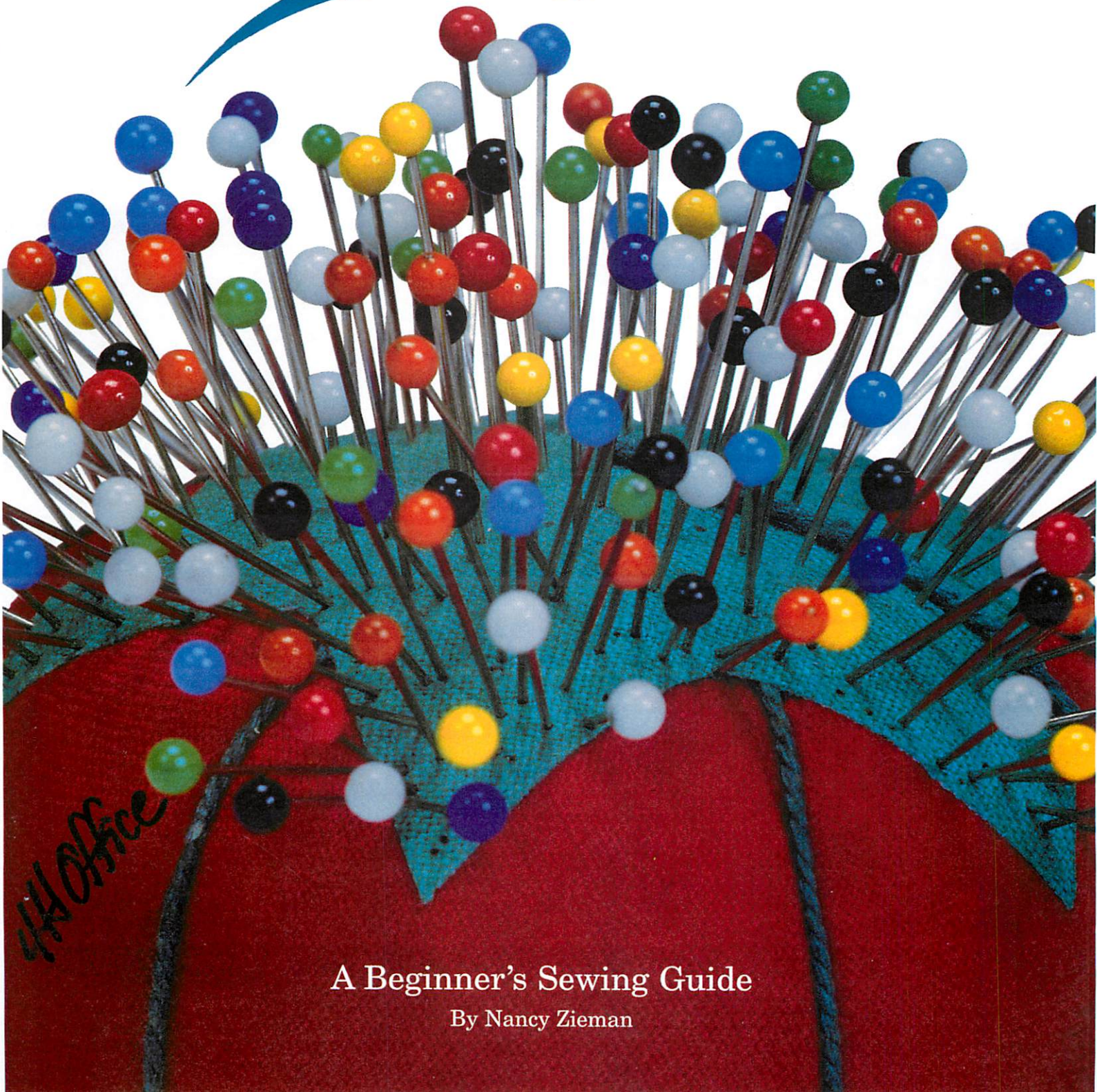


# Let's Sew!™

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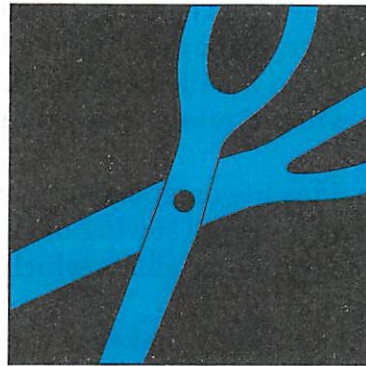
*4-H Office*

A Beginner's Sewing Guide

By Nancy Zieman

# Let's Sew!™

## A Beginner's Sewing Guide



# Foreward

by Kathleen Vos

Youth Development Specialist

Cooperative Extension

University of Wisconsin-Extension

If you've ever tried to teach a young person to sew, you may have faced a common dilemma: where do you find a resource that includes all the sewing fundamentals, yet makes sewing interesting and fun?

Our 4-H Clothing Construction Task Force faced that same problem as we tried to update literature used to help young 4-H'ers learn to sew. Our Task Force, composed of sewing educators and enthusiasts, is an ongoing advisory committee for the 4-H clothing project. Our current 4-H literature was 11 years old. Sewing techniques and products have definitely changed in those 11 years! And at the time the original booklet was written, few people had heard of, let alone used a serger. We wanted our new materials to reflect the changes in both machines and techniques.

We originally discussed updating the booklet internally, but staff reductions made that unfeasible. We also reviewed existing 4-H literature from throughout the nation and searched existing commercial material. Nothing seemed geared for our 4-H audience. As we pondered how to solve the problem, we thought of Nancy Zieman at Nancy's Notions. To us, Nancy's 4-H background and her visibility in the sewing industry provided a natural combination. This new book represents the joint efforts of Nancy's business and 4-H in producing a book to meet a critical need.

Our Task Force submitted what we viewed as the basic philosophy of the book in February, 1990. Following a series of meetings, Nancy compiled a list of topics and techniques to be included in the book. We spent a year and a half checking and rechecking, and we're excited about the finished result. This book will definitely be a valuable resource for beginning sewers throughout the country!

Sewing is an activity that provides lifelong pleasure, and a child's teen or preteen years are the perfect time to learn. *Let's Sew* presents sewing basics in a clear, yet upbeat, format. It incorporates new techniques, technology, and products which make sewing easier and more efficient for young and old alike.

You'll enjoy using this book. It definitely makes sewing fun!

## 4-H Clothing Construction Task Force:

Donna Albrecht, Ph.D., Professor, Apparel, Textiles and Design, UW-Stout

Shirley Daniels, 4-H Leader

Ann Keim, Family Living Education Volunteer Development Specialist

Chris Kniep, Extension Home Economist

Ruth Navrestad, 4-H and Youth Agent

Susan Pleska, 4-H and Youth Agent

Kay Stanek, Extension Home Economist

Kathleen Vos, Youth Development Specialist

# **Let's Sew!**<sup>TM</sup>

## **A Beginner's Sewing Guide**

**by Nancy Zieman**

**Written in association with the National 4-H Council**

**Nancy's Notions, Ltd.  
Beaver Dam, WI**

# Dedication

Every person needs a mentor, someone to guide and encourage them. This book is dedicated to my mentor, Lenore Landry, the Textiles and Clothing Specialist for the State of Wisconsin from 1954- 1979. Lenore was the mentor or role model for many aspiring young seamstresses. Through her clothing guide books, inspiring sewing seminars, and continued sewing enthusiasm, she passed on her love of sewing. Lenore, I thank you!

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Beaver Dam, WI 53916

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Library of Congress Catalog Number 91-62364  
ISBN 0-931071-54-2

Manufactured in the United States of America

LMNOPQRSTU-1110090807

Contributing Editor: Pat Hahn  
Illustrations and Design: Mardel Curwick  
Photography: Keith Glasgow and Dale Hall

## Acknowledgements:

Cross Plains Wondermakers 4-H Club:

Rex Haverberg

Tammy Haverberg

Aimee Zingg

Casey Zingg

Heather Zingg

The McCall Pattern Company

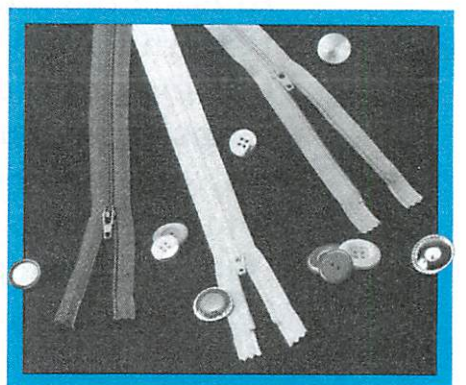
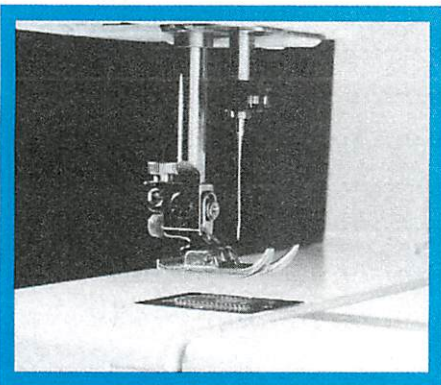
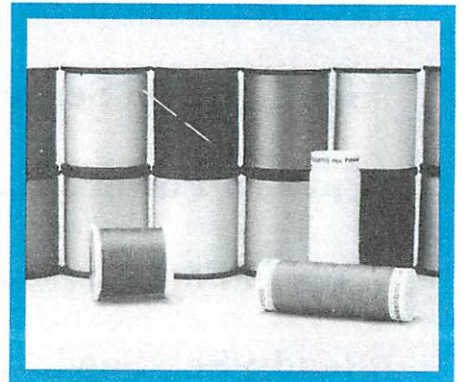
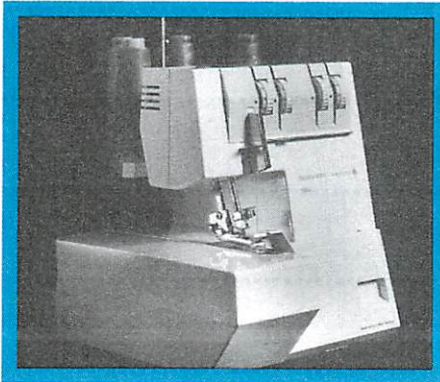
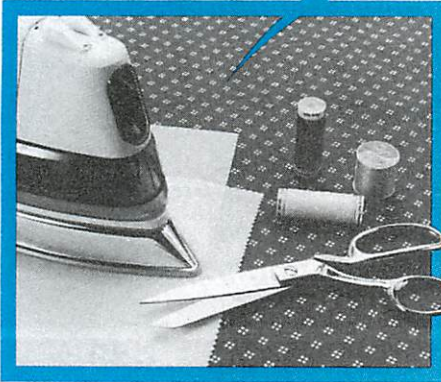
The National 4-H Council

4-H Clothing Construction Task Force

Mary Judd, owner, Fabrications

Tillie Griggs, owner, STITCH IN KNITS

# Let's Sew!




## An Introduction . . .

Sew a simple top! Make a pillow or tote! Stitch a pair of shorts or pants! Sewing is fun, and so is using or wearing things you've sewn!

When you learn something new, you need to begin with the basics. The same is true for sewing. It's easy to learn to sew! Just take a step at a time.

In this book, you'll learn about sewing tools and how to use a sewing machine and serger. You'll learn how to select and use fabrics and

patterns. And you'll learn how easy it is to sew simple projects.

One hint—as you use this book, be on the lookout for this special symbol: 

Every time you see it, you'll learn tips from me, Nancy Zieman, that will make your sewing easier, faster, and more fun. Watch for those special hints!

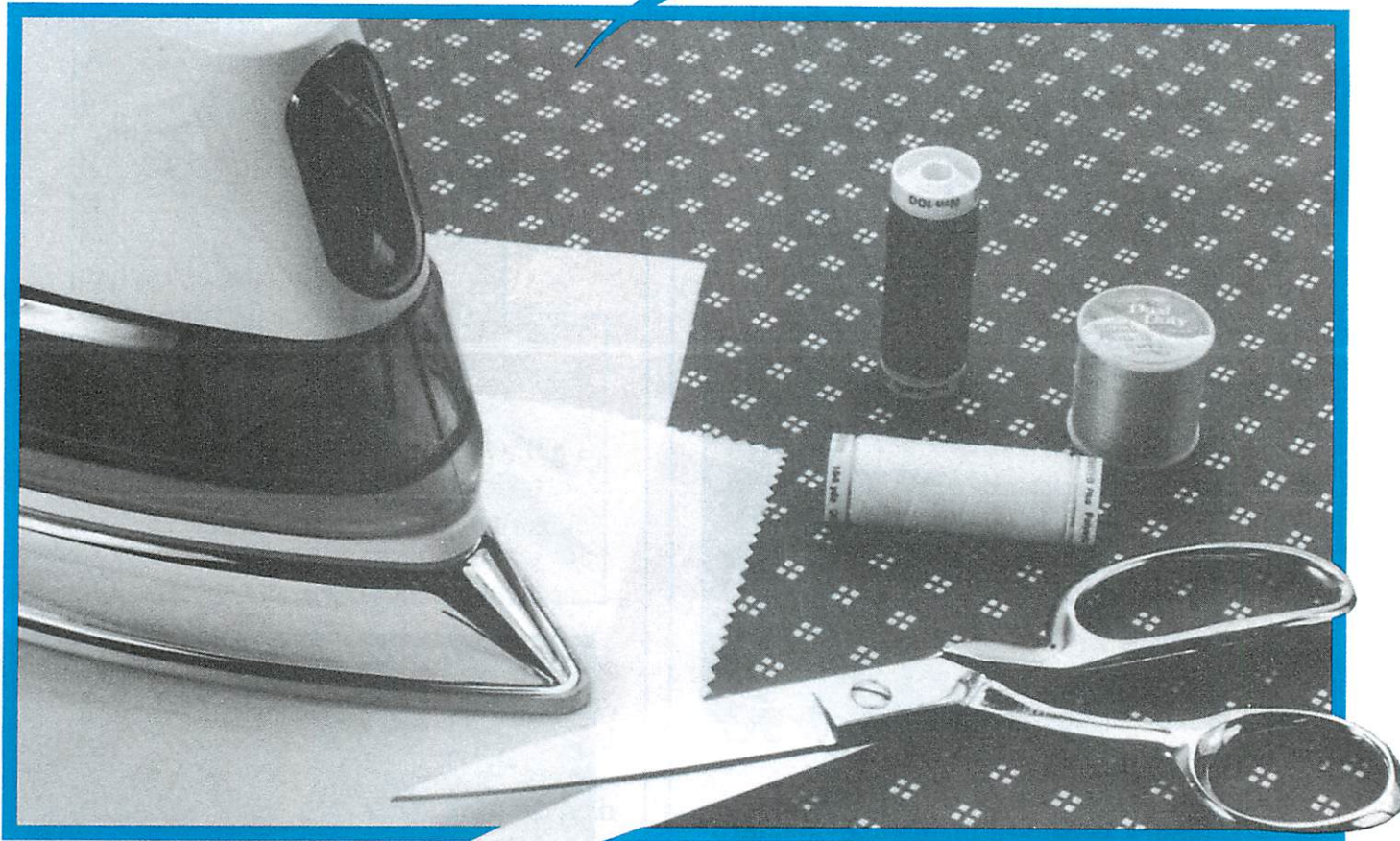
So what are you waiting for? Turn the page, and Let's Sew!

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# Tool Talk



Having the right tools and knowing how to use them makes sewing much simpler. You will need tools for cutting, measuring, marking, sewing, and pressing. If you can, borrow tools from other family members as you learn. But eventually, you will want some tools of your own.

Store all your sewing supplies in one place, and always return them to that place when you finish sewing. You could use a basket or a

heavy cardboard box. Or you could store your tools and supplies in a drawer in a desk or cabinet or in a special sewing case.

It's easier to find the sewing tool you need if your storage area has dividers. You can make your own dividers by recycling small cardboard boxes, or you can use small baskets or bins.

Now let's take a look at some basic sewing tools.



# Cutting Tools

Scissors and shears are used to cut fabrics, clip threads, and trim seams. Special shears and scissors are available for left handed people.

- **Shears**

- One handle is larger than the other.
- Used mainly for cutting fabric.
- Some shears have bent handles. These specially shaped handles keep the fabric flat on the table's surface when you're cutting out a pattern. This makes it easy to get straight accurate cutting lines.

- **Scissors**

- Both handles are the same size.
- Used mainly for clipping threads and trimming seams.



- **Caring for scissors and shears**

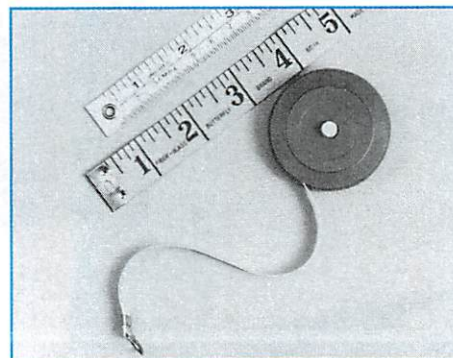
- If blades become dull, have them sharpened.
- Do not drop scissors or shears. This could damage the blades or make it difficult to cut accurate, crisp lines on the fabric.
- Use your shears and scissors only for sewing. This keeps blades sharp longer.

# Measuring Tools

Accurate measurements are important in sewing. If your measurements are not correct, your finished project will not look or fit as it should.

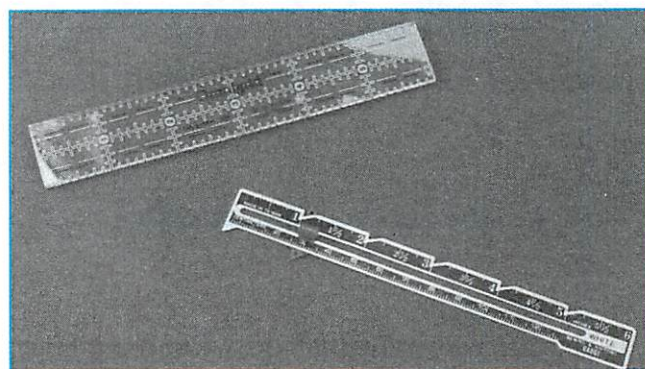
- **Tape Measure**

- Used for larger measurements such as measuring fabric grainline and determining pattern size.
- Choose a 60" (150 cm) tape made of durable, nonstretching material.
- Both sides of the tape should have markings. This makes it easier to use the tape.
- Having metal or plastic tips on the ends of the tape protects the measure from fraying.



- **6" (15 cm) Ruler or Hem Gauge**

- Used for smaller measuring jobs like hems, cuffs, and casings.
- A sliding pointer on a gauge makes it easy to get even measurements.



# Marking Tools

Pattern markings are like the signs along a highway! Markings provide guides for assembling and sewing a project. These markings must be transferred to your fabric.

Markings should be transferred to the **wrong** side of the fabric. They should be easy to see, yet easy to remove. There are many types of marking materials. No one marking tool works for every fabric.



*It's important to try marking a scrap of fabric before using a marker on your project. Sometimes the marking does not show, and sometimes it shows so much that it would be difficult to remove later! Test several types of fabric markers to see what works best on your fabric.*

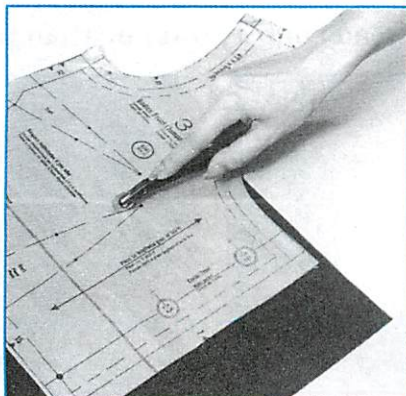
### • Marking Pens

- Some fabric markers contain an ink, usually **blue** in color, that can be removed with cold water.
- Some fabric markers contain disappearing ink, usually **purple** in color, that vanishes within 12-24 hours.
- Some markers have blue ink on one end and purple ink on the other.



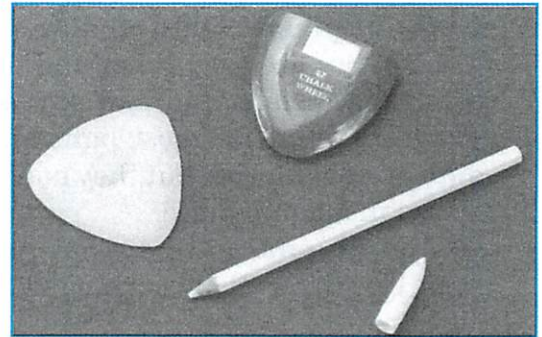
### • Tracing Paper and Tracing Wheel

- Tracing wheels may have pointed (serrated) edges, or the edge of the wheel may be smooth.
- Use a special sewing tracing paper with the tracing wheel.
- Use the lightest color of tracing paper that will show on your fabric. Marks are sometimes difficult to remove.
- For additional information on using tracing paper and a tracing wheel, refer to page 34.



### • Chalk Pencils, Triangles, and Wheels

- Chalk is available in several colors to contrast with every fabric.
- You may find chalk in several forms. Look for chalk pencils, solid chalk triangles, or powdered chalk in a special plastic container.
- **DO NOT** use regular lead pencils or ball-point pens, as marks are difficult to remove.

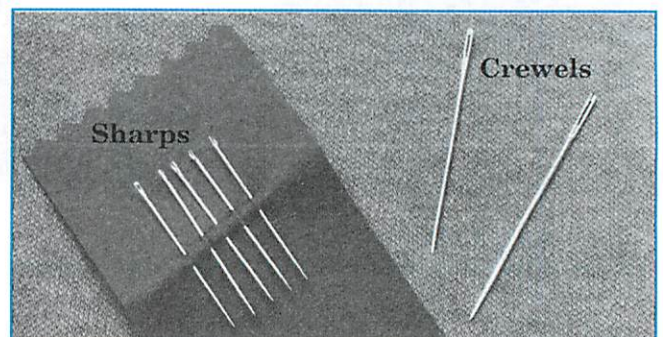


*Slivers of soap can sometimes be used as a marking substitute. The soap that works best is Ivory; other soaps have dyes that may discolor the fabric. And always test soap on a fabric scrap before using it on your project!*

## Sewing Tools

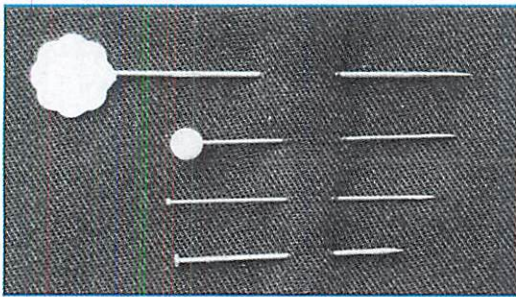
### • Needles

- Hand sewing needles come in several different styles. Needles come in sizes 3 to 10. The larger the number, the finer the needle. Choose a fine needle so it will not leave holes in your fabric.
- **Sharp** needles have round eyes and are medium length.
- **Crewel** needles have long eyes which are easier to thread.



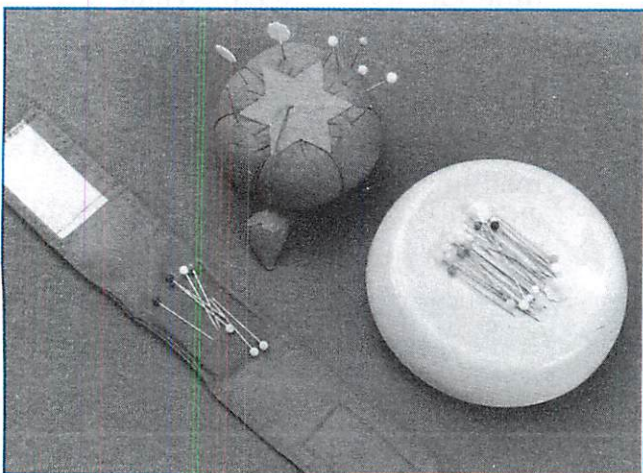
### • Pins

- A pin's size refers to the length of the pin, based on sixteenths of an inch. For example, a size 8 pin is 8/16 or 1/2 inch (1.3 cm) long.
- Pins may also be marked with the thickness or diameter of the pin. Most pins are .5 mm or .6 mm thick.
- **Flower head pins** are extra long. They have colored flat heads and are easy to pick up and locate.
- **Glass or plastic head pins** are slightly shorter, but are easy to see and find.
- **Silk pins** are fine, thin, and extra sharp. They are great for most light and medium weight fabrics, but they may rust if stored in a damp place.
- **Ballpoint pins** have special rounded tips. Use them when working with knit fabrics.



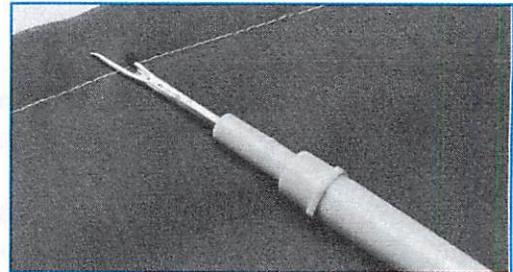
### • Pin Cushion

- Used to store pins before and/or after they are removed from fabric.
- Pins should NEVER be put into your mouth.



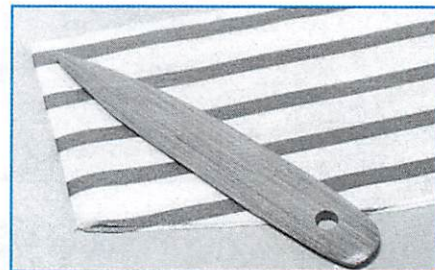
### • Seam Ripper

- Used for “reverse sewing.” (Removing stitching mistakes!)
- A special sharp point fits under and cuts the thread.
- Be careful! Insert the sharp cutting edge only under the thread used to stitch the seam, **NOT** under the fabric threads.



### • Bamboo Pointer and Creaser

- Use the pointed end to help you turn points of collars, cuffs, and lapels.
- Use the curved, beveled end to temporarily “press open” seams.



### • Thread

- You will usually use all-purpose thread.
- All-purpose thread is made of cotton covered polyester or 100% polyester.
- Special threads are available for embroidery, topstitching, and sewing lingerie. Try them when you have more experience.
- Thread looks slightly darker on the spool than it will when you sew with it. Take a piece of your fabric to the store. Choose thread slightly **darker** than the fabric.



# Pressing Tools

Pressing is an important part of sewing. For a sewing project to look its best, each line of stitching should be pressed as it is completed.

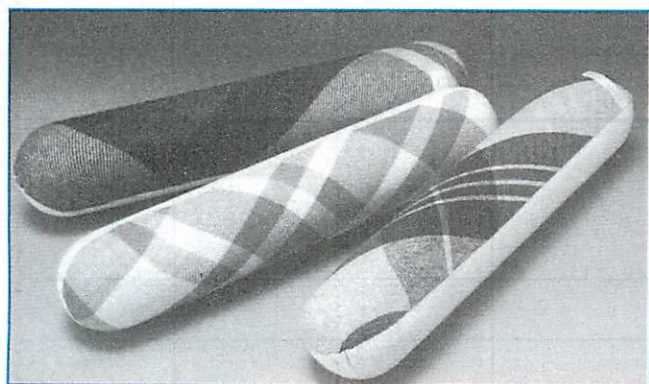
## • Iron

- Choose an iron which can be used as either a steam iron or a dry iron.
- An iron should ALWAYS be turned off and unplugged when you finish sewing and pressing.
- Empty the water from a steam iron after you finish sewing and pressing.



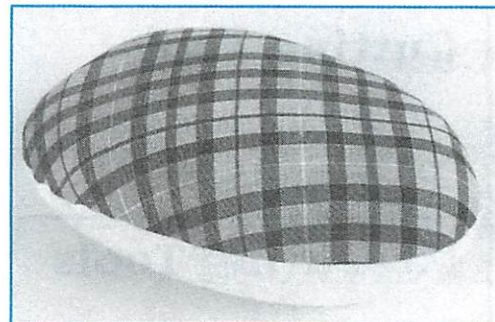
## • Seam Roll

- Used for pressing open seams. A seam roll prevents the imprint of the seam edges from showing on the right side of the fabric.
- You can make a seam roll by tightly rolling and taping a magazine. Cover it with fabric.



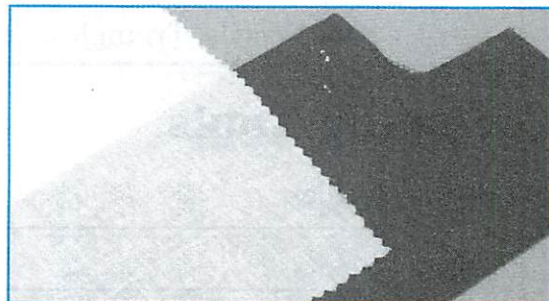
## • Pressing Ham

- Used to press curved areas such as darts or curved seams so they keep their shapes.
- Pressing hams often have wool fabric on one side and cotton on the other to make it easier to press all types of fabrics.



## • Press Cloth

- A press cloth is a piece of lightweight fabric placed between the iron and your fabric when pressing. It prevents damaging the fabric's surface.
- Use a damp press cloth for fusing interfacing.



## • Ironing Board

- Ironing boards come in several sizes. Choose from full size, tabletop, and smaller sleeve board versions.
- The height of many full size ironing boards can be adjusted, making it more comfortable to iron and press.

