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Learning to Sew : Extension Circular 4-01-2

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Learning To Sew

PREPARED FOR
Nebraska Clothing Club Girls

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, EXTENSION SERVICE, COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, LINCOLN
WHAT fun it is to sew! How thrilling it is to have pretty new dresses in your wardrobe!

Wouldn't you like to be able to make attractive dresses and undergarments for yourself? In the Learning to Sew Club you will not only learn how to sew but how to be attractive. As a 4-H club girl you will develop a good posture, have a clean body, clean hair and teeth, and well-cared-for hands and nails. You will learn to keep your clothing clean and in repair. You will wear clothes that are becoming in color and style and that are suited to the occasion.

The Learning to Sew project is planned to give help to you girls who have done very little sewing. It is planned to help you develop skill in dainty hand sewing and machine stitching as well as to develop good sewing habits while making useful articles.

The directions for making each article should be followed carefully because each is planned to teach certain stitches or seams which you will use in sewing throughout your life. By the time you have finished all the clothing projects, you should be able to make many attractive garments for yourself and others and make them correctly.

REQUIREMENTS

You are asked to do the following:
1. Equip a sewing box or basket, or if you already have one, check it over at club meeting to see that it is complete. Make any necessary changes.
2. Make five articles from the following list:
   - Needle case
   - Shoulder cover
   - Pin cushion
   - Laundry bag
   - Kitchen hand towel
   - Kitchen apron
   - Holder
   - Pinafore
3. Finish your work by giving your leader your completed record book.

When you have completed the Learning to Sew Club you will have made three units. (1) a workbox with sewing equipment, (2) a home outfit (hand towel, holder, apron, or other articles) and (3) a sewing booklet containing the stitches, seams, and other finishes you have learned. Try to select harmonizing colors for all the articles of each unit. To do so you will need to plan the whole unit before making the first article.

As a good club member, you will also try to:
(1) Complete the three units in this project, keeping in mind that the colors in each unit should harmonize.
(2) Keep the records in your clothing record book.
(3) Make a sewing booklet.
(4) Learn how to use a sewing machine.
(5) Keep yourself trig and trim by
   Shining your own shoes
   Sewing on buttons
   Washing hose and socks
   Airing, pressing, mending
Needles.—You will need needles of various sizes for your work. The assorted needles, 5 to 10 Sharps, provide a good variety. Use the finest needle possible for the material if you would do your best work. A long eye is more easily threaded than a short eye.

Needle Case.—Keep a few needles in your needle case. A needle case is easier to find and handle than the paper in which you buy them. Directions for making a needle case are given later. This piece of sewing box equipment also makes a nice gift.

Thread.—A fine needle requires fine thread. You will need numbers 60 to 70 cotton. Thread should match the fabric in weight and color. Thread is made of cotton, mercerized cotton, silk, or linen. Cotton thread is numbered from eight to 200, according to coarseness. Mercerized, silk, and linen threads are available in only a few sizes.

Tape Measure.—Your tape measure should be firm so it will not stretch. Metal ends keep the tape measure from fraying and make it easier to handle. The inches should be numbered on both sides, beginning at opposite ends.

Ruler.—You will find a ruler useful on many occasions. A six or twelve-inch pliable one is a good type.

Measuring Gauge.—You will learn to make your own measuring gauge.

Pins.—Select fine smooth pins with sharp points that will not leave dark spots in the cloth when removed. Test them carefully before buying. A good pin for use in dressmaking is short and slender and has a very sharp point. A blunt pointed pin which may make a hole in the material by breaking the thread should not be used. Pins are used to hold patterns in place while cutting, to hold parts of cloth together while basting, to hold material in place while fitting, and to try out the effect of bits of trimming. A finished garment or article never needs a pin.

Pin Cushion.—Keep some of your pins in a pin cushion in the sewing box. This cushion may be small, one that can easily be used to supply you with pins while you work. A cushion is much more convenient than a box or paper. The covering on the pin cushion may be made of silk or velvet and stuffed with wool so the pins will not rust. You will be making one as part of the equipment for your sewing box. Perhaps you will like it so well that you will make others as gifts for friends or relatives.

Shears and Scissors.—Select good shears and scissors. Good shears have sharp cutting edges and are over six inches long. The handles are arranged to distribute the pressure in cutting. Scissors are not over six inches long and are used for cutting short lengths. Good scissors have sharp points well designed for snipping threads or corners.

Table.—You will need a table at which to work. It should be large enough to hold your fabric and sewing box. Check it for good working height.

Notebook and Pencil.—Other useful articles to have in your work box are a small notebook and pencil. Many times you wish to write directions and measurements. How much time a handy notebook and pencil may save!
Good Posture While Sewing

Good posture is a position of easy poise, a comfortable, pleasant, and enjoyable position. It is neither stiff nor strained. Sitting correctly while sewing reduces fatigue and helps make the work to be done more enjoyable.

To have good posture while sewing, choose a chair which will give your back support. Choose one that is neither too high nor too deep.

Choose a sewing table of a suitable height to that of your chair so you can reach your work easily and without strain.

Sit well back in the chair with feet resting on the floor. Keep your back erect, but lean slightly forward. The posture shown in Fig. F will tire you less easily than that of Fig. D or E. Arrange your chair so that good light falls on your work.

These suggestions will help you to develop good posture habits at a time when you can watch your posture. Good posture gives grace and poise and helps you to wear your clothes with an air.

Pointers Which Make Good Sewing Easy

Care of Hands.—Be sure your hands are clean. If they perspire, dust them with talcum powder.

Use a Thimble.—Practice using your thimble. You cannot do excellent work without the aid of a thimble. The thimble is worn on the middle or big finger of the right hand to help guide the needle.

Thread.—When sewing, use a thread the length of the distance from the finger tip to the elbow. Do not bite the thread nor wet it in the mouth.

