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FREE EBOOK

ENGLISH, CAREERS AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS

Dress Design and Tailoring Basics Study Book

The complete study notes, practice questions and glossary for Dress Design and Tailoring Basics

INSIDE THIS BOOK

- Tailoring Tools and the Workspace
- Fabrics: Fibres, Weaves and How to Choose
- The Sewing Machine: Parts, Threading and Care
- Taking Body Measurements Correctly
- ...and 3 more chapters, practice questions and a glossary

Beginner

Students starting dress design and tailoring

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Dress Design and Tailoring Basics Study Book

From tailoring tools and fabrics to measurements, pattern drafting, cutting layouts, seams, hems and the sewing machine, then on to the elements and principles of design, fashion illustration and building a simple portfolio.

WHO IT IS FOR	Students starting dress design and tailoring
LEVEL	Beginner
SUBJECT AREA	English, careers and vocational skills
WHAT IS INSIDE	7 chapters, practice questions with answers, and a glossary

HOW TO USE IT

Read one chapter at a time and try the examples as you go: on a computer, at your workbench or in your notebook. The boxes give tips, safety points and short activities. When you finish, test yourself with the practice questions and check your answers at the end. Words you may not know are explained in the glossary.



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Tailoring Tools and the Workspace

Measuring and marking tools

- **Measuring tape (inch tape):** a flexible tape, commonly marked in inches (up to 60) on one side and centimetres (up to 150) on the other. Many tailors in India take measurements in inches.
- **Metre scale and L-square:** a long ruler for straight lines, and a tailor's square for right angles while drafting.
- **French curve and hip curve:** shaped rulers for drawing smooth curves such as armholes, necklines and the hip line.
- **Tailor's chalk:** marks lines on fabric and brushes off afterwards. Fabric marking pens are also available; some marks wash out with water and some fade in air.
- **Tracing wheel and tracing (carbon) paper:** transfer pattern lines and markings onto fabric.
- **Pattern paper:** brown paper or large sheets on which patterns are drafted.

Cutting tools

- **Shears:** long-bladed scissors with a bent handle, so the lower blade rests flat on the table and the fabric is not lifted while you cut.
- **Small scissors** for trimming and clipping, and **thread snips** for cutting threads close to the fabric.
- **Pinking shears:** blades with a zigzag edge; the cut edge frays less on woven fabrics.
- **Seam ripper (unpicker):** removes stitches without damaging the fabric.

Keep your fabric shears for fabric only. Cutting paper with them dulls the blades quickly.

Sewing tools

- **Hand needles** come in sizes; for hand needles, a higher number means a finer needle.
- **Machine needles** are sized the other way: a larger number means a thicker needle, for example 70 for fine fabrics and 100 for heavy ones.
- **Pins and a pin cushion,** and a **thimble** to protect the finger that pushes the needle.

- **Thread:** choose thread that suits the fabric, and match the colour; if an exact match is not available, a slightly darker shade usually blends better.
- **Bodkin or a large safety pin** to pass elastic or a drawstring, such as a salwar nada, through a casing.

Pressing tools

An iron, an ironing board, a **sleeve board** for narrow parts and a **pressing cloth** to protect the fabric from shine. Tailors **press** rather than iron while sewing: the iron is lifted and lowered onto an area instead of being slid along, so the fabric does not stretch.

Setting up your workspace

- A large, flat cutting table at a comfortable height, with good light.
- A place for every tool, so nothing is lost under fabric.
- A notebook or register for client measurements and orders.
- A waste bin for threads and scraps.

Safety at the work table

1. Keep pins in the cushion, never in your mouth.
2. Close shears and scissors when not in use, and pass them handle first.
3. Keep fingers away from the machine needle while sewing.
4. Switch off and unplug an electric machine before changing the needle or cleaning it.
5. Switch off the iron when you leave the table, and keep its cord away from the edge.

Good tools last for years when they are kept clean, dry and used only for their own job.

KEY POINTS

- Measuring, marking, cutting, sewing and pressing each have their own tools.
- Shears have bent handles so fabric stays flat on the table while cutting.
- Pinking shears cut a zigzag edge that frays less; a seam ripper removes stitches.
- For machine needles a larger number is thicker; for hand needles a higher number is finer.
- Keep pins out of your mouth, close shears, and unplug the machine before changing the needle.

