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February/March 2015

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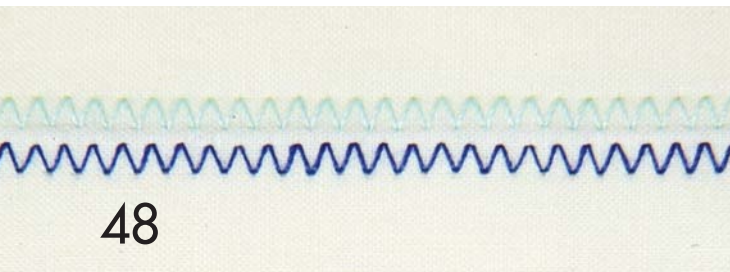
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ON THE COVER:

Cake Cushion

Create a sweet pincushion for a unique gift.

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Coming Attractions

Find the conclusion to "Pants Perfection" Part III), plus learn expert tips to create couture waistbands, dart pivoting techniques and secrets to serger success. All this and more is in the April/May issue, on newsstands in March, 2015.



Enter our 35th Anniversary Scavenger Hunt!

Learn all about it on page 81. You could win big!

DEAR READERS,

It's hard to believe that *Sew News* has been on newsstands for 35 years! What an achievement. Many of you have saved every issue since the beginning, and I can't blame you. It's so fun to look back at those newsprint copies and see the fashion trends depicted throughout the years. Despite the changes in fashion, the techniques and tips remain relevant. After all, sewing never goes out of style.

You'll find the number 35 sprinkled throughout the pages of this issue as our homage to this special anniversary. Begin with the best Reader Tips throughout the years on page 10. Many of you tell us that "Reader Tips" is your favorite column, so you'll want to save these pages for future reference! Then move on to 35 of the best fitting tips from contributor Joi Mahon. Joi recently taught fit classes at the American Sewing Expo, and her sold-out classes were a hit. See why on page 54. Plus, Rae Cumbie shares her must-have garment sewing tools on page 42. See which ones you have and what you need to stock your sewing room. (Plus, the tools are all available on shopsewitall.com.)

You are the reason we're here and the reason *Sew News* has been around for so long. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your dedication to *Sew News* and your never-ending love of sewing. As we move forward to our 40th (and 50th) year on the newsstand, we want to ensure you're satisfied. So please drop us a line at sewnews@sewnews.com or comment on our Facebook page to tell us what you'd like to see in the future issues. We're always listening!

Sincerely,

Ellen March,
Editor-in-Chief

LOVE THE COVER?

Find the cake pincushion kit at shopsewitall.com, including all the supplies you need!



Find out about the talented experts featured in this issue, and visit their websites for more fun extras

1. Susan Beck ("Basic Skills: 35 Must-Know Sewing Terms"—page 20) has loved creating with fabric, needle and thread for most of her life. She's an educator, writer and editor for Bernina of America.

berninausa.com

2. Rhonda Buss ("Sew & Tell"—page 78) is a woman of many talents. She's a pilot, writer, artist, dog lover and sewist. She lives in Chicago, where she drafts patterns and sews for her blog, Rhonda's Creative Life.

rhondabuss.blogspot.com

3. Rae Cumbie ("Fitting FAQs"—page 24, "35 Tools of the Trade"—page 42) is the Creative Director at Fit for Art Patterns, which offers patterns for modern wardrobe basics that focus on fit and include artful design options. She coaches sewers of all skill levels, in classes and on her blog, to stitch up a fun and comfortable wardrobe and design more creatively. Visit her blog, Sew! Let's Get Dressed, for everything from basic sewing education to artful inspiration.

fitforartpatterns.com

4. Elizabeth & Liz Evans ("35 Skirt Embellishments"—page 68) are two former teachers who married brothers and now share a name and love of creating.

simplesimonandco.com

5. Sara Gallegos ("35 Must-Know Stitches"—page 48) loves to sew in her free time. She writes and appears at promotional events for sewing machine retailers.

practicallyposhkids.com

6. Liesl Gibson ("Haute Topics"—page 34) is the chief designer of Liesl + Co., makers of the Oliver + S, Lisette and Straight Stitch Society brands of sewing patterns and fabrics. lieslandco.com

7. Ana Jankovic ("Pattern Play: Over the Rainbow Shirt"—page 30) is a computer programmer who expresses her creativity by sewing in her free time. She's a self-taught sewist and designer residing in Belgrade, Serbia.

stepalica.blogspot.com

8. Cindy Luby ("Home Dec Help"—page 28) trained as a commercial seamstress and loves designing patterns for quilts and bags. She loves long-arm quilting and entertaining creative friends in her home studio.

9. Joi Mahon ("35 Fitting Factors"—page 54) is a fashion designer and owner of Dress Forms Design Studio, LLC. She's a past winner of the American Sewing Expo Passion for Fashion contest and is the founder of Baby Lock's Love of Fashion Programs. dressformsdesign.com

10. Kate Van Fleet ("Cake Cushion"—page 40) has been sewing for more than 40 years. She's the former owner of Creations by Kate, a business supplying handmade pillows to nine stores in five states.

11. Katie Vardijan ("Sew Vintage: '80s Style"—page 36) is a sewing machine company educator and works passionately on millinery and historical costuming.

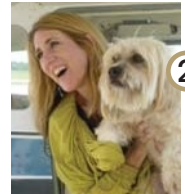
luludeuxmillinery.com

12. Katrina Walker ("35 Silk Sewing Tips"—page 74) specializes in working with silk and wool. She enjoys designing projects for home sewists and playing with her flock of sheep. katrinawalker.com

13. Sheila Zent ("35 Edge Finishes"—page 60) has been sewing for 35 years and created eXpresSew, a learn-to-sew program for preteens and teens. expressew.com



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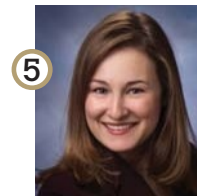
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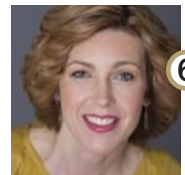
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Free Sewing e-Books!

Download a new sewing e-Book every month from the Sew News library. Find tips on learning to sew, easy projects and expert advice on making your sewn garments and projects look their best at sewnews.com/ebook_library.

Download the newest e-Book, *Finishing Sewn Garments*, and learn how to add construction details that give your garments a polished look. You'll also learn durable and inconspicuous hemming techniques for woven and knit fabrics, how to sew crisp, flat plackets and the best seam finishes for any project. Plus, it's free!



What we love from shopsewitall.com!

Get ready for the Sew News Sew Chic Slip Sew-Along beginning March 2, 2015. Purchase the Sew Chic Slip pattern now, plus download the handy *Sewing Lingerie* e-Book for more tips and tricks for sewing lingerie. Find the sew-along schedule and all the details on page 78. Don't forget to join Flickr to show off your what you've made.



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Sew News February/March 2015 • No. 2

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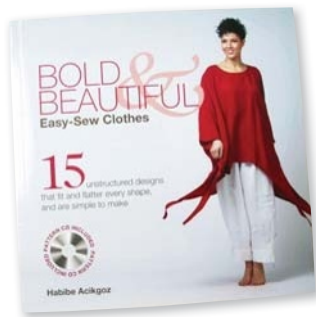


**BEST
IN SEW**

"As many as I can!
I usually get in around
four to eight hours
a week. I have two
little ones, so I think
that's pretty good."

Anna H.

Anna won a copy of *Bold & Beautiful: Easy-Sew Clothes* from St. Martin's Griffin for her great comment. For your shot at winning a prize, "like" the *Sew News* Facebook page.



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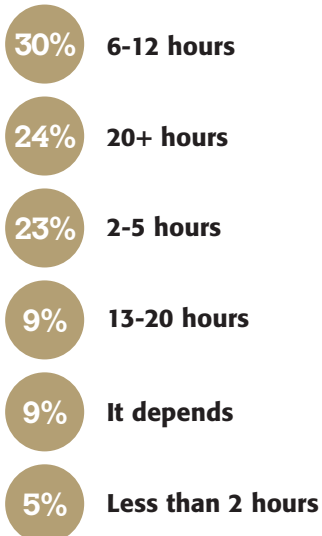
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THE RESULTS ARE IN

We asked you on Facebook:

How many hours per week do you sew?



YOU SAID SEW

"I sew 20 hours per week or more if I can. I sew on my machine during the day and by hand at night. It's how I relax and wind down from the day's events." Melissa Q.

"I do a lot of charity sewing, so I sew about 20 hours per week." Deb N.

"I sew 15 or more hours per week. I work full-time and make costumes part-time for an outdoor drama production. And I have three teenagers." Vicky H.

"Before my daughter, I sewed about 30 hours per week. Now, I'm lucky to get two hours." Linda P.

"I sew one to two days per month from sunup to sundown. When I get started, I don't want to stop until a project is finished." Joni M.

"I sew between 20 and 50 hours per week. I work really hard at doing nothing else." Casey J.

READER REMARKS

Check out the latest comments on our Facebook fan page:

"Love your magazine! I read all the tips your magazine offers. It makes for smarter sewing and better success!" Louise W.

"I just started sewing again and I'm so excited to see the great ideas you share on Facebook with all of us. Thank you." Deborah M.

"I'm taking the new Sulky class. I can't believe it's offered right here in my little town!" Cyndy B.

"I love watching *Sew it All!* I watch it on KVCR every Saturday morning." Ernie A.

"I wish my local station would air *Sew it All!* more than once a week!" Sally H.

"Lovely to read ["Meet the Designer"] about Rhonda Buss, as I'm a fairly recent follower of her blog. This article has given me the chance to learn more about her." Marysia P.

35

OF OUR MOST
POPULAR
SEW NEWS
READER TIPS

SCRAP HAPPY

I store my fabric and yarn scraps in a large shopping bag, and when full, I take it to the activities director of my local nursing home. The residents happily use my leftovers for some very clever projects.

L. Vanderbloom, May '91



1

2

PATTERN WEIGHTS

Use 2"-diameter galvanized washers from the hardware store for inexpensive pattern weights.

I. Weinberg,
Dec. '97



3

PRESSING MATTERS

To avoid the hassle of getting up to press while sewing, I place my ironing board at a right angle to the left of my sewing table and lower the height to use comfortably from a sitting position. Now I just swivel my chair around and press, then roll back to the machine. No more wasted time!

B. Patricelli, Jan. '89

4



COORDINATED EFFORTS

Each time I complete a garment or shorten a ready-made item, I save a small swatch of each fabric. I keep the clips in a small plastic bag in my purse and use them to coordinate other fabric and clothing purchases. There's no more guessing about what colors might go well together and it's eliminated many impulse purchases.

K. Guidry, Apr. '89

POCKET POINTERS

To keep slanted pockets from stretching, I cut the pocket opening edge on the straight grain instead of the bias (as most instructions indicate). This method serves two purposes: The straight grain acts as a permanent stay along the pocket edge, without the bulk of stay tape, and the bias cut of the remainder of the pocket helps it contour to the body.

E. Hollingsworth, March '90

5

CARRIER KUDOS 6

Instead of slip-stitching wide belt loops to a garment, I use the blind-hem stitch to invisibly anchor the carrier ends from the right side. It's a real time-saver.

M. Jensen, Oct. '91



TOP IT OFF 7

A wine bottle cork makes a great travel pincushion.

E. Niziolek, March '93

SHOCKING NEWS 8

I work extensively with spandex fabrics using a rotary cutter and mat for cutting, but often static electricity builds up and shocks me. To solve this problem, I keep a fabric softener sheet handy to wipe the mat. This eliminates the static and picks up lint as well!

P. Struck, Oct. '90

KID FRIENDLY 9

Keep small fabric scraps, children's scissors, a tapestry needle, glue stick, buttons and other small items in a box. When kids come over, let them make a creation to take home. It's a good way to introduce them to sewing.

F. Shoults, June '95



PIN TRICK 10

When pulling elastic through a casing, I insert a straight pin crosswise through the elastic free end. As the elastic is pulled, the pin catches on the casing end so I don't accidentally pull the elastic too far.

C. Wong, Feb. '92

ZIPPER TIPS 11

Use narrow strips of fusible web to "baste" zippers in place before stitching. There's no excuse for crooked stitching when the zipper doesn't budge!

B. Dezelle, July '93



LIQUID ASSETS 12

Save small scraps of water-soluble stabilizer in an airtight bag. When you have about a yard's worth of scraps, dissolve them in water and store in a spray bottle. Voilà, you've created a liquid stabilizer.

D. Hardy, Jan. '95



COOL IDEA

To keep tiny notions tidy, store them in old ice cube trays. The cube holders are the perfect size for buttons and beads, and the trays stack neatly.

G. Kelley, Aug. '94



13

TO DYE FOR

When sewing an item you plan to dye, use cotton thread—polyester thread doesn't absorb dye as well.

L. Ketchmark, Nov. '94

14

RIGHT WAY TO REFILL

I have better control when refilling my iron with water if I use a recycled sports water bottle. I extend the mouthpiece, insert it in the iron and squeeze to fill up the water tank. No more spills!

Jessica S., July '03

15



SOUVENIR SAVVY

When on vacation, buy unusual fabrics in place of souvenirs. When you return home, create one-of-a-kind garments that bring back fond vacation memories each time you wear them.

L. Hoffmeister, March '95



16

PRESSING PLEATS

Cover pleats with aluminum foil, and then press them with an iron set on steam and its hottest temperature for deep, sharp pleats.

B. James, Apr. '96

17

SMOOTH STUFFING

18

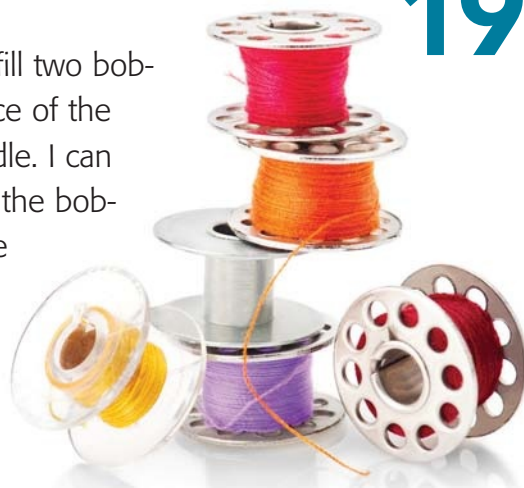
For pillows filled with fiberfill rather than a pillow form, create a smoother appearance by using a layer of batting on each pillow panel wrong side.

P. Verfaillie, SN Home, Dec. '97

BOBBIN MINDER

When I start a project, I fill two bobbins and use one in place of the spool to thread the needle. I can tell how much is left on the bobbin as I sew because the top bobbin is emptying at the same rate. No more surprises when the bobbin runs out.

Frances F., Oct. '00



19

FRAYED NOT

20

I had a length of gorgeous blue wool tweed that tended to ravel, so before cutting out my blazer, I fused lightweight interfacing to the fabric wrong side. This step solved the raveling problem and also prevented the fabric from stretching. I interfaced the garment as usual during the construction.

Jeanne H., July '03

CLEVER CASINGS

21

When I make a garment with a waistline casing, I use a small piece of fusible web to secure the seam allowances inside the casing. The elastic insertion goes more smoothly when you're not fighting loose seam allowances.

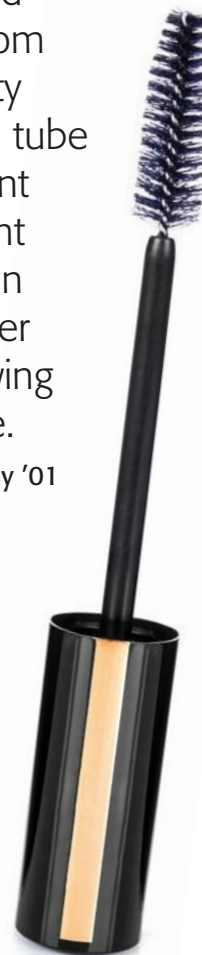
Mrs. W. Neff, Jan. '89

TIGHT SPOT

22

A washed and dried wand from an empty mascara tube cleans lint from tight places on the serger and sewing machine.

Libby P., July '01



EXPANSION PLAN

To expand your thread rack's capacity, cut plastic drinking straws in half and place one piece over each spindle. Each spindle now will hold two or three spools instead of one.

B. James, Apr. '96



23

NEAT EDGES **24**

Serge the cut edges of fabric you're planning to preshrink in the washing machine. This eliminates raveled edges and cleaning loose threads out of your washing machine.

C. Reigh, June '98



OLDIE BUT GOODIE **25**

A friend gave me a box of very old thread, which she was going to throw away. Instead of trusting it for seams, I use it in my serger for seam finishes. It works great!

Barbara G., Feb. '07

COLOR GUARD **26**

To test thread for colorfastness, place a length of the thread on a light color fabric scrap. Press over it a few times, then try using steam. If no color transfers to the fabric, the thread is safe to use.

Mindy R., Jan. '99

SEEING CLEARLY **27**

When changing the needle on my sewing machine, I have trouble because I can't see where the needle shaft is supposed to be inserted. I place a small compact mirror over the bobbin cover and under the needle to see exactly where to insert it.

Mrs. J.C., Feb. '02

28



FUSIBLE-FREE **29**

To protect your iron and ironing board when using fusibles, grab a piece of parchment paper from the kitchen. In addition to keeping your cookies from sticking to the baking sheet, parchment keeps the iron and ironing board free from sticky fusible residue. A large piece folded in half, encasing the iron-ons, easily protects the iron and board at the same time. Adhesives peel off the paper easily. You can also use a single parchment sheet on top of the ironing board, under your work.

Gail M., Jan. '04



STAY-PUT SOLUTION

To keep dresses (especially those sewn from a slippery fabric) from slipping off their hangers, I stapled a small square of rubber shelf liner to each side of the hanger. No more slipping clothes!

Linda M., Dec. '03

REPAIR PATTERN RIPS

30

I use paper bandage tape to mend pattern rips. Unlike transparent tape that melts, paper tape can be ironed and it comes in a convenient dispenser.

Karen R., Aug/Sept '10

STUBBORN STABILIZER

31

Dipping completed embroidered pieces in water is awkward, and spraying to remove tear-away or water-soluble stabilizer is messy. In detailed areas, removing all the backing can be difficult. Instead, use a damp cotton swab to outline the design and/or reach small areas. The tear-away stabilizers tear away cleanly and the dissolvable stabilizers need only minimal moisture.

Deinya M., Sept. '04



TRASH TO TREASURE

32

While throwing out some wrapping paper, I noticed a faint 1" grid printed on the paper wrong side. This came in handy for a quilt block I was working on at the time. I sketched a full size, 1" block and then cut it into templates. The 30"-wide gift wrap is easier to work with than standard 11"-wide graph paper, making it great for drafting clothing patterns and full-size quilt designs.

Elma H., Jan. '05

SIMPLE TRANSFER

33

To accurately transfer pattern markings to the fabric right side, thread the sewing machine with water-soluble thread, select the longest straight stitch, and stitch along the markings on the fabric wrong side. The water-soluble thread is visible on most fabric colors and is easily removed with a damp cloth.

Kim N., Jan/Feb '08

THREAD TESTED

34

Use a coffee mug to hold large thread cones that don't fit on the sewing machine spindle. Place the mug behind the machine; thread as usual.

Sharon, June/July '11

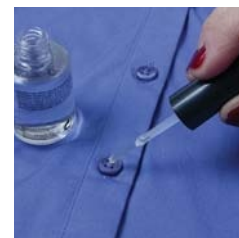


POLISH PERFECTION

35

After sewing a button, dab clear nail polish or seam sealant in the button center. This seals the threads and keeps the button securely in place much longer.

