



APPAREL

JOANN'S FIELD GUIDE

NAME

JOANN



APPAREL

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Introduction

Hi there! Welcome to JOANN's Field Guide to Apparel.

If you picked this up, you must be interested in making clothes. Just getting started? Lucky for you, we've got lots of tips!

For specific projects and inspiration, make sure to visit joann.com/projects. But if you need some basic information to get started, you've got the right guide in your hands. After reading through this information, you'll know how to sew with the appropriate fabric, how much yardage and what other tools you'll need for your project.

Have more questions? Stop by the cutting counter for some friendly advice, or check out the classes we offer at joann.com/classes.

As always, we can hardly wait to see what you make. Share with us! #handmadewithjoann

Words to Know

A-line- a women's dress or skirt style that gradually flares out to a wide hem, resembling the letter A.

Allowance- fabric beyond the seam line for gathers, tucks or pleats.

Basque- a form-fitting bodice or coat extending past the waistline over the hips.

Basting- a temporary straight stitch.

Bias/bias cut- the diagonal direction, a 45 degree angle, across a piece of woven cloth. Cutting on the bias creates a greater amount of stretch.

Binding- to finish a seam or garment hem with an edge or trim.

Blind hem- a method of joining two fabric pieces so the hem is almost invisible from the front.

Cap sleeve- a sleeve that falls between the shoulder and bicep.

Casing- a folded over edge of fabric to enclose elastic or a drawstring tie.

CB- a pattern abbreviation meaning center back.

CF- a pattern abbreviation meaning center front.

Dart- folds sewn into the fabric to give a garment shape. Helps to fit the curves of the body.

Ease- the amount of extra room a garment allows the wearer beyond the pattern's size measurements.

Face (or right)- the top side of the fabric, usually prettier and shows any prints.

Facing- fabric to hide the seams and give the garment a professional finish around the edges.

Fit model- a person fashion designers or clothing manufacturers use to check the fit, drape and visual appearance of clothing.

Gather- a sewing technique for making folds, shortens the length of a strip of fabric to decrease the width.

Gusset- a small piece of diamond-shaped fabric sewn in areas subject to stress, such as sleeve underarm or pant crotch. The extra stretch reduces the likelihood of tearing.

Hem- a finishing method to fold and sew the raw edge of fabric to prevent from raveling.

High Point Shoulder (HPS)- where the shoulder seam meets the neckline. Many measurements are given in relation to the HPS.

Interfacing- layering material used to stabilize, stiffen or strengthen a fabric.

Interlining- fabric added to a garment to provide additional warmth or weight.

Lapped seam- a way to reduce bulk when sewing heavy fabrics like leather and felt by overlapping one panel on top of the other.

Lining- a protective layer of fabric inside of a garment.

LS- a pattern abbreviation meaning long sleeve.

Neck tape- a band of tape or fabric sewn inside of a neck seam for comfort.

Patch pocket- a pocket made of a separate piece of cloth sewn onto the outside of a garment.

Peplum- a ruffle or flare to a women's jacket, dress, skirt or blouse that extends below the waistline. May be part of the bodice or an attachment.

Placket- a slit or opening that provides room for the garment to be put on, often found at the neck, the wrist, the top of a skirt or the face of trousers. Buttons, snaps, hooks, zippers or VELCRO can be added to a placket.

Pleat- a fold of fabric, either stitched down or held in place, to create fullness. Types of pleats include knife, box, inverted, sunburst or accordion and kick.

Raglan sleeve- a sleeve that runs from collar to hem with no shoulder seam.

Raw edge- an unfinished cut edge.

Ruching- clothing that has been gathered to create a rippled effect.

Serger - A machine that sews over the edge of one or two pieces of cloth for edging, hemming or seaming. Usually, the machine will cut the edges of the cloth as they are fed through.

Set in sleeve- In contrast to a raglan sleeve, a set in sleeve is joined to the body of a garment by a seam starting at the edge of the shoulder and continuing around the armhole.

SS- a pattern abbreviation meaning short sleeve.

Sweep- the circumference of a hem.

Topstitching- stitching that shows on the face side of fabric.

Trim- the decorative material on the edge of a garment.

Tuck- a fold or pleat in fabric that is sewn in place.

Understitching- a line close to the edge to keep the facing from rolling toward the outside of the garment. Creates a more professional look.

WB- a pattern abbreviation meaning waistband.