TRY THESE EXERCISES

1. Lay out your tailoring kit and label each tool with its name and one use, then check the list with your teacher.
2. Practise drawing a neckline and an armhole curve on paper with a French curve until both curves are smooth.
3. Cut a strip of cotton fabric once with ordinary shears and once with pinking shears, wash both, and compare the fraying.

CHAPTER 2

Fabrics: Fibres, Weaves and How to Choose

From fibre to fabric

Every fabric starts as **fibres**. Fibres are twisted together, or spun, into **yarn**, and yarn is made into **fabric** by weaving or knitting. Non-woven fabrics, such as felt, are made by bonding fibres directly.

Natural fibres

Fibre	Source	Key qualities
Cotton	Fibres around the seeds of the cotton plant	Absorbent, cool and comfortable in hot weather; creases; may shrink
Linen	Stem of the flax plant	Strong, crisp and cool; creases easily
Silk	Cocoons of the silkworm	Smooth, lustrous, drapes beautifully; needs gentle care
Wool	Fleece of sheep and some other animals	Warm and springy; can shrink if washed hot and rubbed

Man-made fibres

Fibre	Type	Key qualities
Viscose rayon	Regenerated from cellulose, usually wood pulp	Soft, absorbent, drapes well; weaker when wet
Polyester	Synthetic	Strong, resists creasing, dries quickly, absorbs little moisture

Fibre	Type	Key qualities
Nylon	Synthetic	Very strong, light and elastic
Acrylic	Synthetic	Soft and warm, similar to wool
Elastane (spandex)	Synthetic	Stretches a great deal and springs back

Blends combine fibres to get the best of each. A polyester-cotton blend, for example, is more comfortable than pure polyester and creases less than pure cotton.

Woven and knitted fabrics

- **Woven** fabric has two sets of yarns crossing at right angles. **Warp** yarns run lengthwise, parallel to the **servedge**, the firmly woven edge that does not fray. **Weft** yarns run crosswise, from servedge to servedge.
- **Knitted** fabric is made of interlocking loops, so it stretches. T-shirts and jersey fabrics are knits.

Three basic weaves

Weave	Structure	Examples
Plain	Each weft yarn passes over one warp yarn and under the next	Cambric, voile, poplin, muslin
Twill	Forms diagonal lines on the surface	Denim, drill, gabardine
Satin	Long floating yarns give a smooth, shiny face	Satin, sateen

How to choose fabric

1. **Purpose and season:** cotton for summer kurtas, wool for winter jackets, a strong twill for uniforms and trousers.
2. **Drape:** soft, flowing fabrics such as georgette and chiffon suit gathered and flared designs; crisp fabrics such as poplin hold a structured shape.
3. **Weight and see-through:** hold the fabric up to the light to see whether it needs a lining.
4. **Care:** check whether it can be washed at home or needs dry cleaning.
5. **Shrinkage:** wash or soak washable cotton before cutting, so the finished garment does not shrink.
6. **Colourfastness:** rub a damp white cloth on a corner; if colour comes off, wash the fabric separately.

7. Pattern and budget: stripes, checks, one-way prints and velvet need extra fabric for matching, so check the total price in rupees before buying.

Before buying, crush a corner of the fabric in your hand for a few seconds. If it stays badly creased, the garment will crease the same way.

KEY POINTS

- Fibres are spun into yarn, and yarn is woven or knitted into fabric.
- Cotton, linen, silk and wool are natural; polyester, nylon, acrylic and elastane are synthetic; viscose is regenerated from cellulose.
- Warp runs lengthwise along the selvedge; weft runs crosswise.
- The three basic weaves are plain, twill (diagonal lines, as in denim) and satin.
- Choose fabric for purpose, drape, care and shrinkage, and pre-shrink washable cotton.

