



Sewing and Techniques

Guidebook

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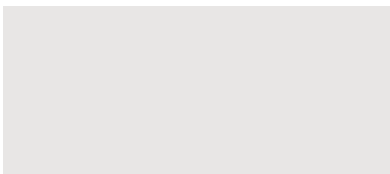
Symbols & Markings

Fabric Sides



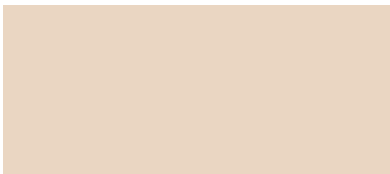
Outer fabric side

The '**outer fabric side**' can have different names, such as the 'right side' or 'face' of the fabric. It is the side that faces outward when the garment is finished.



Inner Fabric Side

The '**inner fabric side**' is often referred to as the 'wrong side' of the fabric and faces inward on the finished garment.



Lining or Facing Side

The '**lining**' is usually a thinner fabric to protect the 'inner fabric side' and cover seams. It lets you move more easily into and out of the garment, or even to protect you from the wind. The word "lining" is also used in combination with pockets.

The '**facing**' is usually cut from the same fabric as the outer fabric. It covers raw edges and gives stability to certain garment areas, like necklines, armholes, front edges and waistbands. In most cases interfacing is applied to the 'facing'.



Interfacing

The '**interfacing**' is a support fabric to give garments extra strength and stability. In outdoor garments it is used in, for example, all kind of flaps, brims, collars, waistbands, sleeve cuffs, fabric straps, button holes or other type of small parts

The most common interfacings are: woven, jersey or vlies interfacings. They come in different strength and are either iron-on or sew-on interfacings. Most can be stretched in one direction. The iron-on ones have glue on one or both sides. Make sure to press it firmly on and let it cool for 15-20 min. Interfacings are ironed or sewn to the inner fabric side.

SYMBOLS & MARKINGS

Markings

Grainline



The 'grainline' arrow on the pattern needs to be aligned with the grain in the fabric. The grain itself indicates the direction of the warp threads in the fabric. The grainline, or lengthwise grain, is the lengthwise direction of the fabric (fabric length). The sides of the fabric, its edges, are called selvage. While the crosswise grain, or cross grain, is the cross direction of the grain (fabric width). These edges are raw cut edges. See Pattern Layout.

Notches / Clips & Circular Markings



Notch / Clip



Circular Marking



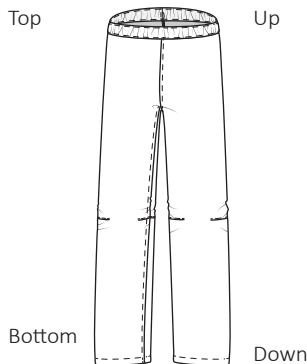
Diamond Marking

Markings make sewing easier and more accurate.

Mark all 'notches or clips' from the pattern onto the fabric either with short clips, fabric chalk or pins.

Transfer 'circular marks' with tracing paper and wheel, or a pin and fabric chalk. Mark only the inner fabric side on garment pieces.

A 'diamond' marks certain points on the pattern. These points can be used to update your pattern with a new or different design. Do not transfer these marks to the fabric.



Up / Down Top / Bottom Marks

Seam allowances or darts need to be folded in a certain direction before closing another seam or top stitching. One reason is the looks, another is to prevent water droplets to run into the seam.

'Up/Top': fold seam allowance or dart towards the top edge of the garment.

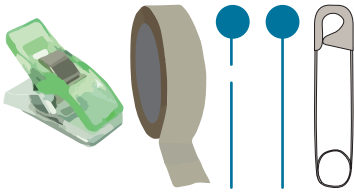
'Down/Bottom': fold seam allowance or dart towards the bottom edge of the garment or hem.



Cut off or In

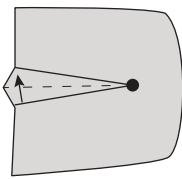
Sometimes you need to cut off a piece of the fabric or pattern. Other times you need to cut into the fabric.

SYMBOLS & MARKINGS

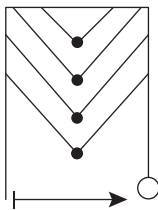
**Pins, Clips & Such**

For most fabrics you can use pins. Pins help holding together fabric pieces. They make sewing easier when placed at the right places.

Pins can leave holes in coated fabrics. Use fabric or wonder clips for coated and/or heavy fabrics. Masking tape is also an option that does not make holes in the fabric.

**Dart**

A dart adds extra volume at the point of the dart, such as the knee, breast, shoulder or chest, and it takes volume away at the wider part of the dart. It is sewn from the wider end to the point.

**Pleats**

Pleats are controlled folds of fabric to add more volume. They are marked with an arrow of direction. The start of the arrow is the fold line and the end is the placement line.

