of trips to the ironing board.

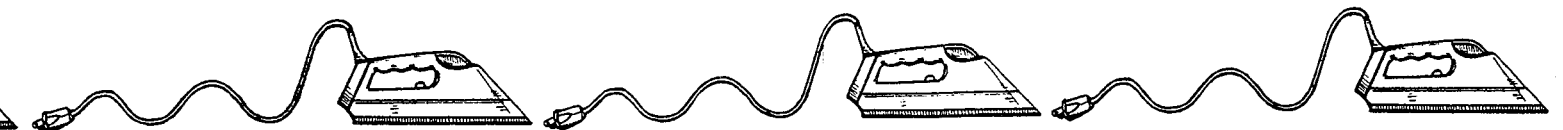
Some delicate fabrics or those with a thick pile such as velvet or fake furs, may need to be finger-pressed. To do this, hold the iron above the fabric and apply steam. Remove the iron and use your fingers rather than the iron to do the pressing.





PRESS-AS-YOU-SEW GUIDE					
FIBER	PRESSURE	HEAT	MOISTURE	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS	
Acetate	Light	Very low	Dry iron	Use press cloth on right side.	
Acrylic		Moderate			
Cotton	Light to moderate	Moderate to high	Dry or steam iron	Press with steam iron. For more moisture, dampen fabric and press with dry iron. To avoid shine on dark colors, press from wrong side or use press cloth on right side.	
Linen	Light to heavy	High			
Nylon	Light	Low to moderate			Little or no ironing required.
Polyester	Moderate				May need press cloth on right side; test first.
Rayon	Light				Use press cloth to prevent shine and water spots.
Silk					Press light to medium weights with dry iron. For heavyweights, use steam iron and dry press cloth to avoid water spots.
Wool	Light to moderate	Moderate			Press with steam iron. For more moisture, press with dry iron and slightly dampened press cloth. Use press cloth on right side to prevent shine. Press crepe with dry iron.
Blends	Press according to requirements of the more delicate fiber.				
Texture					
Crepe	Light	Low to moderate	Dry iron	Use press cloth on right side.	
Deep Pile	Finger-press	Moderate	Steam iron	See finger pressing on the left under "What Is Pressing."	
Glossy	Light	Low	Dry iron	Same as Crepe.	
Nap, Pile	Light or finger-press	Low to moderate	Dry or steam iron	Press fabric over needleboard, using light pressure; or finger-press.	

Simplicity's Simply The Best Sewing Book



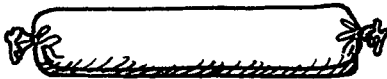
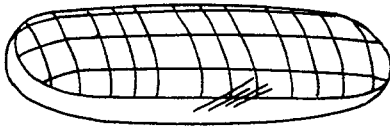
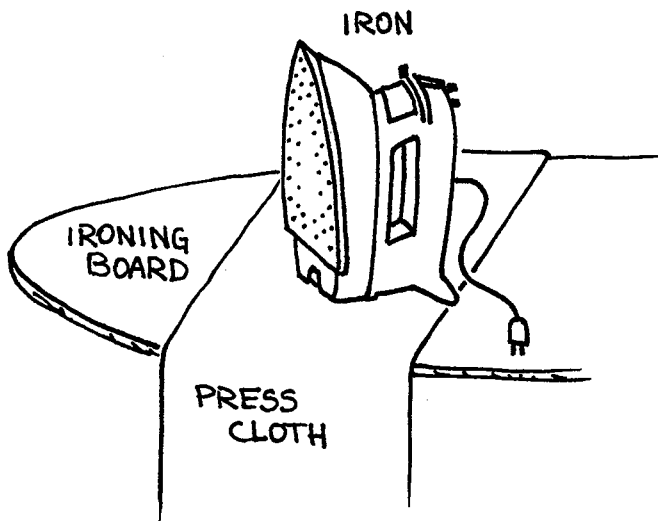


Pressing Equipment

There are many different types of pressing equipment available. Some of them provide a shaped pressing surface that is similar to the curves of the body. Others will allow you to press small detail areas without creasing the rest of the garment. Some of these can be quite expensive to purchase so just start with the basics.

The essential pieces of equipment you need for proper pressing are:

- Iron - one that is both steam and dry
- Ironing board - whatever size you can get
- Press cloth - fancy or homemade
- Seam roll - bought or handmade, either will do.



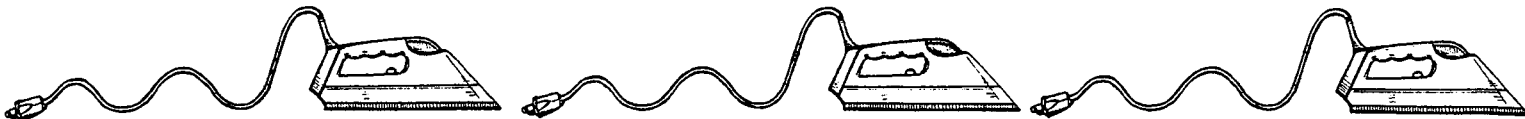
Iron - Your iron should be able to be used as either a steam iron or a dry iron. Empty the water when you are finished for the day. If you don't have a steam iron, place a damp cloth between the fabric and the iron.

Ironing Board - Boards can be full size or tabletop. The height of the full size boards can be adjusted. Cover your ironing board with a padded cloth which you can buy or make by folding an old flannelette sheet and pinning it.

Press Cloth - You can use a lightweight press cloth damp or dry. When placed between the iron and your fabric, it prevents damaging the fabric surface. If you don't have an official press cloth, use a piece of the fabric you are sewing with, a piece of muslin or light cotton or a handkerchief.

Seam Roll - This is used for pressing open seams on long cylindrical sections of the garment, like sleeves and pant legs. The curved surface of the roll stops the imprint of the seam edges from showing on the right side of the fabric.

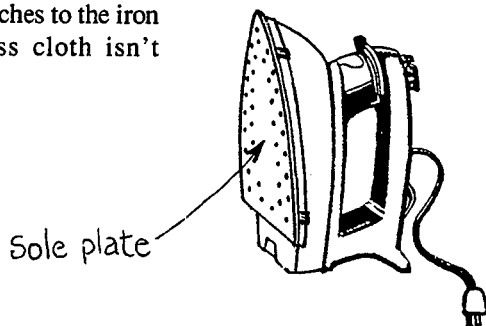
You can buy one or make your own by tightly rolling a newspaper in muslin and using elastic bands to hold the tube together.



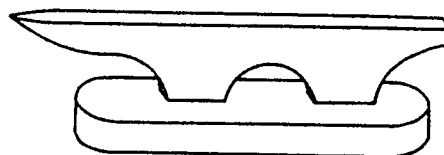
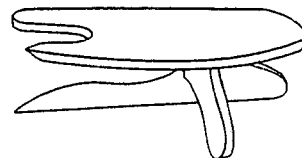


As your sewing skills advance, consider adding some of these items to your sewing room (or corner).

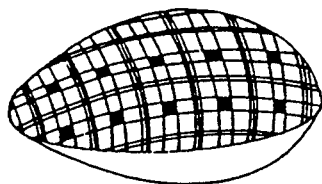
Sole Plate - attaches to the iron face so a press cloth isn't needed.



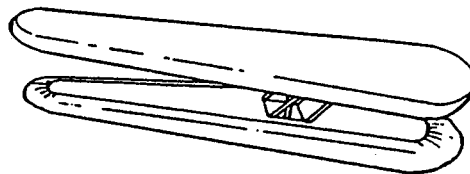
Presser Point - Also known as a tailor's board, this multi-edged surface makes it easy to press seams open on small detail areas such as collars, cuffs and facings.



