

sewing: the thread of life

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Project Skill: Organizing sewing tools

Life Skill: Learning to learn and decision making

Level: 1A

Basic Sewing Supplies

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Basic sewing tools are needed for beginning items. A few are essential to use in constructing a sewn item. As you progress in your sewing skills, you may want to include other supplies for more advanced projects. Other supplies make the process easier. Visit your local fabric store or browse the internet for additional supplies. As you get your supplies check them off.



Basic Supplies:

Needed:

- Straight pins
- Pin cushion
- Sharp shears (for cutting fabric)
- Tape measure
- Seam ripper
- Sewing supply container

Optional:

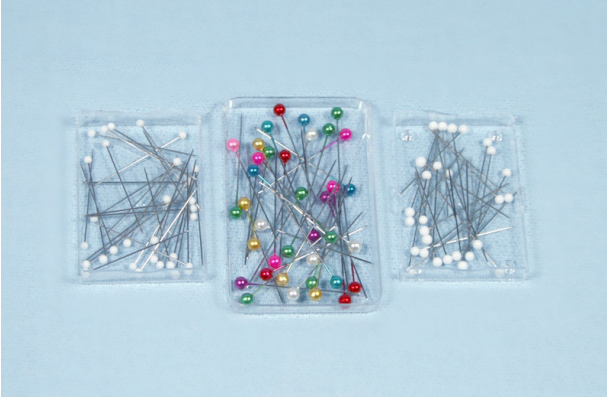
- Hem (seam) gauge
- Marking pen/pencil or chalk
- Small scissors (for clipping threads)
- Hand sewing needles
- Thimble

Advanced Project Supplies:

- Point turner
- Rotary cutter
- Self-healing cutting mat
- Ruler with grid
- Rotary cutter safety glove
- Dressmaking ham
- Press cloth
- Sleeve roll or board
- Tailor board
- Needle press board/pad
- Press mitt

Sewing Kit Glossary

Basic supplies needed:



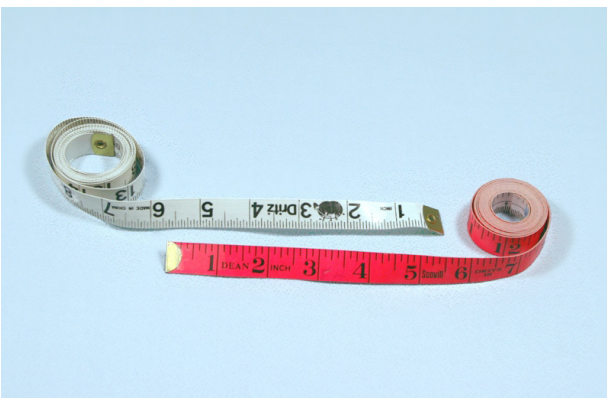
Straight pins—Select steel pins that are sharp. Dull pins can damage fabrics. Ballpoint pins can be used on knitted fabrics. Long pins with flat heads can be used on fleece or open weave fabrics.



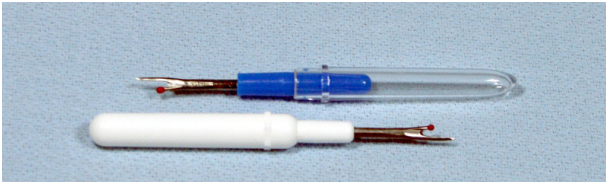
Pin cushion—There are a variety of pin cushions available. A magnetic pin cushion helps hold pins in place. A wrist pincushion keeps pins accessible.



Dressmaker shears (for cutting fabric)—For best results in cutting fabric select shears that are sharp. Bent handle shears allows the fabric to lay flat while cutting. Left-hand shears are available. Shears are available in a variety of blade lengths.



Tape measure—A firm but flexible tape measure is a must for sewing. Select a non-stretching tape measure.

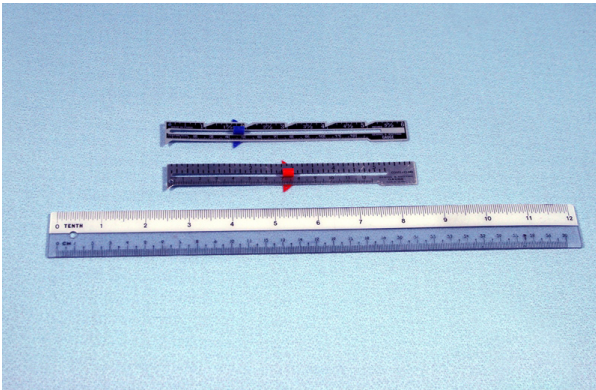


Seam ripper—Select a seam ripper with a sharp point and curved edge to remove unwanted stitches. When not in use, keep the cover on to protect the point.



Sewing supply container—Organize basic sewing supplies in a container so that they are easy to find. Some examples of containers include: shoe box, plastic self locking bag, zippered bag, pencil box, compartment box such as a fishing tackle box, etc.

