

Sewing Skills Checklist

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION • C0677E



4-H 

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INTRODUCTION

Learning to sew is fun and rewarding! As with most things, the more sewing you do, the more skilled you'll become. Some techniques you will do frequently and feel confident of your mastery of them. However, sewing is an art where you will never learn all there is to know. What is important is to continue learning new skills and techniques.

This publication is designed for 4-H'ers enrolled in the Clothing Program. Its purpose is to help you plan sewing activities to constantly stretch your sewing abilities. Numerous sewing skills are listed, beginning with the basics and moving toward the more advanced. It is divided to correspond to the three Washington 4-H Clothing and Textiles projects: "Fun With Clothes," pg. 2; "Clothing Capers," pg.7; and "Clothes That Click," pg. 15. Keep the *Sewing Skills Checklist* as part of your records throughout your 4-H sewing years. By maintaining this record, you will see your sewing progress.

Using the *Checklist* is a 3-step process:

1. At the beginning of each 4-H year, go through the list of skills for the project you are enrolled in. Place a check (✓) in the "Skills I Know" column for all the skills listed you feel confident in doing.
2. Choose skills you want to learn or improve in the current 4-H year. Discuss these with your 4-H leader and parents. Determine what garments/items you will sew to learn those skills. Then check (✓) the skills you want to learn in the "Skills to Learn or Improve" column.
3. Once a skill is learned, place the date in the "New Skills Learned" column. You can also make a note of the sewing project where you applied the skill.

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Use self-bias		✓	9/98 (<i>red checked jumper</i>)
Attach round patch pockets		✓	6/97 (<i>green print camp shirt</i>)

Be sure to refer to the publication, PNW0197, *Measuring Up: Quality Standards in Sewn Items*, to evaluate your newly learned skills. It lists and describes specific characteristics that can be expected in high-quality construction. To evaluate your project using PNW0197, look up the different construction techniques (listed in alphabetical order) that you used. Compare your sewn item with the listed characteristics of high-quality construction. Many techniques can produce the same result. You may want to try several techniques for the same skill and determine which you like best. All may produce quality results, but one method may be easier for you to do than another.

Looking back over what you have learned in 4-H sewing will give you a great feeling of pride. Enjoy your experiences and keep a good record of your accomplishments. This publication will help you do just that!!

HAPPY SEWING!!

CREATIVITY: SEWING SKILLS CHECKLIST

"FUN WITH CLOTHES"

Skills List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Sewing Tools & Machines			
Sewing Tools Identify & use:			
Scissors/shears/pinking shears			
Pins & pin cushion			
Thimble			
Needles—hand & machine			
Marking tools			
Measuring tools—ruler, tape measure, seam gauge, etc.			
Seam ripper			
Sewing Machine Be able to:			
Name parts of the machine			
Thread machine			
Fill & insert bobbin			
Change machine needle			
Recognize balanced stitching			
Control speed			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Control fabric while running the sewing machine			
Change the length of the straight stitch			
Change the length & width of the zigzag stitch			
Change the settings to stretch stitching			
Know the proper use of straight, basting, zigzag, & stretch stitches			
Use the seam guide on the machine			
Pivot			
Use good habits: proper lighting, good posture, clean-up skills			
Fabric Knowledge & Skills			
Be able to recognize:			
Difference between a knit & a woven			
Solid fabric			
Print fabric			
Striped fabric			
Plaid fabric			
Lengthwise grain			
Crosswise grain			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Fabric grain by fringing fabric edge			
Bias			
Selvage			
Appropriate fabric choice for pattern			
Matching thread			
Pattern Knowledge & Skills			
Be able to:			
Select an appropriate fabric for pattern			
Lay out pattern			
Cut out pattern			
Construction Knowledge & Skills			
Pre-treatment/Pressing Be able to:			
Pre-treat fabric			
Press seams			
Final press			
Machine Sewing Be able to:			
Sew a straight seam			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Sew a square corner			
Sew a curved seam			
Backstitch at ends of seams			
Sew an edgestitch finish on seams			
Sew a zigzag finish on seams			
Trim seams			
Sew casing for elastic			
Machine hem			
Hand Sewing Be able to:			
Thread a needle			
Tie a knot			
Use a thimble			
Use a variety of hand stitches —			
• Basting stitch			
• Blind stitch			
• Overhand stitch			
• Running stitch			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Fabric Care Knowledge & Skills			
Fabric Care Be able to:			
Sew in care labels			
Replace buttons			
Repair broken seams			
List Additional Skills Learned			

CREATIVITY: SEWING SKILLS CHECKLIST

"CLOTHING CAPERS"

If you are 9 to 11 years old and enrolled for the first time in a sewing project, you need to refer to and learn the basic sewing skills listed in the "Fun With Clothes" section of this *Sewing Skills Checklist*. As you learn the basics you can also work on the skills listed in "Clothing Capers." Remember sewing is a skill that you keep building on the more you sew. Enjoy learning by sewing!