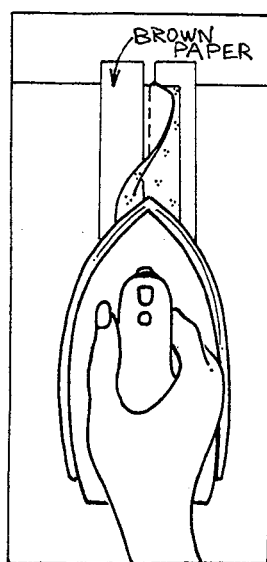
Pressing Ham - Using a pressing ham, also called a tailor's ham, to press darts or curved seams helps keep their shape. Hams are often made of wool fabric on one side, cotton on the other. You might also use a ham holder. It acts as an extra hand while placing pieces on the ham.



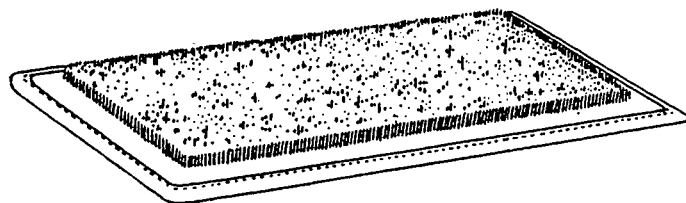
Sleeve Board - This is kind of like a mini ironing board. It makes it easy to press narrow garment sections that won't fit over the regular ironing board. A sleeve board will let you press sleeves or pant legs without putting creases in where they aren't needed.



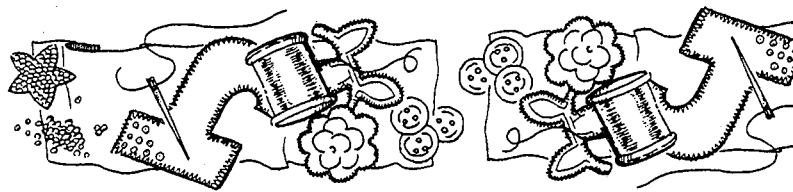
Paper Strips - Cut strips of heavy paper. Slip them between the seam allowances and the garment as the seams are pressed so imprints won't show on the right side of the garment. This is an excellent way to press pleats to reduce marks left by the iron.



Needle Board - If you sew a lot with napped fabrics like velvet, velveteen or corduroy a needle board would be a good buy. The fabric is placed right side down on the needles. The short, dense needles keep the pile from being flattened during pressing. You can also use a fluffy terry cloth towel to provide a cushioned surface when ironing napped fabric.



Essential Extras



There are a lot of great products to help you create a truly wonderful garment. And, with a little practice, they are all so easy to use.

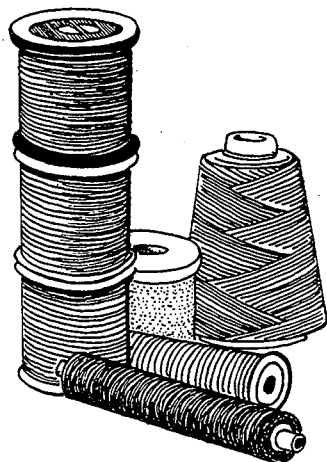
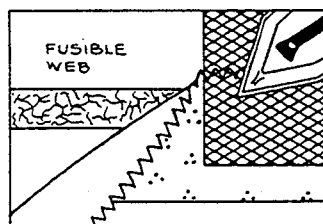
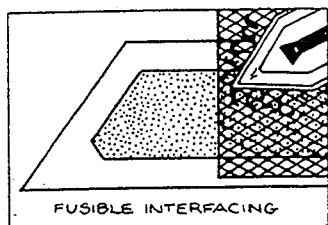
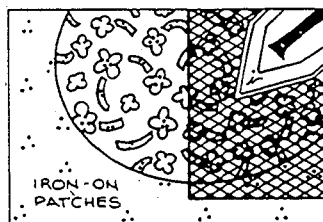
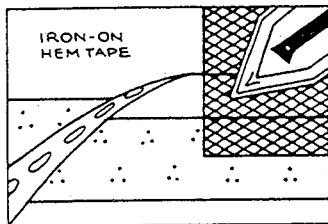
Sewing with Your Iron

There's a whole range of iron-ons and fusibles to help you with hems, interfacing and tailoring. Each kind comes with easy instructions. Be sure to follow them closely. If the adhesive touches the surface of the iron it will melt and stick to it. Always use a press cloth with fusible and iron on products. Preshrink interfacing and some tapes by immersing in hot water and air drying.

- An iron-on is applied using heat and pressure — no steam. Mending tape, patches and some hem tapes are iron-on products, as well as embroidered appliques and sequined trim.
- Fusibles are applied using heat, steam and pressure. Fusible products include interfacings and fusible web.

Fusible interfacing supports, shapes and reinforces your fabric.

Fusible web is an adhesive web that "glues" two layers of fabric together when it is "melted" by the heat of the iron. It does not provide support or reinforcement. Fusible web, which comes paper-backed and unbacked, allows you to design your own appliques, fuse-baste, fuse hems in place and be more creative in your mending. A word of warning: once the web melts it is almost impossible to remove. Get it right the first time!

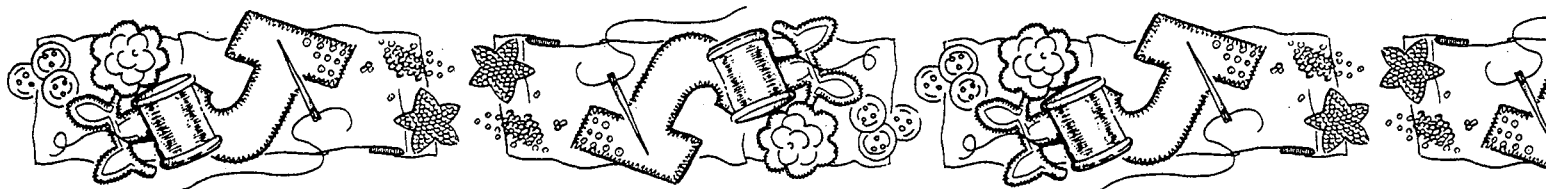


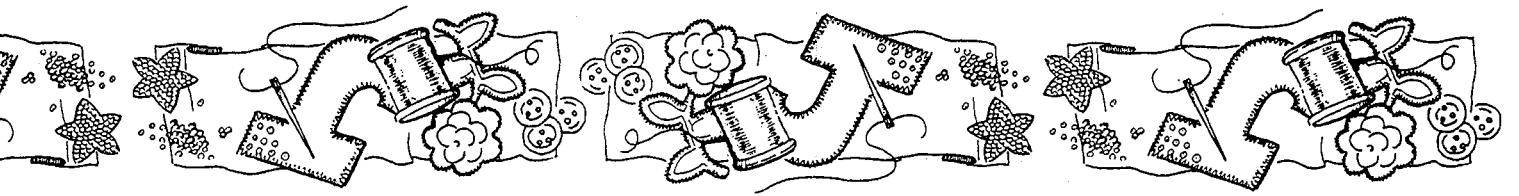
Thread

Buying quality pays off. Cheap thread can spoil an outfit.

Conventional Machine Thread

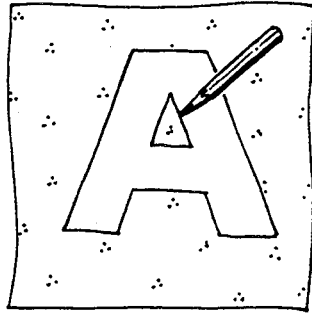
Use regular weight polyester or cotton-covered polyester thread with any fabric and it's a must if you're sewing on synthetics. Extrafine polyester thread is good for lightweight fabrics.