Karen S.,
May '05



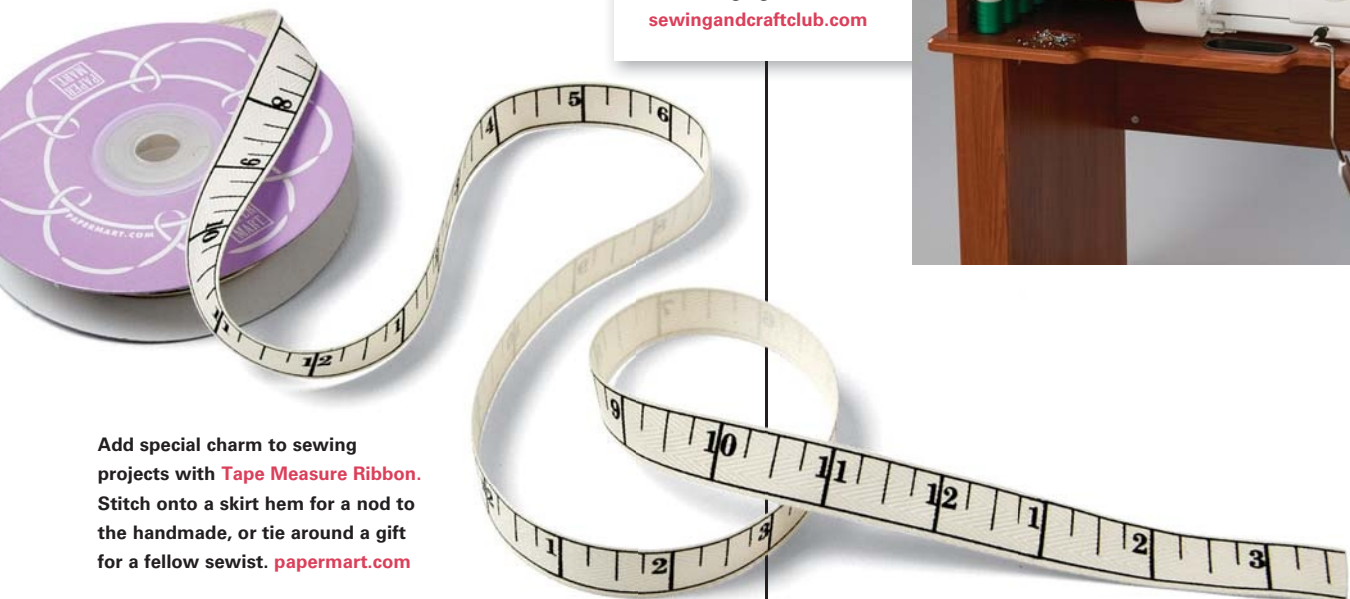
Cool Tools

Stock your sewing room with the latest notions, tools, fabric, books and more.



Use the pretty **Emmy Grace Collection** by Art Gallery Fabrics to stitch an easy springtime dress using one of the four prints offered in cotton jersey knit. artgalleryfabrics.com

Serge in comfort with the **Serger Studio** from Koala Studios. Beveled corners prevent fabric snags, and a large workspace and built-in scrap catcher make serging a dream. sewingandcraftclub.com



Add special charm to sewing projects with **Tape Measure Ribbon**. Stitch onto a skirt hem for a nod to the handmade, or tie around a gift for a fellow sewist. papermart.com



Cut perfect curves and circles in a snap with the **TrueCut 360° Precision Circle Cutter**. Simply lock in the circle size and rotate the blade for clean cuts with no fabric bunching. graceframe.com



Featuring a thread cutter, magnifying glass, punch needle, seam ripper, tweezers, needle threader and more, the **Fiskars Sew Taxi** is the ultimate in on-the-go tools. shopsewital.com



Personalize your outdoor living space using the UV and moisture-resistant **Outdoor Living Thread** from Coats & Clark. Stitch and repair sturdy upholstery fabric, umbrellas and awnings, tents and even saddles. makeitcoats.com

The **Husqvarna Viking Designer Topaz 25** offers a fun and affordable sewing and embroidery experience, featuring the exclusive sensor system that detects fabric thickness for even feeding, and needle and bobbin thread sensors to notify you when the needle thread breaks or the bobbin thread is running low. husqvarnaviking.com



Stock your sewing library and increase your know-how with these latest and greatest books.

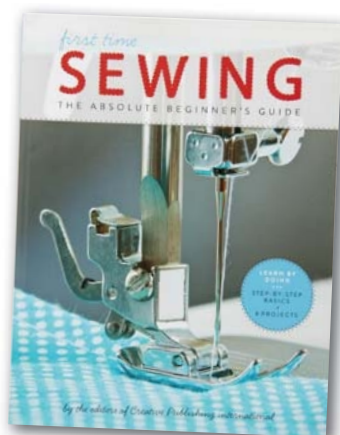
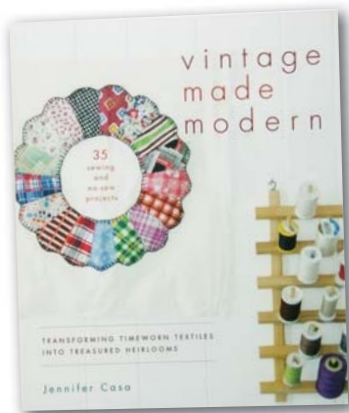


Enter to win a copy of *Present Perfect: 25 Gifts to Sew & Bestow* by entering the *Sew News* blog giveaway on Feb. 20, 2015!

Present Perfect: 25 Gifts to Sew & Bestow

by Betz White

WHILE IT'S ALWAYS FUN and satisfying to sew for yourself, presenting someone special with a handmade gift is especially rewarding. Popular sewing blogger, author and pattern designer Betz White brings you 25 fun and unique gifts to make for every occasion and person on your list. White begins with ideas for customizing gifts with thoughtful touches, including instructions for printing your own personalized labels. There's a general sewing term overview, but this book is best suited to sewists who already know the basics. Each project is rated from Confident Beginner to Seasoned Seamstress, so you know what's in store before you start sewing. Create the sophisticated Wool Courier Bag for a college-bound student or a friend who just landed her dream job. Or be the toast of the next baby shower by stitching the adorable Patchwork Bears Baby Quilt. White is known for clever repurposing of found fabric and materials, so plenty of her upcycling tips are sprinkled throughout, such as recycling a grandfather's necktie into an eyeglass case or using a hand-me-down flannel shirt to make a cozy winter cap. *Present Perfect* inspires you to skip a trip to the mall for your next gift-giving occasion and instead sew something for the lucky recipient to treasure and enjoy. interweave.com



New & Noteworthy

Vintage Made Modern by Jennifer Casa

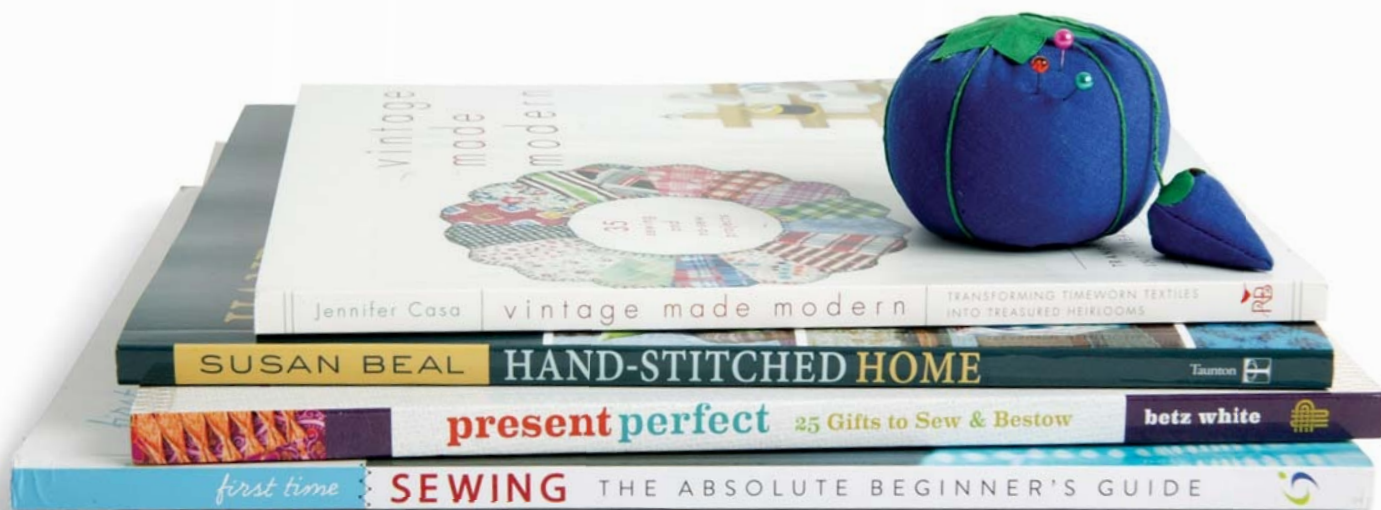
Find out how to breathe new life into heirloom textiles in *Vintage Made Modern*. Many sewists have a stash of these irresistible fabrics, whether it's a collection vintage handkerchiefs salvaged from an antique store or a pile of unfinished quilt blocks handed down from a favorite aunt. This book encourages you to display these textiles and create new memories by repurposing them into new projects. Assemble tea towels into a pretty picnic blanket, transform vintage bed linens into a tablet sleeve and much more. roostbooks.com

First Time Sewing: The Absolute Beginner's Guide by the Editors of Creative Publishing International

First Time Sewing is a great resource for any aspiring sewist who's never put a needle to fabric. Learn about the most important sewing tools, get acquainted with the sewing machine and find out how to use a commercial pattern. Next, venture into basic sewing techniques, such as cutting, marking and pressing. By the time you reach the simple project section, which includes instructions for making a simple apron, baby blanket or T-shirt, you'll be confident in your new stitching skills. creativepub.com

Hand-Stitched Home: Projects to Sew with Pendleton & Other Wools by Susan Beal

Showcase naturally beautiful Pendleton wool fabric by creating an array of practical projects for your home. Beal provides a helpful overview of wool sewing tools and techniques, as well as some fun background information about this classic fabric company. She includes plenty of blanket, pillow and quilt ideas, but also ventures outside the basics with tutorials for a few fun and unexpected wool projects, such as the Modern Embroidered Tote and Plant Hanger. taunton.com



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MUST-KNOW SEWING TERMS

{ by Susan Beck }

Explore this glossary to learn the correct definitions for common tools and techniques to improve your sewing knowledge and understanding.

appliqué (ap-li-kā)

From the French, meaning “to apply”, appliqué is the technique of cutting fabric shapes and applying them to a background fabric. The shapes are usually secured with a decorative stitch, such as a satin or blanket stitch, over the raw fabric edges.

armscye (ahrm-sahy)

The arm opening of a garment where a sleeve is inserted or facing attached.

awl (all)

A sharp pointed metal tool used to pierce leather and punch holes in fabric.



bar tack (bahr-tak)

A series of closely spaced stitches sewn by hand or machine to reinforce stress points on garments, such as pocket corners.

Watch
Cynthia Guffey's
video "Seven Core
Sewing Skills" at
craftdaily.com
to learn more
about sewing
fundamentals.

baste (beyst)

Long stitches that temporarily hold garment pieces together for fitting. Usually basting stitches are removed after the permanent stitching is sewn. On a sewing machine, select a 4mm- to 5mm-long straight stitch for basting. Many machines have a built-in basting stitch.

batting (bat-ing)

Filler material, such as silk, wool, cotton or polyester fibers, manufactured into a large sheet that's inserted between a quilt top and backing fabric for loft and insulation.



bias (bahy-uhs)

The diagonal direction of woven fabric that runs at a 45° angle to the lengthwise and crosswise grains. The bias has the most stretch and is used for bindings, narrow facings or garments cut on the bias for a fluid drape.

bobbin (bob-in)

A small metal or plastic spool that's wound with thread and typically placed in the lower part of a sewing machine. During stitching, the bobbin thread is picked up by the threaded needle, creating a stitch when the two threads are secured together.



bodice (bod-is)

The upper part of a women's dress from neckline to the waist. Historically, "bodice" refers to a close-fitting garment, similar to a corset, worn over a dress or blouse.

casing (kā-sing)

The folded edge of a fabric stitched to create an open channel or tunnel. Elastic or a drawstring is threaded through the casing for waistbands or hooded sweatshirts.

clapper (kla-pər)

A pressing block made of smooth, hard wood used on heavy fabrics, such as wool and denim, to flatten seam allowances and compress fabric bulk. After pressing with steam, place the clapper over the fabric and apply pressure until the fabric is cool.



clip (klip)

A small cut or snip made into the fabric edge using sharp trimming scissors. Use clips along inside curved edges, such as necklines and armholes, to release the fabric edge for turning to create a smooth finished edge.

crosswise grain (kraws-wahyz greyn)

Created by the weft thread that runs horizontally, perpendicular to the vertical thread, known as the warp. Crosswise grain has a slight stretch, more than the lengthwise grain and less than the bias.

ease (eez)

Wearing ease, typically ½" to 4", is added to body measurements at various locations to make a garment comfortable and easy to wear. Design ease is added to make the garments a particular style, such as closely fitted, fitted, semi-fitted, loosely fitted and very loosely fitted. Ease is also a stitching technique that allows two fabric pieces of different sizes to be smoothly stitched together with no gathers or puckers. For example, easing a sleeve into an armhole because the armhole measures smaller than the sleeve.

facing (fey-sing)

Fabric pieces stitched to a garment that provide a professional finish for curved garment edges, such as necklines, waistbands and armholes.

fat quarter (fat kwor-tər)

A yard of fabric cut lengthwise and crosswise into four equal pieces, creating 18"x22" fat quarter pieces. Fat quarters are usually used for quilting because their size works well for small patchwork pieces.

feed dog (fēd däg)

The mechanism on a sewing machine that has tiny metal teeth that gently grips the fabric and pushes it under the needle and out from under the presser foot. The feed dogs work in conjunction with the presser foot to feed the fabric through the machine.

free-motion stitching (frē mō-shən stich-ing)

Sewing with the feed dogs lowered and manually moving the fabric underneath the presser foot during stitching to create any pattern or motif desired. Used for quilting, thread painting, bobbinwork or appliqué.

gathering (ga-thər-ing)

A basic sewing and embellishment technique that controls fullness by shortening the fabric length, creating soft folds or pleats with fullness. The fabric edge is stitched with a long straight stitch, and then the thread is pulled to draw up the fabric to form gathers. Use gathers on ruffles, puffed sleeves or dirndl skirts.

grading (grād-ing)

Trimming seam allowances to reduce bulk and eliminating the seam allowance bulky ridge to produce a smooth edge on a garment right side. The seam allowances, including fabric, interfacing and lining, are trimmed in staggered layers to create a smooth transition from the seam to the seam allowance raw edge.



grainlines (grān-linz)

The fabric grain refers to the direction of the woven yarns that make up fabric. The weft creates the crosswise grain and the warp creates the lengthwise grain. Grainlines are important to determine how a garment drapes on a body. Cutting fabric off-grain creates a garment that hangs crooked. Fabrics with patterns, such as prints and plaids, need to be cut with the grain so the pattern is straight.

interfacing (in-tər-fās-ing)

A stiff material available in varying weights used to add body and stabilize certain garment areas, such as collars, cuffs and neck openings. Interfacing is available in fusible or sew-in varieties and in a limited color range, typically black, white and nude.



knit fabric (nit fa-brik)

Made of interlocking yarn loops that resist wrinkles and have two-, four- or all-way stretch. Knits are available in several fiber types and knit styles, such as single, double, jersey, slinky, ribbed, thermal or French terry.

lengthwise grain (lenkth-wīz grān)

Created by the warp in woven fabric. The warp runs vertically and perpendicular to the weft thread that runs horizontally. The lengthwise grain is very stable with little or no stretch. Most garments are cut with the lengthwise grain running from the upper edge to the lower edge.

nap (nap)

Refers to fabrics that have raised fibers created during the manufacturing process. The raised fibers are either brushed, clipped or left standing upright to create texture on the fabric surface. Velvet, flannel, brushed denim, faux fur and mohair are all napped fabrics. The nap usually reflects light differently from all directions. Always cut project pieces in the same direction to create a uniform look.



notch (näch)

A V-shaped cut made in the seam allowances to reduce bulk and manage convex curved edges. Use notches on rounded jacket edges, Peter Pan collars or circular pillows to ensure a smooth seam.

notions (nō-shənz)

A term used for small sewing supplies and tools, including items used on a garment, such as buttons, zippers and snaps, and items used in the sewing process, such as pins, measuring tapes and tailor's chalk.

pinking shears (pink-ing shirz)

A type of scissor that cuts a zigzag edge, most often used on seam allowances to prevent fraying. The shears are named after a flower, pink, that has irregular edges similar to a carnation.



pivot (pi-vət)

The ability to turn a corner during stitching, usually where two seams intersect at a 90° angle. To pivot, end sewing with the needle in the down position, and then raise the presser foot and rotate the fabric 90°. Lower the presser foot, and then continue sewing.

pressing (pre-sing)

The process of using an iron to set stitches, open seam allowances and press fabric into shape. Lower the iron onto the fabric, lift the iron straight up, and then lower onto another section. This process is different from ironing, where the iron slides over the fabric without lifting.

presser foot (pre-sər füt)

A presser foot holds the fabric flat over the feed dogs during stitching. Specialty presser feet are designed for specific techniques, such as couching, pintucks and invisible zippers.

ruffler (rə-fəl-er)

A special presser foot that forms and stitches pleats. Adjust the pleat depth and frequency to create gathers and ruffles.



seam (sēm)

The point of joining two fabric pieces together with stitching. A seam creates a finished edge on the fabric right side and seam allowances on the wrong side.

selvage (sel-vij)

The finished side edges of fabric resulting from the manufacturing process. Selvages prevent the fabric edges from raveling or fraying but need to be trimmed away before using the fabric.

serger (surj-er)

A machine that trims, stitches and overcasts seam allowances in one step. Multiple thread strands construct a strong seam that encloses the raw fabric edge. ➤

SOURCES

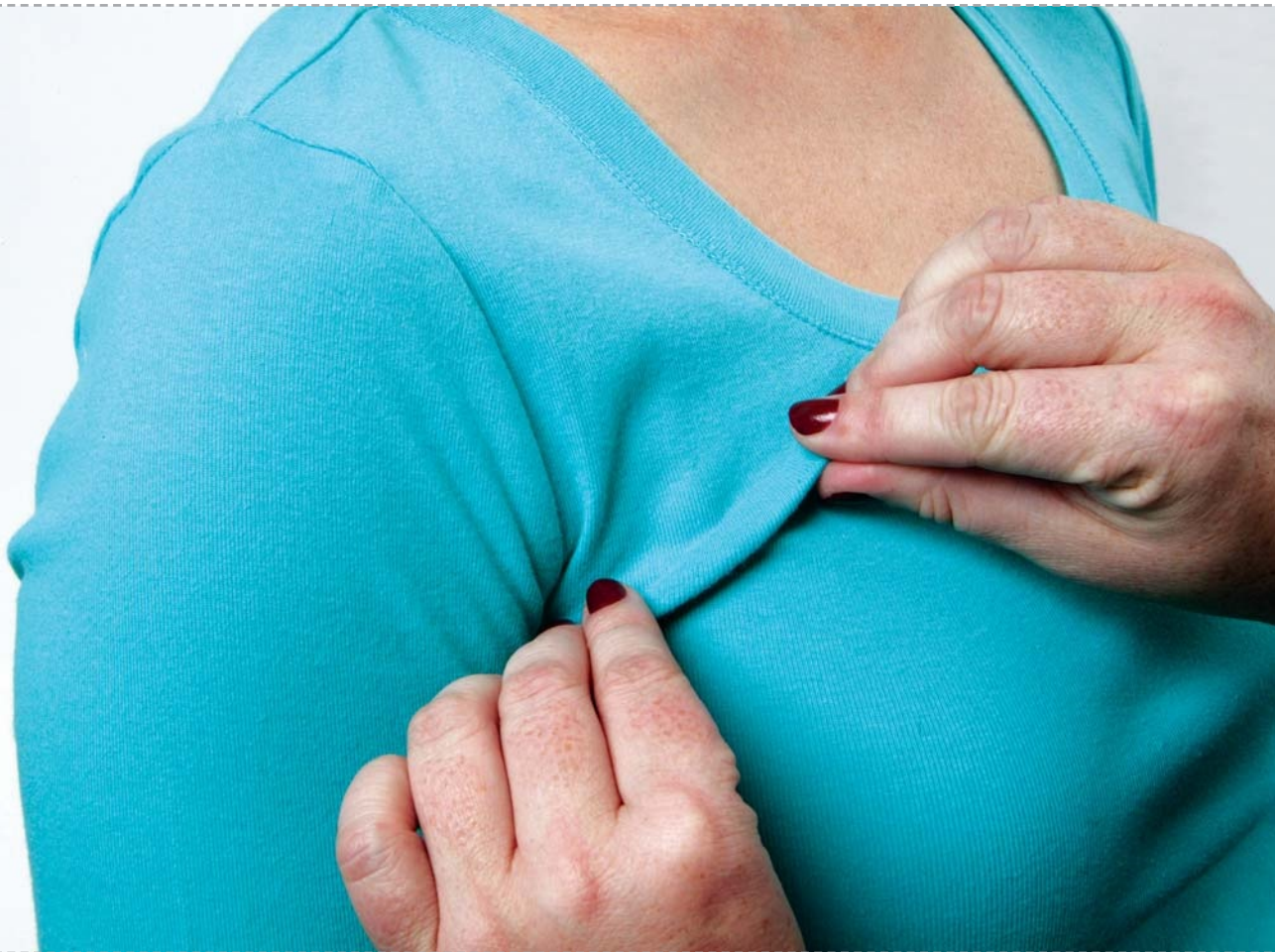
Brother provided the ruffle foot/attachment: brother-usa.com.