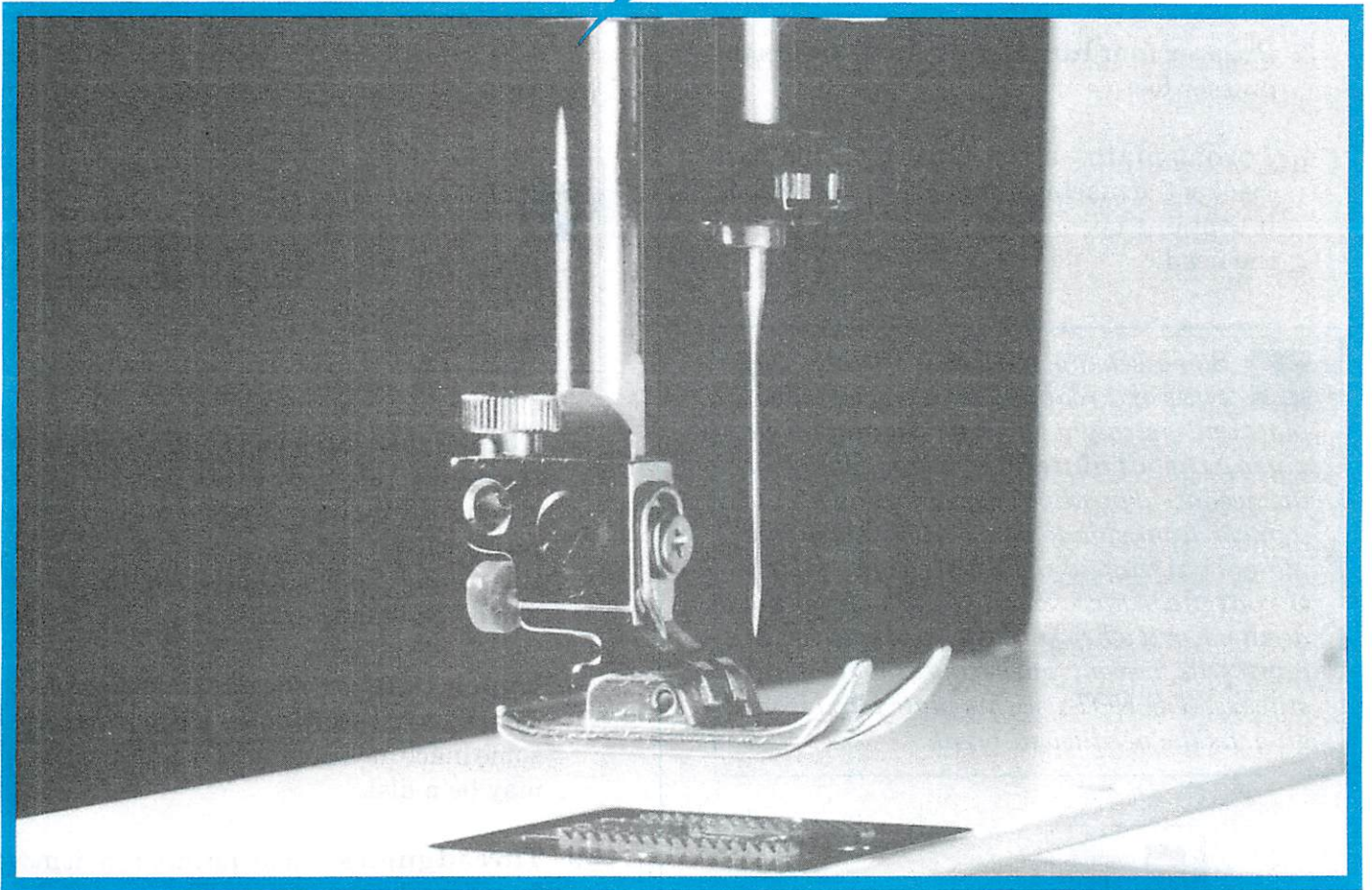


# Tool Checklist

	Have/ borrow	Buy now	Buy later
<b>Cutting Tools</b>			
Shears			
Scissors			
<b>Measuring Tools</b>			
Tape Measure			
6" (15 cm) Ruler or Hem Gauge			
<b>Marking Tools</b>			
Marking Pens			
Tracing Paper and Tracing Wheel			
Chalk Pencils, Triangles, and Wheels			
<b>Sewing Tools</b>			
Needles			
Pins			
Pin Cushion			
Seam Ripper			
Bamboo Pointer and Creaser			
Thread			
<b>Pressing Tools</b>			
Iron			
Seam Roll			
Pressing Ham			
Press Cloth			
Ironing Board			



# Sewing Machine Savvy



You and your sewing machine will become a “team,” so you must become familiar with your machine.

Not all sewing machines are alike. Some machines can only straight stitch. Other machines straight stitch and zigzag. Still others have additional decorative stitches.

The important thing isn't the KIND of machine you have. The important thing is that you learn how to use **YOUR** machine.

The instructions in this book are general guidelines. Sometimes you may need to refer to your owner's manual to see how a particular step is done on **your** machine.

It takes practice to stitch straight and at an even speed. As you gain experience in using your machine, stitching will become a “snap,” and soon you will be a stitching “pro!”

So get out that sewing machine manual, and let's get ready to stitch!

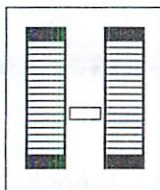
# Parts of the Sewing Machine

Use your owner's manual to locate these machine parts.

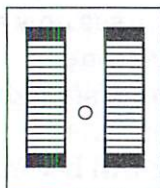
1. **Power switch**—turns the machine on and off.
2. **Presser foot**—holds the fabric in place during sewing. Always lower the foot when sewing. Lift the foot to remove fabric when you're finished sewing.
3. **Presser foot lifter**—raises and lowers the presser foot.
4. **Throat plate**—a metal piece on the base (bed) of the machine under the presser foot. It contains openings for the feed dogs and the needle.



Some sewing machines include two types of throat plates: a zigzag throat plate and a straight stitch throat plate. The **zigzag throat plate** has a wide opening for the needle. This allows room for the needle to move from side to side. Always use this plate for zigzagging. The **straight stitch throat plate** has a small round hole for the needle. Use it when you stitch on lightweight fabrics to prevent puckering and skipped stitches. **DO NOT** use this plate for zigzagging, as the needle will break.

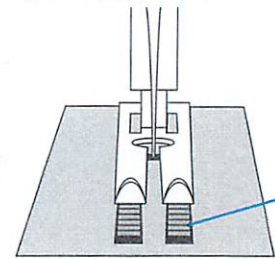


Zigzag throat plate



Straight stitch throat plate

5. **Feed dogs**—hold the fabric tight against the presser foot as stitches are formed. Feed dogs move back and forth to “feed” the fabric through the machine.



Feed dogs

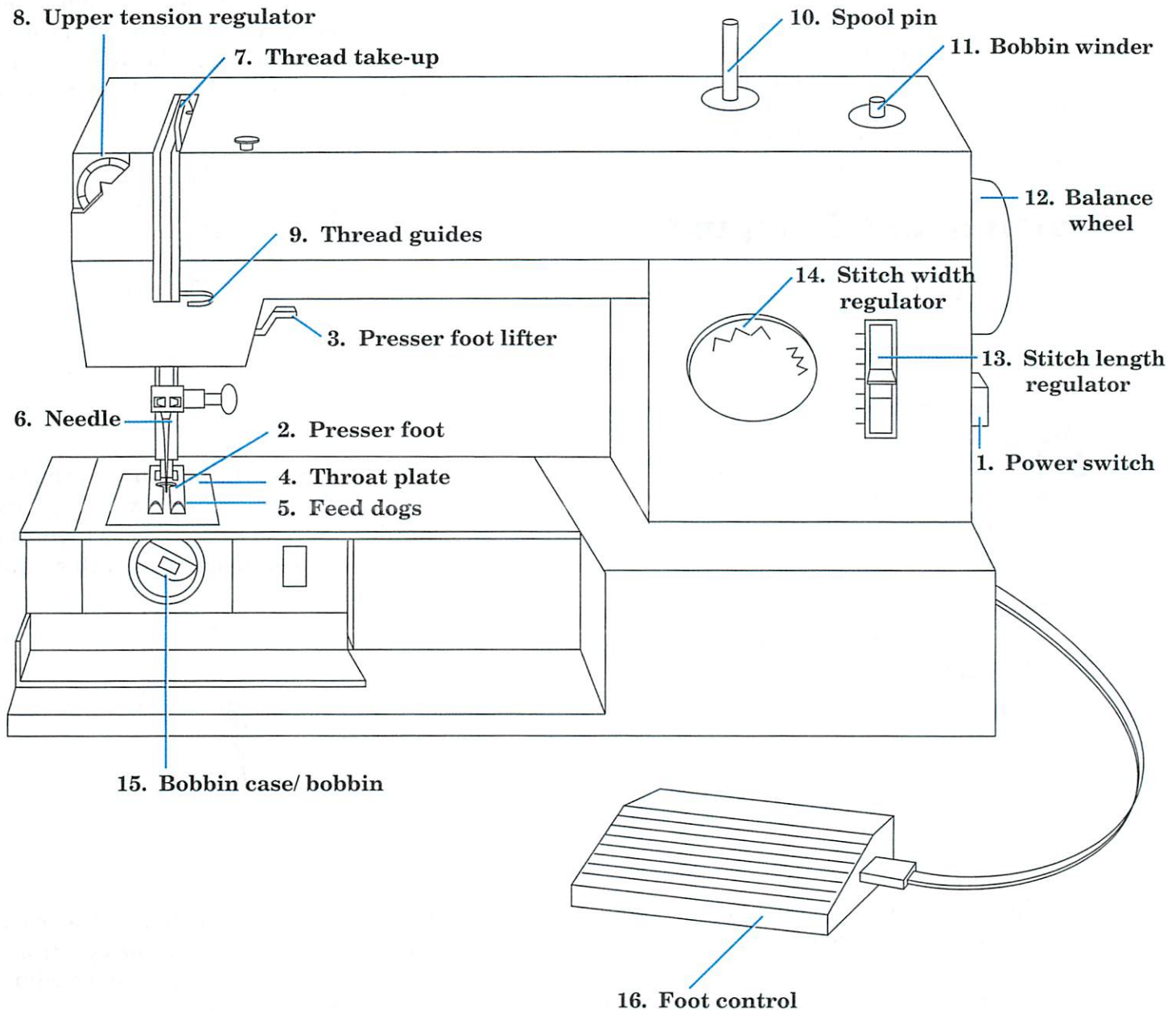
6. **Needle**—moves up and down through the fabric to form a stitch. The larger the size of a sewing machine needle, the thicker it is. Use a size 10 or 12 needle (European sizes 70 or 80) for sewing most cottons and blends.



It's a good idea to insert a new needle each time you begin a new project. Your stitching will look better, and you'll have less chance of snagging your fabric or having skipped stitches.

7. **Thread take-up**—moves up and down with the needle, taking up thread slack with each stitch. Always have this lever at its **highest point** when you stop sewing. This prevents the thread from pulling out of the needle when you start sewing.
8. **Upper tension regulator**—controls the tightness (tension) of the upper thread. On some machines, it may be a dial; on others it may be a disk.
9. **Thread guides**—hold the thread as it moves from spool to needle. The number and location of guides varies with different machines. Check your owner's manual to see where they are located on your machine.
10. **Spool pin**—holds the spool of thread.
11. **Bobbin winder**—holds the bobbin while thread is wound from the spool onto the bobbin.

# Sewing Machine



12. **Balance wheel**—makes a turn with each stitch. You can use this wheel to move the needle up and down by hand without using the motor.

13. **Stitch length regulator**—determines how long each stitch will be.

- Use 10-12 stitches per inch (3–2.5 mm stitch length) for sewing most seams.
- Use 6-8 stitches per inch (4–3.25 mm stitch length) for basting. Basting is a longer stitch which temporarily holds two edges together.

14. **Stitch width regulator**—determines how wide a zigzag stitch will be.

15. **Bobbin**—holds the lower thread.

16. **Foot control**—controls how fast or slow the machine sews. It's like the gas pedal on a car.



# Using the Sewing Machine

Practice makes perfect! Practice using your sewing machine before you stitch on your first project. As you gain experience, you will learn to control the speed of the machine and your stitching will get straighter.

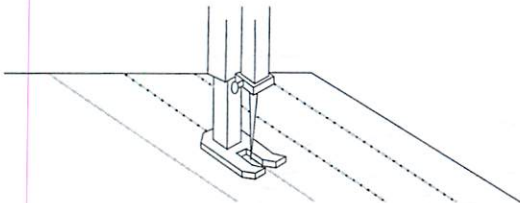
## Starting and Stopping

1. Remove the thread from your machine.
2. Practice stitching on a piece of paper.

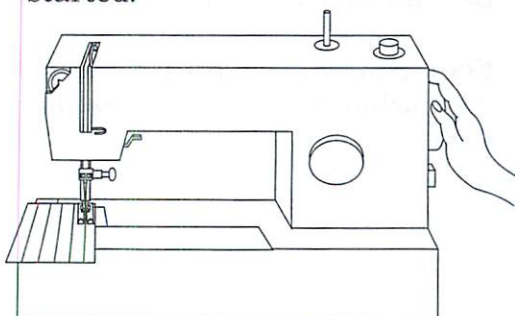


*You'll never sew on paper. Yet we like this step because you can see exactly where you're stitching so you can practice stitching straighter.*

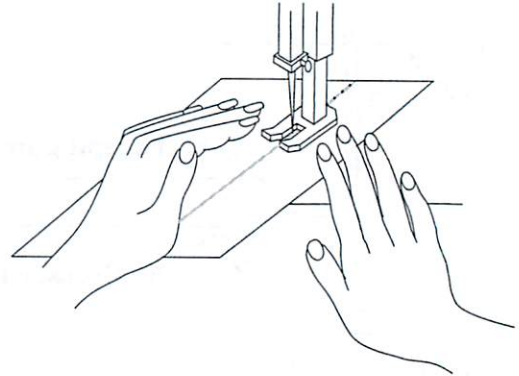
- Draw some straight lines (or use a sheet of notebook paper). Guide the machine along those lines as you stitch.



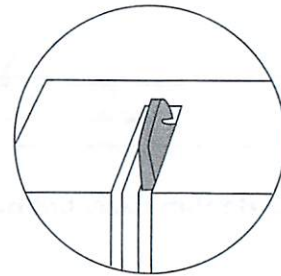
- The largest portion of the paper should be to the **left** of the presser foot.
- Lower the presser foot using the presser foot lifter.
- Turn the balance wheel toward you by hand as you gently press on the foot control. This helps get the machine started.



- As the machine begins to stitch, remove your hand from the wheel. Place it to the right of the needle. Place your left hand to the left of the needle. Use your hands to guide the paper through the machine. Do not push or pull the paper. Just guide it so the stitching follows the line.

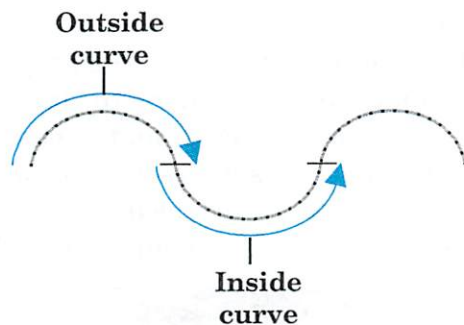


- To stop, release the pressure on the foot control. Turn the balance wheel by hand until the thread take-up is as high as it will go. (Some machines do this automatically.)



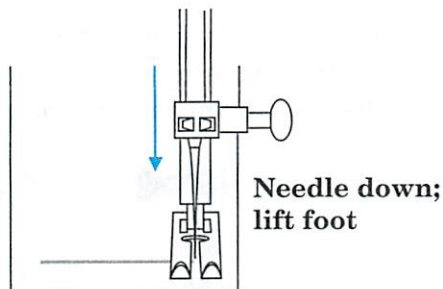
- Practice until you can put the right amount of pressure on the foot control so the machine runs smoothly at a medium speed (without “jerks”) and you follow the marked lines.
- Most machines have a control for stitching in reverse. Check your instruction manual to see how to stitch in reverse on your machine. Practice stitching backward and forward.

3. Draw some curved lines. Make some inside curves and some outside curves. Practice stitching along those lines until you can guide the paper easily and run the machine smoothly. If you stitch slowly, it's easier to follow curves.

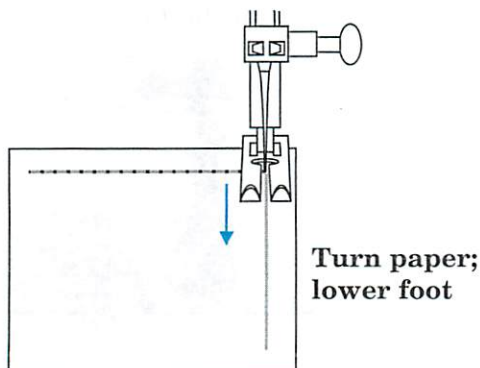


4. Draw some corners. Practice turning corners. This is called **pivoting**.

- Stitch to the corner. Stop with the needle **down** in the paper. Lift the presser foot.



- Turn the paper so the foot lines up with the next stitching line.
- Lower the presser foot and continue stitching.

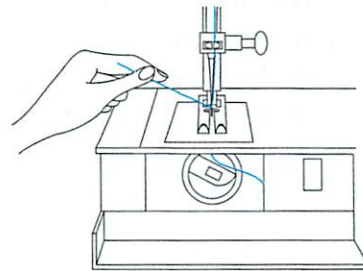


- **PRACTICE** until it's easy to turn corners.

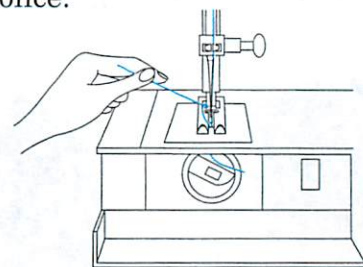
## Threading the Machine

Check your instruction manual to learn how to thread your machine and wind your bobbin. Use the same kind of thread in both places. Practice until you can:

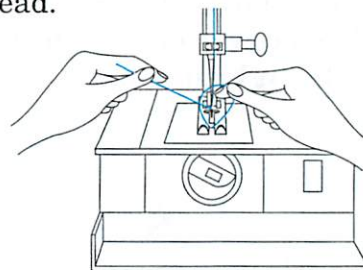
1. Wind the bobbin.
2. Put the bobbin in its case and remove it.
3. Thread the top of the machine.
4. Next, bring up the bobbin thread to get the machine ready for sewing.
  - Hold the needle thread in your left hand.



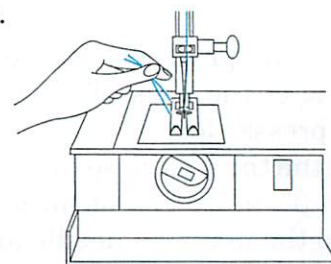
- Turn the balance wheel with your right hand so the needle goes down and comes up once.



- Gently pull the thread in your left hand to pull up a loop. This loop is the bobbin thread.



- Hold both threads and bring them under the presser foot to the back of the machine.



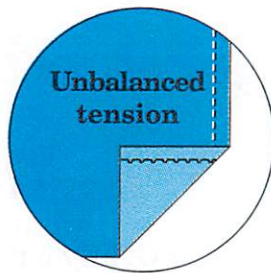
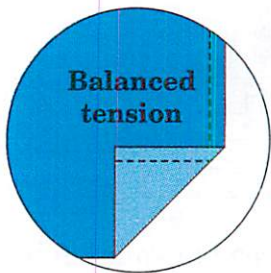
## Stitching on Fabric

Now practice stitching on a single thickness of fabric. Mark some straight and curved lines on fabric scraps and stitch.

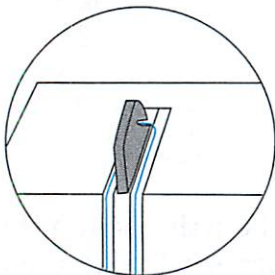
1. Set the stitch length at 10-12 stitches per inch (3–2.5 mm stitch length).
2. Make sure the upper and bobbin threads are at the back of the machine under the presser foot.
3. Place the fabric under the presser foot. Lower the presser foot.
4. Lower the needle into the fabric by turning the balance wheel; stitch.
5. Check that your stitching is balanced.



*Balanced stitching looks the same on both sides of the fabric. A balanced stitch looks good and lasts longer than stitching which is unbalanced. If your stitching looks different on one side, check your instruction manual or seek help in adjusting the tension.*



6. At the end of each row of stitching, turn the balance wheel until the take up lever is at its **highest** point.

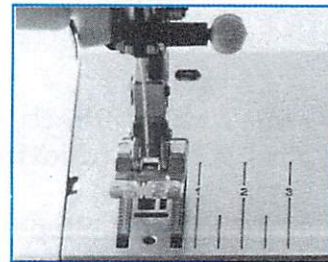


7. Raise the presser bar lifter and pull the fabric to the back of the machine under the presser foot.
8. Cut the threads close to the fabric. Leave 2" to 3" (5–7.5 cm) of thread tails coming from the machine needle and bobbin.

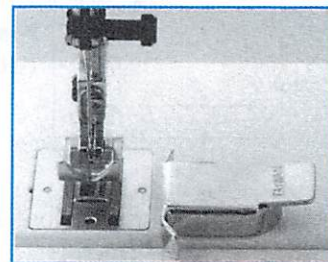
## Guides to Straight Stitching

Next, practice stitching straight on fabric without following marked lines. There are several ways to stitch an even distance from the edge.

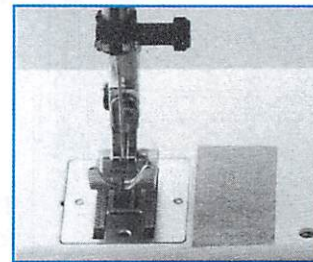
- Use the straight edge of the presser foot as a guide, keeping it along the fabric edge or a uniform distance from the edge.
- Some machines have lines marked on the throat plate at various distances from the needle. Use them to guide the fabric.



- Place a magnetic or screw-on seam guide on the machine so its edge is the desired distance from the needle.



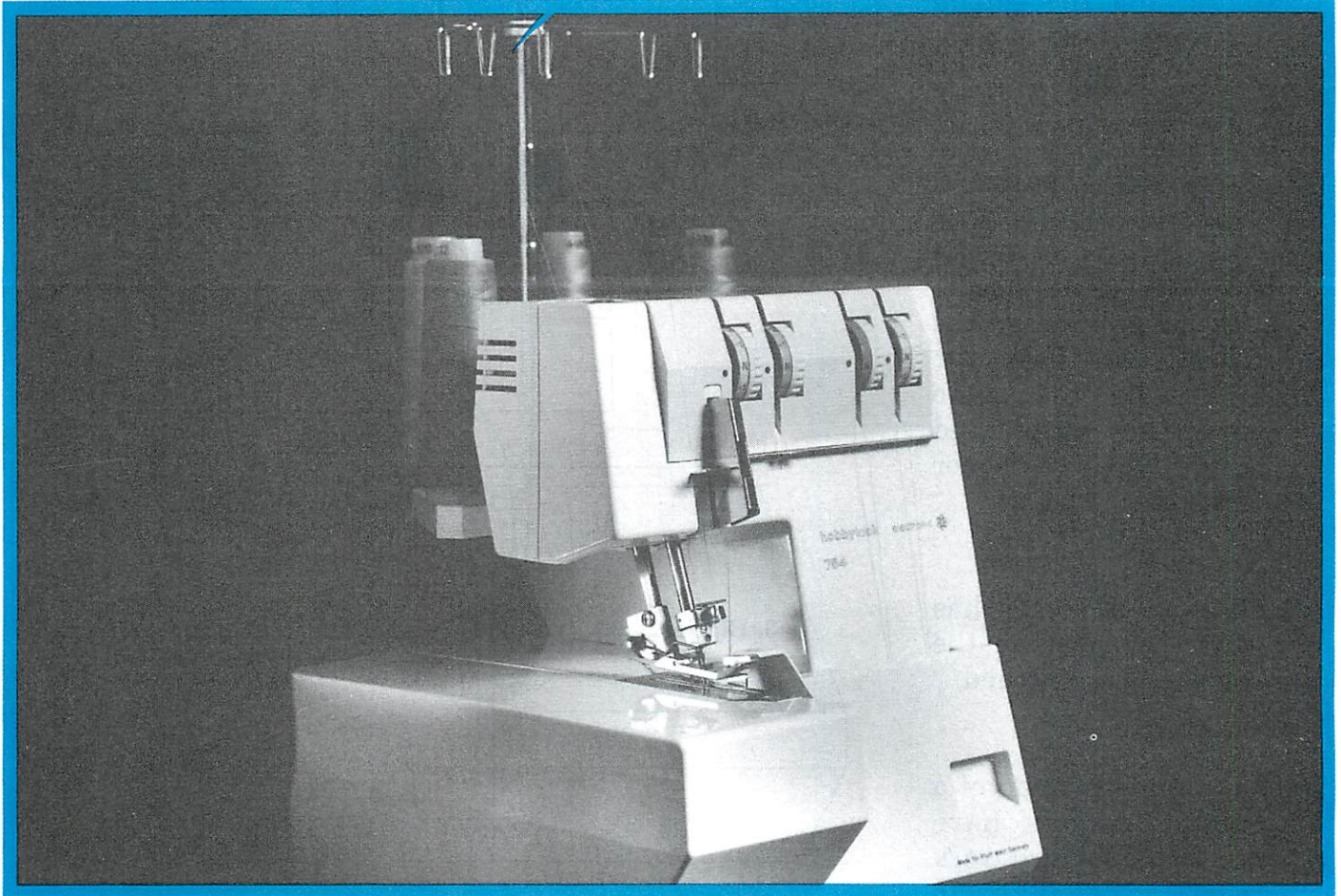
- Place a strip of adhesive or masking tape on the machine so its edge is the desired distance from the needle.



*Another way to get straight stitching is to place a piece of elastic or a rubber band around the free arm of the machine. Guide the fabric along that edge.*



# Spotlight On Sergers



It's fun to sew with a serger! A serger does not totally replace a sewing machine, but it can speed your sewing and make it much easier.

A serger uses three, four, or five threads instead of the two threads used on a conventional sewing machine. Because of those extra threads, a serger looks more complicated than a conventional sewing machine. But don't worry! This book will give you some tips which will make threading and stitching with a serger fast and easy.

A serger stitches a seam, finishes the raw edges, and cuts off excess fabric all at the same time. It's important to check the fit or size of the garment or project before serging. Once the seam has been trimmed, you cannot reattach the trimmed seam allowance!

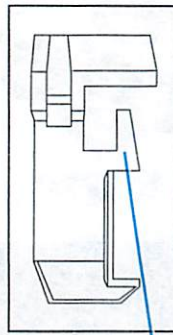
Just as with a conventional sewing machine, each serger is a little different. This book gives guidelines, but you will want to refer to your serger owner's manual, too.

Give serging a try. In no time at all, you'll be making sensational serged projects!

# Parts of a Serger

Many of the parts of a serger are similar to those of a sewing machine. Here are some differences between the two machines. **Use your owner's manual to help locate these machine parts.**

1. **Stitch finger**—The stitch finger can be located on the throat plate or on the presser foot. It is a metal prong that stays between the fabric and the thread until the stitch is completely formed.



1. Stitch finger

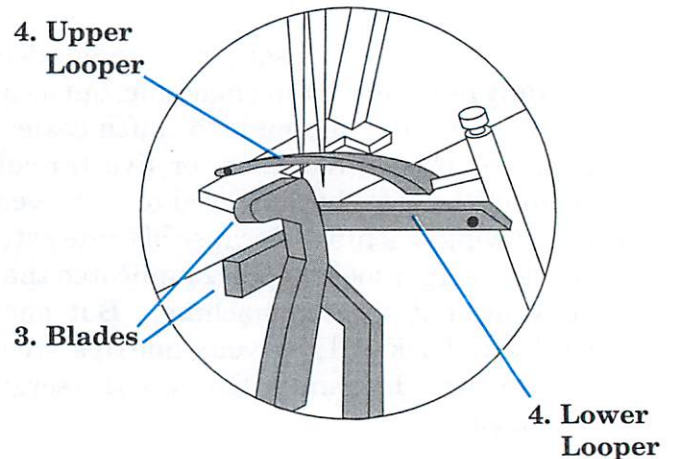
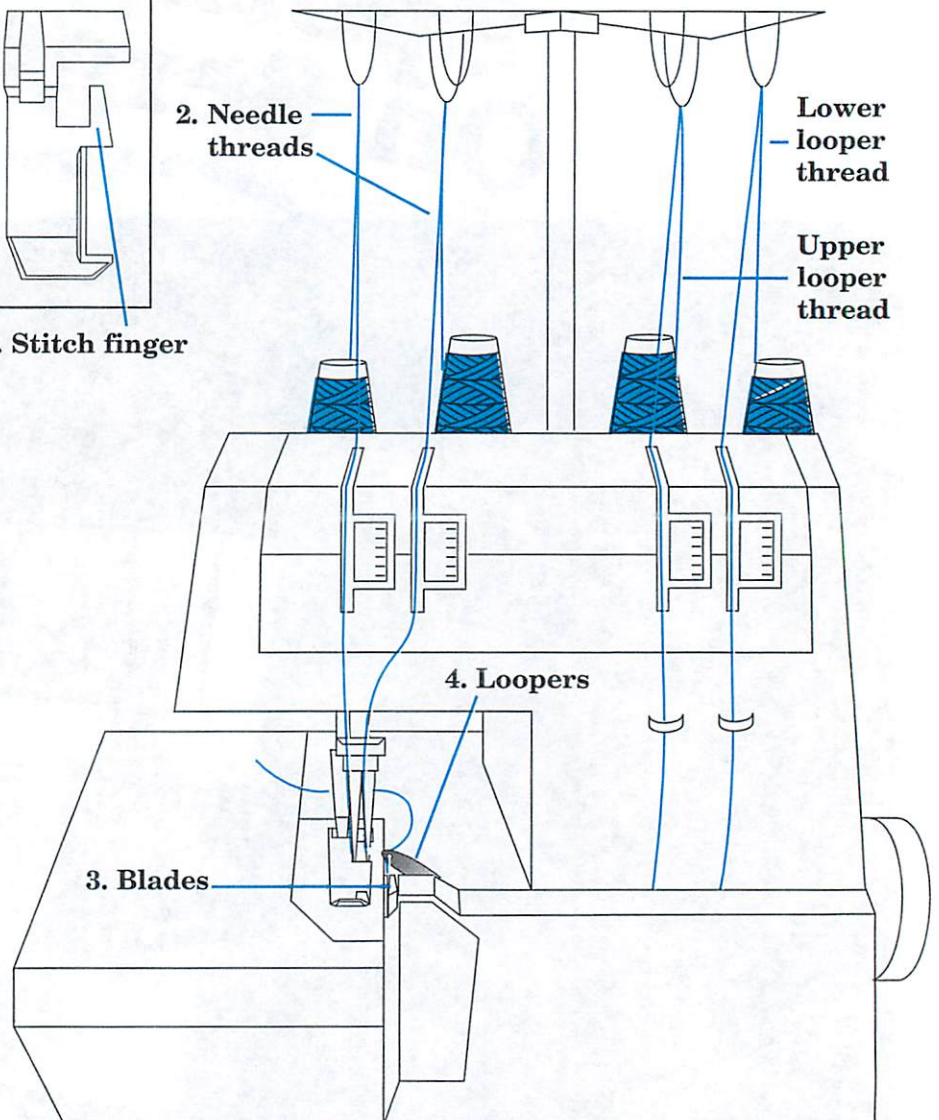
2. **Needle threads**—A serger may have one or two needles and needle threads. As the needle threads go through the fabric, they form the stitch. At the same time, they catch and secure the two looper threads.

3. **Blades**—A serger has knives which trim the seam as it is stitched.

4. **Loopers**—Instead of a bobbin, sergers have two loopers which work together similar to knitting needles.

- The **lower** looper uses the last thread on the right. It does not stitch through the fabric, but passes under the fabric. It interlocks with the upper looper, and is secured by the needle thread.

- The **upper** looper uses the second thread from the right. It also does not stitch through the fabric. It passes over the fabric, interlocks with the lower looper, and is secured by the needle thread.



# Serger Threads

Serger thread is made of **two** strands (plys) twisted together, while thread made for conventional sewing machines is made of **three** strands. Three or four threads are joined to form each serged seam. The lighter weight 2-ply thread keeps the serged seam from becoming too stiff.

Serger thread is spiral wound on cones, while sewing machine thread is parallel wound on spools.

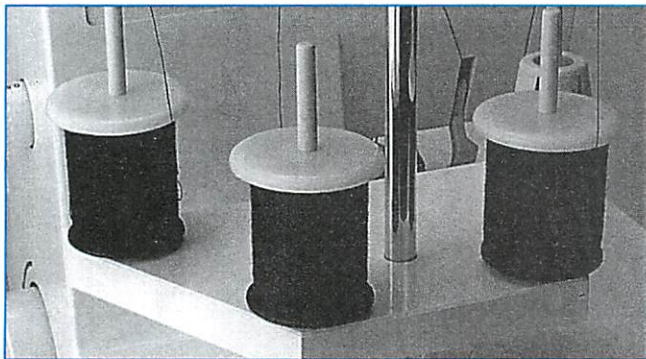
**Spiral wound**



**Parallel wound**



Parallel wound thread can be used on a serger if a special “spool cap” is placed over the spool. This keeps the thread from catching on the rim of the spool.



