

# Here's what's new

When was the last time you seriously looked at the notions area in your favorite sewing center? It seems the makers of notions and sewing aids have been working overtime in the last couple of years to make home sewing what it should be — fast, fun and easy! The proper use of today's notions will not only save you time, but will give your garment that professional look we all try to achieve.

Bias-tape makers are a terrific new invention for everyone who enjoys crafts or making custom designed trim for garments. They come in several sizes for making bias strips from 1/2 to 2 inches. One yard of 45 inch fabric will give you about 20 yards of one inch bias tape. Simply ease your strips of bias fabric into the large end of the bias-tape maker, poke it through with a pin to get it started and then catch the pre-folded strip at the other end with your iron and press. The bias-tape maker also makes great belt loops, with fabric strips on the straight-of-grain though.

So, you want to finish your seam allowances neatly on your wovens without adding bulk.

**Jean Johnson**

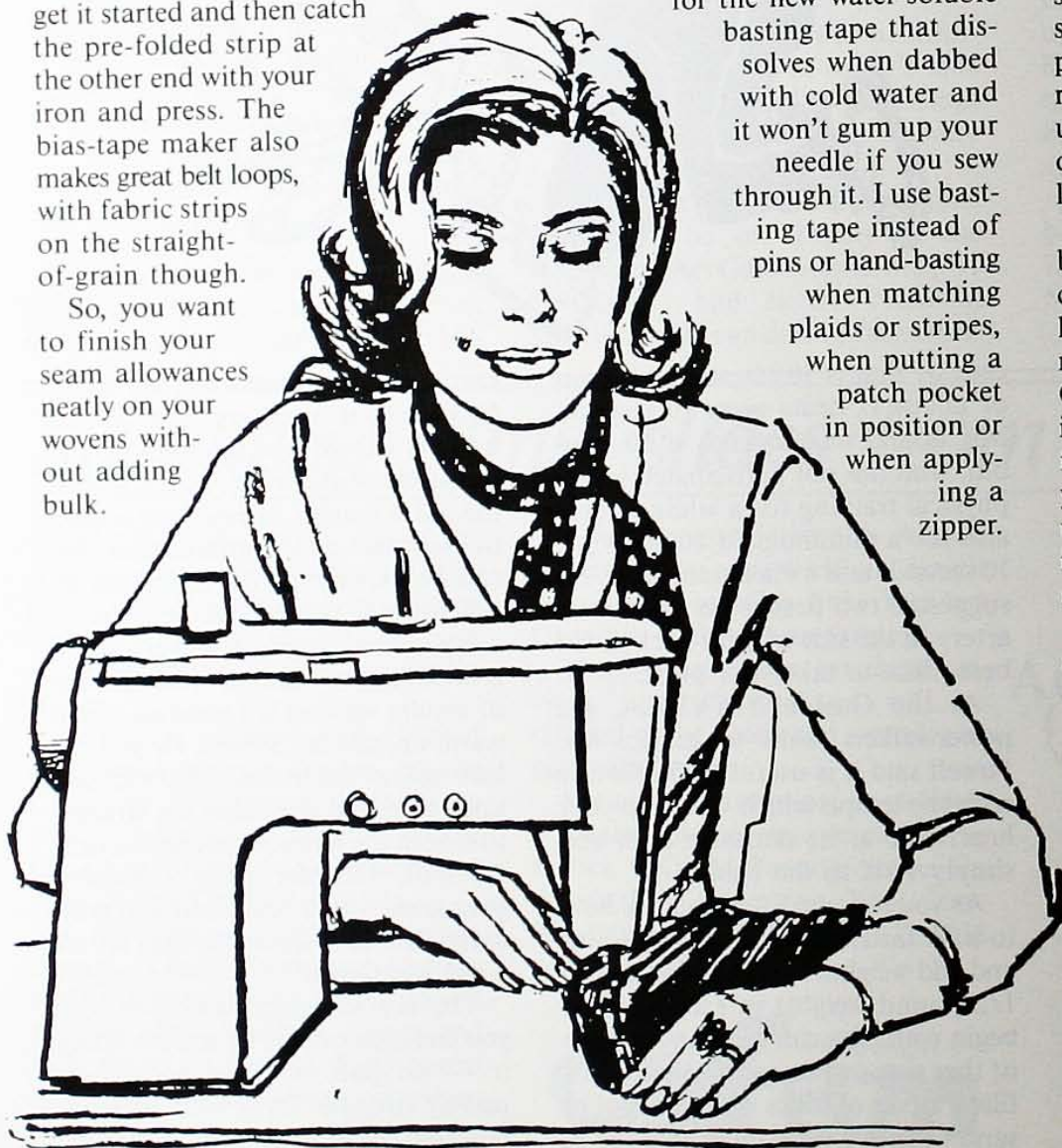


Try Seams Great or Seam Saver. These are rolls of 5/8 inch wide nylon tricot bias strips which will curl over your raw edges and encase them. Just zig-zag over the Seams Great and seam allowance for a beautiful clean finish. Seams Great comes in a variety of colors and it's truly a lightweight seam finish.

Basting tape is truly a must in your notion drawer. It is a tape that is adhesive on both sides with a wax coating that you simply peel off once your tape is in place. It is available in

1/8 and 1/4 inch widths. Look

for the new water-soluble basting tape that dissolves when dabbed with cold water and it won't gum up your needle if you sew through it. I use basting tape instead of pins or hand-basting when matching plaids or stripes, when putting a patch pocket in position or when applying a zipper.



When I make clothes for my children I sometimes like to finish a garment with an applique or some monogramming. Stitch and Tear is a wonderful, new stabilizing sheet you place on the back of the fabric you are stitching onto. Just zig-zag over your design, then tear away the Stitch and Tear from the back of your work. You can draw on Stitch and Tear and use this as a guide for doing reverse applique.

Another way to secure your applique to your fabric is to bond it in place. Up until now we have been cutting pieces of Perky Bond or Stitch Witchery and pressing the applique in place. Try using new Wonder-Under instead. It's a sheet of paper with the bonding agent on one side. Cut from Wonder-Under a piece the same as your applique piece. Place the rough side of Wonder-Under to the wrong side of your fabric piece and bond in place. Wonder-Under is firmer than regular bonding sheets and easier to use. All that is left to do is topstitch or satin stitch for a neat, finished look.

Finally, we are going to look at buttonholes. A clean, neat buttonhole can really make a garment. After I have made my buttonholes with my machine, I run a fine line of Fray Check over the stitching. Fray Check is a liquid sealant which prevents the fraying of your fabrics or thread once you cut open your buttonholes. I also use Fray Check when I have to clip into a seam allowance or to finish the raw edge of a woven fabric.

To cut open my buttonholes I use a buttonhole cutter and block. This is one notion that I wouldn't be without. Just place the small block of wood from the kit under your buttonhole and cut it open with the cutter. Remember to stay away from your buttonhole stitching.

I have just begun to mention some of the new notions now available. Ask to see the new rotary cutters and mats that make cutting easier and faster than scissors. Jewels, beads, studs and glitter are important accents this year. Your sewing center will have a good selection for you as well as handy attachment aids.