Havel's Sewing provided the pinking shears: havelsewing.com.

Shannon Fabrics provided the napped Cuddle Fabric: shannonfabrics.com.



Your frequently asked fitting questions answered by Rae Cumbie



[Q] I'm not overly busty, but when I make or purchase knit tops that fit comfortably in the bust, there are folds of fabric in the front near the armhole. When I drop down a size to eliminate the armhole folds, stretch lines appear across the bustline center. How can I create a smooth-fitting knit top?

[A] Knits offer so much comfort because they stretch along as the body moves, but they still benefit from a bit of fitting so they sit smoothly on the body.

To correct the armhole folds, put on the larger top that doesn't stretch across the bust. Pin out the armhole folds so the top lays smoothly on your body. Use a safety pin to mark the bust point (1). Carefully remove the shirt, and then use a fabric marker to transfer the pin marks to the shirt wrong side.

Place the paper pattern piece over the shirt, and then mark the armscye pin marks and bust point on the pattern. Use a ruler to connect the pin marks into a dart at the armscye (2). Either leave the dart in the armscye, or transfer the dart to the side seam.

To move the dart, draw a line through the dart and extending to the bust point (3). Mark the side seam 2" to 3" below the armscye, and then draw a line from the mark to the bust point (4).

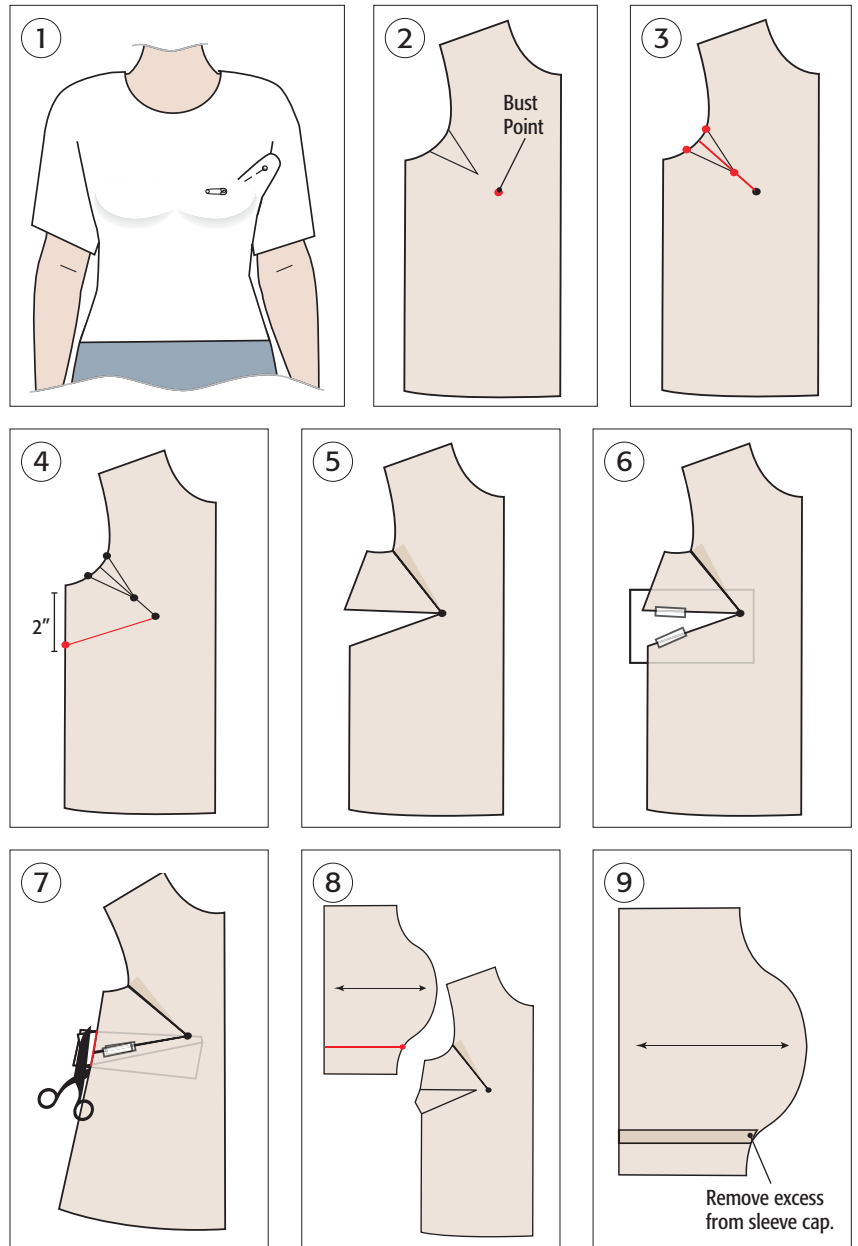
Carefully cut along each line to, but not through, the bust point, leaving a small paper hinge.

Align the armscye dart legs, spreading the slash along the side seam; tape closed (5).

Place a piece of pattern paper behind the spread area to create a side-seam dart; tape in place. Make sure the new dart is at least as long as the armscye dart that was just closed, but don't extend the dart to the bust point (6).

To true the new dart legs and edge, fold the dart closed, and then trim the excess paper along the side-seam edge (7).

If the knit top has a sleeve, folding out the excess from the armscye area requires a similar change to the sleeve pattern. Align the sleeve pattern cap with the front armscye and find the point at which you folded the excess fabric. Mark the sleeve cap at this point. Draw a line from the mark to the sleeve lower edge, parallel to the grainline (8). Cut along the line, and then overlap the cut edges the same amount that was folded out from the armscye (9). True the cap

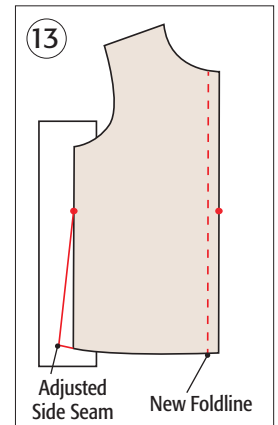
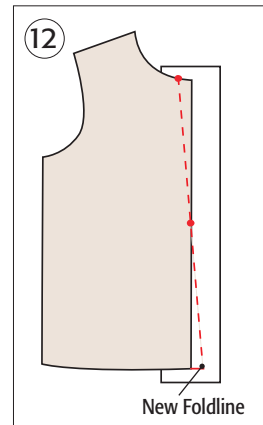
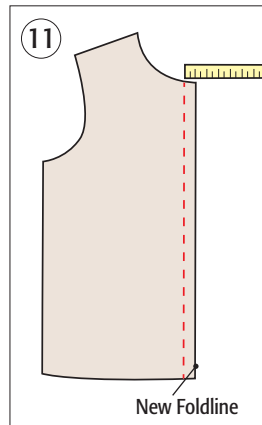
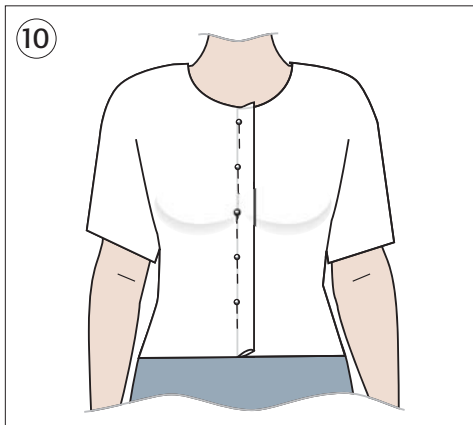


upper edge using a curved ruler, ensuring that it fits smoothly into the armscye.

Using knit fabric of a similar weight, stretch and hand to the the fashion fabric,

make a fitting sample and adjust the new dart as needed. Transfer any additional alterations to the pattern.

Get more great fitting advice from Rae Cumbie by watching her videos at craftdaily.com.



[Q] I'm very small-busted and narrow in the chest. Whenever I make or buy knit tops there's too much fabric in the front and the neckline gapes open. How can I adjust the pattern to fix this problem?

[A] We're accustomed to making adjustments in the side seams when a garment is too big, but with knit shirts, the solution is to remove fabric through the center along the foldline.

Try on a top that's too large in the bust, and then fold the needed amount to create a smoother fit along the center front; pin (10). Carefully remove the shirt.

If the folded amount is even from the neckline to the lower edge, draw a new center-front foldline on the pattern parallel to the original center-front line (11).

If you've folded out fabric through the neck and bust area but find that folding out fabric below the waist would make the top too small, pin from the neckline to the lowest comfortable point. There are two methods to alter the pattern in this situation:

- Change the front foldline angle so it eliminates the bulk at the upper edge and adds to the abdomen area. Place pattern paper along the center-front line. Measure and mark the desired foldline placement at the neck. Mark the desired lower edge on the extra paper. Use a ruler to draw a straight line from the upper point through the center-front line and to the lower point (12). This is the new center-front foldline.
- As an alternative, move the foldline an even amount along the center front, and then add the needed amount back to the side seam in the desired area (13).

After adjusting the center front, it's often necessary to reshape the neckline. Test-fit the pattern to determine any desired adjustments, and then transfer them to the pattern.

When fitting knit garments, keep in mind that the stretchy qualities of knits vary. Generally, the stretchier they are, the closer they need to fit. If you make lots of stretch tops, consider having two different front and back foldlines on your pattern and even vary the seam allowance width to accommodate the stretch of each fabric. If you're unsure how a knit fabric is going to fit, baste the pattern pieces together to test-fit the garment before using multi-thread seams and finishes to complete the construction. ➤

Need expert fitting advice?

Send your sewing questions to sewnews@sewnews.com.

** Published questions may be edited for clarity and brevity.*



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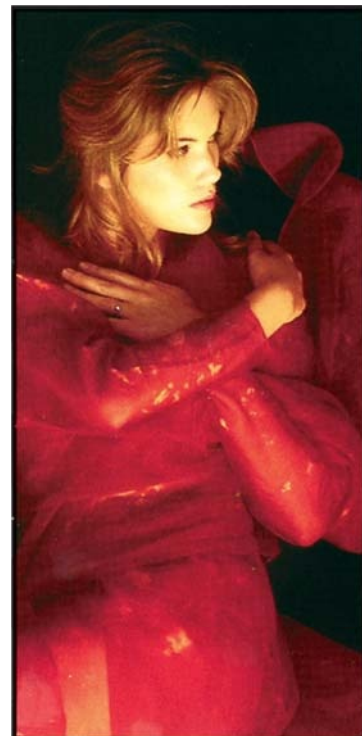
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DRAPERY LINING

{ by Cindy Luby }



Dear Sew News,
I want some light filtering curtains in my living room and blackout curtains in my bedroom. What lining type should I use for each curtain? How do I add a lining to a curtain panel?

Dear Reader,

Adding a lining to valances or panels gives curtains a professional look and extends the life of the window treatment. In addition, lining a window treatment insulates, reduces sound and filters light.

Fabric Types

Select any cotton or polyester/cotton blend fabric or use fabrics that are specifically manufactured for lining window treatments.

Uncoated linings filter light, are machine washable, water repellent, wrinkle resistant and available in white or ivory. Some linings also protect against ultraviolet rays.

Coated linings are a polyester/cotton blend base fabric coated with white acrylic foam to seal the weave. The coating blocks light from filtering through, creating a blackout lining. Always dry-clean coated linings, as machine washing breaks down

the coating properties. Some coated linings filter light and provide insulation. Other coated linings completely block light and provide insulation. Coated linings don't have a right side. Select the woven or coated side as the right side based on your personal preference.

Construct

Determine the curtain panel desired finished length. Add 8" to the length measurement for the hem, and then add 4½" to the length measurement for the header; record as the curtain length.

From the curtain fabric, cut one panel according to the curtain length measurement by the fabric width. Trim away the selvage from the curtain panel. Designate one short edge as the upper edge.

For the curtain lining, add 4" to the desired finished length for the hem, and then add 3" to the length measurement for the header; record as the curtain-lining length.

From the lining fabric, cut one panel according to the curtain-lining length measurement by the fabric width.

Measure the curtain panel width; record. Subtract 4" from the width measurement; record as the lining-panel width. Trim the lining panel according to the width measurement. Designate one short edge as the upper edge.

Double-fold the curtain-panel lower edge 4" toward the wrong side; press. Stitch using a blind-hem stitch on the sewing machine or by hand.

Double-fold the lining-panel lower edge 2" toward the wrong side; press, and then edgestitch the first fold.

Standard Finish

Double-fold each curtain-panel side edge 1" toward the wrong side; press.

Center the lining panel over the curtain panel with wrong sides together, aligning the upper edges.

Insert the lining-panel side edges under the curtain-panel folded side edges; pin (1). Stitch using a slipstitch or blind-hem stitch. Press the curtain panel flat.

Baste the upper edge using a ½" seam allowance.

Fold the upper edge ½" toward the wrong side; press. Fold the upper edge 4" toward the wrong side; press, and then edgestitch the first fold. Finish the drapery header with a rod pocket, pinch pleats or grommets.

Fast Finish

With right sides together, align the curtain-panel and lining-panel upper edges; pin the sides.

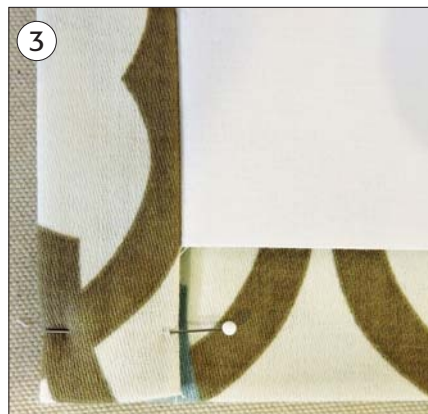
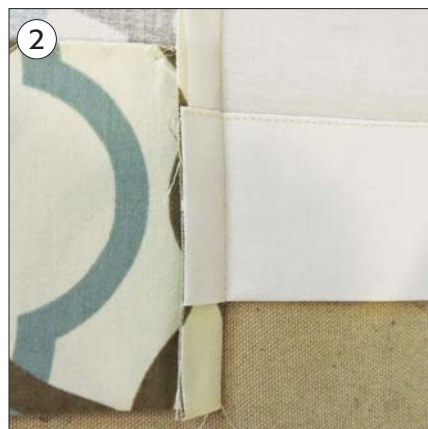
Stitch the sides using a ½" seam allowance, and then press the seam allowance toward the curtain panel (2). Turn the panel right side out.

Align the lining-panel and curtain-panel upper edges at the center; pin from the center toward the sides. The curtain panel will fold 1" to 1¼" toward the lining on each panel side.

Baste the upper edge using a ½" seam allowance. Press the panel flat.

Pin the hem at each lower corner (3). Hand stitch the sides to the hem.

Fold the upper edge ½" toward the wrong side; press. Fold the upper edge



4" toward the wrong side; press, and then edgestitch the first fold. Finish the drapery header with a rod pocket, pinch pleats or grommets. ➤

SOURCE

Roc-Ion provided the Budget Blackout, EconoSheen, Rain-No-Stain, Sonata Sateen and SpecialSuede linings: roc-ion.com.

OVER THE RAINBOW SHIRT

{ by Ana Jankovic }

Update a basic button-down shirt by adding flattering style lines and a double placket.



Look for a basic shirt pattern, such as McCall's 6750.



TIP: The featured shirt is made from one poplin fabric that includes various stripe widths and placements throughout the repeat. Look for an unusual striped fabric, and experiment with the stripe vertical and horizontal placement to create an eye-catching, unique effect.

Supplies

- Button-down shirt pattern with horizontal bust dart & vertical waist darts (McCalls 6750)
- Rainbow-striped shirting or poplin fabric (amount according to pattern envelope plus 1/2 yard to account for matching stripes)
- Lightweight fusible interfacing & notions (according to pattern envelope)
- Buttons (desired size & amount; featured shirt has 20 buttons)
- All-purpose thread
- Pattern or tracing paper
- Rulers: clear & curved
- Removable fabric marker
- Clear tape



Prepare

Cut out the pattern pieces.

Before beginning the alterations, pin-fit or make a muslin fitting sample of the selected pattern.

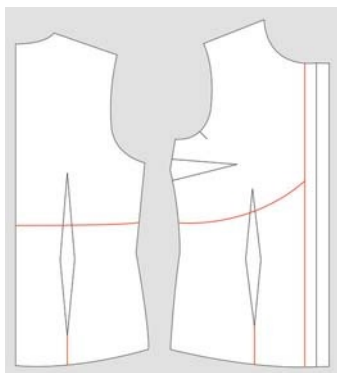
Make any necessary fit adjustments to the pattern, and then trace a copy on paper, transferring all markings.

Alter

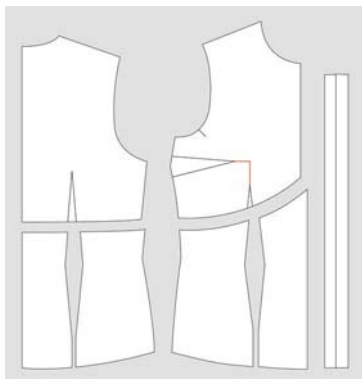
On the front bodice, mark the bust apex. Mark the side seam edge 2" to 3" below the dart and above the natural waist. From the mark, draw a line under the bust, gently curving up to the center-front placket line.

On the back bodice, mark the side-seam edge at the same point as the front side

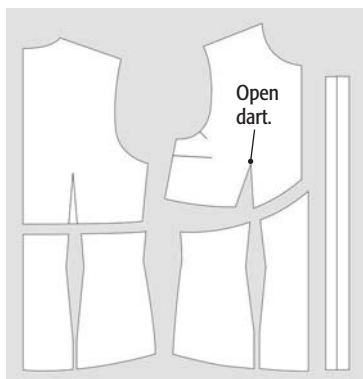
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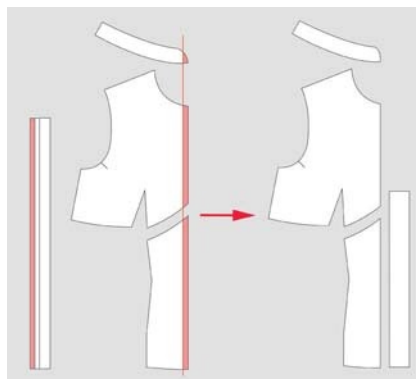
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③



④



seam, and then draw a very slightly curved line from the mark to the center back.

Draw lines connecting the bodice vertical dart lower points to the lower edges (1).

Cut the placket from the center-front bodice, and then cut each bodice along the new drawn lines. Cut away the dart excess from each lower bodice, creating four sections. Draw a line from each front dart point to the bust apex (2).

Cut the front upper bodice from the vertical dart line to the apex. Fold the side-seam dart closed, causing the vertical dart to open; tape in place (3).

Measure the button-placket finished width, and then divide by two; record. Using the recorded measurement, remove width from the upper and lower bodice center-front edges. Remove the recorded amount from the collar-stand center front (4).



To create the inner button placket that goes beneath the double outer placket, multiply the original finished placket width by two. To account for the facing, multiply the width by two again; record as the inner-placket width. For the length, measure from your collarbone to the hemline, and then subtract 1"; record as the inner-placket length. On pattern paper, draw a rectangle according to the recorded inner-placket measurements.

Learn more about pattern alteration in Karen LePage's video "Modifying Sewing Patterns for Style" at craftdaily.com.

Add $\frac{5}{8}$ " seam allowances to all new cut edges.

The final pattern includes an upper front bodice, lower center-front bodice, lower side-front bodice, outer placket, inner placket, upper back bodice, lower center-back bodice, lower side-back bodice, collar, collar stand and sleeve (5).

Cut

From the shirting fabric, cut one upper-front bodice pair, one upper-back bodice pair and one sleeve pair with the stripes running vertically. Cut the collar stand and collar pieces following the pattern guidesheet, with the stripes running parallel to the long edges.