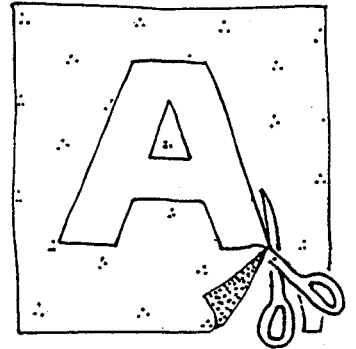


Design An Applique

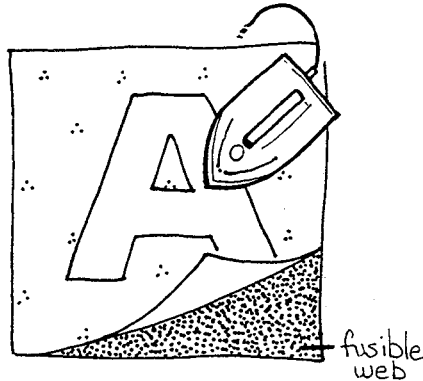
Design your own applique and use fusible web to "sew" it in place. Draw your applique shape on the right side of the fabric you want to use.



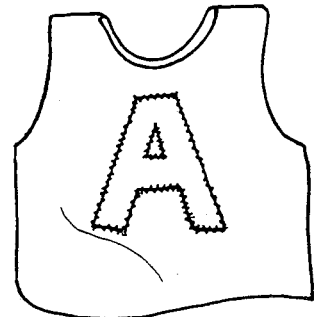
Cut out the applique and remove the paper backing from the webbing.



Put the fabric, right side up, over top of the fusible web. Press it with the iron to fuse the two layers together.



Place the applique on your project. A touch of the iron and there you are - instant glamour! Finish the edges with a zigzag, satin stitch or fabric paint.



Mercerized cotton thread is used on fabrics with little or no stretch.

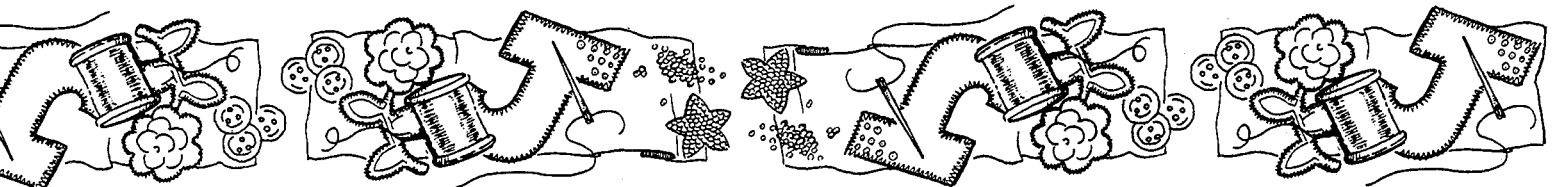
Silk thread is expensive and sometimes hard to find but it can be used on silk, wool and silk-like synthetic fabric. It is also recommended for topstitching and for basting since it won't leave ridges when pressed.

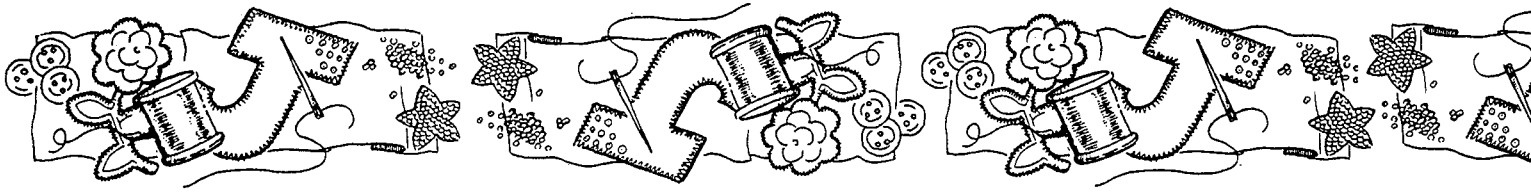
You can also explore the possibilities of decorative threads, like elastic thread, metallic thread and woolly nylon thread, that can be used on conventional machines and sergers.

Serger Thread

Because so many threads are used in serged seams and seam finishes, serger thread is a little thinner than conventional all-purpose thread. It also has a special finish to make it extra smooth for high-speed sewing.

Serger thread is cross-wound so it will reel off the top evenly and easily during high speed sewing, unlike the thread for a conventional machine, which is parallel wound or stacked. Serger thread is cheapest if bought in 1,000 to 1,500 yard cones or tubes.





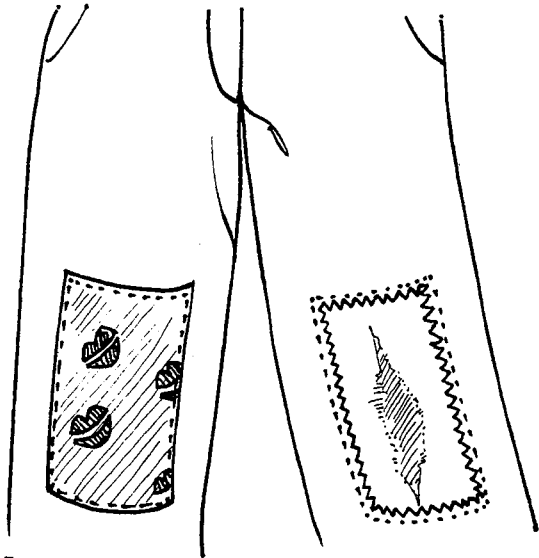
Creative Mending

Patch It!

If you have a great pair of jeans with a hole in the knee or elsewhere, a shirt with the elbow out, or a jacket with a rip in it, consider a patch. You can make a patch out of the same fabric (if you're lucky enough to find it), a contrasting fabric or some crazy colour. Apply the patch with a zigzag or try fusible interfacing.

You can also buy pre-embroidered patches, although getting the right size can be difficult.

Try letting the rip stay and putting the patch behind the tear!



Mend It

Sew on those missing buttons, fix the zipper, the snap or the hook. Sew that split seam, replace the lining. These are little jobs that we all put off for too long.

Change That Hem

Have you grown? Do your ankles show where they're not supposed to? Lower the hem on those pants or that skirt. If the foldline shows you can put on a cuff in a contrasting colour — this looks great on shorts. For skirts or dresses sew a tuck where the foldline used to be and then hem it.

If there's not enough material to fold under for a hem, consider buying extra wide bias tape and using that to face your hem.

On The Cuff

Are your cuffs frayed? Replace them with contrasting cuffs. While you're at it, add some new buttons to get a whole new look.

Sewing With Flair

Rather than sewing a ho hum piece of clothing, let your imagination run wild and create a fashion statement!

