SEWING HINTS
FOR THE WORKROOM AND HOME

Tag Your Piece-Bag

Here is a sensible method of tagging the contents of a piece-bag. On the outside of the bag fasten the largest procurable safety-pin. Attach samples to this pin of every remnant that goes into the bag. A great amount of time and patience is saved by this simple device, for one can see at a glance just what the bag contains.

Prevent Ball of Wool from Rolling

A good plan to keep the ball of wool from rolling when crocheting or knitting, is to wind so the thread will pull from the center; a little care in winding will give much satisfaction. Wind over the four fingers a dozen times or so, slip off, wind loosely over this at first, then proceed as usual in winding; only keep one end open. When finished, the wool or thread should pull out from the center. Fasten outside end; no more rolling balls.

Cutting Bias Bands

An excellent way to cut and point bias bands is in the following manner: With a ruler and something which will mark the cloth—chalk for dark colors and a hard pencil for light are good if not used too heavily—mark the bands on the material. Then carefully join the two ends of the cloth so that the chalk lines exactly meet, only have the first line on one end, meet the second on the other, thus forming a spiral. Stitch on the machine; then with a needle and thread put a few secure stitches each side of the marks to stay the stitching. With sharp scissors begin at the place where the first band extends beyond the second, and cut round and round, following the chalk line, until the whole is cut into one piece all perfectly joined.

Boning Belts and Collars

Princess or one-piece wash dresses joined with a belt may be boned in the following simple manner: Cut the whalebone or un-
covered featherbone to the desired lengths. Now cut linen tape, which must be a little wider than the bone, into lengths at least two inches more than the strips of bone. At the top and bottom, fold over the tape an inch or more and stitch down at each side. This makes a sort of envelope or receptacle at top and bottom, into which the bone, when slightly curved, will easily slip after the tapes have been fastened into the inside of a gown. When the dress is to be laundered the bones are removed and reinserted after the ironing.

All wash-collars and wash-belts may be boned after the same handy fashion. One set of bones for collars and one for belts will suffice, as it takes but an instant to remove them from one and slip into another if the tapes are made uniform on each. Another very great advantage is the fact that the boning never needs renewing.

To Make Sewing Silk Run Evenly

When the silk thread on the machine runs off the spool too fast, and causes it to tighten around the spindle, cut a piece of blotting paper or thick cloth, make a hole in the center and slip on the spindle before the spool, and you will have no more trouble.

Braid Used for Buttonholing

An excellent substitute for buttonholing is found in the use of the familiar coronation braid. It may be whipped along any edge where buttonholing is commonly used. This is suggested for garments made of inexpensive material for general use.

A Simple and Economical Way to Braid

is to trace the design on tissue paper, then baste to the material that is to be braided. Proceed to sew on the braid, sewing through both paper and material, until the design has been all covered with the braid, after which remove the paper by carefully tearing it off. The paper is a protection to delicate material while braiding, although it works equally as well on dark material.

Button Moulds

Before covering wooden button-moulds for wash frocks, boil
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Turning in Hems

When turning in hems on wiry or sheer materials like swiss, it is often much easier to take a warm iron and press them down by the eye, which is generally accurate for long distances. This gives better results in many cases than measuring, as a wiry swiss will slip in spite of you when you attempt to measure accurately for a deep hem or tuck.

Hints for Amateurs

Neatness is always a requisite of good sewing, and besides the fact that durability is increased, there is a satisfaction in knowing that the inside of a garment need not be withheld from a critical eye. Binding the seams is a little thing, but most effectual in the attainment of the neatness that marks the careful sewer.

If it is difficult to adjust binding, the edges of seams can be pinking—a method in favor with tailors. There is no fraying of the edges, and the bulky line is obviated.

Hems of heavy material can be successfully and neatly finished if the raw edge of just one turn be stitched down underneath a pliable tape of the same color. Two rows of stitching are necessary, but the scheme is worth a trial.

If a bias strip be used for binding armholes or seams, it can be adjusted easily and evenly if it be creased in the center before it is placed on the edge of the seam.

When cutting very sheer chiffons, batistes or soft materials, it is well to draw a thread as a guide line.

It is better to shrink washable materials before making them into garments. A little salt in the water will set the color, and it is only necessary to wring out and hang by the selvedge on the line.

What Not To Do

Do not sew trimmings or buttons on tight beneath. Use very fine thread or sewing silk for basting velvet, and to press the seams open them, very slightly dampen and run the seam across the narrow end of a warm iron standing on the broad end. Do not allow the weight of an iron on it.

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them well in strong soda-water. This will take all the turpentine out of the wood and prevent the buttons from discoloring the material when the frock is washed.

