

## Decorative Thread

Amber wants to use the fancy stitches on her sewing machine to decorate her denim vest and skirt. She will need to purchase some thread that will look nice and work best for the sewing machine. Help her pick out the best thread to use with the decorative stitches on her machine.

Rank the thread samples from best to worst:

1. A cone of red **Maxi-Lock** serger thread
2. A large spool of red **Sulky** rayon thread
3. A skein of red **DMC** embroidery floss
4. A spool of red **Coats and Clark All-purpose** thread

**Rank:** 2-4-1-3

**Cuts:** 2-4-9

(Hornel scores, for online score calculations see:

<http://www.worldaccessnet.com/%7EEnormans/hornel.html>)

## Reasons

2. The spool of Sulky rayon embroidery thread is Amber's best choice. This thread is designed specifically for decorative sewing on the sewing machine. The rayon thread has a nice sheen that will show off the decorative stitch patterns Amber uses. It is also finer than regular sewing thread so it will not make the stitches too dense. This will help the machine feed the decorative stitches better.

4. The spool of Coats and Clark All-purpose thread is Amber's next best choice. It has a nice sheen but not as nice as the rayon. It is heavier so Amber may have to make some adjustments to the density of the stitch patterns she chooses so the thread lies smoothly and the machine feeds the fabric evenly.

1. The cone of serger thread is Amber's next choice. It is fine but it has very little sheen and it is really designed to be used in a serger. Amber should select it over the skein of DMC embroidery floss as it would be easier to use as it is conveniently wrapped around a cone that will make it feed nicely through the sewing machine.

3. The skein of DMC embroidery floss has very nice sheen but it is intended for hand embroidery. For very small sections of machine embroidery, one could wind some on a spool to use in the machine but this would be very time consuming and the embroidery floss is not as strong as thread intended for use on a sewing machine. It would fray and break easily. This would be Amber's worst choice.

## Interfacing

Sabrina is making a blouse out of the 4-H fabric for camp (4-H fabric was the same weight as the quilter's cotton fabric). Her leader has told her to buy a lightweight, non-woven, fusible interfacing material for her facings. Help her find the best interfacing.

Rank the samples from best to worse.

1. A sample of a non-woven, non-fusible, lightweight interfacing
2. A sample of a non-woven, fusible, lightweight interfacing
3. A sample of a non-woven, fusible medium to heavyweight interfacing
4. A sample of a knit, fusible, lightweight interfacing

**Rank:** 2-4-1-3

**Cuts:** 1-4-10

(Hornel scores, for online score calculations see:

<http://www.worldaccessnet.com/%7EEnormans/hornel.html>)

## Reasons

2. The type of interfacing in this sample is Sabrina's best choice. It is fusible and lightweight. It is intended for use with woven fabrics like the one Sabrina has chosen for her blouse. It will not make the collar and facings too stiff.

4. The interfacing in this sample is lightweight and fusible but it is a knit and is considered best used with knits. However, it will be easier to use than the non-fusible interfacing in sample 1 and it does meet all the requirements that Sabrina's leader requested. It can be used in woven fabrics in place of the non-woven fusible interfacing that is normally recommended. This would be Sabrina's second best choice.

1. Sabrina should choose this interfacing over the one in #3. It is lightweight and it will make suitable interfacings for her woven fabric. However, it is more difficult to use because it is not fusible and it does not meet the requirements that Sabrina's leader recommended.

3. This interfacing sample is fusible and non-woven but it will be unsuitable for the collar and interfacings, as it is too heavy. This sample is ranked last because it would be the least satisfactory interfacing for Sabrina to use in her blouse.

## Class: Double Stitched Hem

Ali is making a t-shirt out of a stretch knit fabric. She wants her hem to look like those on the t-shirts she has seen in the stores. These t-shirts have hems that appear to have two straight lines of stitching next to each other. She does not have serger that does a cover stitch (special double needle stitch with stretch for knit fabrics, used for hemming and decorative top stitching).

Help Ali select the best needle to do a double row of stitching on her t-shirt with a regular zig-zag sewing machine. All of the needles below fit in her machine. Rank the needles from best to worst.

Samples: Use packages of needles and a sample of knit interlock.

### 4 Coverstitch hem, catching hem raw edge.

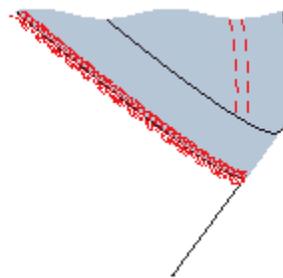


Image above from: <http://sewing.about.com/library/sewnews/library/aatech0603.htm>

- 4 Double needle for stretch knit fabrics
- 1 Single needle for stretch knit fabrics
- 2 Universal double needle for most woven and knit fabrics
- 3 Denim double needle

Double Stitched Hem

Official Placement: 4-1-2-3

Cuts: 2,1,9

Hormel scores, for online score calculations see:

<http://www.worldaccessnet.com/%7Enormans/hormel.html>

#4 This double needle is designed for stretch knits. It is best to use because Ali will not have to stitch her hem twice to get two lines of stitching and the tips of the of the needles are rounded so they will not cut delicate fibers in knit fabrics. It will prevent skipped stitches as it is designed to keep stretchy fabrics from bouncing when the needle comes up out of the fabric. Also, double needles used with all-purpose thread build in some stretch into the stitching so the hems do not pop out as easily.