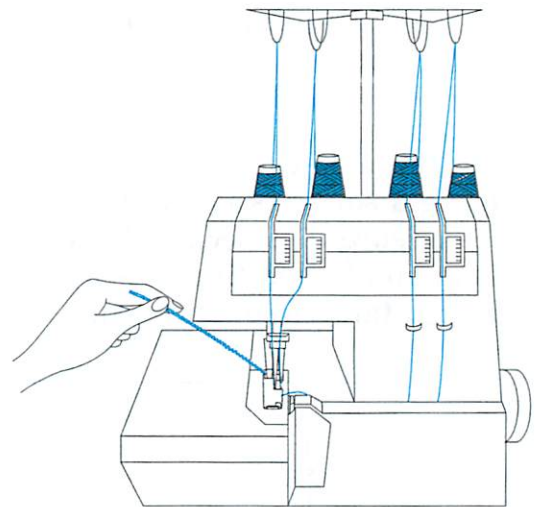
*Please use all purpose serger thread while you are learning to serge. It's what I use for most of my serging projects. Many types of decorative threads can also be used on a serger. After you become more experienced, try using some of these threads for special effects.*

# Serging

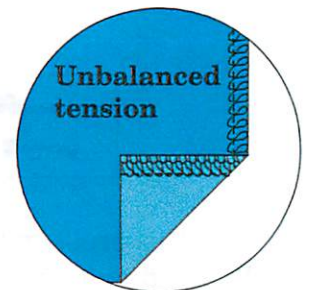
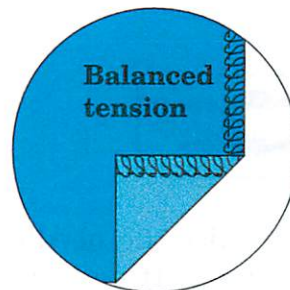
Although a serger can make several types of stitches, the stitch used for most serging is called an overlock. Check your instruction manual to be sure your serger is adjusted for an overlock stitch.

You need a 2" (5 cm) thread chain behind the presser foot before you begin serging. To make this chain:

- Hold the looper and needle threads with your left hand; lower the presser foot.
- Turn the wheel with your right hand as you lightly press the foot control. This helps get the machine started.
- Continue pressing the foot control as the thread chain forms.



Before stitching on a project, always test the serger tension on a scrap of the fabric. Refer to your instruction manual if the stitch is not balanced or if the fabric puckers.

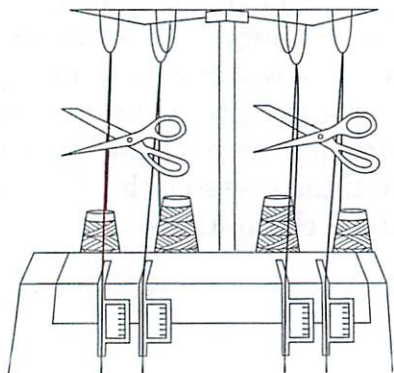


A serged seam is only 1/4" (6 mm) to 3/8" (1 cm) wide. You must position your fabric in the serger so the seam is sewn at that position. Refer to “Serging an Overlock Seam,” page 38, for additional information.

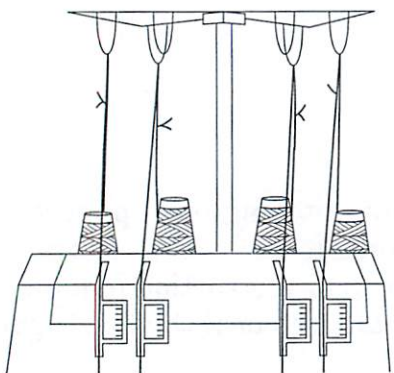
# Changing Threads

Changing threads on a serger is a lot easier than it looks! **DO NOT REMOVE THE THREADS FROM THE MACHINE.** To change threads, follow these easy steps:

1. Clip the threads near the thread spools. Remove the spools and replace them with new spools.



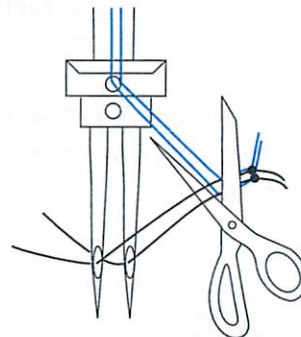
2. Tie the new threads to the old threads using a square knot. Tug on the knot to make sure it is secure. If not, retie the knot and test until it is secure. Clip the thread tails close to the knot.



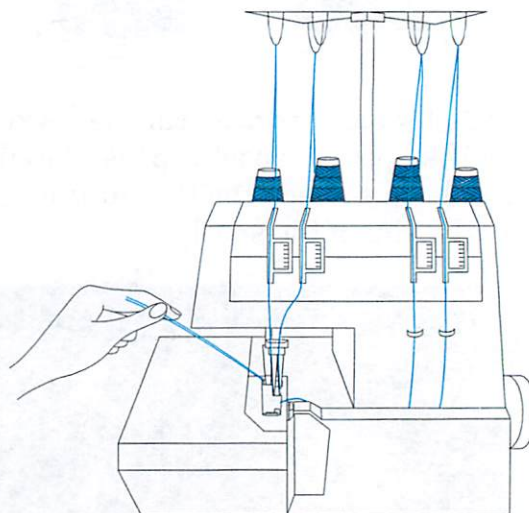
3. Lift the presser foot; raise the needle(s). Write down the tension settings so you can return the dials to the correct settings after you change threads. Now loosen all tensions to "0" or the - (minus) numbers.

4. Pull the threads through the machine.

- Pull the needle thread(s) through the machine. Cut the thread(s) at the needle, clipping off the knot(s) joining the old thread(s) to the new thread(s).

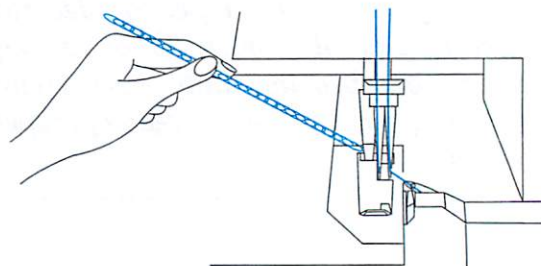


- Next, pull the lower and upper loopers through the machine.



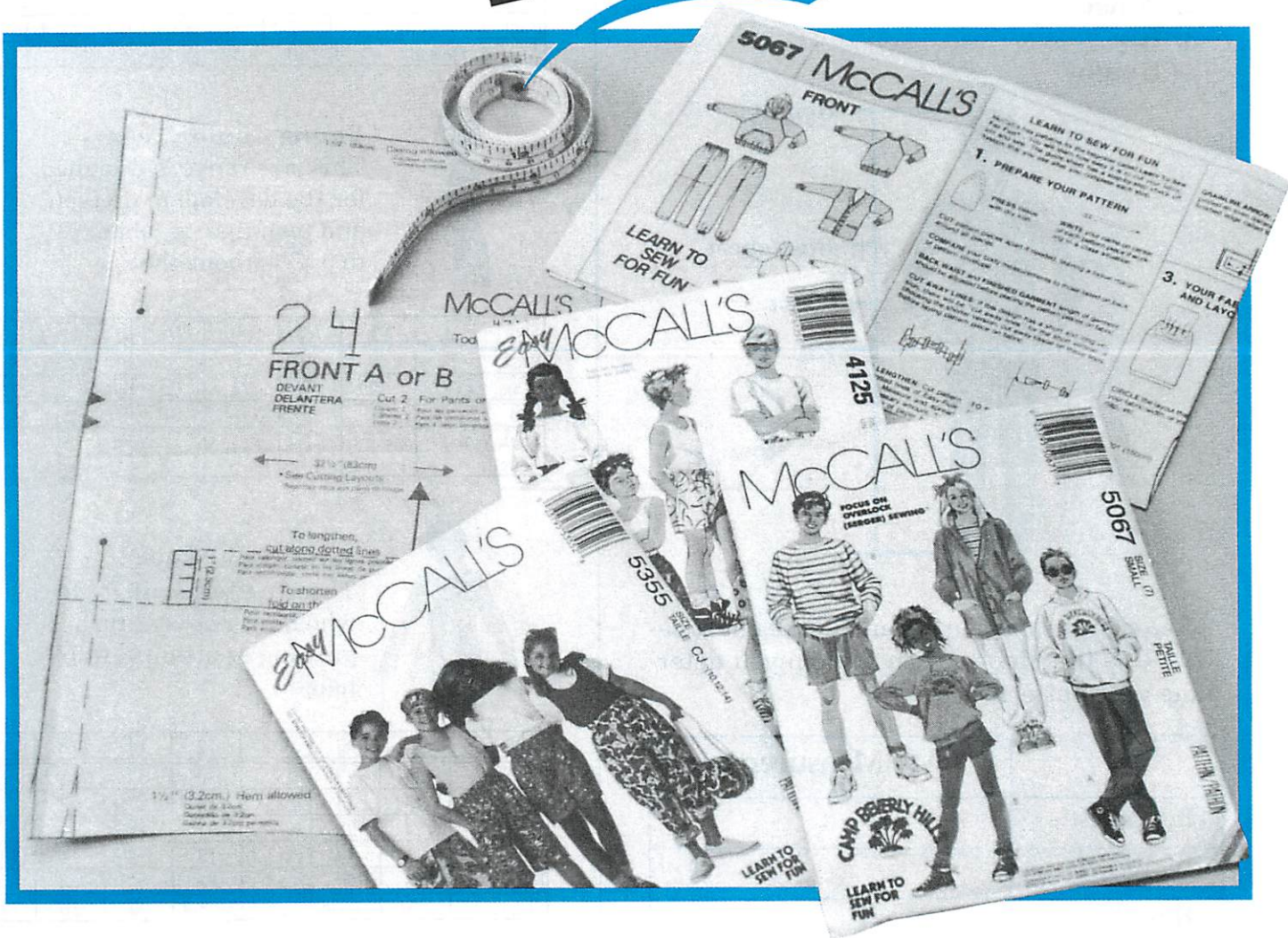
- Rethread the needle(s).

5. Pull all the threads to the left under the presser foot. Return the tensions to their original settings. Hold the threads and press the foot control until a thread chain forms.





# Pattern Power



Patterns are like “road maps” for your projects. A pattern helps you turn a piece of fabric into a great finished project.

Before choosing a pattern, think about what you would like to sew. Would you like to make a simple top, or a pair of shorts or pants? Or do you want to sew a pillow, a tote bag, or some other kind of project? The choice is yours!

Next, look for a pattern you like in a pattern catalog. Pattern catalogs are divided into separate sections for different types of projects. Flip to the section that includes the kind of project you want.

The patterns shown in this book are merely examples. If you cannot find these specific patterns in a current catalog, look for similar styles.

For your first project, choose a simple pattern. Easy patterns have few pattern pieces and simple sewing steps. Most pattern books include special sections with patterns which are easy for beginners. Some also label patterns for beginners as “easy to sew” or “learn to sew.”

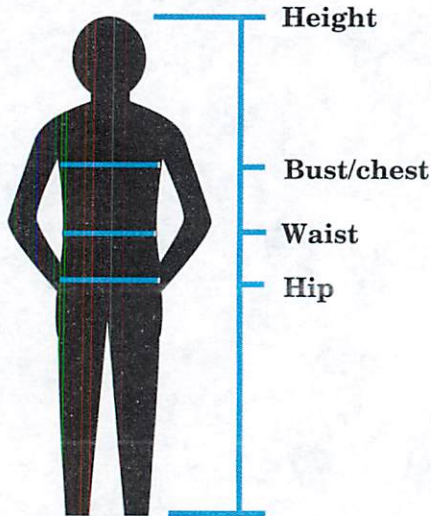
Let’s take a look at how a pattern helps you sew.



# Selecting the Correct Pattern Size

Ask someone to help you take your body measurements so you can choose the correct pattern size. The measurements you will need are:

1. **Bustline or chest**
2. **Waist**
3. **Hip**
4. **Height**



Record your measurements in the chart below. Use this information to help you determine your pattern size.

My Measurements	
Bust/chest	
Waist	
Hip	
Height	

Compare your measurements to those in the size charts in the back of the pattern catalog. **Choose the pattern type and size closest to your measurements.** The charts in the following column are examples of several pattern types.

If your measurements don't exactly match those listed, use the chest or bust measurement for tops, dresses, or jackets. Use hip and waist measurements for pants or skirts.



## Girls'

Girls' patterns are designed for the girl who has not yet begun to mature.

Size	S		M		L	
	7	8	10	12	14	
Breast	26	27	28-1/2	30	32	
Waist	23	23-1/2	24-1/2	25-1/2	26-1/2	
Hip	27	28	30	32	34	
Back Waist Length	11-1/2	12	12-3/4	13-1/2	14-1/4	
Approx. Heights	50	52	56	58-1/2	61	



## Young Junior/Teen

This size range is designed for the developing preteen and teen figures, about 5'1" to 5'3" without shoes.

Size	5/6	7/8	9/10	11/12	13/14	15/16
Bust	28	29	30-1/2	32	33-1/2	35
Waist	22	23	24	25	26	27
Hip	31	32	33-1/2	35	36-1/2	38
Back Waist Length	13-1/2	14	14-1/2	15	15-3/8	15-3/4



## Boys'/Teen Boys'

These patterns are for boys who have not yet finished growing or attained full height.

Size	7	8	10	12	14	16	18
Chest	26	27	28	30	32	33-1/2	35
Waist	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Hip	27	28	29-1/2	31	32-1/2	34	35-1/2
Neckband	11-3/4	12	12-1/2	13	13-1/2	14	14-1/2
Height	48	50	54	58	61	64	66
Sleeve	22-3/8	23-1/4	25	26-3/4	29	30	31



## Misses'

Misses' patterns are designed for a well proportioned and developed figure about 5'5" to 5'6" without shoes.

Size	XS		S		M		L
	6	8	10	12	14	16	18
Bust	30-1/2	31-1/2	32-1/2	34	36	38	40
Waist	23	24	25	26-1/2	28	30	32
Hip	32-1/2	33-1/2	34-1/2	36	38	40	42
Back Waist Length	15-1/2	15-3/4	16	16-1/4	16-1/2	16-3/4	17



## Understanding Patterns

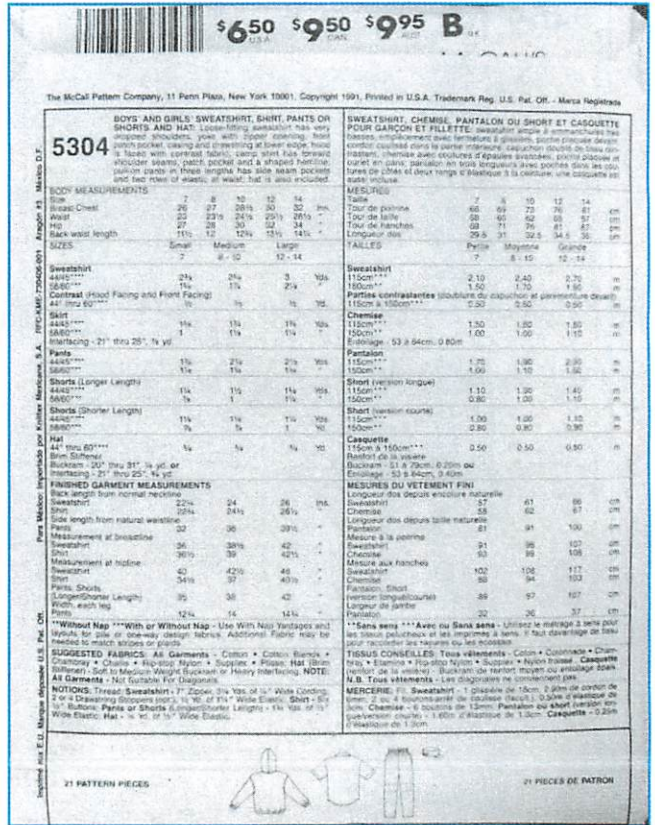
There is SO MUCH information in a pattern! Refer to your pattern as you learn about what is included on the pattern envelope, its guide sheet, and individual pattern pieces.

## Information on the pattern envelope

Study your pattern envelope. The front of the envelope shows all the possible variations of the pattern. These are called “views.” The views are either marked by numbers or letters.

The back of the envelope includes additional information:

1. Back views of the garments.
2. A chart of body measurements.
3. A list of suggested fabrics.
4. A list of notions needed to make your project. Notions are things like buttons, zippers, elastic, thread, snaps, and hooks and eyes.



5. A **yardage chart** for each pattern view. To determine the amount of fabric needed:

- Find the view you are making on the left side of the chart.
- Find the line under that view which lists 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 need.

	Small	Medium	Large	
	7	8-10	12-14	
<b>View A - Pants</b>				
44/45"	1	1-1/4	1-5/8	Yds.
58/60"	7/8	1-1/8	1-1/8	
<b>View B - Shorts</b>				
44/45"	7/8	1	1-1/8	Yds.
58/60"	3/4	7/8	7/8	
<b>View C - Top</b>				
44/45"	1-1/2	1-7/8	2-3/8	Yds.
58/60"	1	1-1/4	1-5/8	

# 5254 McCall's

## INTERFACING GUIDE

Use this handy reference sheet as a guide when selecting your own fabric. Always test for compatibility by taping or stitching a piece of interfacing to your fabric before applying it to your garment.

**Front**

**Back**

**TUNIC A-B**

**PATTERN PIECES**

**LEGGINGS OR SHORTS**

**CULOTTES**

**TOP C-D**

**LEGGINGS OR SHORTS**

**SEPARATES AND DRESSES**

**OTHER SHAPING**

**COATS, DRESSES, SUITS, AND SUITS**

**OTHER SHAPING**

**SEWING INFORMATION**

**ADJUST IF NECESSARY**

**CUTTING AND MARKING**

**SEWING INFORMATION**

**CUTTING LAYOUTS**

**A TUNIC**

**B TUNIC**

**C TOP**

**D TOP**

**PATTERN MARKINGS**

**FABRIC GARMENT MEASUREMENT SYMBOLS**

PRINTED IN U.S.A. CONTINUED ON OTHER SIDE

## Information on the pattern guide sheet

Think of the guide sheet as your instruction book. It includes:

- **Illustrations of all pattern pieces** for the different pattern views.
- **Pattern markings**—an explanation of symbols and terms used in the pattern.
- **General information** about interfacing, adjusting the pattern, cutting and marking, and sewing which will help you complete the project.
- **Cutting layouts**—These illustrations show how to place the pattern pieces on the fabric before you cut them out.

- **Step-by-step instructions** and illustrations showing how to make the project from start to finish.

**B TUNIC**  
use pieces 1, 3, 5, thru 8, 10, 11

58" 60" (150cm) fabric with nap all sizes

**TOP C OR D**

**1. SHOULDER SEAMS AND NECK FACING**

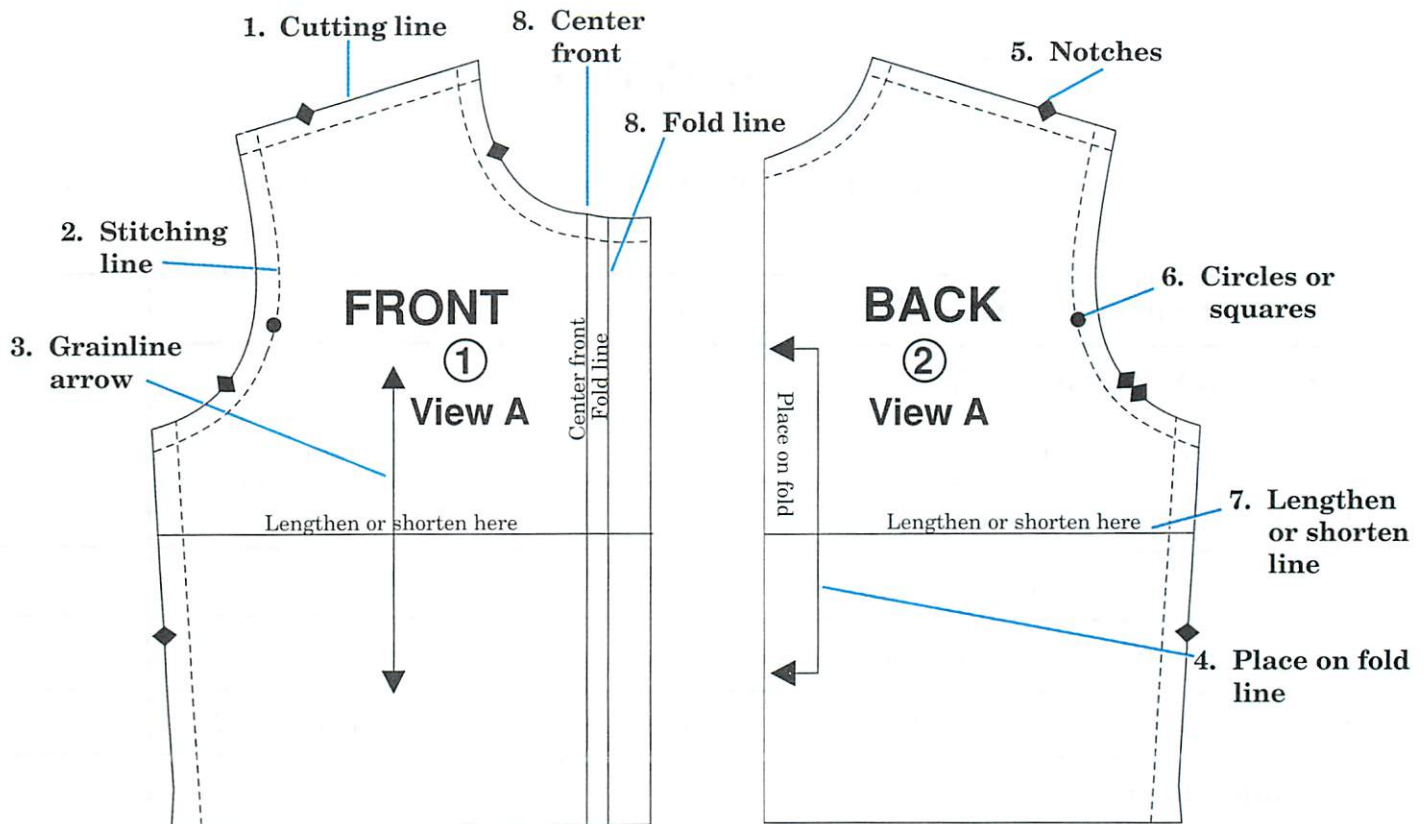
View C is shown.

Stitch TOP FRONT (12) to TOP BACK (13) at shoulders.

Baste interfacing to WRONG SIDE of FRONT NECK FACING (14) and BACK NECK FACING (15).



Before beginning a project, I like to read through the guide sheet so I have a general idea of the complete process. It's like checking the map before taking a trip.



## Symbols on pattern pieces

Symbols on a pattern are sewing and cutting “landmarks,” similar to those found on a road map.

1. **Cutting line**—a solid, dark outer line. A scissors is sometimes printed on this line to let you know this is where you should cut.
2. **Stitching line**—a dotted line inside the cutting line. This is the line on which seams will be stitched.
3. **Grainline arrow**—a straight line with an arrow at each end. It is used to position the pattern on the fabric. This arrow must be parallel to the fabric selvage or lengthwise grainline. For more information about fabric grain, refer to the sections “Fabric Dictionary,” page 26 and “Pattern Layout,” page 31.
4. **Place on fold line**—a narrower line than the cutting line which tells you to put that line on a fold of the fabric. “Place on fold”

is usually printed along the line. Sometimes a second parallel line with double ended arrows points to the foldline.

5. **Notches**—single, double, or triple diamonds which help you match garment pieces accurately.
6. **Circles and squares**—marks which help you match garment pieces. Sometimes they show where you should start or stop stitching.
7. **Lengthen and shorten lines**—one or more lines which show where you can add or subtract length to make the pattern longer or shorter.
8. **Hemline, center front and back, and fold line**—show position and/or suggested sizes of special construction details.



*As you learn more about sewing you'll also find markings for things like darts, pockets, buttons, and buttonholes.*

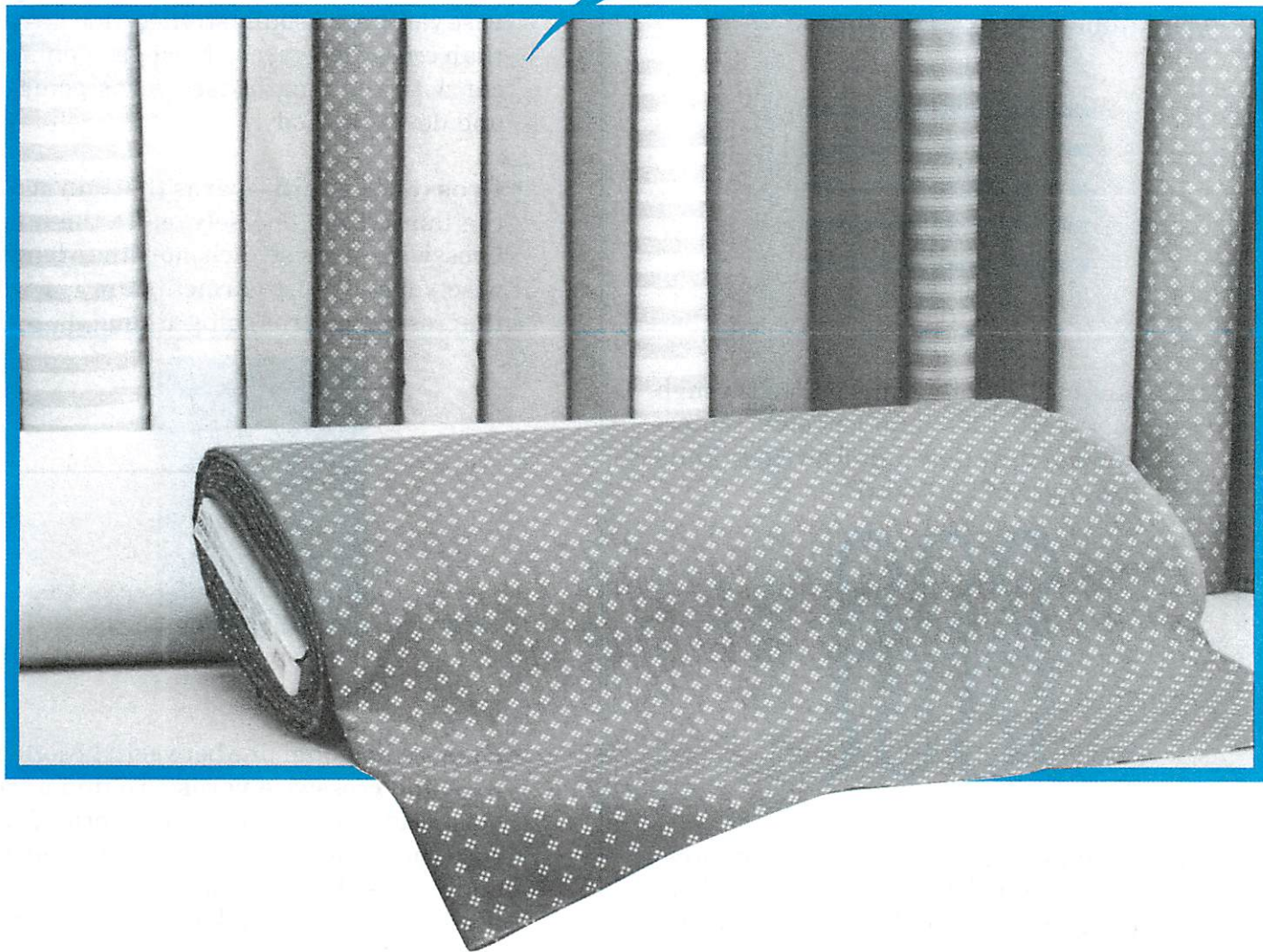
# How's Your Pattern Power?

Look at your pattern. Can you find the following information? Check each item as you locate it.

<b>Pattern Envelope Front</b> —Front views of all garments	
<b>Pattern Envelope Back</b>	
Back views of garments	
Body measurement chart	
List of suggested fabrics	
List of notions needed for your pattern	
Yardage chart—How much fabric do you need for the view you are making?	
<b>Guide Sheet</b>	
Front and back views	
Illustrations of pattern pieces	
Explanations of symbols and terms	
General sewing information	
Pattern layouts—Circle the layout you will use for your project.	
Step by step instructions (sewing directions)	
<b>Pattern symbols</b>	
Cutting line	
Stitching line	
Grainline arrow	
“Place on fold” line	
Notches	
Circles or squares	
Lengthen or shorten line	
Center front or back	



# Fabric Facts



Once you've selected a pattern, the next step is choosing fabric. Selecting fabric can be exciting, but it can also be confusing! The fabric store is filled with fabrics of different colors, textures, and fibers. There are SO MANY fabrics to choose from! How do you pick one that's right for your pattern and right for you?

The list of suggested fabrics included on your pattern can help you select the right fabric, but there are still many choices. Before you purchase your fabric, you should know

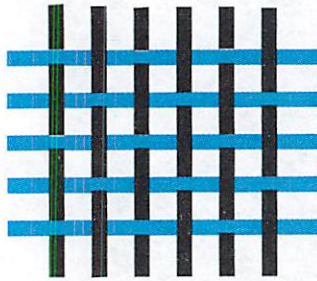
some basic information about how one fabric differs from another. Knowing the difference between a woven and a knit fabric, and what to look for when choosing fabrics will make you a smarter shopper.

This chapter will also help you choose interfacing and other sewing notions needed for your project. Purchase all these items at one time if possible. Doing so will eliminate extra trips back to the store. Then you'll have more time for actually sewing!

# Types of Fabric Construction

Fabrics are made in three ways—woven, knit, and nonwoven. Learn to recognize all three.

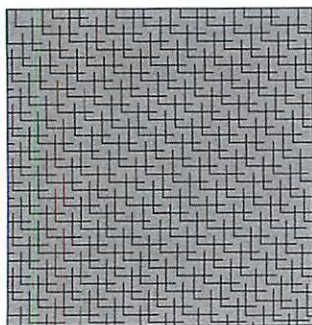
- **Woven**—Yarns go over and under one another. Denim, corduroy, and broadcloth are examples of woven fabrics.



- **Knit**—One loop of yarn is pulled through another loop. Most knits stretch. Interlock, sweatshirt fleece, and sweater knits are examples of knit fabrics.



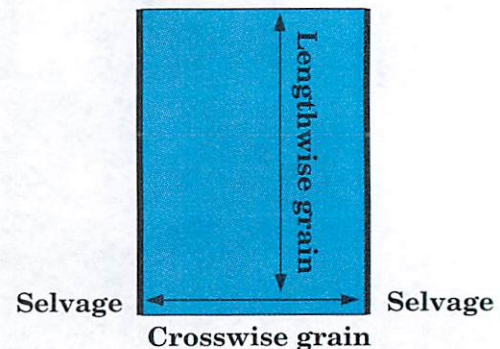
- **Nonwoven**—Heat, moisture, and pressure are applied to fibers, forcing them close together. Sometimes chemicals are added to hold the fibers together. Many interfacings, polyester fleece, and felt are examples of nonwoven fabrics.



