

Topic: **FUNDAMENTALS OF TEXTILES AND CLOTHING**

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BASIC SEWING EQUIPMENT

Most of the equipment needed for clothing construction can be found in almost any home, be it a mansion or a furnished room, for these items are indispensable to womankind. The excellence of the tools of clothing construction add a great deal to the quality of the finished garment. For beginners, the list of equipment's which follow is more than adequate.

Equipment

Shears

Cutting shears eight to ten inches long with a bent handle are best. The bent handle makes it possible to cut faster and easier while the fabric remains flat on the table. Keep your shears sharp. Never use them for anything but cutting fabrics.

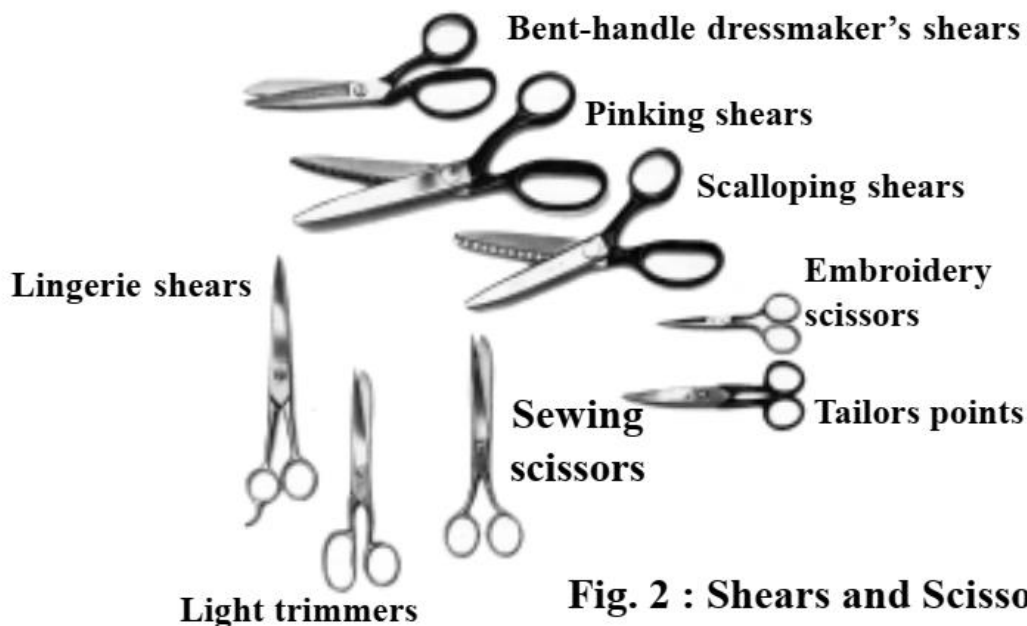


Fig. 2 : Shears and Scissors

Scissors

Scissors about six inches long with good sharp points are preferable. Always have them ready to hand, since you will use them for clipping, slashing, trimming and other cutting operations.

Embroidery scissors

These scissors are not necessary equipment, but are extremely useful for undoing seams, cutting threads, clipping for fine or delicate detail.

Pinking shears

Get a size of pinking shears that is comfortable for you to use. Try them out for weight. Use them only for pinking seams, or decorative edges on felt.

Pins

Insist on good steel pins, and buy them by the box. They are less expensive when purchased this way and are easier to use. Most of us can take pins from a box more easily than from a pin cushion, and you should keep a box by the machine, the table and the ironing board.

Ruler

Several good rulers are available in most departmental stores. Your ruler should be made of metal and have a slide for marking hems. The width of the ruler is convenient for marking button holes. Keep the ruler by your sewing machine so that you can measure and check as you sew.

Ironing board

When you sew, your iron and ironing board are most important. The professional dress maker actually does a good deal of “sewing” at the ironing board. Be sure it is set up when you start to sew. As you learn these short, easy methods, you will realize how important “press as you sew” can be.

Steam iron

The instant steam or dry iron is preferable. It is impossible to do really professional sewing without one. You probably have one for pressing and caring for your clothes. It is a tremendous time over for professional work.

Tailors chalk

Be sure you get chalk, not wax. It comes in many colours, but white will be usually enough. Chalk is widely used nowadays instead of tailor tacking since it is a good deal faster and just as accurate.

Tape measure

Get a good strong tape measure, either plastic or plastic-coated, so that it won't stretch. Be sure it is numbered from either end. You'll use it in countless sewing operations.

Yardstick

You'll use it for checking lines and hems. If you decide to try your hand at altering a pattern, this is a necessary equipment.



Tape measure

Yardstick



Fig. 3 : Measuring devices

Tracing wheel and carbon paper

The tracing wheel is not a necessity; all marking can be done with tailor's chalk. There are, however, many instances when the tracing wheel is faster. Dressmaker's carbon paper is not the blue carbon used in typing. It is a special

carbon to be used with the tracing wheel. It comes in several colours, but white and yellow are probably all you will need.

Dress form

Unless it is an actual duplication of your own figure, the dress form is not a great help in fitting. However, collars, shoulder lines and other details can be checked on a standard form. There are dress forms which can be made to conform to your body. These are rather light weight and not too practical if also used for designing.

Sewing machine

No matter how beautifully you sew, you don't want to make a whole dress by hand. It is unnecessarily time consuming. There are so many good makes of sewing machine. An ordinary sewing machine which comes with a variety of attachments will be perfectly suitable. You'll get instruction for the use and care of the machine when you purchase it. If you have an old machine, have it serviced regularly by the manufacturers and learn how to care for it properly to keep it in good condition. Now we proceed further to learn the basic sewing techniques for clothing construction.