Optional:



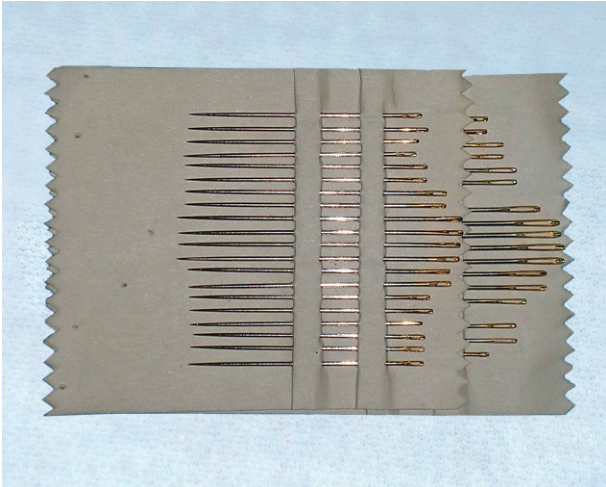
Hem (seam) gauge—Select a metal gauge with double pointed slider. The gauge is six inches long and used to measure small areas such as hems and buttonholes. A small ruler may also be used.



Marking pen/pencil or chalk—Select a marking device that can be easily removed from the fabric after sewing. Test the marker on a scrap of your project fabric to make sure it can be easily removed.



Small scissors (for clipping threads)—Keep small scissors by your sewing machine and clip thread as you sew.



Hand sewing needles—Hand sewing needles come in a variety of sizes. Select a sharp needle that is a comfortable length for your hand.



Thimble—A thimble is used to protect your middle finger when doing hand sewing. Select a metal thimble. Thimbles come in a variety of sizes. Size the thimble to the middle finger of your sewing hand.

Advanced project supplies:



Rotary cutter safety glove— A protective glove can be worn on the hand which is holding the grid ruler in place while using the rotary cutter. Gloves come in a variety of sizes.



Cutting mat— Cutting mats protect the work surface and keep the rotary cutter blade sharp. Mats are made from a firm plastic with ruled lines and markings. When storing your mat lay it flat or store in an organizer to avoid warping. Do not store your mat rolled up. Mats are temperature sensitive. Avoid extreme hot and cold. Heat warps the board and cold cause brittleness and cracking. Clean your mat occasionally with water and a mild detergent to remove lint.

Rotary cutter—A rotary cutter provides a smooth cutting line when cutting fabric. The blades are extremely sharp and care is needed when cutting. To avoid damaging the self healing mat cut with the blade straight. Cutting at an angle will permanently damage the mat. Various blades are available to use with the rotary cutter.

Ruler with grid—The ruler is used to make straight lines and is especially useful when using the rotary cutter and when cutting quilt pieces.



Dressmaker ham/Tailor's ham—The ham is used when pressing shaped areas such a darts and curved seams. The curve of the ham helps to set the curve of the seam.



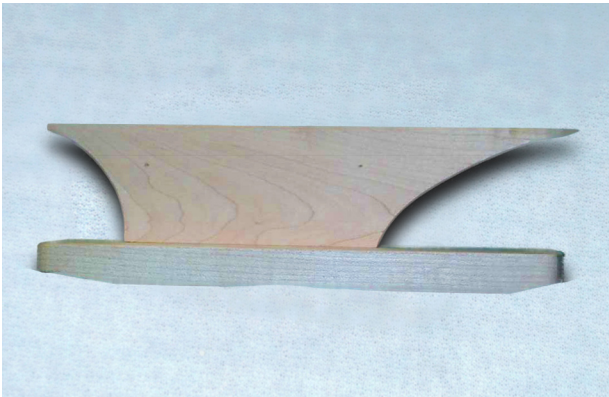
Press cloth—A press cloth is used between the iron's surface and the fabric. It helps to prevent shine and press marks on the fabric.



Seam roll—The seam roll is used for pressing seams and narrow garment areas such as sleeve inner seams. It helps to eliminate seam allowance marks on the garment.



Tailor board—The point of the tailor board allows you to press deep into hard to reach points such as collars and lapels. The long round curve allows you to press garment curves such as the curve over the hips in a fitted skirt or the curve design in some jacket fronts. The smaller curve provides a base for pressing smaller curves such as a rounded collar.



Point press and pounding block—The point on the sewing tool allows you to press into corners such as the point of collars and not crease the surrounding fabric. After steam pressing seams, pleats, and lapels with an iron the base of the point press can be used to apply pressure while the fabric dries. This will aid in setting the seam and giving a sharp press.



Needle board/pad—A flat, flexible board with wire needles that stick up from the board. The needle pad is a firm textile product which allows the fibers to penetrate in the same fashion as the needle board. They are used to press pile fabrics such as velvet, corduroy, velour, and velveteen. Place the right side of the fabric next to the needles or pad and press. The needles/pad prevent crushing the pile of the fabric.



Press mitt—The press mitt is used when pressing rounded and hard to reach areas such as sleeve caps. The mitt has a pocket for your hand so that you can support the garment area from the wrong side while steaming it from the right side.

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