Cut one lower side-front bodice pair, one lower center-front bodice pair, one lower side-back bodice pair, one lower center-front bodice pair, one cuff pair, one inner placket and one outer placket with the stripes running horizontally.

From lightweight interfacing, cut one collar stand, one collar, one outer placket, one inner placket and one cuff pair.

Construct

Stitch the front and back upper-bodice darts; press.

With right sides together, stitch the left lower side-front and center-front bodice pieces to create one left lower-bodice. Repeat to stitch the right lower pieces and the back lower-bodice pieces.

With right sides together, stitch the left upper-front bodice lower edge to the left lower-bodice upper edge; press the seam allowance toward the lower bodice. Repeat to construct the right upper-front bodice and back bodice pieces.

With right sides together, stitch the bodice side and shoulder seams; press open.

Stitch the outer button plackets to the bodice center-front edges following the pattern guidesheet.

Attach the collar and collar stand to the bodice following the pattern guidesheet.

Finish the bodice lower edge following the pattern guidesheet. Fold the inner placket in half lengthwise with right sides

together. Stitch one short edge and the long open edge. Clip the corners, and then turn the inner placket right side out. Finish the short open edge in the same manner as the shirt lower edge.

Center the inner placket under the outer plackets, aligning the long edges. Pin the inner placket to the left-placket inner long edge, and then edgestitch through all layers from the shirt right side.

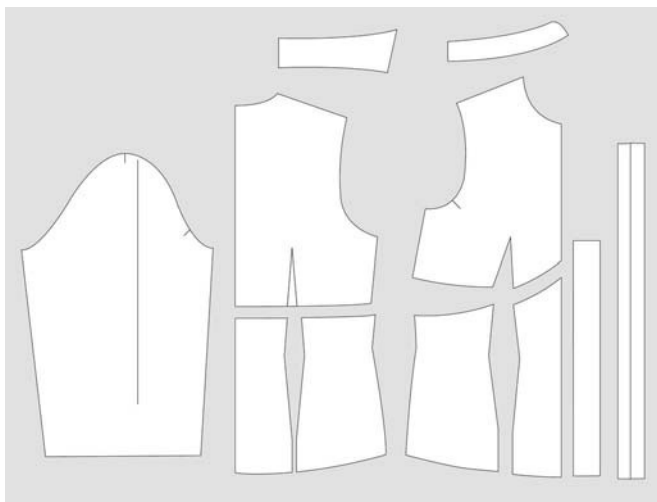
Beginning near the inner-placket upper edge, stitch the desired number of evenly spaced vertical buttonholes on the right outer placket. Hand stitch a button to the inner placket at each right-outer placket buttonhole placement. On the left outer placket, hand stitch a button evenly aligned with each right button through all layers. (The right buttons and buttonholes are functional; the left outer-placket buttons are decorative and not functional.)

Construct and insert the sleeves according to the pattern guidesheet. ↻

SOURCE

The McCall Pattern Company carries 6750: mccallpattern.mccall.com.

5





BACK TO BASICS

{ by Liesl Gibson }

Identifying your fashion basics—the items in your closet you reach for over and over—can help you choose the right fabrics and keep you busy at the sewing machine.

Staple Garments

If you open a fashion magazine, you'll find all sorts of opinions on this topic. One person might say that everyone should own the classic trench coat, little black dress, black trousers, pearls and pumps. Another person might insist that everyone should own jeans with a perfect fit, a navy blazer and a white button-down shirt. Someone else might insist that closet must-haves are a jean jacket, gold hoop earrings and a wrap dress.



Truthfully, there are no universal fashion basics. It all depends on what garments and styles work best for you. Those will become your personal fashion basics, and they're an important part of building your individual style. Identifying those basics also helps when planning sewing projects so you'll know where to spend your time and money when purchasing fabric.

Your fashion basics relate closely to your core wardrobe. They're the pieces you wear again and again, the items you mix and match in various ways, the ones that go with everything. I'm sure you can identify a few items in your closet that are your favorites. Do you wear them in many different ways? Is there something missing from your closet that you know you'd wear a lot? If you think about your wardrobe in this way, it can help you to decide what to sew, rather than sewing on impulse and having nothing to wear in the mornings.

Your fashion basics may gradually change over time. At the moment, my fashion basics consist of two pairs of gold earrings I turn to almost every day, a lot of button-down shirts and a motorcycle jacket. I wear the same pair of beat-up boyfriend jeans with sneakers, loafers and strappy heels. These fashion basics are a big part of my personal look. Dresses aren't included in my fashion basics at all. I have yet to find or design a dress that feels versatile and interesting enough to wear over and over again, and which can look different depending on how I'm wearing it. I'm still searching and thinking about what that dress would be, but for now I prefer separates. As a result, I don't sew many

dresses for myself, because I know they're not part of my key wardrobe.

Just because they're called "basics" doesn't mean they need to be boring. I sew a lot of my own clothes because I want them to have interesting details. Each garment I make has something unique and intriguing about it so it feels special. In many cases, that special element might be so subtle it's noticeable only to me, but it's there. This keeps my wardrobe from feeling like everyone else's, and it keeps me interested in wearing it. In my otherwise-neutral wardrobe I might line a pencil skirt or jacket with a vibrant cobalt blue or pink. I'll choose interesting buttons for a classic shirt, or add an unusual pocket to a blouse. These special details don't scream for attention, but they do keep my basics looking and feeling interesting. And they keep my sewing projects exciting, rather than becoming boring and mundane.

Instead of sewing a plain pencil skirt, play with the details. Add a kick pleat and a little button tab at the top of the pleat. Or choose a fabric with a little texture to it and an interesting color for the lining. You'll find lots of ideas for these special details if you keep your eyes open. Vintage clothing offers all sorts of inspiration, as do high-end clothing in stores.

Think critically on your fashion basics. Knowing which items are key in your closet helps you plan your sewing and keep you returning to those items you make again and again. It also helps you to define your personal style and look your very best. ➤



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modern sewing

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Tops, Skirts,
Dresses & Suits
for Every Day

WARDROBE ESSENTIALS

ESSENTIAL GARMENTS

by Denise Wild,
BurdaStyle sewing expert

No matter what your personal style is, a great closet starts with a base of staple garments. These core pieces will stay with you for many seasons while you mix in and layer on the latest trends.

When building your closet with key core pieces, look for classic cuts, simple shapes and styles, and garments that flatter your body. If you're not sure where to start, some no-fail wardrobe staple options include a blazer, pencil skirt, fitted dress and button-down blouse. Choose wardrobe staples in neutral tones that are easy to combine with seasonal colors. When you're ready to sew your core wardrobe pieces, check out *BurdaStyle Modern Sewing Wardrobe Essentials*, which features 21 must-have garments, each with their own full-size pattern.

interweave.com

80's

STYLE

{ by Katie Vardijan }

Everything old is new again! Garment details from past decades cycle back into fashion like clockwork. Learn how to re-create vintage styles with a modern twist using current patterns.



Simplicity 2255,
View B (modified)



Sew News remembers the '80s!

1980s

What was in style when *Sew News* first hit the newsstands in the early 1980s? Career suits for women sported soft bow ties and floral dresses featured big bows and feminine sleeves with a large, gathered cap. Shirts and jackets highlighted strong shoulder pads and ladies wore bubble skirts for special occasions. Today, some of these style details are back in fashion, and they're easy to re-create with a modern spin using a few simple pattern alterations.

Blouse

Blouses and dresses with soft, floppy bow ties were a huge trend in the early 1980s as designers created their own take on the business power suit. Soft polyester, silk or rayon lent a feminine look unlike men's structured neckties. A stiff underlining was often used to give blouse and dress sleeve caps extra volume. This sleeve type was popular for career wear and is now called "the secretary" blouse or dress by vintage clothing enthusiasts. Choose a blouse pattern with a set-in sleeve near the natural shoulder line to create the look.

Straight, padded shoulders were most dramatic on suits in the 1980s. Modify a fitted, set-in sleeve shirt pattern to recreate this trend. Many fabric stores carry shoulder pads in a variety of styles, or make your own.

Supplies

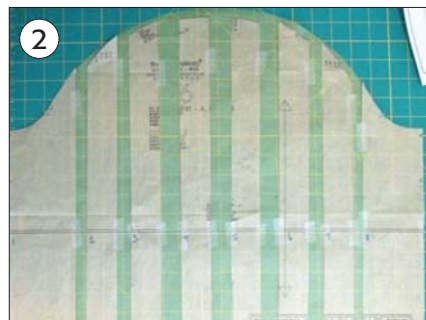
- **Semi-fitted shirt pattern with standing band collar (such as Simplicity 2255)**
- **Silky synthetic fabric or other soft, lightweight fabric at least 52" wide (amount according to pattern envelope plus 1 yard)**
- **Matching all-purpose thread**
- **Buttons and interfacing (according to pattern envelope)**
- **Quilt batting scraps (shoulder pads)**
- **$\frac{3}{8}$ "-wide elastic (amount depends on wrist measurements)**
- **Tailor's chalk or removable fabric marker**
- **Pattern or butcher paper**
- **Paper scissors**
- **Hand sewing needle**
- **Serger (optional)**

Prepare

Download the shoulder pad pattern at sewnews.com/web_extras. Print, and then cut out.

Prewash and press the fabric. Cut out the needed pattern pieces and press using a warm, dry iron.

Place the collar pattern onto the fabric. Extend the collar end onto the fabric for 18" (1). If the fabric isn't wide enough, piece the added collar length separately.

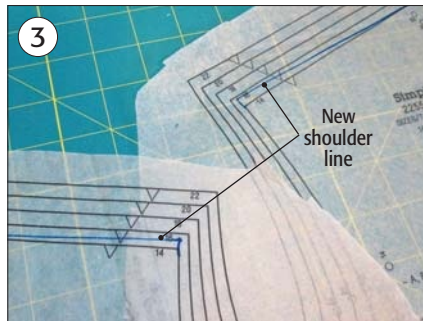


Draw a line along the sleeve pattern lengthwise center. Draw three parallel lines $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to the left of the centerline. Repeat to draw lines to the right of the centerline to achieve seven lines. Number each piece from left to right. Cut the pattern apart along the lines.

Place the sleeve pieces over a large piece of pattern paper. Tape pieces 4 and 5 to the paper, spaced 1" apart, aligning the lower edges. Place pieces 3 and 6 on either side of pieces 4 and 5, spacing them 1" apart. Place the remaining pieces spaced $\frac{3}{4}$ " apart. Tape all pieces to the paper.

Extend the sleeve-cap height by $\frac{1}{2}$ " between pieces 4 and 5. Redraw the sleeve cap to include the new sleeve height (2).

On the front- and back-bodice shoulder seam edges, measure up $\frac{1}{4}$ "; mark.



➤ Find instructions to make a cute, '80s inspired bubble skirt at sewnews.com/web_extras



TIP: To keep silky fabrics from shifting while cutting, use a rotary cutting system. Pin within the seam allowance if pins make visible holes in the fabric, or use fine silk pins.

Draw a line from the new shoulder height to the collar, blending the line into the shoulder seam (3).

Cut

From the batting, cut two shoulder pads in a single layer.

From the shirt fabric, cut out needed pieces and two shoulder pads on the fold. Transfer all pattern markings. Don't interface the collar/tie pieces.

Construct

Construct the blouse front and back according to the pattern guidesheet. Attach the outer collar to the blouse, leaving the tie ends free. With right sides together, pin the undercollar to the

upper collar along the upper edge and tie perimeters, leaving the collar lower edge free; stitch. Turn the collar/ties right side out, clipping the corners and curves. Press the collar/neckline seam allowance toward the collar. Fold the undercollar raw edge toward the wrong side; press, and then hand stitch over the previous stitching line to conceal the raw edges.

Add the buttons, buttonholes and hem the blouse following the pattern guidesheet.

Select a long basting stitch on the machine. Beginning and ending 3" above the sleeve cap notches, stitch using a 1/4" seam allowance. Stitch again using a 1/2" seam allowance.

With right sides together, stitch the sleeve seam; press open. Pull the sleeve-cap bobbin thread tails to evenly gather the sleeve cap to fit the blouse armhole.

With right sides together, align the sleeve cap with the blouse armhole; pin. Stitch, easing the cap to ensure to

gathers aren't caught in the seamline. Remove the basting stitches.

Double-fold each sleeve lower edge 5/8" toward the wrong side to create a casing; press. Edgestitch the first fold, leaving a 1" opening to insert the elastic.

Wrap the elastic around your wrist so that it's snug but comfortable; mark. Add 3/4", and then cut two pieces. Thread one elastic length through one sleeve casing, overlapping the ends by 3/4". Stitch a square along the elastic ends, and then finish stitching the casing. Repeat to add elastic to the opposite sleeve.

With wrong sides together, fold the fabric shoulder pads in half, aligning the rounded edges. Sandwich one batting piece between the layers. Serge or zigzag stitch the rounded edges using a 3/8" seam allowance (4). Tack one shoulder pad to each shoulder seam, centering the pad over the seam (5). ➤

SOURCE

Simplicity carries 2255: simplicity.com.

Find more
heirloom-inspired
sewing tips and
techniques at
marthapullen.com.



SEW BEAUTIFUL TRENDY TIPS

Lace embellishments were all the rage in the '80s. Traditional lace beading is woven with holes to accommodate $\frac{1}{4}$ "- to $\frac{1}{2}$ "-wide ribbon. Create your own lace beading using this technique from *Sew Beautiful* Fall 1989, called "Custom Lace Beading." Use strips of insertion lace to create lace beading for any ribbon width.

Supplies

- $\frac{3}{4}$ "-wide insertion lace
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ "-wide satin ribbon
- Fine thread
- Spray starch
- Water-soluble fabric marker
- Tissue paper or sheer cut-away stabilizer
- Fabric glue stick (optional)

Construct

Dampen the lace to preshrink; let dry. Lightly spray the lace using starch; press.

Set the machine to a 2mm-long, 2.5mm-wide zigzag stitch. Cut two long lengths of lace insertion. The

exact length depends on the desired finished width and length. Abut the lace-strip long edges, and then zigzag stitch, catching one lace piece in each needle swing (A).

Cut the lace into pieces at least $\frac{1}{2}$ " longer than the chosen ribbon width. For the featured $1\frac{1}{2}$ "-wide ribbon, cut 2"-long lace pieces.

Place a piece of tissue paper or sheer stabilizer on a flat work surface. Draw two parallel lines according to the desired lace beading length and as far apart as the cut lace lengths. Place the lace pieces horizontally between the lines, abutting the edges (B). Pin or lightly glue-baste each cut edge to the stabilizer, and then machine baste the lace edges along the drawn lines. Trim away the tissue paper or stabilizer along the lace outer edges.

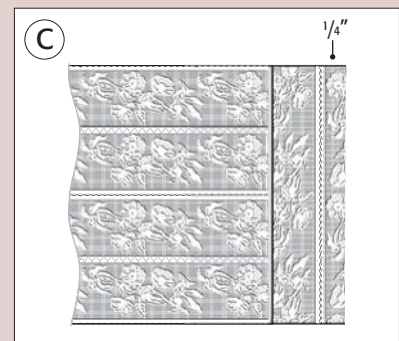
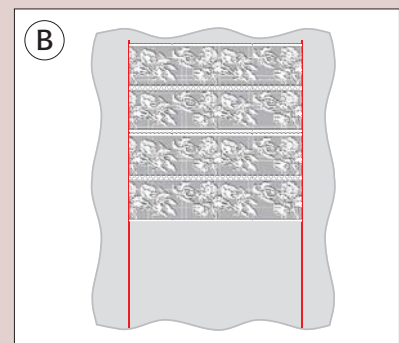
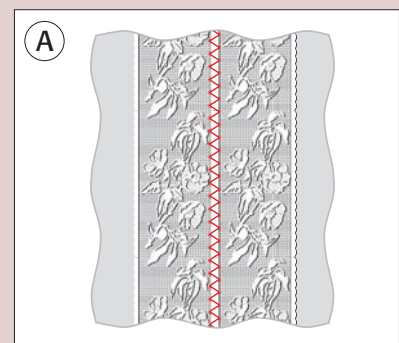
Cut two lace lengths according to the desired lace beading length.

With right sides together, align one lace long edge $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the pieced-lace cut edge. Stitch along the outer lace header through all layers. Stitch again a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the first stitching line toward the edge (C). Trim the lace close to the second stitching line.

Set the machine to a .5mm-long, 4mm-wide zigzag stitch. Zigzag-finish the edge; press the seam allowances away from center.

Repeat to attach the remaining lace length to the opposite edge.

Carefully trim away the remaining stabilizer; press the lace. Thread ribbon through the open slots between the lace pieces.



Cake CUSHION

{ by Kate Van Fleet }

Create a cute pincushion in the shape of a cake to celebrate a sewing friend's birthday or anniversary.



> **Piece of Cake!** Show us your take on this cake and enter to win a prize! Take a photo of your creation and post it to Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag #HappyBirthdaySewNews. One winner will be chosen each month in 2015 to win a fantastic prize and be showcased on the *Sew News* Facebook page!

Get this kit! Purchase a kit, including the pattern, felt, floss and form to make this project even easier. Find it at shopsewitall.com.

Supplies

- 6"-diameter foam cake form
- ¼ yard each of brown & pink felt
- Scraps of white & yellow felt
- 5 white pearl-head straight pins
- Large-head straight pin or flat quilting pin (head large enough to insert into drinking straw)
- White embroidery floss
- Pink cording
- Large-eye hand embroidery needle
- Drinking straw
- Toothpick
- Temporary spray adhesive
- Fabric glue or glue gun & glue sticks

Prep & Cut

Download the [Cake Cushion pattern](http://sewnews.com/web_extras) at sewnews.com/web_extras.

From the brown felt, cut one cake.

From the pink felt, cut one cake top and one cake frosting; reserve the extra felt for the candle.

From the yellow felt, cut one of each flame size.

From the white felt, cut five meringues.

Cut a ¾" length of drinking straw.

Assemble

Place the brown cake piece around the cake form, abutting the short ends; glue to secure.

Position the pink cake frosting around the cake form, extending the frosting straight edge 1" beyond the cake-form upper edge. Use fabric glue or a glue gun to secure, abutting the frosting short ends and trimming if needed to fit.

Center the pink cake top on the cake-form top; use temporary spray

adhesive to secure. The pink circle should extend 1" beyond the cake-form perimeter and fit inside the frosting upper edge.

Thread a hand embroidery needle with pink cording; knot the end. Insert the needle into the frosting/top along the cake-form edge, working from the outside in. Blanket stitch the upper edge, spacing the stitches ½" apart and pulling the cording slightly to gather and scallop the felt edges.

Wrap a pink-felt scrap around the drinking straw, leaving ½" of felt extending beyond the straw upper edge; glue to secure. Fold the excess felt into the straw upper edge; glue (1).

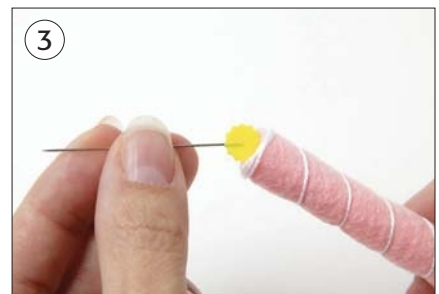
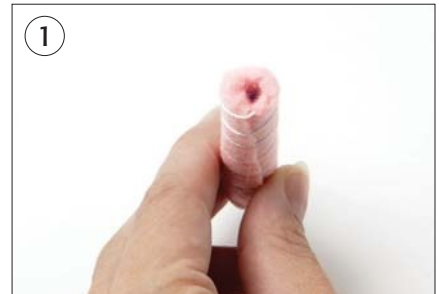
Layer the three flames from largest to smallest; glue. Place the flame lower edge around a toothpick. Wrap the flame base with white embroidery floss to secure it to the toothpick; knot the end (2). Insert the toothpick into the straw upper-edge hole.

Wrap the straw with white embroidery floss, using the photo at left for guidance. Knot the floss around the straw base. Insert a large-head straight pin into the straw-base hole (3). Set aside the candle.

Fold one meringue "petal" end to meet the adjacent pointed end; secure with a small dab of glue. Repeat to meet each meringue end, overlapping the petal slightly to form a meringue. Repeat to create five meringues.

Place the meringues on the cake-top center, forming a circle. Insert a pearl-head straight pin into each meringue center, through the cake top to secure (4).

Insert the candle pin into the cake top at the meringue circle center (5). ∞





TOOLS *of the* Trade

{ by Rae Cumbie }

Learn all about the basic tools garment sewists need close at hand to enjoy a pleasurable sewing process. High quality, well-cared-for tools enhance the experience and afford you years of sewing satisfaction.

