

## **TOP 10 SEWING MACHINE TIPS - DO'S & DON'TS**

**(01) DO** make sure to always use the proper size spool cap when using a stationary spool setup. The spool cap not only holds the spool of thread in place, it also provides the thread a smooth surface to spool off on. This means that the correct cap to use will be larger than the plastic spool itself. If the cap is smaller than the spool the thread could get snagged on the (sometimes) rough edges of the spool.

**(02) DO** thread and un-thread your sewing machine with the presser foot up. This releases the tension device and allows the thread to drop between the tension discs (where it belongs) when threading and prevents the tension discs from pinching off bits of thread fuzz when un-threading. When fuzz and lint debris builds up between the tension discs the tension device will not be able to control the thread.

**(03) DO** hold the loose threads before the machine sets the first stitch to prevent the threads from being pulled into the hook/shuttle assembly as the machine starts stitching. This will prevent a potential thread jam. Machines with automatic thread cutters will manage the bobbin thread, but it is still a good idea to hold the upper thread from being pulled into the machine when starting to stitch.

**(04) DO** get comfortable using the tension control. Most tension dials range from 0 up to 9. Most machines work best in the 3 to 5 range. If you're seeing bobbin thread pull up to the top, lower the top tension. If you're seeing the top thread pull down to the bottom, raise the top tension. Do not adjust the bobbin case tension screw unless you are very comfortable with tension adjustments.

**(05) DO** bring the thread take up lever to its highest point before raising the presser foot and removing your work. This ensures that the last stitch has been fully formed. Machines with a 'Needle Up' function will do this automatically. When the take up lever is in any other position the stitch is still being formed in the hook/bobbin case area and it's very difficult to remove your work. Let the stitch finish.

**(06) DON'T** turn your sewing machine backwards when threaded. Easy threading (loop through) thread take up levers can easily become un-threaded. When this happens you will create a thread jam. If the machine is not threaded it doesn't matter if it is turned backwards.

**(07) DON'T** help your machine feed the fabric by pulling. This is the leading cause of broken needles. Every time a needle breaks it causes damage to some part of your sewing machine. You can only help by taking the weight off of bulky items. Let the machine do the work. All you should do is steer.

**(08) DON'T** sew over pins. This is the second leading cause of broken needles. It's not the pin that breaks the needle. The pin deflects the needle enough to cause the needle to hit a part of the machine, either the presser foot, the needle plate or the (expensive) hook and bobbin case.

**(09) DON'T** oil your machine with anything other than sewing machine oil, which is clear and odorless. If it is yellow, has an aroma or comes in a spray can, do not use it on your sewing machine. In fact, the only part of your machine you usually need to be concerned about is the hook/shuttle area. Refer to your instruction book or ask an Expert Sewing Machine Repair Person for more information. And please, do not over oil. By the way, plastic parts (such as plastic gears) usually do not require oil or grease.

**(10) DON'T** use compressed or canned air on your sewing machine unless you remove all of the covers, which is not recommended. Your machine will pack the lint away in safe places. Blowing air into a machine with the covers in place will cause that lint to be re-distributed into areas it does not belong, such as: motors, gear teeth, belt cogs, etc. Leave this kind of work to the professionals.