Wearers left- the left side of a garment from the wearers point of view.

Wearers right- the right side of a garment from the wearers point of view.

Wrong side- the back of the fabric. May be fainter or plainer than the face or right side of the fabric.

Yoke- a shaped pattern piece that forms part of a garment, usually around the neck and shoulder.

Basic Sewing Supplies

Stocking your sewing room or basket with the right tools will certainly make every project easier. Refer to our Field Guides to Basic Sewing and Sewing Machines if you're just getting started.

- Assorted all-purpose thread colors- a variety of sewing threads.

- Bent handled dressmaker's shears- important for cutting fabric as the shape of the lower blade allows the fabric to lay flat while cutting.
- Bodkin- a sewing tool that acts like tweezers to draw elastic, cording and other materials through tubing and casings. Can also be used to insert elastic into a waistband or sleeve during garment construction.
- Chalk wheel or tailor's chalk- temporary marking to transfer quilting designs, seam allowances, embroidery designs or other craft markings. Marks can be brushed away or rubbed off with a damp cloth.

MEASUREMENTS	
NECK _____ . Measure around base of neck.	HIPS _____ . Measure around fullest part, usually 7"-9" below waist.
BUST _____ . Measure straight across widest part of back, under arms & across fullest part of bust.	BACK WAIST LENGTH _____ . Measure from prominent bone at base of neck to natural waistline.
WAIST _____ . Tie narrow cord around waist. Bend from side to side to find natural waistline. Measure natural waistline.	FULL BODY LENGTH/ HEIGHT _____ . Begin at center back, measure from natural waistline to the floor; add waist length measurement.

- Container to hold supplies- It's wise to invest in a storage system so supplies are neatly and safely stored when not in use.
- Dress form - an easy solution for sewing dresses and clothing tops to fit. Select a dress form with adjustment ranges according to your body measurements. Use this chart to help you get correct measurements.

- Erasable fabric marker- used to transfer pattern markings. Some have extra fine points for detailed marking and are available in blue or purple ink. Don't use pens on dry clean-only fabrics.
 - Water soluble fabric pen marks can be removed with plain water.
 - Disappearing ink or air soluble fabric pen marks disappear within 24 to 72 hours or can be removed with plain water.
- Hand sewing needles- needles made for use specifically by hand. Available in a range of sizes and types depending on fabric and thread type.
- Iron and pressing surface- an area to press the fabric with heat before, during or after finishing the garment.
- Liquid fray preventer- a liquid seam sealant that keeps fabric from fraying and secures the ends. Withstands repeated laundering and dry cleaning.
- Measuring tape- a flexible ruler to measure fabric and the body for patterns.
- Needle threaders- allow for quick and easy threading of all types of needles, which can be difficult to see or reach.
- Paper scissors- scissors for cutting patterns and other papers.
- Patterns- templates to make a fabric item. Apparel pattern sizes are based on body measurements and may not correspond to standard clothing sizes. It is best to have another person measure you with a tape measure and select a pattern size based on actual measurements.
- Pin cushion- a small stuffed cushion to store sewing pins or needles with sharp points down.
- Pinking shears- used to finish seams, raw edges

and create decorative edges. Pinking shears have serrated or jagged edges that create a zigzag pattern on the fabric that is resistant to raveling.

- Point turner- a plastic tool to turn over the fabric without causing damage. Also helps to create sharp creases on the fabric and unfasten basting stitches with ease.
- Rotary cutter and blades- a tool with a round blade that looks like a pizza cutter. A rotary cutter can be used to cut through several layers of fabric at once, allowing you to cut multiple fabric strips at the same time, instead of marking and cutting individual pieces of fabric. It is fast, easy to use and improves accuracy. The blade is very sharp and can cause injury if not handled properly. Blades come in a variety of sizes and types, including:
 - 18mm- for curved pieces of quilting, applique trimming, seams, cutting templates and miniature work
 - 28mm- for small-scale projects and miniature work
 - 45mm- most popular size for general quilting, sewing and crafts
 - 60mm- easily cuts multiple layers of fabric, heavy wool, denim and leather
- Rotary cutters- should only be used in conjunction with a rotary cutting mat and ruler.
- Rotary cutting mat- helps the rotary cutter glide smoothly over the surface of the fabric for easy and accurate cutting. Mats extend rotary blade life and protect the sewing table/table surface from cuts, nicks or other damage. A self-healing surface makes cut marks disappear, allowing you to cut the fabric without leaving ridges for future work. Some mats have measuring lines to help align fabric perpendicular to the cutting tool and are available in a range of sizes.