Stitches.—Baste carefully. Make permanent stitches small and even. Use the finest needle that is strong enough for the sewing being done.

Cutting.—Use sharp shears and cut with long even strokes. Hold them with narrow blade down.

Measuring.—Be accurate in measuring. A measuring gauge is your best helper in making straight hems.

Holding Your Sewing.—To prevent wrinkling the material on which you are sewing, handle it as little as possible. Hold the bulk of the material next to you. Use a table to help keep your material orderly. Have all your sewing equipment and materials nearby when you sit down to sew. Always practice new stitches or seams on a small piece of cloth before doing them on a garment. These samples of stitches can then be put in your sewing booklet for later use or reference.

THE NEEDLE CASE

A bright colored needle case filled with various sizes and kinds of needles is not only a convenience, but an aid to good work, therefore it is one of the first articles to be made.

The needle case will add interest to your sewing box. If it is made of some bright color like orange, red, or yellow, you will have no trouble finding it when you open your sewing box.
Making the Leaves.—The needle case requires two leaves. Make a paper pattern for the leaves three and three-fourths inches by five and one-half inches for the larger leaf and another one three and one-fourth inches by five inches. Measure accurately. Lay the patterns on the flannel or other material you have chosen for the leaves, watching the thread of the material. Pin securely and cut with long even strokes of the shears. Make a one-fourth inch turn on all sides of both leaves. Use your measuring gauge (Fig. 7). Only one turn is required as the turn is to be held in place with blanket stitches. Baste into place with uneven basting. The leaves are now ready for the blanket stitching. Use embroidery floss in a harmonizing color.

Blanket Stitch.—Work from left to right, holding the edge of the cloth toward you. To begin the stitch, take two or three running stitches from the edge up into the cloth. (See Fig. 10.) Hold the thread under the thumb of the left hand and insert the needle directly above the last running stitch at right angles to the edge or line of decoration. Bring the needle through the loop. Insert the needle the desired distance away from the last stitch and proceed as before (Fig. 10 and 11). When a new thread is necessary, end the old one on the wrong side with two stitches and begin the new thread as before, inserting the needle through the loop of the last stitch.

If you expect to get best results from your sewing, use the right size of needle and the right size of thread for the material on which you are working.

Materials Needed

Use any firm material for the cover; flannel or some woolen material for the leaves; one skein of embroidery floss, ribbon or tape for ties.

Stitches to be Learned

Even basting

Blanket stitch

Hemming stitch

Back stitch

Directions for Making the Needle Case

The Cover.—Make a pattern four and one-half inches by six and one-half inches for the cover. Pin it securely to the material you have selected for the needle case, being careful to have it lie straight on the threads, then cut with long even strokes. Hem it on all four sides with one-fourth inch hems. To do this, turn a one-eighth inch turn and then a one-fourth inch turn to cover up the raw edges. Baste into place with even basting stitch. Use a measuring gauge to make the hem even.

To make a measuring gauge, take a piece of tough cardboard about six inches long and one inch wide. Use your tape measure or ruler and mark carefully the depth you wish the hem to be and slash with sharp scissors as in Fig. 7.

Basting Stitch.—“Basting” is the stitch used to hold two or more pieces of cloth together until they are permanently joined. Begin with a knot on the right side and sew from right to left. There are several kinds of basting stitches (Fig. 8).

Even Basting.—The stitches and spaces are even in this type of basting and are from one-fourth to one inch long. Even basting is used when very careful basting is required. (No. 1, Fig. 8.)

Uneven Basting.—The stitches are long with short spaces between; the upper stitch is one to two inches long and the under stitch one-fourth to one inch in length. Uneven basting is used where there is little danger of the material slipping. (No. 2, Fig. 8.)

Making the Hem.—Straighten the edge of the material by drawing a thread and cutting along the line. Make a turn one-eighth inch wide and crease. Make a second turn one-fourth inch wide and fasten down with a basting stitch.

Hemming Stitch.—Hemming is a stitch much used for finishing raw edges. Hold the wrong side of the material next to you as the hem is turned down to the wrong side. (See Fig. 9.) Hem neatly all around the edges with small hemming stitches. Press. Girls with little experience may fasten the hem in place with embroidery floss, using a running stitch. (See Fig. 14.)

When both leaves have been blanket stitched on all sides, they are ready to be placed in the cover.

Fastening Leaves and Cover with Back Stitch.—Fold the leaves and the cover in the middle crosswise. The smallest leaf should be on top. Fasten the three pieces through the center with the back stitch. Embroidery floss like that used for blanket stitching may be used for the back stitching.

Back Stitch.—Hold material as for the basting stitch. (See Fig. 8.) Take one small stitch, bringing the needle through to the right side of the cloth at a distance three times the length of the desired stitch and take a stitch halfway back to the last stitch on the right side (Fig. 12).
Fastening the Needle Case.—If you wish a fastening on your needle case, sew on two pieces of narrow tape or ribbon to the hem at the center or fasten at the center back with the back stitch. Tie in a bow.

Judging

When all needle cases have been completed, judge them for appropriate materials, attractive colors, and workmanship. These questions may help you to know just what to look for:

Materials
- Is the cover material firm?
- Is it suitable in color?
- Is the material in the leaves suitable for holding needles?
- Are the ties suitable in size and color?
- Is the thread of suitable weight and color?

Workmanship
- Is the hemming neatly done?
- Are blanket stitches even?
- Are ties firmly sewed in place?
- Are all pieces carefully cut?

Appearance
- Is the needle case neat and attractive?
- Is it clean?

Record Book

Make your entry of costs and materials in your record book. In case you make more than one needle case, credit yourself by entering the number made.

Exhibit

Your needle case will make a nice exhibit. If you have been careful with it, you may wish to enter it at your club or county fair. It should be labeled with a tape on which is printed or typed your name, address, and the name of your club.