In Ripping Buttons

off old blouses, etc., string them at once on a bit of strong thread and tie together. Next time you want a set of buttons you will not have to pick them out from several hundred others.

To Make Even Buttonholes

In making buttonholes in sheer, soft material, a perfectly firm straight edge may be made by even a novice in buttonholes if a very fine cambric needle is run through the cut from one end to the other, so that the needle is directly over the opening; the buttonholing is done over the needle, then the needle is pulled out and inserted again outside of the work, and the second side worked over it, the little cross-stitch at the ends being made while the needle is not in place.

To Make a Neat, Firm Buttonhole in a Jacket

Cut in waste material the length of buttonhole required, measure and mark the exact length with thread where the buttonhole is to be; stitch quite closely on each side of thread; cut between the rows of stitching; stay in the usual way with a few over and over stitches at each end, passing the thread along the edges between the ends, and work. The stitching prevents the canvas interlining from slipping, also the goods from pulling out.

Mending the Gloves

Use cotton thread for mending the gloves, as silk thread will cut the kid. Do not use the over and over stitch as it always shows so plainly. Take a stitch on one side of the seam and then a stitch on the opposite side, and draw them together. This keeps the regular seam intact and conceals the fact that the glove is mended.

A Short Hatpin Is Useful at Sewing Machine

With a short hatpin one can guide and place the work. Keep the hatpin in the sewing-machine drawer.
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Embroidery Hoops for Darning

Embroidery hoops are the handiest things to use for darning. Draw the material tightly in the same direction of the rent or tear and notice the improvement in your work.

A New Dignity for the Curling Iron

When further sewing is blocked, for lack of a hot iron to press a tiny seam, heat the curling iron, and the work may go merrily on. In the winter, when the hot flatiron has been forgotten until needed, the poker thrust into the fire will heat in a moment and answer for a short seam. The curling iron will often help a person living in a hotel, where hot irons are not so easy to have.

Some Sewing Items

If you have difficulty in hemming or stitching chiffon, soft silks, etc., try laying a piece of thin paper under the goods and stitching through this. The paper may then be torn away and the goods will not be puckered nor require pressing.

If you are a poor buttonhole-maker or pressed for time, try a machine-made buttonhole. They are neat, quickly made, and last as long as if worked by hand. Cut the buttonhole perfectly straight, overcast the edges and ends by hand, then stitch all around two or three times by machine, and you will have a nice buttonhole with very little time and labor.

Keep a piece of sandpaper in the machine drawer for rough or blunted needles; a file, too, will quickly smooth a dull machine needle, and scissors may be sharpened on a large needle or the stem of a glass (or piece of glass) by opening and shutting quickly, as if you were trying to cut the glass.

A Smart Laundry Bag

An attractive looking laundry bag that is showy enough for a gift or a prize, yet it is easily made, may be cut from a yard and a half of cretonne, flowered chintz or denim.

The full width of the material is used, the ends doubled over and the three edges sewed tight on the machine, all but enough
space for turning. When turned the rest of the seam is blind-stitched together.

Three inches from the top a ribbon is stitched through the two sides of the bag, being sewed on each edge to form a casing for a narrow stick, shorter than the width of the material. This gives the necessary fullness to the bag and leaves a small frill at the top.

A lengthwise slit is now cut on the right side of the bag, slightly below the ribbon casing and as long as is desired for an opening. This slit is bound with narrow ribbon the same color as the casing.

Hooks or ribbon loops are added at the upper, back corners of the bag to suspend it on the inner door of a closet.

Such laundry bags can be easily washed by removing the stick. Charming ones are made from the rose-covered cretonne bound in pink or green wash satin ribbon or colored linen braid. One smart looking bag that was also distinctly serviceable was made from brown denim, with a casing and binding of brown satin ribbon. The monogram of the owner was worked on the front below the end of the opening.

Larger bags can be easily made by increasing the amount of material.

**A Mode of Mending**

that comes very handy in case an accident happens to a carpet after it is tacked to the floor is this: Find a piece of carpet as near like that on the floor as possible, and a little larger than the place that needs patching. Make some paste with flour and cold water the consistency of cold cream. Paste the side of the patch that goes next the carpet, and lay it on just as you want it, then with hot sad-irons press until dry; if properly done, one can hardly find the patch after a day or two.

**To Utilize Embroidered Monograms**

Take the embroidered initial or monogram from old bolster and pillow cases and use them on new slips. Cut letter from old slip, leaving a three-inch square around it (letters for bed-linen are usually two inches), then cut the material to form an oval
leaving a small margin to turn under. Sew to the new slip, then outline with embroidery-cotton to conceal stitches. Outline another row one-fourth of an inch from the first and work eyelets at intervals between the rows to form a medallion. The result is even prettier than when first embroidered.