- Rotary cutting ruler- plastic see-through rulers will help make rotary cutting fast, easy and accurate. Rulers come in a wide assortment of sizes and shapes for standard and more specialized patterns or techniques. Raised edges help guide the rotary cutter along. Rulers with non-skid surfaces or non-slip sandpaper feet prevent the ruler from sliding and causing you to inaccurately cut the fabric. Easy-to-read numbers and gridlines that go all the way to the edges ensure precise measuring, and multiple-angle lines make it easy to pivot for 30, 45 and 60 degree cuts. The double-sided lines, for left- and right-handed users, are easily visible on light or dark fabrics.
- Safety pins- a basic notion for securing fabrics. Available in several shapes, lengths and materials.
- Seam gauge- a small, multi-purpose ruler with point turner and sliding right-angle marker that stays in place for multiple marks and measurements of hems, tucks, pleats and buttonholes.
- Seam ripper- designed to rip out stitches from seams without damaging fabric.
- Sewing machine in good working order with manual and accessories.
- Sewing machine needles- needles made specifically for use in a sewing machine in a range of sizes and types depending on the fabric or thread.
- Straight pin- a pin with a short, straight stiff piece of wire and pointed end to fasten pieces of cloth or paper together. Available with large, sometimes colored ball heads to make them easier to see and grip.
- Thimbles- a protective covering for fingertips while hand quilting, applique and sewing binding. A thimble prevents accidental piercing or abrasion and helps to push the needle

through all layers of fabric and batting. Available in a variety of materials including metal, plastic, leather, glass and wood.

- Thread clippers- a spring loaded tool specifically designed to snip threads. These are smaller and held differently than traditional scissors.

Sewing Tips For Specialty Fabrics

SEWING WITH KNITS

- Use a serger if possible. Or, sew with a zigzag or stretch stitch on a regular sewing machine.
- Use a ball point needle.
- Use a walking foot to help keep hems from stretching while sewing.
- Choose location thoughtfully when hand-sewing embellishments on knits. Be sure to allow stretch in hems and neckline.
- Don't pull stitches tight. Allow a little room for stretch.
- Test on scrap fabric before beginning.

SEWING WITH SWEATER KNITS

- The term sweater knits describe fabrics used to sew sweaters that resemble hand knit or crocheted fabrics.
- Sweater knit fabrics are one of the harder knit fabrics to work with, as they are more prone to unraveling because of their looser fabric structure.
- Cut extra seam allowance to support the fabric and prevent the fabric from growing or unraveling.

- Use pattern weights and a rotary cutter to keep fabric in place while cutting. Avoid using scissors, which can cause distortion.
- Finish raw edges with a serger or faux overlock sewing machine stitch.
- Use a ballpoint needle: 70/11 for fine knits and an 80/12 for heavier knits.
- Reinforce seams that are prone to stress, such as shoulders, by sewing in clear elastic to prevent stretching or misshaping.
- Use a walking foot or lower the tension of the presser foot.
- Use a stretch stitch, zigzag stitch, double needle stitch or a standard serger stitch.

SEWING WITH DENIM

- Prewash to help soften fabric and make it easier to work with.
- Sharp bent handled dressmaker's shears or rotary cutter will make it easier to cut pattern pieces. Consider cutting only one layer of fabric at a time to ensure accurate cuts.
- Use a jeans needle. For lighter denim, use size 90/14. For heavier denim, use 100/16 or 100/18.
- Use a longer stitch length. For heavyweight denim, lengthen stitches to about 3 millimeters.
- Use a heavier weight thread, such as topstitching or upholstery thread, to topstitch seams to provide extra support for the right side. Use a regular all-purpose thread in the bobbin.
- Give your denim a professional finish with a flat-felled seam.
- Reduce bulk by separating and pressing open seam allowances.

- Consider investing in a jeans presser foot, if available for your machine, a walking foot or a Teflon foot.
- Use the zigzag stitch over the cut edge on interior seams to keep fraying in check.
- Press seams using a hot iron and plenty of steam.