The Pin Cushion

A pin cushion is your best friend when sewing. With the pin cushion handy in your sewing box, and pins in the cushion, you will not have to look around for pins when you need them; nor will you lose as many as you would if you had no definite place for them.

The pin cushion is made of a plain dark color, because the pins will show up better against it. It is difficult to see the pin heads against figures or against light colored material.

Material Needed
- Almost any firmly woven material of plain dark color.
- For the filling, wool ravelings, wool, wool clippings, sawdust or curled hair.
- A piece of cardboard or buckram.
- Embroidery floss.

Sewing the Top and Bottom Together.—Sew the two halves together with the catch stitch using a harmonizing color of embroidery floss.

Catch Stitch.—The catch stitch is often used for decoration. It is also used to hold down the unturned edge of a hem that does not ravel. You will use it to join two finished halves of your cushion. Work from left to right and make a loop with the pin head before catching the threads.

Fig. 13.—The Pin Cushion.

Fig. 14.—The running stitch.

Fig. 15.—Catch stitch.
right. Carefully hiding the knot, bring the needle out and take a small stitch from right to left on the upper line far enough ahead to give the proper slant. Then take a stitch from right to left on the lower line far enough ahead to give the same slant. Continue this stitch the necessary distance. Try to keep the stitches the same in size, distance apart, and slant (Fig. 15).

Judging

The club motto is, “To Make the Best Better.” Being critical of the work you have done and discovering how improvement can be made are two ways of living up to this motto. The “judging” or “scoring” of each piece of work is very important. Judging helps you to improve your work. Each girl is to score her own work as well as to take her part in the club judging. This sets a high standard of workmanship and selection and is in keeping with the 4-H motto. Your leader will help you with club judging.

When all club members have completed their pin cushions, judge them to select the best. Score the pin cushion on the following points:

- Do the pins push in easily?
- Does the cardboard keep pins in good position?
- Is the color combination pleasing?
- Is the shape and size suitable?
- Is the catch stitch correctly done and with even stitches?

Record Book

Enter the cost, name of materials used, and number of cushions you have made.

Exhibit

When your pin cushion is finished, attach neatly to the bottom a label of tape on which is neatly printed or typed your name, address, and the name of your club. It will then be ready to exhibit.

THE KITCHEN HAND TOWEL

It will add interest and fun to your work as you help your mother in the kitchen if you have a hand towel all your own. It may also furnish an opportunity to add a bit of beauty and ornament. There is more pleasure in handling an attractive well made towel than just a machine hemmed piece of cloth.

This will be a good time to plan the color scheme for your entire kitchen outfit. Be sure the colors are becoming to you. The towel is to be made by hand.

Suggested Materials

Kitchen hand towels are usually made from cotton, rayon, linen, or union crash or of huck toweling.

The average length of a hand towel varies from three-fourths of a yard to one and one-half yards, depending upon the width of the material. Pleasing proportions for a towel are from one and one-third to one and one-half times as long as it is wide. The depth of the hem will depend upon its length and width.

When you are selecting your material at the store, ask the clerk to show you the different kinds of toweling. Feel them, notice the difference in the appearance, then compare the prices. Clerks are usually glad to show club members household linens.

Stitches to Be Used in Making the Towel

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Directions for Making Towel

Straighten edge of material by drawing a thread if necessary and cut along this line.

The hem may be from one-half inch to one inch wide, depending on the size of the towel and your individual taste.

Make one-fourth inch turn, using your gauge, and press with a warm iron to crease accurately.

Make a second turn of the desired width in the same way.

Use pins at various intervals, placing them at right angles to the hem. Baste into place with even basting stitch.

Finish with plain hemming stitch (Fig. 9).

Overhand the ends.

Overhand Stitch.—This stitch is used to join two finished edges such as two selvages or in joining lace to a hem. It is also used to close the ends of bands and hems. It is sometimes called “over sewing.” Work from right to left. On the wrong side the stitches should be even, close together, and very shallow. They should slant on the wrong side. On the right side (or inside) they should be parallel to each other, close together, and tiny (Fig. 17).

Choosing the Design.—Dainty designs look best on dainty material; heavier and coarser designs on the coarser materials. Kitchen hand towels are made for service and require a simple, medium heavy design. Initials, monograms, and borders make good designs for a towel.

Placing the Design.—Place the design to give a restful appearance. When placed too near the hem, it appears crowded; if too far from the hem, it will seem to have no relationship to the hem and will seem lost. The size of design and its location should be in good proportion to the size of the towel, the width of the hem, and the size and color of any border stripe. The color of the embroidery floss should be harmonious with any colors woven in the cloth. Use no knots in the embroidery but begin with tiny running stitches. The wrong side should be as neat as the right side.

Decorative Hand Stitches

Feather Stitch.—The feather stitch is a variation of the blanket stitch. The feather stitches are made alternately, first on the right and then on the left. To make a feather stitch working from right to left, place the thread in a loop...
toward the left. Hold the thread under the thumb. Insert the needle, letting
the point pass over the thread loop. Alternate the directions of the stitches.
This may be varied by making two or more stitches on each side of the line,
each time before working on the opposite side (Fig. 18-A).

Chain Stitch.—The chain stitch is worked toward you. Bring the needle up at the end of the line, let
the thread hang naturally or hold it in place with the left thumb. Put
the needle back where the thread comes out and bring it out a short
distance ahead and over the thread which thus is held down in the form
of a loop. Every stitch is made in the same way, one end of it coming out through the preceding stitch and the other end held down by the next stitch (Fig. 18-B).