Skills List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Sewing Tools & Machines			
Sewing Machine Be able to:			
Recognize balanced tension			
Adjust upper tension			
Adjust presser foot pressure			
Recognize & use special stitches on your machine			
Use a zipper foot			
Change the light bulb			
Clean & oil machine			
List new sewing tools used:			
Serger Be able to:			
Recognize balanced tension			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Sew a seam			
Adjust tension			
Adjust stitch width & length			
Change needles			
Clean & oil machine			
Pattern Knowledge & Skills			
Pattern Knowledge & Skills Be able to:			
Take body measurements			
Determine pattern size & type			
Compare body measurements to pattern measurements			
Determine the amount of fabric needed to construct an item			
Use pattern pieces & markings			
Lay out pattern on fabric using pattern guide			
Pin & cut out garment			
Transfer pattern markings to fabric using a variety of methods —			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marking pens 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pins 			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Tailor's chalk			
• Tailor's tacks			
• Tracing wheel & carbon paper			
Follow pattern guide			
Fabric Knowledge & Selection			
Fabric Knowledge Recognize:			
Fiber to yarn to fabric relationship			
Differences between knit, woven, & non-woven fabrics			
Fiber content & characteristics			
Weaves—plain, satin, twill			
Fabric finishes			
Suitable fabric choice for pattern			
Notions & trim needed			
Differences between sewing with a knit & a woven			
Information found on labels & hang tags			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Construction Knowledge & Skills			
Construction Be able to:			
Pre-treat fabric & notions			
Fit by making minor pattern adjustments			
Staystitch with grain of fabric			
Use a variety of interfacings —			
• Non-fusible			
• Fusible			
Machine baste			
Use different seam constructions —			
• Plain			
• Flat felled			
• French			
• Stretch stitch			
Use different seam finishes on a plain seam —			
• Clean finish (turn under edge & stitch)			
• Pinked			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Zigzag			
Reinforce seams			
Trim & grade enclosed seams			
Clip inward curve			
Stitch darts			
Apply facings			
Understitch			
Stitch in the ditch			
Apply lapped zipper			
Apply centered zipper			
Apply an invisible zipper			
Construct kimono sleeves			
Put in set-in sleeves			
Reinforce sleeve seam			
Apply cuffs			
Make sleeve plackets			
Attach a collar			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point turning 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understitching 			
Make gathers & ruffles			
Apply yokes			
Attach waistband			
Attach patch pockets with rounded corners			
Attach patch pockets with square corners			
Construct belt & belt loops			
Topstitch			
Attach fasteners —			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buttons with built-in shank 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buttons with thread shank 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hooks & eyes 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Snaps 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decorative snaps 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nylon hook & loop tape 			
Use hem variations —			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hem by hand 			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Machine hem using regular stitch			
• Machine hem using blind hem			
• Apply trim			
• Use self-made bias			
Make pants —			
• Reinforce crotch seam			
• Apply fly zipper			
• Use fly front guard			
Sew stretchy knits —			
• Construct seams with stretch			
• Construct seams for stability (taping)			
• Apply ribbing			
• Stitch in the ditch			
Pressing —			
• Press as you sew			
• Press darts			
• Final press			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Care Knowledge & Skills			
Care Be able to:			
Sew in care label			
Repair seams, hems, replace missing fasteners			
Sort clothes for laundry			
Operate washer & dryer			
List Additional Skills Learned			

CREATIVITY: SEWING SKILLS CHECKLIST

"CLOTHES THAT CLICK"

If you are 12 to 18 years old and enrolled for the first time in a sewing project, you need to refer to and learn the basic sewing skills listed in the "Fun With Clothes" and "Clothing Capers" sections of this *Sewing Skills Checklist*. As you learn the basics you can also work on the skills listed in the "Clothes That Click." Remember sewing is a skill that you keep building on the more you sew. Enjoy learning by sewing!