SEWING WITH PERFORMANCE FABRIC

- Select a simple pattern with few detailed parts.
- Prewash fabric on machine wash cold and tumble dry low settings.
- When pinning a pattern on the fabric, pin in the seam allowances to avoid damaging the fabric.
- Use a stretch sewing machine needle.
- Sew a stretch stitch or a narrow zigzag stitch with a width of 1 ½ and a length of 2 ½ to 3 on the sewing machine.
- Apply normal pressure on the presser foot or slightly more if stitches are skipping.
- Use a cool iron to avoid fabric damage.
- The fabric does not ravel so there is no need to finish the edges.

SEWING WITH FLEECE

- Lighten the foot pressure to accommodate the fabric thickness, if possible.
- Use a universal or stretch sewing machine needle in size 80/12.
- Use polyester thread as it is strong and has some give for the stretchy fabric.
- Sew 7 to 9 stitches per inch or a stitch length of 3 to 3.5 millimeter.

SEWING WITH TULLE

- Tulle comes in 54 or 108 inch widths.
- Cut tulle with a rotary cutter, ruler and mat.
- Cut tulle while still folded from the bolt for easy straight edges.
- Use pattern weights when cutting to keep this lightweight fabric from shifting.
- Layer the tulle on top of plain tissue paper then pin it before cutting to help control the tulle. Simply pull away the tissue paper when finished.
- When sewing a seam, stabilize the seam area with a layer of tissue paper. Tear away when finished.
- Sew with a short straight stitch.
- Use a thin needle such as a size 70.
- Stitch slowly to avoid puckering or gathering the fabric.
- To prevent the tulle from catching on the machine foot, use a roller foot or place tape on the bottom of the foot.
- Use a cotton-covered thread rather than all polyester to avoid excess static.
- Tulle will not unravel, so there is no need to finish the edges.
- Use a cool iron and press cloth over the tulle.
- Spray with anti-static spray if static electricity is causing the tulle to stick together.

SEWING WITH FAUX LEATHER

- Sewing with faux leather takes precision. Practice stitching on a scrap of the leather before sewing the actual garment or accessory to prevent mistakes.

- Avoid using pins when cutting out a pattern. Use binder clips, paper clips, hair clips or weights instead. If pins are absolutely necessary, pin only in the seam allowance.
- Mark around the pattern on the back of fabric. Cut one layer at a time. Be sure to flip the pattern for right and left side.
- Use a rotary cutter or very sharp scissors when cutting fabric.
- Use a chisel-tip leather needle. The size of the needle will depend on the thickness of fabric. For thicker fabric, use a size 14 needle or higher.
- Use a longer length sewing machine stitch.
- Use a heavier thread for added durability.
- Loosen thread tension on top and the bobbin so the seam does not pull.
- Loosen the foot pressure so the faux leather does not drag when sewing.
- Use a walking foot, Teflon foot or roller foot for topstitching.
- Topstitching faux leather creates a finished and more authentic look.
- Do not back tack. Leave long threads at the beginning and end of seams. Tie in a knot. Glue can also be used to secure the knot.
- Interfacing can be put in place by using a spray adhesive. Always read manufacturer's instructions and test a swatch first.
- After sewing seams, a double-sided tape or rubber cement can be used on the inside to hold seam allowances open. Use a roller to press seams down.
- Test iron setting on a scrap to avoid scorching or melting. In general, use a cool iron and press on the wrong side with a pressing cloth.

SEWING WITH FAUX FUR

- Select a pattern specifically designed for fur when possible. Otherwise, look for a pattern that has a simple shape with few seams, darts, gathers or pleats.
- Faux fur has nap, the direction the fur falls, similar to the way fur is on an animal. The nap typically goes downward.
- Once the nap is determined, trace the pattern on the wrong side of the fur.
- Use tailor's chalk or a chalk wheel to mark around the pattern pieces.
- Make sure the nap goes in the same direction on all pieces. In other words, the nap shouldn't go upward on one sleeve and downward on the other.
- Add at least a ½ inch seam allowance.
- If making a garment with a collar, use fur on only the top side of the collar. Use another fabric, such as a lining fabric, on the underside. Two layers of fur would be too bulky at the collar.
- Cut only through the backing, not the fur itself.
- Cut only a single layer of fur at a time. Be sure to mirror image and make two of any pattern pieces that would generally be cut in double for other fabric.
- A sharp craft knife or single edge razor blade works well for cutting just the back and not through the fur. If using scissors, run the point of the blade that's under the cloth.
- Shake the fur pieces outside to get rid of the loose fur to minimize the mess when working with it.
- Facings should not be used in fur as they will also make it too bulky. If possible, eliminate the facing and bind the edge.