Outline Stitch.—Work exactly on the line of the design. Hold cloth over the left forefinger. Begin with
two small running stitches down, then work back over this with out-line stitch. For outline stitch, work
away from you, keeping the thread down under the thumb and to the right
of the needle. Put the needle through the material one-eighth to three-
sixteenths of an inch beyond the point where it went through last and bring
it out where the thread came through. Continue in this manner (Fig. 18-C).
This stitch is used in outlining shapes in embroidery and for line decoration.

Cross Stitch.—The cross stitch is simply one stitch crossed over another,
the two occupying a perfect square, crossing it diagonally from corner to corner. The stitches must always be crossed in the same way and worked in the same direction in order to prevent an uneven surface (Fig. 18-D).

Folding, Laundering, and Pressing

When the towel is finished, fold in thirds lengthwise and again through
the center. If the towel is soiled, wash and iron it carefully. Pressing on the
wrong side will make any decorative stitch more attractive.

Judging

Score your hand towel on the following points:
Is the material suitable for a kitchen hand towel?
Was the edge of the hem straightened correctly?
Is the towel well proportioned?
Does the hem have a pleasing width?
Are the hem ends neatly overhanded?
Are the colors a pleasing harmony?
Are the knots hidden?
Is the towel clean and well pressed?

Record Book

Make the entry for all items of the towel in your record book.

Exhibit

Label your towel neatly with your name, address, and the name of your club. Sew the label neatly on the edge of the hem on the wrong side.

THE SEWING MACHINE

Every girl who wishes to make her own clothes will want to learn how
to use the sewing machine. Making a holder by machine will give you much
practice. Machine stitching makes a strong seam much more quickly than
can be made by hand. One who uses a sewing machine should at least know
what the parts of the machine are, what these parts do, and how to take care
of the machine. Can you tell what each part shown in Fig. 19 does?
How to Sit While Sewing

Did you stand while threading your machine, and do you expect to stand while sewing? Of course not! But how should you sit while sewing? Sit well back in your chair. Keep your back erect, leaning slightly forward. Have your feet flat on the treadle of the sewing machine. Sit with the light coming over your shoulder.

Practice Treading, Guiding the Material, and Winding the Bobbin

If you have never sewed on a machine, you will first need to practice treading until you can make your feet work just the right way to keep the wheel turning evenly and in the right direction.

Before threading the machine, place your feet on the treadle, the right foot slightly ahead of the left foot. Turn the hand wheel and notice how the toe of the right foot goes down as the heel of the left foot goes up and vice versa. Turn the wheel with your hand until you get the feel of the treadle motion in your feet, then practice treading until you can keep the hand wheel going smoothly in the right direction.

Threading the Machine

How long does it take you to thread a sewing machine? Time yourself and see how long it actually takes. Try to shorten this time by practicing doing it quickly.

Removing Work from the Machine

To remove work from the machine, see that the “take-up” lever is at its highest point. When the take-up is in this position, the presser foot is raised and the work can easily be removed. Take the material from the machine by pulling it straight back away from you. Have the thread long enough to prevent pulling through the needle when you start to sew the next seam. Pull both threads back over the thread cutter, hold the threads with both hands and cut with a quick downward motion. Removing the work from the machine is a good individual demonstration.

Learning to Stitch

Place a piece of striped or checked material under the needle by turning the hand wheel. Let the presser foot down on the material, and practice guiding it as you treadle so that the needle will follow a stripe or go where you want it to go. Some girls like to practice on paper. Take a plate or a saucer, lay it on a piece of plain paper and draw around it; then draw lines across as though you were cutting a pie. With the machine still unthreaded, try stitching around the circle and across the diameters. This will help you to follow curves, to turn corners, and to follow straight lines. You can see how accurate your stitching is by holding the paper up to the light. Keep trying until you can make a good circle.

Now, try stitching without lines. There are two things to learn to do in stitching: how to stitch away from the edge, and how to stitch near a folded edge, as in a hem. Take a piece of plain paper and fold it lengthwise. Place the paper under the presser foot as a guide and stitch. Now open your paper. Perhaps your first attempt will show two wavy lines. Place under the presser foot and stitch as near the edge as possible. When the stitching shows two parallel lines of perforations, you are ready to use a threaded machine.

Turning a Corner

You may also like to practice turning a corner. Fold hems on two adjoining sides of a paper. Stitch through four thicknesses to the corner, leave the needle in the paper to swing the paper into place, lower the presser foot and stitch in the opposite direction. If the unfolded paper shows a perfect “cross roads” of parallel perforations, you are ready to work on cloth with the needle threaded. Even grown people find these suggestions helpful in learning to do beautifully straight stitching. Make a sample of your best machine stitching.

Score Your Machine Stitching

Is the line of stitching straight?
Are the stitches of suitable length for the material?
Is the tension in good adjustment both top and bottom?

The Stitch

Now that you can make straight rows of stitches, see if they are too long, too short, or just right. For general sewing on cotton, there should be about 12 to 14 stitches per inch. Practice lengthening and shortening the stitch until you can adjust the length of stitch easily.

Oiling the Machine

A machine should be thoroughly cleaned and well oiled if it is to do good work. Directions for oiling come with every machine. Follow these directions carefully. A good time to oil a machine is when you finish sewing on it, so the oil can run down through the machine while it is not in use. If you oil the machine just before you start to sew, you are almost certain to get oil on your sewing. A good habit is to wipe the machine carefully with a cloth before starting to sew.

THE HOLDER

For your first machine work you are to make a holder. You may make either holder A or B. Holder A (See Fig. 23) is a very convenient one, as it
has rounded corners that cannot fall into things, also the fingers may be slipped inside the cover so they will not get burned when handling hot dishes. This holder consists of a removable cover and a pad. The cover can easily be removed and laundered while the pad will need only occasional laundering.

Materials Needed

Materials for the holder may match your apron or dress, or it may be made of some other plain or patterned cloth. Indian head, poplin, percale, cambric, and linen are some of the suitable materials.