TRY THESE EXERCISES

1. Collect small swatches of cotton, polyester, a blend, denim and satin, paste them in a notebook, and write the fibre, weave and one good use beside each.
2. Find the selvedge on three fabric pieces and pull one warp thread and one weft thread from each to see the direction of the yarns.
3. Soak a measured 20 cm square of cotton in water, dry and press it, then measure it again to see whether it shrank.

CHAPTER 3

The Sewing Machine: Parts, Threading and Care

Main parts and what they do

Part	What it does
Spool pin	Holds the reel of thread
Bobbin winder	Winds thread onto the bobbin
Hand wheel	Raises and lowers the needle by hand; turn it towards you
Stitch length regulator	Sets the length of each stitch

Part	What it does
Reverse lever	Sews backwards to lock stitches at the start and end of a seam
Tension discs	Hold the upper thread at the right tightness
Take-up lever	Moves up and down, pulling up thread to set each stitch
Presser foot	Holds fabric flat while it is stitched
Feed dogs	Toothed parts under the foot that move the fabric forward
Needle plate	Plate under the needle, often marked with seam guides
Bobbin and bobbin case	Hold and feed the lower thread

Threading the upper thread

The path differs between models, so follow the manual. The general order is:

- 1. Raise the presser foot.** This opens the tension discs so the thread can sit between them.
- 2.** Turn the hand wheel towards you until the take-up lever is at its highest point.
- 3.** Place the reel on the spool pin and lead the thread through the guides and between the tension discs.
- 4.** Thread the eye of the take-up lever.
- 5.** Lead it down through the lower guides and thread the needle, from front to back on many machines.

The bobbin

Wind the bobbin evenly and insert it as the manual shows. To bring up its thread, hold the upper thread, turn the hand wheel one full turn towards you and pull up the loop. Lay both threads behind the presser foot.

Sewing a seam

- Lower the presser foot before you start stitching.
- Guide the fabric gently and let the feed dogs move it; do not push or pull.
- Use the reverse lever for a few stitches at each end to lock the seam.
- To turn a corner, stop with the needle down, lift the foot, turn the fabric and lower the foot.

Common problems

Problem	Common cause
Tangled loops under the fabric	Upper thread not in the tension discs, often from threading with the foot down
Skipped stitches	Blunt, bent or wrongly inserted needle
Puckered seam	Upper thread tension too tight for the fabric

Care of the machine

1. Unplug an electric machine before cleaning it or changing the needle.
2. Brush lint out of the feed dogs and bobbin area regularly.
3. Oil only the points the manual shows, with sewing machine oil, a drop at a time.
4. After oiling, stitch on a scrap of cloth to soak up extra oil.
5. Change a blunt or bent needle, and cover the machine after use.

Most stitching problems are solved by re-threading with the foot raised and fitting a new needle.

KEY POINTS

- Feed dogs move the fabric; the presser foot holds it flat; the take-up lever sets each stitch.
- Thread the upper thread with the presser foot raised so it sits between the tension discs.
- Always turn the hand wheel towards you.
- Lock seams with the reverse lever and let the feed dogs move the fabric.
- Clean lint, oil as the manual shows, and stitch on scrap after oiling.

TRY THESE EXERCISES

1. Point to and name each part in the table on a real machine, then explain its job to a classmate.
2. Unthread and re-thread the upper thread and bobbin three times without looking at the manual, then check your path against it.
3. Sew straight lines, curves and a square corner on paper (with the machine unthreaded) to practise guiding and pivoting.

Taking Body Measurements Correctly

Why accuracy matters

A garment can only fit as well as its measurements. A small error at the chest, waist or hip spreads all round the garment, and a length cut short cannot be added back.

Before you measure

- The client should wear light, close-fitting clothes, with nothing bulky in the pockets and no belt.
- Ask the client to stand straight and relaxed, feet together, arms by the sides, looking ahead.
- Tie a narrow tape or string round the **natural waist**, the narrowest part of the torso, so it is clearly marked.
- Explain each measurement before you take it and respect the client's comfort and privacy; many clients prefer a tailor of the same gender, or a family member present.