**Economy in Machine Needles**

Keep a piece of white soap in the machine drawer, and when stitching anything with much dressing in the goods, rub the seams with the soap, and you will find you can stitch with ease and with no danger of breaking the needle.

Always keep on hand in the machine drawer a small whetstone, and if your needle becomes dull, sharpen it on the whetstone. You can make it as good as new.

**To Prevent Pricking the Fingers**

One accustomed to doing needlework of any kind is aware of the discomfort caused by the needle pricking the finger which holds the underside of the cloth. This can be prevented if the worker will moisten a small strip of court plaster and stick it on the end of the finger.

**Dress Protector**

When the yoke of a night-dress becomes worn, cut off the night-dress skirt, take out the sleeves and sew it together across the top, leaving a small opening through which the hook of a suit-hanger may be slipped, and use it to protect a nice dress hanging in the closet. Washed but seldom it will last a long time, and will be found more convenient than a bag, as it is so much easier to insert the dress without crushing.

**Rusty Shears**

A good pair of shears, carelessly left out-of-doors for some time, seemed hopelessly rusty, were scoured with salt moistened in scalding vinegar, soaked for a day in kerosene oil, then dried, sharpened and vigorously rubbed with a flannel cloth dipped in sweet oil; they were restored to their original use and brightness.
To Sharpen Scissors

Cut them rapidly on the neck of a small glass bottle, or better still, on a ground glass stopper. It trues the edges and makes them cut like new.

Take a fine file and sharpen each blade, being careful to keep the same angle as they had at first; file till rough places are all taken out. Put a little oil on the edges of the blades and snap together. Then wipe off all the oil.

When Stitching Seams

When stitching heavy white cotton or linen, rub the seam to be stitched with hard white soap, and the needle will not cut the material.

Sewing Machine Hints

When your sewing machine belt becomes loose, do not stop to take it off in order to tighten it. Just drop a little machine oil upon it, and you will find the belt tight after a few turns of the wheel. One sometimes has trouble because the needle cuts heavy cotton or linen goods when stitching. If the seam to be stitched is rubbed with hard white soap you will have no more difficulty.

Sewing Notes

In sewing on buttons leave them a little loose from the garment so that the thread may be wound around in order to insure a good fastening. It is a good plan to place a pin between the button and the cloth, passing the thread over the pin; then when the thread is fastened remove the pin and the button is sufficiently loose.

In padding embroidery use the chain stitch. This is an especially good hint for making scalloped edges.

In making patch work, if you cut your pattern in table oil cloth instead in paper, you will find the work much more satisfactory. The oilcloth pattern will not slip when cutting and there is no danger of snipping off a portion with the scissors.

Some women use soft wrapping twine to pad buttonholes on children's garments. Place this wrapping twine as near the edge
as possible and work over it. It will not show when the buttonhole is finished and the buttonholes will be very strong.

**In Facing a Circular or Gored Skirt**

do not cut a bias facing, but take the goods as it is in the piece and lay it on the skirt (on the right side), beginning with the center of the front. Pin in place, turn over and trim off at edge of skirt. Now measure the width you wish your facing to be and cut. Follow this plan around the skirt, and you will find that you have a nice, smooth facing, with no little plaits or gathers and no waste of cloth. Stitch around the bottom, turn on the wrong side and turn in and hem or stitch the top of facing, afterward sewing the joinings (which will be selvage if facing has been put on correctly) over and over.

**Turning a Dress Skirt**

If a skirt has become faded or soiled, it can often be turned to good advantage. First, clean it as thoroughly as possible. Rip one seam, turn and baste carefully before ripping another. If there are plaits re-fold, following the old creases, making what was formerly the wrong side the right. If the skirt is a good hanging one, any home dressmaker can do the work satisfactorily, for it is not nearly so difficult a task as to make a new one. One seam at a time is a much better way than to rip all the seams apart before beginning to baste.

**For Darning Stockings**

Electric light bulbs that are usually thrown aside when burned out make an excellent addition to the work basket and can be used in darning stockings. They are much lighter than the articles generally used for the same purpose.

**An Excellent Spool-Rack**

To keep machine drawers in perfect order, saw a thin board to fit the bottom of the drawer, mark it with rings, using a spool, and put a peg or nail in the center of each ring. Now each spool is in its own place on a nail and the thread does not become tangled.

**The Modern Sweater**

Now that sweaters have become a staple article of dress and are
custom made, big improvements have developed in their cut (if one may so speak of garments built up of stitches) and consequently they have a grace and shapeliness unknown to sweaters of former seasons.

In the new sweaters any stretching of the shoulder seam is avoided by a length of strong tape, one end of which is sewed to the armhole, the other end to the edge of the neck. This tape simply forces the shoulder to keep its shape.

