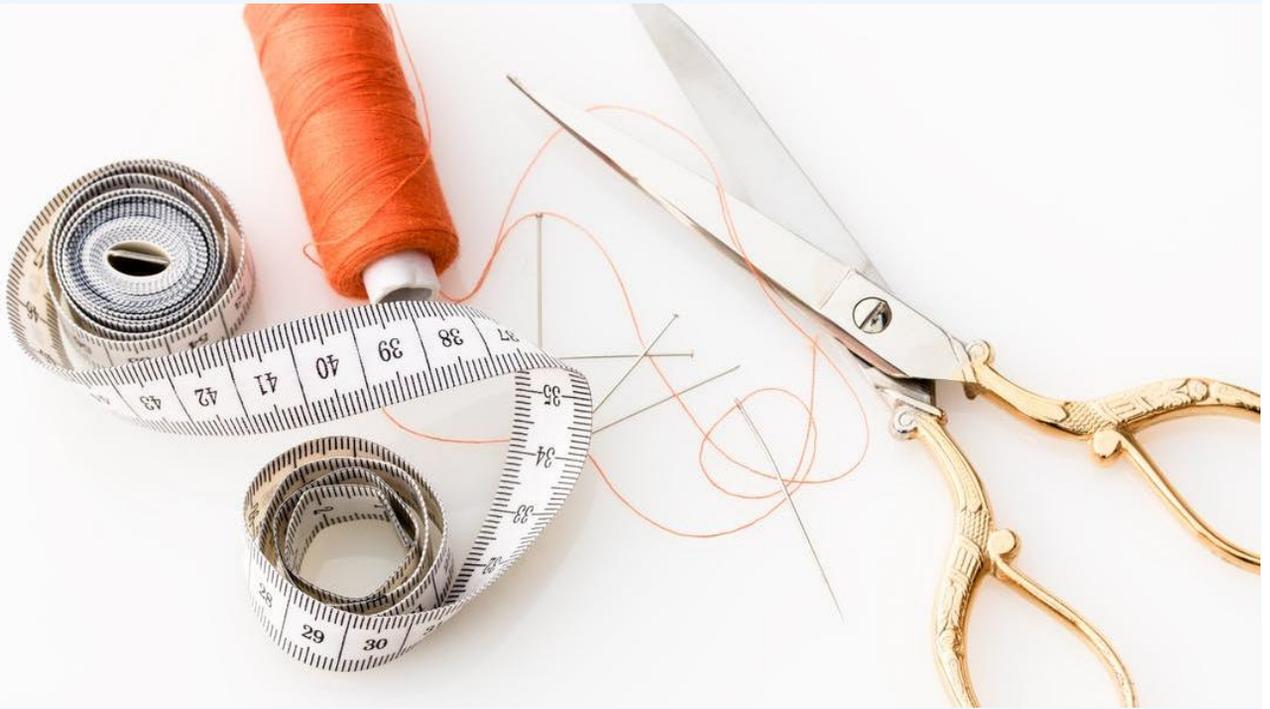


THE **Oomph!** DIGEST

An Oomph! Digest Special: Sewing, Knitting and Crafting



Let's start by exploring the history of sewing... Sewing was one of the first skills that Homo Sapiens learnt. Archaeologists believe that people used to sew together fur, hide, skin and bark for clothing as far back as 25,000 years ago! Cotton fabric has also been found in many archaeological sites. Meanwhile, early needles were not actually made of

metal. Sewing needles found at a lot of ancient archaeologist sites were made of bone and ivory. Metal needles came into existence much later in human history.

Sewing is now an integral part of daily life, whether it's assembling clothes for us to wear, or making covers for the cushions we sit on.

Sewing Machine – Then and Now

A sewing machine is used for stitching material (such as cloth or leather), usually having a needle and shuttle to carry thread. It was the first widely distributed mechanical home appliance and has been an important industrial machine.

An early sewing machine was designed and manufactured in France. This was intended to mass-produce uniforms for the French army, but 200 rioting tailors, who feared that the invention would ruin their businesses, destroyed the machines in 1831!

1851 - Isaac Merritt Singer formed I.M. Singer & Company with New York lawyer Edward C. Clark, following Singer's first lockstitch sewing machine patent. The Singer Sewing Machine was for sale all over the United States. Within two years Singer was

