

Tips for Sewing with Knit Fabrics

From www.appletreesewing.com

Tip #1: Use a stretch stitch on your sewing machine, or a serger/overlocker.

- Use a stretch stitch so the seam will stretch as your fabrics stretches. This will help to prevent seams from breaking.
- A twin needle can also be used for topstitching and hemming

Tip #2: Stretch the fabric as little as possible while sewing

- If you stretch too much you get a wavy seam. If you are using a serger you can adjust your differential feed to help avoid wavy seams.

Tip #3: Use a ballpoint needle and ballpoint pins

- This is so you don't puncture holes in the fabric. The ballpoint end pushes the fibres aside instead of piercing the fabric.

Tip #4: Use lots of pins to fit two fabrics of different lengths

- If you are sewing on a neck and or a cuff you usually have to stretch it to fit it onto the garment. Placing pins evenly at the quarter points and then lining the pins up helps you to sew the bands on nice and evenly.

Tip #5: Steam is your friend

- If your seam looks a bit stretched out, steam will often help fix it. Using your iron (with steam) hover the iron over your stretched out seams.

Tip #6: Reinforce

- Especially with children's clothes, reinforcing seams with a zigzag stitch can really help a garment to last. I always like to do an extra zigzag stitch over the crotch seams (within the seam allowance) of my kids pants.

Tip #7: Use appropriate stretch

- Direction of stretch: For most fabrics the direction of most stretch runs across the fabric (from selvage to selvage). If a garment requires four way stretch, this means it must also stretch cut edge to cut edge as well.
- Percentage of Stretch: To get proper fit you must use the appropriate stretch percentage as specified by your pattern. (See next page for instructions on how to determine stretch percentage).

To determine the percentage of stretch:

You will need a flat ruler and a sample of your fabric with at least 4" width.

1. Align the vertical edge (parallel to selvage) of the fabric with the 0" mark on your ruler and hold it there with your left hand. Using your right hand pinch the fabric at the 4" mark.



2. Stretch it to the right as far as it will (reasonable) go.



If the fabric stretches to the 5" mark it has 25% stretch, if it stretches to the 6" mark it has 50% stretch, if it stretches to the 7" mark it has 75% stretch, and so on (increasing 25% for each inch further the fabric stretches). So if you need at fabric with at least 50% stretch your 4" section needs to stretch to at least the 6" mark.

Tip from Yvonne at www.blackrabbitfabric.com: "Knits are easy to see with, just go slow and a Teflon foot is golden".