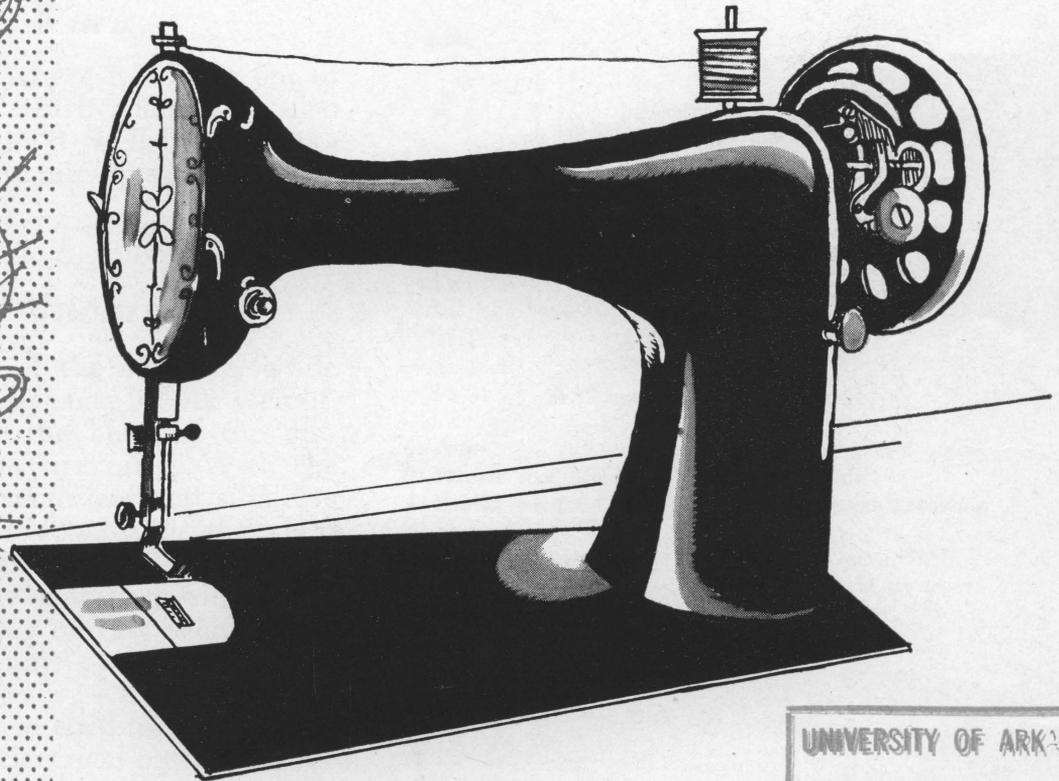


Getting Ready To Sew



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Getting Ready To Sew

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YOU HAVE LOOKED FORWARD to the time when you could run Mother's sewing machine. At last the time has come. Before you begin to sew you need to know how to operate and care for the machine so that you can obtain the best results in your finished garments.

A Space To Work

Place the machine where it will be out of the family's main traffic lanes. It also should be placed in a well-lighted area with the light coming over your left shoulder.

Opening the Machine

First, raise the lid of the machine, while you are standing. Because of its weight, be careful to raise the head of the machine gently with a firm grip. With the left hand raise the small leaf that supports the head in front. Now, with the right hand, because often it is stronger, raise the head, place the leaf in position and then lower the head to rest securely on the bed of the machine.

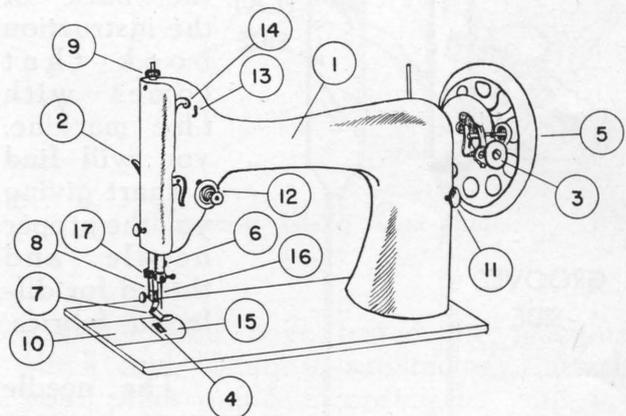
Connect the lead-in cord to the machine and to the nearest electrical outlet. If your machine is the treadle type, place the belt in position for operating the machine.