#1 This is a single needle designed for stretch knits. Ali will have to stitch two rows of stitching to make the hem look like ready made t-shirts. She may want to use woolly nylon, a stretchy thread, to build some stretch into the stitching to prevent popped stitching when the hem

stretches. However, the needle is designed to prevent skipped stitches on knits and the point is rounded. This is Ali's second best choice.

#2 This is a double needle designed for most woven and knit fabrics. Most likely, the slightly rounded points will not damage the knit. This double needle is not designed to prevent the fabric from bouncing so Ali may get skipped stitches. She can prevent this if she stabilizes her fabric. Starching the fabric may help to stabilize it or she can fuse the hem with fusible web. This will stiffen the hem a bit and it will not bounce as much when the needle comes out of the fabric. Ali should choose this needle over a denim double needle which may damage a knit fabric.

#3 This is a denim double needle. Ali should not choose this needle for knits of any kind. The sharp points will cut the fibers and leave holes in the fabric. This is Ali's worst choice.

## Best Use of Pinking Shears

Jaime got a pair of pinking shears for her birthday. Help her choose the best way to use them. Rank her choices from best to worst.

1. To finish seams on firmly woven fabric
2. For cutting fabric pieces from paper pattern pieces
3. For trimming and notching curved seams on fabric craft projects and lightweight fabrics
4. For cutting paper shapes for scrapbooking

Rank: 1 3 2 4

Cuts: 3 4 8

(Hornel scores, for online score calculations see:

<http://www.worldaccessnet.com/%7Enormans/hornel.html>)

**References:** *Sewing Skills Checklist*, Fun with Clothes (for ages 5-8)

### Reasons:

1. This is the best way for Jaime to use pinking shears. When she makes garments, she needs to finish the seams of fabrics that ravel. Pinking shears can be used to quickly finish the seams of tightly woven fabrics.
3. This is the second best way to use pinking shears. It is better than using them to cut out the fabric pieces when she is getting ready to sew. Pinking shears can be used to finish and trim curved seams on craft projects and lightweight fabrics, as they will notch the curve, allowing it to curve smoothly. On heavier fabrics, it is best to grade the seams and clip or notch the curves.
2. This choice would be better than # 4. Jaime should use the pinking shears on fabric but using them to cut out her fabric pieces would not give her a very accurate and smooth edge to follow with the seam guide on the sewing machine.
4. Jaime should not use a good, new pair of pinking shears to trim paper for scrapbooks. She should buy a pair of scissors that make fancy cuts on paper for scrapbooking or use an old pair of pinking shears.

## Pinking Shears

Jose is buying his mom some pinking shears for her birthday. She wants to have them for finishing the edges of seams. Help him make the right choice.

Rank the samples from best to worse.

1. A pair of Wiss pinking shears
2. A set of Fiskars Softouch spring action scissors
3. Rotary cutter with a pinking blade
4. A pair of Fiskars Corner Edgers with a zigzag pattern similar to pinking shears

**Rank:** 1-3-2-4

**Cuts:** 4-5-6

(Hornel scores, for online score calculations see:

<http://www.worldaccessnet.com/%7Enormans/hornel.html>)

### Reasons

1. These are pinking shears. Exactly what Jose's mom wants. This is Jose's best choice.

3. The rotary cutter has a pinking blade in it. It would be difficult to use to trim seams but it does pink fabric when you use it to cut. It would be the next best choice for Jose.

2. The Fiskars Softouch spring action scissors are used like regular shears for cutting fabric. They don't pink the edges of the fabric and would not work for what Jose's mom wants to do. This is a better choice than the paper cutters in #4 as they will cut fabric and will be useful to someone who sews.

4. These are paper scissors. They make decorative corners on paper similar to the pinked edges pinking shears make on fabric but they don't cut fabric at all. This would be the worst choice Jose could make.

## 2005 Class 3: Quilting Camp Notions

Aaron is making a quilt in day camp. He has already purchased fabric and batting. Help him purchase his sewing notions. This is his list:

- ✂ Long quilting pins
- ✂ #1 sharp safety pins (1 inch long)
- ✂ Pincushion (magnetic is best)
- ✂ 5  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch sharp scissors
- ✂ Size 10 Crochet cotton (looks like colored string, no embroidery floss or yarn)
- ✂ Large spool of all-purpose thread (neutral or coordinating color)
- ✂ Sharp hand-sewing needle with a large eye to use with the crochet cotton to tie his quilt
- ✂ Box to store his notions

Rank his selections from best to worst.

Samples: Find notions as described below.