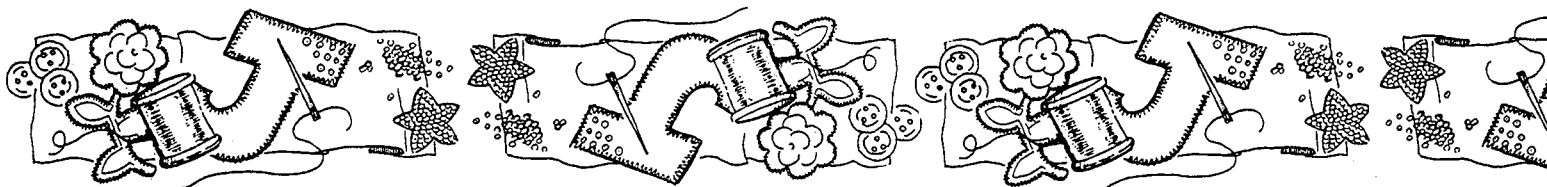
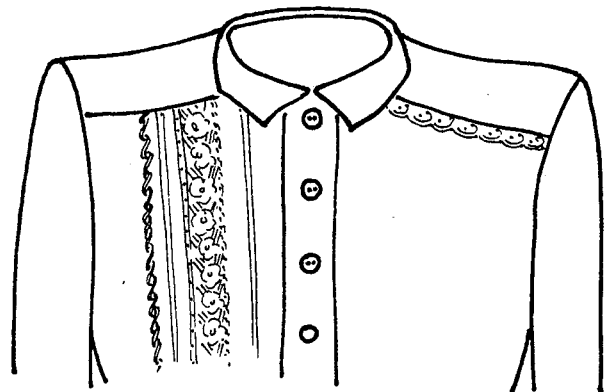
Accessories

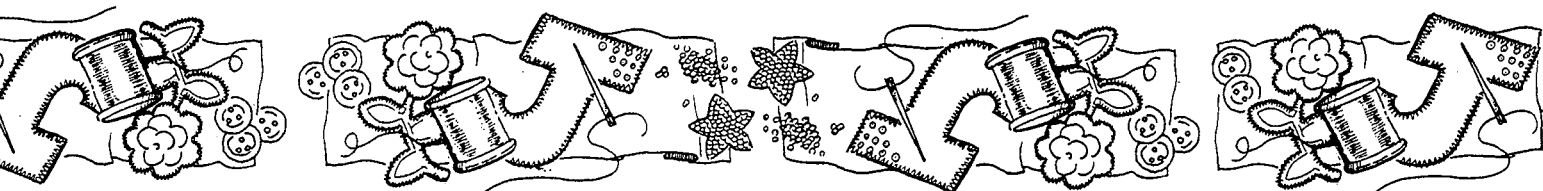
Belts, earrings and hair accessories can all be easily made from coordinating fabrics. Look in craft and fabric stores for lots of ideas on how to create your own.

Button covers can also be fun. They are made to slip over top of a standard, flat button. Inexpensive kits are available in many fabric stores. Just glue an eye catching button or gem stone to the button cover and you'll have a great accessory that you can move from garment to garment.

Lace It Up

A row of lace, ribbon or piping can add pizzazz to a garment. A lace collar, removable or sewn on, can make an old blouse look new. Add some beads or sequins for holiday wear.

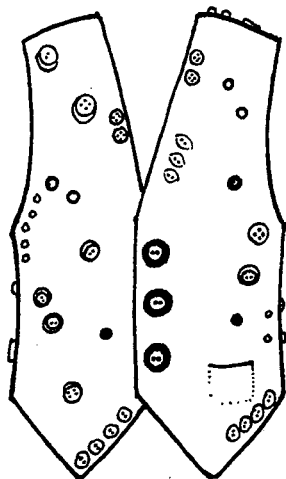




Button, Button, Who's Got The Button?

Use your flair. Decorate a shirt, cap or vest with a million buttons. You can raid the button jar or buy some great looking buttons at a reasonable price. For more cheap chic use safety pins, beads or other crafty items.

Instead of using matching buttons for that shirt or jacket select a set of mix-matched buttons. It is best to pick one characteristic that all of the buttons will have in common — shape, colour or texture.



Shouldering On

Shoulder pads are popular and look great in some blouses and jackets. Do some experimenting with different sizes of pads. Move them around and try them in different positions. Do you think the Argos do this?

Zip It Up

Use zippers to give yourself a new opening for your creativity! They don't have to work, they don't have to lead anywhere. They just have to look great.

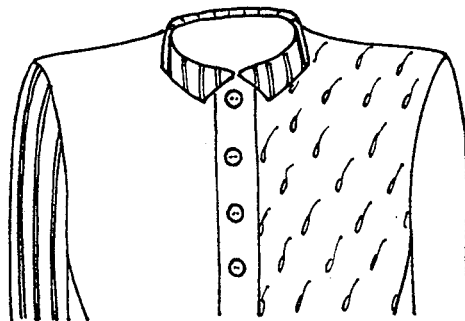
Add a colourful zipper pull such as a piece of fruit or a cartoon character for a fun jacket.

Colour It

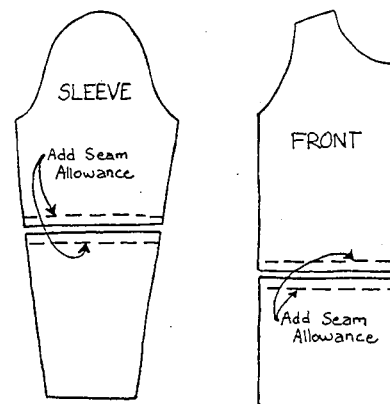
There are lots of fabric paints, dyes and markers available. Use them to add some finishing touches to your sewing. Or buy a solid colour or unbleached fabric and add an all over design to 'create' your own fabric and then lay the pattern out.

Block It

Colour blocking is a simple technique that can give you a very dramatic effect. Before laying out your pattern decide the colour scheme. This could be chosen by pattern piece. For example a shirt could have the left sleeve colour A, right sleeve colour B, left front colour C, right front colour A, back colour C and the collar colour B.

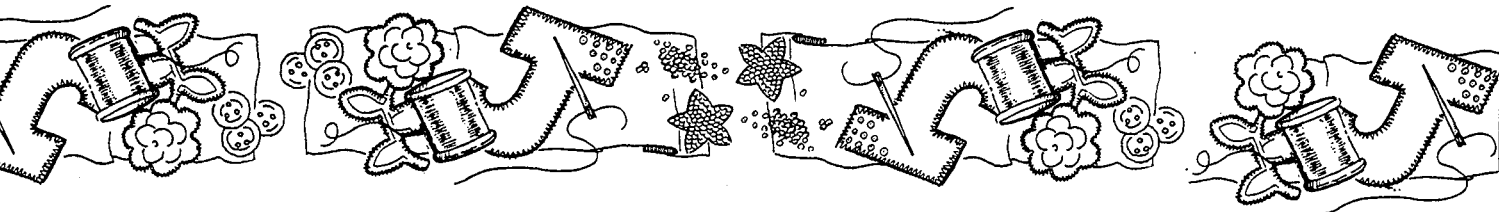


Or you might want to make the top third of your shirt one colour and the bottom two-thirds another colour. In this case you will need to cut each of the pattern pieces in two horizontally; except for the collar. Remember to add the seam allowance to each of these pieces before laying out the pattern.



Your first step in sewing the garment will be to sew the pieces together along any seams you created. Then you just follow the instruction sheet like you would if you had cut the garment out of one fabric.

Colour blocking is great for sweat shirts and other simply styled garments.



Closing Details

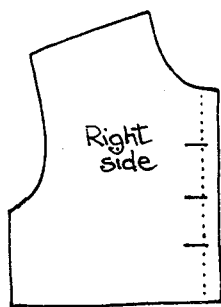
Beautiful Buttonholes

Once upon a time, a long time ago, people had to learn how to sew bound buttonholes, or even worse, they had to make buttonholes by hand! But no more. Now sewing machines have either a built-in buttonholer or a special attachment. But you still need patience and skill — and a lot of practice — to make good buttonholes. You also need to understand your machine and your fabric.