- Long straight pins work well in the fur to secure pieces in place.
- Fur tends to move when sewing, so hand basting the pieces together is necessary, especially on large pieces.
- Use a universal needle in the machine and a longer stitch length.
- Use a walking foot to help prevent layers from shifting.
- Direct the fur caught in the seam allowances toward the middle of the project.
- After sewing, use a small crochet hook or knitting needle on the right side of the fabric to pull out fur that got caught in the seams.

SEWING SEQUINS

There are two types of sequin fabrics: Type A are sewn on and Type B are glued on, such as Confetti Dot.

GENERAL TIPS FOR SEWING SEQUINED FABRIC

- Use a dedicated pair of sharp scissors for cutting sequin fabrics.
- Choose a simple pattern design without darts and with few pieces. The focus of the garment should be on the fabric, not on complicated design lines.
- Choose a different fabric for sleeves, such as chiffon or organza, as sequins may catch on the body of the garment.
- Cut the garment with the wrong side facing up. Pin the pattern pieces to the fabric, being careful to insert pins between the sequins.
- Adjust the stitch length on the sewing machine to 10 stitches per inch. Use longer stitch length for stronger seams. Sew the fabric using a straight stitch.

- Finger press open seams on the fabric.
- Do not iron.

TIPS FOR TYPE A SEQUINED FABRIC ONLY

- Make sewing sequin fabric easier by placing sequins going down.
- After cutting out the garment, mark the seam line with dressmaker's chalk.
- Any sequin that overlaps the chalk line should be removed.
- Sequins are stitched to the fabric in a line. To prevent raveling and loosening of sequins, pull the thread aside with tweezers. Use tiny scissors to cut from the outer edge of the sequin to the center, being sure to avoid the thread. This will remove the sequin while leaving the thread intact.
- Remove any sequins from the seam allowances before sewing to allow seam to lay flat.
- Seam finishes are not easy on Type A sequin fabrics, so line the entire garment.
- Make a faced hem by cutting a 3-inch wide bias strip of soft fabric, such as satin. Stitch right sides together to the hem of the sequined fabric. Turn under the facing and hem in place at the top of the facing with hand stitching. Repeat the same technique at the necklines or armholes with a 1 inch strip of bias fabric.
- When finished sewing, hand sew sequins to cover bare spots along seam line.

TIPS FOR TYPE B SEQUINED FABRIC ONLY

- Use a denim needle and have spares in case of breakage or dulling.

- To reduce gumming of the needle as it pierces the glued-on sequins, cut wax paper into strips. Place strips over the seam line and sew. Remove the wax paper after sewing.
- Do not remove sequins from the seam allowance. Sequins cannot be glued back on. These sequins are plastic and can be sewn through with the heavier needle.

SEWING BEADED FABRIC

When sewing beaded fabric, place fabric on a protective board. Place masking tape over seam allowance and ¼ inch into fabric. Break beads with a small hammer. The masking tape will prevent crushed beads from escaping and protect the thread that connects other beading. Peel away the masking tape and sew seam together with a zipper foot. If needed, hand sew any fill in beads.

SEWING WITH LACE

- Gently prewash lace fabric in soapy water, rinse and air dry. If the lace has lost much of its stiffness, use spray starch and iron on low to medium heat with a press cloth.
- When laying out the fabric to cut, check to see if it has obvious right and wrong sides. If it does have a right side, mark that side lightly with a water erasable marker where the pattern pieces will be pinned.
- There may not be a grain line in the fabric, but it is important to pay attention to the design of the lace. Place the pattern pieces to take advantage of the design.
- If possible, fold the lace fabric to cut out both right and left sides of the garment at the same time as you would using a woven fabric. Often, the lace fabric will shift making it difficult to

keep the pieces lined up. In that case, cut out the pattern one side at a time.

- When sewing with lace, use a zigzag stitch to ensure the lace is secured to its adjoining fabric with every stitch.
- Make lace darts look invisible by sewing darts in the lining, under lining and fabric under lace. Sew lace to bodice as to fit design but pin or baste lace to the dart. Trim outline of lace motif (will extend over into bodice lace). Manipulate the lace to lay over the dart keeping within the best part of lace motif. Trim any excess under lace. Cut off excess. Hand or machine stitch to bodice.