Rules of good measuring

1. Hold the tape **snug but not tight**: one finger should slide under it.
2. Keep the tape **parallel to the floor** for every round measurement.
3. Measure round the **fullest part** for bust or chest and hip.
4. Read the tape at eye level and write each figure down at once.
5. Use one unit, inches or centimetres, for the whole chart.
6. If a figure looks unusual, measure it again.

The main measurements

Measurement	How to take it
Bust or chest	Round the fullest part, with the tape level across the back and under the arms
Waist	Round the natural waist, at the marking string
Hip	Round the fullest part of the hips and seat
Shoulder	Across the back from one shoulder point to the other
Neck	Round the base of the neck

Measurement	How to take it
Armhole	Round the arm where it joins the shoulder, passing under the arm
Sleeve length	From the shoulder point down to the length wanted, such as the elbow or wrist
Garment length	From the highest point of the shoulder, near the neck, down to the length wanted, such as for a kurta
Bottom length	From the waist down the side of the leg to the length wanted, such as for a salwar or trousers

Recording measurements

Use a dated measurement card for each client: name, phone number, garment type and every measurement. Add notes on the figure, such as sloping shoulders, and on style preferences, such as a deep or high neckline. Measurements change over time, so date every entry.

Ease

Body measurements give the size of the body, but a garment that matched them exactly would be too tight to move in. The extra room added for breathing, sitting and movement is called **ease**.

- **Wearing ease** is the minimum extra room needed for comfort.
- **Design ease** is extra fullness added for style, such as a loose A-line kurta compared with a fitted blouse.

The amount of ease depends on the garment, the style and the fabric. Stretch knits may need very little ease, or even a garment slightly smaller than the body.

Measure twice, cut once. A minute spent checking the tape saves a metre of wasted fabric.

KEY POINTS

- Keep the tape snug but not tight, and parallel to the floor for round measurements.
- Measure bust and hip at the fullest part and the waist at its narrowest, marked with a string.
- Write each measurement at once on a dated card, in one unit.
- Ease is extra room added to body measurements for comfort, movement and style.

TRY THESE EXERCISES

1. Take a full set of measurements on two classmates using the table, record them on dated measurement cards, and have a third classmate re-measure to compare.
2. Measure the same person's waist once with the tape loose, once snug and once tight, and note how much the figure changes.
3. Measure one of your own well-fitting kurtas or shirts flat and compare its chest and length with your body measurements to see how much ease it has.

CHAPTER 5

Drafting, Cutting Layouts and Grain Line

Three ways to make a pattern

- **Drafting:** drawing the pattern on paper directly from body measurements, using straight lines, right angles and curves.
- **Flat pattern method:** starting from a basic block, also called a sloper, and changing it to create new styles.
- **Draping:** shaping fabric directly on a dress form and marking it to make a pattern.

Good first garments to draft are simple ones, such as an A-line skirt, a plain kurta, a pyjama with a drawstring or a child's frock.

Drafting principles

1. Start with accurate measurements and decide how much ease the style needs.
2. Draw a frame: a rectangle based on the length and width measurements. For a symmetrical garment you usually draft only half of the front or back, which is then cut on a fold or as a pair.
3. Mark the key horizontal lines, such as shoulder, chest, waist and hip levels.
4. Shape the neckline and armhole with a French curve.
5. Add **darts**, tapered stitched folds, where the fabric must shape round the body, such as at the bust or waist.
6. Add **seam allowance** outside the stitching line. The width varies with the garment and the maker, so mark it clearly on every edge.
7. Label each piece: garment name, piece name, how many to cut, the grain line arrow, any fold line, **notches** for matching and dart points.

8. Check that edges which will be joined, such as front and back side seams, are the same length.
9. For a new design, sew a trial version, called a **toile**, in inexpensive fabric to test the fit before cutting costly fabric.

Understanding grain

- **Lengthwise grain** runs along the warp, parallel to the selvedge. It is the strongest direction and stretches least.
- **Crosswise grain** runs along the weft and has a little more give.
- **Bias** is the diagonal at 45 degrees to the selvedge. It stretches the most and drapes softly, which is why bias strips are used for binding and piping curved edges.

The **grain line arrow** on every pattern piece must lie parallel to the selvedge. Measure from each end of the arrow to the selvedge: the two distances must be equal. A piece cut off-grain twists and hangs badly.