Machinery

There are myriad different machines and gadgets, but here's a list of the most basic priorities:

1 Sewing Machine: An electric sewing machine with straight and zigzag stitch settings and backstitching capability, plus a standard, zipper and buttonhole foot are essential. Always keep the

instruction manual handy, especially if you only sew occasionally. Purchase additional feet and accessories when you find one that's particularly helpful.

2 Iron: An electric iron with multiple heat settings for dry and steam pressing is a sewist's best friend.

Furnishings

Consider the ergonomic issues related to sewing as you plan your sewing space, whether it's a permanent studio space or a temporary set up in a mixed-use area.

- 3 Ironing Surface:** A padded surface is required for ironing, preferably a freestanding board or table top model that's sturdy enough for you to apply pressure. Select a board with a shaped end that most garments can be slid over for easy 3-dimensional pressing.
- 4 Sewing Machine Surface:** A desk, tabletop or counter should be sturdy enough to keep the sewing machine stable during use, but provide enough space around the machine to support the fabric as you sew. It should be free of nicks or other imperfections that could snag and damage the fabric. A comfortable and supportive chair, preferably with wheels, is also necessary.
- 5 Cutting Surface:** Space to lay out fabric and patterns can be high, low or in between. Place cardboard cutting mats or rotary cutting mats on tables or the floor to create space to lay out fabric, plan designs and pin and cut out your projects. Insert bed lifts under table legs to elevate the table to a comfortable height.
- 6 Lighting:** Natural light is ideal when sewing but rarely available. Invest in good lighting or at least one good natural-light lamp for your sewing space.

Machine Accessories

There are aisles upon aisles of choices, but these are a must:

- 7 Sewing Machine Needles:** Keep extra needles close at hand in the types and sizes you regularly use. Replace needles when they break or become nicked. Choose needles specifically to complement each sewing project. Variety packages of universal needles are available so you're sure to have the size you need.
- 8 Sewing Machine Oil:** There are areas on every sewing machine that occasionally need lubrication to ensure smooth sewing. Reference the machine manual for the frequency and oil placement, and whether oiling is recommended for your machine brand.



Pressing Tools

These tools aid in thorough pressing to create great looking garments.

- 9 Press Cloth:** A fabric press cloth or nonstick transparent sheet prevents the iron from picking up residue from fusible support products. They also prevent the fine fabrics from becoming shiny or damaged by direct contact with the iron heat. Cotton batiste or silk organza make excellent press cloths, as they withstand plenty of heat but are sheer enough to allow you to iron strategically.
- 10 Ham or Sleeve Roll:** These sand-filled, fabric-covered pressing tools offer curved surfaces that are heavy enough to stay grounded as you shape seams and press darts over them.
- 11 Point Presser/Clapper:** This wooden pressing block allows you to press open seams and corners in hard to reach places. Use its weight to apply heavy pressure, called clapping, to flatten bulky areas.
- 12 Iron Cleaner:** Keep an iron cleaning product on your shelf to quickly and safely clean the iron when mishaps occur.



Measuring & Patternmaking Tools

High-quality patterning tools are the heart of garment sewing.

- 13 Tape Measure:** A soft tape measure is a must for taking body measurements, measuring garments on and off the body and taking other measurements that require a flexible tool.
- 14 Clear 2"x18" ruler with 1/8" grid:** This perfectly-sized ruler is great for measuring and marking changes, adding seam allowances to patterns and double-checking grainline placement.
- 15 Fashion Ruler:** This well-designed ruler includes a long side curve, round armscye curve, straight edge and more. If you only have one curved ruler, this is the most versatile for smoothing pattern line adjustments.
- 16 Roll of Lightweight Paper:** This paper is great for copying and adjusting patterns. When fitting a new pattern, use strong, transparent paper that is easily trimmed or taped to patterns when seams need to be released or designs altered.
- 17 Weights & Weighted Tape Dispenser:** As you lay out a pattern on the fabric or copy a pattern onto pattern paper, small weights are an excellent way to keep things anchored. Small dressmaker weights are available for purchase or use small, smooth, heavy objects, such as hardware washers. A weighted tape dispenser can serve as a weight and its stability means you need only one hand to access the tape.



- 18 Pencils & Sharpener or Mechanical Pencils:** Patternmaking and altering requires both light temporary lines and heavy permanent lines as you trace patterns and make adjustments. Use colored pencils to record different pattern changes for easy reference.
- 19 6" ruler:** Whether the small ruler is a plastic 1"-wide ruler or a metal ruler with the sliding gauge marker, it's great for checking seam widths, marking hemlines and placing buttonholes.

Pins & Needles

Choose the highest quality tools you can afford for best results.



20 Straight Pins: Many sewists prefer 1½" glass head pins because they offer enough length and the visible heads won't melt when ironed over. Other sharp pins, such as dressmaker or silk pins, work equally well for pinning patterns to fabric and keeping seams aligned for sewing.

21 Pin Container: Pin cushions, bowls, boxes and magnets are just a few available choices. Be aware that magnetic pin holders can affect computerized machines and magnetize pins so they stick to scissors and other metal tools. However, they're great for picking up dropped pins from the floor. Choose what works best for you and keep one by the machine, on the cutting table and by your side as you hand stitch.

22 Needles: High-quality hand sewing needles ensure that hand stitches are smooth and don't damage the fabric. Needles are available in various lengths and sizes. The higher the number on the hand sewing needle, the thinner the needle. Buy a variety pack and test out a few to find the needle that fits your hand and is easy to thread. If threading is a challenge, buy a package that includes a needle threader.

Cutting Tools

Buy the best cutting tools available. Test them first to make sure they fit comfortably in your hand and keep them sharp.



23 Shears: Sharp fine scissors with at least 4"-long blades cut fabrics with ease and precision. Label them and use them exclusively for cutting fabric. Choose a pair that can be professionally sharpened so your investment will provide years of service.

24 Paper Scissors: These can be hand-me-down shears that are no longer sharp enough for cutting fabric or simply a serviceable pair of scissors to use for cutting paper patterns and other non-fabric materials.

25 Rotary Cutter: This modern cutting tool is available in a variety of sizes. When combined with a rotary mat and a thick straight edge, a rotary cutter is perfect for cutting binding strips and other straight or uniform pieces. Look for rotary cutters that are ergonomically comfortable for the size of your hand and table height. If you're new to rotary cutters, practice before cutting curved garment pieces, as they can be tricky.

26 Small Scissors or Snips: You can never have enough pairs of small scissors. Keep one pair at each machine for cutting threads, on the ironing board for clipping and grading seams, and in the hand sewing basket to cut threads and open buttonholes. Whether decorative or functional, choose a style that has holes large enough for your fingers.

27 Seam Ripper: Use this handy tool to remove stitches from a seam that needs adjusting, to gently coax a point or corner into place, or to open a buttonhole. Seam rippers are available in many sizes and colors with different shaped handles. Choose one that suits your hand and will be easy to find when you have a ripping emergency.

Supports

Not every garment needs additional products to support its structure, but having a few basics on hand makes sewing projects go faster and wear better over time.

28 Stay Tape: Certain seams need stabilization to prevent them from stretching out of shape. Narrow twill tape or fusible stay tapes work well for woven fabrics, while lightweight clear elastic is best for knits. Keep them handy in white and black. Silk organza and chiffon selvages make great stabilizers too. (Cut off the selvages when working with these fabrics and save them to use as stays in future projects.)

29 Interfacing: Keep a yard or two of fine quality interfacings on your sewing shelf. Having light-, medium- and heavyweight choices in black and white provides the option to test them on scraps first to determine the best choice. Keep a few varieties with stretch on hand to use with knits and woven fabrics with spandex.



Notions

Purchase specific notions to accompany each project, but you should never be without these basic supplies:

30 Marking Tools: You can get lost in the aisles of marking tools at sewing and craft stores where you'll find chalk, air- or water-soluble marking pens and wax, to name a few. Marking tools are available in pencil and pen shapes, or as rolling dispensers, tracing wheels and blocks. Have several different types on hand to test on each project, as different fabrics require different marking techniques.



31 Thread: All-purpose garment sewing thread (polyester or polyester/cotton blend) is available in a wide variety of colors. Keep basic colors on hand, such as black, grey, beige and white. Add colors from your wardrobe so you'll be ready to stitch a muslin or mend a seam in no time.

32 Basting Thread: Hand baste garments first to test the fit when using fine fabrics or stitching a complex design. Very fine silk basting thread makes basting easy and won't leave marks in the fabric once removed.

33 Fasteners & Closures: Keep multiple sizes and colors of hooks and eyes and snaps close on hand. Basic snaps are even available in clear plastic so they blend into any fabric or color. Purchase zippers, buttons and elastic for each specific project. Make note of the items you use regularly and keep those in stock.

Reference Books

Either a book on the shelf or a trusted Internet source is like having a teacher by your side.



34 Sewing Technique Resource: There's a lot of sewing information available out there, but you're well served to pick one thorough resource with a writing style and illustrations or photos that are clear and suit your learning style. Don't refer to too many different sources, or you'll be slowed down by indecision over which method is best. Don't choose a project-based sewing book, as the technique instructions are often lost in project steps.

35 Fabric Reference Resource: Keep a resource to refer to about sewing different fabrics, including pretreatment and care instructions, needles types, thread, interfacings, design choices and finishes for each featured fabric. As you expand your sewing projects to include a variety of garments, this source will provide the essential information to work with each new fabric. ➤

SOURCES

A&E provided the all-purpose sewing thread: amefird.com, shopsewitall.com.

Arrow sewing cabinets provided the Olivia sewing cabinet: arrowcabinets.com, shopsewitall.com.

Clover provided the tailor's chalk, fabric marking pencil and tracing wheel: clover-usa.com, shopsewitall.com.

Dritz provided the rulers, iron cleaner, snaps, hooks & eyes, pins, magnetic pin wand and hand sewing needles: dritz.com, shopsewitall.com.

Fabric Savvy: The Essential Guide for Every Sewer by Sandra Betzina; Taunton Press: taunton.com, shopsewitall.com.

Havel's provided the scissors, snips and rotary cutter: havelssewing.com, shopsewitall.com.

June Tailor provided the point presser/clapper: junetailor.com, shopsewitall.com.

Pfaff provided the Creative Performance embroidery and sewing machine: pfaff.com, shopsewitall.com.

Schmetz provided the sewing machine needles: schmetz.com, shopsewitall.com.

Step-by-Step Guide to Sewing Techniques by the editors of Vogue and Butterick Patterns; Sixth & Spring books: sixthandspring.com, mccall.com, shopsewitall.com.

➤ Find all of these essential sewing supplies and more must-have tools at shopsewitall.com.





Must-Know Stitches

{ by Sara Gallegos }

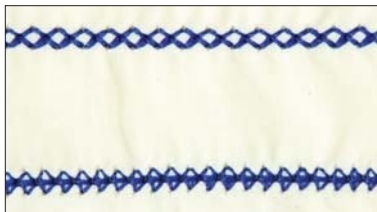
Most sewing machines come with an array of decorative stitches, but most sewists don't know how and when to use them. Learn about the most common decorative stitches and essential techniques and creative applications.

Distinct Deco Stitching

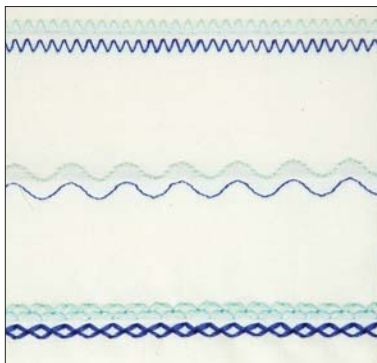
Discover 35 tips, tricks and fun uses for the decorative stitches on your machine.

- 1 Always test-stitch the chosen decorative stitch and thread combination on the desired fabric to ensure best results.
- 2 If the stitching causes the fabric to bunch or pucker, place a piece of stabilizer that corresponds to the fabric weight and type on the fabric wrong side.
- 3 Refer to your sewing machine manual for stitch information, applications, tension settings and suggested thread type.
- 4 Experiment with decorative and specialty threads, such as variegated and metallic, for unique and exciting looks.
- 5 Select a needle size and thread that corresponds with the desired fabric type and weight for proper stitch formation.
- 6 Backstitch at the beginning and end of decorative stitching to secure the thread.

- 7** Add an heirloom appearance to any project by using a wing needle. Wing needles have flanges on the needle side that pierce a small hole into the fabric during stitching that's supported with thread.



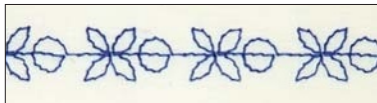
- 8** Select a twin or triple needle to easily add uniform stitching rows. Thread the machine with two thread spools according to the sewing machine manual. Select a narrow decorative stitch so that both needles move freely within the presser foot needle opening.



- 9** Adjust the decorative stitch length and width to create more stitch designs. For example, creating a very narrow zigzag stitch produces a wobbly straight stitch.

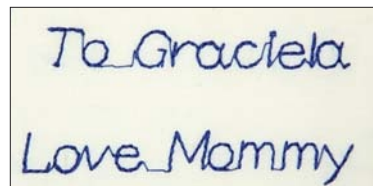


- 10** Most mid- to high-end sewing machines have the ability to create stitch sequences, which allow multiple decorative stitches to be combined into one continuous stitching line.



- 11** Save test scraps and record the stitch number, width and length. Attach and organize numerous test scraps into a notebook for quick reference.

- 12** Many sewing machines have built-in alphabets. Combine letters to create a label or write a personal message on a project.

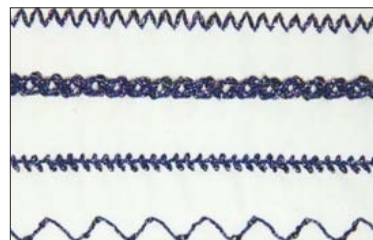


- 13** Sewing at a consistent speed produces the best results with decorative stitches. Sporadically changing speed results in uneven stitching points.

- 14** Refer to your sewing machine manual to select the corresponding presser foot for the correct decorative stitch or application, such as a blind hem, buttonhole or overcasting foot.

- 15** Specialty presser feet are available in addition to the feet that come with the machine. Experiment with additional feet for unique decorative applications, such as couching or pintucks.

- 16** Bobbinwork allows threads that are too thick to fit through the needle eye to be used as an embellishment. Slowly wind thick threads, yarns or ribbons onto a bobbin and insert into a secondary bobbin case with the tension loosened. Select an open decorative stitch and stitch with the fabric wrong side facing up.

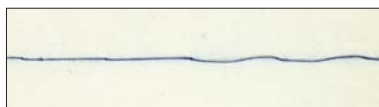


- 17** Create a satin stitch by adjusting the zigzag stitch length to .8mm or less, and then the desired width for a stitch that fills in and covers the fabric. Use as an edge finish on appliqué projects.

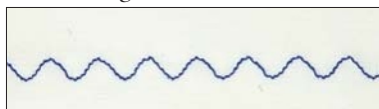


- 18** Use a blanket stitch for a traditional appliqué edge finish. Adjust the length and width for the desired look.

- 19** Create a basting stitch by adjusting a straight stitch length to 3mm or 4mm. Use a basting stitch to temporarily hold fabric layers together, especially for multiple fabric layers or slippery fabrics to prevent shifting.



- 20** A serpentine stitch creates a soft curving stitching line and is perfect for topstitching or as an edge finish.

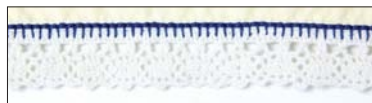


- 21** Use a ladder stitch with coordinating thread to attach ribbon onto fabric for a textural treatment.

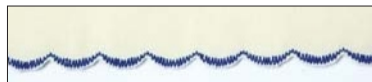


- 22** Use a decorative joining stitch on blouse or skirt seams or to piece batting scraps together for quilts.

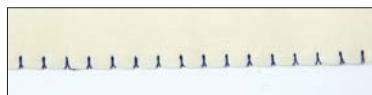
- 23** Attach lace trim to a folded hem edge using a blanket stitch for a feminine detail.



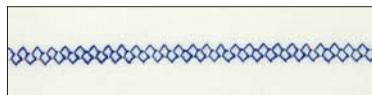
- 24** Add a scallop hem to a skirt or dress for a cute touch. Select the satin scallop stitch, and then stitch along the project hem. Trim close to, but not through, the stitching. Apply seam sealant to the raw edge to prevent fraying.



- 25** A shell-tuck stitch resembles a blanket stitch, but is designed to be stitched along a hem edge, and then pulled tight to create a curved edge effect.



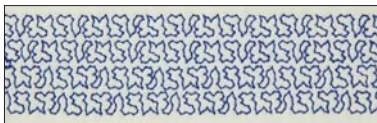
- 26** Traditional smocking is created by hand and is time consuming. Use a smocking stitch to secure gathers in place on a dress or blouse to quickly create a faux smocking look.



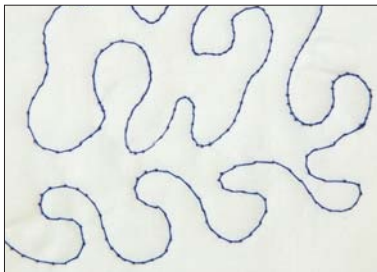
- 27** Fagoting is a traditional heirloom technique designed to join an open seam together. Position a piece of stabilizer underneath the open seam, select a decorative bridging stitch, and then stitch.

Turn to page 52 for a handy stitch glossary.

28 Stipple stitching is typically used on quilts with free-motion sewing. A built-in stipple stitch recreates the look by stitching rows of a similar design pattern.



29 Free-motion stitching creates a loose and organic motif on fabric, usually quilts. Select a straight stitch on the machine and lower the feed dogs. Maneuver the fabric underneath the presser foot by hand to create a unique pattern. Some machines have a specialty free-motion presser foot that aids in stitching.

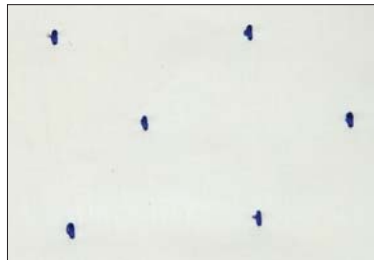


30 Use a decorative stitch to quickly add binding to a fabric edge, such as a neckline or quilt. Wrap the binding around the raw edge, select a decorative stitch, and then stitch along the binding edge to secure.



31 Most machines have a bar-tack stitch used for attaching buttons. Manually turn the hand wheel for the first few stitches to ensure the proper stitch width. Some machines have a button presser foot to correspond with the bar-tack stitch.

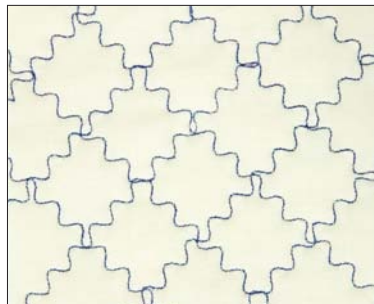
32 Quickly anchor quilt layers together using a bar-tack stitch.



33 For best results, observe how a decorative stitch is formed during a test stitchout, including how many times the needles moves side-to-side or front-to-back and the number of pattern repeats.

34 Always end stitching with the needle in the down position to easily pivot and maneuver the fabric without losing the stitch positioning. Many machines have a built-in feature that automatically lowers the needle and lifts the presser foot for pivoting.

35 Fill a fabric piece with decorative stitches to create your own unique fabric design. Select matching thread for a subtle look, contrasting thread for a bold look or add pintucks for texture. ∞



SOURCE

Baby Lock provided the tear-away stabilizer and Unity sewing and embroidery machine: babylock.com.

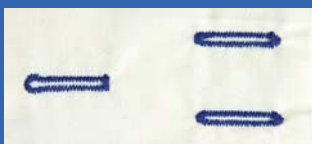
DECORATIVE STITCH GLOSSARY



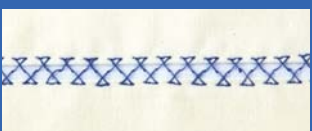
Blanket Stitch: This straight stitch followed by a perpendicular stitch is used along edges, such as appliqués.



Blind-Hem Stitch: Traditionally used for a nearly invisible hem finish, this stitch takes several straight stitches, and then one small stitch into the hem to secure.



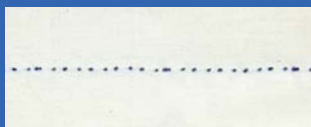
Buttonhole Stitch: This built-in stitch creates a buttonhole. Some built-in buttonhole types in sewing machines include standard, rounded and keyhole.