Foundations

INTERFACING

Interfacing is the inner construction material that lies between layers of fashion fabric. It adds stability, shape, strength and body to every project. Many garments require some type of interfacing. You can find it in collars, cuffs, waistbands, lapels, necklines, button holes and any opening that needs additional stability or support.

There are three different types of interfacing: non-woven, woven and knit. These types come in either fusible or sew-in applications and come in different weights and colors. A rule of thumb to follow when choosing interfacing is to always choose a weight that is the same or slightly lighter than the fabric you are using. Let's take a closer look at the three types and applications of interfacing.

Woven interfacing -- Woven interfacing has a lengthwise and crosswise grain just like woven fabrics. Matching the grain of the interfacing with the grain on the fabric is a crucial part to make sure the two layers work together properly. The

matching grain requirement of woven interfacing may have to be cut on the bias. This tends to be stronger and more stable than non-woven interfacing. Woven tends to be used for more tailored garments.

Non-woven interfacing -- Non-woven interfacing is made by bonding or felting fibers together, creating a mesh without visible direction and therefore has no grain. This type can be cut in any direction, won't ravel and is very easy to use. The only fabric that can't be used with is a stretch fabric, like jersey knit.

Knit interfacing -- Knit interfacing is usually soft and flexible with a stretch crosswise but minimum lengthwise stretch. This type is suitable for garments using jersey knit and other stretchy fabrics as it will stretch with the garment and not hinder it. Knit interfacing can be used on woven fabrics when you want a softer shape or when you want to maintain stretch in the fabric after the interfacing has been applied.

APPLICATIONS OF INTERFACING

When it comes to the application of interfacing there are two kinds: sew-in and fusible. All three types of interfacing are offered in both applications. The type of fabric will help to select the correct application of interfacing to yield the desired shape and body.

Fusible interfacing is backed with an adhesive that melts with the heat of an iron to bond the interfacing to your fabric. This method is very popular because it's fast, easy to apply and great for the beginner sewer. When using this type of interfacing, let it completely cool prior to handling.

Sew-in interfacing is sewn on to the main fabric just like another normal layer of fabric and is held in place with stitches. This can also result in a more natural shaping and drape as there is less stiffness to it. Sew-in is usually recommended for lace, mesh, heat sensitive and very textured or napped fabrics. This type of interfacing isn't recommended for the beginner sewer.

OTHER INTERFACING TIPS

- It's important to verify the weight of the fabric against the weight of the interfacing.
- Use dark interfacing with dark fabric and light interfacing with light fabric.
- Every bolt of interfacing has a sheet in the center that will provide you with instructions.
- Always test a swatch of fusible interfacing before using it for a project. Iron temperatures can vary, so a test will help determine the proper setting to use with a press cloth.
- If the fusible test swatch looks wrinkled, the fabric may be shrinking. Wash fabric again or use a lower fusing temperature. If the interfacing is too heavy, try a lighter weight or use a sew-in style.
- Fusibles are meant to be permanent. If you want to remove interfacing from fabric that is not completely fused, reheat the area while pressing lightly. While warm, gently peel up.
- To remove fusible residue from fabric, iron with a dryer sheet or use a spot remover made for glue and adhesive.
- Use a hot iron cleaner to remove any fusible residue on the iron. Follow package directions.
- How to tell which is the fusible side: Most products have a dot adhesive. You can see or feel small dots on the rough side. If the product has a coated adhesive, the fusible side will be shiny.

BRA INSERTS

If you're sewing women's apparel, you may want to think about a bra insert to eliminate the need to wear a bra or accessories to ensure proper coverage.

- Accessories- Bra strap holders, bra extenders, lingerie strap slides and rings can help your existing bra work stay put and adapt to your needs. Clear plastic straps allow you to wear your own bra without distracting from your outfit. Fashion straps with fashion pearl and rhinestone details help you make a statement while also giving support.
- Bras and bra cups- Get coverage and protection while going braless. Simply choose the desired cup style--sew-in, molded or push-up--in your cup size, attach and go!
- Inserts and gel cups- Naturally enhance any look. Enhancers can fit into your bra or in addition to sewn-in cups. They're removable and reusable so you can wear multiple times with a variety of garments.
- Adhesive cups and bras- Adhesives offer support and concealment while wearing plunging necklines, cutout clothing, backless dresses and other garments.