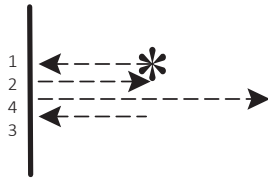
Fold the fabric from the fold line to the placement line and pin or sew the pleat in place at the top edge and /or the fold line.

Machine Stitches



Straight stitch

Use the straight stitch of your sewing machine at a medium stitch length of approximately 0.3 cm. Secure each seam with a few back stitches (3 - 4) at the beginning and end of the seam. Start about 0.5 cm from the edge.



Backstitch

Start about 1 cm from the edge. First go backwards 2 - 3 stitches. Then go forward 2 - 3 stitches. Go backward again 2 - 3 stitches. Then continue your seam.



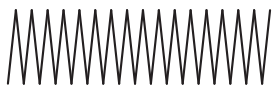
Edges

Prevent the edges from fraying by finishing them with a 'zig-zag' or 'overlock' stitch from your sewing machine, or use an overlock machine (serger).



Stretch Stitch

Nowadays, most sewing machines have different stretch stitch options. Look in your machine's guidebook and follow the instructions. Here is an example of a stretch overlock stitch.



Bar Tacks

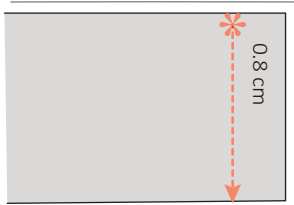
Bar tacks are used to reinforce points of strain such as pocket corners. They are basically made of a zig-zag stitch, 0.2 - 0.4 cm wide and 1.5 - 3 cm long.



Overlock Machine (Serge)

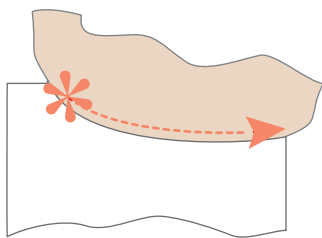
This machine is used to sew and finish seam edges in one go. It cuts the edges of the fabric before sewing it. It makes your work faster and the inside of your garment look nicer. Stretchy fabrics, such as knitted wool, cotton stretch or lycra are easier to sew with an overlock machine.

Basic Sewing Techniques



Sewing a Seam

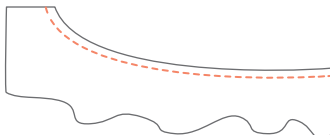
Pin the fabric pieces outer fabric sides together and sew the seam with the inner fabric side on top. Sew the amount of seam allowance mentioned for the seam. Seam allowances for PatternAdventure patterns are: 0.8 cm, 1 cm, and 1.5 cm from the edge.



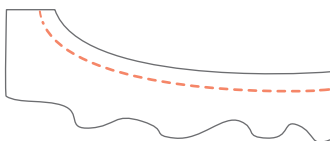
Understitching

This technique is used to secure seam allowances to the lining or facing side. Understitching prevents the lining or facing from rolling out. If the seam or edge is folded over, it keeps the edge of the seam in place and the edge looks nicer.

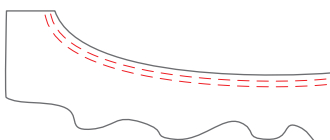
After sewing the seam, fold and iron the seam allowances to the facing or lining piece. From the outer fabric side, sew with a long stitch 0.3 - 0.4 cm close to the edge.



Example 1



Example 2



Example 3

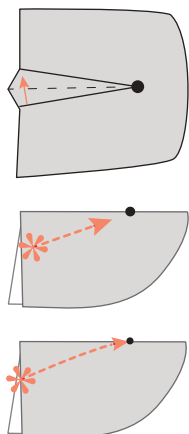
Topstitching

Topstitching assures that the seam allowances stay on one side and thus makes the seam flat and stronger. It gives the edge or seam a different, more sportive look. There are several topstitching designs you can choose from. Be consistent with all the seams. Use a longer stitch length of 0.3 - 0.4 cm.

A few examples: Example 1 is 0.2 - 0.3 cm from the seam edge. Example 2 is 0.7 - 0.8 cm, and Example 3 is a combination of Examples 1 and 2.

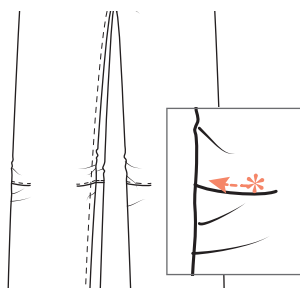
If you would like to emphasize a seam or design, use a decorative stitch along the pocket opening or the neckline. After sewing the seam, fold and iron the seam allowance to one side. Understitching the seam first might be recommended in the instructions. Always sew with the outer fabric side on top. It helps to use the sewing presser foot as a guide.