Parts of the Machine

You can operate the machine more easily if you know something about its parts. Look at Figure 1 and locate the labeled

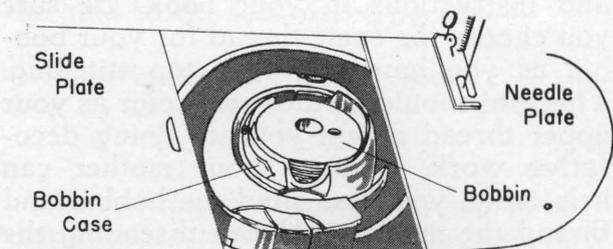
parts. Now locate these parts on your sewing machine. Your machine may not be exactly like the illustration, but it will be similar.

Figure 1



A. Head of the machine.

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Arm | 9. Pressure-control screw |
| 2. Presser foot lifter | 10. Slide plate |
| 3. Bobbin winder | 11. Stitch length regulator |
| 4. Feed dog | 12. Tension |
| 5. Balance wheel | 13. Thread guide |
| 6. Needle bar | 14. Thread take-up lever |
| 7. Presser foot | 15. Needle plate |
| 8. Presser bar | 16. Needle |
| | 17. Thread cutter |



B. Close-up of bobbin and bobbin case.

There are other parts with which you will need to become familiar:

Knee or foot control } —if electric

Treadle — if non-electric

Preparing the Machine for Work

Just as for hand sewing, you also should choose the proper size needle and thread

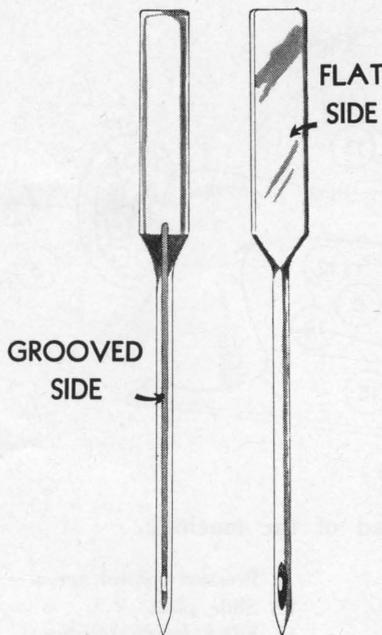


Figure 2

for your machine job. In the back of the instruction book that comes with the machine, you will find a chart giving you the proper needle and thread for different fabrics.

The needle may be removed or replaced by adjusting the screw attached to the needle clamp.

When removing the needle, notice the position of the flat side so that you will not put the needle in backward.

To wind the bobbin follow the diagram and instructions in your book. Be sure you choose the same thread for your bobbin as you have for your top stitching. This also should be the same color as your upper thread unless you are doing decorative work. Perhaps your mother can help when you first wind the bobbin and thread the machine. When threading the machine, be sure that you follow every step or your thread will break when you

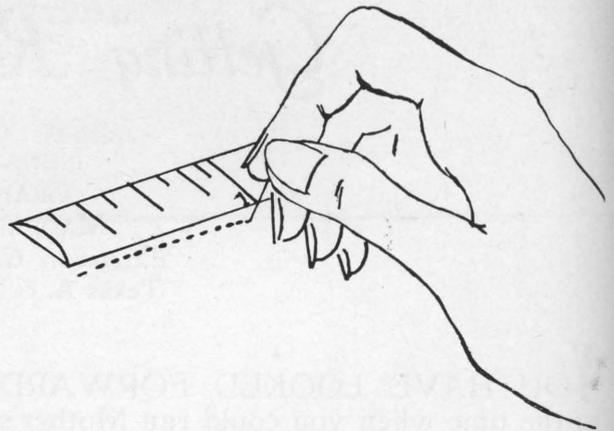


Figure 3

begin to stitch. There is only one position for placing the bobbin in its case for each model and make of sewing machine. Your instruction book will give the placing of the bobbin for your particular machine.

Now set your stitch length regulator for the length of stitch you will need. Twelve to 14 stitches per inch will suit most of your needs.

These stitches may be lengthened or shortened by adjusting your stitch regulator screw. If your machine does not have a regulator, you may find the number of stitches in the following manner: Sew a line of machine stitching; measure 1 inch of the stitching and place a pin. Take another pin to point the stitches as you count them. (Figure 3) This makes it a little easier to count accurately. If you count 14 stitches within the measured inch, your machine has been regulated to make 14 stitches per inch.