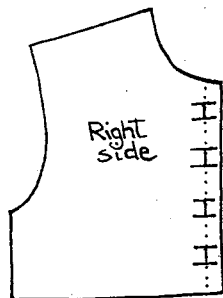
5 Steps to Beautiful Buttonholes

1. The first step in making good buttonholes is to read your instruction manual to see how your machine makes buttonholes and then practice on fabric scraps. Practice on the fabric that you will be sewing with, including interfacing if it will be used. This way you won't be surprised when you come to make the real buttonhole.
2. Transferring the buttonhole markings from your pattern onto your fabric is also important. Horizontal buttonholes should end 3mm (1/8 in.) past the centre front or centre back line. Vertical buttonholes should be right on the centre line.

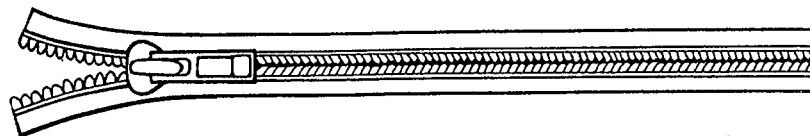
Use a washable marking pen, chalk, tailor's tacks or a basting hand stitch to mark the buttonhole position.



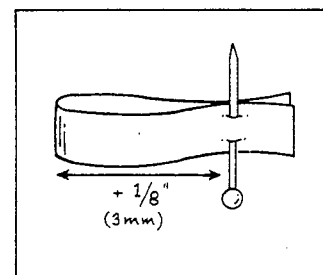
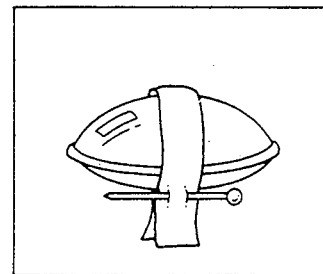
Horizontal



Vertical

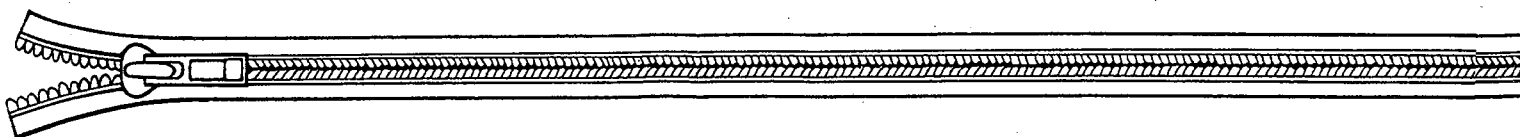
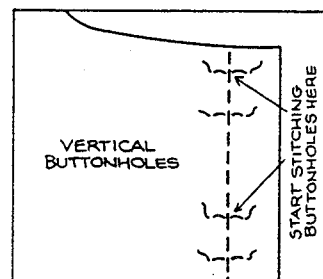
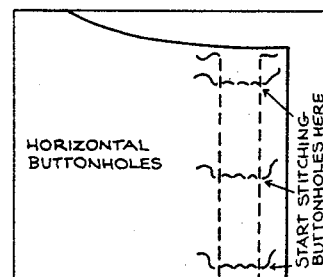


3. The markings on the pattern show you where the buttonhole is supposed to go. It may not say how long the buttonhole is to be. To figure that out, take a piece of string, narrow ribbon or twill tape and wrap it around your button, pinning the ends together. Measure this to find the distance around your button. The length of your buttonhole should be half the distance around your button plus 3mm (1/8 in.). Test this size before making any buttonholes on your garment.



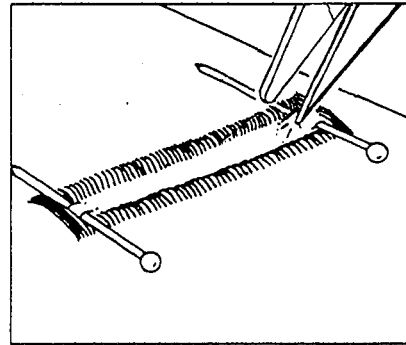
Now mark the buttonhole length on your fabric, using masking or cellophane tape at either end to tell you where to start and stop. Sometimes tape will leave a mark on fabric so test your tape on a fabric scrap first.

4. Stitch the buttonholes, following the directions in your sewing machine manual. To make sure buttonholes line up, begin stitching each one at the same spot. Begin horizontal buttonholes at the end closest to the garment edge. Begin vertical buttonholes at the top.

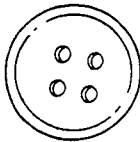


- Once all the buttonholes are stitched here comes the tricky part, the cutting. You can cut buttonholes open with a seam ripper, an X-Acto knife and cutting board or a pair of small, sharp scissors. You can also buy a buttonhole cutting tool which is easy to use. It's important not to cut through any of the stitches, especially the ones at the end. To protect those stitches, place straight pins across each end of the buttonhole.

When you are cutting your buttonhole, always start from the end and cut to the middle. If you do snip through some of the threads, use a liquid seam sealant to repair the damage. You may even want to put a little bit of seam sealant along your buttonhole before you cut.

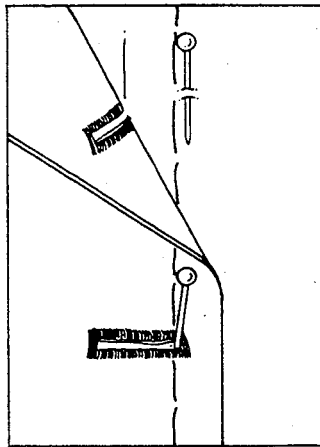


Buttons

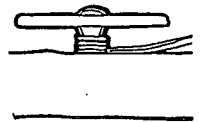
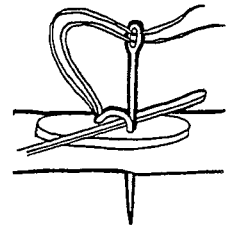


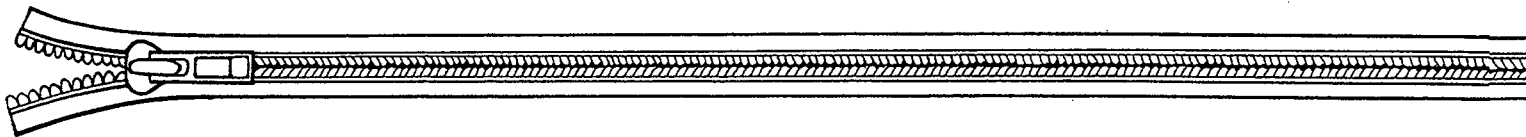
Buttons come in all shapes and sizes but there are only two styles: sew-through and shank. The shank makes room for the buttonhole to fit under the button. Even when using a sew-through button, you must attach it with a thread shank. Some sewing machines will attach sew-through buttons. Here's how to do it by hand.

- After the buttonholes are made and cut, lap the garment edges, matching centres, so it looks like it is buttoned. Stick a pin through the hole to mark the placement of your button. The pin should be 3 mm (1/8 in.) from the top of a vertical buttonhole or 3 mm (1/8 in.) from the end of a horizontal buttonhole that is closest to the garment's centreline.
- Using a doubled strand of thread take a few small stitches over top of the pin. Now remove the pin. If you are knotting the thread, hide the knot under the button.



- Put a round toothpick or a large darning needle on top of the button, between the holes.
- Sew five or six stitches through each set of holes, stitching over the needle or toothpick.
- Bring the threaded needle up from the underside of the garment, between the button and the fabric.
- Remove the needle or toothpick and pull the button so the threads are tight.
- Wind the needle thread tightly around the threads between the button and the fabric five or six times, forming a shank.
- Take the threaded needle back to the underside of the fabric. Either knot the thread close to the fabric or take several small, tight backstitches to secure it.

