There are other things you can sew besides clothing! In this project, you can sew things that are useful, simple, and fun to make.

**You will learn to:**
- Do straight and curved stitching
- Backstitch
- Thread a sewing machine
- Wind the bobbin
- Pivot

**You might also want to learn to:**
- Apply bias tape
- Stitch in a looped fastener
- Use fiberfill
- Enlarge a pattern
- Work with terry cloth

**You will need:**
- Tape measure and gauge
- Sewing scissors or shears
- Sewing basket or container
- Needles
- Silk pins and pincushion
- Thimble
- Sewing machine
- Iron
- Press cloth
- Thread
- Fabric
- Notions
- Commercial pattern or idea from pamphlet or magazine

**Sew!**
Choose one or more of these ideas:
- Travel or bed caddy
- Draft dodger
- Pot holders or mitt
- Sewing caddy
- Pocket on beach towel
- Pillow or “quillo”
- Pajama bag
- Tote, laundry, or gym bag
- Simple accessory or household item
- Wall hanging
You can also make something out of an item that has already been made for another purpose. For example, you might make a garment out of placemats or a garment cover from a pillowcase. Other possibilities are an article made from a preprinted panel or a “torn” project. So... let's get sewing!

**Getting to Know the Sewing Machine**

First, you will need to learn the parts of the sewing machine and what they do. All sewing machines are pretty much alike. There may be a little lever here or there that’s different, but most machines work the same way.

Before learning to thread the machine, practice stitching your own designs on envelopes or heavy paper. This will teach you how to control the machine and where to put your fingers. You may want to try following the outlines or mazes in simple coloring books, or draw your own outlines.

Practice sewing very slowly. If your machine has a “sew slow” feature, be sure to use it. It will help you sew more evenly.

Practice going forward and backward, and around curves. When you get to a corner, stop there and use the wheel to make the last few stitches. With the needle down, raise the presser foot and adjust your paper to form a new line of sewing. This step is called a “pivot.”

Now let’s work with thread and fabric. First, wash your hands and fingernails, and dust off your work area. That way you won’t have to worry about removing dirt or stains from your project.

Threading is done almost the same way on every machine. To help you remember how, try giving each hook or spindle a name that is familiar to you. Then make up a poem or story about it.

Have someone show you how to wind the bobbin, put the bobbin into the machine, and pull up the bobbin thread. Practice this several times.

**Threading a Sewing Machine**

Find these sewing machine parts on your machine. Use a colored pencil or crayon to thread the machine on this page.

![Diagram of a sewing machine with labels for various parts.]

Shawn dropped his spoon, the spindle and carried thread through a small can. He jumped off the hill, saddled a horse, pushed a rooster as high as he could! The thread passed through the rooster's eye but Shawn fell down and hooked his knee on a ledge. A tooth looked scary, but he went through the can and found a gravel road and happily made his way back home.
**Stitching for Practice**

Begin stitching on notebook, graph paper, or coloring book pages printed with simple designs. Stitch on paper mazes or draw your own designs! When you have practiced, take your road test and get your sewing machine license (see next page).

Then stitch on a single layer of polyester-cotton fabric printed with a large geometric design or stitch on stripes. Using a plain stitch, cut and stitch several short lengths of fabric (10 to 18 inches), printed side together. Use a few pins to hold the fabric together while stitching. Practice using a pinking scissors.

Idea: To practice seam finishes, try several different finishes on a few scraps of the same fabric. Wash the fabric scraps a few times to see how they come out. Then select the seam finish that is right for your project!

Press the seam by moving the iron in an up-and-down motion. First press one side of the seam and then another, then press the seam open. Use a press cloth to press from the right side (the printed side of the fabric).

Have your leader check the stitch tension. The tension is the amount of “give” in the stitch. If the thread is too tight, the seam will pucker. If the thread is too loose, the threads will be loopy. The tension is good when stitches form the same way on both sides of sewn fabric. You can adjust the tension (upper tension) on the machine. Different fabrics may need different tension settings.

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**I take care of my clothes each day by:**

- hanging up clothes
- folding clothes
- putting dirty clothes in laundry
- keeping closets neat
- keeping drawers neat
- treating stains
- fixing tears as they happen
- changing out of “good” clothes before playing or snacking

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Sewing Machine Road test

License to Drive a Sewing Machine
This license certifies that _____________________________ is a licensed driver
LEADER’S SIGNATURE

Driver has shown the ability to:
- thread machine
- use hand wheel
- wind bobbin
- replace needle
- adjust tension
- back stitch
- change stitch length
- control speed
- use lint brush
- pivot
- keep fingers away from needle
- let feed dogs move paper
Sew Much More Project Record

I made it!

It’s . . .

What I made for my project

Name

Address

Age as of January 1

Club

Leader’s signature

What I shared with others (show and tell, helping other members, community service)

What I learned in this project

Be a cost counter

Keep track of all your sales slips and add it all up

Fabric

Pattern

Notions

Tax

TOTAL

Cost of similar garment

SAVINGS
Show and Tell
Tell what you learned in this project. You may show something you made or demonstrate one of the following:
- Parts of a sewing machine
- Threading a sewing machine
- Backstitching
- Stitching around a curve
- Pressing a seam
- Pivoting around a corner
- Checking and adjusting tension
- Making a label for a fair exhibit
- Or come up with an idea of your own.

Want to Know More?
Check your local library or bookstore for ideas in craft books and magazines. In Pennsylvania, lists of helpful resources can be found on PENpages at your county extension office.

Exhibits and Fashion Revue
Ask your leader about your project exhibit. Garments to be exhibited should include a hand-stitched fabric label near the inside hem. The label should be printed with your name, age, 4-H club, and county.

This project was not designed to be modeled at a fashion revue. But have your leader check guidelines at the county, regional, and state levels.

Taking the Project Again
You may want to take this project for more than one year. If so, choose something that will help you develop skills you haven’t learned before.

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