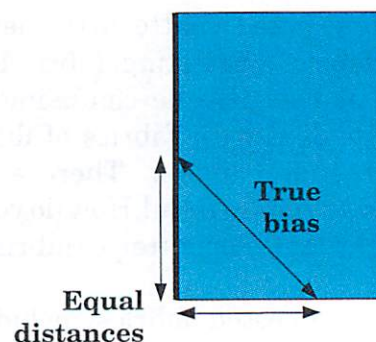
# Fabric Dictionary

Fabric has a language all its own! Add these terms to your sewing vocabulary.

- **Selvage**—the tightly woven finished edges of a piece of fabric. Selvages do not ravel.
- **Lengthwise grain**—yarns that run the same direction as the selvages. Lengthwise yarns are usually stronger and heavier than crosswise yarns. 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 are cut with the crosswise yarns going around the body.



- **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. Bias stretches!



# Fiber Content

Fibers are the materials used to manufacture fabric. A fiber looks like a fine thread. Some fibers are materials which occur naturally. Other fibers are manmade. To make manmade fibers, special liquids are forced through tiny holes and hardened to form continuous threads.

## Natural fibers

Natural fibers include cotton, flax, silk, and wool. These four fibers have been used for centuries.

- **Cotton** comes from the boll of a cotton plant.
- **Flax** comes from the stalk of the flax plant. Flax is used to make linen fabric.
- **Silk** comes from cocoons spun by silkworms.
- **Wool** comes from the fleece of animals like sheep, goats, alpacas, and camels.

## Manmade fibers

- Manmade fibers are usually made from chemical solutions containing products made from oil. Some common manmade fibers are **nylon**, **acrylic**, and **polyester**. **Rayon** is a manmade fiber produced by adding chemicals to the natural cellulose found in wood.

## Fabric blends

- Fabric “**blends**” are made by combining two or more different fibers. For example, a fabric may be a blend of 50% polyester and 50% cotton, or a blend of 75% rayon and 25% cotton. Combining several kinds of fibers to make a fabric gives the finished fabric some of the characteristics of each of those fibers.

# Selecting Fabrics

It's important to choose fabric carefully. If you select the wrong fabric, your project may not look, fit, or wear as you want it to.

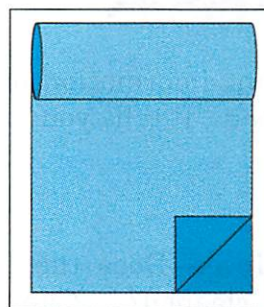
1. Refer to the list of “Suggested Fabrics” on the back of the pattern envelope to see what kinds of fabrics are recommended. Specific fabrics are suited for each pattern. Sometimes a pattern will also list fabrics which should NOT be used for that pattern.

**\*\*Without Nap \*\*\*With or Without Nap - Use With Nap Yardages and layouts for pile or one-way design fabrics. Additional Fabric may be needed to match stripes or plaids.**

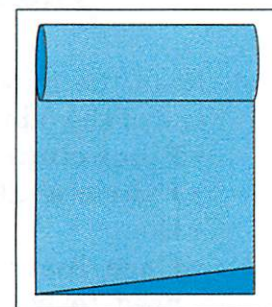
**SUGGESTED FABRICS: All Garments - Cotton • Cotton Blends • Chambray • Challis • Rip-stop Nylon • Supplex • Plisse; Hat (Brim Stiffener) - Soft to Medium Weight Buckram or Heavy Interfacing. NOTE: All Garments - Not Suitable For Diagonals.**

**NOTIONS: Thread; Sweatshirt - 7" Zipper, 3/8 Yds. of 1/4" Wide Cording, 2 or 4 Drawstring Stoppers (opt.), 1/2 Yd. of 1/4" Wide Elastic; Shirt - Six 1/2" Buttons; Pants or Shorts (Longer/Shorter Length) - 1 1/4 Yds. of 1/2" Wide Elastic; Hat - 1/4 Yd. of 1/2" Wide Elastic.**

2. Look at the fabric. Check whether the fabric is straight.
  - Check that the ends of the fabric are square. Line up the ends of the folded fabric with the corner of a counter or table. Both ends should be even and straight with the corner.



Square



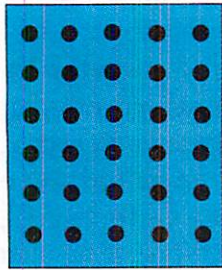
Not square

- If the fabric's cut edges are not straight, you may need to purchase extra fabric.

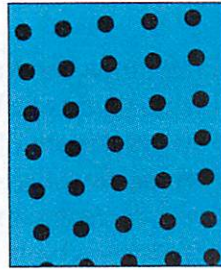


3. Check the fabric's design.

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

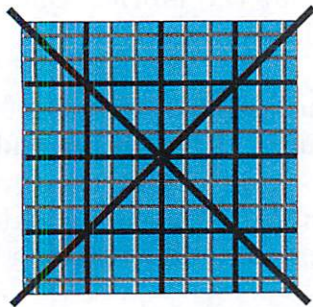


Straight



Not straight

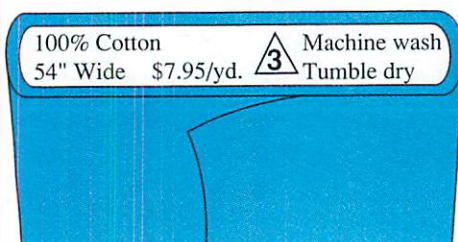
- If the design is not straight, you may want to look for another fabric.
- For your first projects, avoid choosing striped or plaid fabric. These designs must be matched at seamlines. Save such fabrics until you have more experience.



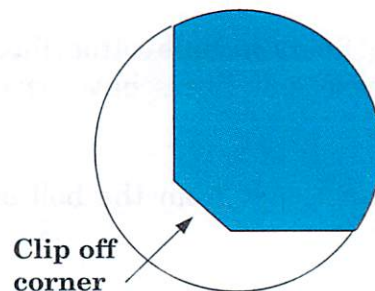
4. Read the important information on the end of the fabric bolt. It tells you:

- **Fiber content**
- **Fabric width**
- **Cost**
- **Care instructions**—Does the fabric need to be dry cleaned? Can it be machine washed? Will it need ironing?

When you purchase fabric, make a note of that information.



*If your fabric is washable, always prewash the fabric after you purchase it. This makes the fabric easier to sew. Wash and dry the fabric according to the care instructions on the bolt **before** cutting out your garment. After your fabric has been prewashed, clip off a small triangle at one corner. Then you can later tell at a glance that your fabric is ready for the sewing machine. Plus, if the fabric shrinks, the shrinking will happen **before** you sew your project.*



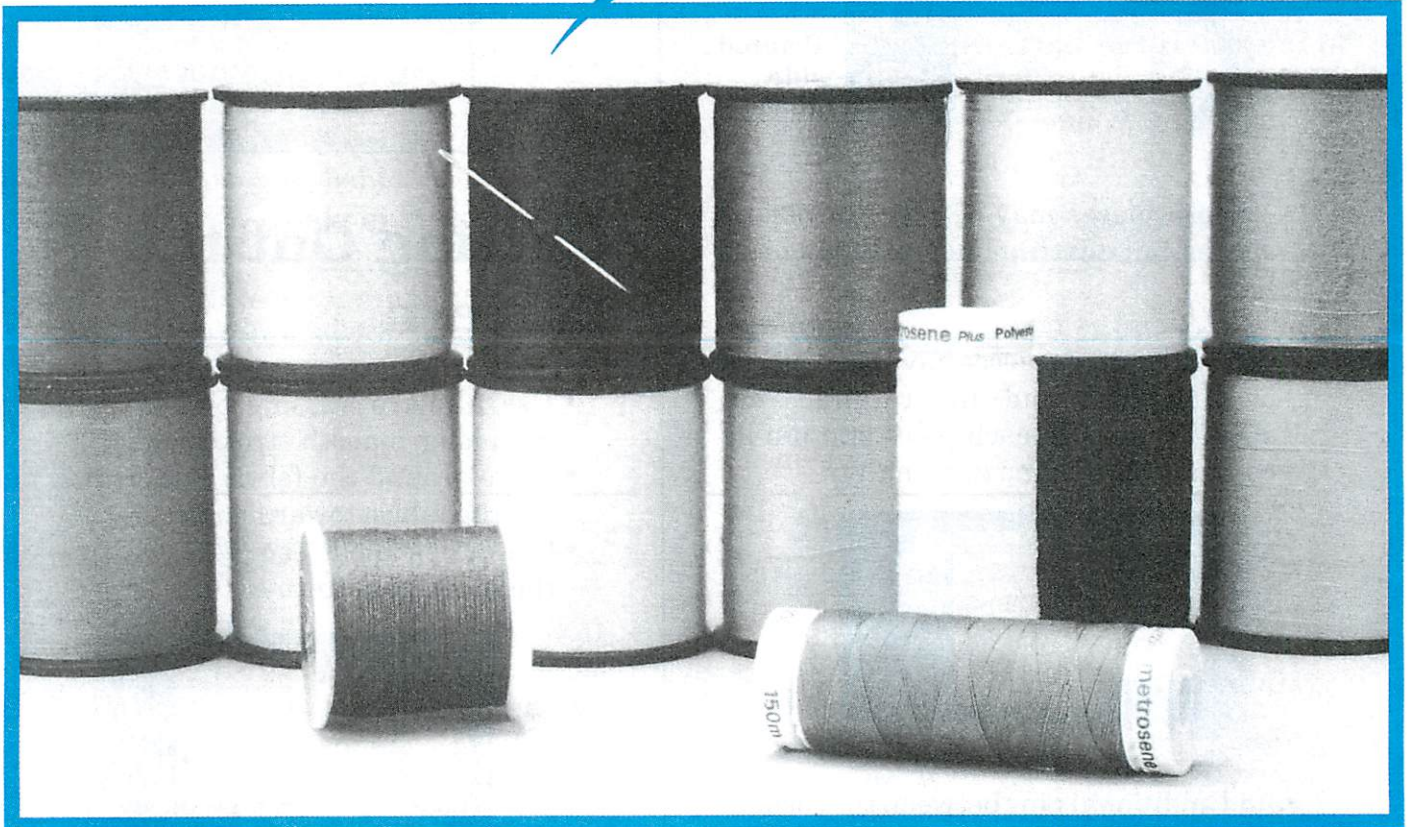
5. If your pattern calls for interfacing, purchase it at the same time you purchase your fabric so you will have it available when you need it. Interfacing is a second layer of fabric on the inside of a garment used to give shape and body.

- The amount of interfacing needed is listed on the yardage chart on the back of the pattern envelope under each pattern view.
- Choose an interfacing that is **lighter** in weight than your fabric.
- Some interfacings must be sewn into the garment, while others are fusible. This means they have a special glue-like backing which melts when heat, moisture, and pressure are applied. Fusible interfacings are easy to use. Just press the fusible backing to the wrong side of the facing.

6. Purchase any notions needed for your project at the same time you buy your fabric. Check the list on the back of the pattern envelope.



# Ready, Set, Sew!



Now for the fun part! You're ready to sew! As you sew your project, you will put together and use all the information you have learned in the other chapters of this book.

You will use the tools you have gathered and organized to cut, measure, mark, sew, and press your project. You will use your skill in stitching with your sewing machine and/or serger to join the individual pieces of your project. And you will use the information you have learned about patterns and fabric as you

change your flat piece of fabric into a completed project.

You don't have to complete your entire project in one day! Sew as much as you have time for; then mark your stopping point on your pattern guide sheet. Pick up your project again when you have more time. Organizing your sewing time into shorter sewing units makes sewing easier and more fun.

Now get out your pattern and fabric, and let's sew!

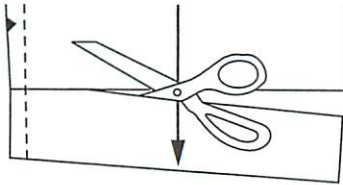
# Altering the Pattern

Even if you have chosen the correct pattern size, you should check the pattern's fit before cutting it out to make sure it fits properly. Pin the pattern together on the marked seamlines and try on the paper pattern. **Be careful!** The pattern is only paper and tears easily.

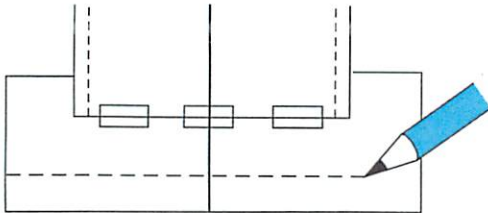
It's easy to change the length of the pattern. For other changes, you may need to get help from someone with more sewing experience.

## 1. To lengthen the pattern:

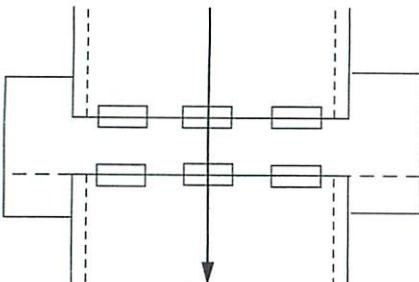
- Cut the pattern apart along the lengthen and shorten line.



- Place a piece of paper under the pattern and tape it to one of the cut pattern edges.
- Measure the amount you want to lengthen the pattern. Draw a line along the taped paper. Extend the original grainline marking onto the taped paper.

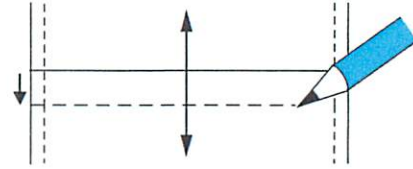


- Place the second part of the pattern piece along the marked line. Match the grainline marking and tape the paper in place.

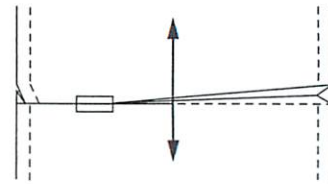


## 2. To shorten the pattern:

- Measure from the lengthen and shorten line the amount you want to shorten the pattern. Draw a line at that point.



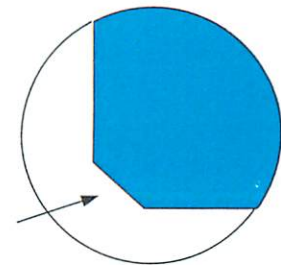
- Fold the pattern on the lengthen and shorten line.
- Bring the folded edge to the marked line. Tape it in place.



# Pattern Layout

1. If your fabric is washable, double check that you have prewashed it before you cut and sew. Look for that clipped-off corner which shows that the fabric is ready for sewing.

Check if prewashed



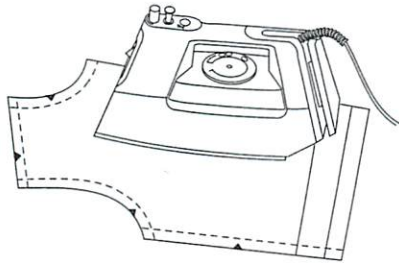
2. Check the guide sheet to see which pattern pieces you need for the view you have chosen.



*The guide sheet is like a road map. It explains all the information you need to get from the start of a project to the finish. Refer to the guide sheet as you sew. It will answer many of your questions.*


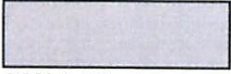
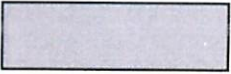
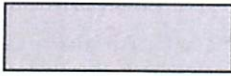
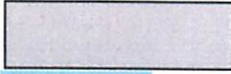
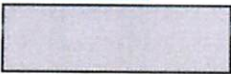
- Unfold the pattern pieces; take out those you need. Refold and return the others to the pattern envelope.
- If several pattern pieces are printed on the same sheet, cut apart the pieces you need and return the rest to the envelope.

3. Press the pattern pieces with a warm, **dry** iron.



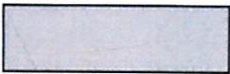

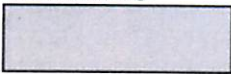
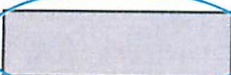
4. Find the correct layout on the pattern guide sheet. To do this:

- Find the view you are making.
- Find the fabric width.
- Find your size.

CUTTING LAYOUTS	
<p><b>View A</b></p> <p>45" fabric (115 cm) sizes small, medium</p>  <p>size large</p>  <p>60" fabric (150 cm) all sizes</p> 	<p><b>View B</b></p> <p>45" fabric (115 cm) size small</p>  <p>sizes medium, large</p>  <p>60" fabric (150 cm) all sizes</p> 



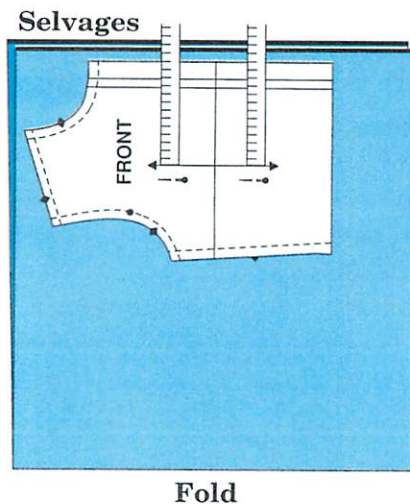
*It's easy to confuse all the different pattern layouts, so circle the correct layout for the view you have chosen. It's a simple step that eliminates frustration later.*

<p>size large</p>  <p>60" fabric (150 cm) all sizes</p> 	<p>sizes medium, large</p>  <p>60" fabric (150 cm) all sizes</p> 
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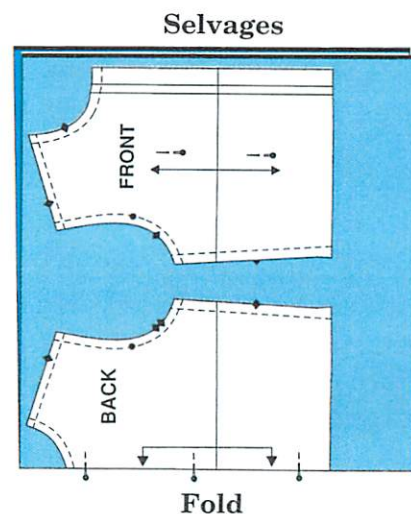
5. Fold the fabric as shown on the pattern layout.

6. Lay the pattern pieces on the fabric.

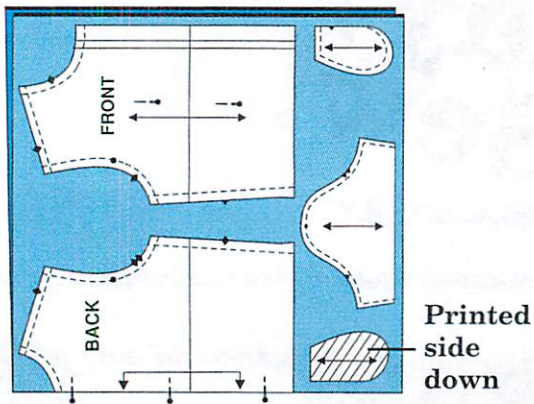
- Start by placing the larger pattern pieces, following the guide sheet layout.
- Locate the grainline arrow. Pin one end of the arrow to the fabric. Measure the distance to the fabric fold or the selvage.
- Measure the distance from the other end of the arrow to the fold or selvage. Both distances must be the same. Pivot the pattern until the two distances are equal. Pin the second end of the arrow. The grainline is now parallel to the selvage or fold.



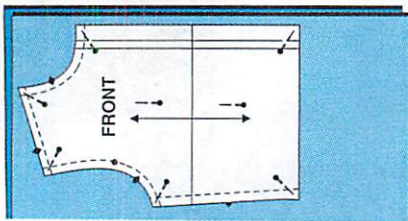
- If a pattern piece has a "place on fold" line, place that line **exactly** on the fold of the fabric. Pin the pattern along the fold. Extend pin tips beyond the fold so you don't accidentally cut along the fold of the fabric.



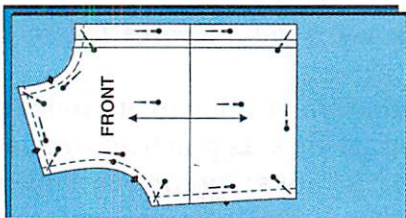
- Some pattern pieces may need to be placed on the fabric with their printed sides down. The guide sheet usually shows these pieces as shaded shapes.



- Pattern pieces may be placed close together, but **cutting** lines must not overlap.
- After all pattern pieces have been placed on the fabric and all grainlines are straight, smooth each piece and pin its corners. Place pins diagonally.



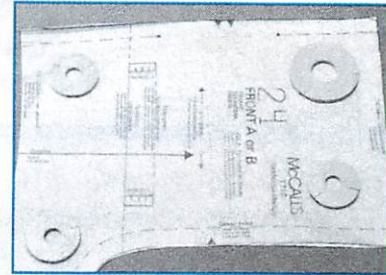
- Add additional pins between the corners every 6 to 8 inches (15-20 cm). Use more pins around curved areas.



Double check the guide sheet to make sure you have included **all the pieces** needed for the view you are making. Double check that **grainlines** are straight.

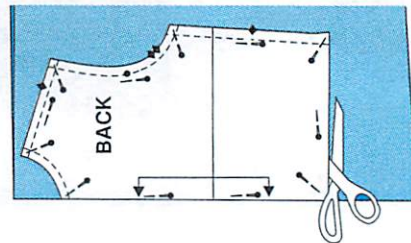


Another way to hold pattern pieces to the fabric (without using pins) is by using pattern weights. These weights hold the pattern and fabric together, and they can be easily repositioned. Place the weights 2" (5 cm) from the cutting edge.

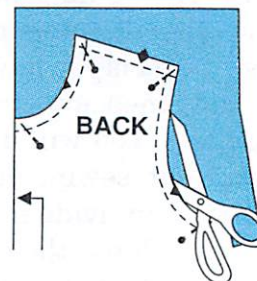


## Cutting Out the Pattern

- Use a sharp scissors or shears, cutting with long, smooth strokes.
- Move around the fabric rather than moving the fabric toward you.
- Cut out each pattern piece, cutting along the marked pattern cutting line.



- Cut notches even with the cutting line. This gives a smoother line. Notches can be marked later.

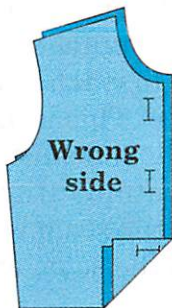


- If the pattern calls for interfacing, cut out the interfacing at the same time you cut out the rest of the project.

# Transferring Pattern Markings

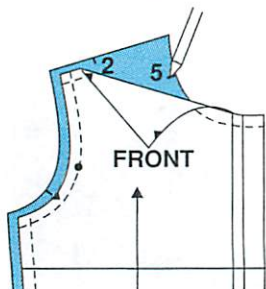
You can transfer markings from your pattern to fabric with chalk, marking pens or pencils, or tracing paper and a tracing wheel.

1. Transfer these markings:
  - **Notches**
  - **Hemlines**
  - **Darts and pleats**
  - **Center front and center back**
  - **Dots, squares, button or pocket placements**
2. Markings are usually made on the fabric's **wrong** side. If two layers are cut at the same time, be sure to mark **both** layers.

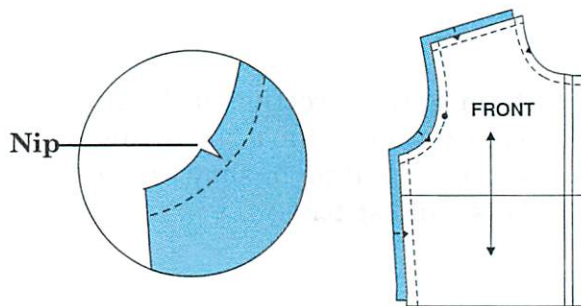


Remember to test the marker you choose on a scrap of fabric before using it on your project. You may want to try several types of markers before selecting one. Test to see what works best on your fabric.

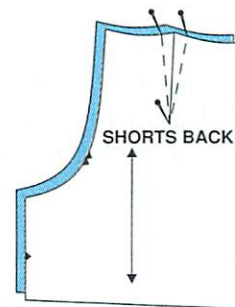
3. An easy way to mark notches is with a washable marking pen or chalk pencil. Mark the notch with a short line perpendicular to the cut edge. You may also want to mark the **number** of the notch. This helps you match the right pieces together when you stitch the garment.



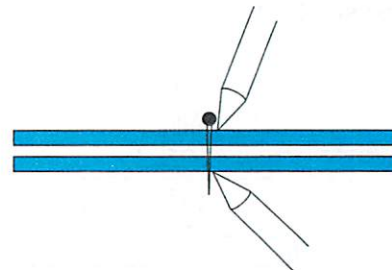
As you gain more experience, try marking things like notches, outer edges of darts, center fronts and center backs, pleats, and hemlines with short "nips." A nip is a 1/8" to 1/4" long (3-6 mm) clip into the seam allowance, perpendicular to the seamline. The important part is the **length** of the clip. Don't cut too far! If you do, you will weaken the seam or have a hole in your project.



4. To transfer markings with chalk or a marking pen:
  - Poke a pin through each pattern dot or marking that needs to be transferred.

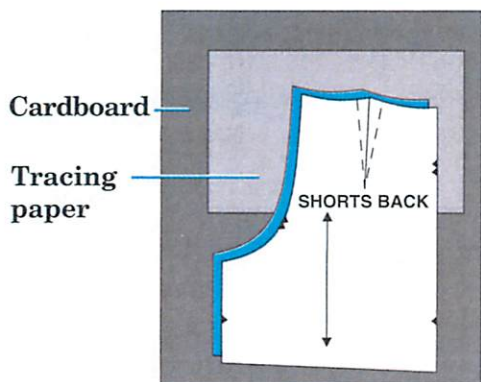


- Carefully remove the pattern from the fabric. Start at outside pattern edges and work toward the center, pulling the pins gently through the pattern.
- Mark each pin's position. If two layers of fabric were cut at the same time, mark the wrong side of each layer.

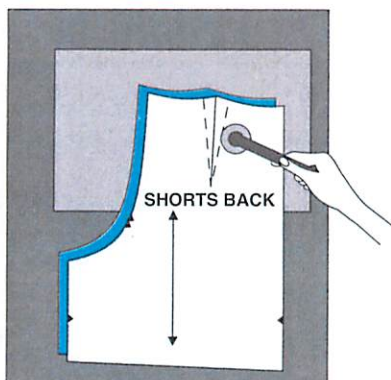


5. To transfer markings with a tracing wheel and tracing paper:

- Use the **lightest** color sewing tracing paper that will show on your fabric. This is important, as tracing paper marks are sometimes difficult to remove.
- Place the colored side of the tracing paper next to the wrong side of each fabric piece.
- Always protect the table by placing cardboard underneath the fabric. The wheel's sharp points could damage some surfaces.

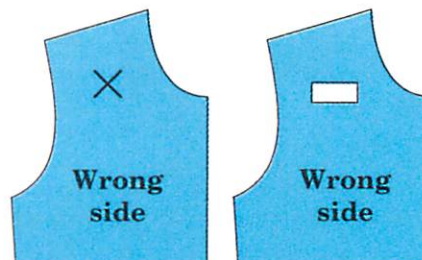


- Run the tracing wheel along the pattern markings. To more easily trace straight lines, place a ruler along the line. Use the ruler as a guide as you trace. Press firmly so markings show on both layers. Test a fabric scrap before marking your project so you can tell how hard to press.

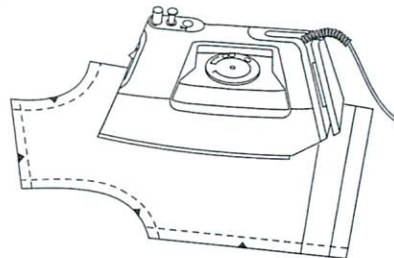


- After marking one area, reposition the tracing paper and cardboard. Continue until all markings have been transferred.

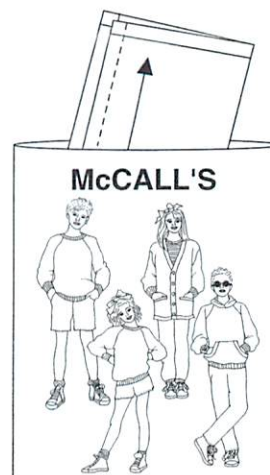
6. If the right and wrong sides of your fabric look alike, mark the **wrong** sides before removing the pattern from the fabric. Mark an "X" on the wrong side with a marking pen or pencil or chalk. Or place a small piece of tape on the wrong side of the fabric.



7. After transferring the markings, remove all pattern pieces. Press them with a dry iron.



8. Fold the pattern pieces and put them neatly back into the pattern envelope.



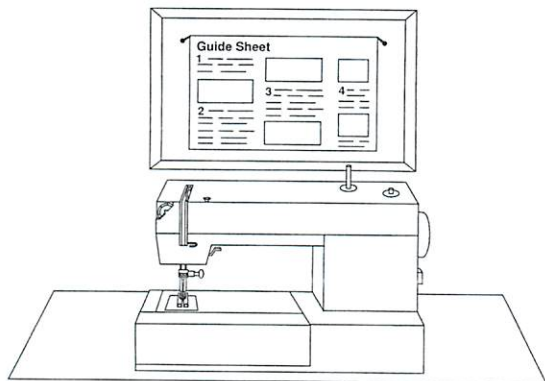
# Assembling Your Project

Your pattern guide sheet is your sewing “road map.” First, read the instructions from start to finish to get an idea of the entire process. Check the fabric key on the guide sheet. Different shadings are used to show the right and wrong sides of the fabric and the interfacing. Then start at the beginning and complete each step.

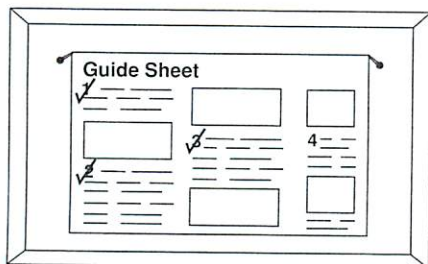
- Place the guide sheet in an easy-to-see-and-reach location.



*I like to hang a bulletin board on the wall behind my sewing machine. I pin the guide sheet to the bulletin board so it will always be handy. Or pin the guide sheet to a curtain near your sewing area.*



- After finishing a step, check it off on your guide sheet.

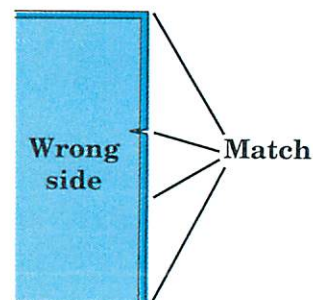


# Stitching Seams with a Sewing Machine

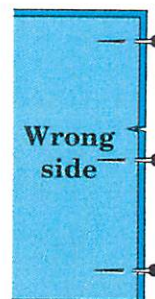
Most projects are completed by stitching a series of seams. Seams are formed by joining two fabric edges. The way you stitch seams on a conventional sewing machine varies, depending on whether your fabric is woven or knit.

## Stitching Seams on Woven Fabrics

1. Set the stitch length at 10-12 stitches per inch (3–2.5 mm stitch length).
2. Place **right** sides of two pieces of fabric together, matching seam edges, the top and bottom of the pieces, and notches.



