



# Pressing and Seam Finishes

Members will learn about the importance of proper seam allowances, how those seams should be finished, and the importance of pressing them. Members will learn about the iron and how to do quality sewing by pressing and finishing their seams properly.



## Background

Ironing or pressing, they are the same thing right? Wrong! Ironing and pressing is the key to sewing success, but only if you choose the correct method at the correct time. If your iron is too hot on the man-made fabric, the next thing that could happen is there is a puddle of melted plastic sticking to your iron. In order to stay sharply dressed. Follow these rules to proper pressing procedure.



## Activity 1 Instructions (20 minutes)

1. The first activity of the lesson is to go over and demonstrate around the ironing board, covering the following:
  - a. (1) Safety, temperature settings and maintenance.
  - b. (2) Pressing equipment
  - c. (3) How to iron clothes (a shirt)
2. Members will then do the worksheet on pressing.
3. Discuss reflect and apply questions.



## Reflect and Apply Questions

1. What is the difference between ironing and pressing?
2. Why is it important to iron with the grain of the fabric?
3. What does "press as you go" mean?



## Activity 2 Instructions (25 minutes)

1. The second activity includes the various samples of seam finishes and demonstrate how they are done.
2. Members will then produce their own samples, attach them to the worksheet (printed on cardstock) The leader should check the examples and give members suggestions as necessary.
3. The Jeopardy Game can be played together as a class with a projector or individual members can play it on the computer.
4. Discuss reflect and apply questions.



## Reflect and Apply Questions

1. Describe how to stitch and pink a seam?
2. Why is it important to backstitch at the beginning and ending of seams?
3. What is the standard seam allowance size?

### Time

45 minutes total

### Activity 1 Materials

- Ironing Board
- Iron
- Distilled water
- Press cloth
- Sleeve Roll
- Tailor's Ham
- Sleeve board
- Fusible interfacing
- Samples of fabrics, seams, and darts

### Activity 2 Materials

- Fabric squares to demonstrate seams and finishes

### Space Required

Room with table space for each youth, a sewing machine, and additional room to lay out their project.



### Before the Meeting

Set up members' stations and supplies. Member should bring their own fabric (and supplies depending on resources). Leader may prepare project in steps to show members how to sew their project.



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# IRONING AND PRESSING

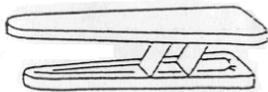
**IRONING** is the process of using an iron to remove wrinkles from damp, washable clothing. Heat and pressure are used to flatten the fabric. Ironing is done with a gliding or sliding motion. It is done to entire garments after laundering.

**PRESSING** involves no sliding of the iron. The iron is placed on the fabric and then lifted. Moisture is added from a pressing cloth or steam in the iron. This procedure is good for wool clothing and loose or bulky textures. It is often done to apparel between wearings. It is also done while constructing garments.

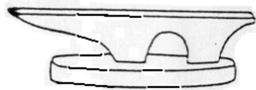
## QUESTIONS

1. You should always use \_\_\_\_\_ water in irons because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Explain the temperature settings on the dial on most irons. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the purpose of a pressing cloth? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why is it important to iron with the grain of the fabric? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. When ironing a garment the areas should you start with are the \_\_\_\_\_  
followed by \_\_\_\_\_ and finish with the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Why should you iron dark, dull fabrics on the wrong side? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Why would you want to have cotton and linen be damp? \_\_\_\_\_
8. The cardinal rule in sewing is "Press as you go", what does this mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Why should you press seams flat before pressing them open? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Using a lifting and lowering motion is \_\_\_\_\_. Using a sliding motion is \_\_\_\_\_.
11. How should fusibles be applied? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. How should a straight seam usually be pressed? \_\_\_\_\_

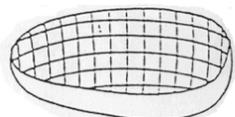
Identify the following pressing tools and tell what their purpose is.



13. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



14. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



15. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# SEAM ALLOWANCES AND SEAM FINISHES

1. Cut out 4 squares 5" X 5" from fabric with a visible right side.
2. Do CLEAN FINISH sample on two sides of one square following the directions below.  
Do method one on one side and method two on the opposite side.  
**Method one:**
  - Stitch 1/4" seam along single edge of fabric.
  - Press to wrong side of fabric along stitching line.
  - Stitch next to the folded edge.**Method two:**
  - Fold 1/4" of edge to wrong side of fabric and stitch 1/8" from the edge.
3. CUT remaining 3 squares in half and SEW 3 SEAM SAMPLES following the directions in the box below.
  - SEW a 5/8" seam with two of the halves
  - SEW a 5/8" seam with another two halves
  - SEW a 1/4" seam with the last two of the halves

\_\_\_\_\_ **OK with teacher before continuing**

## 4. STITCHED AND PINKED

- On the first seam stitch along each side of the seam allowance separately with a straight stitch. (1/4" from the cut edge of seam) Stitching will not show on the right side of sample.
- Trim edges with pinking shears

## 5. ZIGZAG SEAM OPEN

- On the second seam stitch along each side of the seam allowance separately with a zigzag stitch (set zigzag on 4 or 5)

## 6. ZIGZAG SEAM CLOSED

- On the 1/4" seam allowance Zigzag the seam allowance together (closed)

- 7 PRESS the seams and TAPE the samples to this paper with the labels showing to the right side of each sample

Clean Finish.

Stitched and Pinked

Zigzag Seam Open

Zigzag Seam Closed

## PRINT THIS PAGE ON CARDSTOCK



# Pressing and Seam Finishes

Members will learn about the importance of proper seam allowances, how those seams should be finished, and the importance of pressing them. Members will learn about the iron and how to do quality sewing by pressing and finishing their seams properly.

## Activity 1 Reflect and Apply Questions

### 1. What is the difference between ironing and pressing?

- Ironing is the process of using an iron to remove wrinkles from damp, washable clothing. Heat and pressure are used to flatten the fabric. Ironing is done with a gliding or sliding motion.
- Pressing involves no sliding of the iron. The iron is placed on the fabric and then lifted. Moisture is added from a pressing cloth or steam in the iron.

### 2. Why is it important to iron with the grain of the fabric?

To prevent stretching the fabric out of shape.

### 3. What does “press as you go” mean?

Press each seam as it's sewn before stitching adjoining seams.



## Activity 2 Reflect and Apply Questions

### 1. Describe how to stitch and pink a seam?

- On the first seam stitch along each side of the seam allowance separately with a straight stitch. (1/4" from the cut edge of seam)  
Stitching will not show on the right side of sample.
- Trim edges with pinking shears

### 2. Why is it important to backstitch at the beginning and ending of seams?

This locks the stitches in place so they don't unravel.

### 3. What is the standard seam allowance size?

5/8"

REFLECT AND APPLY  
ANSWER SHEET



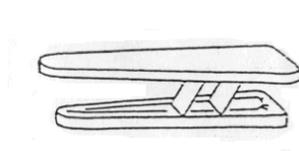
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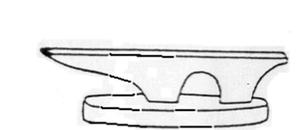
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## Ironing and Pressing Answer Key

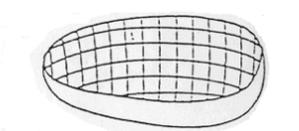
1. You should always use DISTILLED water in irons because ??.
2. Explain the temperature settings on the dial on most irons.  
**Low** Synthetics  
**Medium** Wool And Silk  
**High** Cotton And Linen.
3. What is the purpose of a pressing cloth? To prevent scorching or shiney fabric, to protect the iron and the fabric.
4. Why is it important to iron with the grain of the fabric? To prevent stretching the fabric out of shape.
5. When ironing a garment the areas should you start with are the small (collar & cuffs), followed by the back, and finish with the front.
6. Why should you iron dark, dull fabrics on the wrong side? To prevent shiney spots.
7. Why would you want to have cotton and linen be damp? They wrinkle too much to press well without being damp.
8. The cardinal rule in sewing is “Press as you go”, what does this mean? Press each seam as it's sewn before stitching adjoining seams.
9. Why should you press seams flat before pressing them open? It flattens and sets the stitches so the seam lays smooth and flatter \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Using a lifting and lowering motion is Pressing. Using a sliding motion is Ironing.
11. How should fusibles be applied? The side of the fusible with the glue or adhesive should be placed on the wrong side of the fabric. Press and hold for 10 –15 seconds using a press cloth and steam.
12. How should a straight seam usually be pressed? Press flat and then open.



13. Sleeve Board  
For enclosed seams such as sleeves



14. Point Presser  
For pointe areas such as collars and cuffs



15. Tailor's Ham  
For darts and curved seams