Seams no longer are overhanded together with the yarn of which the sweater is made, but are closely stitched with cotton or silk which will never stretch. An excellent idea is to bind the seams with an extra strong cotton tape that is machine-stitched in place.

A Table Scarf Resembling Oriental Work

On a gaudy red and green small “Brusselette” rug, colored a rich cardinal red work a simple cross-stitch pattern across each end with yellow, dull-blue and black silkateen, double in the needle. The scarf is lined with red silkoline and looks quite expensive, though the original rug cost only forty cents.

When Sewing Taffeta

Use a thin, fine needle for sewing taffeta. The blunt end of a needle long used is liable to pucker the goods, and the stitches will not be even. A heavier needle may be used in sewing China silk.

A Substitute for Tape Needle

A safety-pin makes the nicest kind of a tape needle for all purposes. It never catches in the goods, for the edges are round, and it never loses the tape for you close the pin as you pin it into the tape or ribbon, always using a pin the size of hem or beading.

To Mend an Ugly Tear

Sometimes you are unfortunate enough to make an ugly tear in a handsome new gown. It may be mended very successfully, and if in an inconspicuous place it will not show at all. Lay the tear edge to edge, and baste across it, being careful that while the edges meet, they do not overlap. Cut a piece of rubber tissue, which may be obtained at any tailoring shop, to amply cover the tear. Lay the garment on the ironing board right side down, place the rubber over the
rent, and over the rubber lay a piece of goods of the same material as that of the garment to be mended. Keep both rubber and goods perfectly smooth, and press out with a hot iron for several minutes. Now cut out the basting threads on the right side, and shave off any rough edges remaining. When there is no material of the dress on hand, a piece of light-weight woolen goods of the same color will answer. That the bottoms of men’s trousers are held together in this way is a good sign that the method is practical and successful.

A Tonic for Sewing Machines

After some years’ usage every sewing machine is likely to clog up with fine dust which the machine oil collects on the bearings. As soon as the machine begins to work heavily, take out the shuttle, and then give every movable part a generous bath of gasoline. Work the foot lever briskly, so that the gasoline may penetrate every part. The old oil and caked dust will loosen and fall off in quantities that will amaze you. Then open the windows of the sewing-room and let the fumes of the gasoline escape. Of course, during this cleaning process, the machinist will take good care that there is no lighted gas, lamp or fire in the room. It is a good plan then to let the machine stand without the usual lubricating oil until you are ready to use it again. A piece of chamois should always be kept on hand to wipe off the superfluous oil before beginning to stitch.

To Remove Threads After Ripping

After a garment has been ripped it is a tedious job to pick the threads from the seams. If you take a piece of coarse cloth—such as a piece of toweling—dampen it and rub it over the seams, the threads come out readily.

Thread Twisted and Knotted

When thread twists and knots as you sew, try stretching the cotton before beginning to use it. Take from the spool the usual needleful, and holding each end firmly, stretch the cotton as tightly as possible two or three times.

A Thimble Factory at Islington

Thimbles were introduced into England by a man named John
Lofting, who came over from Holland about the end of the seventeenth century and established a thimble factory at Islington.

The word thimble is derived from the Scotch "Thummel" or thumb bell, a sort of shield worn on the thumb.

**Trifles Made from Scraps**

A quick and effective method of utilizing small scraps of velvet, silk and ribbon is the making of novel pincushions, which can be equally well done by either young or old.

Cut a circle of cardboard three inches across and cover neatly. Take a piece of silk, satin or velvet five inches wide and long enough to go round circle. Then join same on wrong side up width and join neatly to circle, so that both ends be turned out, leaving stitching inside. Fill lightly with bran to an inch from the top, where run draw thread. Take small doll's head—the penny Japanese variety is most effective—and place neck in draw string, pull same tightly and fasten firmly off. The inch of material above thread will form frill round neck, and ribbon cap tied around or small hat made to finish off. This idea can also be carried out in round, square or sack cushions.

Bolster cushions are easily made out of any material from five to eight inches long and three to four wide. Join up length, line either end with scrap of contrasting colored silk. Draw one end tightly one inch and a half down, fill tightly with bran and draw other end up the same. Finish with ribbon tied in bow round end, carried loosely across and tied round other end, to form loop for hanging on looking glass or wall. This idea can be carried out round a piece of circular wood or blind roller, small gilt dresser hooks being screwed through material to hang keys on.

Make four sacks three inches in depth, of any contrasting colors, fill tightly with bran to inch from top, where draw tightly up, leaving frill. Join together with bows for standing up. If to hang, fasten each to length of ribbon and tie ends together.