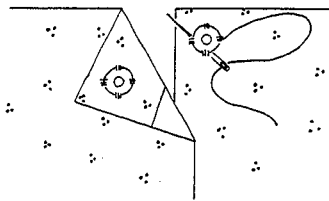




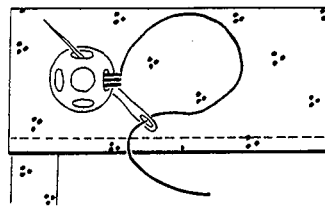
It's a Snap

Snaps are used to hold together overlapping edges that don't get much strain, such as cuffs. Snaps come in a range of sizes, from very small to very large. The size you buy will depend on where you are putting it and the weight of your fabric. They come in different colours, too.

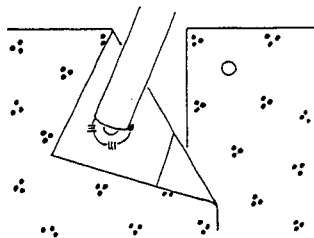
There are two parts to a snap: the ball and the socket. It's fairly easy to see which is which. The ball always goes on the top piece of fabric, the socket on the bottom. Each piece has four holes around the edges.



Start by sewing the ball. Use a single knotted thread and hide the knot between the fabric and the snap. Stitch through one of the holes several times before moving on to the next. Do not stitch through to the other side of the garment. When you are finished stitching through all the holes, knot the thread close to the garment.



Rub some chalk over the end of the ball and press it against the facing piece of fabric. The chalk will mark where the socket is to go. Follow the same sewing steps as for the ball.



There are some types of snaps that you have to attach to your garment with a hammer! These heavy-duty snaps would be used on heavy fabric, like denim. Carefully read the instructions that come with the snaps.

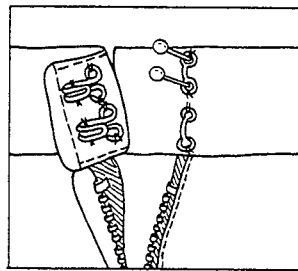
Hooks and Eyes

Hooks and eyes are used to fasten openings where there is some stress, such as on waistbands. There are straight eyes, which you use when edges overlap, and looped eyes, which you use when edges only meet. They come in a range of sizes.

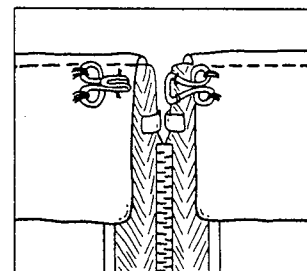
The hook should be sewn onto the overlapping piece, with the end (called the bill) about 3mm (1/8 inch) from the edge. Use a single knotted thread. Stitch through both rings, placing the stitches close together. Do not stitch through to the right side of the garment.

Before fastening off the thread, sew around the lower part of the bill with several stitches.

Put the garment together as if it were fastened and mark the position for the eye. Stitch around the rings of the eye. Fasten off the thread close to the fabric.



Edges Overlap



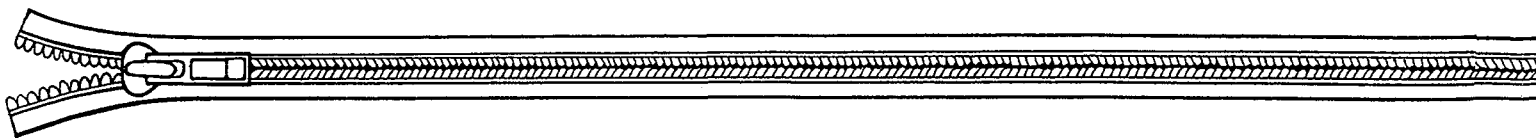
Edges Meet

Velcro®

Velcro® and its counterparts come in strips or are sold as pre-cut squares or circles. They come in a variety of colours.

The loop part usually goes on the overlap and the hook part on the underlap. You can either machine stitch these closures in place or handstitch them.

Velcro® squares or circles usually have a light adhesive backing that holds them in place while you are sewing. Some people don't like this feature because they feel the adhesive gums up their sewing machines. Instead they buy the strips of velcro and cut the shapes they need.

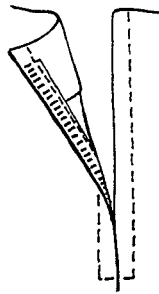


Let 'er Zip

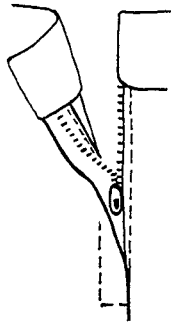
There are 2 basic types of zipper.

- Open-end zippers are open at both ends and are sewn into a seam that will open completely, like the front of a jacket. Open-end zippers should be inserted before any facings, hems or linings are attached.
- Conventional zippers are closed at one end and sewn into a seam. There are three different methods for sewing a conventional zipper.

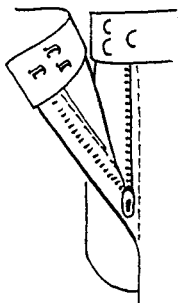
Centred zipper - sewn in the centre of a seam.



Lapped zipper - one side of the garment laps over the zipper. Most often used at the left side seam of trousers, skirts and dresses.



Fly-front zipper - traditional on men's trousers, but also used on women's trousers and skirts. It requires a facing.

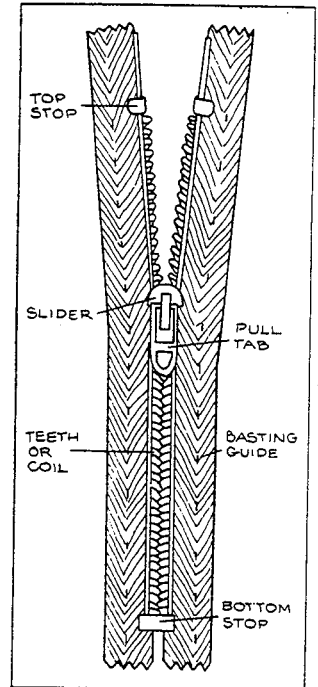


Your pattern will suggest the method that is best for the garment and give instructions for sewing the zipper in place.

Zipper Tips

When you are buying a zipper, do a test run in the store. It would be a shame to put the zipper in and find that it doesn't zip properly!

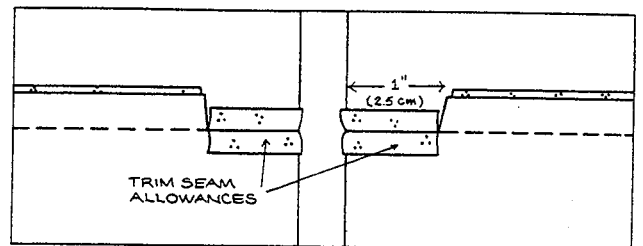
Unless your zipper tape is 100% polyester, you should pre-shrink it by plunging the zipper into hot water for a few minutes and air dry. Iron the zipper tape to remove folds or wrinkles. But don't place the iron on top of the zipper teeth. Metal teeth can scratch the iron and plastic teeth or coils can melt.



Attach a zipper presser foot to your machine.

Always stitch the zipper from the bottom up. If you stitch this way, even when machine basting, you will never get ripples around the zipper.

If the zipper is going to cross a seam, for example at a waistline, reduce some of the bulk before basting the seam closed. To do this, make a clip in the intersecting seam allowance 2.5 cm (1 inch) in from each opening edge. Trim the seam allowances within the clipped section to 1 cm (3/8 inch) and press them open.



Use machine basting, cellophane tape, basting tape or glue stick to hold the zipper in place while you are sewing it in. Tape can leave a mark on some fabrics so be sure to test it first on a fabric scrap.

