

SEWING EQUIPMENT

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If a thing is worth doing it is worth doing well. This applies to sewing just as it does to making a cake or building a house. No home keeper builds a home without a kitchen, yet very few people who do all of their sewing have a place, plan, or equipment for this work. Lack of organization, poor and adequate equipment are among the reasons some women consider sewing a disagreeable task. In many cases sewing is done at the end of a day's work when the home maker is tired. The additional energy required to go all over the house looking for scissors, needle, thread or thimble, increases her weariness and puts her in a bad frame of mind. Unorganized equipment, which is usually a result of the lack of planning, is often responsible for poor work. The person who does not plan is apt to do the wrong thing first, then have to pull out and do over. This putting in and taking out gives the work that home-made look which the professional has learned to avoid.

"To most women the satisfying part of sewing is the creative part. If the confusion and annoyance, as well as the expenditure of time and energy, undergone in assembling, using and putting away sewing equipment could be reduced to the minimum, and if the mechanical phases of the job could become as well ordered and automatic as possible, the worker would be able to put her best efforts, physical, mental, and spiritual, into the higher creative phases of the work."—ELLA M. CUSHMAN.

The woman who is interested in doing her sewing should give much time and thought to the equipment she needs, the placing, arranging and care of it. If one wishes to do finished work in clothing, good tools are a necessity. One cannot make a nice smooth seam in a garment unless the edges have been cut smoothly and evenly, the edges cannot be cut smoothly without good scissors. Don't let the children cut paper dolls, cardboard, or flowers with your scissors. Have the right size needle for a given piece of material—fine needles for sheer material, coarse needles for coarse material.

Some of the homes being built today have a sewing room. This is most desirable, however it is perfectly possible to organize a sewing center in any home. A place where the sewing equipment is all together and conveniently arranged. The home keeper who has such a place can accomplish twice as much as the woman who has to go all over the house to collect her tools. Many kitchens have recently been rejuvenated, made more beautiful, more efficient, thus saving steps, time, worry. Now let's rejuvenate our sewing equipment. Good equipment for sewing will save time, strength, nerves, insure better work, and put more joy in the work.

SEWING EQUIPMENT

I. LARGE EQUIPMENT:

1. Sewing machine:

- a. The better the machine the better the work.
- b. Know how to operate your machine, how to oil, clean.
- c. Become accustomed to using machine needles of different sizes for different sizes of thread.
- d. Learn to regulate machine stitch according to the kind of work to be done.
- e. Know the attachments and how to use them. They will save you time.

2. Tables:

- a. Have a good substantial table for cutting. Thirty-six inches is a good height for the average woman. The right height saves backache.
- b. A small sewing table is convenient to have nearby to put work on. A folding table may be used.

3. Mirror:

A mirror in the sewing room is not a necessity, but is a help.

4. Dress Form:

A dress worm is invaluable for fitting, getting skirt lengths, joining skirts and waists, arranging neck lines, and designing.

- a. There are adjustable forms that may be adjusted to different figures. Prices vary from \$12.50 to \$20.00.
- b. Non-adjustable: Very good proportions may now be found in non-adjustable forms. Small variations may be taken care of by the use of a perfectly fitted lining put over a dress form that is slightly undersize and padded out with layers of wadding or fabric. These may be purchased for around \$5.00.
- c. Home Made: A very satisfactory form may be made at home by using gum paper and a knitted shirt that fits.

5. Board for pressing:

- a. Skirt board, sleeve board.
- b. Built-in boards are good.
- c. Cloths:
Good boards well padded are essential for good work. Use the iron frequently when sewing. Pressing is a necessity.

6. Irons:

- a. Electric where electricity is used.
- b. Hot irons as near the work as possible are great aids in producing good results.
- c. Keep irons clean, have salt and waxing pad nearby.

7. Fashion magazines—read and keep up with the times.

8. **Storing space:**
 - a. Shelves or drawers.
 - b. Space to hang unfinished garment.
 - c. Place for patterns.
 - d. Place for magazines.

9. Small sewing tables with drawers; or the old-time Priscilla with partitions, giving space for thread, scissors, work utensils. Screen with pockets and racks on the back; a work basket with partitions—all are good. Have some particular, definite place to keep the small sewing equipment and keep it all together. Be as particular with your tools as an architect is with his.

10. **Other Helps for Good Work:**
 - a. Skirt maker: One of simplest type is a help, if only a T-square.
 - b. Pinking machine or scissors save time in finishing seam edges.
 - c. Needle board for pressing velvet.
 - d. Chalk tracing board for marking seams, notches, position for trimming saves much basting.
 - e. Pressing pads and mits: These are excellent for use when pressing shoulder and armseye seams, and other curved edges. May easily be made at home.
 - f. Hat Block: Excellent to have to keep hats in good shape, also a great help if remodeling or designing hats. A very usable one may be made at home.
 - g. Coat and skirt hangers.
 - h. Yard stick or ruler.
 - i. Pattern bag with pockets for keeping patterns.

