10 things to do before you start sewing!

© 2020 Crafty Gemini LLC. All rights reserved.

www.craftygemini.com

1). **Find your user manual.**

Dig it out; download it, or google it and then download it; but find that manual. This is the ultimate guide to your specific make and model of machine.

2). **Pick the correct thread for your project:**

Rule of thumb: If it's quilting cotton or similar use an 80/12 universal needle. If it stretches use a Ballpoint/Jersey needle. If you can see through it use a 70/10 universal. I love **this brand of needles.**

3). **Wind your bobbin:**

Check your manual for details on size and type. Most newer machines will also have illustrations or a color coated diagram at the top of your machine to show you how to wind a bobbin.

4). **Thread your machine:**

Learn how to do it via your user manual or with a YouTube video for your specific make and model. Most newer machines will also have numbers and/or lines marked on the machine to show you how to thread it and in exactly what order.

5). **Put a NEW Needle in your machine:**

Needles are pretty inexpensive and can be the main culprit between you sailing through a project or wanting to throw the machine out the window. Rule of thumb: change needle every 8 hours of sewing time.

6). **Lift your presser foot:**

Locate the presser foot lift via your manual or with YouTube videos for your machine. Remember, the presser foot has to be UP for you to place your fabric in the machine or remove it after you are done stitching. And always remember that the presser foot lever must be DOWN before you touch that foot pedal.

7). **Set the correct stitch settings:**

Select a stitch based on the fabric and project you are working on. 98% of the time you will probably be using a straight stitch. A good default length for a straight stitch is 2.5mm.

8). **Test your thread and stitches:**

Test your stitching on scrap pieces of similar fabric before starting on the real thing. ALWAYS do your test stitching through two layers of fabric to mimic what you'll do in the real project.

9). **Check your seam allowance:**

Double check your seam allowance and set a guide if needed. These are my favorite seam guides for beginners/kids. Whether you sew clothes, home decor, quilts or handbags each pattern has it's own designated seam allowance. You MUST follow that seam allowance or the garment will not fit, your quilt blocks will not match up and your handbag may turn out smaller than designed.

10). **Bring bobbin thread up: (for those of you sewing on vintage or other mechanical machines)**

If you are sewing on a vintage/mechanical machine bring the bobbin thread up before you start sewing and leave long tails. Follow these steps: Insert a full bobbin and thread your machine as usual. Once the thread is through the needle eye pull 6" of thread out and hold on to it with your left hand. With your right hand turn the hand wheel on your machine TOWARDS YOU until the needle goes all the way down and comes back up. Then give the thread in your left hand a tug and you should see the bobbin thread come up. Grab both tail ends- top thread (via needle) and the bobbin thread and pull about 6"-7" of thread out and drape it over the back of the machine. Repeat this setup every time you are going to sew a seam.

Ready to start your first project? **CLICK HERE FOR OVER 100 FREE video tutorials just for beginners!**