Serging Basics

The serger, also called an overlock machine or "overlocker," is a miracle machine. It stitches, trims and overcasts in one step at almost twice the speed of a conventional sewing machine. Like the conventional sewing machine, it takes practice to use a serger well and with confidence. But the effort is well worth it.

Standard Features

The serger has many of the same parts that a conventional sewing machine has.

Stitch Length Regulator (or feed regulator) - controls how long the stitch is. Adjust to suit the fabric.

Stitch Width Regulator - controls how wide the stitch is. Adjust to suit the fabric.

Pressure Regulator - is a screw on top of the machine to adjust pressure foot tension.

Hand wheel - connects the serger motor with the other moving parts.

The serger also has some different features that are shown on the diagram.

Optional Features

Free-arm - good for children's clothing, cuffs, pant hems.

Rolled edge attachment - built-in on some machines.

Elastic applicator foot - automatically stretches elastic as it is being serged.

Tape sewing foot - is a presser foot with a slot through which twill or other stabilizing tape can be fed while serging.



Stitch Finger - is a metal prong that stays between the fabric and the thread until the stitch is completely formed. It can be either on the throat plate or on the presser foot.

Tension regulator - dials are either on the outside or set into the machine. They control the tension for each thread.

Needles - a serger can have one or two needles. They can either be conventional or industrial. The industrial needles are less expensive and more durable than the conventional. When inserting a needle, the groove always faces the front.

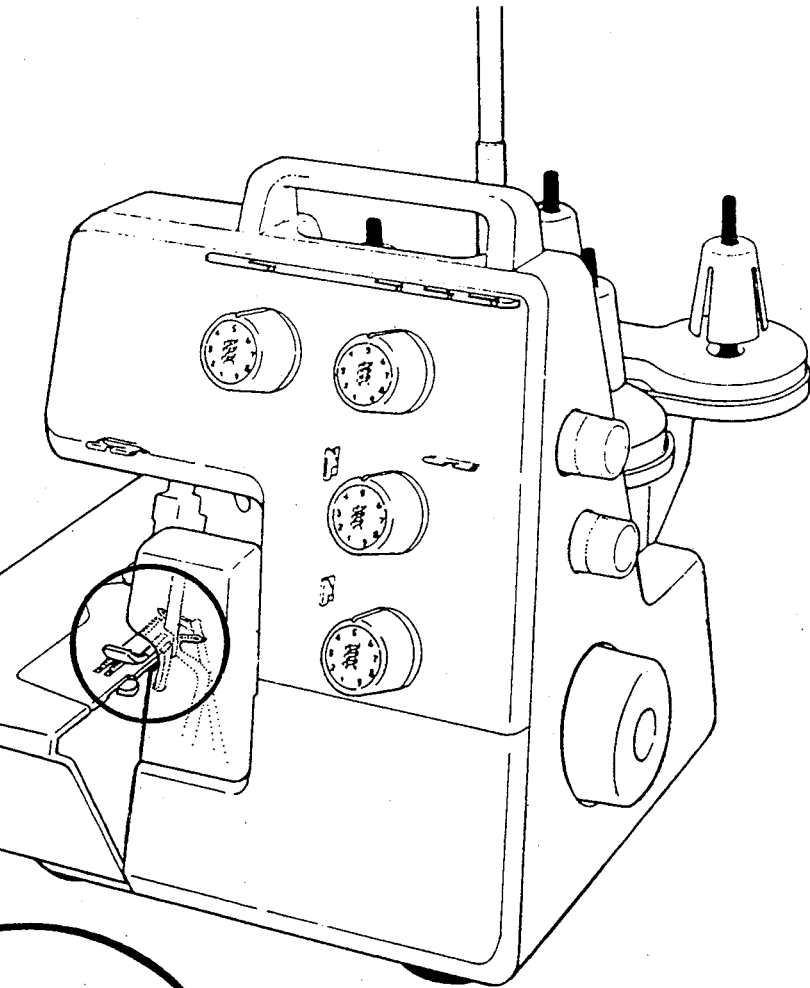
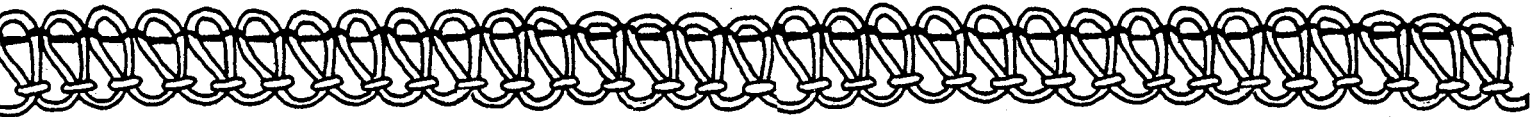
Feed System - the feed dogs, needle plate and presser foot work together to move the fabric with even feeding. Some machines have a differential-feed system that allows you to make adjustments to prevent puckered or wavy seams.

Knife blades - The knives trim the excess seam allowance before the seam is stitched. There is usually an upper knife blade, which moves up and down, and a lower knife blade, which does not. On some machines the upper knife can swing out of the way when trimming is not desired.



Looper
used in
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Buying a Serger

Not all sergers can create every type of overlock stitch. You need to understand what each stitch can do and then select the model that does what you want. There are 2, 3, 4 and 5-thread machines.

2-Thread - doesn't sew seams, just finishes them. A good machine if you only want to finish seam allowances and edges. Flatlocking is easy and very flat. Some 2-thread machines can sew a rolled edge.

3-Thread - can sew seams. Makes a balanced stitch that looks the same on both sides - great for reversibles. Can flatlock and is excellent for knits.

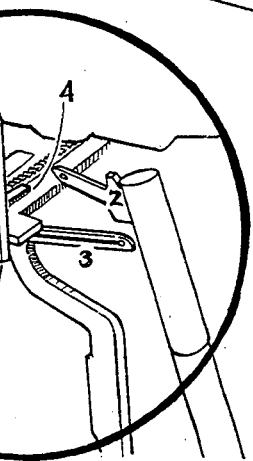
4/3 Thread - excellent for clothes that get hard wear. Interesting decorative effects created when different colour threads are used in the needles. Can flatlock.

True 4-Thread - good for ravelly, loosely woven fabrics. Remove the left needle for a 2-thread overedge stitch for finishing seams. Remove the right needle for a straight chain stitch.

5-Thread - has two needles and three loopers: an upper, a lower and a chainstitch looper. It sews a 5-thread safety stitch made up of a 2-thread chainstitch and a 3-thread overlock stitch. Some 5-thread machines also sew a 4-thread safety stitch, a 2-thread overedge stitch and a 4- or 3-thread mock safety stitch. Each stitch may be used separately.

Serging methods are different than conventional sewing methods. Ask if lessons are included with the serger.

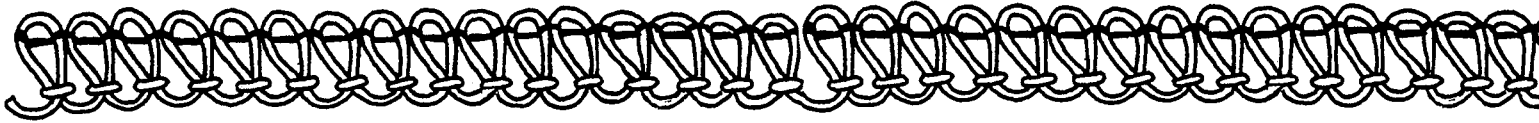
Have the dealer demonstrate the various features. Pay attention to how many adjustments are needed to change from one feature to another. See if the controls are on the inside or the outside of the machine. Don't buy any serger until you have tried it yourself. Some models are easier to control and use than others.



