



Sewing Machine Troubleshooting Checklist

Machine Threading

- Is machine Threaded Correctly?
- Is it traveling through all the channels?
- Is the thread traveling in the correct direction?

Note: most modern machines have threading numbered along the pathway for the thread. Keeping your manual handy and page marked to the threading page is a good idea.

Bobbin Threading

- Is bobbin firmly wound?
- Is bobbin placed in case correctly?
- Drop-In bobbin - Thread should be traveling Counter Clock Wise when viewed from above
- Lower bobbin with Case - Thread should be traveling Clock Wise as you place it in the bobbin case
- Thread should be latched in tension gauge/bar for both bobbin types.

Bobbins

Your machine likely requires a certain size/shape bobbin and will operate more efficiently (and in some case only operate) with the correct bobbin.

Thread Tension

For most fabrics, leave tension on suggested center numbers. If you are using the correct needles, thread and feet for your fabric, it should be fine. Some thinner or thicker fabrics may require a tension adjustment.

Needles

It is important to use the right SIZE needle for your fabric. Also, "Jersey" needles should be used for knit fabrics. As a rule, the finer the fabric, the finer (or smaller size) needle. Example: With silk chiffon, I use a size 8 or size 9 needle and with denim or canvas, I use a size 16.

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Some Common Problems I see in Class...

Machine is making an awful clanking noise and a big spaghetti ball of thread appears under fabric and machine stops sewing correctly

- Upper looper on machine came unthreaded. Or
- Machine not threaded correctly
- When in doubt, just re-thread your machine from scratch.

Stitching is really loopy on back side of fabric

- Bobbin thread not placed in bobbin tension gauge/bar.
- Bobbin placed in case with the thread traveling in the wrong direction

Upper thread keeps coming unthreaded

- Thread tails not long enough
- Thread getting caught in cog of machine - clean out cog or re-thread machine

Threads skipping stitches

- Incorrect size or needle type being used
- Old needle that needs to be replaced

Machine jammed and needle won't come up and down.

- Thread caught around inner workings of machine. Needs to be somewhat excavated of thread, cleaned and put back together.