



Starting to Sew

LESSON CHECKLISTS



NICKI HIBBITS



Hello!

I'm Nicki Hibbits, the sewist and content creator behind [The Ruffled Purse](#), my website dedicated to helping others discover the joy of sewing.

At The Ruffled Purse, you'll find my free online sewing class [Starting to Sew](#). Each of the 12 lessons in [Starting to Sew](#) was carefully designed to take you step-by-step through learning how to sew on a machine.

You'll learn all the things you would in an in-person sewing class plus some extras. And, you can complete [Starting to Sew](#) at your own pace.

The **lesson checklists** in this downloadable PDF document **are made to be used in conjunction with the information found in the class articles**. These checklists put the key information for each lesson right at your fingertips. **IMPORTANT:** They are NOT a replacement for the lessons.

So print off the checklists, use the interactive links on each page to head over to the [Starting to Sew](#) lessons, and get started on your sewing journey!

♥ Nicki

Lessons 1 & 2

Finding a Machine



Lesson 1: The Best Sewing Machine You

1. Why do you want a sewing machine?
2. What is your skill level?
3. Do you want a mechanical, electronic, or computerized sewing machine?
4. How much are you willing to spend?
5. Do you have a particular brand in mind?
6. What features are "must-haves" for your sewing machine?
7. Does the machine have a free arm?
8. Does the bobbin load from the front or the top of the machine?
9. Where is the spool pin?
10. What type of stitches and presser feet does the machine have?



Lesson 2: Where to Buy a Sewing Machine

- Authorized dealers
- Shop online
- Borrow a machine
- Thrift or second-hand stores
- Retail stores
- Garage sales, estate sales, Craigslist, apps



These lesson checklists are made to be used in conjunction with the information found in the online class. You can find Lesson 1 at <https://theruffledpurse.com/best-sewing-machine-for-you/> and Lesson 2 at <https://theruffledpurse.com/where-to-buy-a-sewing-machine/>

Lessons 3

Essential Tools

Lesson 3: Essential Sewing Tools

Essential Tools to Prepare Fabric

- ☐ fabric scissors 
- ☐ scissors for other stuff*
- ☐ cardboard pattern cutting board
- ☐ rotary cutter
- ☐ rotary cutting mat 17" x 23"
- ☐ rotary cutting rulers
 - ☐ 6" x 12"
 - ☐ 6" x 24"
- ☐ pins 
- ☐ marking pen


*Have a pair of scissors for other tasks like cutting patterns. You may even want a small pair to keep at your sewing machine.

Essential Tools for Measuring

- ☐ sewing gauge
- ☐ tape measure



Essential Tools for Construction

- ☐ bobbins
- ☐ sewing machine needles
- ☐ iron
- ☐ seam ripper
- ☐ thread 

Essential Tools for Routine Maintenance

- ☐ cleaning brush
- ☐ sewing machine oil
- ☐ screwdriver



For details & photos of the tools go to <https://theruffledpurse.com/essential-sewing-tools>.

Lessons 4

First Steps to Set Up a Sewing Machine

Use your instruction manual to get details about your specific sewing machine. This lesson checklist is to be used in conjunction with the information found in the online class. **IMPORTANT: It is NOT a replacement for the information found in the online lesson.** You can find the full lesson at

<https://theruffledpurse.com/first-steps-to-set-up-a-sewing-machine/>



Lesson 4: First Steps to Set Up a Sewing Machine

1. Look at the paperwork
 - a. Safety instructions
 - b. Quick start guide
 - c. Instruction manual
 - i. Parts of the sewing machine
 - ii. Sewing machine accessories
 - d. Warranty information
 - e. Registration
2. Connect to power
3. Insert the needle
4. Attach the presser foot

Bonus: Sew straight stitches on your machine. No thread is needed, just notebook paper.

Lessons 5

How to Wind a Bobbin

Use your instruction manual to get details about your specific sewing machine. This lesson checklist is to be used in conjunction with the information found in the online class. **IMPORTANT: It is NOT a replacement for the information found in the online lesson.** You can find the full lesson at

<https://theruffledpurse.com/how-to-wind-a-bobbin-on-your-sewing-machine/>



Lesson 5: How to Wind a Bobbin on Your Sewing Machine

1. Put the spool of thread on the spool pin.
2. Pull the thread from the spool into the thread guide.
3. Wrap the thread around the tension disk.
4. With the end of the thread between the top and bottom discs of the bobbin, push it up through the hole on the top disc.
5. Pull the thread through until you have a tail about 4-5 inches.
6. Set the bobbin on the winding spindle. Push it to the right to snap it in place.
7. Pull the thread taut and hold the tail end of the thread firmly. Step on the foot control so the bobbin starts spinning at a steady pace (not too fast). Don't let go of the thread.
8. Once the center cylinder of the bobbin is covered with thread, lift your foot off the foot control to stop the bobbin. Trim the tail as close to the top of the bobbin as you can.
9. Step on the foot control to finish winding the bobbin until it's full. The thread should be evenly distributed on the bobbin.
10. Clip the thread leaving a tail of a few inches.
11. Push the winding spindle back to the left and remove the bobbin.

Lessons 6

How to Insert a Bobbin



Lesson 6: How to Insert a Bobbin Into Your Machine

Front-Loading Bobbin

1. Turn off the main switch.
2. Raise the needle to the highest position by turning the handwheel toward you.
3. Open the cover below the needle plate so you can see the bobbin case.
4. Lift the lever on the bobbin case and remove it from the sewing machine.
5. Leave a tail of about 3 to 4 inches of thread and place the bobbin in the bobbin case.
6. Hold the lever of the bobbin case and slide it onto the hook pin.
7. Let go of the lever and press it securely in place.
8. Leave the shuttle cover open until you thread the top thread and draw up the bobbin thread from the bottom.