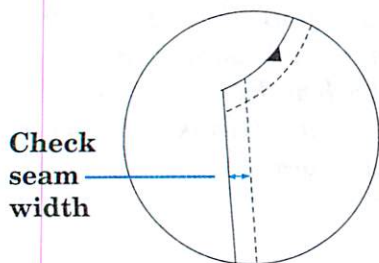
3. Pin the edges together.
  - Place pins at right angles to the edge of the fabric.
  - Pin heads should face the cut edge of the seam.
  - Sew with the layer containing the pins on top.



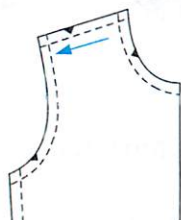


4. Stitch the seam.

- Check the pattern's seam allowance. Most patterns allow 5/8" (1.5 cm), but some allow only 1/4" (6 mm). It is important to stitch exactly on the seam line.

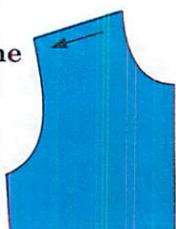


- Stitch in the direction of the grainline. Some patterns have an arrow on the pattern seamline to show the direction you should stitch.



You can also determine the stitching direction by running your fingers along the seam edge. It's like petting a cat. When the "fur" is smooth, you're going with the grainline. When the fur is ruffled, you're going against the grain. Stitching against the grain stretches fabric.

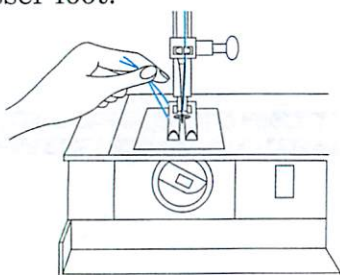
With the grain



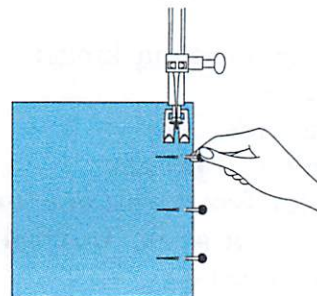
Against the grain



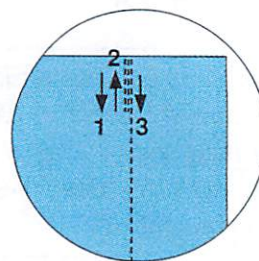
- Make sure the upper and bobbin threads are at the back of the machine, under the presser foot.



- Place the end of the seam under the presser foot. Lower the presser foot.
- Lower the needle into the fabric by turning the balance wheel.
- It's best to remove each pin as you come to it. Otherwise the machine needle could hit the pin. This could break or dull the needle.



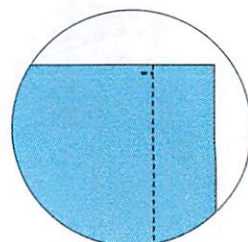
- Lock the stitches at the beginning and end of each seam to prevent them from coming out. To do this:
  - Sew 2 or 3 stitches. Then adjust the machine to stitch in reverse. Sew 2 or 3 stitches. This is **backstitching**.
  - Adjust the machine to stitch forward again; continue stitching. Guide the fabric so the seam is a uniform width.
  - Stitch to the seam end; backstitch.



Backstitch

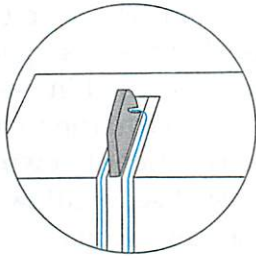


Another way to lock stitching is to stitch in place several times. Set the stitch length lever at "0" and make 2 to 3 stitches. Then return the stitch length to 10–12 stitches per inch (3–2.5 mm stitch length) and continue stitching. Repeat the process at the end of the seam.

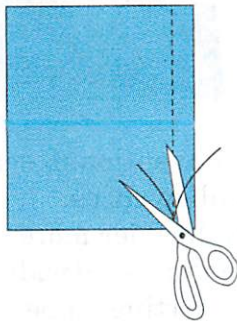


Stitch in place

- Turn the balance wheel until the take up lever is at its **highest point**.



- Raise the presser bar lifter and pull the fabric to the back of the machine under the presser foot.
- Cut the threads close to the fabric. Leave 2" to 3" (5 cm–7.5 cm) of thread coming from the machine needle.

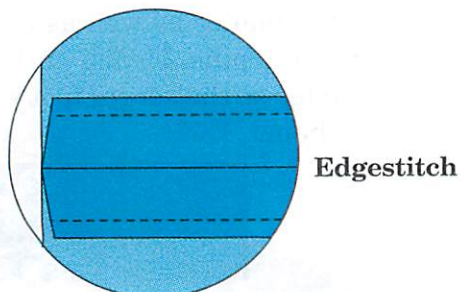


- Trim the thread ends at the beginning of the seam close to the fabric.

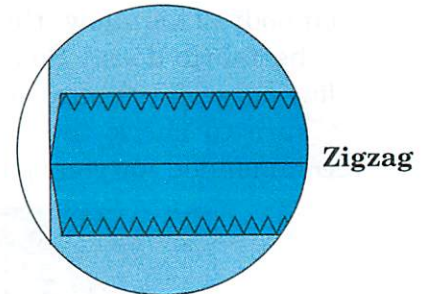
## Finishing Seams—Woven Fabrics


Most woven fabrics ravel unless the edges are finished. After stitching a seam, add a seam finish to each seam edge to prevent fraying. Most seam finishes are done on a single thickness of fabric to avoid bulk and make the seam flatter and neater. Here are several ways to finish seams:

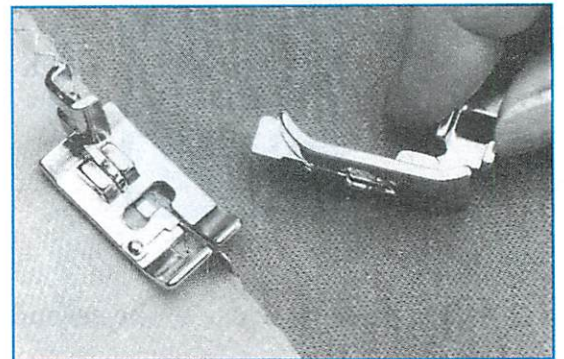
- **Edgestitch** close to each seam edge. Set the machine to straight stitch. Guide the right edge of the presser foot along the cut edge of the fabric. (Stitching will be about 1/4" (6 mm) from the cut edge.)



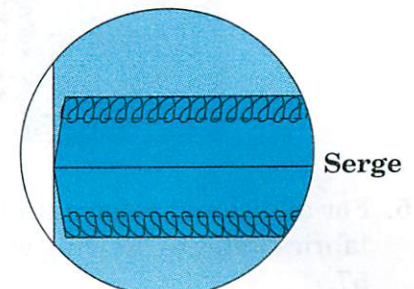
- **Zigzag** each seam edge.
  - Use a medium width zigzag and a medium to short stitch length.
  - Stitch the “zig” in the fabric and the “zag” close to or off the cut edge.
  - Zigzagging works best on medium to heavyweight fabrics. If zigzagging draws in the seam edge and makes it pucker, you may want to choose another seam finish.



 If fabric edges always seem to curl and pucker when you zigzag, try replacing the regular presser foot with an overcast-guide foot. You'll find this foot in the accessory box which comes with most sewing machines, or it can be purchased as a separate accessory. The overcast-guide foot holds fabric flat while the zigzag goes over the fabric edge.

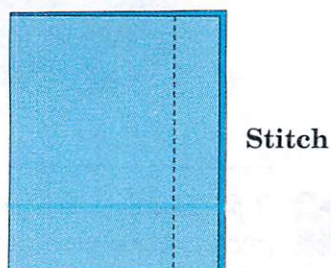


- **Serge** each seam edge with a 3- or 3/4-thread serged overlock stitch.



## Stitching Seams on Knit Fabrics

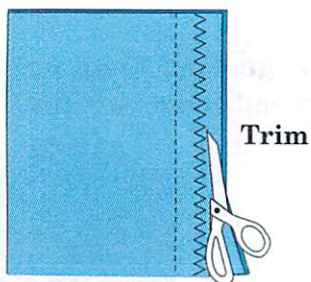
1. Place right sides of the two pieces of fabric together, matching seam edges, top and bottom of the pieces, and notches. Pin.
2. Straight stitch the seam, or use a narrow zigzag. Use a straight stitch for vertical seams like side seams. Use a zigzag for horizontal seams which go across or around your body. This allows the seam to stretch as the fabric does. Some knit patterns allow only 1/4" (6 mm) seam allowances. Be sure to check the seam allowance recommended for your pattern.



3. Stitch the seam again, sewing 1/4" (6 mm) away from the first stitching through both layers of fabric. A wide zigzag works best because it stretches like the fabric does.



4. Trim the seam close to the second stitching.

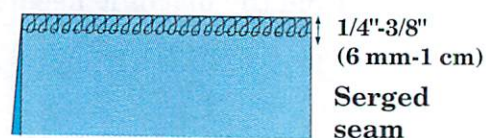


5. For additional information on using knit fabrics, refer to "Sewing with Knits," page 57.

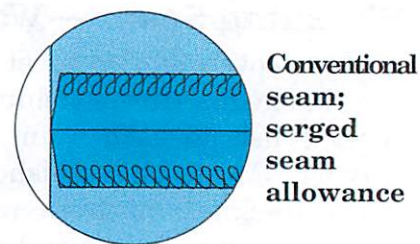
## Serging an Overlock Seam

A serger can also be used to stitch a seam on knit or woven fabrics. A serged seam is stitched, trimmed, and finished in one step.

1. First, decide whether to use a serged seam or a conventional sewing machine seam with serged seam allowances.
  - Use serged seams:
    - For most knit garments.
    - For loose fitting garments where it isn't important for seams to lie flat.
    - When you're sure of the garment's fit and will not need to alter seams.
    - Where seam allowances don't need to be pressed open.

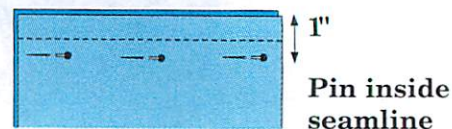


- Use conventional seams with serged seam allowances:
  - With heavier more bulky fabrics.
  - When you need wider seam allowances for inserting zippers or pockets.
  - When you're unsure of the fit and may need to alter seams.
  - When seams must be very flat and pressed open.



2. Pinning serged seams:

- Place pins the same direction as the seam rather than at right angles to the seam. If pins are at right angles to the seam, the serger blade might hit the pin if it isn't removed. This could damage the blades as well as the pin.
- Place pins 1" (2.5 cm) from the seam edge so the serger foot will not pass over them.

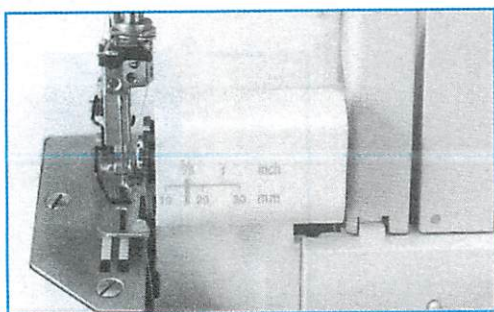


### 3. Serging seams:

- A completed serged seam is only 1/4" to 3/8" (6 mm–1 cm) wide.
- If your pattern allows a 5/8" (1.5 cm) seam, you must determine where to position the fabric so the seam is sewn at the correct place.



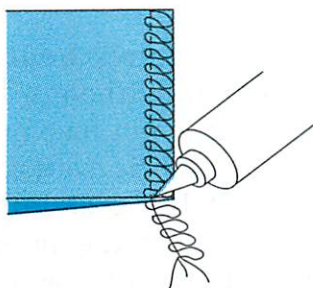
Some sergers have lines marked on the front of the machine to guide stitching. If your serger does not have these lines, place a mark or a strip of tape on the machine to show the stitching line.



- Seams with corners are difficult to serge. Use a conventional sewing machine for these seams until you have more experience.

### 4. Securing seam ends:

- A serger does not backstitch, so you cannot secure seam ends by backstitching.
- Apply a dab of Fray Check™ to the end of the seam to seal the threads. The liquid dries clear and prevents the thread ends from raveling. After it dries, cut off the thread tails.

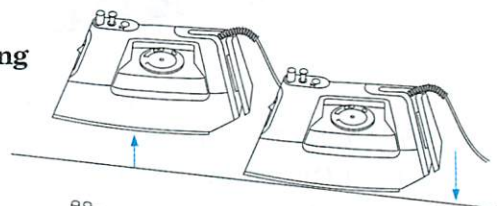


## Pressing Seams

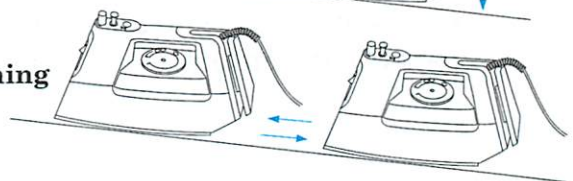
Pressing is just as important as sewing! Sew, then press! Press each seam or construction detail before it is joined to another garment section.

- Pressing is different than ironing. In pressing, you lift the iron **up and down**. In ironing, you move the iron **back and forth**.

### Pressing



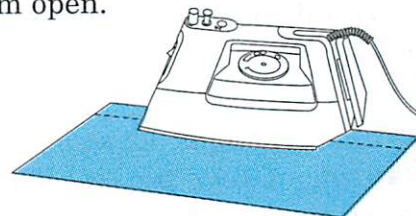
### Ironing



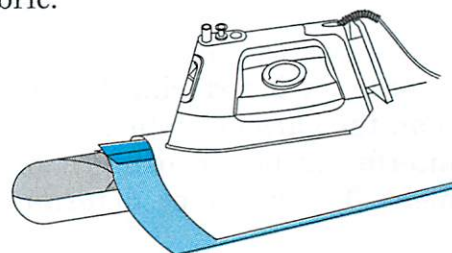
- When you press, use a steam iron or cover the fabric with a damp press cloth.
- Choose the correct iron temperature for your fabric.
- Press on the **wrong** side of the fabric.

## Pressing seams stitched with a conventional sewing machine:

- Press the seam **flat**. This evens out the stitches and makes it easier to press the seam open.

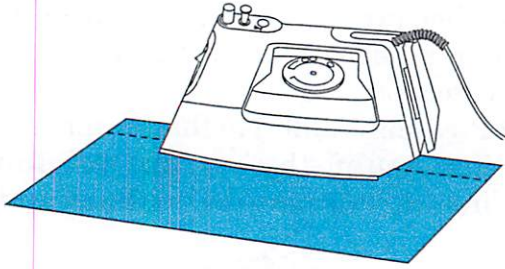


- Next, press the seam **open**. Press over a seam roll to prevent the seam edges from making an imprint on the right side of the fabric.

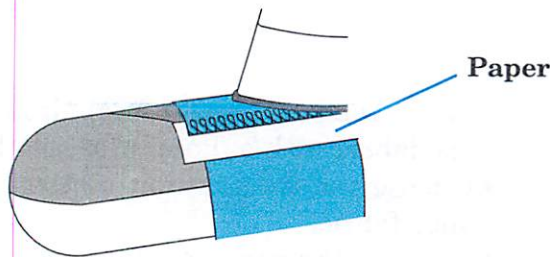


## Pressing a knit or serged seam:

- Press the seam flat.



- Next, press the seam in one direction.
- To prevent seam imprints from showing on the right side of the fabric, place pieces of adding machine tape or other paper between the seam and garment.



## Adding Facings

A facing covers and encloses a raw edge. It usually does not show on the outside of the garment. You may find facings at neckline, armhole, sleeve, front, and back openings.

1. Apply interfacing to the wrong side of the facing.

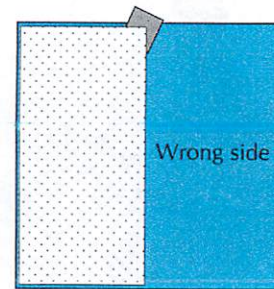


*Interfacing is not seen from the outside of your project. It is fused or stitched to the wrong side of a facing to give an area support. It adds shape and body and prevents the garment from stretching out of shape. Interfacing is a very important extra layer of fabric!*

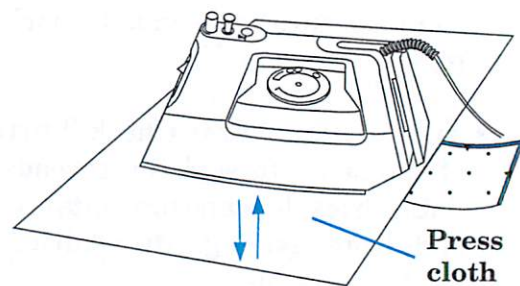
2. It's easiest to use fusible interfacing. Choose an interfacing lighter in weight than the garment fabric. Always test the interfacing before using it on your garment. Testing helps determine whether

the interfacing is the correct weight and whether the interfacing is securely fused. You'll also be able to check how the interfaced fabric looks and feels.

- Cut a 6–8" square (15–20.5 cm) from fabric scraps.
- Fold the square in half. Cut an interfacing piece the size of the folded fabric.
- Cut another 1" (2.5 cm) fabric square for a "tab."
- Set the iron temperature at "wool."
- Press the large fabric square to warm it and make it easier to fuse the interfacing.
- Place the fusible side of the interfacing (the rougher side) next to the wrong side of the fabric square. Place part of the tab under one of the interfacing corners.



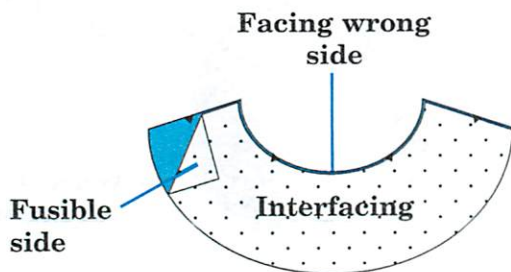
- Cover the interfacing with a damp press cloth. Press down firmly, following instructions included with the interfacing. Use an "up and down" motion. Do not slide the iron over the fabric.



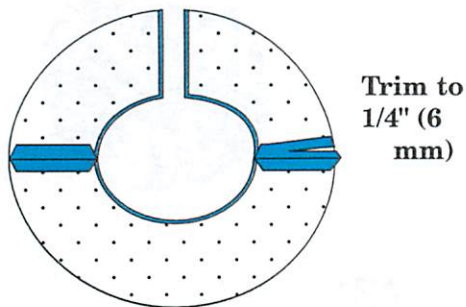
- Fusing requires **heat, moisture, and pressure**. Without all three, the interfacing may not fuse properly.
- Turn the fabric over; repeat the process.
- Let the fabric cool. Pull the small fabric tab to see if the interfacing is firmly fused. If it peels away, try again, using more heat, moisture, and pressure.

- Check for puckers and wrinkles. Sometimes increasing the fusing pressure solves this problem.
- Check for interfacing bubbles. Bubbles sometimes form if the iron is too hot.
- Check how the interfaced fabric feels. If it feels much heavier than the non-interfaced fabric, choose a lighter weight interfacing and test again.

3. Use the facing pattern to cut out the interfacing. Fuse the interfacing to the wrong side of each facing piece, following the techniques used for the test fusing.

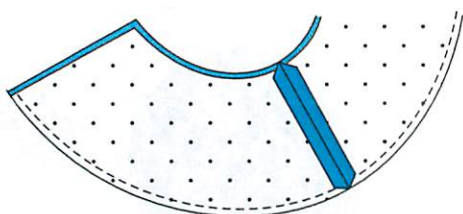


4. Stitch facing sections together following pattern directions.
- Press seams open.
  - Trim seams to 1/4" (6 mm) to reduce bulk.

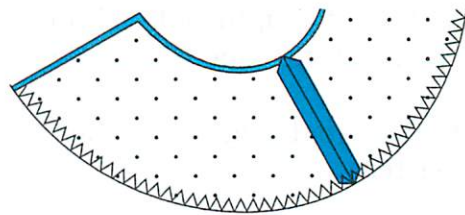


5. Finish the outer edge of the facing in one of these ways:

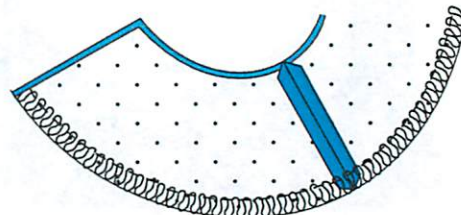
- **Machine stitch** 1/8" to 1/4" (3 mm to 6 mm) from the outer edge (for heavier fabrics that ravel very little).



- **Zigzag** the edge.

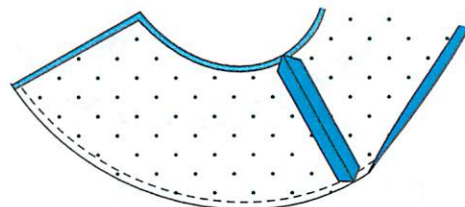


- **Serge** the edge.

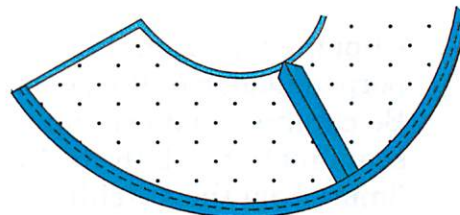


- Clean finish the facing edge by turning under and stitching the edge (only for lightweight woven fabrics that ravel a lot).

- Stitch 1/4" (6 mm) from the facing's outer edge.
- Press the edge to the wrong side along the stitching line.

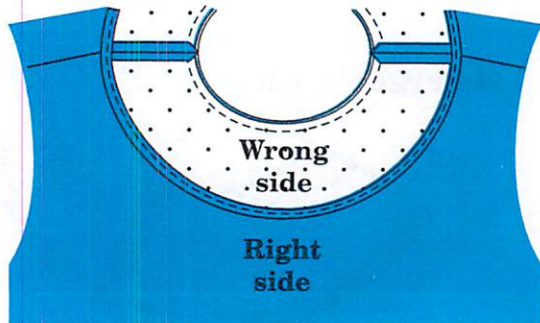


- Stitch close to the folded edge.



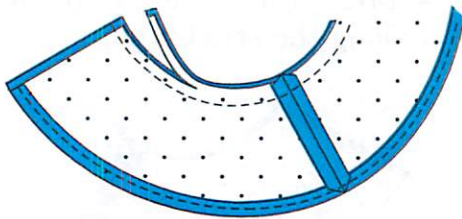
5. Stitch the facing to the garment.

- Place the right side of the facing next to the right side of the garment.
- Match cut edges, notches, and seams; stitch.



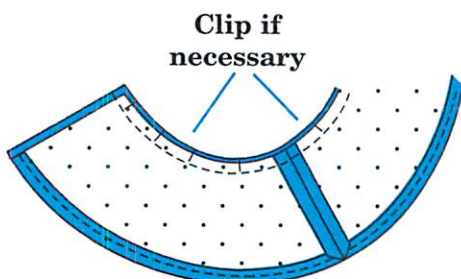
6. Cut each seam allowance a different width to reduce bulk. This is called **grading**.

- Trim the facing seam to 1/4" (6 mm).
- Trim the garment seam to 3/8" (1 cm).



- If the seam is curved, you may sometimes need to clip the seam to make it lie flat after the facing is turned to the wrong side.

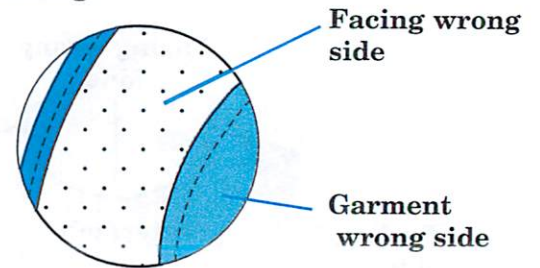
- Clipping means making **short** “nips” perpendicular to the seamline.
- Be careful you don’t clip past the seamline! Stop 1/16" to 1/8" (1.5 mm 3mm) from the stitching.
- Clip only enough to make the facing lie flat after it is turned. **Be careful!**



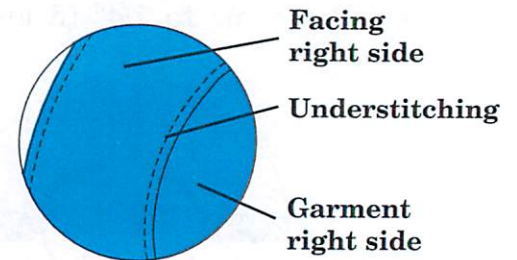
*Less is best! I try to avoid all clipping. Clipping generally weakens a seam and creates an indented curve. And it's so easy to clip too far! If a seam is trimmed and graded correctly, clipping may not be necessary.*

7. **Understitch**, stitching both of the seam allowances to the facing. This prevents the facing from rolling to the right side.

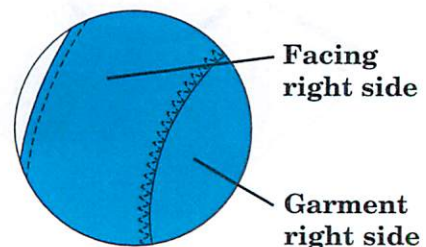
- Press the seam flat.
- Next press all seam allowances toward the facing.



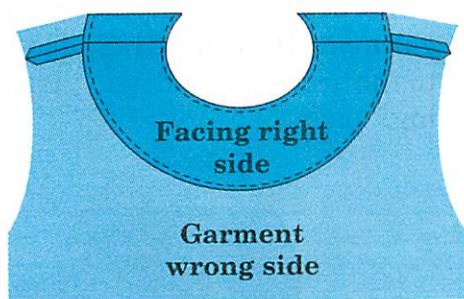
- From the right side, stitch the seam allowances to the facing with a straight stitch, zigzag, or a multi-step zigzag. Stitch on the facing, close to the seamline.



*I like to use a multi-step zigzag for understitching. Instead of just zigzagging back and forth, the machine makes several stitches for each “zig” and each “zag.” This helps the facing to lie flat. Check your instruction manual to see if your machine can sew this stitch.*

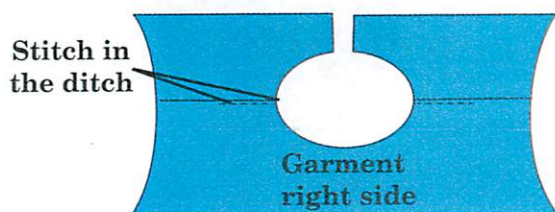


- Turn the facing to the wrong side of the garment. Press.

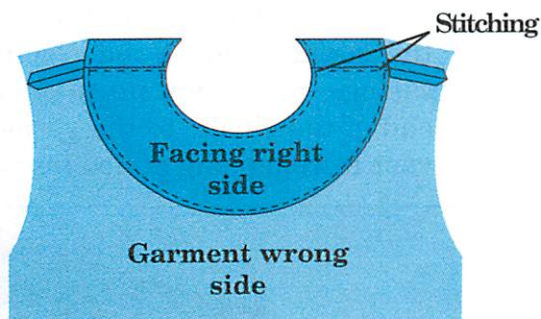


- Secure the facing to the garment at seam-lines such as shoulder and armhole seams. **Stitch in the ditch** to prevent the facing from rolling to the right side.

- Stitch in the groove (called the “well” or “ditch”) of each seam. Stitch from the right side of the garment, sewing through all thickness of the facing and garment.



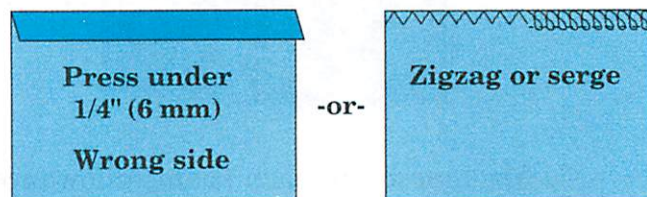
- Stitch the full width of the facing. Then pull the thread ends to the wrong side and knot them. Clip off extra thread tails.



## Adding a Casing

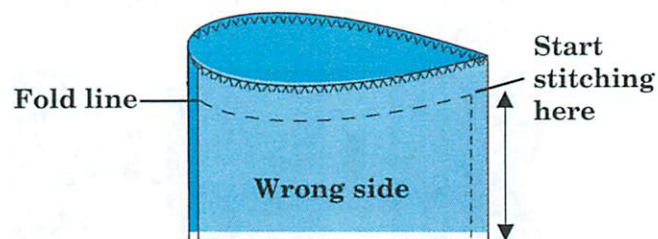
An elastic casing is an easy way to finish the waistline of pants, shorts, or a skirt. Here's a quick way to make a casing:

- Press under 1/4" (6 mm) along the waist-line edge, or zigzag or serge this edge.

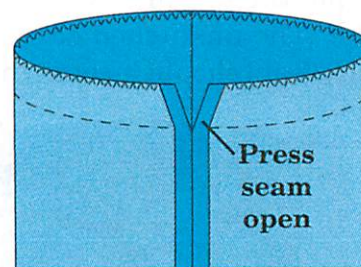


- Stitch the center back seam of the garment.

- Locate the fold line on the casing. Check your pattern if you have not marked its position.
- Begin stitching at the casing fold line and stitch to the end of the seam. Back-stitch at the beginning and end of the stitching. The seam is **not** stitched from the fold line to the cut edge of the casing.

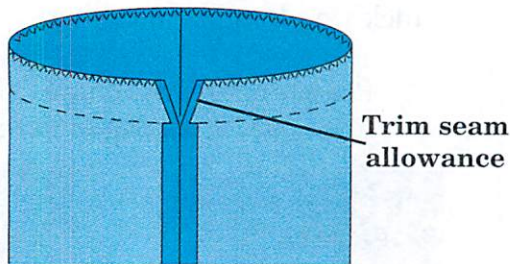


- Press the seam flat; then press the seam open.

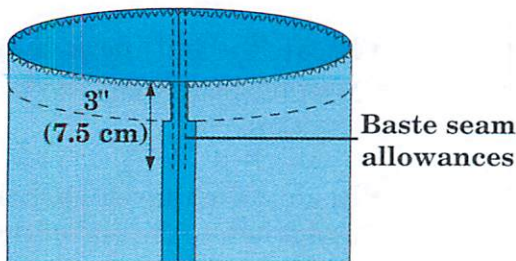




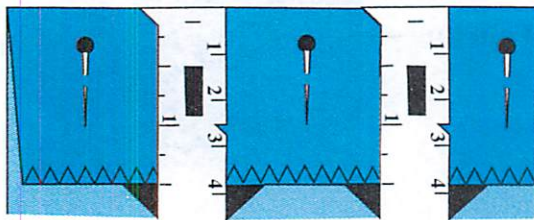
- From the casing fold line to the cut edge, trim away half the width of the seam allowance. This reduces bulk in the casing.



- Machine baste each seam allowance to the garment for about 3" (7.5 cm) from the upper edge. This prevents the elastic from getting caught under the seam when it is inserted.

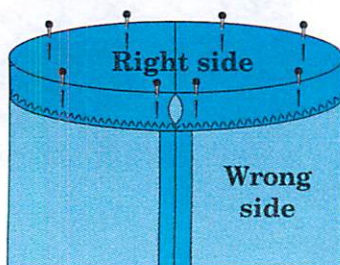


- Press under the casing along the fold line. Measure so the entire casing is the same width.