Two or three thicknesses of outing or canton flannel or one thickness of padding cloth may be used to make the pad. The binding may be blanket stitched around the edge with embroidery cotton.

Stitches and Problems

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Directions for Making the Holder

The Pad Pattern.—Make the pattern of paper six inches long by five inches wide. Measure accurately with your ruler or tape measure. Fold through the center crosswise and again lengthwise. Mark the corners A, B, C, and D, having point C at the double fold and A at the four open corners. Draw a line connecting A and C. Measure off on a line AC two and three-fourths inches; mark this point Y. Draw a curved line from D to B, passing through point Y. Cut on this curved line. This will be the pattern for the back of the cover. Because the front is opened and is to be hemmed, you will need to cut it just a little differently.

For the front of the holder, use the pattern you have cut for the back and cut three-eighths inch below the crosswise fold. This will allow extra material for finishing the hem. You will need to cut two of these pieces. You now have three pieces in your pattern: the pad pattern, which is a little smaller than the cover; the back of the cover, and one-half of the front cover.

Making the Pad.—To make the pad, pin the pattern carefully on the material which you have selected and cut with long even strokes. If you use outing flannel or other material of the same weight, you will need two or three pieces, cut like the pad pattern, depending on the weight of the flannel. Next baste the pieces together with even or uneven basting (Fig. 8).

Quilting the Pad.—A good way to make a pad firm is to quilt it. It will be fun to try these designs on the pad. This would give practice in using the sewing machine. Here are some designs for quilting the pad (Fig. 25).

Finishing the Pad.—Blanket stitch is an easy way to finish the edge (Fig. 10). Trim edges off neatly before beginning the blanket stitch. Use embroidery cotton in harmonizing color. A nicely made pad would also make a good hot dish pad.

Making the Cover.—There are three pieces for the cover. They are two front pieces and the back. Make the front of the cover first. Take the two front pieces cut from your cover pattern. These may be finished either with a hem or bound with bias tape.

To hem, turn a fold one-eighth inch deep along the straight edge, then fold again one-eighth inch deep. Baste in position and it is ready for hemming. You may hem either by hand or stitch on the machine. Both pieces should be finished alike.

Now you are ready to put the back and front together. Lay right sides together carefully, baste around the edge with even basting stitch and stitch three-eighths inch from edge. You have just made a plain seam.

Plain Seam.—A plain seam is one which you will use often in your sewing. A plain seam is made with the stitching and raw edges both on the wrong side. It is most often pressed open so it is very flat but in the holder the edges will come together when it is turned to the right side, so it will not be necessary to press it open. A good slogan for clothing club girls is “Press every seam as soon as it is finished,” and we press this one with both edges.
together. There are various ways to finish a plain seam and, as you will use them often in your sewing, you will want to know about them. Let us overcast the seam on the cover of the holder.

**Overcasting.**—Before overcasting, trim the edges of the seam evenly. Hold the cloth over the first finger of the left hand. Conceal the knot between two thickness of cloth. The needle should point toward the left shoulder; pass it through from the under to the upper side, making a slanting stitch. Keep stitches uniform, fairly loose, and farther apart than they are deep (Fig. 28).

Usually overcasting is done in one thickness of material after seams are pressed open (Fig. 27). When a seam is not pressed open, overcast the edges together (Fig. 28). We wish this seam to be flat. Both methods are known as "overcast seams."

**Pressing.**—Careful pressing makes much difference in the way your sewing will look when it is finished. Pressing makes the work lie flat, and then it is so much easier to do the next step. Try to form the habit of pressing every seam as soon as it is finished. Press the pad well when it is finished. Press the cover first on the wrong side then on the right side. Use a moderately hot iron. Place the pad inside the cover. Now the holder is completed and ready for use and for scoring.

### Directions for Making Holder B

Cut the material for the cover twice as long as it is wide, as six and one-half inches by 13 inches. Cut several pieces of outlining flannel, old cotton blanket, or other suitable material six by six inches for the inside. Press a one-fourth inch turn in all sides of the cover. Place the padding pieces on the cover piece; fold it over and baste on the edge. Insert a loop of tape in one corner. Stitch, using one of the designs suggested in Fig. 29.

**Judging**

Score your holder by testing it with the following questions:

*The Cover.*—Is the material firm, easily laundered, and attractive in color and pattern? Is the size correct and has the pattern been carefully followed? Is the front opening carefully finished with hem or bias tape? Is the seam well made with stitching straight? Is the overcasting even and straight? Are all ends of thread tied and neatly clipped? Is it carefully pressed?

*The Pad.*—Is the padding heavy enough to prevent burning? Is thequilting well done with straight stitching and well adjusted tension? Are the thread ends clipped? Is the edge of the pad finished neatly?

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**KEEPING A 4-H GIRL'S CLOTHES TRIG AND TRIM**

To take care of clothing so you will always look your best is one of the fine habits any girl can have. Once you get in the habit of caring for your clothes, you will do it without thinking. As a result, you will be more attractive, you will be happier, and your clothes will wear longer. One aim of the Learn to Sew Club is to form good habits in the care of your clothes.

Every girl should have a clothes closet in her room in which to keep her clothes neat and orderly. In case your room has no closet, a simple one can be constructed of orange crates or built with a few boards.

Here are ten things you will want to do:

- Arrange a place for your clothes.
- Assemble hangers, clothes brush, shoe trees, shoe horn, and a shoe polishing outfit.
- Hang up your dresses, blouses, and coats on hangers as soon as you take them off.
- Air clothes before putting them away.
- Keep clothes clean, brushed and pressed.
- Mend rips and tears as soon as they appear.
- Wash hose daily.
- Keep buttons and fasteners securely sewed on.
- Clean and polish shoes often. Use shoe trees, shoe horn, and shoe rack, box, or bag so shoes will keep their shape.
- Keep hats free from dust and store them where they will not be bent or crushed.

