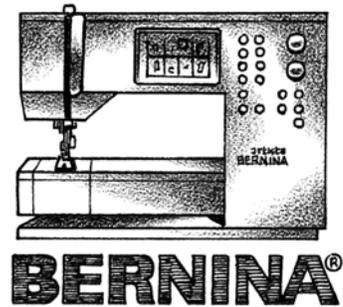


Streamlined Sewing: 10 Timely Tips



1 Look for projects and patterns with limited pieces and little detail. Take classes to learn new techniques instead of trying to figure it out on your own. In the long run, you will pick it up faster and will waste less time than using the trial and error method.

2 If possible, leave your machine out and available at all times. The less you have to do to “get ready” to sew, the more likely you will frequently stop and stitch.

3 Read pattern instructions thoroughly before beginning and highlight any parts that look a little tricky or unfamiliar. Visualize each step and work through it in your head, trying to anticipate any unusual areas. Mark a big X over the sections that don't apply to your project. This will make it easy to keep your place, and prevent confusion caused by reading extraneous directions.

4 Think through each task and decide if it is something you can do by machine rather than by hand. Not only is it usually faster to sew techniques such as sewing on buttons by machine, it often lasts longer and doesn't have to be redone in the near future.



5 Group your tasks and work in an assembly line fashion. Spend an evening cutting out patterns, another one seaming and joining the major pieces, and another working on the finishing details. The less you jump around, the faster your projects will come together.

6 Keep a log or journal of all of your sewing projects. Most sewers give away the majority of their creative pursuits and it is sometimes easy to feel defeated and unmotivated; but when you look at all you've accomplished, it will keep you excited and spur you on!

7 Make it a ritual to keep your machine clean and in tip-top shape. Have it serviced during your birthday month and make a concerted effort to do quick cleanings on a regular basis.

8 Organize projects with pattern, cut fabric, and notions packaged together so you don't waste time “getting ready”.

9 Discipline yourself to sew regularly even if it is only 10 minutes at a time. It's amazing how much those little snippets of time add up and before you know it, you've finished another project!

10 Be prepared. Keep a tote bag with you for hand sewing items or related reading so you can make good use of your time when attending ball games, waiting at the dentist, or commuting to work by car pool, bus, or train.

