

SELECTING MACHINE NEEDLES

Before selecting a machine needle, you must choose the type of thread you plan to use.

Stitch quality is affected by the needle and the thread. They go hand in hand and create a successful sewing experience that eliminates skipped stitches, puckered seams and broken threads.

NEEDLE & THREAD SELECTION ARE DETERMINED BY:

- ✂ Fabric – Is it a knit, woven, stretch or leather? What is the weight?
- ✂ Type of Sewing – Seams, hems, topstitching, embroidery, quilting, pintucking or heirloom sewing.

STITCHING TIPS

- ✂ Always start with a fresh, new needle for every sewing project.
- ✂ If stitching problems occur, always change the needle. A dull or burred needle can cause snags and puckering.
- ✂ Select the size of the needle based on the weight of the fabric and the size or type of thread being used. Thicker fabrics require a heavier, larger size needle.
- ✂ Just as sewing machine technology has become more sophisticated, so have the types of needles available. Understanding the parts of a needle will help you select the proper needle for a project.

PARTS OF A NEEDLE

Shank – The upper end of the needle that is held by the needle bar or set screw. It can be round or flat on one side.

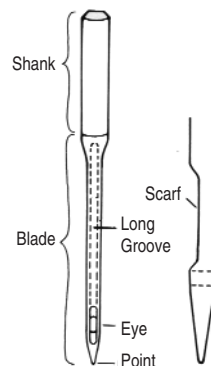
Blade – Extends from the base of the shank to the point.

Scarf – Indentation on the back of the needle just above the eye. This allows the hook of the bobbin case to get close to the eye of the needle to catch the thread and form a stitch. Stretch needles have a deeper scarf that eliminates skipped stitches.

Long Groove – Provides a protected channel for the thread as it is drawn through the fabric. It acts as the last thread guide.

Eye – Carries the top thread into the bobbin case for the stitch formation. The size of the eye varies with the size of the needle to accommodate different size threads. The wrong size needle for the thread may result in damage to the thread or interfere with stitch formation.

Point – The end of the needle that pierces the fabric. Different points are designed for different types of fabric.



NEEDLE SIZES

There are two numbering systems – the European (based on metric) and the American. Most needle packages list both sizes.

American	European	American	European
Size 8	.....60	Size 14	.....90
Size 9	.....65	Size 16	.....100
Size 10	.....70	Size 18	.....110
Size 11	.....75	Size 19	.....120
Size 12	.....80		

TEST FOR RIGHT SIZE NEEDLE:

Cut a piece of thread about 12 inches long and thread it through the needle. Hold the thread vertical and fairly taut. Then, from the top, spin the needle. It should slip down the thread. If it doesn't, you need a larger needle.

GENERAL PURPOSE NEEDLES

Universal Point Needle – For most woven and knit fabrics. For use in all household machines that require a flat shank. The point is slightly rounded, yet sharp enough to pierce tightly woven fabrics, yet rounded enough to

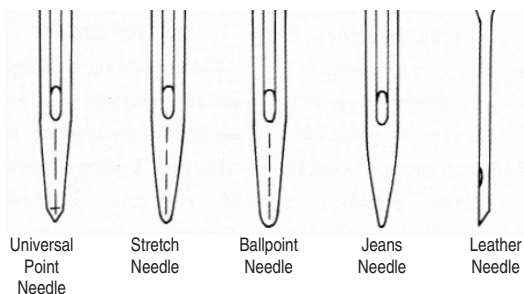
push between the yarns of a knitted fabric. Sizes: 8/60 to 19/120

Sharp/Microtex Needle – Sharp point for stitching woven fabrics, including silk and the newest microfiber fabrics. Use especially for topstitching and edge stitching. Sizes 8/60, 10/70, 12/80 and 14/90.

Ball Point Needle – Point is slightly rounded. Use for stitching knit fabrics. Helps to eliminate runs. Sizes: 10/70 to 16/100.