II. SMALL EQUIPMENT:

1. Sewing bag, box, basket or screen for holding small equipment.

2. **Scissors and Shears:**
 - a. Shears should be heavy and sharp enough to cut long, even seam lines. Seven inch length is satisfactory. Buy good steel, have sharpened once a year, and they will last a life time. Do not use for anything but cutting garments.
 - b. Scissors, sharp pointed scissors are needed for clipping and cutting threads.
 - c. Button hole scissors. This type scissors enable one to cut button holes in an even, regular manner.

3. **Thread:**

Threads come in various sizes and colors. White and black threads come in sizes 8 to 200, number 8 being the coarsest and number 200 being the finest.

In stitching, the machine stitch and needle should be regulated with varying thread sizes—Nos. 8—10—12 size of thread would require 8 stitches to the inch.

Thread No. 16 to 40 requires 10—12 stitches per inch.

Thread No. 50—90 requires 14—18 stitches per inch.

Thread No. 100—200 requires 20—25 stitches per inch.

Mercerized sewing thread comes in all colors, usually size 50.

Use for colored fabrics.

Silk thread comes in size A and B, 50 and 100 yard spools in all colors.

300—400 yard spools of white cotton may be purchased, also basting cotton in larger spools. There is usually a small saving in getting the larger spools.

It pays in time saving to keep a good supply of thread on hand.

4. Other equipment for the work basket:

A good tape measure; pins—the small dressmaker type may be secured in $\frac{1}{4}$ -pound boxes; needles of various sizes; thimble; tracing wheel, emery, small pin cushion, darning board, gauge, tailor's chalk, needle book, bias cutting gauge, and needle threader.

5. Findings for the Work Basket:

Many time-saving notions may be purchased at department stores.

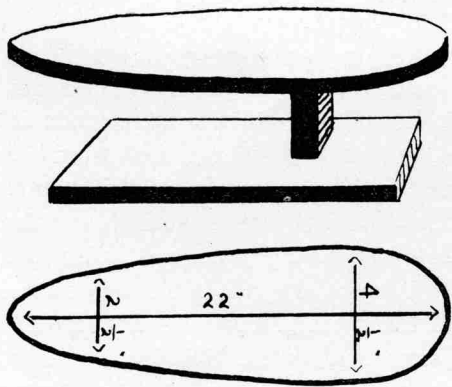
These time-savers have been designed by manufacturers to make sewing easier for you. Buy from the notion counter, in one shopping tour if possible, a supply of hooks and eyes and snap fasteners in assorted sizes, buttons, elastic, darning cotton, pins, needles, bias binding, dress shields, hook and eye, and button-hole bands ready to sew on, straps for slips or brassieres, thread and needles suitable for various materials.

III. SEWING HINTS:

- a. Thread several bobbins before starting to stitch.
- b. Have a hot iron near—use frequently.
- c. Have a good comfortable chair the right height.
- d. See that the light is good. Light should come over the left shoulder.
- e. In stitching very thin material such as georgette or chiffon, baste a piece of thin paper on underneath side before stitching; this keeps it from stretching or puckering.
- f. Keep a small pair of scissors on the machine to clip threads and trim seams.
- g. Use pins generously. They save time in basting. Dress makers' pins are short, thin and very sharp. Number 5 pins are good. Coarse, dull pointed pins mar fabric.

Suggestions for Demonstrations:

1. Cutting bias bands—using guage.
2. Taking hem length.
3. Using tracing wheel and board.
4. Padding ironing board.
5. Making tailor tacks.
6. Steaming velvet.
7. Shrinking woolens.
8. Making hat block.
9. Shoulder pad and mit for pressing.



SLEEVE BOARD

It is almost impossible to press sleeves without a sleeve board. The sleeve board may be made at home out of lumber a little less than an inch thick. The top piece is 22 inches long by 4½ inches at widest end, tapering to 2½ inches near the lower end.

DRESS FORM

Dress form made of knit shirt and gummed tape covered with a fitted unbleached domestic blouse. The standard is made to make the figure the exact height of the individual. This is excellent for fitting dresses, designing neck lines, joining waists and skirts, and taking hem lengths.

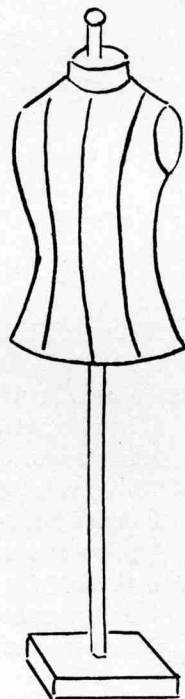


FIGURE I

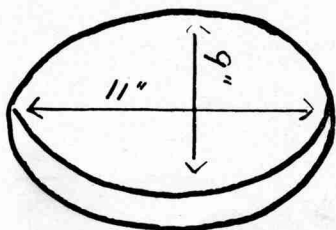
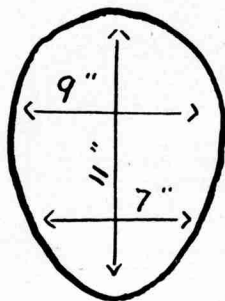


FIGURE 2

SHOULDER PAD

Shoulder pad for pressing shoulder and armseye seams. Made of two pieces of unbleached domestic cut in oval shape, length 11 inches. Width at upper part 9 inches, lower part 7 inches. Take three or four darts on each side of the oval. Do this to both pieces, then sew the two together and stuff with cotton, dried saw dust or some similar material.