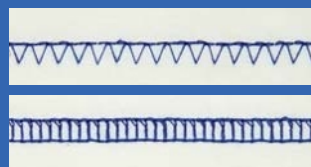
Fagoting Stitches: Decorative bridging stitches are stitched over an open seam to join two fabric pieces.



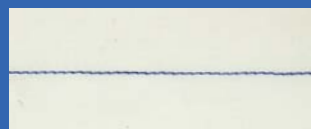
Joining Stitches: Decorative bridging stitches are stitched over the seamline of two joined fabric pieces with the seam allowance pressed open.



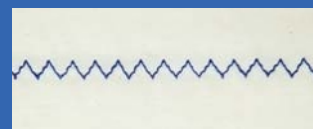
Mock Hand Quilting Stitch: This stitch that mimics the look of hand stitching.



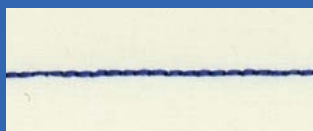
Overcast Stitch: This stitch is designed to cover and support a fabric edge and prevent fraying.



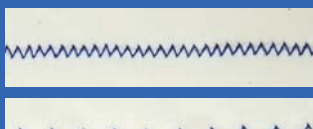
Straight Stitch: Every machine has this most basic stitch, which is used for basic construction with utility threads. Some machines have a left, center or right needle justification and almost all machines allow you to adjust the stitch length.



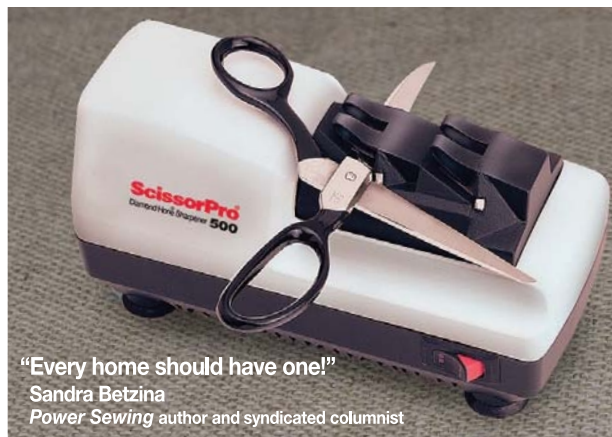
Three-Step Zigzag Stitch: Instead of one stitch from point to point on a regular zigzag stitch, three short stitches are taken from point to point. This stitch has slight stretch so it's helpful when overcasting stretch fabrics and attaching elastic.



Triple Straight/Stretch Stitch: Used as a reinforced seam on sleeves, inseams or denim projects, this straight stitch is created by the needle taking two stitches forward and one stitch backward to create a strong seam with some stretch.



Zigzag Stitch: This back-and-forth stitch creates a zigzag line and is used as an edge finish on seam allowances or for appliqué.



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Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 58,092. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 68,358. G. Copies not Distributed. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 14,696. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 12,189. H. Total (sum of 15f and 15g). Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 72,786. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing: 80,547. I. Percent paid. Average percent of copies paid for the preceding 12 months: 99.0%. Actual percent of copies paid for the preceding 12 months: 99.6%. 16. Electronic Copy Circulation: A. Paid Electronic Copies. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 41. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 43. B. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a). 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Fitting FACTORS

{ by Joi Mahon }

Achieving a great garment fit makes the sewing process more satisfying and enjoyable. Increase your fitting know-how by following 35 helpful hints.

Enter to win a copy of *Create the Perfect Fit: Measuring and Pattern Fitting For Real* by Joi Mahon. Find out how by visiting the *Sew News* blog on Feb. 13!

Fit Fundamentals

Even in the most beautifully sewn garment, it's easy to see and feel a fit problem. Some traditional fitting techniques work to correct fit issues, but with today's changing body and fit dynamics, there's often more to fitting than adjusting the pattern edge or cutting apart a muslin. However, fit doesn't have to be a difficult or intimidating process. Learn some key areas to address prior to pinning and don't be afraid to open your mind beyond what you've always been taught about fit. You'll be well on your way to enjoying a process that is actually one of the most satisfying aspects of garment sewing.

Fitting Prep

Many fit issues can be addressed and even corrected before you sew a single stitch. Make note of the following factors before you start cutting and constructing a garment.

1 Body Evaluation: Evaluate your body for unique characteristics, such as forward-tilting arms, uneven shoulders/hips and other body variations. Recognizing that everyone has a unique shape helps achieve the mindset of modifying the pattern to match the body.

2 Mindset: Fitting is as much about attitude as it is application. Be realistic when it comes to combining different fabrics, garment patterns and body characteristics. Understand that it's okay to deviate from the fitting "rules" you've learned before.

3 Foundation Garments: To achieve a consistent garment fit, wear the same well-fitting foundation garments each time you try on the garment. Note that different undergarments are necessary for different articles of clothing. Also, measure your body over the foundation garments you'll be wearing with the finished garment.

4 Shoes: Posture greatly affects fit. The shoe you wear changes your stance, how you hold your torso, how your legs angle, and how clothing hangs from your body. A skirt hem might look too long when worn with flat shoes instead of heels. Wear the shoes you intend to wear with the garment during all fittings.



5 Fitting Samples: Always sew a test-fitting sample before cutting the fashion fabric. It's amazing how many sewists skip this necessary and helpful step. Create the fitting sample in a fabric similar to the fabric intended for the finished garment, which allows you to see how the pattern works in combination with the fabric on your body. The same pattern will look, fit, feel and perform differently when combined with a different fabric.

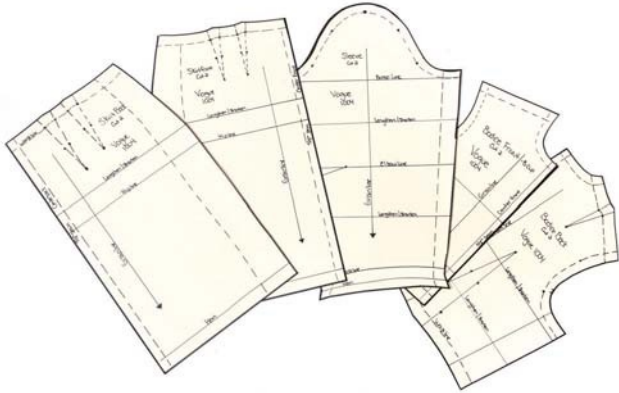


6 Adhesive Dots: To ensure you accurately begin and end when measuring points on the body, use adhesive dots from the office supply store as easy reference points.



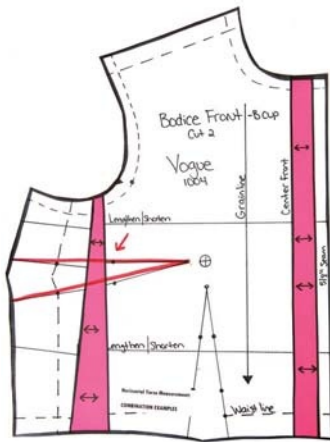
7 Personal Preferences: Pin-fit to a comfortable feel, and then loosen and tighten to find your perfect comfort zone. Fit is custom, so don't get stuck on a generic ease chart or standard number. Even when reading a fit book, the application is unique to your body.

8 Pattern Lines: Think of pattern seamlines as generic guidelines. It's perfectly acceptable and often necessary to change and alter the printed seamlines.



9 Patterns Sizes: Select a pattern size based on what matches your bust, waist and hip measurements most closely, but know that it will need to further modifications to match your body shape. No single pattern will automatically fit you perfectly in all areas.

10 Asymmetrical Adjustments: Depending on your body shape, some pattern adjustments may be necessary only on one side of the pattern, or just on the front, back, upper edge or lower edge. Avoid the generic approach of evenly adjusting all seams or fitting only along the side seams.



11 Fabric Choice: Different fabrics yield different results. The same pattern sewn in different fabrics will fit differently, so it might be necessary to modify how you fitted a test garment when changing fabrics.

Torso Fitting

Keep these factors in mind when fitting garments, such as blouses, jackets, and dress bodices, for the upper body.

12 Apex: The bust apex is the key fitting area of any torso garment. Select a pattern according to the full bust measurement. It's imperative to adjust the pattern apex-to-apex or center front to align with your body proportion. This should always be the first adjustment for bust fitting.

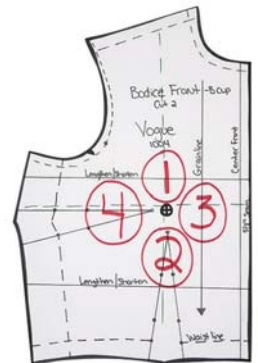


13 Front & Back: Fit the torso front separately from the back. You don't have to evenly distribute adjustments among all seams; only adjust a pattern where your body needs it to be larger or smaller.

14 Bust Lift: The bust is a key fitting area for torso pattern adjustments. Wear a supportive, well-fitting bra or upper-body foundation garment in order to have a clean, consistent bust shape to fit. Garments will also hang better if the bust isn't sagging.

15 Bra Alteration: Many bras and foundation garments are molded to a standard shape that doesn't fit everyone. Make sure the bra cups fit the breasts, and then alter the band or make tucks as necessary to fit your bust shape.

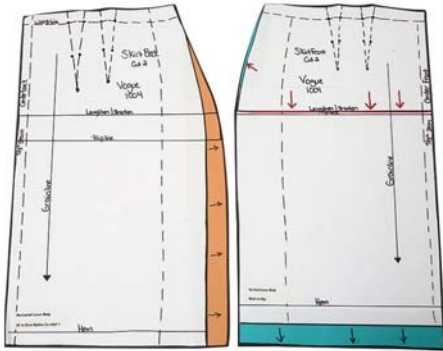
16 Unique Alterations: Not all bust adjustments are the same. Breast tissue can fall in different places on the torso: above the apex and toward the center or below and toward the side. Evaluate exactly where you need to make the adjustment because a standard full-bust adjustment isn't always the answer.



Lower-Body Fitting

Follow these steps to fit pants, shorts and skirts.

- 17 Front & Back:** Just like the torso, fit the front separate from the back. The lower body front may have different curves and shapes than the back.



- 18 Hip Lines:** Contrary to popular belief, the front and back hip lines don't need to match. It's true that the hip line needs to be parallel to the floor, but they don't have to match at the side seams. Treat the front hip area separate from the back.

- 19 Pin Fitting:** After fitting or adjusting the flat pattern for the lower body, pin-fit the pattern on your body. Unpin and adjust the pattern as necessary to trace the exact shape and curve of your hips.



- 20 Briefs & Shapers:** Wear comfortable, well-fitting lower body undergarments. Narrow elastic bands that cut into the hips interfere with the natural hip curve, causing you to lose the foundation of the garment during fitting.

- 21 Top Down:** The hemline is always the last adjustment. When adjusting the lower body pattern, begin by fitting the waist, abdomen, hip curve and anything above the fullest part of the hip. After that area is fitted, fine tune the hem length.

Sleeve Fitting

Sewists often over-fit the arm and torso, creating odd-shaped pattern pieces that are difficult to join. Much of perfecting sleeve fit begins with addressing the body shape.

- 22 Level Shoulders:** Rather than fitting two different-shaped shoulders, even out any differences with shoulder pads. Rather than the outdated oversized

shoulder pads of past decades, use small pads to create an even shape on the body.



- 23 Extend Shoulders:** Very often, sleeves are hanging too far into the armhole. Extend the shoulder seam outward to allow a sleeve to hang smoothly off the arm rather than pulling.

- 24 Padding Hollows:** Forward-tilting arms create a hollow in the armhole front. If there's a hollow in this area, there's no foundation for the sleeve. Adding a tailor's chest pad is a great solution. It also often eliminates the need for a torso dart or for taking in the armhole or sleeve.



25



Torso First: It's important to complete torso and armhole pattern adjustments before fitting the sleeve. Correct the shoulders, add padding and any other necessary fitting or styling. Problems on the torso pattern will show up in the sleeve if they're not corrected beforehand.

26

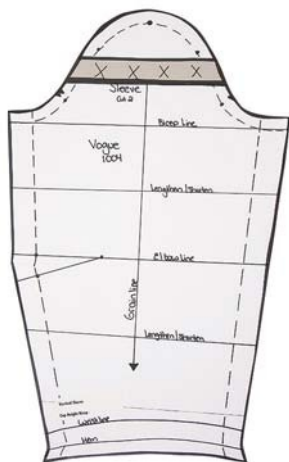
Bias Cutting: If you have fuller arms and the fabric allows, cutting a sleeve on the bias provides the needed ease and comfort while allowing a cleaner armhole fit. Adding vertical seams to the sleeve pattern also provides more places to fit to the arm contour without adding fullness.

27

Sleeve/Torso Matching: Adjustments to the torso aren't always necessary to make on the sleeve as well. For example, it's possible to have a shorter torso and arms with a longer cap height. If you shorten the cap to match the torso, you won't be able to fit the sleeve.

28

Length Adjustments: Length adjustments don't have to occur only along the line printed on the pattern. Adjust the sleeve pattern so the cap, bicep and elbow length match the same areas on your arm.



Practical Pointers

Improve the fitting process by incorporating helpful tools and techniques.

29

Make Templates: Trace a copy of the pattern to make adjustments rather than cutting into and altering the original pattern. After you complete the pattern adjustments, transfer the final alterations onto the original copy if desired.



30

Tailoring Supplies: Materials sold for women's alterations aren't always the best quality. Don't hesitate to purchase professional men's tailoring supplies, notions and garment foundations, such as suit padding and interlining, to use when altering women's patterns.

31

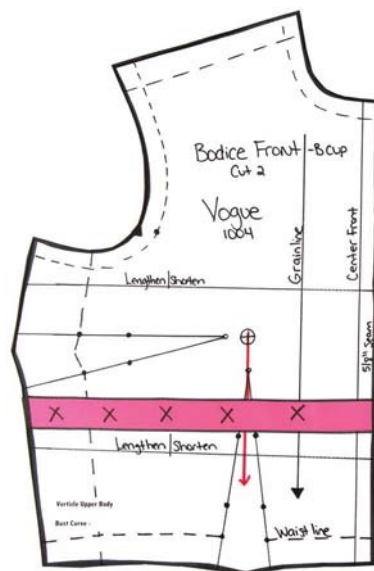
Fitting Shell: If you find that you always have to make a particular alteration, such as padding a shoulder, adding a bust cup or padding a hip line, apply the shaping to a separate camisole or undershirt to use as a fitting foundation or shell. Or sew these shapers into a foundation garment to have a removable fitting aid to use with many garments.

32 Add Fitting Elements: Some patterns only have a single fitting element, such as darts, seams, gathers, tucks or pleats. Sewists often take patterns literally, when in reality it's much more fun and flattering to custom fit the pattern to your body. If adding a dart or seam creates a better look or fit, then utilize these tools.

33 Angular pinning: Some fit areas cannot be addressed until a fit sample is on the body. Often there's excess within a pattern rather than along an edge. This fullness often appears under curves, such as the side front of the body. Remove excess by pinning at whatever angle necessary. Baste the excess fabric down, and then press to eliminate the fullness in the test-fitting sample.



34



Skip the FBA: Rather than falling back on the traditional full-bust adjustment, learn how to scale a pattern vertically and then horizontally to correct bust-fitting problems. This will grade the pattern to match your body proportion more accurately. See “Resources” for further information.

35 Fit Smaller Areas: Instead of fitting only along the side seams, learn to look at smaller pattern areas. Make smaller pattern areas match smaller areas of your body for a more precise fit. ∞

Bonus Tip! Develop a fitting eye. Fitting lines are different than movement lines. A wrinkle in the elbow from bending the arm is different from a drag line in the sleeve cap or crotch area. Learn to identify fit issues and determine the amount of ease that feels comfortable to you.



CREDIT
Bobier Photography, Andrea Zenor

RESOURCES
Find further fitting information and instructions in *Create the Perfect Fit: Measuring and Pattern Fitting For Real* by Joi Mahon (Fons & Porter, 2014), shopsewitall.com.



edge FINISHES

{ by Sheila Zent }

In the rush to finish a project, it's easy to fall back on tried and true methods for hemming or finishing edges. However, by changing up a hem or edge finish, the final design takes on a completely new and more unique look.

Learn 35 professional techniques for finishing fabric edges in style.

On the Edge

Take edge-finishing inspiration from ready-to-wear and vintage garments. Imagine lapels, pockets or sleeve edges outlined crisply in a contrast piping, or consider wrapping a neckline edge in bias strips of chiffon. Change up a classic skirt pattern by adding a scalloped hem. Reinterpret and update any favorite pattern by adding a new edge finish.

Edging techniques not only add unique detail but also solve a number of problems for both handmade and ready-to-wear garments. For a hem that needs lengthening, let out the full hem allowance, and then wrap the raw edge with matching or contrasting bias binding. Remove sleeves from a ready-to-wear blouse, and then finish the armhole edges with a bias facing cut from the discarded sleeve fabric. A new decorative or functional edge finish refreshes tired garments already in your wardrobe.

Decorative Raw Edges

From deconstructed jeans with intentional slashes to couture frayed trims from the House of Chanel, raw edges add texture and volume. For denim or similar heavy-weight fabric, deconstructed edges soften and continue to unravel with each wash and drying cycle.

- 1 Fringe:** Remove yarns in the crosswise direction along the edge, leaving only the lengthwise yarns to form fringe. Remove additional crosswise yarns to create wider fringe. For textiles that don't have yarns or a grainline, such as felt, fleece or leather, make small, evenly spaced clips of the desired length along the fabric edge.



- 2 Contrast raw-edge binding:** From contrasting fabric, cut a bias strip that's the desired width (the featured sample includes a 1/4"-wide strip). Fold the strip lengthwise with wrong sides together; press. Enclose the fabric edge in the bias-strip fold; topstitch 1/8" from the strip long edges. For bolder topstitching, select a long triple stitch as in the featured sample.



- 3 Folded tuck with topstitching:** Along the fabric edge, fold a tuck approximately 3/8"-wide or wider; press, allowing 1/4" of the raw edge to extend from under the tuck. Topstitch a double row in contrasting thread along each tuck edge. (For a 3/8"-wide tuck, account for a 1/4" hem allowance.) This finish adds weight and body along a garment hem. Fray the raw edge manually or machine wash.



- 4 Chenille trim:** Cut two 1/2"-wide bias strips. Layer the strips with the right sides facing up along the fabric raw edge. Topstitch all layers 1/4" from the edge. To fray the bias edges, fluff by hand or wash and dry the garment.



- 5 Chiffon bias trim:** From chiffon, cut a 1 1/4"-wide bias strip. Fold the strip in half lengthwise with wrong sides together; press. Serge- or zigzag-finish the project edge. Align the strip fold with the serged edge with right sides together. Edgestitch the fold. Fold the chiffon downward to extend below the project edge; press. Topstitch the project edge 1/4" from the fold.



Bias Bindings & Strips

Bias strips are very useful for stitching around straight or curved edges. Make self-binding by cutting strips and pressing the edges by hand or using bias turner tools widely available in sewing and online stores. Substitute matching, self-made and prepackaged bindings as desired. Adjust bias widths as desired for different effects. Join strips end along the short ends to achieve the needed length.

- 6 Bias facing:** From matching fabric, cut a 1½"-wide bias strip. Fold the strip long edges toward the wrong side, abutting them along the strip center; press. With the right sides facing up, lap one binding folded edge ¼" over the project edge. Edgestitch the fold through all layers. Fold the binding toward the wrong side; press. Topstitch the opposite binding fold through all layers (only one line of topstitching appears on the fabric right side).



- 7 Double-fold binding:** From matching fabric, cut a 2"-wide bias strip. Fold the strip long edges toward the wrong side, abutting them along the strip center; press. Fold in half again along the center; press. Enclose the project edge within the binding center fold; pin. From the project right side, stitch the binding upper fold, catching all layers in the stitching.



- 8 Front single-fold contrast binding:** Purchase ready-made ½"-wide single-fold bias binding in a contrasting color. Unfold one binding edge, and then align the raw binding edge along the project edge with the wrong sides facing up; pin. Stitch along the foldline. Fold the binding toward the project right side; press. Topstitch the opposite binding fold through all layers.