SHOULDER PADS

Typically used in jackets or tops, shoulder pads can give form and structure to a garment. Shoulder pads can help slenderize a silhouette or camouflage sloping shoulders. Shoulder pads also help retain a garment's shape when hung on a hanger. The basic kinds of shoulder pads are set-in, raglan, all-purpose and foam. Shoulder pads are available in range of sizes and materials.

ELASTICS

Using elastic in sewing allows your fabric to be stretched to better keep it in place. There are many types of elastic and a variety of instances where it could be used.

TYPES OF ELASTICS:

- Wovens- plush-back, flat non-roll and ribbed non-roll, underwear and pajamas, button hole and waistband
- Knits- stretch lace, knit, knit non-roll, sport and drawcord
- Braids- braided, soft stretch, ballet and swimwear
- Cords- beading, oval and round cord
- Specialty- thread and clear

Fasteners

Some projects, like jackets and pants, will require some type of fastener. Here's how to decide the best hardware for your project:

BASIC CLOSURES

Sew-on snaps and hooks and eyes are the most frequently used closures for fastening and finishing garments. Fasteners have traditionally been hidden. Today's fashion uses them on the outside as key elements of the design.

- Hooks & eyes hold finished edges together.
- Sew-on snaps hold overlapping edges together.

EYELETS & GROMMETS

The terms eyelet and grommet are used interchangeably. Eyelets and grommets are round metal 1- or 2-piece reinforcements for holes in fabric, plastic and paper. They can be either functional or decorative. The size indicates the inside diameter of the opening of the eyelet or grommet.

LOCKS AND BUCKLES

Locks are decorative and functional metal hardware often found on bags, purses, wristlets, backpacks and belts. The locks can be opened by turning, pressing or flipping. Buckles are available in several designs with interlocking parts to secure overalls, jumpers, back ties on vests, belts, bags, totes, luggage and sporting equipment.

BUTTONS

Apply liquid fray preventer to buttonholes before cutting open to avoid frayed threads.

Use a seam ripper to open buttonholes. Be cautious to avoid piercing fabric. Place a pin across the end of the buttonhole to avoid cutting too far.

Cover buttons are used to make half ball fabric-covered shank buttons. They are available in aluminum ½ to 1 ½ inches in diameter, brass in 7/16 to 1 ½ inches in diameter and a range of sizes for denim jeans and overalls.

Trims

Apparel trims are fun materials to add more interest to your clothing. These can include belting, stretch trim, rick rack, feather & faux fur, rhinestones or studs, cord, fringe, gimp braid and flat braid and tape. On washable fabrics, use a glue stick instead of pins to hold trims or lace in place while sewing. The first washing will remove the glue.

LACE

Lace is steeped in tradition with many styles, fibers, colors and patterns and widths to choose from. Types of lace trims include raschel lace, cluny lace, venice lace, eyelet lace, gimp, passementerie, pompom fringe and twist cord.

Lace can be worked by hand sew, machine sewn or fabric glue. When sewing with lace, use a zigzag stitch to ensure the lace is secured to its adjoined fabric with every stitch. Many types of lace don't have a right or wrong side, however, some have a smooth side and a bumpy side.

SEWING RICK RACK

- Wash, dry and press rickrack before sewing.
- Use fabric tape or a fabric glue stick instead of pins to hold the rick rack in place for sewing. If using fabric glue, wait until glue is dry first.
- Sew a straight stitch down the middle of the rick rack.
- Use matching thread or invisible thread when applying the rick rack to the surface of a project.
- Rick Rack can be applied in several ways for different looks:
 - It can be sewn with a straight stitch on the top side of fabric so the entire zig zag shape is seen.
 - It can be inserted into a seam so only half of the rick rack shows, making points along the seam.
 - It can be sewn along the inside at the bottom of a finished hem so only the points peak out below the hem.

Quick Fashion Fixes

If you're in a rush, you may need a quick fix and not have time to sew. Or, you may want another way to hold a hem in place for sewing.

Fashion tape

A clear, hypoallergenic, double-stick apparel and body tape used to keep clothing in place. It's gentle on skin and fabric and stretches with your body for comfort.

Temporary hem tape

Instantly tailor pants with temporary hem tape, specially sized tape to create temporary hems and repair a ripped or fallen hem. The tape allows you to wear the same pants with high heels, flats, sandals, sneakers or boots without tailoring.

