

## SINGER® PROJECTS

# Blind Hemming by Machine: Tips & Hints



For more information, and to watch a video on how to sew a blind hem, visit:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBCC7fWJlas>

The goal of sewing a blind hem by machine is to create a hem that is essentially invisible from the right side of the fabric. This technique mimics a hand-sewn hem, but using the machine takes just a fraction of the time!

The Blind Hem Foot has a guide at the front and an adjusting screw which allows you to move the guide left or right. It is moved so that, depending on the thickness of the fabric, you can adjust the foot's position. When you sew, keeping the fabric fold up against the foot's guide, the stitches form consistently and evenly.

## Tip #1: Decide on a Finish for the Hem Edge

The hem's raw edge needs to be finished before the blind hem is sewn. Here are some ways that the raw edge can be finished in preparation for machine hemming.

- Pinking shears: Good for fabrics that tend not to unravel easily
- Serger: Looks professional; good choice if hem will be visible during wear
- Overcast stitch: Prevents raw edge from unraveling; use an Overedge or Overcasting Foot when sewing along raw edge so fabric edge doesn't pucker
- Folded and pressed: Fast and easy, good for light or medium weight fabrics



Pinking Shears



Serger



Overcasting Stitch



Folded & Pressed

## Tip #2: Prepare the Hem Allowance

Try on the garment. Fold up and pin the fabric where you want the hem to be; lightly press. Trim the hem allowance to the depth of hem you desire, making sure that the hem allowance is even all the way around.

*Note: If using the 'fold and press' finishing method (from Tip #1), you will need to leave an additional 1/2" in the hem allowance so there is enough extra to fold under.*



Tip: For garments such as A-line dresses, circular skirts, or projects where the whole hem (once it is folded up) will actually have more fabric than the main part of the garment to which the hem is sewn, it will be necessary to choose an alternative hemming technique. Blind hem sewing by machine works best for straight skirts and dresses, trousers, curtains, etc., where the amount of fabric in the hem allowance is basically the same as the amount of fabric in the main project.

## Tip #3: Thread and Needle Selection

When sewing a blind hem, select an all-purpose thread that matches or blends well with the fabric. If an exact thread match is not available, opt for a thread one shade darker than the fabric for best results.

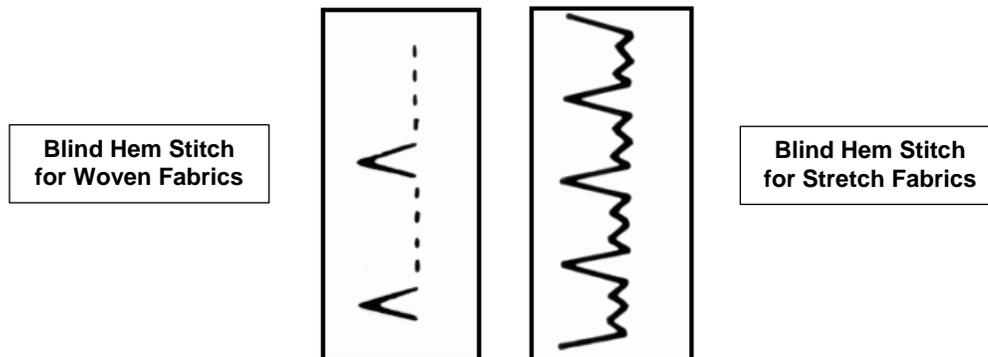
*Note: For instructional purposes, photos in this document are showing a contrast thread in order for you to be able to see the stitches in the images clearly.*

If you are hemming a woven (non-stretch) fabric, use a Regular Point needle. If you are hemming a stretch-knit fabric, use a Ballpoint needle to help prevent skipped stitches that could occur if using a Regular Point needle on a stretch fabric.



## Tip #4: Selecting the Correct Blind Hem Stitch

Most sewing machines have the standard blind hem stitch for woven (non-stretch) fabrics as well as a stretch blind hem stitch for stretch fabrics.



Looking at the diagram of the blind hem stitch patterns, you'll notice that there are connecting stitches in between a larger, single zig-zag stitch.

In the blind stitch for woven fabrics, there are three straight stitches and then one larger zig-zag. The straight stitches are formed on the hem allowance only, and the larger zig-zag swings into the fold of the hem, catching just one or two threads of the main fabric.

Stretchy fabrics require more flexibility. The stretch blind hem provides more elasticity than the woven blind hem, thanks to the smaller zigzag stitches in between each larger zigzag. This allows the hem to 'give' with the fabric when stretched.

Choose your stitch based on the type of fabric you are sewing.

## Tip #5: Testing & Adjusting Settings for Your Fabric

Always test on a scrap fabric first, which will save you time in the long run! Because fabrics vary in thickness and fiber content, you will most likely need to make some minor adjustments in the position of the extension guide on the foot. If desired, if your machine has a Stitch Width Adjustment, you can also adjust the width of the Blind Hem stitch - finer fabrics may require a narrow width setting, while heavier fabrics may require a wider width setting.

It's important to fold the fabric correctly. You'll want to have the wrong side of the fabric facing you, then fold back the pinned hem, exposing the finished edge of the hem at the fold of the garment. Leave approximately 1/4" of the hem edge visible.

Place under the foot, making sure the fabric fold lies next to the guide on the foot. The left movement of the needle must only catch one or two threads of the fabric fold.



To check that the left “swing” of the needle just “catches” the fold, turn the handwheel toward you manually. Keep turning the handwheel until the needle swings fully to the left. Begin to sew, keeping the fold along the guide of the foot. If you catch too much of the fabric fold into the stitch, you can decrease the stitch width. If you aren’t catching any of the fold, you can increase the stitch width. You can also move the adjusting screw to reposition the extension guide instead of changing the width of the stitch or use a combination of both. Moving the guide from left to right will cause the fold of the fabric to shift closer or further away from the needle.

Once adjustments have been made, begin stitching. Sew about an inch or two, then stop to check the right side of the fabric to see how much of the stitch shows through, if at all. The goal is to catch just a couple of threads in the fold, but to have the stitch remain invisible from the top side of the project. It may be necessary to make further adjustments if too much of the stitch shows through on the right side or the needle is missing the fabric all together. When the perfect settings have been made on your test fabric, the hem is ready to be stitched on your main project.