Official Placement: 3-2-4-1

Cuts: 1,6,7

(Hormel scores, for online score calculations see:

<http://www.worldaccessnet.com/%7Enormans/hormel.html>)

#3 is the best selection of sewing notions. Aaron has everything on his list.

#2 is the next best selections of sewing notions. Aaron has everything on the list except that the spool of all-purpose thread is small. He was supposed to get a large spool.

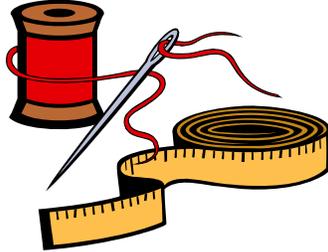
#4 is next to the last selection because Aaron only got two things on the list that he needs. He has #1 safety pins and a pincushion. He doesn't have a box; he has small straight pins, baby yarn, 6 inch ruler, tape measure, and a small spool of thread.

#1 is the worst selection of notions. The only thing that is on the list is the large spool of all-purpose thread. The safety pins are #2's but the 4-H leader requested #1 safety pins for basting the quilt. Aaron has no box. The bag also contains short curved embroidery scissors, perle (or pearl) cotton embroidery floss, short straight pins, #2 safety pins, seam ripper, point turner, and tape measure.

## Junior Class: Sewing Box

Alicia's primary 4-H group will be hand sewing all of their projects. They will learn simple embroidery and utility stitches to make and decorate felt Christmas decorations and vests.

Help Alicia fill her sewing box. Which sewing box has the best tools for hand sewing?



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|--|--|
| <p>1. Pinking shears<br/><a href="#">Seam Guide</a> (unique shaped, little ruler to check seam allowances)<br/>Skein of baby yarn<br/>How to knit book<br/>Buttonhole thread<br/>Small quilting needles<br/>Seam ripper<br/>Hooks and eyes</p> | <p>3. Thimble<br/>Variety pack of hand sewing needles<br/>Short, sharp scissors<br/>6 inch ruler<br/>Pins in a pincushion<br/>Different colors of embroidery floss<br/>Quilting thread in a variety of colors<br/>Variety of buttons</p> |
| <p>2. Finger protector<br/>Tape measure<br/>Long shears<br/>Large needlepoint needles<br/>One spool of neutral quilting thread<br/>Pins in a box<br/>Snaps</p>   | <p>4. Rotary cutter<br/>6-inch square ruler<br/>Cone of serger thread<br/>Package of sewing machine needles<br/>Fusible web on a roll<br/>Safety pins<br/>Glue sticks and glue gun</p>   |



## Sewing Box

Reasons: 3 2 1 4

Cuts: 4 4 7

(Hormel scores, for online score calculations see:

<http://www.worldaccessnet.com/%7Enormans/hormel.html>)

3. This box has the best variety of hand sewing tools and notions. Alicia can use the sharp scissors to cut out felt Christmas decorations and trim thread. The large variety of hand sewing needles will offer the best selection for the types of threads Alicia has in her sewing box. The embroidery floss and quilting thread will be good choices for decorating and constructing her hand-sewn projects. The variety of buttons will be useful for decoration. Having the pins in a pincushion is safer than just having pins in a box that might spill. The 6-inch ruler is handy and easy for small hands to use. The thimble is a good tool to have for hand sewing to protect the finger that pushes the needle through the fabric. Alicia should have a thimble in her sewing box.

2. This box has some things that might be useful for hand sewing the projects that Alicia's group will be making. The shears can be used to cut out the felt vest but they may be awkward for small hands to use when cutting out the decoration. Alicia might have use for the snaps for her vest and decorations but they are not as useful as the buttons. The finger protector might fit a small finger so it may work in place of a thimble. The quilting thread is a nice hand sewing thread because it is strong and has a glaze that keeps the thread from tangling easily. One spool won't give Alicia the choices she has the box above. The large eye needles are easy to thread and may be sharp enough for the felt but the dull points are designed for needlepoint and cross-stitch. The straight pins may be needed to hold her projects together while she hand stitches the seam but the box might spill easily. It is safer to have a pincushion. This box has a better selection of tools than the box below.

1. This box has a few things that are useful for Alicia's projects but the needles won't work with the yarn and buttonhole thread because the eyes are too small. The small needles may be very difficult for small hands to use, too. The knitting booklet is of no use for hand sewing but the pinking shears will offer a way to cut out felt with a decorative edge. The seam ripper is a good tool to have for machine sewers but not a necessary for tool for handwork. A good pair of sharp scissors would be more useful. The hooks and eyes might be useful but they are very small and difficult for small fingers to hold in place. The [unique ruler for checking seam allowances](#) is more useful for machine sewers.

4. This box is the least useful. The notions are better for quilting, machine sewing, and crafts. Alicia has no hand sewing needles and the serger thread will fray and twist easily when used for hand sewing. It is not as strong or decorative as the thread or yarn in the

other boxes. The safety pins might be of use in place of straight pins. The rotary cutter can be dangerous for young sewers to learn to use. This box is Alicia's worst choice.

### Unique Seam Guide:

