

Blindhem Stitch

16.120

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SEW-lutions Guidelines

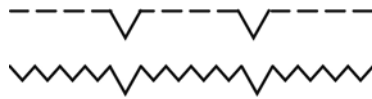
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The blindhem stitch is found on even basic sewing machines, and some models offer more than one version. Common to all is the unique stitch configuration—a straight or narrow zigzag patterning of four to five stitches, then a single wide zigzag. The stitches can be used for almost invisible machine hemming on wovens and knits, respectively (1).

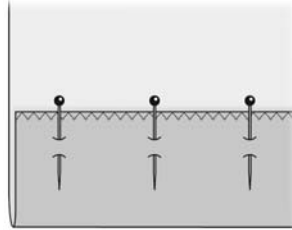


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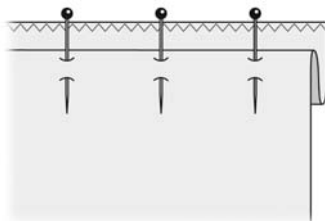
Hem Preparation

Measure the garment or project finished length and press the hem allowance to the wrong side. Trim the hem width evenly, leaving at least 1 1/4".

Finish the hem upper edge using a zigzag, serging, seam tape or by turning under 1/4" to clean-finish the edge; pin in place (2).



2



3

Right sides together, fold the project fabric back onto itself, exposing at least 1/4" of the hem edge; pin in place (3).

Blindhem Foot

Many sewing machines offer a blindhem or edge-stitching foot to help guide the folded fabric edge for stitching. The foot has a vertical edge guide of some sort (some are adjustable) to align with the hem foldback and keep the hemming stitches



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Photo courtesy of
Bernina of America

evenly spaced from the edge, catching only a small bit of the outer fabric (4).

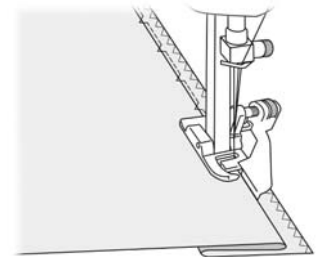
Check with your machine dealer for this specialty foot if it didn't come with your machine, or purchase a generic version.

Blindhem Stitching

The goal of a machine blindstitched hem is to make the outside stitches as invisible as possible. Use thread to closely match the fabric or select invisible thread for a multi-color print.

Always make a test sample using the same fabric as your project.

With the project wrong side up, adjust the stitch width to barely catch the folded fabric edge with the large portion of the stitch. An adjustable needle position can help fine-tune the bite size and location to catch as little as possible (5).



5

The amount of fabric caught determines how much shows on the outside and varies by fabric thickness. Catch enough of the fabric to make a stable hem, but not too much that the visible outside stitching is too prominent.

When the hem stitching is complete, unfold the hem and press to set the stitches (6).



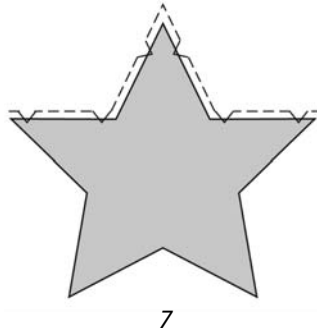
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Other Uses for the Blindhem Stitch

In addition to hemming, this versatile stitch can be used for several decorative techniques as well.

Appliqué

The blindhem stitch is perfect to attached finished appliqués to their base fabric. Position the stitch so only the larger zigzag portion of the blindhem catches the appliqué fabric (7).

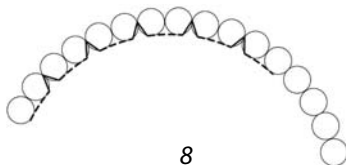


Beading

Attaching strung beads by machine can be done easily using the blindhem stitch. Use a beading presser foot or a zipper foot and position the beads on the fabric base.

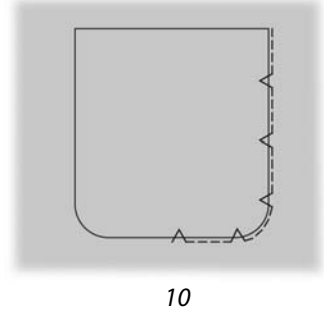
Stitch along one side of the beads, allowing the zigzag bite to go between the beads at regular intervals to hold them in place.

Depending on the bead size, and how securely the beads need to be held, adjust the stitch length and width accordingly (8).



Patch Pockets

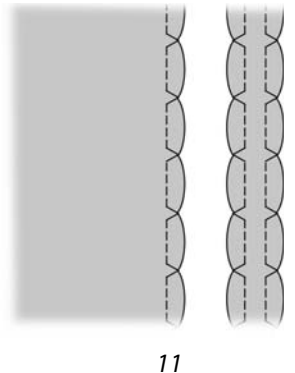
Much like appliquéing, the blindhem stitch can be used to invisibly attach patch pockets. This works especially well on nubby woolen fabrics like suiting as the threads are well hidden along the pocket edge. Shorten the stitch length to ensure a sturdy pocket attachment and be sure the straight portion of the stitch is just beyond the pocket finished edge (10).



Scallops

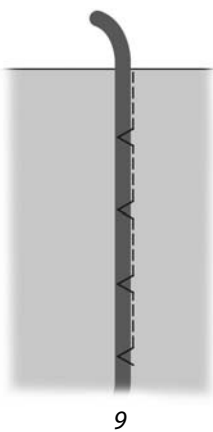
The blindhem stitch can be used on lightweight fabrics to create a scallop edging, either single or double. Tighten the upper tension for more pronounced scallops and allow the blindhem's wide zigzag to go off the fabric edge while stitching.

To create a double scallop, like on a lingerie strap, use the mirror-image function to reverse the stitch direction (11).



Couching

Perfect for holding down yarns or other trims, the straight stitch portion of the blindhem lies next to the trim while the zigzag portion of the stitch holds the decorative cord in place (9). Adjust the length and width as needed, depending on the trim characteristics.



Zipper Insertion

The blindhem stitch can be used to emulate a hand-picked zipper application, on either lapped or centered zippers. Follow the instructions with the zipper, except for the last topstitching. Fold back the project to expose the zipper seam allowance and set the blindhem stitch to catch a thread of the fabric fold (12).

