

# Simple Hems

11.130

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## SEW-lutions Guidelines

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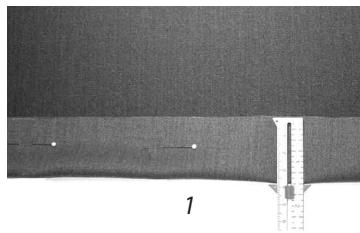


A hem is the finished edge of a garment, such as the lower edge of a pant leg, sleeve or top. There are several types of hems and hem finishes to choose from. The type of hem you choose depends largely on the style of garment, the type of fabric and your personal preference. Usually the hem is one of the last details stitched when making a garment or a home dec item, such as a curtain.

The hemline is one of the most important details of a garment, and, when turned and pressed correctly, it gives a professional finish to the garment. Poor hems will give a project a definite homemade look.

### Making a Basic Hem

Mark the hemline. Refer to the pattern to see how much hem allowance has been



provided. Fold the hem up this amount from the cut edge and pin in place (1).

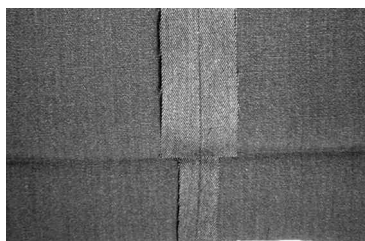
*TIP: If using a turned-and-stitched hem finish, be sure to add 1/4" to the finished hem allowance (see "Hem Finishes").*

Press the hem lightly, and try on the garment. Adjust the hemline if necessary. Take off the garment, re-measure and pin the new hemline if necessary.

Press the hemline in place, being careful not to iron on the pins. Hold the iron perpendicular to the hem edge making sure the fabric grain of the hem is aligned with the grain of the garment.

Re-measure the hem allowance, and trim it to the correct width all the way around. Next, trim the seam allowances to approximately half their width within the hem allowance (2).

This will reduce bulk in the hem.

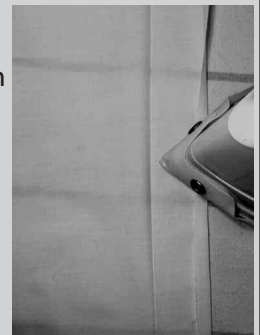


### Hem Finishes

Unless the garment fabric will not ravel at all, the cut edge of the hem needs to be finished to prevent the fabric from fraying. Choose one of the following hem finishes.

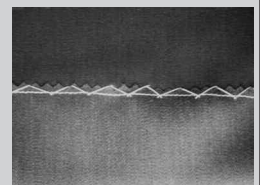
**Turned-and-Stitched Hem:** For a turned-and-stitched hem, turn under the cut edge 1/4" and press in place (A). Hand or machine topstitch near this pressed fold.

This treatment is suitable for most lightweight fabrics and crisp sheers.



**Pinked-and-Stitched Hem:** This finish is for fabrics that ravel little or not at all and is quite suitable for knits. After you have measured for and marked the hemline, trim the hem allowance to the correct width using pinking shears. Stitch around the cut edge just shy of the deepest cut of the pinking shears.

Secure the hem by machine stitching through all layers along the first stitching or hand stitch with a catch stitch (B). Press.



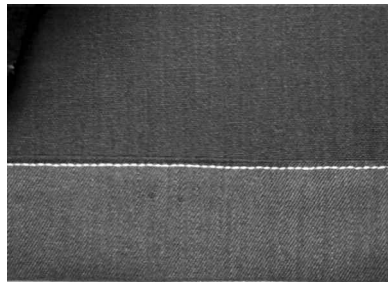
**Zigzagged Edge:** After you have marked, pinned, pressed and trimmed the hemline, straight stitch near the cut edge. Trim the fabric close to the stitching. Adjust your machine to a medium width

Continued on Page 2

Now that you have your hem measured, turned and pressed, finish the hem's raw edge. The finish you choose depends on the fabric, garment, style and your personal choice. If the fabric doesn't ravel and the garment will be lined, the raw edge can be left unfinished. There are four methods of finishing the simple hem. See "Hem Finishes."

## Hemming Casual Pants and Sleeves

The finished hem on casual pants should be about 1" deep. If choosing a turned-and-stitched hem, add 1/4" for the edge finishing. After you have marked, pressed and finished the hem, Pin the hem in place.



3

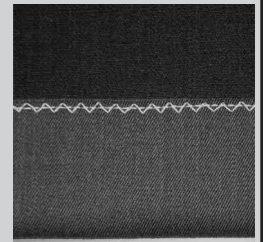
Topstitch by machine from the right side of the garment, catching the hem beneath (3). Sleeves can be hemmed in the same manner.

## Hemming Skirts, Dresses and Dress Pants

For most skirts, dresses and dress pants, plan a hem of 1 1/2" to 2" deep. Choose a hem finish, and then hand stitch the hem in place with a catch stitch (see "Hand Hemming Stitches").

On a flared skirt, the cut edge of the hem will be several inches wider than the skirt where the edge is to attach. To avoid ripples in the hem, you need to shrink the hem's cut edge. Using steam, press the hem by holding the iron at right angles to the hemline. Turn up the hem, and align the grain of the hem fabric with the grain of the garment. Pin, stitch and press. 🍷

zigzag and a medium stitch length. Stitch over the straight stitching near the fabric cut edge (C). Press.

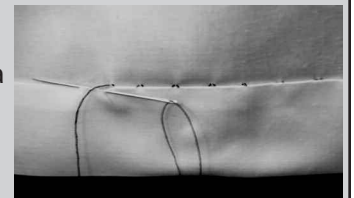


C

**The Serged Edge:** After you have marked, pinned, pressed and trimmed the hemline, serge finish the cut edge of the hem. To secure the hem in place, machine stitch along the cut edge or hand stitch using a catch stitch. Press.

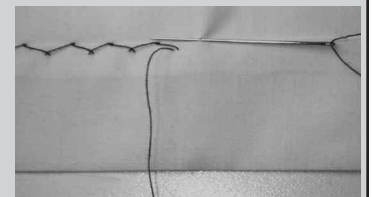
## Hand Hemming Stitches

**Uneven Catch Stitch:** This stitch moves from right to left along the hem. Catch a couple of threads of fabric on the garment just above the hem. Slide the needle through the top fold, and exit about 3/8" away. Catch a couple of threads of the garment fabric, and then slide the needle through the hem finished edge again (D). Continue around the hem moving to the left.



D

**Catch Stitch:** The catch stitch moves along the hem from left to right. Catch a couple of threads of the garment fabric above the hem allowance. Move to the right about 3/8", and take a stitch into the hem about 1/8" down from the finished edge (E). Repeat.



E