**Washing Stockings**

If stockings or anklets are carefully washed every time they are worn, they will last longer. To wash stockings or anklets, make a good suds by dissolving soap flakes in hot water then adding cold water until the mixture is
Neatness and orderliness are of great importance to any girl who desires to look her best. By means of your laundry bag you can keep soiled articles separated from clean ones. This habit will not only help to keep your clothing in order but will help to keep your room neat and attractive too.

This problem will give you many opportunities to test your skill in using the sewing machine, as the laundry bag you are to make is almost entirely made on the machine.

**Material Needed**

- Same kind as for shoulder cover.
- Amount required, one and one-eighth to one and one-half yards, 36-inch material.
- Four snaps, size No. 1/0 or No. 2/0.

**Stitches and Problems**

- Same as for shoulder cover, plus facing an opening.
- Sewing on snaps.

**The Pattern**

- Same as for shoulder cover except that it is made 24 to 27 inches long. Lay this pattern on the material. Watching the thread, pin carefully in place. You will need two pieces. They may both be cut at the same time.

**Directions for Making Bag**

- See directions for making the shoulder cover. In one piece which is the front, you will need to make an opening. Locate the center and fold in halves. Measure down five inches from the top and ten inches more for the opening. Mark each point carefully with a pin. Put a bastin along a thread between the pins to mark the place you will cut the opening.

- To face the opening, cut one straight piece of the same or contrasting fabric twelve inches long and three inches wide. It may be cut either lengthwise or crosswise of the material. After making the location of the slash with a bastin thread, apply the facing material to the front piece, right sides together. Pin and then baste into position, having the center thread lying directly over the bastin thread and diagonally to the corners. (See Fig. 32.)

- Pull material through the opening to the wrong side. Baste in position, being careful to keep the corners straight at each end. Press well.

- To finish the edges, turn a one-fourth inch turn all around, baste securely into position and hem with small stitches which do not show on the right side.
Finish the bottom with a three-fourths inch hem. This may be hand hemmed or machine hemmed. Put snaps four inches apart and an equal distance from the edge. This will make an easy opening to empty the laundry bag.

VARIATIONS.—If you desire to use a contrasting color or figured material on plain material, apply the facing to the wrong side instead of the right and stitch the edges with the machine. The contrasting or figured material may also be used to face the hem carrying out the same idea as in facing the opening slit. When facing is used at the bottom, the hem allowance should be cut off.

SEWING ON SNAPS.—Measure accurately the distance apart and the distance from the edge. Locate each point with a pin. Sew with several over and under stitches taken in each hole of the edge of the fastener. Carry the thread from one hole to the next under the snap. Press neatly.

Judging.—Bring your completed laundry bag to club meeting for practice judging. These questions will help you to know what to look for in a good laundry bag:

1. Is the material firm and attractive in color and pattern? (If patterned material is used.)
2. Is the bag carefully cut and of good proportions?
3. Are the hand hems straight?
4. Is the hand stitching even and small?
5. Are snaps correctly located and sewed on firmly?
6. Is the machine stitching straight?
7. Is the overcasting even and well made?
8. Is the opening well reinforced?
9. Is the top opening overcast on each side?
10. Is the front slit made according to directions?
11. Are all thread ends securely fastened and clipped?
12. Is the bag well pressed?

Exhibit.—Attach a label with your name and address to the bottom of the back of the shoulder cover or laundry bag.

Record Book.—Have you filled in the record book page for shoulder cover or laundry bag, depending on which article you chose to make? Have you filled in the page, Keeping Clothes Trig and Trim, showing how you have cared for your clothes?

THE KITCHEN APRON

All 4-H club girls are interested in looking as neat and attractive as possible while cooking and helping with other home duties. The purpose of an apron is to protect the dress but it may also be attractive. This problem includes buttons and buttonholes because they are a secure fastening for an apron; so try to select a pattern with a button closing.
not bunch up around the neck, has at least one well placed pocket, and is flat enough to iron and fold easily. Look in the fashion magazine and see if you can find a type of apron that has these good qualities. Choose a design that is suitable for your needs, then you are ready to buy your pattern.

The Size.—Patterns sold at the stores are called commercial patterns. They are made according to the average proportions of girls of different ages. A girl who is large or small for her age must make allowance for this and buy according to her size. Select the picture of the garment you wish to make, note the number, and purchase the size you require.

Preparing the Material

Before cutting the material, press out wrinkles or creases and straighten the ends either by tearing or by cutting on the line of a drawn thread. Sometimes cotton materials may be straightened by stretching diagonally. If you are to cut on a fold, lay the fold of the material toward you.

How to Use a Pattern

Open the pattern and identify parts, selecting only those to be used in the garment. Read all the directions carefully.

Testing the Pattern.—Test the pattern by pinning pieces together and holding it up to you. Another way to test the pattern is to lay it out on a table with the joining edges together, then measure each piece according to your measurements. The number of measurements necessary to test a pattern varies. Your apron will require length, waist measure, and hip measure. If the pattern does not fit when tested, it will need to be changed. Later on we will study altering patterns.

Placing the Pattern on Material.—After the material has been straightened, fold it in half lengthwise bringing the two selvages together. Place the front section of the pattern on the material near one end with the center front line and pin in place. Place other pieces on the straight of the material in the most economical way for cutting. A study of the following layouts for different widths of material will be helpful in laying out patterns. Follow the cutting chart that accompanies the pattern for the width of the material you are using (Fig. 35 and 36). Be sure to keep the “grain” of the material straight.

Pinning the Pattern to Material.—Pin parts of pattern on material before cutting. Use pins freely, being careful to keep the material straight as you put in the pins (Fig. 37). Place the pins parallel to the edge about one inch inside the cutting line. Pin securely at curves or bias lines.

