

FREE

machine needle guide



Anatomy of a Machine Needle

SHANK

The shank is the upper portion of the needle that is inserted into the machine. The front is rounded & the back is flat. Check manual for instructions on properly inserting needle into sewing machine.

SHAFT

The shaft is the lower portion of the needle that begins at the base of the shank & extends to the point. The needle size is determined by the shaft diameter.

GROOVE

Groove is the indentation located on the front of needle. Thread is protected in the channel as the needle passes through the fabric.

SCARF

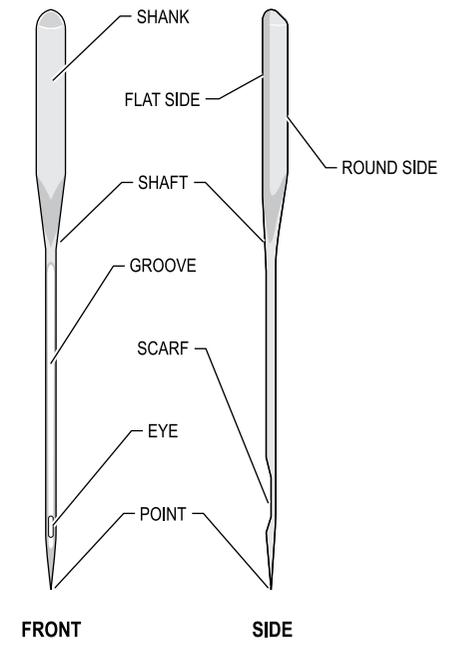
The scarf is the indentation on the back of the needle above the eye. The scarf allows the bobbin thread to pass closely to the needle eye catching the needle thread to create a stitch.

EYE

The eye is the hole in the lower portion of the shaft. The thread passes from the front to the back of the needle through the eye. Select a needle with the appropriate size eye to accommodate the thread. The thread should flow freely through the eye.

POINT

The point is the tip of the needle that penetrates the fabric. Needle points are designed to penetrate different fabric types.



NEEDLE SIZES

Needle packages are marked with two size numbers. The higher number is the European metric system & defines the needle shaft diameter in fractions of a millimeter. The lower number is the American numbering system.

EXCEPTION: For Twin or Triple Needles, the first number is the distance between the needles in millimeters. The second number is the European needle size.

American	European
8	60
9	65
10	70
11	75
12	80
14	90
16	100
18	110

FABRIC WEIGHTS

Select needle size based on fabric weight. The finer the fabric weight, the lower the needle size.

Fabric	Needle Size
Very Lightweight	8 or 9
Lightweight	9, 10 or 11
Medium-weight	12 or 14
Heavyweight	14 or 16
Very Heavyweight	16 or 18

Courtesy of Dritz®

Please read & follow all manufacturers' instructions for all tools & materials used. Provide adult supervision if children participate in this project.
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Selecting Machine Needles

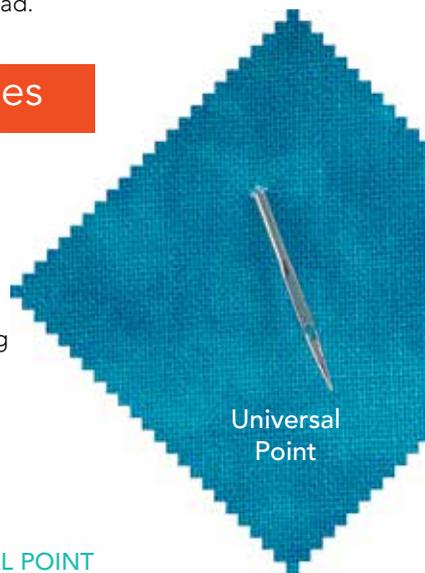
Machine needles vary according to the type of point & size or thickness of needle. Select your needle for the type of fabric you will be sewing & then choose the size of needle for the weight of fabric & type of thread.

Types of Machine Needles

GENERAL PURPOSE

UNIVERSAL POINT

Point is slightly rounded. All-purpose needle for sewing wovens & knits.



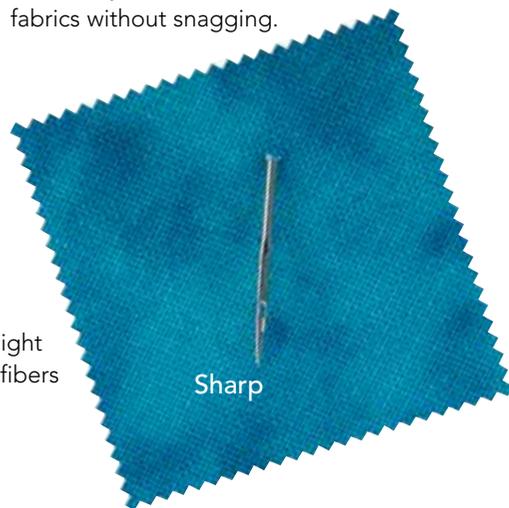
BALL POINT

Point is more rounded than Universal, designed to slide between yarns of knit fabrics without snagging.



SHARP/MICROTEX

Sharp point for perfectly straight stitches. Ideal for silks, microfibers & heirloom sewing.



Needles shown are not actual size

SPECIALTY NEEDLES

DENIM/JEANS

Very sharp point & stiff shank for stitching tightly woven fabrics like denim & canvas, & multiple fabric layers. Also available: double needle.



HEMSTITCH/WING

Wide "wings" on sides of needle create openwork stitching in tightly-woven fabrics, such as linen & batiste. Use for hemstitching & heirloom embroidery. Also available: double needle.



LEATHER

Wedge-shaped point pierces real leather & suede, creating small stitch holes & strong seams. Never use on woven or knit fabrics.



MACHINE EMBROIDERY

Designed with a special scarf & large eye to prevent shredding & breakage when stitching dense designs with rayon & special machine embroidery threads. Also available: double needle.



METALLICA

Special scarf prevents skipped stitches; the large eye accommodates heavier threads & the large groove prevents shredding of delicate metallic threads. Also available as a double needle.



QUILTING

Tapered needle with sharp point for stitching through multiple fabric layers & intersecting seams.



STRETCH

Special design prevents skipped stitches on swimwear & knit fabrics that contain spandex or Lycra® as well as on synthetic suedes.



TOPSTITCH

Extra-sharp point with an extra-large eye & large groove to accommodate topstitching thread.



DOUBLE (TWIN) & TRIPLE NEEDLES

Double & triple needles are designed with two or three shafts from a crossbar that extends from a single shank. Use for pintucking, heirloom sewing, decorative topstitching and hemming.



NOTE: Sewing machine must have zigzag capabilities in order to use twin & triple needles, even when straight stitching. Available stitch width is limited due to wider spread of needle positions. Test stitch first by manually turning the hand wheel.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I CHANGE MY NEEDLE?

Always use a new needle for each sewing project. A dull needle or one that has a burr can snag the fabric or cause the thread to break. Bent needles can break or cause skipped stitches.