

THE KNACK OF SEWING " WITH KNITS "

On Oct. 12-13, 1971, a two day Course was held in Foxboro United Church, with a, enthusiastic group. Mrs. Mildred Milligan, Specialist, in clothing for the Home Economics Branch, Toronto, taught the Course. She was able to tell us of many ways and tricks when sewing with knits. First of all, forget many of the methods you have learned over the years of sewing, as many don't apply and are unnecessary when using Knits. Knitted fabrics reflect the pace of the world in which we live. They are wrinkle resistant so are excellent travellers and require little care. They are comfortable to wear as they stretch with body movements and are suitable for almost any type of clothing as they are available in a wide variety of fibres, weights, patterns, colours and textures.

You will find notions especially made for knits. Ball Point pens and sewing machine needles, for example. From time to time, there will be a knit sold which cannot be sewn with an ordinary needle but no problem with a ball point. Special thread is a must, stretch lace hem bindings, unnecessary but pretty. A Tailors hem, which we were taught, works very well, it is invisible from both sides of the material and the thread doesn't snag your nylons, as it is hidden.

Home sewers will find knitted fabrics are a real boon, as they are generally simple and easy to use and when you develop the knacks of sewing with knits, you can save time and have a better garment. Knitted fabrics are constructed faster and often less expensively than woven fabrics. Knits are formed by one or more yarns in a series of interlocking loops, so are more stretchy and resist creasing. Reports are that knits are going to be better and more plentiful in the future.

When choosing your pattern, buy closest to your body measurements. If you are between 2 sizes, choose the smaller size, when the fabric is a knit. Since knits stretch more crosswise than lengthwise, avoid a pattern with seams in these directions, eg. yolks, raglan sleeves, bias and circular skirt seams. Choose a knitted fabric which is suitable for the style of the garment, such as jerseys, for a soft flowing designs. Before buying a fabric, check the grain, and if off more than 1 inch do not buy. Some finishes are permanent and cannot be straightened. When buying cotton knit, or inexpensive man made knit, allow one-eighth yard extra for shrinkage. Man Made Fibres DO NOT Shrink, but may have been stretched during manufacturing and when washed, will return to their proper size. Linings and underlining are optional with knitted garments and are often better not used, as they eliminate the elasticity and drapability of the garment.

When making the garment, complicated adjustments can be avoided, by buying the correct pattern type. Before laying the pattern on make sure the centre fold of the fabric can be removed, by pressing. Do not allow knitted fabrics to hang over the edge of the cutting surface, as they stretch and if pattern calls for bias binding, cut a piece from the crosswise grain.

Use very sharp shears when cutting and to prevent stretching, always keep pattern pieces pinned to garment pieces, until ready to sew. A new sewing machine needle is best, # 14 for Med. to heavy knits, # 11 for lightweights. Polyester or cotton and polyester thread is best. Use a short stitch 12 - 15 stitches per inch, or a zig zag stitch of the same length. A slightly loose but balanced tension and a fairly light pressure on the pressure foot.

When assembling the garment, remove the pattern from each garment piece, as you are ready to work on it. Since knits stretch, always put a row of stay-stitching on the curved seams, eg. necklines. Knitted fabrics do not ravel, therefore do not require seam finishes. To prevent curling on light weight knits stitch one quarter inches from cut edge.

Necklines may be finished by (1) Facings, cut on the same grain as the neckline of the garment. (2) Collars, To prevent the edge of the undercollar from turning out, the undercollar should be slightly smaller than the top collar.

(3) Bindings and self bindings are quick and easy.

(4) Neckbands of self fabrics are ideal for very stretchy knitted fabrics.

Armholes are finished with a fitted facing, a binding or a sleeve.

Before cutting the sleeve for a knitted garment, measure around the sleeve and armhole. If sleeve is more than 1 inch larger than the armhole, make a number of diagonal slashes evenly spaced around sleeve cap pattern. Overlap the pattern at each slash to make the sleeve measure not more than 1 inch larger than the armhole and sew in.

Hipper - Use a light weight nylon or polyester.

Hems - A knitted garment should hang 24 hours before making the hem and a tailors hem is the most satisfactory method for hemming knits.

A Summary day was held on Jan. 18th at Stirling, with 175 women in attendance and a Fashion Parade was presented by each W.I. Two members of each Institute were to attend.

By:- Jessica Campenev

Typed by:- Gladys Simpson

*Compiled by - Mrs. Lewis Masters*