Running the Machine

Raise the presser foot by lifting the presser bar lever.

Hold the thread coming from the needle. Now pull the lower thread up from the bobbin by turning the balance wheel by hand — one complete turn — then

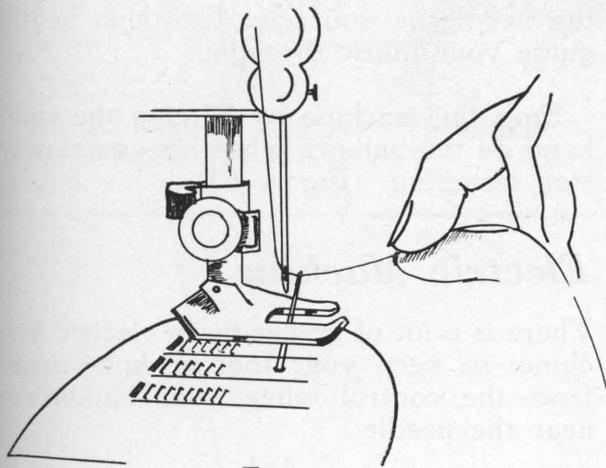


Figure 4

pulling up slightly on the needle thread. (Figure 4)

Pull the threads together and away from you to the back of the needle — holding the needle thread between toes of the presser foot. (Figure 5)

Note: It is wise to test the quality of the machine stitch. Use a double thickness of fabric since this is what you will have when you sew your garment. If the machine is sewing correctly, the stitch will appear the same on bottom and top. Ask your mother to help you if the tension needs adjusting. This will not have to be done often if the machine is handled properly.

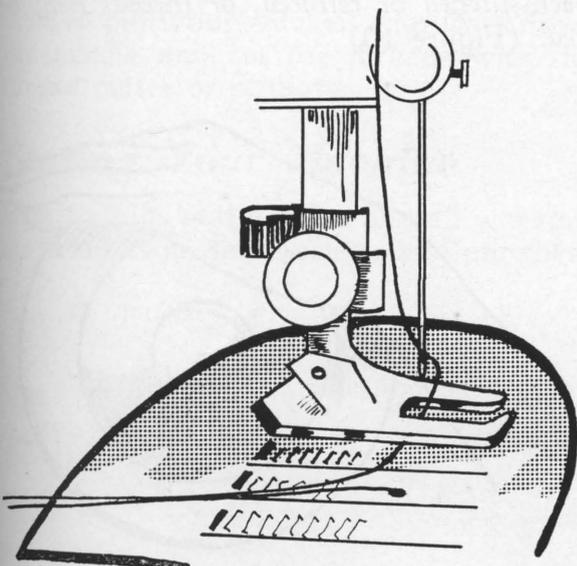


Figure 5

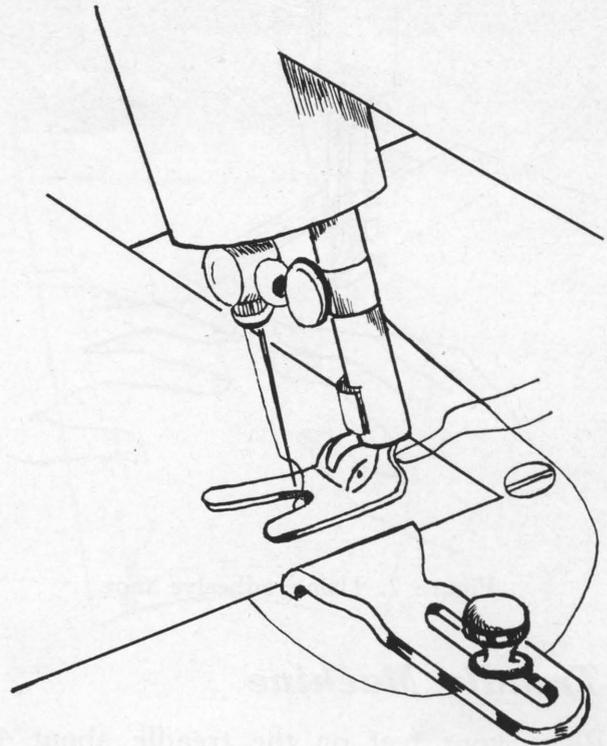


Figure 6. Using seam guide

When you have tested the machine stitch and found it satisfactory, attach your seam guide according to your instruction book. (Figure 6)

If a seam guide is not available, a strip of wide adhesive tape may be placed on the throat plate parallel to the feed dog. Draw a line on the tape to indicate $1/2$ and $5/8$ inch seams measuring from the point of the needle. (Figure 7)

To begin stitching, place the cut edge of the seam to be stitched next to the seam guide. The bulk of the garment should be held to the left of the needle.

