



SEW-lutions Guidelines

Your Guide
to
Successful
Sewing

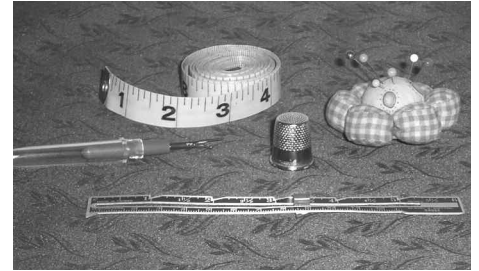
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Basic Sewing Tools

There are some sewing tools that you can't even begin without. The correct sewing tool makes any sewing project easier. Knowing which tool to select and where to use it will simplify and improve the outcome of each sewing step. The sewing tools listed below are the basic tools of the trade that help you save precious sewing time. Compare the items listed below to those in your sewing basket, and treat yourself to some of the ones that are missing. Also, look for new sewing tools at the notions counter of your favorite sewing store every time you shop. Ask for a demonstration if you're not sure how a particular product works. When purchasing sewing tools, select brand names for quality products that have clear directions.



Disappearing Ink Pen

A nonpermanent ink pen, usually with blue or violet ink, is used for transferring pattern markings. The ink eventually disappears (air-soluble) or is easily removed with water (water-soluble). Check the ink on a scrap of the fabric prior to using it on your projects.

Iron & Ironing Board

You cannot sew without these. While sewing, keep your iron warmed to the wool setting, and be prepared to press each seam after you stitch it, depending on the fabric's ability to handle heat. Never stitch across a seam that hasn't been pressed. It's a sure way to make your project look homemade.

Needles

Sewing needles, both hand and machine, are another must-have item. There are many types of needles, and there are separate guidelines that give in-depth information on how to choose the correct one for your sewing project. For the most basic machine-sewing project, choose a universal or ball-point needle for knit fabrics, and a "sharp" for woven fabrics. Choose the size of the needle based on the weight of the fabric. For lightweight fabrics, choose a finer needle (lower numbers); for heavyweight fabrics, choose a thicker

needle (larger numbers). For more information see Guideline 6.125.

Pins

Straight pins range in lengths from 1/2" to 1 7/8". Look for sharp, smooth, rustproof pins that can bend without breaking. Use different types for general sewing, quilting, working with silks or knits. For more information see Guideline 6.130.

Pincushion

Pincushions come in a variety of styles. The most popular styles include the familiar red tomato with an emery-filled strawberry, which sharpens and cleans pins and needles; a rectangular, wristband pincushion mounted on a plastic wristband that is perfect for pin-fitting and marking hems; and magnetic "grabber" types that make for easy plop-and-drop pin catching.

Seam Gauge

Also called a sewing gauge, this 6" ruler with a sliding red marker has many uses. Use it to mark hems, buttons and buttonholes as well as design details, such as pleats and tucks.

Seam Ripper

A curved metal cutting blade used to "rip" stitches or "reverse sew." One end of the

curved blade has a sharp point and the other has a small plastic ball that prevents the ripper from slipping. Use a seam ripper to remove stitches one at a time, slash machine stitched buttonholes, and to pick out loose threads caught in stitching.

Tape Measure

Flexible fiberglass or fabric measuring tape that is ideal for taking body measurements, measuring patterns and layouts as well as general measuring. Fabric types tend to stretch after prolonged use.

Thimble

Made of metal, rubber, leather or plastic, this small, protective cover slips over the index or middle finger. When hand sewing or quilting, a thimble protects the fingertip from pin pricks and is used to push the needle through multiple layers of fabric. 