- 1 Blades
- 2 Upper looper
- 3 Lower looper
- 4 Stitch finger

s - an upper looper and lower looper are instead of a bobbin to form stitches. The and needle threads lock together. The threads do not go through the fabric.





Sewing Room

A serger will not replace your conventional sewing machine. But together they make an unbeatable team. For efficient sewing, the serger and sewing machine should be within easy reach and placed so you can move from one machine to the other, without changing chairs.

Thread

While you are learning to serge it is best to use all-purpose serger thread. Use the best quality of thread you can. Bargain threads sometimes cause more problems than the savings are worth.

It is not always necessary to use a thread colour that exactly matches the fabric. Use a colour of thread or a mixture of colours that *blend* with the fabric. Colours that blend easily with many fabrics are ivory, grey and rose. Primary colours — red, yellow and blue — do not blend well with many colours of fabric. If you have only one spool of matching thread, use it in the needle at the seamline, and use colours that blend for the other threads. If your serger has two needles, fill a bobbin from your conventional machine and use it on the spool pin for the second needle.

Decorative Threads

After you become more experienced, try using some of the many decorative threads that are available.

Not all decorative threads will work in all overlocks. You will need to do some testing to find out which threads will be most successful for you and to find out the “look” you want to achieve with your stitching.

Monofilament nylon, topstitching thread and woolly nylon are the easiest decorative threads to use in an overlock. They require minor tension adjustments and can be used in both loopers and in the needles.

Rayon, silk and metallic threads require more tension

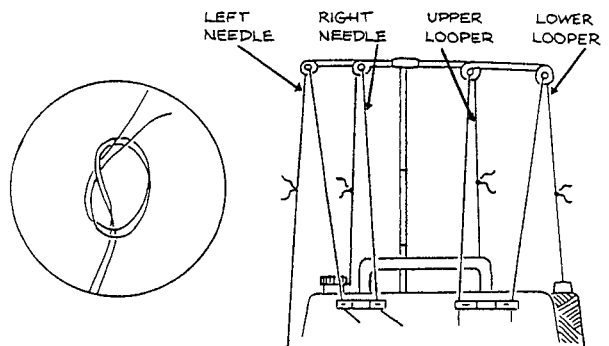
adjustment but are not difficult to use. They are easier to use in the upper looper than in the lower looper.

Crochet thread, pearl cotton, ribbon and yarn are the heaviest, thickest decorative threads and need the most tension adjustment. To ensure even feeding of balls or skeins, feed the thread by hand, making sure there is always slack in the thread as it enters the first thread guide.

Threading The Serger

Threading a serger appears to be complicated but it really isn't that difficult. Start by turning the hand wheel to move loopers to a position where they do not cross. Then just follow the threading guide in the instruction manual or on the door of the serger — threading the needles last.

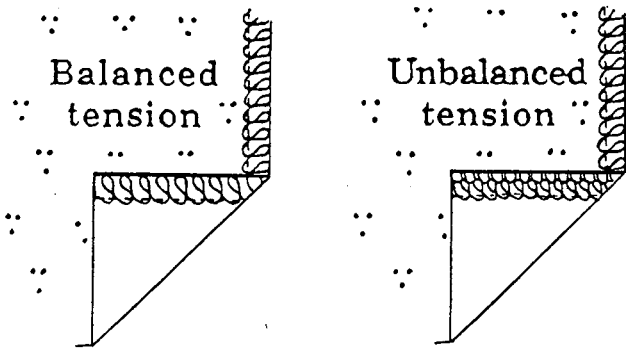
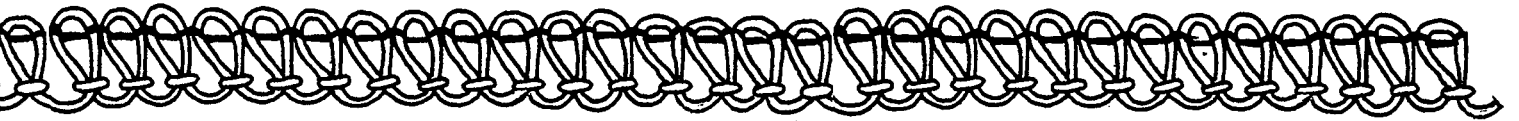
Once the serger's threaded you can very quickly change thread colours by using the tying-on method. Clip the threads close to the spools. Put the new threads on the spool stand. Tie the old threads to the new threads using a square knot. Run the machine slowly until the knots get to the needles. Clip the knots off and thread the needles. Bring all the threads under and slightly to left of the presser foot. Run the machine slowly to form a chain. Check that the threads are snugly in the tension dials and then you're set to go!



Adjusting Tension

Before sewing on your garment, always test the tension on a fabric scrap. If the tension is correctly adjusted the loops will meet at the edge of the fabric. If the loops don't meet, check that the machine is properly threaded before changing the tension.





To adjust the tension, refer to the instruction manual. It probably has photos or drawings to help you decide which thread needs to have the tension adjusted. Keep a record of the tension settings you use for each project. This will save you time in setting the tension for future projects that use similar fabrics and threads.

COLOUR CODING

To help you learn which thread forms which part of the stitch use a different colour of thread for each looper and needle. Try some practice seams. Adjust each tension individually and see how it affects the stitching.

Serge Ahead

Unlike your conventional sewing machine, the presser foot on a serger can be left down all the time. For a smooth start, serge a 5-7.5 cm (2-3 in.) thread chain, then gently feed the fabric under the foot. If you're sewing very thick fabric or several layers, you may want to use your thumb to lift the front of the foot onto the fabric. When you get to the end of the seam, continue serging off the fabric and create another thread chain. Once you have some experience serging you may want to try other methods of starting and finishing seams.

Beware of Pins

When sewing with a serger you must be very careful not to hit a pin with the knives. If this happens the pin can be cut in two sending pieces of the pin flying through the air — a real danger. You may also have to replace the knives and have the machine's timing adjusted. When using pins, place them vertically to the left of the presser foot. If you must put them horizontally, to hold pleats or tucks, remove the pins as they get close to the knives.

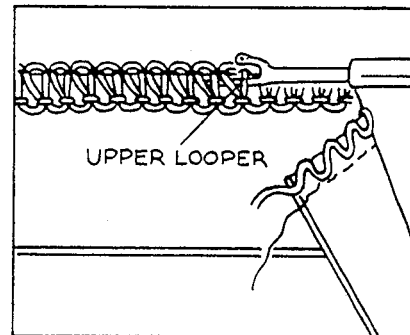
Securing Tail Chains

Sergers cannot backstitch. To keep stitches from ravelling, the tail chain must be secured. Use one of these methods.

- Smooth out the loops in the tail chain with your fingers and thread it through a large tapestry needle. Weave the needle under the serged stitches for about 2.5-5 cm (1-2 in.). Cut off the rest of the tail.
- Apply liquid seam sealant to the stitches at the end of the seam. After it dries, cut the tail chain off.

Oops

No matter how careful you are with your sewing sometimes mistakes are made. Overlock stitches look very permanent but they are actually easy to remove. Smooth out the tail chain and locate the needle threads. They will be the shortest threads in the chain. Hold the needle threads and push the looper threads close to the fabric. Pull the needle threads, gently easing the fabric until the threads can be removed. Remove the looper threads. Or run a seam ripper along the edge of the fabric, under the upper looper threads, cutting them as you go.



When restitching the seam, remember that it has already been trimmed so just guide the fabric along the edge of the knives. If the seam needs to be taken in you don't even have to remove the old stitches first. Just sew the new seam and the original stitches will be trimmed away.