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Sewing Tools & Machines			
Sewing/Pressing Tools Identify & Use:			
Rotary cutter & mats			
Pattern weights			
Specialized rulers			
Correct pins for fabric type			
Types of hand sewing needles —			
• Sharps			
• Betweens			
• Crewels			
A variety of marking pens & pencils			
Pressing cloth			
Pressing ham			
Press mitt			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Seam roll			
Sleeve board			
Point press			
Pounding block (clapper)			
List other sewing tools you used:			
Sewing Machine Be able to:			
Select the correct needle, size, & type —			
• Universal			
• Ball point			
• Twin			
• Topstitching			
• Stretch			
• Leather/wedge			
• Wing			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Adjust upper & lower tension			
Use special stitches for seam finishes			
Machine blind hem			
Use the multiple zigzag features			
Use stretch stitch			
Use decorative stitches			
Identify & use a variety of sewing machine feet/attachments —			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straight stitch foot 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zigzag foot (multi-purpose foot) 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zipper foot 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satin stitch foot 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blind hem foot 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roller foot 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pin tucking foot 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruffler 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quilting foot 			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Serger Be able to:			
Sew a balanced stitch			
Finish seams			
Use decorative threads			
Change feet/plates/stitches for different applications —			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flatlock 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolled edge 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialty feet 			
Secure the thread tails using different methods —			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seam sealant 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knot & clip 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thread back through stitching 			
Use serger gathering			
Read & follow the instruction manual			
Pattern Knowledge & Skills			
Pattern Knowledge & Skills Be able to:			
Select the correct pattern size			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Know ease requirements			
Make necessary pattern alterations			
Lay out a pattern "with nap"			
Lay out a pattern "without nap"			
Transfer pattern markings to fabric			
Combine different patterns into one garment			
Use a multi-sized pattern			
Use a master pattern (needs to be traced)			
Use a pattern without seam allowances printed on the pattern			
Use a pattern with 1/4" seam allowances			
Fabric Knowledge & Selection			
Know the difference between fibers & fabrics			
Understand fiber characteristics			
Use fabrics made from a variety of fibers (either as blends or 100%):			
Acetate			
Acrylic			
Cotton			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Linen			
Lyocell			
Nylon			
Polyester			
Ramie			
Rayon			
Silk			
Spandex			
Specialty hair fibers			
Triacetate			
Wool			
Use a variety of fabrics:			
Design fabrics —			
• Stripes			
• Plaids			
• 1-way prints			
• Border print designs			
• Pre-shirred fabric			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Pre-pleated fabric			
Pile & napped fabrics —			
• Terry cloth			
• Corduroy			
• Velvet/velveteen			
• Velour			
• Leather/leather-like			
• Suede/suede-like			
• Fur/fake fur			
• Fleece			
• Brushed fabric			
• Chenille			
• Felt			
• Melton			
Outerwear —			
• Outdoor nylons			
– Ripstop			
– Taffeta			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Coated fabric			
• Canvas			
• Pack cloth			
• Reversible quilted fabric			
• 1-sided quilted fabric			
• Vinyl			
• Waterproof laminate			
• Ski-stretch			
• Stretch fabric inserts			
Knits —			
• Single knit			
• Double knit			
• Tricot			
• Interlock knit			
• Sweater knit			
• Rib knit			
• Raschel knit			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Stretch velour			
• Design double knit (jacquard)			
• Stretch terry knit			
• Tubular knit			
Specialty Fabrics —			
• Crepe			
• Charmeuse			
• Satin			
• Brocade			
• Eyelet embroidery			
• Metallic cloth			
• Beaded or sequined fabric			
• Faille			
• Georgette			
• Organdy			
• Lamé			
• Moiré			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Tulle			
• Lace			
Miscellaneous Fabrics —			
• Batiste			
• Broadcloth			
• Challis			
• Chambray			
• Chino			
• Chinz			
• Denim			
• Double-cloth/double-face			
• Duck			
• Flannel			
• Gabardine			
• Noil			
• Oxford			
• Polished cloth			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Poplin			
• Pique			
• Quilted fabric			
• Recycled fabric			
• Seersucker			
• Shantung			
• Tapestry			
List additional fabrics studied & used:			
Use a variety of interfacings:			
Sew-in interfacing —			
• Woven			
• Non-woven			
• Knit			
Fusible interfacing —			
• Woven			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Non-woven			
• Knit			
• Low temperature			
• Weft-insertion			
• Warp-insertion			
Fusible web			
Use a variety of specialty threads:			
Metallic/silver/foil			
Pearl			
Rayon			
Topstitching/buttonhole twist			
Transparent (nylon filament)			
Yarn			
Construction Knowledge & Skills			
Pressing Skills Be able to:			
Finger press			
Use a press cloth			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Use a variety of pressing tools (refer to previous tool section)			