Overlock Needle – Sharp point suitable for all fabrics. Sizes: BLX1 (2-11, 2-14) and DCX1 (2-11, 3-14) Choose system recommended by machine manufacturer.

SPECIALTY NEEDLES



Jeans/Denim Needle – Very sharp point and stiff shank. Use for stitching jeans, canvas and multiple layers of fabric. Sizes: 10/70 to 18/110

Stretch Needle – Designed for stitching knit fabrics that contain spandex or Lycra®. This needle has a deeper scarf that prevents skipped stitches. May not be compatible for all machines. Sizes: 11/75 and 14/90

Topstitch Needle – Extra sharp point with an extra large eye and a large groove to accommodate topstitching thread. Use for topstitching. Sizes: 12/80, 14/90 and 16/100

Leather Needle – Slight cutting point for stitching through leather, suede and vinyl. Never use on woven or knit fabrics. Sizes: 12/8- to 18/110

Hemstitch/Wing Needle – Point has wide metal wings on the sides to create large holes in tightly-woven fabrics, such as linen and batiste. Use for hemstitching, heirloom embroidery and other decorative stitching. Sizes: HEM/100 and HEM/120

Quilting Needle – Tapered needle with a sharp point for stitching through multiple layers of fabric and intersecting seams. Sizes: 11/75 and 90/14

Machine Embroidery Needle – Designed with a special scarf and a large eye to prevent shredding and breakage when sewing with rayon and special machine embroidery threads. Sizes: 11/75 and 14/90

Metallica Needle – Special scarf, large eye and large groove prevent shredding of delicate metallic threads during stitching. Size: 12/80

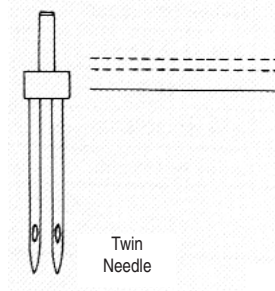
Self-Threading Needle – General purpose needle with slip-in threading slot for those who have difficulty threading needles. Sizes: 12/80 and 14/90

Spring Needle -- For free-hand machine embroidery, quilting and monogramming. Designed with a wire cage around it that acts like a presser foot only when the needle enters the fabric, the cage rises. This makes stitching easier. Universal Sizes: 10/70, 12/80 and 14/90

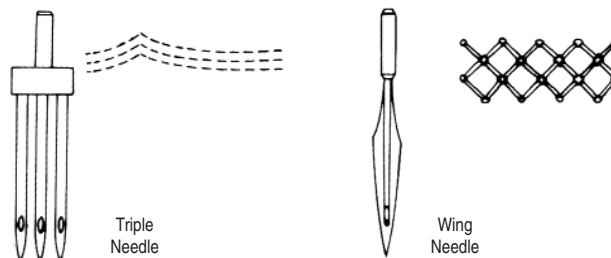


DOUBLE NEEDLES

Double Needle – Constructed with two needles on a crossbar from a single shaft. Can be used with zigzag sewing machines that thread front to back. Sews two rows of stitching at the same time. Used for heirloom sewing, decorating stitching and hemming. The space between the needles varies and is measured in millimeters. Sizes: 1.6/70 to 4.0/100



Triple Needle – Three needles on a single shaft. Stitches three rows at the same time for decorative stitching. Sizes: 2.5 and 3.0



SPECIAL POINT DOUBLE NEEDLES

Double Denim Needle – Size: 4.0/100

Double Stretch Needle – Sizes: 2.5/75 and 4.0/75

Double Embroidery Needle – Sizes: 2.0/75 and 3.0/75

Double Metallica Needle – Size: 2.5/80

Double Hemstitch Needle – One wing and one regular needle for hemming on heirloom projects.

Extra Wide Double Needle – For use in machines with at least 6.0mm stitch width. Sizes: 6.0/100 and 8.0/100

Information courtesy of Coats & Clark, Prym-Dritz Corporation, Schmetz and Vogue Patterns.