Sewing Machine - Then



Sewing Machine - Now



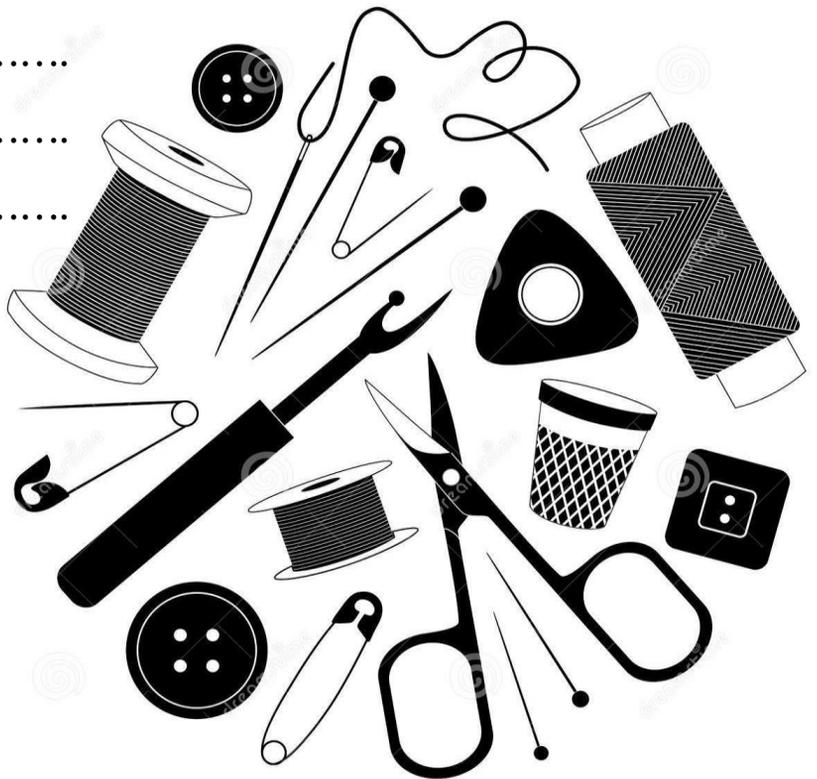
the leading manufacturer and marketer of sewing machines in the United States.

1857 - First Singer showroom and headquarters located at 458 Broadway, New York City.

Sewing Accessories Puzzle

How many sewing accessories can you name?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)
- 9)
- 10)
- 11)
- 12)



The Benefits of Crafting and Knitting



Crafting and knitting has been found to reduce anxiety and promote good hand-eye co-ordination. It reduces stiffness if your hands and fingers and provides a sense of purpose. All in all, very good for your wellbeing!

- What is your favourite thing to craft?
- Do you have any preferred colours when you craft?
- Do you keep everything you craft?
- Have you ever sold anything you have crafted?
- What was the last thing you knitted?
- What would you like to knit next?

The History of Crafts

Every civilization has developed their own crafts. The purpose of crafts in the ancient world, and how they were manufactured, were as varied as the cultures which produced them.

The word 'Craft' comes from the Middle English word for 'strength' or 'skill', which derived from the Old English word *craft*. This word comes from Old High German *kraft*, for strength, and means "skill in planning, making, executing" and, by extension, "an occupation or trade requiring skill".

Types of Sewing Machine Stitches and their Applications

Straight: You use the straight stitch for basting, seaming, and topstitching.

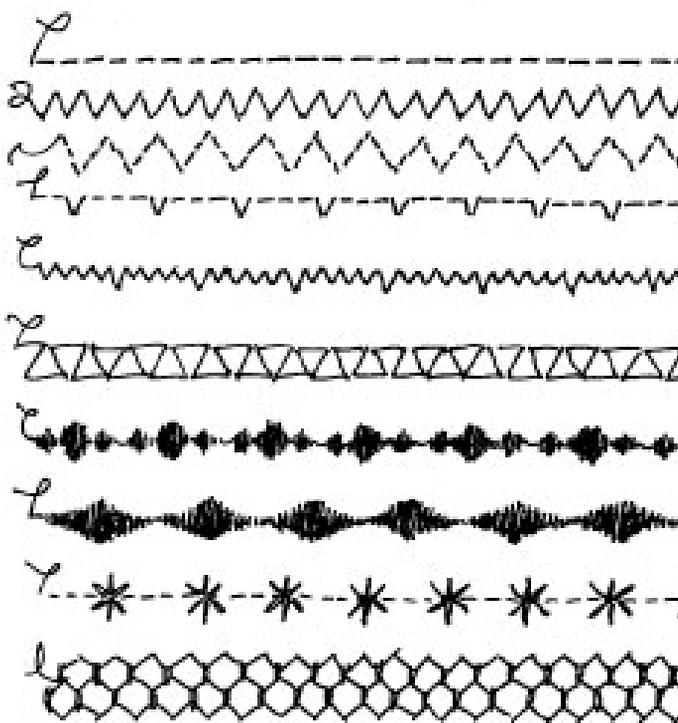
Zigzag: You use the zigzag stitch for stitching around appliqués, making buttonholes, sewing on buttons, and embroidering. The zigzag stitch is as practical as it is fun.

Three-step zigzag: Use the three-step zigzag for finishing raw edges, sewing on elastic, mending tears, and making decorative effects.