SEWING SCREEN

One of the most convenient devices for keeping all sewing equipment in place is a sewing screen (figure 3). It consists of two panels (28 inches

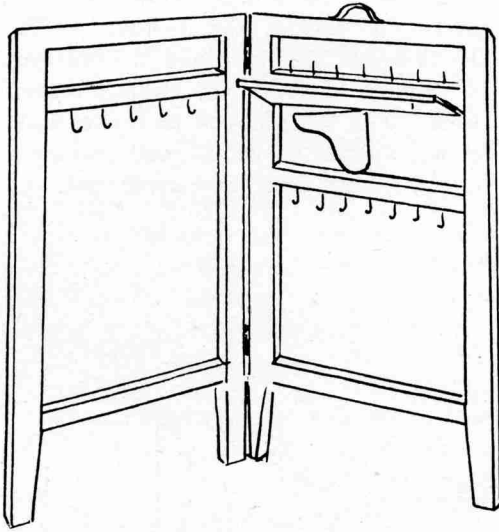


Fig. 3.—Sewing screen showing frame before completion.

high and 13½ inches wide made of 1 by 2-inch plank) folded together and each panel covered with burlap. The pockets are fastened to the bottom of each panel on the inside, and hooks are placed on the bottom of the cross piece to hold the necessary equipment. Pegs or nails driven into the top of one of the cross pieces will hold the spools. The drop shelf makes a good work table, and the groove in the top of the cross pieces will hold buttons. This folding sewing screen is light in weight, requires little space, and can be easily carried to the porch or lawn for sewing work.

Materials For Building Screens

- 10 feet of lumber 1½ by 1½ inches.
- 6 1½-inch (butt) hinges with screws to be used in joining the panels and fastening the drop shelf to the cross pieces.
- 1 handle with screws for the top of screen.
- 1 hook and eye to fasten the panels when they are folded and closed.
- Two yards of burlap, denim, or canvas, 18 inches wide.
- 1 dozen brass cup hooks.
- 1 yard creton for pockets.
- 1 yard ½-inch elastic for top of pockets.
- 4 dozen upholstering tacks for tacking on burlap.
- Sandpaper and stain.

TAILOR'S PRESSING MIT

Make of unbleached domestic. Pad inside with several thicknesses of outing. Quilt. Sew the two together.

The tailored mit is a help in pressing armhole and sleeve seams and other curved seams which are hard to press.

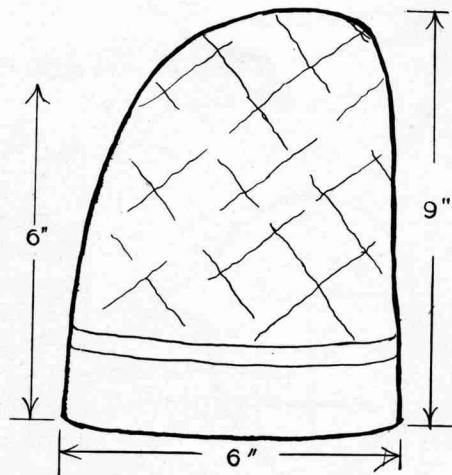


Fig. 4.—Tailor's Pressing Mit.

MISCELLANEOUS HELPS

PRESSING: A well padded board is essential to good pressing. Always press on wrong side unless a cloth or sheet of tissue paper is placed between iron and the silk. If there is danger of leaving the impression of the seam on the right side, place strips of paper between the seams and garments to avoid this imprint.

A PIECE OF OILCLOTH spread wrong side up over a table makes a good surface for cutting out garments. Because the cloth is slightly rough, materials will not shift and slide as they do on a hard, smooth surface.

TISSUE PAPER used either dry or dampened, as the material may require, is often more satisfactory than a cloth in pressing silks. You can lay the paper on the right side, dampen with a sponge, and press without danger of iron marks.

A SMALL SPONGE in a shallow dish of water is more convenient and less disastrous to ironing board covers than a wet cloth for dampening spots to be pressed.

SHEER THREAD for basting leaves only a light mark which can be easily pressed out. Because of the smooth fineness of this thread it can be removed without leaving small pieces of fuzzy lint, which often stick in the material when soft twist basting thread is used.

COLORED CRAYON PENCILS sharpened with fine points are good for marking perforations. Take care to get those with crayon which is like tailors' chalk, rather than waxy.

DARNING COTTON is better than ordinary thread for making tailors' tacks as it does not slip out so readily when the fabric is handled.

DRESSMAKERS' PINKING SHEARS are time and labor savers for the woman who does much work with silks and woolens.