

Successful Serging with Cuddle®

THE BASICS

If you're not currently using your serger with Cuddle®, it's time to get started! These tips provide the essential information on thread choices, stitch settings, and techniques to achieve the best results.

GENERAL SERGER TIPS

Starting a seam

- With needles in the highest position, lift foot and then slide fabric under.

Ending a seam

- Stitch all the way to the end of the seam. Don't veer off the side.

Seam allowances

- Use a seam guide or the landmarks on the presser foot or knife guard of the serger to get accurate seam allowances, when necessary.

Use the blade

- Even if the blade only cuts off a sliver, it gives an accurate and clean edge to serge.

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PRO TIP

Reducing presser foot pressure helps prevent stretching on thicker Cuddle®.

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Basic Serger Set-Up

NEEDLES: 90/14 stretch needle to help prevent skipping

THREAD: Polyester thread; 40 or 50 wt for strength and flexibility

OPTIONS

- Use Wooly Polyester in loopers for softer seams.
- Match thread color to fabric for an invisible finish.

MACHINE FOOT: Standard for most; specialty feet depending on project

STITCH LENGTH:

- 3.5–4mm: 1–2 layers; nap inside
- 4mm: 2+ layers; when nap facing out

FOOT PRESSURE:

- Adjust for fabric thickness
- To prevent stretching, reduce pressure for thicker fabrics
- If your machine has speed control, use a slower speed for better handling.

PINS OR FABRIC CLIPS:

Either! And often both.

- **FABRIC CLIPS:** A quick and effective way to get edges aligned, and safer than pins. When double-pinning, use clips along the edge instead of a second row of pins.

- **PINS:** Choose long, strong pins with large heads to prevent losing them in the fluffy fibers of Cuddle®. Keep pins out of the stitching path and clear of the cutting knife.

Warning! Hitting a pin with the blade can damage the blade and throw off the timing. **Always** check that pins do not stick out over the edge when using the blade.

BASIC SERGER STITCHES

3-Thread Wide Flatlock Stitch

- 3.5 mm stitch length
- 5–9 mm wide
- Engage knife
- Lower presser foot pressure
- Decrease differential feed
- Decrease needle tension

After each flatlock seam, gently tug the layers away from each other which will allow the seam to flatten.

Center Needle Chainstitch

- 3.5 mm stitch length
- Disengage knife
- Lower presser foot pressure
- Decrease differential feed
- Decrease needle tension

Use for decorative or topstitching within the body of the project.

3- or 4-Thread Overlock Stitch

- 3.5 mm stitch length
- 5–9 mm wide
- Engage knife
- Lower presser foot pressure to 1
- Decrease differential feed

Great for simple edge finishing. Can be made with 3 or 4 threads. For basic edge finishing, use 3 threads. For medium/heavier fabric or seams that may see stress, use 4-threads.



A Note about Threading

Each serger has its own distinctive threading process. Check instruction manual of your particular model for each specific threading.

Always, always, always test your set-ups on scraps of fabric from your actual project after each threading change before beginning the next step.

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EMBELLISHMENTS

Serging can also be a source for embellishment: on quilts, home dec, or garments. Use flatlock, chainstitch, and coverstitching to add texture and color. Testing a few stitch designs on test blocks, then transfer your ideas to strip quilts, pillows, or jackets.

Where to use a flatlock stitch

- Strip quilts or other pieced quilts
- Garments with straight seams
- Pieced pillows and shams

Supply options

- Wonderfil threads:
 - Rayon: GlaMore™ or Dazzle™
 - Cotton: Spagetti™ or Fruitti™

Test and practice

- Choose two or three stitch designs/ combinations that you like. Make a few samples: test stitches, various threads, and color combinations.
- Try out your ideas by stitching on a 10" x 10" fabric square. As you make adjustments, jot down machine settings and thread types in a notebook.
- Tape or staple the sample in a notebook for future reference. Something that doesn't work for your current project, may still be inspiration for the next one.

Design ideas

- Chainstitch the edges of the pattern in the fabric print or echo the lines in a quilt block.
- Use contrasting thread colors to create visual texture.

1 3-Thread Wide Flatlock

- Used to create seams with absolutely no bulk.
- Stitch length and width determined by project
- Engage knife
- Lower presser foot pressure



After each flatlock seam, gently tug the layers away from each other, allowing the seam to flatten.



2 2-Thread Chainstitch

- Used for straight seams, basting seams to test for fit, and decorative topstitching
- Disengage knife
- Lower presser foot pressure



3 Coverstitch

- A coverstitch has parallel lines of straight stitches on one side of the fabric and an overcast stitch on the reverse side.
- Widely used in garment construction.



Remember

Many decorative stitches are equally innovative on the top and on the back. Check both sides of your sample for a possible hidden surprise.



Having an issue? Try these tips!

ISSUE: Fabric is stretching or wavy seams.

SOLUTION: Increase the differential feed. (1.3–2.0)

ISSUE: Serging extra thick Cuddle® fabric.

SOLUTION: Reduce presser foot pressure to prevent stretching. Also, lengthen stitch slightly.

ISSUE: Skipped stitches.

SOLUTION: Be sure to use a 90/14 stretch needle.

ISSUE: Stitches falling off fabric edge.

SOLUTION: Check foot pressure and serge closer to the blade.

ISSUE: Serging Cuddle® and cotton together.

SOLUTION: Serge with the Cuddle® on the bottom and increase the differential feed.

ISSUE: Serging stretchier Cuddle® fabrics.

SOLUTION: Serge with wrong side down to help control movement.