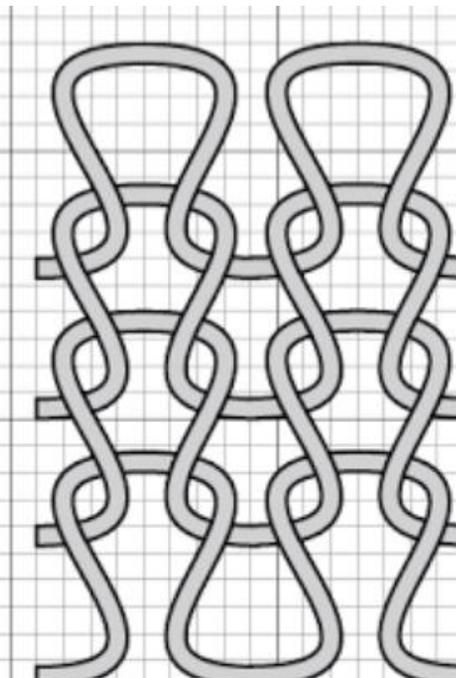
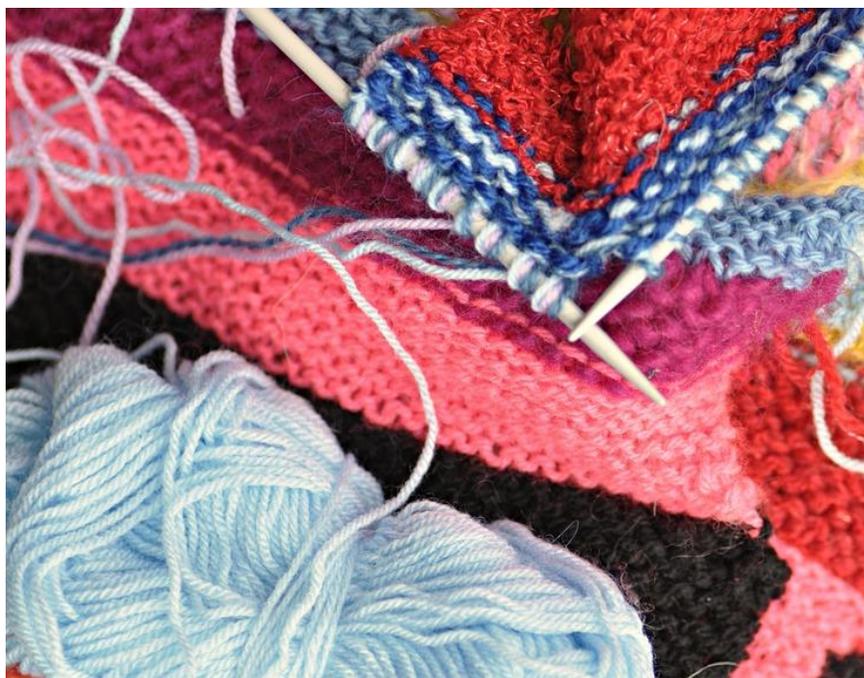
Blind hem and stretch blind hem: The blind hem stitch is designed to hem woven fabrics so that the stitches are almost invisible when looked at from the right side of the garment. The stretch blind hem stitch has an extra zigzag or two that stretches to invisibly hem knit fabrics.

Overlock: Designed to stitch and finish seams in one step, simulating the stitches that you see on ready-to-wear garments.

Decorative: Decorative stitches fall into two basic categories: closed, satin-type stitches (such as the ball and diamond) and open, tracery-type stitches (such as the daisy and honeycomb).



The Origins of Knitting and its Surprising Background



Knitting is one of the oldest methods of making clothes. There are even Egyptian knitted artefacts dating back to the 5th Century AD. Hand knitting can be done very easily with just needles and wool, or yarn, without requiring heavy equipment.

The knitting process involves interlinking or knotting a series of loops of wool using needles. There are different stitch types, from the basic knit stitch to purl stitches which resemble wavy arches.

An impressive property of knitting

is that it enhances the ‘stretchability’ of a fabric. For example, single knit fabric is stretchy and lightweight.

Interestingly, knitting used to be a male-only occupation. The first knitting union was founded in Paris in 1527 – with no women allowed! And, initially, wool was not a popular fibre to knit with, instead cotton and silk were favoured. Now wool is widespread, with wool farmers breeding sheep specifically for strong, soft wool.

Knitting Patterns

Have a look at these knitting patterns. Which are your favourites and why?



Knitting and Sewing Quiz

See if you can complete all the knitting/ sewing terminology

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1) N _ _ D L _ W _ _ K | 8) _ T I _ _ H |
| 2) H _ M | 9) T _ _ L _ |
| 3) B O _ B I _ _ | 10) S K _ _ _ |
| 4) E _ _ L _ T | 11) R _ B |
| 5) G _ U _ _ | 12) M _ R K _ _ |
| 6) L I _ _ _ G | 13) G R _ _ T _ _ G |
| 7) E M _ _ O _ D _ _ Y | 14) K _ _ T |

Answers

1 - Needlework, 2 - Hem, 3 - Bobbins, 4 - Eyelet, 5 - Gauge, 6 - Lining, 7 - Embroidery, 8 - Stitch, 9 - , 10 - Skein, 11 - Rib, 12 - Marker, 13 - Grafting, 14 - Knit