Bra converting clip

Transform a standard bra into a racerback style under sleeveless, tank and racerback tops. Wear high on the back to create cleavage. Use two for additional support.

Silicone coverups

Reusable up to 25 times. Hypoallergenic nipple concealers are great with or without a bra.

Hip hugger

If jeans fit hips correctly, there's often a pucker or gap at the waist. Cue the hip hugger no-front feature to keep jeans laying flat.

Dritz Stitch Witchery

Fusible bonding web permanently bonds two layers of fabric together with the heat of an iron. Creates hems, makes no-sew straps and belts or apply ribbons and trims.

Dritz Liquid Stitch

Glue that can be used for quick hems.

Fray preventer

All-purpose seam sealant stops fraying on fabric edge and ribbon.

Spray adhesive

Temporarily bonds fabric or paper to secure patterns to fabric while cutting, position trims and appliques for stitching and eliminate basting and pinning without damaging sewing machine or hand needles.

VELCRO brand iron-on fasteners

No sewing required and no stitch marks to hide. Iron with high heat and steam for 90 seconds to heat activate the adhesive for a permanent fabric bond. Use for thick, difficult to sew fabrics like denim and canvas or to accessorize fabric handbags, wallets and totes.

VELCRO brand sticky back for fabrics

This peel-and-stick fastener provides a permanent bond to fabrics without sewing, gluing or ironing. Use to quickly fix hems, shoulder pads, collars, sleeves, wardrobe gaps, costumes or personalize apparel and accessories with embellishments.

Sewing Tips & Techniques

Apparel sewing is a great way to customize your wardrobe to fit your style, size and personality. Here are some tips to get started sewing:

- Start with a simpler design to learn the basics of reading patterns and how to alter a pattern to your size.
- Sewing patterns vary between brands, so use your measurements, not other pattern sizes or ready-to-wear sizes, to guide your work.
- Understand the fiber content of the fabric you are working with. Always refer to the end of the bolt for fabric care instructions before purchasing.
- Prewash fabrics as instructed before cutting and sewing to avoid shrinkage once the garment is constructed.
- Make sure you have all pattern pieces laid out right side up and according to the grain direction. This is important when working with prints, patterns sequins and furs.

- Remember, more distinctive or larger prints work better with simpler pattern styles. Showcase intricate designs and stitches on solid fabrics.
- Mark the pattern on the wrong side of the fabric.
- Sharp, high-quality scissors and rotary cutters are key for cutting fabric. Only use fabric scissors to cut fabric. Using fabric scissors to cut paper and other materials can dull the blades prematurely, which can improperly cut fabric and can be unsafe to use.
- Always test a swatch of fabric on the sewing machine before beginning garment construction to ensure proper tension and stitch length.
- Ensure the sewing machine needle is sharp. A dull needle can break, damage fabric or cause thread breakage.
- Change needles after 8 hours of work. Use a new needle when working with a delicate fabric.
- Use a zigzag stitch on a standard sewing machine or a serger to create finished edges and seams. The details in garment construction will help the fabric drape correctly.
- Use the correct thread type based on fabric and garment. Refer to the pattern envelope for recommendation.
- Do not use hand sewing thread in the sewing machine. There is special thread for machine sewing.
- Polyester thread is strong and has some give to it. As such, it works well with sturdy fabrics that take a lot of wear and stretchy fabrics, such as knit or spandex.
- Cotton thread is not as strong as polyester but works well for lighter weight cotton fabrics and woven natural fiber fabrics.

- Select a thread color that is a shade darker than the fabric, as thread looks lighter when sewn.
- For bold topstitching, as on jeans, heavy-duty thread gives a nice finish. Change to a topstitching needle and larger needle size to accommodate the thicker thread.
- Use two spools of thread in place of heavy thread for topstitching. Thread the spools through the machine as one and use a larger sewing needle.
- Iron using a heat setting appropriate for the fabric content. An iron that is too hot can scorch or damage the fabric and potentially the iron.
- To remove scorch marks from most fabrics, dampen a white cotton cheesecloth with hydrogen peroxide and lay on top of scorch mark. Lightly iron with a medium hot iron for a few seconds.
- Run thread through beeswax to prevent thread from twisting or creating a knot while hand sewing.
- Prevent an applique from moving while sewing by using tape on the edges of the applique and fabric. Use a zigzag stitch over the tape and easily pull tape off when finished.

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