Top-Loading/Drop-In Bobbin

1. Turn off the power.
2. Raise the presser foot.
3. Make sure the needle is in its highest position by using the handwheel.
4. Remove the bobbin cover plate.
5. Place the bobbin in the bobbin case with the thread running in a specific direction.
6. Pull the bobbin thread through the thread channels as described in the instruction manual. Leave a 4-5 inch tail.
7. Replace the bobbin cover plate.

Use your instruction manual to get details about your specific sewing machine. This lesson checklist is to be used in conjunction with the information found in the online class.

IMPORTANT: It is NOT a replacement for the information found in the online lesson. You can find the full lesson at

<https://theruffledpurse.com/how-to-insert-a-bobbin-in-your-sewing-machine/>

Lessons 7

How to Thread Your Machine

Use your instruction manual to get details about your specific sewing machine. This lesson checklist is to be used in conjunction with the information found in the online class. **IMPORTANT: It is NOT a replacement for the information found in the online lesson.** You can find the full lesson at

<https://theruffledpurse.com/how-to-thread-your-sewing-machine/>



Lesson 7: How to Thread Your Machine

1. Turn off the power to the sewing machine.
2. Raise the presser foot.
3. Raise the needle to the highest position by turning the handwheel toward you.
4. Put the spool of thread on the spool pin.
5. Move the thread over the top of the machine through the thread guide(s).
6. Bring the thread down, around, up through the eye of the take-up lever, and then down again passing it through the thread guide near the top of the needle.
7. Carefully thread the needle from front to back.
8. Pull at least 4-5 inches of thread through the needle to the back of the machine. It should move smoothly with little resistance.

Note: After you thread the machine, pull the bobbin thread up through the needle plate.

Lessons 8

Understanding Sewing Machine Stitches

Use your instruction manual to get details about your specific sewing machine. This lesson checklist is to be used in conjunction with the information found in the online class. **IMPORTANT: It is NOT a replacement for the information found in the online lesson.** You can find the full lesson at

<https://theruffledpurse.com/understanding-sewing-machine-stitches/>



Lesson 8: Understanding Sewing Machine Stitches

- ☐ Stitch options
- ☐ Stitch selection
- ☐ Stitch length
- ☐ Stitch width

notes

Lessons 9

Two Basic Sewing Machine Stitches

Use your instruction manual to get details about your specific sewing machine. This lesson checklist is to be used in conjunction with the information found in the online class. **IMPORTANT: It is NOT a replacement for the information found in the online lesson.** You can find the full lesson at

<https://theruffledpurse.com/sewing-straight-and-zig-zag-stitches/>



Lesson 9: Two Basic Sewing Machine Stitches

☐ Straight Stitch

☐ Stitch length

☐ Stitch width

☐ Zig-Zag Stitch

☐ Stitch length

☐ Stitch width

☐ Samplers

☐ Straight stitch

☐ Zig-zag stitch

A large pink rectangular area with horizontal lines for taking notes. At the bottom center, there is a yellow house-shaped icon with the word "notes" written inside it.

notes

Lessons 10

Eight Sewing Basics

Use your instruction manual to get details about your specific sewing machine. This lesson checklist is to be used in conjunction with the information found in the online class. **IMPORTANT: It is NOT a replacement for the information found in the online lesson.** You can find the full lesson at

<https://theruffledpurse.com/8-sewing-basics-you-need-to-know/>

Lesson 10: Eight Sewing Basics You Need to Know

1. Posture
2. Needle plate measurements
3. Fabric position
4. Hand positions
5. Foot control and sewing speed
6. How to start and end a seam
7. Backstitching
 - a. At the beginning of a seam
 - b. At the end of a seam
8. Pivoting

notes

Sewing Machine Care and Cleaning

<https://theruffledpurse.com/sewing-machine-care-and-cleaning/>

Caring for Your Machine

- ☐ Read the instruction manual
- ☐ Cover it
- ☐ Change the needle

- ☐ Who should do the cleaning
- ☐ What needs to be cleaned
- ☐ Why you need to clean your machine
- ☐ When you should clean your machine
- ☐ How to clean your machine
- ☐ Oiling your machine

notes

Lessons 12

Creating a Sewing Space

This lesson checklist is to be used in conjunction with the information found in the online class. **IMPORTANT: It is NOT a replacement for the information found in the online lesson.** You can find the full lesson at

<https://theruffledpurse.com/creating-a-sewing-space/>



Lesson 12: Creating a Sewing Space

- ☐ Two Types of Sewing Spaces
 - ☐ Permanent Spaces
 - ☐ Pop Up Spaces
- ☐ Organizing Sewing Supplies by Zones
 - ☐ Cutting Zone
 - ☐ Sewing Zone
 - ☐ Pressing Zone
 - ☐ Storage Zone

notes

notes

Next Steps

Beginner Projects and Time to Sew

You did it! You just finished the [Starting to Sew](#) online class!

Let's get you sewing some projects that will help you gain confidence using your machine. You can find eleven easy-to-sew projects that will inspire you in [Sewing Projects for Beginners](#).

Is finding time to sew a challenge for you? Check out these products and learn how to make the time to sew.

blog posts



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EASY-to-SEW
Beginner Sewing Projects

theruffledpurse.com

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Make more sewing time with [these 5 simple steps](#)



Jumpstart your sewing time with [this online mini-course](#).



Create a place where you love to sew with [this step-by-step digital course](#).

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