Accurate Cutting.—Keep an even line of cutting, sliding the shears along the table to avoid a jagged edge. Cut with the middle of the blades, never with the tips or near the screw. Be especially careful in cutting the lines of the shoulder and armhole.

Making the Necessary Markings.—Note marks indicating seam allowance, plaits, gathers, position of pockets, laps, trimmings. These marks are used as a guide in basting. Before unpinning the pattern, mark all perforations. Mark the places where notches are with thread or snip out carefully with the point of the scissors so the notch will not show in the seam (Fig. 37). Where there is a bias edge, handle it carefully for bias edges stretch easily. The markings may be done with colored thread or pins. On dark materials, white chalk may be used.

After the garment is cut, fold the pattern carefully and replace in the envelope, with written suggestions for further use.

Basting and Fitting

After the apron has been cut out, baste it together. Try it on the person who is to wear it. If it is satisfactory, you are ready to make the seams.

Trimming the Apron

Bias tape may be used as a facing or as an edge finishing. These are placed either on the right side or the wrong side. Rickrack or other finishing braids are also good.
Applying the Bias Binding.—Open bias tape. Often commercial bias tape comes creased through the center with the raw edges also turned in. In case it is not creased down the center, fold it and press with a warm iron.

Place right side of bias against wrong side of the material having the edges even. Baste one-fourth inch from the edge, or in the crease of the bias tape. Do not stretch the edge. Allow plenty for curved places. Stitch by machine in the crease of the bias tape. Turn binding to the right side having the edge exactly in the crease. Turn other edge of the bias under one-fourth inch or along crease of the tape. Baste bias down along the edge. Stitch close to the edge with the machine.

This method gives a stitching along the right side. If it is desirable not to have stitching on the right side, it will be necessary to reverse the process.

Applying the Rickrack.—Turn a fold one-half to one-eighth inch deep along the wrong side of the edge that is to be finished. Place right side of the rickrack on the right side of the material so that the lower points of the rickrack fall along on the folded edge. Baste the rickrack through the center. Stitch just above the basting. The stitching will fall a hem's width or about one-eighth inch from the fold. Turn rickrack along stitching toward wrong side of the garment, baste and stitch along the edge. Only one stitching will show on the right side when the edge is finished.

Pockets.—Pockets on an apron are not only convenient but may add trimming. Pockets should correspond in shape and size to the rest of the apron.

Locating the Pocket.—Hold your hand straight down at your side. Bend the fingers at right angles inward. The bottom of the pocket should come where the fingers touch. Mark the place with pins and apply basted pocket, being sure it is straight.

Putting on the Pocket.—Finish the top of the pocket with rickrack or tape, whichever you have chosen as the trimming for your apron. Make a one-fourth inch turn on all sides and baste carefully in place. Stitch around edges. Beginning about an inch from the top, stitch to the top and turn; continue entirely around. Turn at the top and stitch back an inch. This double stitching will reinforce the corners so they will not tear off easily. Stitch directly on the edge. If a double stitching is desired, stitch about one-fourth inch apart and square across the top. Draw the thread ends through to the wrong side. Tie ends securely and clip.

Buttonholes and Buttons

Making the Buttonholes.—You will need to think about size, marking, reinforcing, cutting, buttonholing, fan end, and bar end when making buttonholes.

The size of the buttonhole is determined by the size and thickness of the button. The buttonhole is usually cut one-eighth to one-fourth of an inch longer than the diameter of the button.

In marking, decide on the location of the buttonhole and the distance it is to be from the edge of the cloth and place a pin at this point. With another pin, follow along the threads of the cloth and place a second pin just the distance needed for the button. Mark by basting on a thread of the material between the pins. Reinforce the buttonhole with a row of sewing machine stitching (Fig. 42).

Fold in the center and snip with sharp pointed scissors and cut from pin to pin. Cut each buttonhole just before it is to be made, because buttonholes ravel if left unfinished. Buttonholes are always made through two or more thicknesses of material (Fig. 46).

In making buttonhole stitches, it is better not to begin with a knot but start with a few small stitches that will be covered. Commence at lower right-hand side. Work from right to left. Insert the needle at the end of the slit and have it come out on the depth that the buttonhole is to be and at right angles to the slit. Make stitches shallow rather than too deep. Having the needle in this position, take the thread from the eye of the needle and throw it around the point of the needle, throwing it in the direction in which the work is advancing.

Draw the needle away from the worker so that the little knot (purl) comes on the edge of the slit. Be careful to pull the thread firmly but not tight enough to draw. In making the next stitch, have it very near the last one and exactly the same distance from the slit. Again
When the apron is laundered, use a mild or neutral soap, rinse well and hang it in the shade unless it is made of a white material. Keep the buttons sewed on. Mend any little hole as soon as it appears. “A stitch in time saves nine.”

Do not allow the apron to become too soiled before it is laundered because it will take much hard rubbing to get it clean. Use holders when lifting hot dishes, do not use your apron.

Judging

When all aprons are finished, bring them to club meeting. Each girl may wear her apron in a club style show. To select the best aprons, answer these questions:

- Is the apron becoming?
- Does it fit?
- Will it protect the dress?
- Does the girl wear it well?
- Is it clean and well pressed?

Also judge the aprons when off, using the score card below.

**Material.**—Is it durable? Easy to launder? Attractive in color and pattern? Is it an all-over pattern which will not soil easily?

**Design.**—Does it give protection? Is it comfortable to wear? Does it fit? Is it easy to launder?

**Trimmings.**—Are they appropriate for the material and style? Do they harmonize in color?

**Workmanship.**—Are the seams even? The stitching straight? Buttonholes well made? Bias joined correctly and neatly? Pockets stitched securely? Buttons sewed on well?