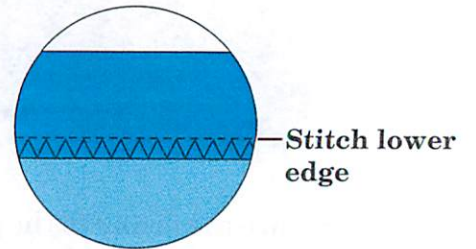


Measure casing

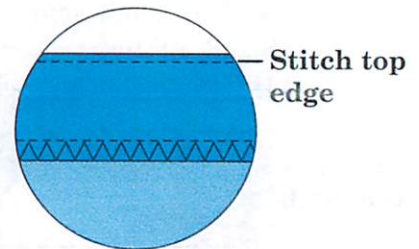
- Pin the casing. Place pins at right angles to the stitching line, with heads facing the fold. The unstitched edges of the center back seam should meet at the center back.



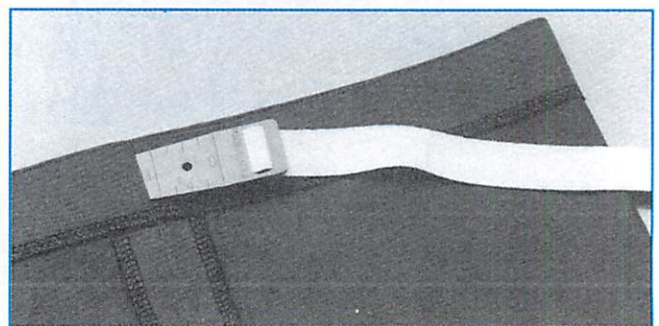
- Stitch around the lower edge of the casing. Use a stitching guide so the stitching is a uniform distance from the edge of the garment. If you need help doing this, refer to the section "Guides to Straight Stitching," page 14.



- Stitch around the top of the casing, 1/8" (3 mm) from the folded edge. This second stitching helps keep the elastic from twisting.



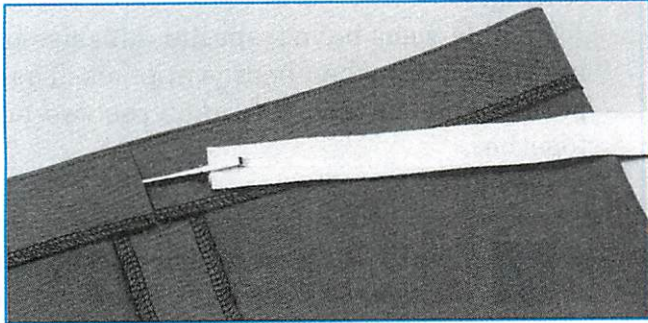
- Cut a piece of elastic which fits comfortably around your waist.
- Attach a large safety pin, a bodkin, or an elastic glide to one end of the elastic. Thread the elastic through the opening in the center back seam. Be careful the elastic does not twist or turn. Do not pull the second end of the elastic into the casing. You may want to pin the second end of the elastic to the garment to prevent it from being pulled into the casing.



Using an Elastic Glide



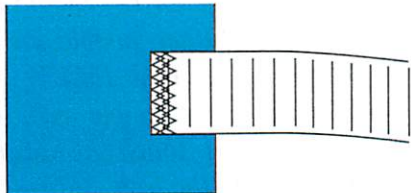
*Bodkins or elastic glides are notions used to insert ribbon, lace, or elastic into a garment. Special "teeth" grip the elastic so it doesn't get lost inside the casing.*



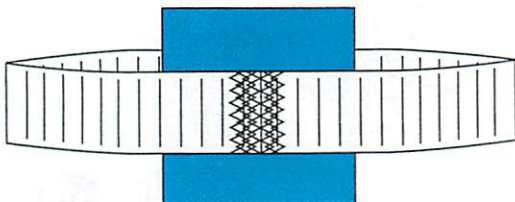
**Using a Bodkin**

10. Join the ends of the elastic.

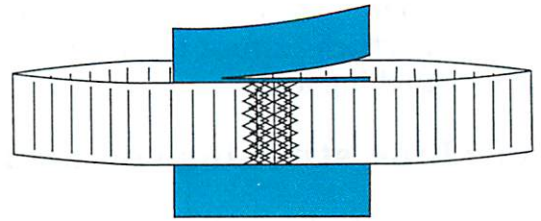
- Zigzag one end of the elastic to a sturdy fabric scrap. (It's easiest to work with a larger scrap of fabric and trim the extra fabric when you're finished.) Stitch across the cut edge several times to reinforce the stitching. You could complete this step before threading the elastic through the casing if desired.



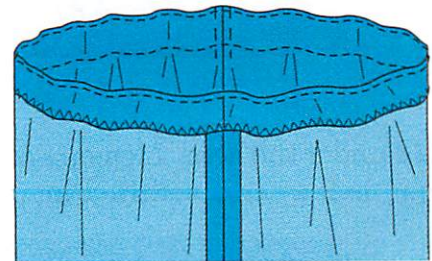
- Place the other end of the elastic against the first end. Zigzag through the elastic and fabric several times.



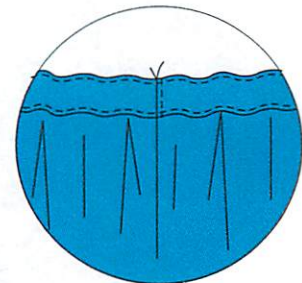
- Trim away the extra fabric which extends past the elastic.



11. Distribute fullness evenly around the waistline.
12. Close the opening used to insert the elastic by machine or hand stitching.



*To prevent the elastic from twisting in the casing, **stitch in the ditch**. Stitch through all thickness of the casing and elastic at each seamline. For additional information about stitching in the ditch, refer to page 43.*



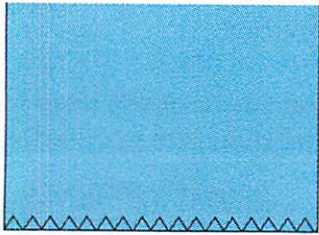
13. Carefully remove the basting stitches from step 3.

## Hemming

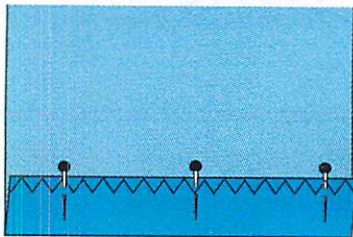
For your first project, you may want to machine stitch or fuse the hem rather than hand stitching it.

### Machine stitching the hem:

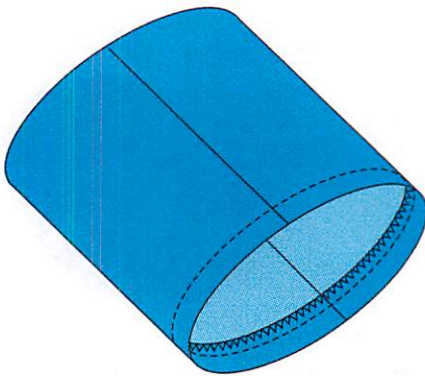
- Finish the hem edge by zigzagging, serging, or pressing under 1/4" (6 mm).




- Fold under the hem. Measure so the entire hem is the same width. Pin; press.



- Machine stitch the hem to the garment.



 Place a rubber band on the free arm of the machine to help you guide the fabric so you stitch an even distance from the fold. Or use a strip of adhesive or masking tape to guide your stitching. For additional information, refer to "Guides To Straight Stitching," page 14.

## Fusing the hem:

Fusing a hem is a fast and easy way of finishing the hem. You can hem your project with a fusible web and the heat of an iron. It will be fast, and it doesn't require any hand sewing!

Fusible webs have a special adhesive backing that melts when heat is applied. The web permanently attaches (bonds) the two layers together.

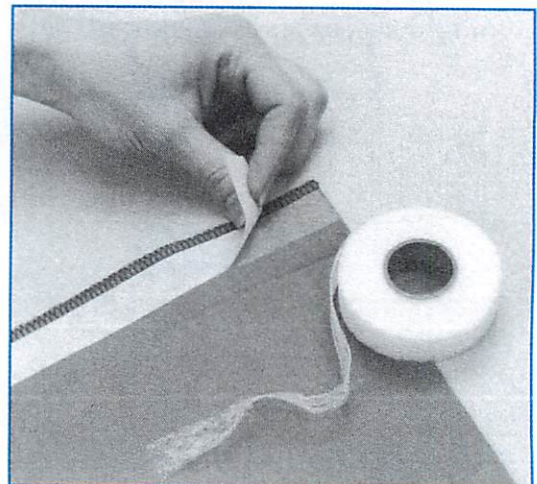


*I like to fuse hems on fun, casual clothes like shorts and skirts. The fusing works best on knits and lightweight wovens. Make a quick test sample and try the fusible web on a fabric scrap to see if this is the hem finish you would like.*

Be careful when you fuse hems! Once the web melts, it is very difficult to remove it. You have only one chance to get it right!



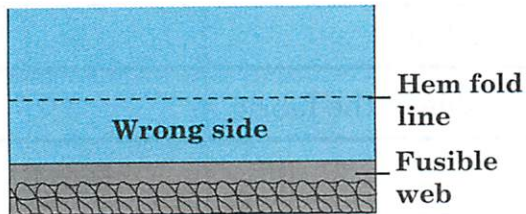
*Fusible web is available in two types. Fusible webs such as Pellon® Wonder-Under™ or Dritz® Magic Fuse have a paper backing. Other fusible webs such as Stitch Witchery® or Fine Fuse™ have no backing. When you use fusible web, be careful that the web does not touch the hot iron or it will melt and stick to the iron. Always position the web between two layers of fabric.*



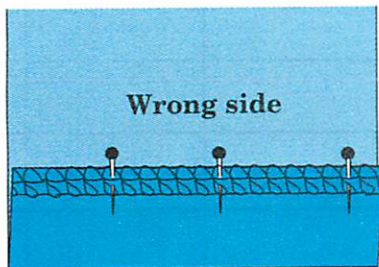
**Top: Paper backed web (Wonder-Under™)**  
**Bottom: Unbacked web (Stitch Witchery)**

## 1. Using unbacked web to fuse hems:

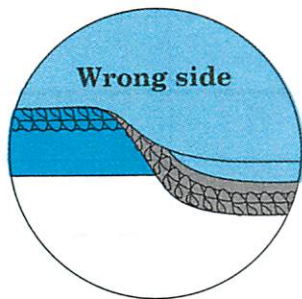
- Place a 1/2" to 3/4" (1.3 cm–2 cm) wide strip of fusible web along the wrong side of the hem edge.
- Serge or zigzag the fusible web to the hem edge. If you zigzag, be sure the web doesn't extend past the hem edge or it will stick to your iron when you fuse. Trim off any web that goes past the edge.



- Fold under the hem. Measure so the entire hem is the same width. Pin.

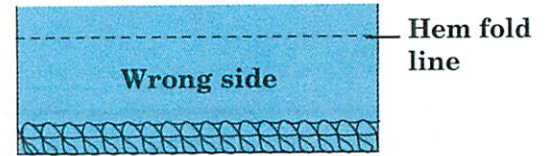


- Cover the hem with a damp press cloth. Press with a steam iron to fuse the hem to the garment.

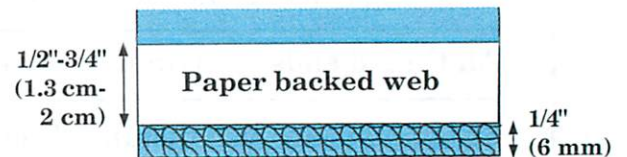


## 2. Using paper backed fusible web to finish hems:

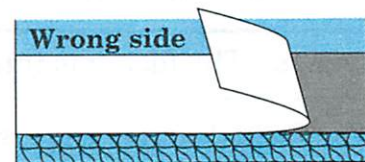
- Finish the raw hem by serging or zigzagging.



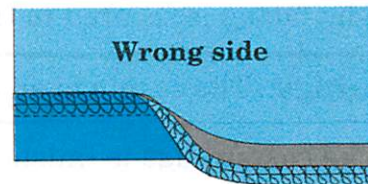
- Cut 1/2" to 3/4" (1.3 cm–2 cm) wide strips of paper backed fusible web.
- Position the **web** side of the paper backed web to the **wrong** side of the hem. Place the web 1/4" (6 mm) below the hem edge. Press.



- Remove the paper backing.



- Fold under the hem; measure so the entire hem is the same width. Fuse.



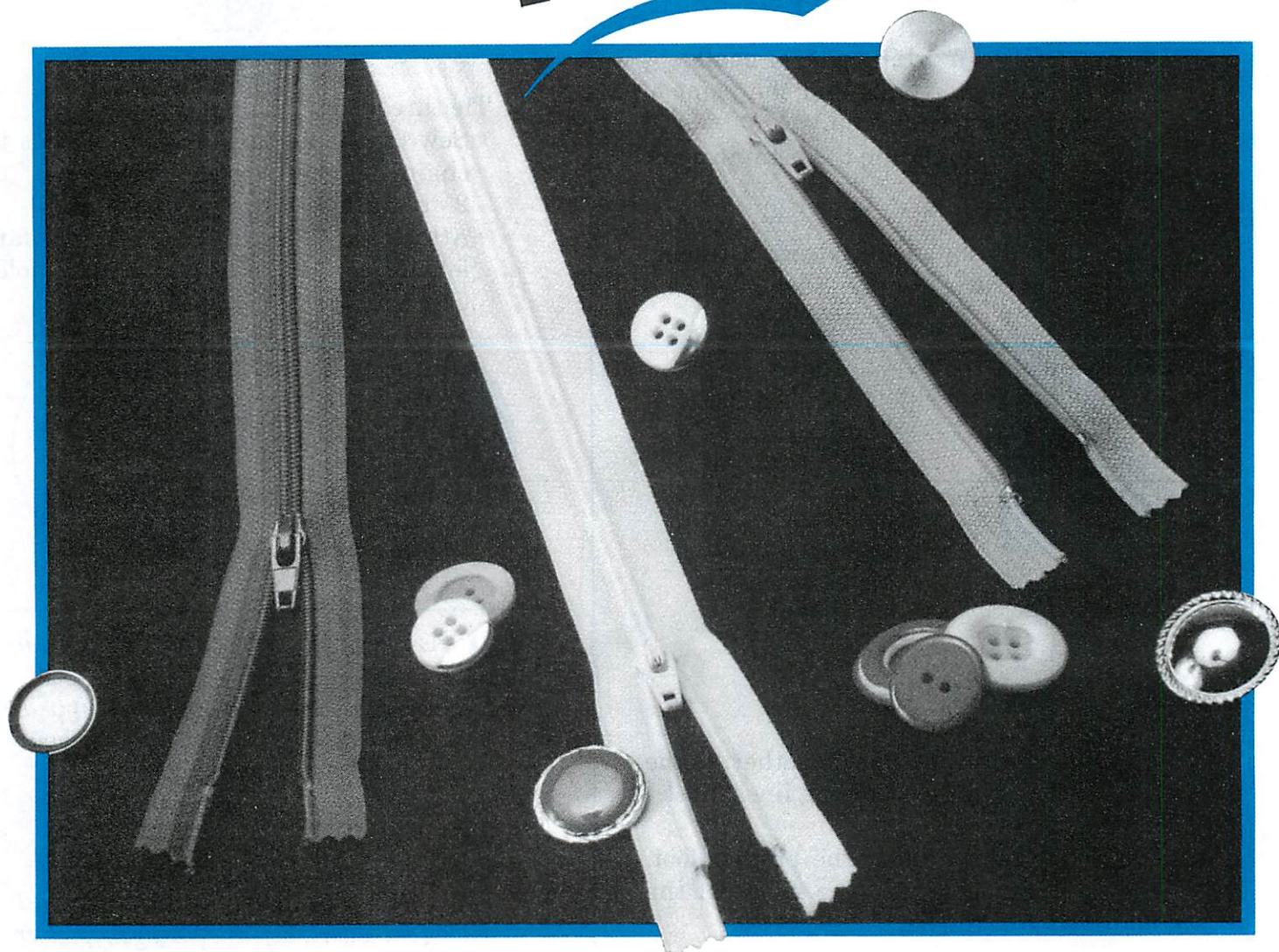
# Sewing Checklist

Now that you've completed a project, take a look at how you are doing. What things have you done well? Which could use a little practice?

	Great job	Needs practice
<b>Alterations:</b> My pattern was altered so it fits me.		
<b>Layout:</b> Patterns followed the fabric straight of grain.		
<b>Cutting:</b> I accurately followed pattern cutting lines.		
<b>Marking:</b> Markings don't show on the right side of the fabric.		
<b>Stitching:</b> Stitching is straight.		
Stitching is locked at the beginning and end of each seam.		
All thread ends are trimmed close to the fabric.		
Stitching is an even distance from the cut edge.		
Seams that ravel are finished to prevent fraying.		
Seams are correctly pressed.		
<b>Facings:</b> The facing is interfaced.		
The facing's outer edge is finished to prevent raveling.		
The facing seam is trimmed and graded.		
The facing is understitched.		
The facing is secured to the garment at seams.		
<b>Casings:</b> The casing is an even width.		
The casing edge is finished to prevent raveling.		
The casing is stitched along both top and bottom edges.		
The elastic is smooth and untwisted in the casing.		
<b>Hems:</b> The hem is an even width.		
The edge of the hem is finished to prevent raveling.		
The hem is invisible on the right side of the garment.		



# Sew Some More



Now that you know the basics, keep practicing and improving your sewing skills. Make a pattern a second time, choosing another fabric. Using a different fabric makes a project look completely different.

Each time you sew a project or try a technique, try to get the stitching just a bit straighter, the facing smoother and flatter, and the hem a little more even. You'll be gaining experience and mastering techniques you will use over and over as you sew.

When you're ready for a greater challenge, select a pattern that has some additional details. Try something new! Add a pocket, insert a zipper, or select a knit fabric. Learn to stitch darts, gather fabrics, and sew buttonholes. Choose a pattern with a collar, add a waistband, learn to sew on buttons, snaps, hooks and eyes. Include one or two new techniques on each project.

Before you know it, you'll be a sewing pro!

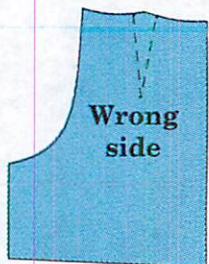
# Stitching Darts

Darts are used to shape a garment so it fits around your body's curves.

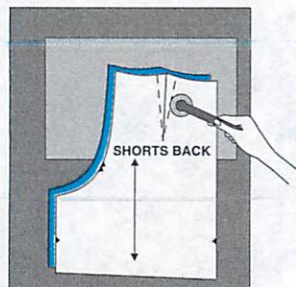
## Marking darts:

Mark the darts on the wrong side of the fabric in one of these ways:

1. Using a fabric marking pen or chalk:
  - Mark the outer ends and the point of each dart. (See page 33.)
  - Connect the ends and the point to mark the stitching line.
2. Mark the dart's outline using a tracing wheel and tracing paper. (See page 34.)



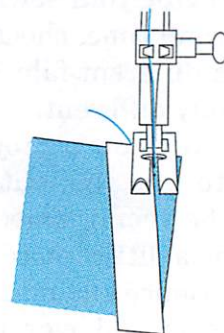
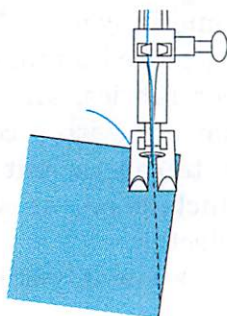
Using marking pens/chalk



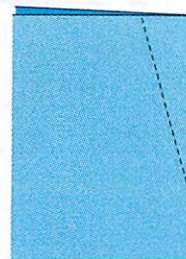
Using tracing paper

## Stitching darts:

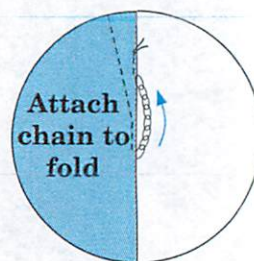
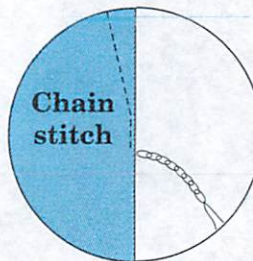
1. Fold the dart, right sides together, so the outer ends and the stitching lines meet.
2. Place the fabric under the presser foot. Lower the needle into the fabric at the outer edge of the dart.
3. Lock stitching by backstitching or stitching in place several times. Then stitch from the dart's outer edge to its point.




4. At the point of the dart, stitch 2 or 3 stitches along the fold. This makes the end of the dart smooth and prevents a "dimple."



5. Tie threads by "chain stitching."
  - Sew off the fabric, allowing threads to chain and lock together. Chain for 1" to 2" (2.5 cm to 5 cm).
  - Attach the chain of stitches to the dart fold by sewing 2 or 3 stitches in the fold. Clip threads.

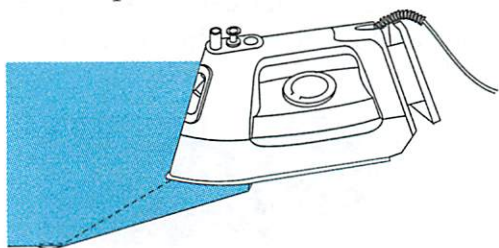


 As you gain experience, try this shortcut for marking and stitching darts:

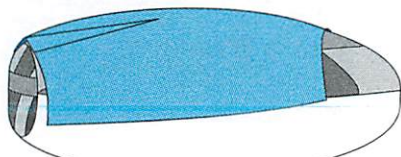
- Mark only the ends and point of the dart with a marker or chalk. (Or mark the ends with "nips" and the point with a pin.)
- When you're ready to sew, match the dart's outer ends.
- Lower the needle into the fabric.
- Find a piece of lightweight cardboard at least as long as the dart. Before lowering the presser foot, place the cardboard between the ends and the point of the dart.
- Stitch, following the cardboard as a guide.

## Pressing darts:

1. Press the dart flat, stopping 1/2" (1.3 cm) from its point.

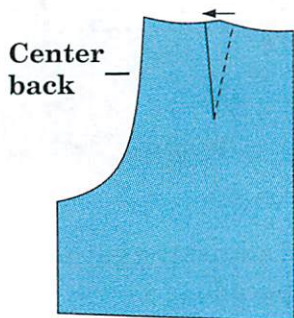


2. Next open the fabric and press the dart over a ham. The ham is rounded and curved like your body, so it helps shape the dart.

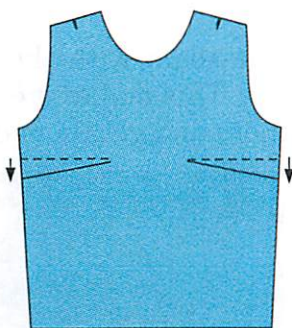


Dressmaker's ham or  
Pressing ham

3. Press vertical darts toward the center front or center back.



4. Press horizontal darts downward.

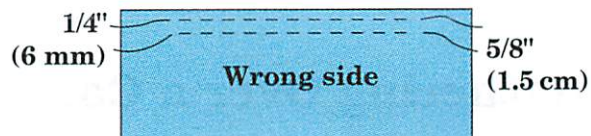


## Gathering Fabric

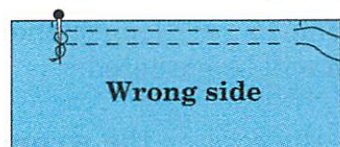
Gathering is used to ease in fullness on a larger piece of fabric so it can be joined to a smaller piece of fabric. You may find gathers at places like a waistline or a yoke. Here are two easy ways to gather:

### Using Two Rows of Machine Stitching

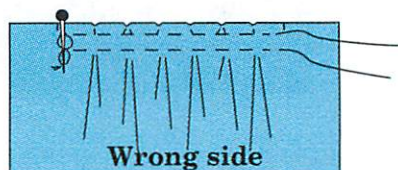
1. Change stitch length to basting, about 6 stitches per inch (4 mm stitch length).
2. Stitch one row of basting 5/8" (1.5 cm) from the seam edge. Leave thread tails 2" to 3" (5 cm to 7.5 cm) long at the beginning and end of the stitching.
3. Stitch a second basting row 1/4" (6 mm) from the cut edge.



4. Fasten the bobbin threads at one end of the stitching by wrapping them around a pin in a "figure 8."

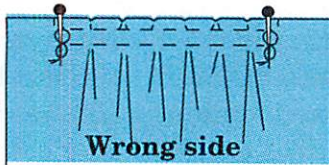


5. At the other end of the stitching, pull both bobbin threads. Gather the fabric until it is the same size as the edge to which it will be stitched.

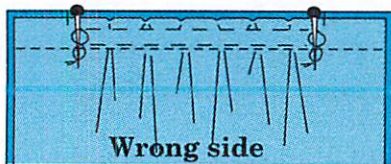




- Fasten the threads by wrapping them around a pin in a figure 8.



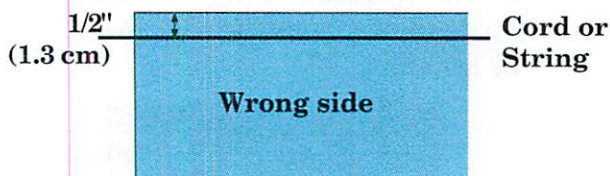
- Slide and adjust the gathers until they are evenly spaced.
- Pin the right side of the gathered section to the right side of the ungathered section. Match cut edges and notches.
- Stitch the seam with the gathered side facing up. This makes it easier to control the gathers and get them even.



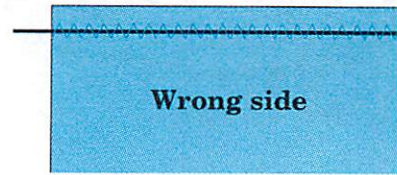
## Gathering Over a Cord

This technique is especially helpful when the fabric which will be gathered is very long or if the fabric is heavy or stiff.

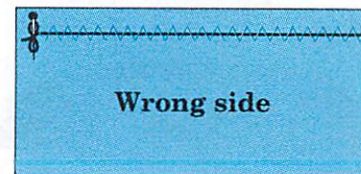
- Cut a piece of strong string or cord 3" to 6" (7.5 cm–15 cm) longer than the fabric which will be gathered.
- Place the cord on the **wrong** side of the fabric, 1/2" (1.3 cm) from the cut edge. Several inches of cord should extend at each end.



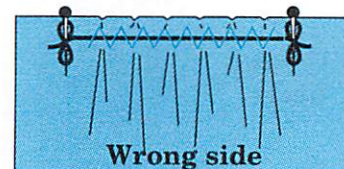
- Set the sewing machine for a wide zigzag stitch.
- Zigzag **over** the cord from end to end. DO NOT stitch **through** the cord or you will be unable to pull the cord to gather the fabric.



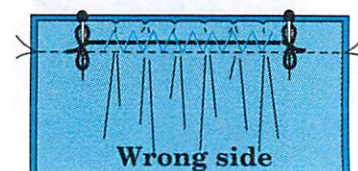
- Fasten one end of the cord by wrapping it around a pin in a "figure 8."



- Pull the other end of the cord, gathering fabric until it is the same size as the edge to which it will be joined. Fasten cord end by wrapping it around a pin in a figure 8.



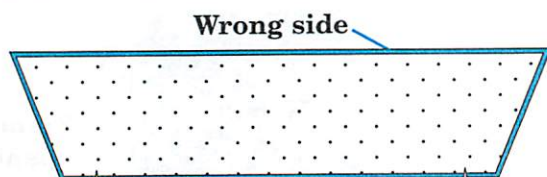
- Slide and adjust the gathers until they are evenly spaced.
- Pin the right side of the gathered section to the right side of the ungathered section. Match cut edges and notches.
- Stitch the seam with the gathered side facing up. This makes it easier to control the gathers and get them even.



# Making a Wrapped Corner Collar

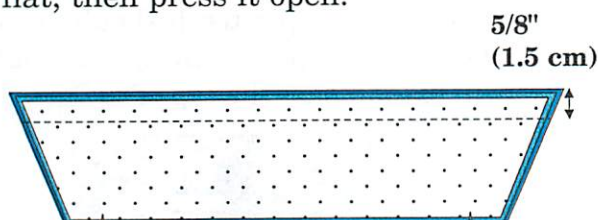
Making collars with sharp, crisp corners isn't difficult if you use a "wrapped corner." Try this technique, and you'll get perfect results every time!


1. Interface the wrong sides of the upper and under collar pieces. Interfacing should be the same size as the collar. (If you need more information on using interfacing, refer to page 40.)



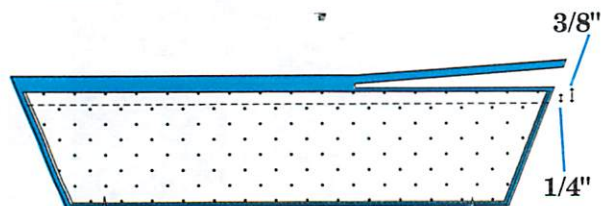
2. Place right sides of the two collars together.

3. Stitch a 5/8" (1.5 cm) seam along the **outer** edge of the collar. Press the seam flat; then press it open.

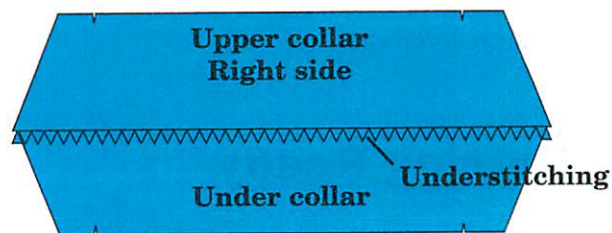


 *Your pattern directions may tell you to pivot at the corners of the collar and to stitch the entire seam with one stitching. I find it much easier to stitch the ends and the outer edge in separate stitchings. Try it! You'll have success every time.*

4. Grade the seam. Trim the undercollar to 1/4" (6 mm). Trim the upper collar to 3/8" (1 cm).

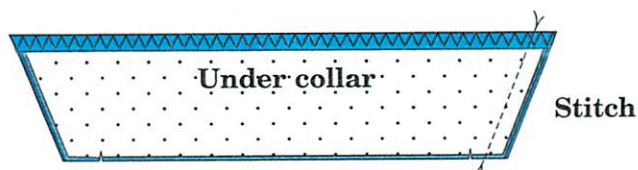


5. Press both seam allowances toward the undercollar. Understitch. If you are unsure how to understitch, refer to the section "Adding Facings," page 42.



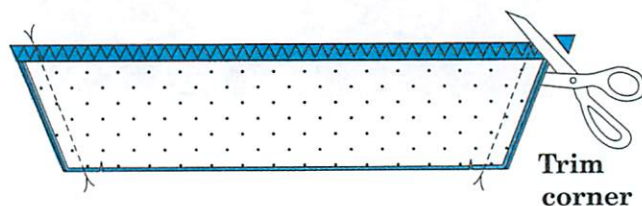
6. With right sides together, fold the collar along the first stitching line. Seam allowances should fold (or "wrap") toward the undercollar.

7. Stitch one end of the collar. Begin at the fold and sew to the other edge.

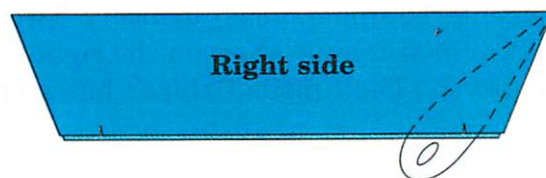


8. Stitch the other end of the collar in the same way.

9. Grade the seam allowances. Trim the corner diagonally close to the stitching. Press the seam flat, then press it open.



