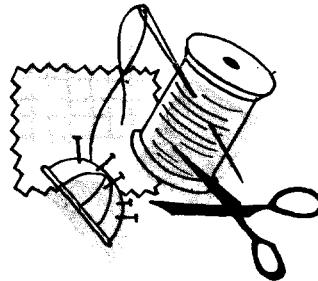




*Suggestions for
Sewing*

The Newer Fabrics



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In recent times many new fibers have appeared on the market. The names are familiar--nylon, dacron, orlon, acrilan dynel, arnel. Add to these the resin treated cottons and rayon and the list becomes extensive.

The resin furnished cottons and rayon are added because these old fibers have been given a new behavior pattern.

When you sew on man-made or resin-treated fabrics, sometimes there are trouble spots.

1. The fabric may pucker at seamlines.
2. Setting the sleeve into the armhole smoothly may be difficult.
3. Pin or construction marks may show.

The new fabrics may be difficult but many of the handling techniques for good sewing apply in general to all new fabrics.

Fabrics differ. They may resemble each other but still require different handling to get good results. Fiber content is just one of the factors. A sheer fabric needs a different treatment from a heavy one. The same is true of crisp versus soft and loosely woven fabrics. Each fabric requires some individual experiments until you find the best way to handle it.

SEWING TECHNIQUES NECESSARY FOR GOOD SEWING

- a. Shears well sharpened. Cutting mistakes can't be remedied later; do it accurately.
- b. Use sharp fine pins; Pin marks are less likely to show if fine pins are used.
- c. If available, use nylon or dacron thread, or possibly silk thread on fabrics of man-made fibers, or on blends containing 50% or more of these fibers. If not available, use mercerized cotton and heavy duty cotton on such garments as work and play clothes that must take hard wear.
- d. Use clay chalk or tailors tacks of thread to mark pleats and other construction features. It's hard to remove wax chalk marks from some of the newer fabrics--particularly dacron. Wax tracing paper may be used but very sparingly. Mark only beginnings

of seam widths and details with the least amount of marking. Oil from the sewing machine is also hard to remove.

e. Check grainline

If the fabric is cut from the bolt, check grainline, pull a crosswise grain thread and cut along the opening. A torn edge is a straight edge and is easy to check.

Some fabrics regardless of fiber content are finished off grain; the crosswise (filling) threads aren't at right angles to the lengthwise threads. Cotton fabrics without a resin finish can easily be straightened. Simply by pulling diagonal corners or, if badly off grain, wet and pull carefully into shape. To straighten wool fabrics, torn from the bolt, pin crosswise and lengthwise edges together. Then fold the fabric loosely inside a wet sheet and let it remain there several hours. Finally spread the fabric out on a flat surface and let it dry. Wool crepe, however, is difficult to straighten.

To straighten rayon fabric pin selvages together and thoroughly steam press. This is usually sufficient. Caution: Some resin-treated fabrics can be straightened and some can't. If you can, obtain fabrics that are not finished off grains, you may save yourself unnecessary trouble, always check the crosswise edges of the fabric before you buy.

If you find you have an off grain fabric which does not respond to the pulling of opposite corners, pin the edges together and soak the fabric in hot water. Then pull the fabric to straighten and smooth it out to dry on a flat surface. (If the grains have been permanently set, however, in an off-grain position they will stay that way despite your best efforts.)

SHRINKAGE

Most of the synthetic and resin treated fabrics do not shrink when washed. Some may shrink if steam pressed. A general rule to follow for resin-treated rayon fabrics: If you plan on washing the garment shrink the fabric before you make the garment.

FINDINGS

Use findings which have the same properties as the fabric. These include tape, inter-linings or inter-facings, lining, and tape on slide fasteners.

If findings are of nylon or dacron and have been properly heat set, they should not shrink. If necessary to use findings of other materials, pre-shrink before using.

POINTS ON SEWING

Pinning, cutting, and basting: When you pin the pattern on the fabric place pins within seam allowance. Pin enough so the layers of fabric will be held firmly in place while cutting. Use long even strokes with the shears.

Correct pattern adjustment can eliminate the need for much basting and fitting.

Basting should be done with care on the exact seam lines. Marks made by the needle are sometimes hard to remove. This is especially true if machine basting is used.

SEAM FINISHES

Sheer fabrics of filament fibers ravel easily; seam finishes are necessary. French seams may be used on straight seams for any sheer fabric.

Seams on medium-weight fabrics which ravel excessively should be over cast or turned under and edge stitched or just edge-stitched.

Seams on resin-treated cottons usually need no special finish.

BUTTONHOLES

Buttonholes are a problem for some fabrics. If you want bound buttonholes make a test buttonhole first and check it for frayed corners.

For worked or machine buttonholes, use a woven or a non-woven interfacing of the right weight. This helps to give firmness to the buttonhole area.

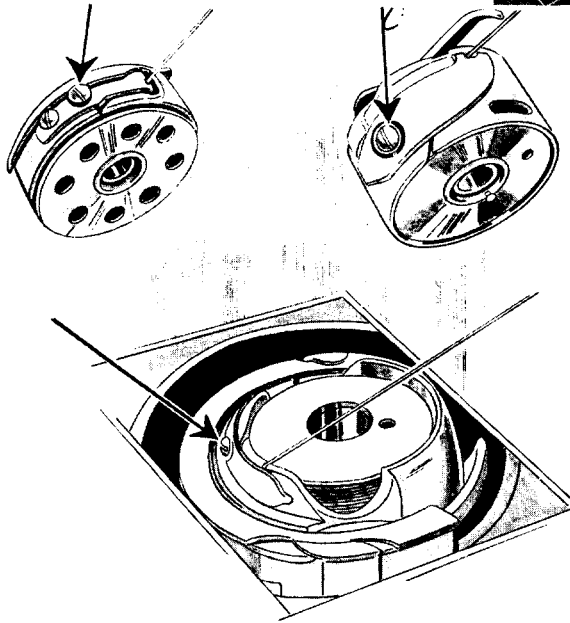
PUCKERING

To avoid seam puckering have both lower and upper tensions on the thread as loose as possible but still form a good stitch. You might also adjust the pressure on the presser foot.

Use a fine sharp needle and suitable thread.

Hold cloth layers firmly as you sew. Don't let the lower layer "over feed." Sew at an even, not too fast pace, about 12 to 14 stitches to the inch.

To prevent puckering, adjust both upper and lower tensions to lowest possible points. Pencil indicates the presser foot adjuster. Move this adjuster counter-clockwise to decrease pressure before stitching on the new fabrics; this will help to prevent puckering.



Adjusting Bobbin or
Lower Tensions

CHOOSE PATTERNS CAREFULLY

Choose a simple pattern. Consider a pattern with kimono or raglan sleeves. Many synthetics are difficult when it comes to easing in fullness. A gored or flared skirt pattern is easier to do than one with straight seams.

POINTS IN PRESSING

1. A good general rule is to use a low temperature without too much pressure.
2. Keep the iron in one place for only a short time.
3. It will develop shiny areas or melt if pressed with an iron that is too hot.
4. A softly padded ironing board helps to prevent glazing.
5. Experiment on scraps until you find the best results.
6. Try steam pressing on the wrong side, steaming lightly.
7. Or dry ironing with damp press cloth.
8. Remove basting stitches before pressing:

Never press over pins.

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