**Record Book**

Are all materials and costs entered in the record book?

**Exhibit**

Is your apron labelled neatly? Is it pressed and folded carefully for exhibiting at your club, community, or the county fair?

**THE PINAFORE**

A pinafore offers more problems than a simple apron. It can be used as an apron or as a dress. Often it is worn with a blouse or it may be worn as a sun dress. The fabric suitable for this dress is similar to that used for an apron. Denim, seersucker, and pique may also be used.

**Directions for Making a Pinafore**

Choose a design that is suitable for you. Select a fabric that is becoming and color fast. Check pattern for size, taking measurement over fullest part of breast or bust line. Follow the directions on the instruction sheet carefully. Seams may be a plain seam turned and stitched (Fig. 48-A), or a twice stitched seam (Fig. 48-B).

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**Workmanship.**—Are the seams even? The stitching straight? Buttonholes well made? Bias joined correctly and neatly? Pockets stitched securely? Buttons sewed on well?

**Record Book**

Are all materials and costs entered in the record book?

**Exhibit**

Is your apron labelled neatly? Is it pressed and folded carefully for exhibiting at your club, community, or the county fair?
Making and Using Bias.—Bias strips cut from the fabric or trimming material may be used as facing, binding, or piping to finish the sides and neck. Making bias is a part of this problem and each club member should learn how to cut bias, how to join bias, and how to use bias as a facing, as a binding, and as a piping. Make a small sample of each for your sewing booklet.

To Cut Bias.—Fold material so warp threads lie parallel to filling threads (Fig. 49). Crease fold, being careful not to stretch it out of shape. Mark the line with pencil or tailor's chalk. With ruler held at right angles to this line, mark desired width of bias parallel to this line (Fig. 49-B). Mark as many pieces as are needed. Cut on ruled lines.

To Join Bias.—Each end of the bias strip has a sharp corner and a blunt corner (Fig. 49-C). With the right sides together, place the sharp corner of one piece to the blunt corner of the second piece so that the edges cross at the point you wish to stitch (about one-fourth inch from edge). If figured material is used, slip along until the figures match (Fig. 49-D). Baste and stitch by machine. Press open and trim off points.

To Use Bias.—As a facing, bias may be applied to the wrong side or as a decoration to the right side just as in the fitted facings.

As a binding, crease a one-eighth to one-fourth inch fold on each side. Place right side of bias against wrong side of material having edges even. Baste in the crease, or one-fourth inch from the edge. Do not stretch the edge. Allow plenty of fullness for curves (Fig. 49-E). Stitch on machine. Turn binding to the right side to the width you desire it to be (this is usually half the width of the bias). Turn other edge of bias under one-eighth to one-fourth inch. Baste close to the seam.

Stitch close to the edge with the machine. This method gives a stitching on the right side as in the applying of bias tape. (Fig. 49-F). If stitching is desired on wrong side, processes may be reversed as in the applying of bias tape, or it may be hand stitched.

As a piping for finishing an edge, cut bias as for facing or binding, place right side together and stitch. Fold bias to extend the desired width beyond the edge of garment. Baste in place and stitch. Turn remaining edge under and hem with blind hemming or small inconspicuous hemming stitches. Press (Fig. 50). This makes an edge finish. Piping may also be set in a seam.

Pockets.—If you use pockets, be sure they are well placed and straight. In case your pattern has pockets, follow the guide chart carefully.

Putting in the Hem.—A carefully made hem gives style to any dress. See how well you can do it. The hem may be put in either by hand or by machine. A one to three-inch hem is usually a very desirable depth. Follow these steps in making the hem.

Mark bottom of dress a desired distance from the floor. Use yardstick and mark bottom of dress line with a row of pins placed parallel to the floor (Fig. 51-A). Turn hem at line of pins and press with warm iron. Trim hem to even width, using cardboard gauge or ruler (Fig. 51-B). Turn hem under one-fourth inch.

For hand hem, stitch close to turned edge by machine. Baste in place with uneven basting stitch. Hem by hand with small, inconspicuous hemming stitches (Fig. 51-C).
For machine hem, pin in place after making one-fourth inch turn, sticking pins in at right angles. Baste and stitch with the machine.

Pressing.—If your pinafore has become soiled, launder it carefully. If it is not soiled, moisten it on the wrong side with a damp cloth and press well with a hot iron. Fold or put on a hanger.

Judging
Hang all the pinafores on hangers and study each one carefully. A girl desires to have her clothes express “her.” As you look at the dresses, do they seem to belong to the girls who made them? Has each member selected materials and colors which are suited to her personality? Has the work been done well? Use the apron score card to help select the best garment.

Record Book
Fill in the page, “Aprons or Pinafores” with cost of materials. Complete your record book and give to your leader.

Exhibit
Label your pinafore at the bottom of the hem in the back. Sew neatly and securely.

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WANTED—A GIRL

Wanted—a girl who is loyal and true,
With the brain to plan and the will to do;
With spirit loyal that none can doubt,
Who thinks of other folks round about;
A girl whose actions make her mother proud,
Who takes her place in the busy crowd
And plays her part in a splendid way,
No matter if the skies be blue or gray.
A girl who is willing, whose nerve is keen,
Whose thoughts and actions are always clean,
Who works with her head and heart and hands,
A girl whom everyone understands.
I know that always she'll play her part
In lowly hamlet or city mart.
A girl with never a thought of fame,
Who's always trying to play the game.
And out of its clamor and din and whirl,
The world pays tribute to such a girl.

—H. Howard Biggar.

(Dedicated to the 4-H Club Girls of Nebraska.)
WANTED—A GIRL

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W. H. Brokaw, Director Agricultural Extension Service.

(12-31-8M) (4-33-10M) (12-35-10M) (2-38-10M) (1-41-10M) (11-44-10M)