10. Turn the collar right side out. Use a Bamboo Pointer & Creaser to help shape sharp corners. Press the collar.

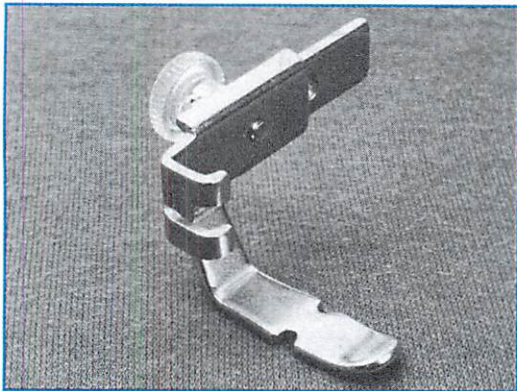


# Inserting a Zipper

Don't avoid patterns that have zipper openings! Zip your way to success by following these easy steps.

## Getting Ready

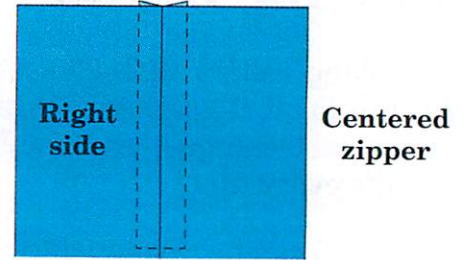
1. Purchase a zipper about 2" (5 cm) longer than the pattern recommends. With the longer length, you won't have trouble stitching around the bulky zipper pull.
2. Decide whether you will use a centered zipper or a lapped zipper. Follow the directions for the one you choose.
3. Attach a zipper foot. Your zipper foot may not look exactly like the one pictured. Check your machine instruction manual if you need help identifying the foot.



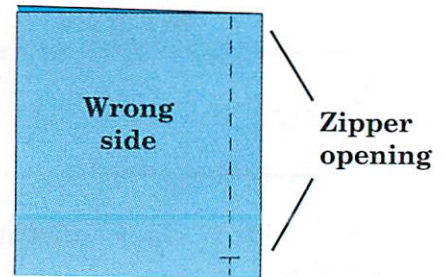
## Inserting a Centered Zipper

A centered zipper is easy to insert. Two lines of straight stitching show on the right side of the fabric. The finished zipper has a sporty

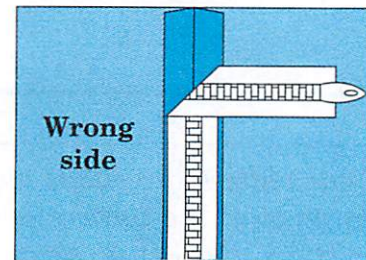
look. A centered zipper is preferred at center front openings and is sometimes used at back openings.



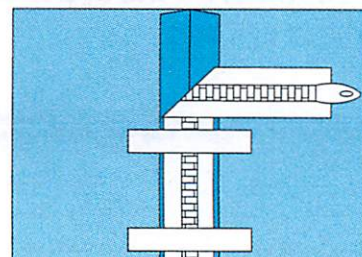
1. Baste the zipper opening, right sides together. Permanently stitch the rest of the seam. Press seam open.



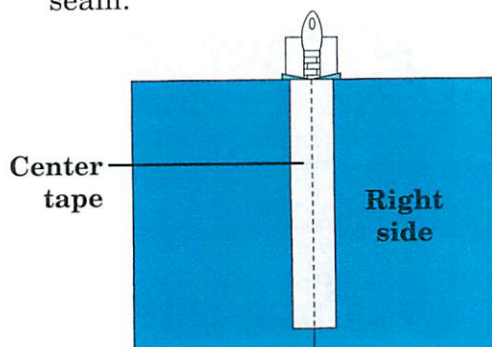
2. Center the zipper over the pressed seam allowance. Put the **right** side of the zipper next to the seam allowance. The lower edge of the zipper teeth should be at the end of the zipper opening. The pull tab will extend past the top of the fabric.



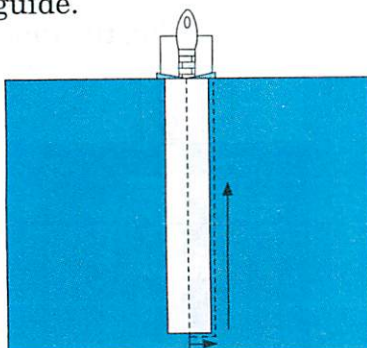
2. Use strips of 1/2" (1.3 cm) wide tape to hold the zipper to the seam allowance. Tape the top and bottom of the zipper. Add one or two more tape strips in the middle of the zipper, depending on the zipper's length.



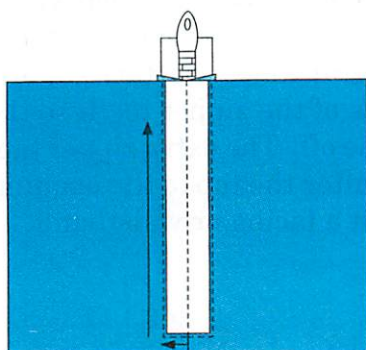
- Turn the garment right side out. Center another piece of 1/2" (1.3 cm) tape over the zipper seamline. The same amount of tape should extend on each side of the seam.



- Stitch across the bottom and up one side of the zipper, following the edge of the tape as a guide.

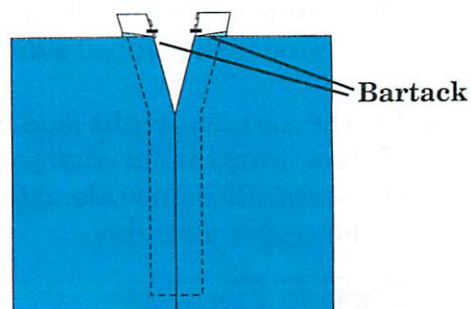


- Repeat, stitching across the bottom and up the other side of the zipper. You may have to reposition the zipper foot or adjust the needle position. Check your machine instruction manual if you need help.



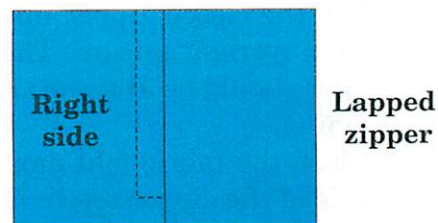
- Remove the tape on the outside and inside of the garment. Remove the basting stitches, and you're almost finished!

- Pull the zipper tab down within the zipper opening. Set stitch length to "0." Zigzag several times (bartack) across the upper ends of the zipper teeth so the pull won't come off. The extra zipper tape can be cut off after the top of the opening is finished with a facing or waistband.

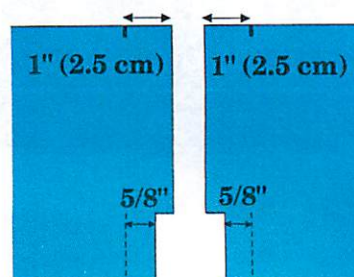


## Inserting a Lapped Zipper

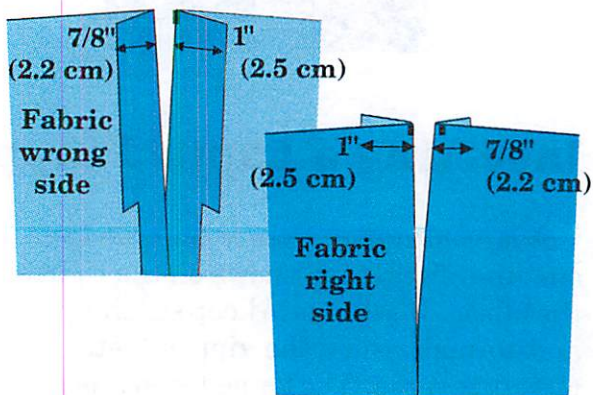
A lapped zipper gives a tailored look. Only one line of stitching shows on the right side of the fabric. It's easier to keep stitching straight and to make sure the zipper teeth are completely covered. The lapped zipper is preferred for side openings and is often used for back openings.



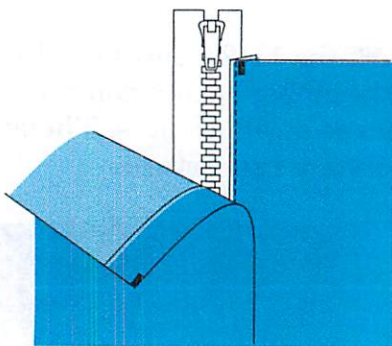
- Before cutting out your garment, increase the zipper seam allowance to 1" (2.5 cm). For example, if the pattern allows a 5/8" (1.5 cm) seam allowance, add 3/8" (1 cm) to the seam in the zipper area.
- Mark the 1" (2.5 cm) seam line at the top of the zipper opening on both the left and right seam allowances. **These markings are very important.**



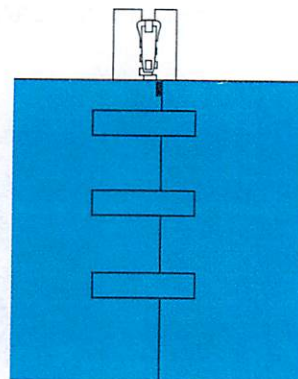
3. Stitch the lower part of the seam, stopping at the zipper opening. Press the seam open.
4. On the garment **left** side, fold and press under the entire 1" (2.5 cm) seam allowance. Use the top marking and the end of the zipper opening to help you press this fold. This is the lapped side of the zipper.
5. On the garment **right** side, measure 7/8" (2.2 cm) from the cut edge and press under the seam allowance along that line. This is the zipper underlay.



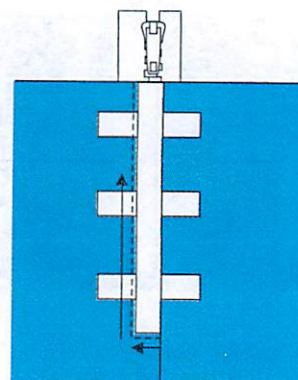
6. Place the closed zipper under the zipper underlay, right side up. The bottom of the zipper should be at the start of the zipper opening.
  - Place the fabric fold next to the **right** side of the zipper teeth. The zipper tab should extend above the fabric. Pin or tape the zipper in place.
  - Attach a zipper foot. The foot should be to the **left** of the needle.
  - Stitch the fold to the zipper, sewing from bottom to top.



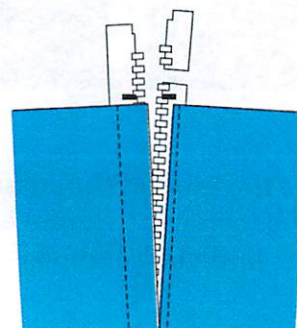
7. Overlap the garment **left** side on top of the garment **right** side, matching 1" markings. Tape or pin the overlap in place.



8. Place the edge of a piece of 1/2" (1.3 cm) tape along the folded edge.
9. Stitch across the bottom and up the side of the zipper, following the tape guide.



10. Remove the tape on the outside of the garment.
11. Pull the zipper tab down within the zipper opening. Set stitch length to "0." Zigzag several times (bartack) across the upper ends of the zipper teeth so the pull won't come off. The extra zipper tape can be cut off after the top of the opening is finished with a facing or waistband.

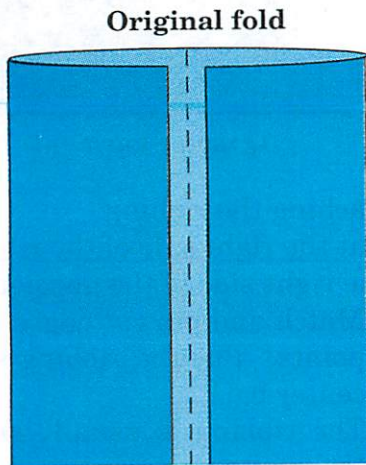


# Sewing with Knits

Knit fabrics stretch, so they need slightly different sewing techniques. You can create super knit projects with either a sewing machine or a serger. All you need is a little knit know-how!



Sometimes it is difficult to remove the center fold from knit fabrics. Before laying out and cutting the pattern, press the fold to see if you can remove it. If the fold line cannot be removed, refold the fabric so the fold line does not fall in the center of the garment.



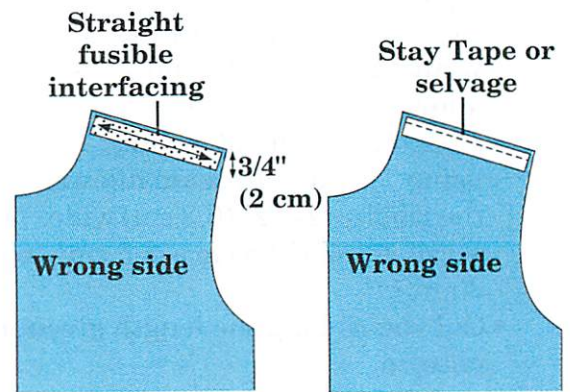
For information on stitching and pressing knit seams, refer to “Stitching Seams on Knit Fabrics” (page 38), “Serging an Overlock Seam” (page 38), and “Pressing Seams” (pages 39-40).

## Stabilizing seams:

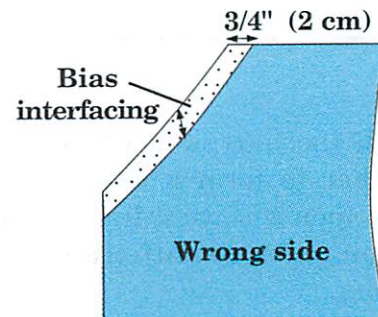
Knit seams which are under stress as they are worn should be stabilized to help them keep their shape. Some places you may want to stabilize include **shoulder seams**, **pocket openings**, and **zipper seams**.



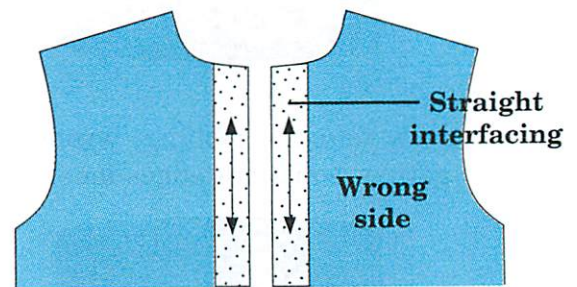
An easy way to stabilize a seam is by using strips of fusible interfacing. Use a 3/4" (2 cm) strip of interfacing cut on the straight of grain for shoulder seams. For pocket openings, use a 3/4" (2 cm) strip of bias interfacing. For zipper seams, use a 1-1/4" (3.1 cm) straight strip. Fuse the interfacing to the wrong side of the seamline before stitching or serging the seam. Another option is placing a piece of Stay-Tape™, seam binding, or a 3/8" (1 cm) strip of woven fabric selvage along the seamline before stitching the seam.



Shoulder



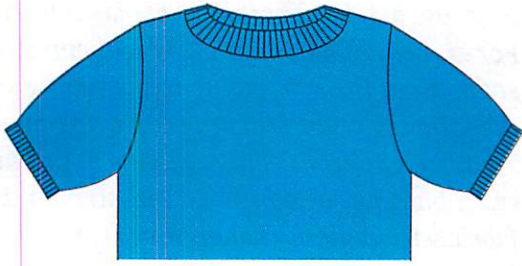
Pocket opening



Zipper opening

## Adding ribbing:

Using ribbing is an easy way to finish the edges of knit necklines, sleeves, or waistlines.

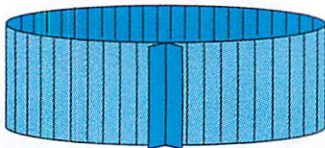


### 1. Preparing the ribbing:

- Cut the ribbing twice as wide as you want the finished band plus two seam allowances. For example, if you want a 1" (2.5 cm) band of ribbing and you are using 1/4" (6 mm) seam allowances, cut the ribbing 2-1/2" (6.3 cm) wide. (1" + 1" + 1/4" + 1/4") [2.5 cm + 2.5 cm + 6 mm + 6 mm].
- Cut the ribbing the length given in the pattern.



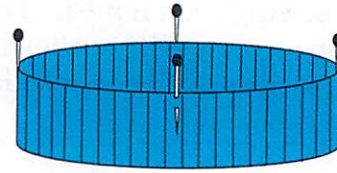
- Stitch the narrow ends of the ribbing together to form a circle. Press this seam open with your fingers. If you use an iron, you may flatten and stretch the ribbing.



- Now fold the ribbing, wrong sides together, so its cut edges meet.

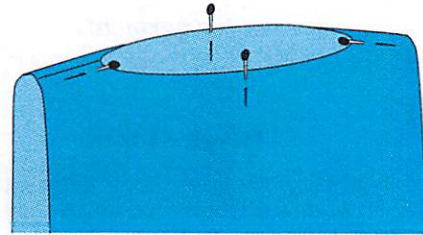


- Divide the ribbing into four equal parts, known as quarters. Use the seam as one of the quarter points. Mark the quarters with pins or a washable marker.



Quarter ribbing

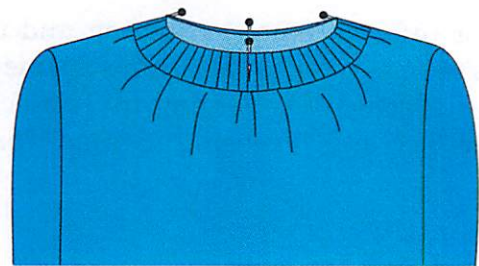
2. Divide the garment into quarters, using the center back and center front for two of the quarter points. Mark the quarters.



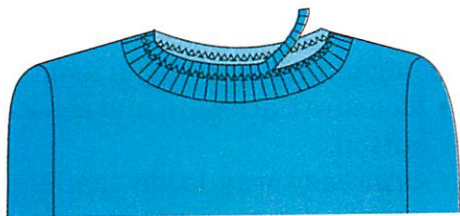
Quarter garment

### 3. Attaching the ribbing:

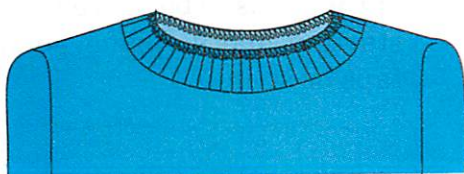
- Put the right side of the ribbing next to the right side of the garment.
  - Match and pin cut edges and quarter points. Put the ribbing seam at the center back.
  - The ribbing is usually smaller than the garment, so you have to stretch the ribbing to make it fit.



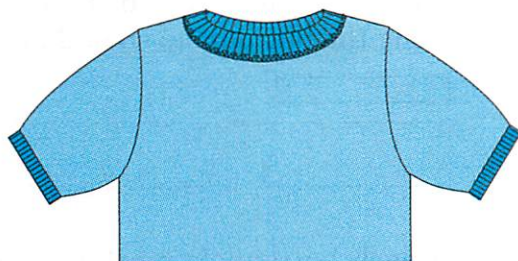
- Stitch or serge the seam.
  - If you use a **conventional sewing machine**, sew with a straight stitch or a narrow zigzag. Then stitch again 1/4" (6 mm) from the first stitching. Trim to the second stitching.



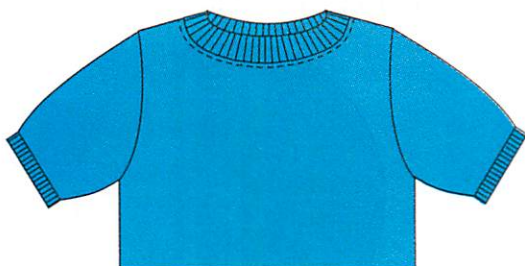
- If you **serge** the seam, the seam is stitched and trimmed at the same time.



- Finger press the seam toward the garment.

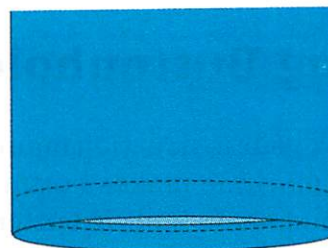


- (Optional) Topstitch along the seam on the right side of the garment, stitching on the garment, not the ribbing.

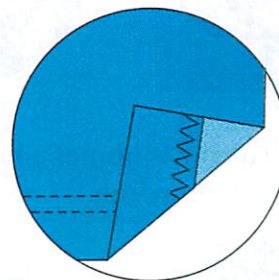
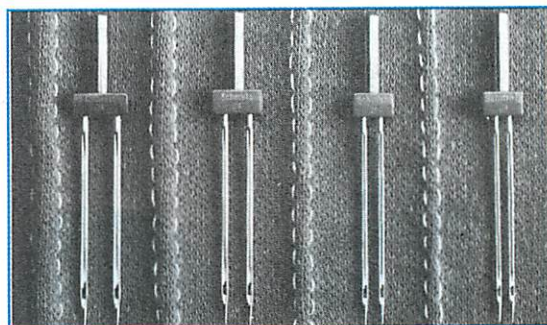


4. Hem the garment.

- Machine stitching is an easy way to finish a sporty knit garment. Press up the hem allowance. Measure so the entire hem is an even width. Then machine stitch with a single or double needle.



*My favorite way to hem a knit is using a double needle. Double needles can be used on any zigzag sewing machine that threads from front to back (not from left to right). Use two threads on top of the machine, but only one thread in the bobbin. The bobbin thread zigzags back and forth between the two top threads. Be sure to stitch from the right side of the garment so two lines of stitching show when you're finished.*



- For more dressy garments, you may want to hand stitch the hem. For more information, refer to "Hand Stitching Hems," page 71.



# Closures

Button, button, who has the button? You'll know exactly how to sew buttons and buttonholes—and snaps and hooks and eyes, too—if you follow these easy directions.

## Making Buttonholes

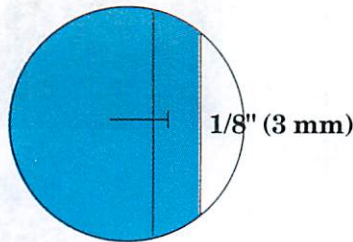
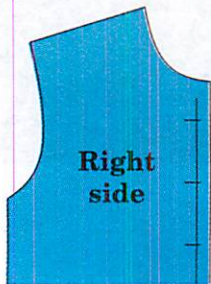
1. Check your instruction manual to see how your machine makes buttonholes. Some machines have built-in buttonholers, while others use special attachments. Always make a test buttonhole on a fabric scrap before working on your garment.



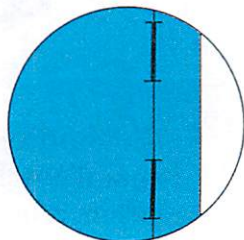
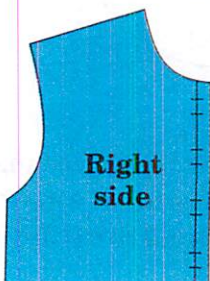
*When making your test buttonhole, stitch on the same grain of the fabric as on your garment. If the garment buttonholes follow the lengthwise grain, use that grain for your test buttonhole. If the buttonholes follow the crosswise grain, stitch the buttonhole along that grain. Include a layer of interfacing between the fabric layers so the test buttonhole is exactly like it will be in your garment.*

2. Marking buttonhole positions:

- Horizontal buttonholes should end 1/8" (3 mm) past the garment's center front or center back.



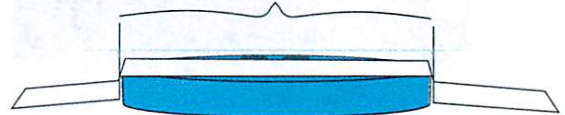
- Vertical buttonholes should be exactly on the center line.



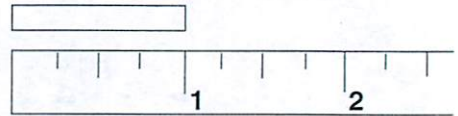
- Transfer the buttonhole positions from your pattern to your garment with a washable marking pen or a chalk line. Buttonholes should be equal distances apart. If you have altered your pattern, you may need to respace the buttonholes.

3. Determining buttonhole length.

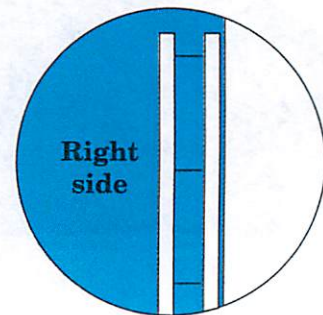
- Measure the length and thickness of the button.
  - An easy way to do this is to place a piece of string or tape around the button. Place the button on a flat surface. Start measuring at the bottom edge of the button, go across the top, and stop at the opposite bottom edge. Mark the starting and stopping points on the tape or string.



- Measure the length of the tape between the marks. This tells you how long the buttonhole should be.

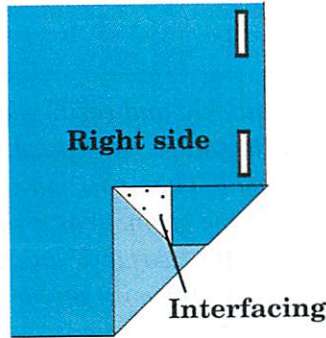


- At each buttonhole marking, measure the buttonhole length. Mark both ends.
- Place strips of tape at the buttonhole ends to provide guides for starting and stopping stitching.



#### 4. Stitching buttonholes:

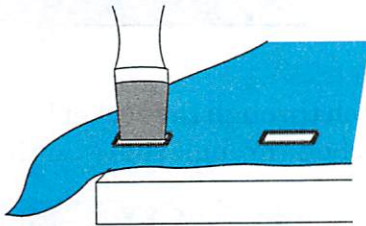
- Buttonholes should have a layer of interfacing between the buttonhole and the facing. If the pattern does not include interfacing, place a strip of interfacing slightly wider and longer than the buttonholes between the two layers of fabric.



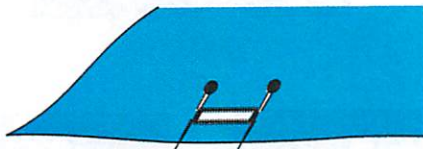
- Stitch the buttonholes, following the directions in your instruction manual.

#### 5. Opening buttonholes:

- Use a buttonhole cutter and block –or–

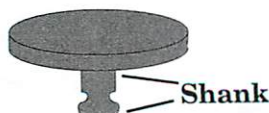


- Use a seam ripper. To prevent cutting past the bartacks at each end of the buttonhole, place a pin across each end.

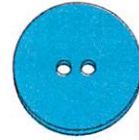


## Sewing on Buttons

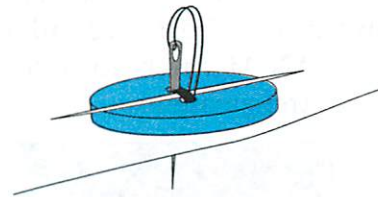
Each button must have a shank so there is room for the buttonhole to fit under the button. A shank is an extension under the button. Some buttons (those **without** holes) have metal or plastic shanks which are part of the buttons.



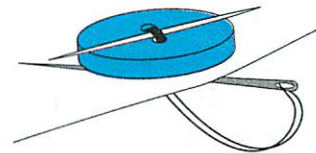
Buttons **with** holes do not have shanks; you must add shanks as you sew them to the garment. Here's how to make a thread shank:



1. Mark the button position on the center front or back, directly under the buttonhole. Place the button over the mark.
2. Use a **doubled** knotted thread. Hide the knot between the fabric and the button.
3. Put a small knitting needle, a round toothpick, or a large darning needle on top of the button between the button's holes.
4. Sew five or six stitches through the holes, stitching over the needle or toothpick.



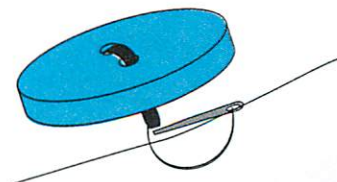
5. Bring the threaded needle up from the underside of the garment, between the button and the fabric.



6. Remove the needle or toothpick. Pull the button to the top of the threads.

7. Wind the needle thread tightly around the threads between the button and the fabric five or six times, forming a shank.

8. Bring the threaded needle back to the underside of the fabric. Knot the thread close to the fabric.

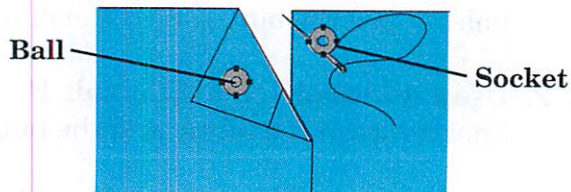


## Sewing on Snaps

Use snaps to hold together overlapping edges that don't get much strain. Snaps come in several sizes, ranging from a tiny size 4/0 to a large size 4.

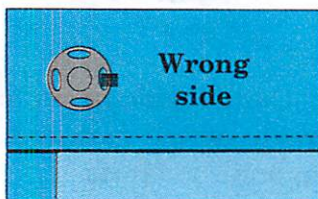
Attach the **ball** of the snap to the **wrong** side of the **overlap**.

Attach the **socket** to the **right** side of the **underlap**.

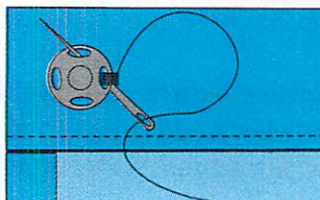


### 1. Sew on the ball first:

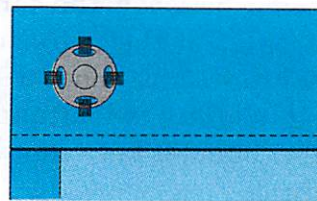
- Use a **single** knotted thread. Hide the knot between the fabric and the snap.
- Stitch through one hole several times, placing stitches close together. Stitch only through the facing and the interfacing. **DO NOT** stitch through to the right side of the garment.




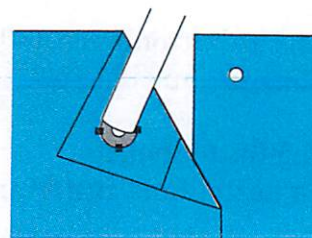
- After you finish stitching one hole, insert the needle under the snap. Bring the thread out in the next hole.



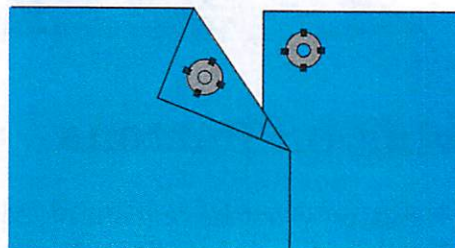
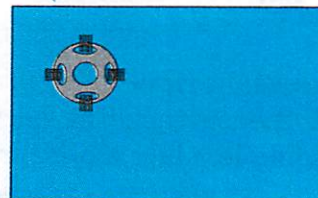
- Stitch through all four holes. Knot the thread close to the fabric.



 To quickly and easily mark the location for the socket, rub a piece of chalk over the end of the ball. Then position the ball over the other part of the garment as if the garment was closed. Press the two fabric layers together. The chalk will mark the position for the socket.



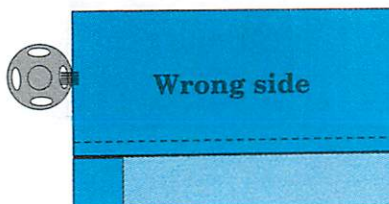
- ### 2. Stitch through the socket holes just as you stitched through those on the ball.