List additional pressing skills used:			
Construction Skills Be able to:			
Use different seam construction methods —			
• Double-stitched			
• Lapped			
• Mock fell (welt)			
• Serged			
Use a variety of seam finishes/treatments —			
• Bound			
• Hong Kong			
• Sear			
• Serge			
• 3-step zigzag			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Reinforce			
Reduce bulkiness in seams			
List other seams or seam finishes used:			
Use a variety of darts —			
• Straight dart			
• Curved dart			
• 2-ended dart			
• Dart in heavy fabric (trimmed to eliminate bulk)			
• Dart in sheer fabric			
Use a variety of necklines —			
• Round neckline			
– Ribbing			
– Turned & stitched			
– Bias bound			
– Center front slit			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
– Faced			
• Square neckline			
– Faced			
– Mitered corners			
• V-neckline			
– Faced			
– Ribbing			
• Tabs & tab openings			
• Tie necklines			
• Bateau			
– Faced			
– Turned & stitched			
• Keyhole			
• 1-piece neck & armhole facing			
List other necklines used:			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Construct & attach different collars —			
• Mock turtleneck			
• Turtleneck			
• Cowl			
• Square			
• Pointed			
• Shawl			
• Scalloped			
• Sailor collar			
• Shirt-style collar with band			
• Shirt-style collar with separate band			
• Ruffle collar			
• Stand-up mandarin collar			
• Tie collar			
• 1-piece flat collar			
• Hood			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
List other collars used:			
Use a variety of fasteners —			
• Buttons & buttonholes			
• Eyelets			
• Hanging snaps			
• Self-fabric loops			
• Snap tape			
• Thread loops			
• Covered buttons			
• Covered snaps			
• Toggles & frogs			
List other fasteners used:			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Use a variety of pocket applications —			
• Curved or shaped			
• Mitered corners			
• Bias			
• Pocket flaps			
• Slot			
• Inseam			
• Lined			
• Welt			
• Kangaroo			
List other pockets used:			
Use a variety of sleeve & armhole finishes —			
• Raglan			
• Drop			
• Circle or bell sleeve			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Designer gathered sleeve			
• Peasant gathered sleeve			
• Ruffle sleeve			
• Faced armhole			
• Bias bound armhole			
• Square armhole facing			
List other sleeves used:			
Use a variety of waistline treatments —			
• Drawstring casing			
• Contoured waistband			
• Faced waistband			
• Pleated waistline			
• Eased waistline			
• Straight yokes			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Shaped yokes			
• Waistline stay			
List other waistline or waistband treatments:			
Use a variety of hems —			
• Bias or circular hem			
• Slit or shirttail hem			
• Faced hem			
• Fused hem			
• Bound hem			
• Ribbing used at hemline			
• Catch stitch by hand			
• Slip stitch by hand			
• Narrow, hand-rolled hem			
• Narrow, machine-rolled hem			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Machine lettuce edge			
• Machine picot edge			
• Tailor’s hidden hem			
• Serger finished hem			
• Turned & stitched hem			
• Bands on jackets or tops			
• Use interfacing in a hem			
List other hems used:			
Use a variety of cuffs —			
• Flat, 1-piece			
• Flat, 2-piece			
• Cuff with ruffles			
• Fake cuff			
• Fitted or shaped			
• French			
• Buttoned			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
List other cuffs used:			
Use a variety of zipper applications —			
• Corded zipper			
• Decorative zipper			
• Exposed zipper			
• Zipper with wind flap			
• Exposed zipper with facing			
• Exposed zipper with collar			
• Exposed zipper with ribbing			
• Hand-picked zipper			
• Separating zipper			
• Zipper in a pocket			
List other zippers used:			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Miscellaneous construction details —			
• Insert a lining:			
– Skirt			
– Pants			
– Jacket			
– Dress			
• Hand-sewn topstitch			
• Machine quilting			
– Free motion (with feed dogs down or covered)			
– Machine guided (with feed dogs moving the fabric)			
• Hand quilting			
• Hand embroidery			
• Machine embroidery			
– Free motion			
– Hoop (as in an attachment to a computerized machine)			
• Machine decorative stitching			
• Make a reversible item			
• Recycle old fabric into new garment or item			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Use a variety of details or embellishments —			
• Appliqué			
• Bias design work			
• Braid			
• Button decor			
• Cobweb lace			
• Couching			
• Crazy patchwork			
• “Crinkle & wrinkle”			
• Fringe			
• Godets			
• Gusset			
• Insets			
• Metal studs			
• Mitered corners			
• Pinweaving			
• Piping			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
• Pleats			
• Rickrack			
• Sawtooth edge finish			
• Shirt yokes			
• Skirt/pant yokes			
• Stitch & slash			
• Trims applied by hand			
• Trims applied by machine			
• Tucks			
List other details used:			
Sew the following, using various construction skills:			
Jacket			
Coat			
Shirt			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
Vest			
Blouse			
Top			
Shorts			
Culottes/split skirt			
Swimsuit			
1-piece dress			
Formal wear			
Accessories			
Costume			
List other garments sewn:			

Skill List	Skills I Know	Skills to Learn or Improve	New Skills Learned Date/Item Sewn
List other sewing projects (quilts, home/room accessories, bags, home decor, etc.):			
Care Knowledge & Skills			
Care Be able to:			
Identify & use correct care method for each item sewn			
Store off-season clothes			
Repair or patch items			
List items repaired:			



4-H 

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

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