SEWING SAFETY RULES

It is important that you correctly use the sewing machine and sewing tools so that you do not cause injury to yourself or to someone else. Listed below are twelve safety guidelines you should follow.

1. When operating a sewing machine, sew at a slow speed.

2. When sewing, place your fingers to either side of the presser foot, not directly in front of or near the needle.

3. Forcing or pulling the fabric through the sewing machine may cause the needle to break. Let the feed dog move the fabric through the machine.

4. When sewing on the sewing machine, do not sew over pins placed in the fabric.

5. When you are not ready to sew, remove your foot from the foot control and place it on the floor. Otherwise, you may accidentally push the foot control and start the machine when you are not ready.

6. The cords on the sewing machine should be untangled and placed out of the traffic path to prevent others from tripping.

7. Disconnect the sewing machine by pulling out the plug from the wall outlet, not by jerking the cord. Jerking the cord can cause the cord to become worn or frayed.

8. Disconnect the plug from the wall outlet first, then the plug from the machine. Otherwise, electricity continues going through the cord and you could receive an electrical shock.

9. Place pins and needles in a container when not using them. Do not leave them loose on the table or on the floor.

10. Pins and needles should never be placed in your mouth.

11. When not in use, scissors should be left closed.

12. Pass sharp object to others with the handle first.
SEWING TERMS AND TOOLS

To understand sewing and its techniques, you must be familiar with basic sewing terminology and supplies. This page covers basic information you will need as you begin your sewing experience.

SEWING TERMS

BACKSTITCH- The reverse stitch on the sewing machine, used at the beginning and ending of a seam.

BASTE- A long temporary stitch done by hand or machine.

GRAIN- The lengthwise and crosswise threads of a fabric.

GUIDESHEET- The instruction sheet that explains how a sewing project is constructed.

MARKING- Transferring pattern details to fabric from the pattern.

NOTIONS- Small items used in sewing, such as thread, buttons, snaps, etc.

PIVOT- To change the direction of the machine stitching by turning the fabric while the needle is still in the fabric.

SEAM ALLOWANCE- The amount of fabric from the cut edge to the seam line.

SEAM LINE- The line on which the seam is stitched.

SELVAGE- The finished edge of woven fabrics that runs parallel to the lengthwise grain.

SEWING TOOLS

hand sewing needle

straight pin

pin cushion

tracing wheel

seam ripper

bobbin

bobbin case

tape measure

seam gauge

spool of thread

thimble

shears

scissors

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SEWING MACHINE PARTS AND FUNCTIONS

The major parts of a sewing machine are identified on the drawing below. The location of these parts may vary on different brands of sewing machines, but their general functions remain the same.

1. **Seam guide** - It is used as a guide to keep the seam straight and even. The standard seam width is 5/8 inch.
2. **Feed dog** - It moves the fabric through the machine during stitching.
3. **Presser foot** - It holds the fabric down against the feed dog while stitching.
4. **Needle** - Thread is placed through the eye of the machine needle according to your machine instructions. (Through the front, side, or back.)
5. **Thread guide** - It guides the thread correctly through the machine.
6. **Presser foot lifter** - It lifts and lowers the presser foot.
7. **Take up lever** - It takes up the slack in the thread between machine stitches.
8. **Tension control** - It controls the tightness or looseness of the thread.
9. **Stitch selector** - It determines the type of machine stitch. (Straight, zigzag, etc.)
10. **Spool pin** - It holds the spool of thread.
11. **Bobbin winder** - It winds the thread on to the bobbin.
12. **Handwheel** - It controls the up and down movement of the machine needle.
13. **Handwheel release** - It prevents the needle from moving while winding the bobbin.
14. **Stitch width control** - It controls the width of the stitch. (As in a zigzag stitch.)
15. **Stitch length control** - It controls the length of the stitch.
16. **Foot control** - It controls the speed of the sewing machine.

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