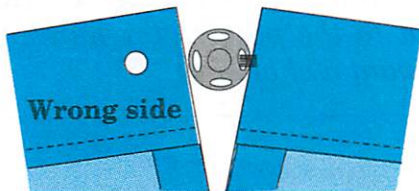
## Adding a Swing or Hanging Snap

Snap fasteners can also hold together two edges which meet, preventing them from gapping or pulling apart. Such snaps are called swing or hanging snaps. To attach a hanging snap:

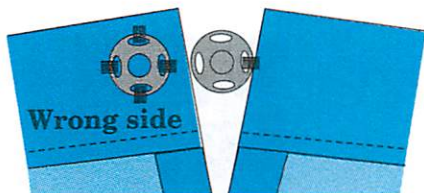
1. Place the ball of the snap at one edge of the opening so only one hole touches the fabric. The remainder of the ball will extend past the fabric edge.
2. Stitch the ball to the garment, sewing through only one hole. Use a **single** knotted thread.



3. Rub chalk on the ball. Place the two garment sections so the edges of the opening just meet. Mark the position for the socket.



4. Stitch through all the holes of the socket.



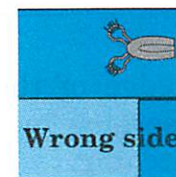
## Sewing on Hooks and Eyes

Use hooks and eyes to fasten openings where there will be greater stress, such as on waistbands. Use a **straight** eye when the edges **overlap**. Use a **looped** eye when edges only **meet**. Regular hooks and eyes are available in sizes 0 through 3, with 3 being the largest.

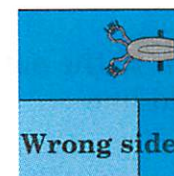


### 1. Sewing on the hook:

- Place the hook on the overlap, with its end (the “bill”) about 1/8” (3 mm) from the edge.
- Use a **single** knotted thread. Fasten the thread under the hook.
- Stitch around both rings, placing stitches close together. Stitch only through the facing and interfacing. **DO NOT** stitch through to the right side of the garment.



- Before fastening the thread, fasten the bill with several overhand stitches. This helps keep the top layer flat when the hook is fastened. Stitch over only the lower part of the bill, rather than over both parts.

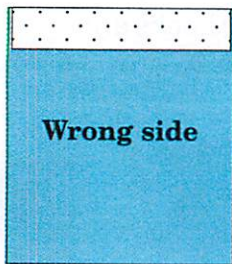


### 2. Sewing on the eye:

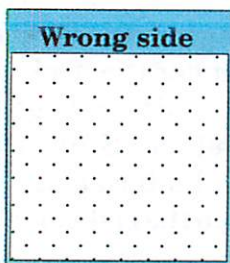
- Position the hook over the other part of the garment as if it were fastened.
- Place the straight eye or the loop of the rounded eye directly under the hook. Mark its position.
- Stitch around the rings of the eye.

# Adding a Patch Pocket

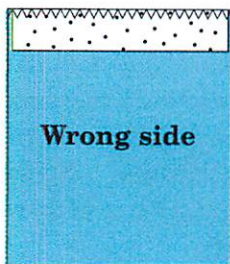
1. Interface the wrong side of the pocket hem.



On some fabrics (such as knits) you may want to cut the interfacing the size of the entire pocket pattern (except the hem) to keep the pocket from stretching.

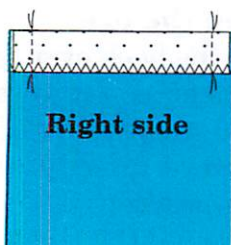


2. Finish the edge of the pocket hem by zigzagging, serging, or turning under the edge and stitching.

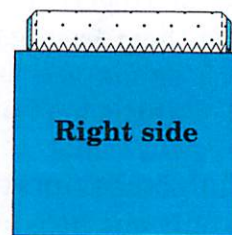


3. Fold the hem to the outside of the pocket along the fold line.

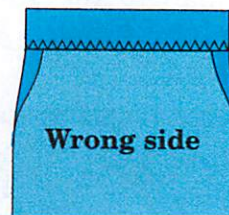
4. Stitch the side seams.



5. Grade the seam allowances. Trim the pocket allowance to 3/8" (1 cm) and the hem allowance to 1/4" (6 mm). Trim the upper corners diagonally.



6. Turn the hem to the inside of the pocket.

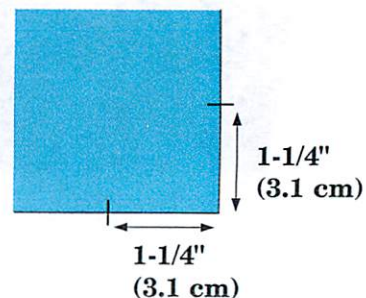


7. Miter each pocket corner.

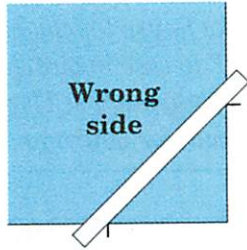


*Mitering a corner is more difficult than merely pressing under pocket hems. But mitering gives a really nice finish to the pocket. Try mitering when you want a challenge!*

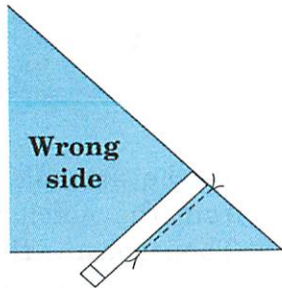
- Measure 1-1/4" (3.1 cm) up and 1-1/4" (3.1 cm) across from the two lower corners of the pocket. Mark with a washable marker, a pin, or a tiny clip.



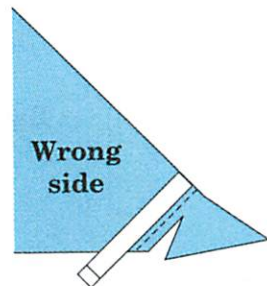
- Place a piece of tape on the wrong side of the pocket between the two marks. Extend the tape beyond the fabric's cut edges.



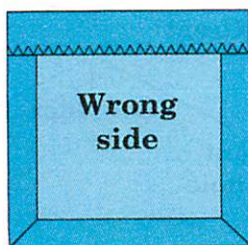
- Fold the pocket, right sides together, matching marks and tape edges.
- Stitch, following the tape edge.



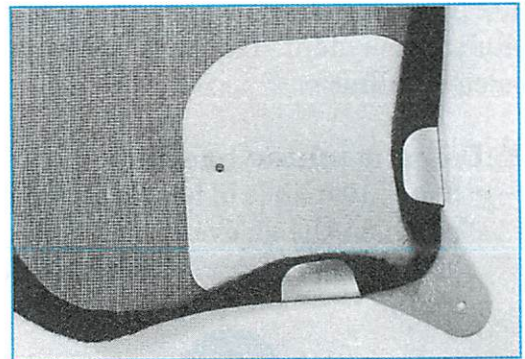
- Remove tape from stitched seam.
- Trim seam allowance to 1/4" (6 mm). Trim corner diagonally.



- Press seam open.
- Turn miter right side out.

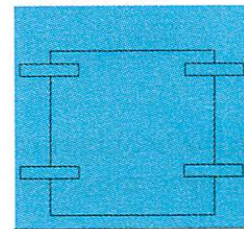


*I sometimes cut a cardboard template the size of the completed pocket to help me get a perfectly shaped pocket. The template also prevents seam allowances from showing on the right side of the pocket. Place the template on the wrong side of the pocket and press the seam allowances around the cardboard. For rounded pockets, another option is using a Pocket Curve Template. This useful notion has four different corner shapes plus a clip which holds the seam allowances as you form and shape the pocket.*

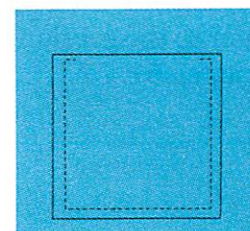


**Pocket Curve Template**

8. Press the pocket.
9. Position the pocket on the garment. Use strips of tape to hold it in place.



10. Machine stitch the pocket to the garment, stitching through the tape. Reinforce the upper corners by backstitching or stitching several stitches across the top edge on each side. Remove the tape when you finish stitching.



# Setting in Sleeves

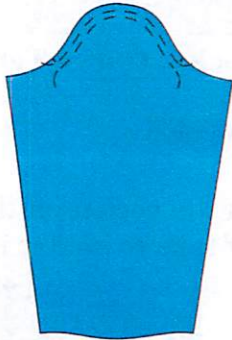
It's easiest to set in sleeves on casual, sporty garments before sewing underarm seams.

## Easing in sleeve fullness:

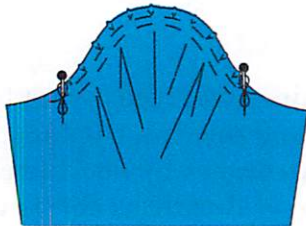
The sleeve cap is usually larger than the armhole. Some sleeves are only slightly larger than the armhole. Others have fullness that must be gathered or pleated so the sleeve will match the garment. Here are two ways to ease in sleeve fullness:

### 1. Using machine basting:

- Stitch two lines of basting from notch to notch on the sleeve cap. Stitch one line at 5/8" (1.5 cm) and the second at 1/4" (6 mm).




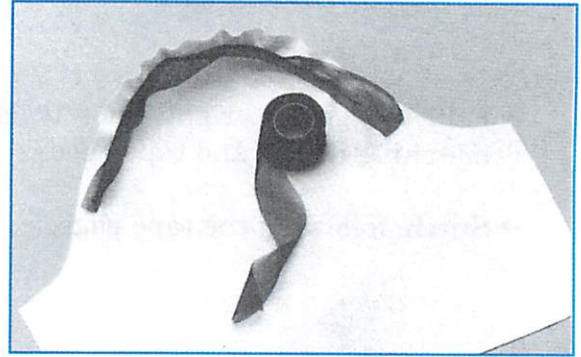
- Pull up the bobbin threads until the size of the sleeve matches that of the armhole.



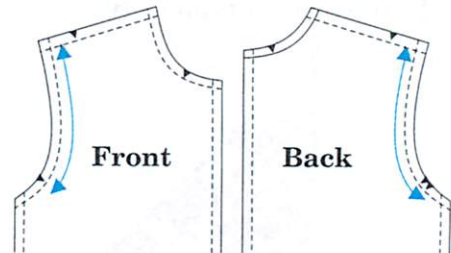
- For additional information on gathering, refer to the section, "Gathering Fabrics," pages 51–52.

### 2. Using Seams Great®:

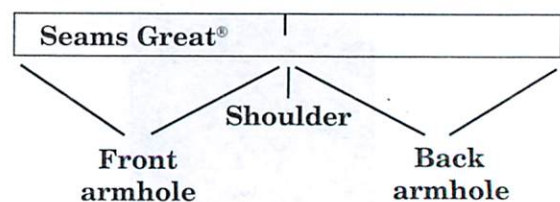
 *Seams Great® is a bias cut nylon tricot that stretches, yet comes back to its original size. I like to use the wider 1-1/4" (3.1 cm) Seams Great® to ease in sleeve fullness on light to medium weight fabrics. Use a matching color of Seams Great® for your project. Here's how:*



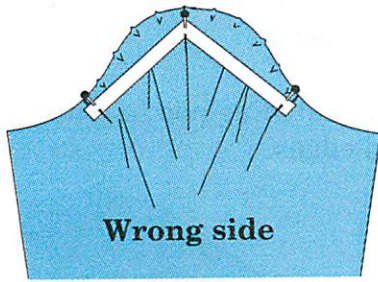
- Measure the armhole on the pattern front from the notch to the shoulder seam. Then measure the armhole on the pattern back from the notch to the shoulder seam. Measure along the **seamline**, not at the cut edge. Instead of placing the tape measure flat as you measure, place the tape on end.



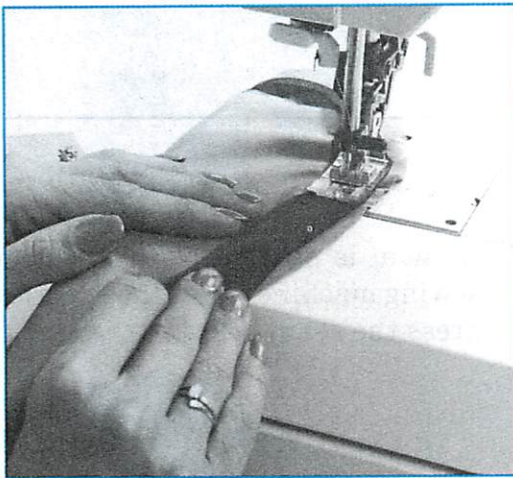
- Add the two armhole measurements. Cut a piece of 1-1/4" (3.1 cm) wide Seams Great® as long as the combined armhole measurement. Mark the position of the shoulder seam.



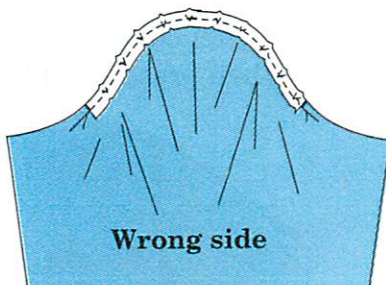
- Pin the Seams Great® to the **wrong** side of the sleeve, placing the ends of the tricot at the notches. Pin the shoulder mark at the sleeve shoulder marking.



- Set the sewing machine at 10-12 stitches per inch (3–2.5 mm stitch length.) **Stretch** the Seams Great® to meet the sleeve. Keep outer edges of the sleeve and the Seams Great® even. Sew the two layers together 1/2" (1.3 cm) from the cut edge.



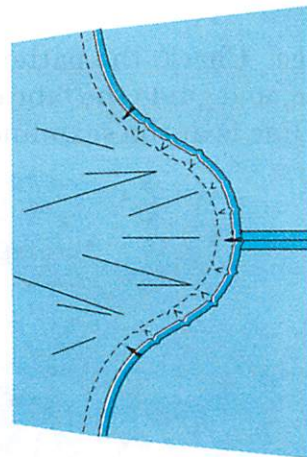
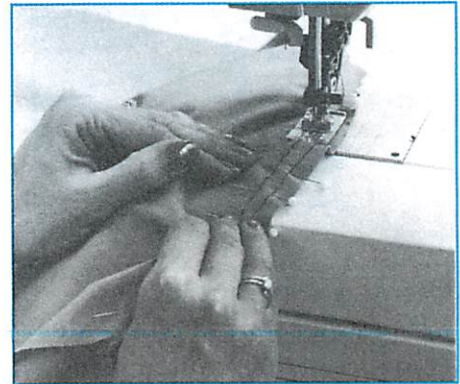
- When you're finished, the Seams Great® will pull back to its original size, automatically easing the sleeve cap.



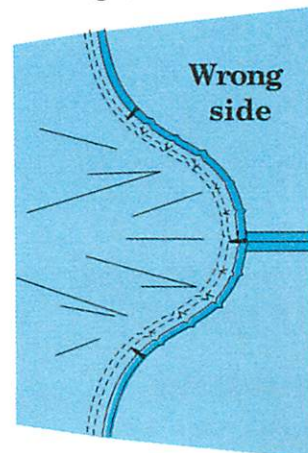
## Stitching the sleeve to the armhole

### 1. Using a conventional sewing machine:

- Place right sides of the sleeve and garment together, matching notches, circles, shoulder point, and cut edges.
- Stitch seam.

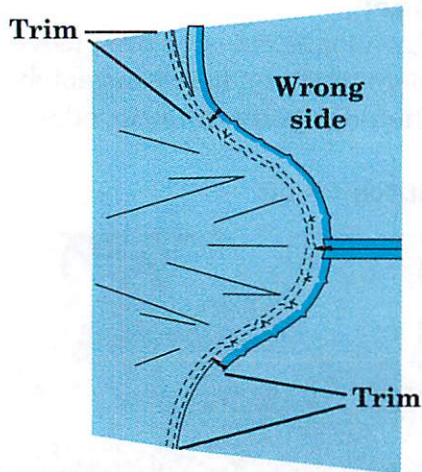


- Add a second line of stitching 1/4" (6 mm) from the first stitching (3/8" [1 cm] from the edge).



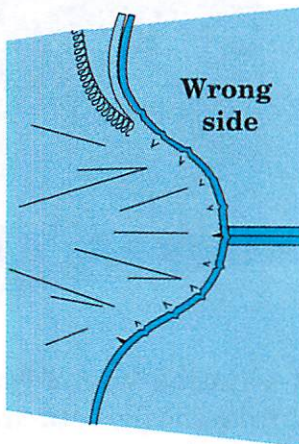


- Trim close to the second stitching between the end of the sleeve and the notch. Do this on both ends of the sleeve. **DO NOT** trim the remainder of the sleeve seam.



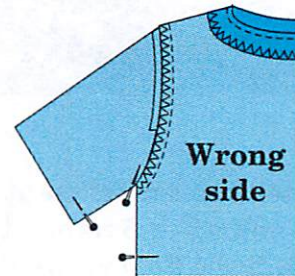
**2. Using a serger:**

- Place right sides of the sleeve and garment together, matching notches, circles, shoulder point, and cut edges.
- Serge. Check the pattern seam allowance, and guide the fabric so the stitching line is at the seamline.

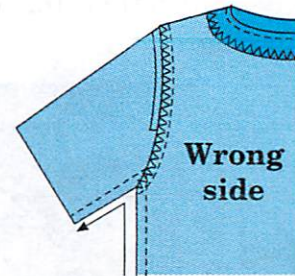


## Stitching the garment and sleeve side seam

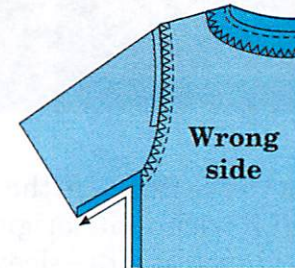
1. Place right sides of the garment and sleeve together.
2. Pin, matching notches, underarm seams, and edges.



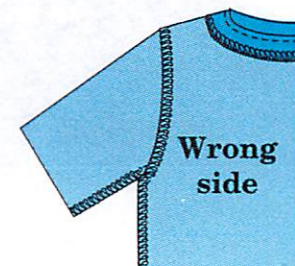
3. Stitch seam.



4. If seam is stitched with a conventional sewing machine, press the seam flat; then press the seam open.



5. If seam is stitched with a serger, press seam flat; then press seam to one side.



# Adding a Waistband

Here's another way of finishing a waistline on pants, shorts, or a skirt—add a separate waistband.

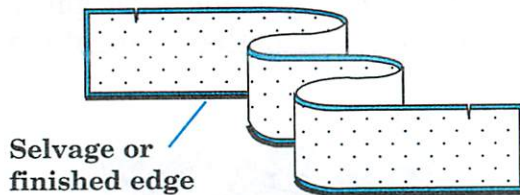
1. Cut the band, using your pattern as a guide.


- **Fold under 1/2" (1.3 cm) along the long unnotched edge of the waistband pattern.**

- If possible, place the folded-under edge along a selvage. This helps reduce bulk.

- If the band cannot be placed on the selvage, finish the edge by zigzagging or serging.

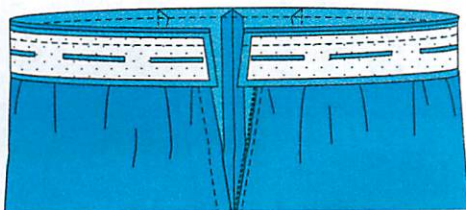
2. Interface the entire band. Fuse interfacing to the wrong side of the waistband.



 Another option is using a precut fusible waistband interfacing such as Jiffy Waistband & Ban-Rol®. It's easy to apply, and your completed band will be straight and uniform. The interfacing stops at the waistband seam lines, and the center slot is the waistband's fold line.

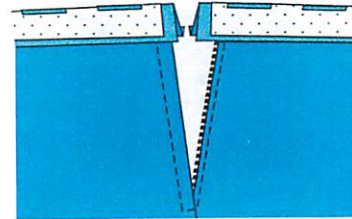
3. Stitch the waistband to the garment.

- Place right sides together, matching notches, centers, and side seams.
- Stitch, easing the garment to fit.
- Grade seam allowances. Trim the garment seam to 3/8" (1 cm) and the waistband seam to 1/4" (6 mm). Angle cut skirt seam allowances and darts from stitching to cut edge to reduce bulk.



- Press seam flat. Then press the waistband up, covering the seam.

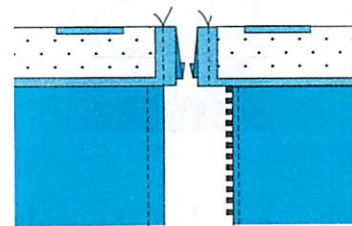
4. Fold waistband along fold line, right sides together. Lower edges will not meet. One edge extends 1/8" (1.3 mm) below the other.



5. Finish waistband ends:

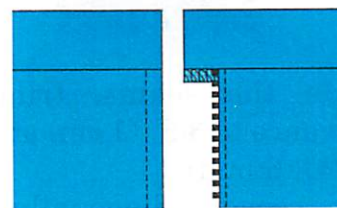
- Method #1:

- Stitch the end seams. On the left end, stitching should go straight up from the zipper overlap. The right end extends past the zipper.



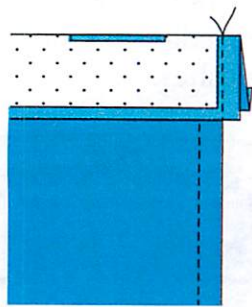
- Trim and grade seam allowances. Angle cut corners.

- Turn band right side out. The finished edge of the band will extend slightly below the waist seam.

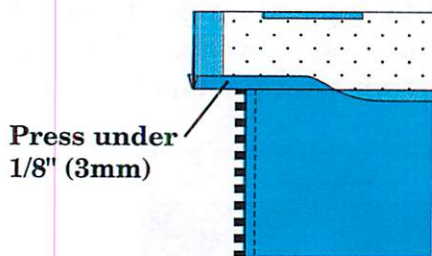


• Method #2:

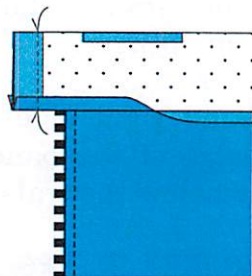
- Stitch **left** waistband end. Stitching should go straight up from the fold of the zipper overlap.



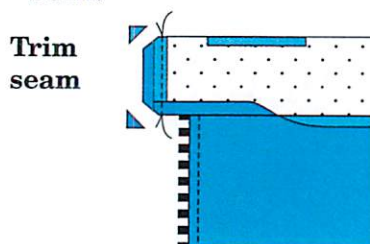
- On the **right** end of the waistband, fold under and press 1/8" (3 mm) on the unnotched edge. Stop pressing 2" (5 cm) past the zipper edge. The lower edges of the band should now be even.



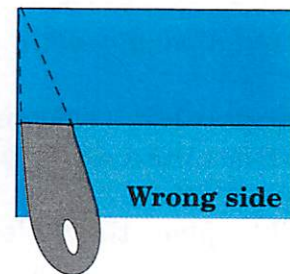
- Stitch the end of the waistband with a 5/8" (1.5 cm) seam.



- Grade the seams, trimming one allowance to 3/8" (1 cm) and the other to 1/4" (6 mm).
- Trim corners diagonally to reduce bulk.

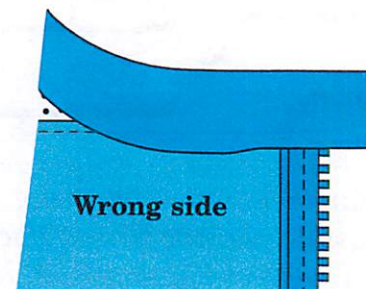


6. Turn the waistband right side out. Use a Bamboo Pointer and Creaser to help get sharp corners. Press the band so the fold line is at the top of the band.

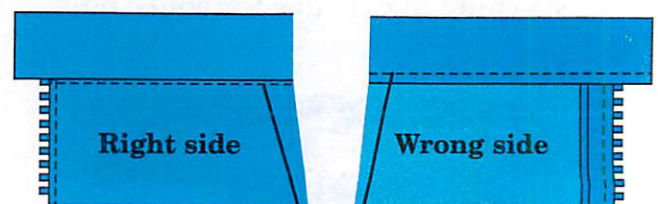
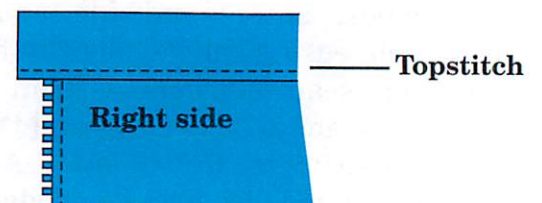


7. Finish the band.

- Pin the remaining edge of the band over the waist seam.
- The selvage or finished edge of the band will extend slightly below the waist seam.
- Pin from the right side of the garment.
- Topstitch the waistband, or stitch in



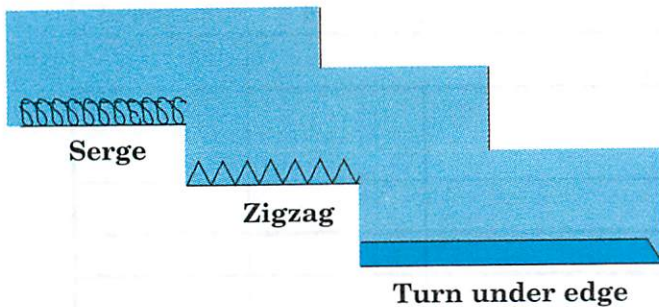
the ditch. To stitch in the ditch, straight stitch in the valley or "well" of the waist seam. The stitching will blend into the seam and will not be noticeable from the right side. On the wrong side, the stitching will catch the remaining waistband edge.



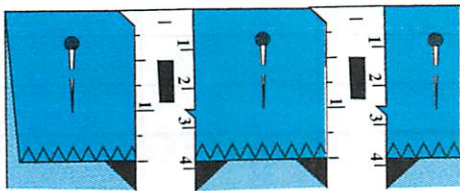
# Hand Stitching Hems

Hem a garment with hand stitching for a dressier, less noticeable edge finish. Here's an easy hem stitch that goes very quickly.

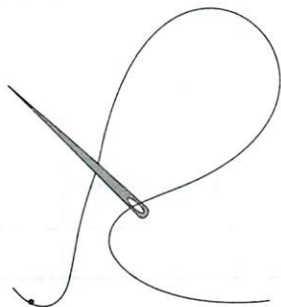
1. Finish the hem edge by zigzagging, serging, or turning under the raw edge.



2. Pin up the hem, measuring to make sure it is an even width around the entire garment.

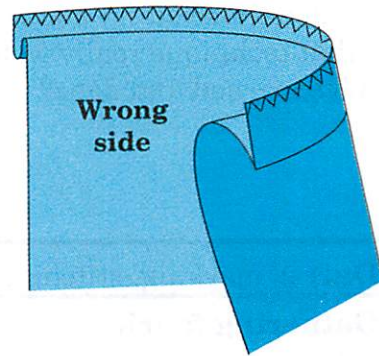


3. Thread a needle with a **single** strand of thread. **DO NOT** use double thread for hemming.
4. Cut the thread about 18" (45 cm) long. The thread will tangle and knot more easily if it is too long.
5. Knot one end of the thread.

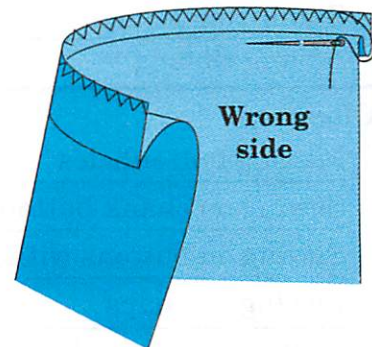


6. Stitch the hem, using a blind hemming stitch.

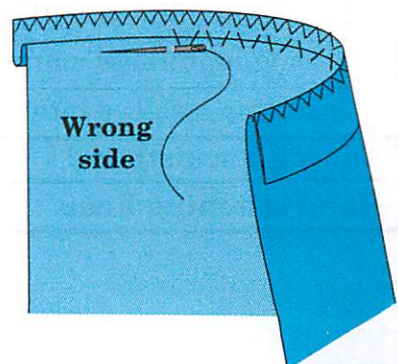
- Fold back the garment edge so about 1/4" (6 mm) of the hem edge shows.



- Work from right to left.
- Take a tiny stitch in the hem; then take a tiny stitch in the garment about 1/4" (6 mm) ahead of that stitch. Pick up only **one or two threads** in the fabric. Next take a stitch in the hem edge about 1/4" (6 mm) ahead of the last stitch.



- Repeat, taking a stitch in the garment, then one in the hem edge, then one in the garment, and so forth.
- Do not pull stitches too tight or the hem will pucker.



# Sew Some More!

Each time you try a new technique, check it off on this chart. When you feel you can do that technique really well, add a check in the second column. Aren't you proud of all you've learned and done?

	Tried	Mastered
<b>Darts:</b> marking, stitching, and pressing darts		
<b>Gathering fabric:</b>		
Using two rows of machine stitching		
Gathering over a cord		
<b>Making a wrapped corner collar</b>		
<b>Inserting a zipper:</b>		
Using a centered zipper application		
Using a lapped zipper application		
<b>Sewing with knits:</b>		
Sewing or serging a garment from knit fabric		
Stabilizing seams		
Adding ribbing		
<b>Closures:</b>		
Making buttonholes		
Sewing on shank buttons		
Sewing on buttons without shanks		
Sewing on snaps		
Adding a swing or hanging snap		
Sewing on hooks and eyes		
<b>Adding a patch pocket</b>		
Hemming and shaping the pocket		
Mitering a corner		
<b>Setting in sleeves:</b>		
Easing in fullness with machine basting		
Easing in fullness using Seams Great®		
Inserting a sleeve into a garment		
<b>Adding a waistband</b>		
<b>Hand stitching hems</b>		

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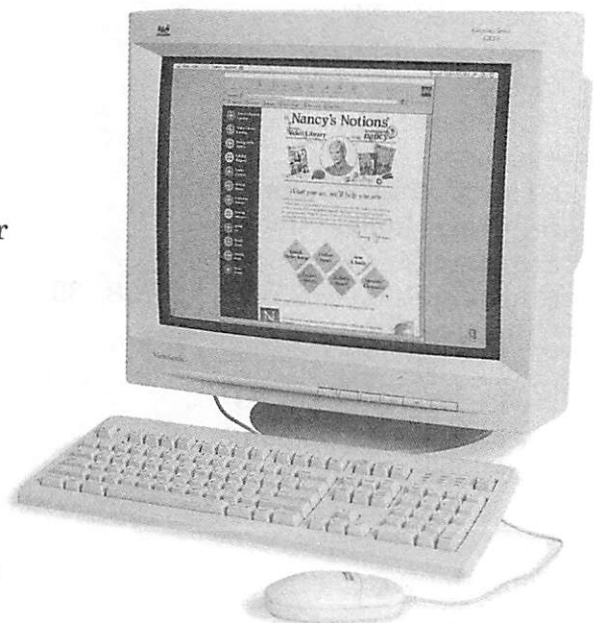
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### Nancy Zieman



Nancy Zieman shares her love of sewing via TV programs, books, sewing articles, and catalogs. She is producer and host of TV's *Sewing With Nancy*® as well as president of Nancy's Notions, Ltd., a catalog mail order business.

Nancy began sewing at age 10 when she joined her local 4-H club, and she's been sewing ever since. She now lives in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, with her husband and business partner, Richard, and their two children, Ted and Tom.

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