- 9 Pieced binding:** From two or more coordinating fabrics, cut ¼"-wide straight grain strips. With right sides together and using a ¼" seam allowance, stitch the strip long edges in an alternating pattern. Press open the seam allowances. From the pieced panel, cut bias strips. With right sides together, piece the bias-strip ends to create a continuous strip long enough to bind the project edge. Follow the double-fold binding instructions at left to finish the project edge. Note that pieced binding is thicker and heavier due to the additional seam allowance bulk.



- 10 Contrast flange:** From contrasting fabric, cut a 1¼"-wide bias strip. With wrong sides together, fold the strip in half lengthwise; press. With right sides together, align the strip raw edges with the project raw edge; pin. Stitch using a ¼" seam allowance, and then finish the seam allowances as desired. Press the flange away from the project. If desired, topstitch the project folded edge.



Covered Piping & Cording

Covered piping is made by wrapping a bias strip around a filler cable cord, and then stitching close to the cord using a zipper or piping foot. The seam allowance is used to insert the piping along a seamline or hemline. Similarly, twisted nylon cord is available on a woven tape and is applied in the same way. Make your own piping or purchase prepackaged piping or cording. The ready-made variety is available at fabric stores either by the package in the notions rack or by the yard in home-décor department. The featured samples include self-made piping cut for $\frac{5}{32}$ "-diameter filler cable cord, but filler cord is available in many sizes. (Adjust bias strip widths as needed for narrower or wider cord.)

11 Self-made matching piping: From matching fabric, cut $1\frac{1}{2}$ "-wide bias strips, and then make piping following the instructions above. With right sides together, align the piping and project raw edges; pin. Stitch close to the piping through all layers. Serge- or zigzag-finish the raw edges, and then press the seam allowances toward the project.



12 Ready-made contrasting piping: With right sides together, align the piping and project raw edges; pin. Stitch close to the piping through all layers. Due to the narrow piping seam allowance, it may be necessary to finish the raw edges separately. Press the seam allowances toward the project.



13 Self-made contrasting piping: From contrasting fabric, make and apply covered piping per the self-made matching piping instructions.



14 Ready-made twisted cording: Using a zipper foot, apply matching or contrasting ready-made twisted cording to the project edge following the ready-made contrasting piping instructions.



15 Gathered piping: From matching fabric, cut a bias strip measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x double the project-edge length. Make piping using the bias strip. Evenly gather the piping fabric along the filler cord until it's equal to the project edge. Apply the gathered piping to the project edge following the self-made matching piping instructions, keeping the gathers evenly distributed.



Topstitching & Zigzagging

Most hems on commercially made clothing are now topstitched, as it's the fastest way to hem or finish an edge. Topstitch using a matching or contrasting thread color depending on the desired look. When using a zigzag stitch to finish an edge, select a very narrow satin stitch to mimic a tight serge or purl stitch.

- 16 Topstitching:** Double-fold the raw edge $\frac{1}{4}$ " toward the wrong side; press. Topstitch close to the first fold. Use a wider or narrower hem allowance as desired.



- 17 Narrow hem or "baby hem":** Install a narrow hem foot. Following the foot manufacturer's instructions, topstitch the edge using a very narrow hem allowance, approximately $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide. As an alternative method, use stiff waistband tape cut lengthwise and fringed about $\frac{1}{8}$ ". With right sides together, stitch the fringed ends to the project-edge right side. Fold the tape toward the project wrong side, and then topstitch again through the narrow roll. Remove the tape by gently pulling the fringe edges from the stitching; press.



- 18 Stitch-turn-stitch:** This method is the most delicate option and is commonly used by couture dressmakers to finish very sheer fabrics. Stitch approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the project raw edge. Fold the edge toward the wrong side slightly beyond the first stitching line. Topstitch again directly over the first stitching line. Carefully trim the raw edge away along the topstitching without cutting it.



- 19 Stitch-turn-zigzag (contrasting thread):** Stitch approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the project raw edge. Fold the edge toward the wrong side directly along the stitching line. Select a very short, very narrow zigzag stitch. Stitch directly over the first stitch to create a tight, narrow edge. The threads from the first stitching line act as a filler for the zigzag stitch. Carefully trim the raw edge away along the topstitching without cutting it.



- 20 Stitch-turn-zigzag lettuce leaf:** For best results, use woven or knit fabric that has a slight stretch in the crosswise grain. Stitch approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the project raw edge, stretching the edge as much as possible. Following the stitch-turn-zigzag instructions, fold the raw edge toward the wrong side and stitch, stretching the fabric while zigzagging; trim. Steam the edge, "training" the edge by hand to wave evenly.



Trim & Ruffles

Attaching ruffles, lace or trims is the best way to add length to an edge that's too short. Apply trims to the project right or wrong side for different effects. Make a sample to test how much thickness is added to the edge.

21 Double-layered ruffle: From matching fabric, cut a strip measuring 4" x double the project-edge length. With wrong sides together, fold the strip in half lengthwise; press. Using a long gathering stitch, stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " and then $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the strip raw edges. Gently pull the bobbin threads to gather the strip to match the project-edge length. With right sides together, align the ruffle and project raw edges; evenly distribute the gathers. Pin, and then stitch using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance. Serge- or zigzag-finish the raw edges, and then press the ruffle away from the project.



22 Circular ruffle or flounce: Cut a 2"-wide circular ruffle from matching fabric. Adjust the ruffle arc and width to create a more dramatic flounce. Finish the outer convex edge using matching thread and following the stitch-turn-zigzag instructions. With right sides together, pin the inner concave edge to project edge. Cut tiny slits in the seam allowance for ease when spreading the ruffle. Stitch using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance. Serge- or zigzag-finish the raw edges, and then press the ruffle away from the project edge.



23 Ready-made gathered lace: Serge- or zigzag-finish the project edge, and then fold $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " toward the wrong side; press, and then topstitch. With the right sides facing up, place the lace header along the fold; pin. Topstitch the header edges through all layers.



24 Jumbo rickrack: Serge- or zigzag-finish the project edge. Place the rickrack along the project edge on the right side; pin. Stitch along the rickrack center. Fold the fabric on the stitching line toward the wrong side, allowing half of the rickrack edge to extend below the project edge. Topstitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the fold.



25 Pom-pom fringe: Serge- or zigzag-finish the project edge. Place the fringe tape along the project edge on the right side; pin. Stitch along the tape center, and then stitch again close to the pom-poms using a zipper foot. Fold the project edge toward the wrong side along the second stitching line; press, and then topstitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the fold.



Hand Stitching & Embroidery

In traditional tailoring and dressmaking, hems are blind stitched by hand. Take the time to hand finish hems on finer projects using classic couture or embroidery stitches.

26 Classic blind hem stitch: Serge- or zigzag-finish the project edge, or fold and press it toward the wrong side. Or apply hem tape along the raw edge following the manufacturer's instructions. Fold the entire edge toward the wrong side along the hemline; press, and then pin. Thread a hand needle with a single thread strand; knot the end. To begin stitching, hide the knot in the fold and pull the thread through to the right side. Whipstitch diagonally across the folded edge and pick up a few yarns. Swivel the needle under the folded edge and pull the needle up through the fold. Continue, placing the stitches $\frac{1}{2}$ " apart. For a more secure hem, loop the thread around to create a knot every two or three stitches.



27 Blind catchstitch: Follow the blind hem stitch instructions to finish and fold the hem toward the wrong side. Thread a hand needle with a single thread strand; knot the end. If right handed, begin at the left side and vice versa. Hide the knot in the fold and pull the thread through slightly below the fold. Take a very small horizontal stitch toward the left, and then insert the needle above and to the right, taking another very small stitch toward the left and slightly above the fold. Bring the needle back down below the fold. Continue stitching at an even interval, working toward the right.



28 Embroidered whipstitch: Embroidery finishes add thickness and body to the project edge. Double-fold the project edge toward the wrong side according to the desired hem width; press, and then topstitch. Using six strands of embroidery floss in a matching or contrasting color, whipstitch the hem, spacing the stitches $\frac{1}{4}$ " apart.



29 Embroidered blanket stitch: Stitch a double-turned hem following the embroidered whipstitch instructions. Using six strands of embroidery floss in a matching or contrasting color, blanket stitch the hem, spacing the stitches $\frac{3}{8}$ " apart.



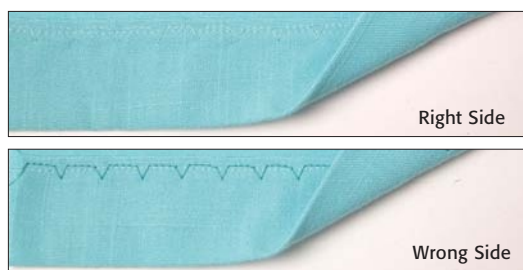
30 Rolled hem: Usually associated with silk scarves, a hand-rolled hem is narrow with no exposed thread on the wrong side. Double-fold the raw edge a scant $\frac{1}{4}$ " toward the wrong side; pin or hold the roll in place by hand. Keep the roll even along the edge without pressing it flat. Thread a hand sewing needle with a single thread strand; knot the end. Slipstitch the roll in place on the fabric wrong side.



Miscellaneous Edge Treatments

As an alternative to standard techniques, finish edges with shapes, beads, curves or machine blind stitches.

31 Machine blind stitch: Most sewing machines have a built-in blind stitch to use for this technique. Finish the project raw edge as desired. Fold the edge toward the wrong side along hemline; press. Place pins pointing toward the fold. Select the blind stitch. Fold the fabric between the project and hem allowance, and then stitch the fold; catching a tiny amount of the right side fabric. Unfold, and then press flat.



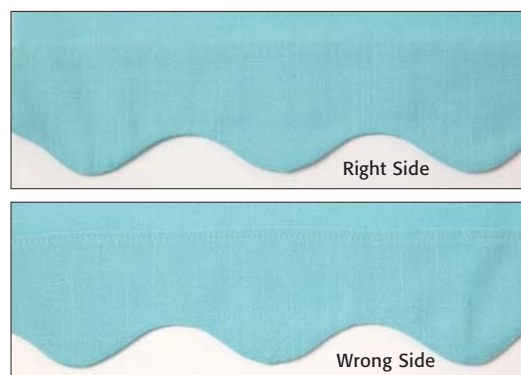
32 Beaded edge: Stitch a topstitched hem. Hand stitch beads along the hem on the right side.



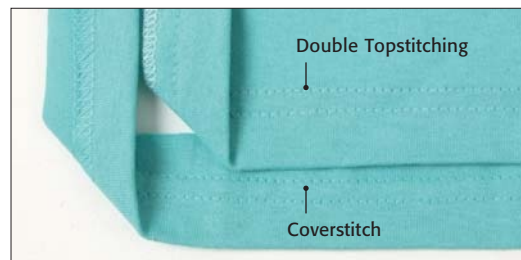
33 Topstitched curved edge: In order to smoothly turn in a curved edge, select a long stitch length, and then stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the raw edge. Every 5" to 6", gently pull the bobbin thread with a pin to draw up the fabric so that the edge cups slightly. Evenly fold the raw edge toward the wrong side, and then topstitch; press.



34 Shaped-edge with facing: For any shaped edge, such as a neckline or scalloped hem, cut a 2"-wide piece of fabric to act as a facing, tracing the shaped-edge outline. Align the fabric layers with right sides together; pin. Stitch using the seam allowance directed by the pattern. Clip and notch the seam allowances as needed, and then fold the facing toward the project wrong side; press. Finish the opposite facing edge as desired, and then slipstitch the facing wrong side to the project.



35 Knit coverstitch: Commercially, T-shirts and knits are often hemmed using a coverstitch machine that generates two rows of topstitching and threads that conceal the raw edges on the wrong side. To duplicate the look of a coverstitch machine, first finish the project raw edges as desired. Fold the edge toward the wrong side along the hemline; pin. Select a slightly longer stitch length, and then topstitch two parallel stitching lines to secure the hem. Space the stitching lines approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " apart. ∞





35 skirt

embellishments

{ by Elizabeth and Liz Evans }

Skirts are one of the easiest garments to embellish. Choose one or more of the following 35 easy embellishment ideas for endless variations.

Download an A-line skirt pattern for free at sewnews.com/web_extras, or use a favorite pattern from your library.



Check out Liz & Elizabeth's video "Simple and Sweet Skirt for Girls or Moms" at craftdaily.com.



1 Box Pleat

Place the skirt front onto a piece of pattern paper. Draw a line extending 8" from the center-front upper and lower edges. Connect the line ends. Cut out the skirt front from the fabric. Measure 2" and 6" from the centerline; mark. With wrong sides together, fold the skirt to align the marks. Fold the pleat toward the skirt center. Repeat to fold the pleat on the opposite side of the skirt centerline.

2 Heart Pocket

Trace a heart larger than the wearer's hand onto a piece of paper. Cut two hearts from fabric and one from light-weight interfacing. Align the interfacing heart with one fabric heart wrong side; pin. With right sides together, align the fabric hearts. Stitch the heart perimeter, leaving a 1" opening along the lower edge for turning. Turn the heart right side out. Fold the opening seam allowances toward the wrong side; press. Topstitch the heart onto the skirt as desired, leaving an opening along the upper curved edges large enough for your hand.



3 Contrasting Fabric Stripes

Create a striped skirt using two different fabrics.

From two contrasting fabrics, cut strips to the desired width and 2" longer than the skirt-panel width.

With right sides together, alternate the fabric strips and stitch the long edges to create striped fabric. Cut out the skirt pieces from the new fabric, ensuring the stripes align along the side seams. Construct the skirt according to the pattern guidesheet.



4 Color Block

Cut $\frac{1}{2}$ of the front skirt panel and back skirt panel out of a different color of fabric. (Make sure the $\frac{1}{2}$ that's a different color is on the same side on the front as it is on the back.) Add seam allowances to the new seam edges, and then construct per the pattern.



5 Lace Overlay

Cut the skirt pieces from the chosen fabric, and then cut a second skirt from lace. With right sides facing up, layer the lace pieces over the corresponding skirt pieces; baste along the waistline and side seams. Stitch the skirt according to the pattern guidesheet, treating the basted layers as one.



6 Upcycle

If you've outgrown the style of an old skirt or dress, but still love the fabric, upcycle it into something new. Remove the side seams and use the fabric to cut a new skirt or completely transform it into an accessory, such as a purse or headband.



7 Ribbon Belt

Add a ribbon belt for a pop of color to any skirt. Machine stitch each ribbon long edge onto the skirt waistband, or stitch button loops at each side seam to change out the ribbon for different occasions.



8 Yarn

Thick yarn adds beautiful texture to garments and launders well. Pin the yarn in place at the desired location, and then hand stitch or set the machine to a short stitch length and carefully stitch along the yarn center. “Paint” on the fabric using yarn, drawing the desired shapes, letters or add a fun Hostess cupcake look using white yarn on a brown skirt.



9 Doilies

Antique or new doilies add vintage charm to any skirt. Place the doily on the finished skirt where desired; pin. Hand or machine stitch the doily perimeter using matching thread.



10 Polka Dot Embroidery

Use polka dot fabric to map out hand embroidery designs. From simple geometric designs to complicated patterns, embroidery adds a personal touch to any garment. Apply a fusible stabilizer to the fabric wrong side, and then embroider the design using a hand embroidery needle and embroidery floss.



11 Felt Fun

Felt adds color, texture and dimension to a skirt. Purchase precut felt shapes at craft stores or cut your own. Spell out a name, monogram or a word. Pin the chosen shape to the finished skirt and hand stitch the perimeter using coordinating embroidery floss. Wash felt-embellished skirts in cold water and let air dry.



12 Rickrack

Cut lengths of rickrack according to the skirt circumference at the desired location. Stitch along the rickrack center using matching thread, folding the rickrack ends toward the wrong side.



13 Tulle Overlay

Cut a piece of tulle according to the skirt length and twice the skirt waistline circumference. Stitch the short edges. Construct the skirt per the instructions, but don't attach the waistband. Gather the tulle upper edge to match the skirt upper edge. With right sides facing up, layer the tulle over the skirt, aligning the upper edges; baste. Attach the skirt waistband to secure the tulle and skirt layers.



14 Appliqué

Adhere paper-backed double-sided fusible web onto the desired appliqué fabric wrong side following the manufacturer's instructions. Draw the appliqué image onto paper, or directly onto the fabric. Cut out the appliqué, remove the fusible web paper backing, and then fuse it onto the skirt in the desired location. Select a straight stitch on the machine, and then edgestitch the appliqué perimeter using matching thread. Layer appliqué pieces in different colors for added depth.





15 Quilt Block Pocket

Combine a quilt block (the featured block is 7½" square), lightweight interfacing and matching lining fabric to add a cute pocket detail to a skirt. Trim the interfacing to match the quilt block size. Fuse or baste the interfacing to the block wrong side following the manufacturer's instructions.

With right sides together, align the lining and quilt block. Stitch the perimeter using a ¼" seam allowance, leaving a 2" centered opening along the lower edge for turning. Clip the corners, and then turn the pocket right side out. Push out the corners using a point turner or chopstick. Fold the opening seam allowances ¼" toward the wrong side; press. Topstitch the pocket sides and lower edge onto the skirt as desired, backstitching at the pocket upper corners.

16 Peplum

From coordinating fabric, cut a rectangle measuring 12" x twice the skirt circumference 6" below the waistband. With right sides together, fold the rectangle in half widthwise; stitch the short ends. With wrong sides together, fold the tube in half lengthwise, aligning the raw edges. Using a long basting stitch and ¼" seam allowance, stitch the tube raw edges, leaving long thread tails at the beginning and end. Evenly gather the peplum to match the skirt circumference. With the peplum folded edge extending upward, align the peplum raw edges 6" below the waistband; stitch using a ½" seam allowance. Fold the peplum downward; press.



17 Tulle Ruffles

Cut as many 2"x90" tulle strips as desired, piecing strips to achieve the needed length. Fold each strip in half widthwise; stitch the short ends. Select a long basting stitch on the machine. Stitch each strip lengthwise centerline, leaving long thread tails at the beginning and end. Evenly gather each strip to match the skirt circumference at the desired location. Stitch the ruffles to the skirt along the lengthwise centerlines. Construct the skirt according to the pattern guidesheet.



18 Mix & Match

Mix trims, fabrics and embellishments in a variety of combinations. Try mixing eyelet, plaid and felt for an eclectic look. There's no right or wrong way to personalize your skirt style.



19 Vintage Buttons

Stitch decorative vintage buttons along the skirt side seam or hem to add a retro look and feel.



20 French Knot Flowers

Use a hand embroidery needle and embroidery floss to add French knots to the skirt lower edge in the shape of a flower. Use a backstitch or running stitch to create the stem.



Download the hand embroidery stitch guide from sewnews.com/web_extras to brush up on 11 common stitches.

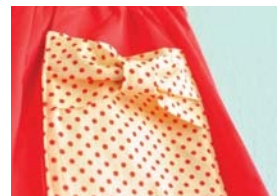
21 Bow

From the skirt fabric, cut as many 7"-wide strips as necessary to achieve two 90"-long strips, including seam allowances. With right sides together, piece the strips along the short ends; press open the seams. With right sides together, align the ties; stitch the perimeter, leaving a 2" opening for turning. Turn the tie right side out; press. Hand stitch the opening closed. Hand stitch the tie widthwise center to one skirt side seam. Wrap the sash around the skirt and tie a bow at the skirt center front. (The bow ties will be different lengths. For even lengths, align the tie center with the skirt center back.)



22 Bow Pocket

Cut two 6" squares, one 6" x 7" and one 2" x 3" rectangle from the desired fabric. Fold the large rectangle in half lengthwise. Stitch the long edge; press open the seam. Turn the tube right side out; press the seam to the tube center. Repeat to stitch the small rectangle. Using long basting stitches, hand stitch the large rectangle widthwise centerline; gather the thread to create the bow shape. Wrap the small tube around the bow center, lapping the ends by 1/2"; hand stitch. With right sides facing up, place the bow over one square, 1" from the upper edge. Place the remaining square right side down over the bow; stitch the perimeter, leaving a centered opening along the lower edge for turning. Clip the corners, and then turn the pocket right side out; press. Topstitch the pocket onto the skirt as desired.



23 Burned Fabric

Fold a piece of light-weight rayon fabric to achieve six to eight layers. Cut 20 to 30 circular petals in the desired shape and size. Using a lighter, singe the petal edges so they curl, being careful not to actually touch the fabric to the flame. Fold one petal in half, and then fold it in half again. Hand tack the lower point to secure the folds. Repeat to layer and stitch all the folded petals together until you achieve the desired size flower. Pin or hand stitch the flower onto the skirt waistband, or a sash.