Now lower the presser foot.

You are ready to sew!

Note: Practice stitching on scrap pieces of fabric before you sew on your garment. After you have a little experience, this practice will not be necessary each time.

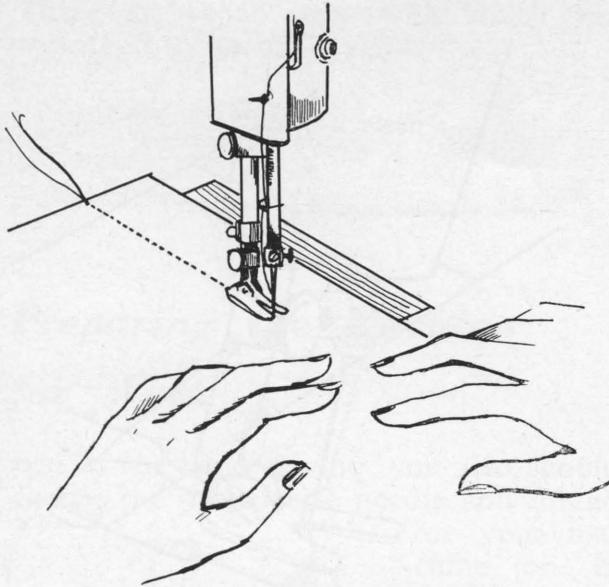


Figure 7. Using adhesive tape

Treadle Machine

Place your feet on the treadle about 4 inches apart with one foot ahead of the other. (Figure 8)

Turn the balance wheel slowly. Did you feel the treadle move? Now start moving the treadle with your feet. Press first with the foot that is forward, then with the foot that is slightly back. You may have difficulty keeping the machine running smoothly the first few times, but practice will make it easy. Keep your hands away from

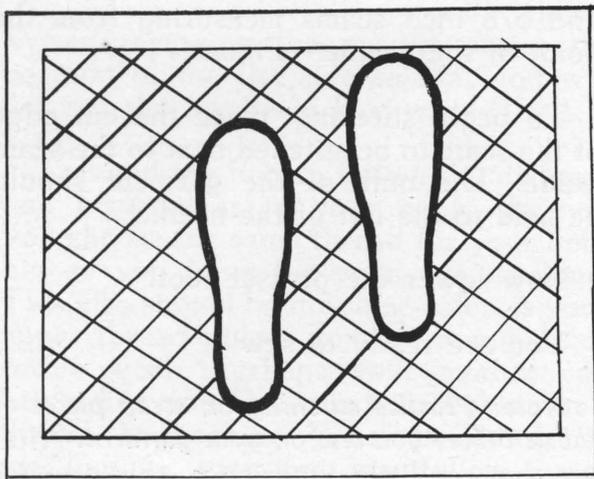


Figure 8

the needle as you sew. Let them gently guide your fabric through.

Stop the machine by placing the right hand on the balance wheel as you slowly stop treading. (Figure 9)

Electric Machine

There is a lot of power in an electric machine; so keep your foot or knee away from the control when your hands are near the needle.

Place your right hand on the balance wheel and turn slowly. At the same time apply pressure lightly to the control. Remove hand from wheel and guide fabric as you sew.

Note: The amount of pressure applied to the control is very important since this controls the speed of the machine which in turn determines the quality of the stitch. Nice, even stitches are obtained best at lower speeds since you are able to control your machine and fabric more smoothly.

Slow down as you approach the end of your seam. The line of stitching should be ended on the edge of the fabric.

