



## SEWING MACHINE TROUBLESHOOTING

Problem	Cause	Solution
Skipped stitches	Needle is incorrectly inserted or loose in machine	Take the needle out and insert it again, tightening it carefully
	Machine or needle is incorrectly threaded	Rethread the machine and rethread (not rewind) the bobbin thread
	Blunt, burred, or bent needle	Replace the needle
	Poor-quality thread	Always buy good-quality threads appropriate to the job
	Type of thread too thick for chosen fabric	Use a finer thread in both the spool and bobbin
	Incorrect needle for fabric	Check the table of needle types on page 44 and change the needle to a more appropriate one
	Lint has accumulated in the feed-dogs or bobbin case	Use the lint brush to clean both areas
	Sewing over thick seams, such as in jeans hems	Place a small piece of folded paper behind your regular presser foot when beginning to stitch at the bulky seam
Thread breaks	Machine is incorrectly threaded	Rethread the machine and the bobbin
	Poor-quality thread	Buy good-quality thread
	Tension is too tight	Adjust the tension and check it on scrap fabric
	Thread is not reeling off evenly from spool	Rethread the machine from the spool
	Needle is blunt or bent	Replace the needle and rethread the machine
	Thread is too coarse for the size of the needle	Use thread appropriate for the fabric or a needle with a bigger eye
Machine is sluggish or unusually noisy or is making crazy macramé-like stitches	The thread may have bypassed the tension discs	Rethread the machine from the spool
	The thread may have skipped a step in the threading (for example, the take-up lever)	Rethread the machine from the spool
	Bobbin is incorrectly inserted into bobbin case	Take the bobbin out of the case, insert it again and rethread into the machine
	Tails of threads get caught up when beginning a line of sewing (some machines require you to hold the threads as you start to sew)	Untangle the threads and cut them away. Rethread the spool and bobbin if necessary. Leave a good tail of threads from the spool and the bobbin, and hold them gently as you start to sew
	Lint has accumulated in feed-dogs or bobbin case	Use the brush to clean both areas
	Bobbin case is loose or is jammed with lint or threads	Clear the bobbin case of any debris and check it. If there is still a problem, use the screwdriver to tighten the bobbin case a little at a time, testing on scrap fabric each time until stitching is normal



## SEWING MACHINES

51

Problem	Cause	Solution
Machine is sluggish or unusually noisy or is making crazy macramé-like stitches	Machine is in need of oil	Add a few drops of sewing machine oil in the places recommended for your machine. Stitch on a scrap of fabric to distribute the oil through the machine and avoid getting any oil on your project
Fabric does not feed evenly through machine	Threads are caught up around bobbin and/or bobbin case	Take the bobbin case out of the machine; untangle, cut, and remove any threads; insert into the machine again; move hand wheel slowly to start off
	Stitch selection or length or both are inappropriate	Change stitch style and length incrementally, testing on a scrap of the project fabric after each change until stitches are even
	Seam allowance is too thick and chunky	Trim and grade seam allowances to reduce bulk
	Lint is caught in or under the feed-dogs	Remove the needle plate and raise the feed-dogs. Use the brush to clean the area
	Feed-dogs not in the correct position	Check the feed-dogs and engage them into the up position
Needle breaks	Presser foot is incorrectly attached to machine	Remove the presser foot and re-attach it
	Thread is caught around take-up lever or needle	Take the broken needle out and insert a new one. Unthread and rethread the machine
	Needle is inserted incorrectly or is too loose in machine	Take the broken needle out and insert a new one. Rethread the machine
	Stitch selection is changed while needle is in down position	Take the broken needle out and insert a new one. Rethread the machine
	Machine is incorrectly threaded	Take the broken needle out and insert a new one. Unthread and rethread the machine
	Tension is too tight	Take the broken needle out and insert a new one, and adjust the tension a little at a time, testing on a scrap of fabric after each change
	The junction of seams is too thick for the needle to penetrate	Take the broken needle out and insert a new one; rethread the machine; trim and grade seam allowances to reduce bulk. See "skipped stitches" on previous page.
	Incorrect handling of fabric, causing needle to hit needle plate	Take the broken needle out and insert a new one. Check its placement before starting to sew, and avoid pulling or dragging fabric
Fabric puckers	Presser foot is incorrectly attached or is inappropriate for chosen stitch type	Take the broken needle out and insert a new one. Remove the presser foot and re-attach it
	Tension is too tight	Adjust the tension a little at a time, testing on a scrap of fabric after each change
Foot control doesn't engage machine	Thread is too thick for fabric	Choose a finer thread
	Bobbin winder has not been disengaged after winding	Stop the threading manually before the bobbin is over-wound. Unwind and cut off any excess thread
	Plug has come loose from machine or power outlet	Re-plug into the outlet and the machine





## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

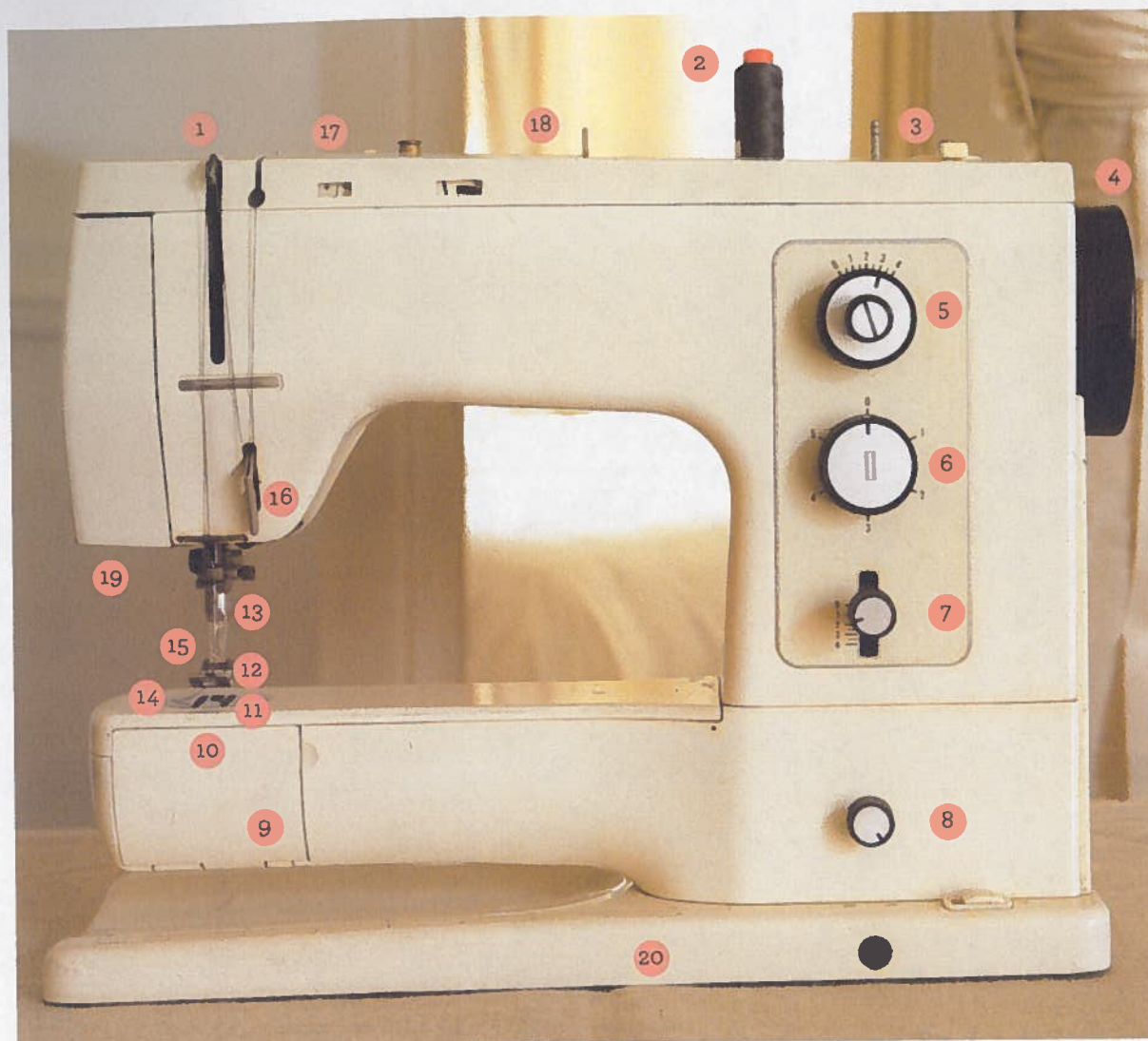
31

tools of the trade



Background: dressmaker's carbon in different colors; top row: blocks and sticks of different colors of tailor's chalk, and powdered tailor's chalk; bottom row, from left: three tracing wheels; chalk pencil with plastic eraser brush; refillable mechanical pencil; grease pencil; water-soluble marker; white ink marker; air-soluble marker





1. Thread take-up lever
2. Spool holder
3. Bobbin winder
4. Hand wheel; also called fly wheel or balance wheel
5. Stitch-width selection dial; small center dial selects needle position
6. Buttonhole dial
7. Stitch-length selection dial and reverse lever

8. Drop control for feed-dogs
9. Hinged bobbin cover
10. Bobbin and bobbin holder (underneath needle plate)
11. Needle plate/throat plate
12. Presser foot
13. Needle clamp with needle
14. Feed-dogs
15. Shank
16. Threading guide

17. Tension regulator dial and indicator
18. Stitch selection lever (decorative stitch options)
19. Light
20. Baseplate

NOTE: Refer to your sewing machine's instruction manual for further information.