24 Tulle Hem

Cut a tulle rectangle measuring 6" x twice the skirt hem circumference. Fold the tulle in half lengthwise. Fold the strip in half widthwise; stitch the short ends. Stitch the raw edges using a long basting stitch and a 1/4" seam allowance. Evenly gather the tulle to match the skirt hem circumference. Lap the skirt hem 1" over the tulle raw edges. Stitch the tulle strip to the skirt wrong side along one hem stitching line.



25 Trim

There's a plethora of fun and fashionable trims available that make for a simple embellishment and can change the look of any skirt. Simply pin onto the skirt as desired and edgestitch each long edge, folding one short end toward the wrong side and lapping it over the opposite raw short end.



26 Contrasting Waistband

Cut the skirt waistband from a contrasting fabric. Construct the skirt according to the pattern guidesheet.



27 Fabric Frenzy

Don't limit yourself to cotton! Stitch a skirt in knit, linen, wool, denim or tweed, ensuring the fabric is compatible with the pattern. Step outside your fabric comfort zone and the finished look may surprise you.



28 Granny Square Pockets

Use a vintage granny square or crochet your own to use as a pocket. Select a long stitch length on the machine. Place the granny square as desired onto the skirt. Edgestitch the sides and lower edge, back-stitching at the upper edges for added stability.



29 Pintucks

Add 3" to the skirt front and back length. Construct the skirt according to the pattern guidesheet, but don't hem the skirt. Draw three rows 1" apart and 4" from and parallel to the lower edge. With wrong sides together, fold the skirt along one line. Stitch using a 1/4" seam allowance; press downward. Repeat for each row. Hem the skirt according to the pattern guidesheet.



30 Piping

Sandwich piping between the waistband and the skirt waistline, aligning the raw edges. Construct the skirt according to the pattern guidesheet. Insert piping into any seam for a pop of color.



31 Coordinating Pockets

Use a coordinating print to add custom pockets to any skirt. Draw the pocket shape rounded, square or any shape imaginable. Construct the pockets and add them to the skirt per the Heart Pocket instructions.



32 Removable Ribbon Hem

Measure 1" above the skirt finished hem; mark. Mark the skirt center front, and then every 5" around the skirt circumference. Machine stitch a vertical buttonhole 1/2" on each side of each mark according to the chosen ribbon width, with the buttonhole lower bartack at the 1" mark. Thread ribbon through the buttonholes and tie into a bow. Change the ribbon for any occasion.



33 Embellished Fabric

There are many fun embellished fabrics available. Use a pre-ruffled, flowered fabric or other special occasion fabric choice to take a skirt from daytime to date night.



34 Yo-Yos

Cut a 3" circle from contrasting fabric. Fold the circle perimeter a scant 1/4" toward the wrong side; press. Thread a hand sewing needle with a single thread strand. Baste the circle perimeter close to the folded edge.



Carefully gather the fabric into a circle; knot the thread ends. Press the yo-yo flat, centering the gathered circle. Create as many yo-yos as desired and arrange them onto the skirt with the gathered side facing up; hand stitch.

35 Vintage Lace

Cut out the skirt front and back. Place rows of vintage lace over the skirt front and back, ensuring the lace aligns at the side seams; pin or baste. Space the lace the desired distance apart, or abut the long edges to completely cover the skirt fabric. Construct the skirt according to the pattern guidesheet. ➤





Silk SEWING TIPS

{ by Katrina Walker }

Undertake any silk sewing project using tips from a professional specializing in silk textiles. Discover 35 must-know techniques to conquer your next silk endeavor.

Watch
Katrina Walker's
video "Working
With Sheer Silks"
at craftdaily.com
to learn more
great silk tips
and tricks.

Pretreat

- 1 To determine if a silk fabric is hand washable, cut a 5" square from the desired silk fabric. Hand wash in warm water using a mild detergent, shampoo or delicate fabric soap. Roll the test square in a towel to remove excess water, and then press dry. Measure the square to determine the amount of shrinkage and compare to the unwashed fabric. Note any difference in hand, drape, luster or texture. If you're satisfied with the silk square, the silk yardage is hand washable.
- 2 Silk fiber is made of protein, just like your hair. If you wouldn't consider washing your hair with the chosen soap, detergent or shampoo, don't wash the silk fabric with it either.
- 3 Silk is weaker when wet, so handle it carefully when washing to avoid putting stress on the fabric.
- 4 After washing, gently roll the wet fabric or garment in a towel to remove excess water, and then press the damp fabric dry to prevent wrinkles.
- 5 Never use chlorine bleach on silk. The bleach ruins the fabric color and destroys the fiber itself.
- 6 Washing stiff silks, such as doupioni, shantung, taffeta or organza, may permanently change the fabric hand. Always test-wash a scrap before laundering or dry clean only.
- 7 Washing satin silks, such as charmeuse, changes the luster and lightens the fabric color. Test-wash to observe any changes in appearance.
- 8 Silk crepe can dramatically shrink after washing. Dry clean only or thoroughly preshrink the fabric before cutting.

- 9 Stabilize shifty and slippery hand-washable silks by pretreating the fabric with a liquid stabilizer or spray starch before cutting and sewing, but after prewashing the fabric. Remove the stabilizer from the fabric after construction is complete.
- 10 For a suede-like distressed look, wash silk charmeuse in hot water with white vinegar. Agitate thoroughly, spin to remove excess water, and then tumble dry low.

Choose Designs

- 11 Soft, fragile silks, such as chiffon, require extra wearing ease to drape properly and prevent stress along the seamlines. Choose a semi-fitted to loose design for these fabric types.
- 12 Some silks, such as taffeta, shantung, doupioni and brocade, have very little drape. Choose either a fitted or boxy design to make use of the stiff fabric property.



- 13 Silk crepe drapes beautifully, but doesn't crease well. Choose a design that uses seams or gentle gathers for shaping rather than pleats or other details requiring a crisp press.

- 14** Silk noil and other silks woven from spun yarns are prone to wrinkling and lack the recovery of the filament woven silks. If using for a lined garment, underline the fabric with a soft, high quality fusible interfacing for better wear and travel performance.
- 15** To select the most desirable fabric for the chosen pattern design, test silk fabric scraps to determine their ability to pleat, gather and ease.
- 16** Simple designs are most often the best choice when sewing silk fabrics. These designs are easier to sew and let the fabric speak for itself without competing with a complicated design.

Cut

- 17** Silk quickly dulls cutting blades. Keep scissors sharpened and replace rotary blades often.
- 18** If using scissors, place tissue paper under the silk fabric to prevent shifting during cutting.
- 19** For the easiest cutting, use a rotary cutter and pattern weights to avoid shifting the fabric as much as possible.
- 20** If static is a problem, wipe down the cutting table and ironing board with a dryer sheet before cutting or pressing for easier handling.

Tools

- 21** Use fine, smooth thread when sewing silk. The finer the thread, the less construction issues occur, such as seam puckering on tightly woven silks. Silk, high-quality polyester or mercerized long-staple cotton, such as Egyptian, are best. Always test-stitch a fabric scrap and adjust the needle and bobbin tensions if necessary.



- 22** To prevent snags and pulls, always use the sharpest, finest pins when pinning silk. Many silk pins found in stores aren't good quality and are too short. Glass head pins are often available in a fine weight that's perfect for silk. Discard any sticky, bent or damaged pins to prevent damaging the fabric.
- 23** Use a fine, sharp needle, such as microfiber 70/10, for sewing silk.
- 24** Always begin a silk sewing project with a new needle in the machine, and then immediately replace the needle if it starts to make popping sounds or has difficulty piercing the fabric.
- 25** Use a water-soluble glue stick to baste slippery silk, especially if using silk bias to bind necklines, armholes and hems. Use the glue stick sparingly, only in seam allowances and only on washable silk.



Construct

- 26** To reduce or eliminate fabric-weave strain or seam slippage along the stitching lines, avoid using narrow seam allowances on silk.
- 27** Many silks are prone to seam slippage. Carefully tissue-fit your patterns prior to construction to ensure there's adequate ease to avoid stress at the seams.
- 28** Use lightweight fusible tape to reinforce and stabilize seams. Use bias strips for curves and straight grain strips for reinforcing shoulder seams and other areas needing additional support.



29 Special seaming techniques, such as French and flat-felled seams, are well suited for silk because they're very strong, prevent fraying and seam slippage and attractive on both fabric sides.



30 Use pinking shears to finish the seam allowances of soft, slippery silks that are otherwise difficult to edge finish.



31 If using silk doupioni for a quilt, use a wider seam allowance, such as ½", to prevent seam slippage. Use a zigzag stitch or pinking along the seam allowances to control fraying.



32 Use a straight-stitch plate with soft, lightweight silks to minimize the fabric being pulled into the bobbin area. Or place a piece of transparent tape over the throatplate needle opening.

33 To prevent silk fabric from getting caught in the throatplate when beginning a seam, select one of the following techniques:

- Begin stitching on a piece of tear-away stabilizer, and then continue onto the silk from the stabilizer.
- Wrap the needle and bobbin threads around your left index finger prior to beginning the seam. This allows you to maintain tension on the stitching line, and if the fabric dips into the stitch plate, gently pull it back out.

- Begin stitching with the needle down in the fabric. When the sewing machine creates the next stitch, the feed dogs will move before the needle pierces the fabric again.

34 To minimize puckering on tight woven silk fabric, use your left hand to hold the fabric behind the presser foot and use your right hand to hold the fabric in front, keeping the fabric taut as it passes through the machine during stitching. Only keep the fabric taut, don't severely pull on either end, which could cause the needle or machine to break.

35 Press silk on a low temperature setting, such as wool, with steam. The silk setting on the iron is only intended for synthetic silks. Press over a soft seam roll or ham to prevent seam imprinting on the right side or shine from over-pressing. A mild white vinegar and water solution helps remove shine or stubborn wrinkles. Always test on a fabric scrap to ensure the solution doesn't affect the dye. ✎

SOURCES

Nancy's Notions carries black Design Plus fusible stay tape: nancysnotions.com.
Superior Threads carries Tire silk sewing thread: superiorthreads.com.



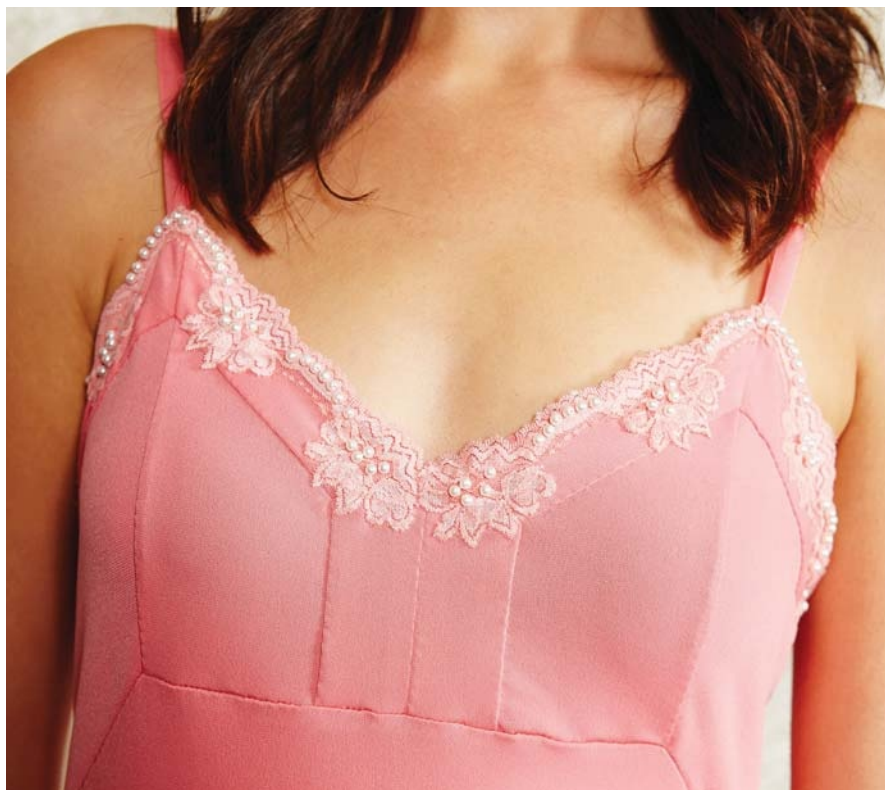
SEW ALONG!

SEW CHIC VALENTINE SLIP

{ by Rhonda Buss }



Join the *Sew News* Valentine Slip Sew-Along on Flickr. Find a tutorial on how to join and use Flickr on the *Sew News* blog!



On The Blog!

The next *Sew News* Sew-Along begins on March 2, 2015 featuring the lovely Valentine Slip from Sew Chic. Visit the *Sew News* Flickr group to view reader photos from last year's Sew-Alongs, and then join us on the blog on March 2 for the first week of the Valentine Slip Sew-Along. Purchase the pattern at shopsewitall.com, and then visit the blog weekly for tips and tricks to guide you through the pattern. Join Flickr, the photo-sharing site, to post photos of your progress and meet other sew-along members. To join the Valentine Slip Sew-Along Flickr group, follow this link: flickr.com/groups/sn_sewalong7.

Pattern Details

The seductive charm of wearing a slip is evident for anyone who's seen Elizabeth Taylor in *Cat On a Hot Tin Roof*. But there's plenty of practicality in wearing a slip, too. A slip adds a level of modesty to an unlined skirt or dress and allows garments to lay more smoothly on the body. Clothes won't stick to the skin when temperatures rise and visible panty lines all but disappear.

The Valentine Slip pattern offers two styles. View A is a traditional style with lace bodice and hem. View B offers a contrasting fabric trim and flounced hem, perfect for wearing under a fuller skirt. Both views have princess bodice seams with ribbon straps. The Valentine Slip pattern is designed for a B cup, but instructions for altering for larger bust sizes are included in the pattern guidesheet. The slip is designed to fall below the knee length, but the pattern is easily adjusted for a shorter or longer style. View B offers many options for a customized look, especially with the use of lace and other trims.

The pattern is multi-sized from 2 to 18 and includes pattern pieces for the front bodice, back inset, skirt, ruffle for view B, and straps. Use moderate (25%) stretch knits, such as tricot and jersey. Lightweight satin, organza taffeta and all-over lace is suitable for the view B ruffle. Be sure to purchase all lingerie notions listed on the pattern envelope.

Purchase the Sew Chic Valentine Slip pattern at shopsewitall.com.



Don't miss weekly how-to videos on the *Sew News* blog for further instruction, tips and hints from Rhonda at sewnews.com/blogs/sewing.



Sew-Along Schedule

Find the pattern at shopsewitall.com. Purchase fabric, notions and supplies according to the pattern envelope. Sign up on Flickr and join the Valentine Slip Sew-Along group. Prep the chosen fabric before the sew-along according to the manufacturer's instructions. Post photos on the Flickr group for help or visit the *Sew News* blog each week for helpful tips, more customizing options and videos.

Week 1: Week of March 2

Fabric Choice & Sewing Lingerie Fabrics

Week 2: Week of March 9

Construction & Bust Adjustments

Week 3: Week of March 16

Customizing with Lace & Seam Finishes

Week 4: Week of March 23

Finishing Touches

Grab the *Sew News* RSS Feed to keep up-to-date throughout the sew-along.

WONDERFUL ADJUSTMENTS

To customize the slip, follow all or some of these options.

- Add ribbon to the slip bodice for durability **(A)**.
- Apply a tricot-backed facing **(B)**.
- Embellish with antique lace and ribbon **(C)**.
- Use French seams for clean, enclosed seam allowances **(D)**.



Celebrating 35 Years!

Join us in celebrating this milestone and enter for a chance to win tons of great prizes!



Visit the *Sew News* blog at sewnews.com/blogs/sewing to participate in a weekly Scavenger Hunt. Each week you'll find questions along with links to sponsors' websites to find the answers. Follow the instructions to plug the answers into your entry form for a chance to win!

Different prizes (with different questions to answer) will be announced each Monday in 2015. Each Scavenger Hunt week begins on Monday at 12am MT and ends on Sunday at 3pm MT.

A list of winners will be updated each week as the Scavenger Hunt unfolds. Check the blog frequently to see the amazing new prizes added for upcoming weeks!

> **Find a list of participating Scavenger Hunt sponsors**
at sewnews.com/contests/Scavenger_Hunt.html.

Winners will be chosen at random from all correct and eligible entries received during the respective weekly offering. Enter as many weeks as you like during the year, but only one entry per person is allowed per week. Multiple entries from the same email address in one week will void all entries from that address.





GLUE SNAFU

While attempting to change the light bulb on my sewing machine, I noticed dust and decided to spray it away. I grabbed a spray can and began to spray, but I noticed that the dust wasn't clearing away as it normally does. I picked up the can, and it read, "spray adhesive." Oops! Needless to say, I had to have my machine professionally cleaned.

Diane M., email

BIRTHDAY BLUNDER

When I first started quilting, I decided to surprise my hubby with a quilt for his birthday. As I was hand quilting the piece, my daughter's cat jumped into my chair and knocked over the hot tea I was drinking. Not knowing any better, I immediately put it in the washer. When it came out, it was no longer a quilt. The batting fell apart because I hadn't added binding yet, the basting stitches did not hold, and all the appliqué had fallen off because it wasn't stitched down yet. His birthday was just a week away, so I put the entire mess in a box and wrapped it. The look on his face was so funny when he opened my "gift." We laughed for years about the whole thing. I promised I'd remake it, but I never have.

Mindy W., email

WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

While chatting with a neighbor, I mentioned that I took sewing courses years ago and love to sew with a serger. After hearing this, she asked me to alter the shoulder seams of a dress she had just purchased. Much to my surprise, the finished dress looked good! So happy, I decided I'd give it a good press to really make it look professional. Unfortunately, I forgot to use a press cloth and burned a hole right through the fabric! I was almost in tears. Not knowing what to do, I called her and explained what happened. She said she paid \$2 for the dress, and I need not worry about it. I'll never tell anyone I have a sewing machine or serger again.

Linda P., email

PANTS IMPERFECTION

I recently cut out two pairs of pants from the same fabric. I carefully placed the front to the back, and finished the first pair. I went to sew the second pair, only to discover I had four back pieces! After ripping the seams from the first pair, I resewed both pants, and they turned out great. I guess I haven't made enough pants in my sewing lifetime.

Judy N., email

BUTTONHOLE BOO-BOO

After rushing through sewing a blouse, I was happy to only have the decorative buttons left to sew onto the shirt. I sewed the buttons, and to my horror, I'd measured the buttonhole layout from the hem up instead of from the top down. Once buttoned up, the shirt looked ridiculous. To save the shirt, I added two buttonholes on the upper part of the blouse, and then added a ruffle to the hem to offset the low buttonhole. The blouse turned out really cute, but my mix-up added another two hours to my project time. I learned a lesson that day: Go slow and steady to save yourself the extra time of fixing your own mistakes.

D.W., email



Send us your sewing bloopers! If your blooper is chosen as our "Last Laugh," you'll win a \$25 gift card from Fabric.com. Write to sewnews@sewnews.com and include your name and mailing address with each email. Bloopers become the property of Sew News and may be edited for clarity and brevity.

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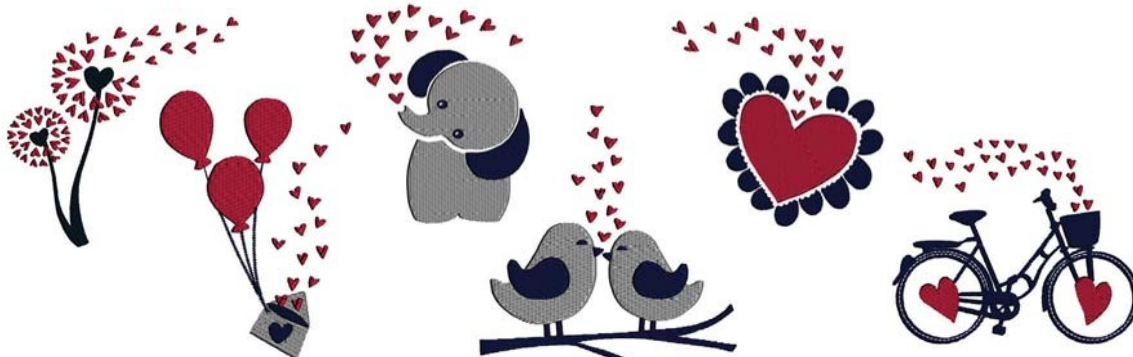
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*Detail of Cat on the
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