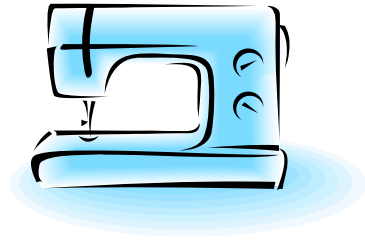


# How to buy a sewing Machine

**A sewing machine is a major investment.**

Therefore, shop around carefully. See what the different brands and models will do, and how well they function. As for prices, they vary greatly, depending on brand, model and a variety of considerations.



## Choose The Best Sewing Machine For You!

- Buying a sewing machine is a long-term investment. Most people keep their machines for at least ten years.
- Always test the machine on a variety of fabrics and on different thicknesses in the shop.
- Ask as many questions as you need to, as this is a major investment. See the checklist below.

## What Is Your Budget?

- Since your sewing machine is the biggest investment you'll make for your sewing room, it's wise to determine what you need in a machine.
- It is a good idea to work out your budget and then take a look at the best sewing machines available in your price bracket.
- I always advise my students to buy the best machine that they can afford. – **The key is to spend as much as you can afford at the time of purchasing your machine.** Remember, you can always upgrade later!



## Checklist for all brands

1. **On a zigzag machine, does the straight stitching come out smooth and even?**
2. **How good is the buttonhole that it makes?**
3. **Does the machine satisfactorily sew various weights of fabrics?**
4. **Does the foot control work smoothly?**
5. **Is the machine quiet and free from vibration at all speeds?**
6. **Does the light shine directly on the work area?**
7. **Is the bobbin easily accessible?**
8. **Can cover plates be easily removed and all parts made accessible for cleaning?**
9. **Are upper and lower tensions easy to adjust? Does the manual explain this clearly?**
10. **What type of guarantee comes with the machine? You should have one, in writing, from both the manufacturer and the dealer.**
11. **Is GOOD service available from a local dealer?**
12. **VERY IMPORTANT!!! Are lessons on the use and care of the machine included?**

# Machine sewing checklist

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## 1) Sewing Machine Needles

Like hand sewing needles, the best thing to do is get the variety pack.

- You'll find that sewing machine needles are colour coded and numbered. The basic rule of thumb is that the lower the number, the smaller the needle. A size 10/70 to 12/80 needle covers most projects, while higher-numbered needles are better for heavier fabrics and lower numbered needles are best for very lightweight and sheer fabrics.
- Once again, let common sense be your guide. Look at what you're planning to sew and pick the most logical needle.

## 2) Bobbins

The principle of the sewing machine is that two threads are involved: an upper thread and a lower thread that interlock to create an even, strong stitch.

- The upper thread is fed from the spool that sits on the spindle on top of the machine.
- The lower thread comes from the bobbin. This is a small spool of thread that sits inside the machine.
- Most machines come with two or three bobbins, but it is a good idea to buy extra bobbins.

## 3) Presser feet

Your new machine will come with some basic presser feet.

- Presser feet hold the fabric down

while the needle goes in and out of the fabric. This is important as it keeps the fabric being sewn, stable - allowing you to maintain even and straight stitching.

- Your machine dealer will be able to get you some of the extra specialised feet you may require, as you develop new sewing skills.

## 4) Zipper Foot

Even if you're not putting in a zipper right away, a zipper foot is good to have, and usually comes with the machine.

- It is designed to allow the needle to get extra close to the teeth of a zipper.
- Why is it good to have even if you're not planning on putting in a zipper? A zipper foot is also essential for inserting piping and cording used in home décor.

## 5) Sewing Machine Oil and Small Brush

A small bristle brush is perfect for cleaning out the lint in your sewing machine.

- With use, your machine can collect dust, lint and even small pieces of thread.
- Leaving it too long can jam the inner workings of your machine. So it's important to brush out underneath the presser foot, the bobbin area and any other nook and cranny that may attract dust.
- A small but firm bristled paintbrush works just fine.

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## PRACTICE MACHINE SEWING

Once you have your sewing machine and accessories in hand, practice some simple seams and seam finishes to get comfortable with your machine and its capabilities. The more you practice, the easier it will be to actually sew a garment together.

***A sewing machine is like a car - the more you practice, the more you become one with it.***