BASIC SEWING TECHNIQUES

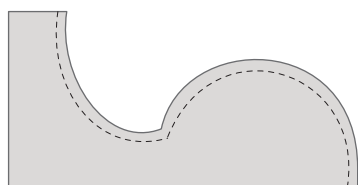
**Dart**

A dart adds extra volume at the point of the dart, such as the knee, breast, shoulder or chest, and it takes volume away at the wider part of the dart. Fold the dart in half. Sew it from the wider end to the point. Sew the last few stitches close to the dart fold. Do not back stitch. Knot the thread ends. Iron darts in one direction:

- Vertical darts are ironed to the center front or back of the garment.
- Horizontal darts are ironed up.
- For pants: to the waist edge.
- For jackets, dresses, shirts, blouses: to the shoulder of the garment.

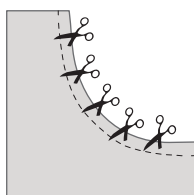
**Topstitching Darts**

1. Start sewing 1 - 1.5 cm away from the dart point.
2. Sew toward the point. Do not back stitch.
3. At the dart point leave the needle in the fabric and lift up the presser foot. Turn the fabric 180 degrees around.
4. Lower the presser foot and continue sewing by going over the start point.

**Curved Seams**

Curved seams need to be clipped in or notched out, so that they lie flat. This depends on the depth of the curve.

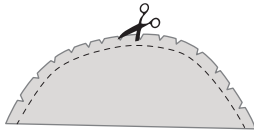
After sewing the curved seam, make short cuts into or wedges from the seam allowance all the way to the stitch line. Do this every 1 - 1.5 cm along the curved section.

**Clip-in**

Used on curved seam allowances that are folded outwards after sewing, like a neckline or hood. When sewn, the seam allowance is on the inner curve and when folded over it makes the outer curve. It needs more space, as it is spreading out.

Clip-in: Make short cuts into the curve.

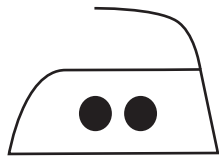
BASIC SEWING TECHNIQUES



Notch-out

Used on curved seam allowances that are folded inwards after sewing, like a curved hem or lapel. The seam allowance needs to fold into less space.

Notch-out: Cut or wedge some of the fabric of the seam allowance.



Ironing

Most fabrics can be ironed with the iron set on two dots and using steam. Always test on a sample piece. You will get a much better result if you 'press as you sew'. Press each seam after sewing and before you continue with the next step.

Waterproof fabrics should be ironed only from the outer fabric side, or use a piece of cloth between the iron and the inner (coated) fabric side.



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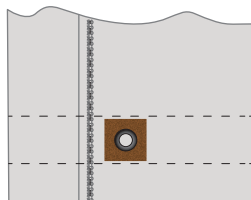
Needle view, outer fabric side

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Bobbing view, inner fabric side

### Twin Needle

Use the twin needle for such things as hemming stretchy fabrics, sewing neck or armhole edging down, or attaching elastic bands with finished edges. The stitch looks like two parallel stitches on the top/outer fabric side and a small zigzag on the under/inner fabric side. Place the twin needle into your sewing machine. Now you will need either 2 thread rolls, or 1 thread roll and 1 bobbin on the top thread guide holder. Sew from the outer fabric side and do not back stitch at the beginning or end. Rather pull the open thread end to the inner fabric side and make a knot.



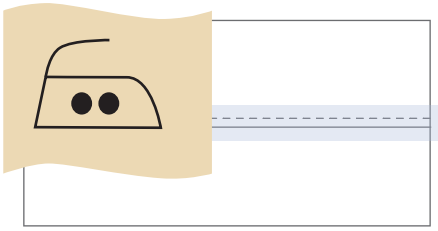
Fold 2

Fold 1

### Reinforcement Patches for Grommet Holes, Rivets and Inserted Snaps

The fabric around grommet holes, rivets and snaps should be reinforced before insertion to ensure that the equipment holds well. Use iron-on or self-adhesive repair patches for reinforcement. Depending on the grommet size, cut out a big enough piece for the patch, for example a 0.5 cm grommet needs a 2x2 cm patch. Iron or glue on the patch to the inner fabric side where the grommet hole will be inserted. Wait for a short time for the fabric to cool down and the adhesive to set. Punch a hole just big enough for the item to go through and install the grommet, rivet or snap.

## BASIC SEWING TECHNIQUES



## Seam Sealing

Seams in waterproof fabrics need to be sealed, so that water does not leak through. Basically, there are two different kinds of iron-on sealing tapes, one for 2-layer waterproof fabrics, and one for 3-layer waterproof fabrics.

Seam-sealing tape has a layer of glue/adhesive on one side and can be ironed on. It can be used on most waterproof fabrics.

Always cover the coated fabric side and the seam tape with a cloth or baking paper when you iron. Press the iron from spot to spot down and count for 5 - 6 seconds each time. Check that the tape is secure. Rather repeat then overheat.

Seam sealing with a certain glue is used for seams in silicon coated or neoprene fabrics.

Questions? Go to:

[www.patternadventure.com/  
asktailorbirgit](http://www.patternadventure.com/asktailorbirgit)