Note: To prevent seam ends from ripping in areas where there is a strain they may be back-stitched or retraced, or threads may be tied. (Figure 10)

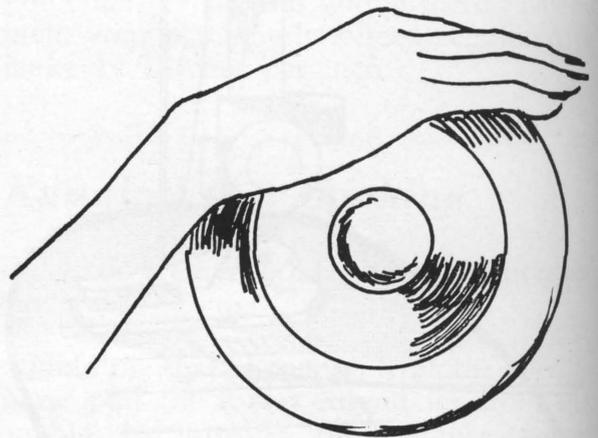


Figure 9

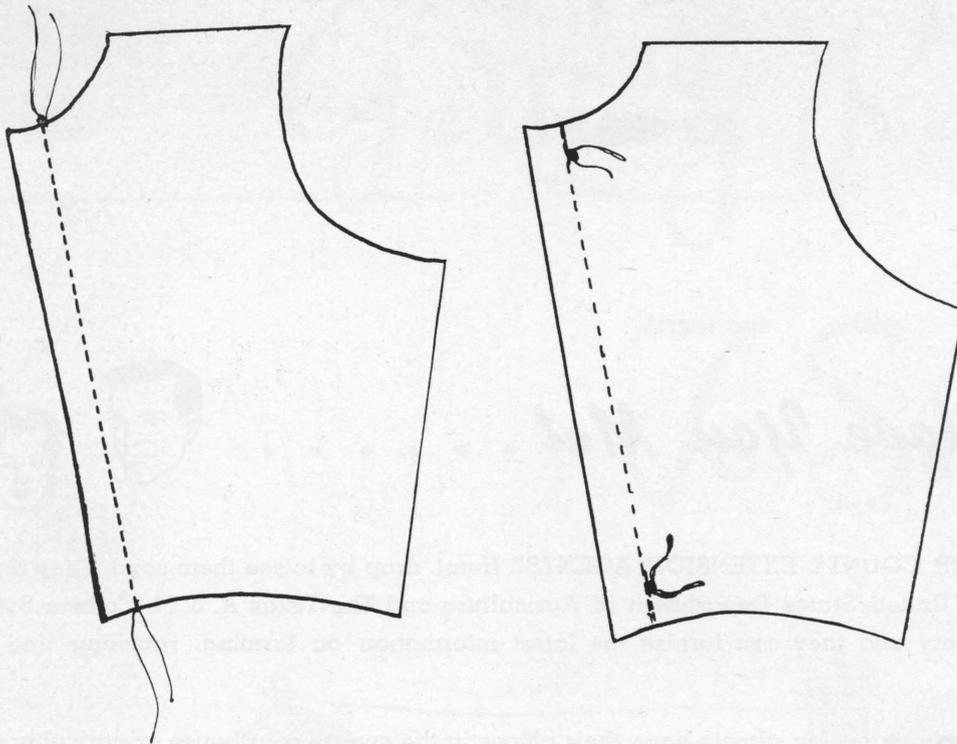


Figure 10

When you have finished your line of stitching, be sure the needle is in its highest position. If necessary, turn balance wheel by hand until the needle reaches this position. This will prevent your thread and sometimes the needle from breaking as you pull your fabric away.

Now pull your stitched edge back from the needle and cut the threads with the thread cutter or scissors.

Storing Your Machine

Remove pins and needles and all working materials from the machine and put them

away. Wipe away threads, strings and dust from the machine. Disconnect and put away the lead-in cord. Release the band or belt. Lower head gently into cabinet and close lid.

Periodic Care of the Machine

The machine should be oiled about once a month. See your instruction book for oiling points. Be sure you locate the proper oiling points. One drop of oil at each point usually is sufficient.

Have You Met



. . . YOUR COUNTY EXTENSION AGENTS? If not, drop by to see them soon. They represent both the United States Department of Agriculture and The Texas A. & M. College System in your county and they can furnish the latest information on farming, ranching and home-making.

Most county extension agents have their offices in the county courthouse or agriculture building. Get to know them and take advantage of their services.

This publication is one of many prepared by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service to present up-to-date, authoritative information, based on results of research. Extension publications are available from your local agents or from the Agricultural Information Office, College Station, Texas.

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