Preparing the fabric

Pre-shrink washable fabric, press out the creases, and straighten the cut end along a weft thread. Fold the fabric, usually with the right sides together and the selvedges matching.

Making the cutting layout

1. Place the largest pieces first, then fit the small ones into the gaps.
2. Put every "place on fold" piece exactly on the fold.
3. For velvet, one-way prints and other fabrics with a direction, place every piece the same way up.
4. Match stripes and checks at the seam lines.
5. Pin within the seam allowance.
6. Cut with long, smooth strokes of the shears, keeping the fabric flat on the table.
7. Cut notches outwards, or mark them with chalk, so the seam allowance is not weakened.
8. Transfer darts and other markings with chalk or a tracing wheel before removing the pattern.

Try the whole layout before cutting anything. It shows how many metres you need and stops costly mistakes.

KEY POINTS

- Patterns are made by drafting from measurements, by changing a basic block, or by draping.
- A draft needs ease, darts where shaping is needed, seam allowance and clear labels.
- Lengthwise grain runs along the selvedge; the bias runs at 45 degrees and stretches most.
- Lay the grain line arrow parallel to the selvedge, measuring both ends.
- Place large pieces first, keep directional fabrics one way, and transfer markings before unpinning.

TRY THESE EXERCISES

1. Draft a simple half-scale A-line skirt pattern on brown paper from a classmate's waist, hip and length measurements, and label it fully.
2. Pin a pattern piece on fabric and check its grain line by measuring from both ends of the arrow to the selvedge.
3. Arrange the pieces of a simple kurta pattern on a folded 2-metre length of newspaper to find the most economical layout.

CHAPTER 6

Seams, Hems and Finishes

Basic hand stitches

Stitch	Use
Basting (tacking)	Long, temporary stitches that hold layers together before final sewing
Running stitch	Small, even stitches for gathering and light seams
Backstitch	A strong hand seam that looks like machine stitching on the right side
Hemming stitch or slip stitch	Small, nearly invisible stitches for holding a hem
Overcasting	Stitches over a raw edge to stop it fraying

Seams

A **seam** joins two pieces of fabric. The **seam allowance** is the fabric between the stitching line and the raw edge.

- **Plain seam:** place the right sides together, stitch along the seam line and press the allowances open or to one side. It is the most common seam.
- **French seam:** stitch the wrong sides together with a narrow seam, trim, fold so the right sides are together, press and stitch again, enclosing the raw edges. It suits sheer fabrics such as voile and georgette.
- **Flat-felled seam:** one allowance is trimmed and the other is folded over it and stitched flat, giving two visible rows of stitching. It is very strong and is used on jeans and shirts.

Seams on curves

On a curved seam, the allowance must be shaped so the seam lies flat after turning:

- **Clip** inward curves, such as a neckline, with small snips towards the stitching, so the allowance can spread.
- **Notch** outward curves by cutting out small wedges, so the allowance does not bunch.
- **Grade** bulky seams by trimming each layer of the allowance to a different width.

Seam finishes

Raw edges of woven fabric fray, so they are finished:

- **Pinked:** cut with pinking shears, quick and suited to fabrics that fray little.
- **Zigzag:** a zigzag stitch over or near the edge.
- **Overlocked:** an overlock machine trims the edge and wraps it in thread in one step.
- **Turned and stitched:** the edge is folded under and stitched.
- **Bound:** the edge is wrapped in a bias strip, a neat finish for unlined jackets.

Hems

A **hem** finishes the lower edge of a garment or sleeve.

- **Double-fold hem:** folded up twice and stitched; neat and strong for cotton.
- **Blind hem:** stitched so that it is almost invisible from the right side; good for kurtas and trousers.
- **Rolled hem:** very narrow and rolled, often used on dupatta and scarf edges and on sheer fabrics.
- **Faced hem:** a separate shaped piece finishes a curved or shaped edge.

To hem a skirt evenly, mark the hem line at the same height from the floor all round.

Pressing as you sew

Press every seam before another seam crosses it. Press on the wrong side, or use a pressing cloth, to avoid shine, and set the iron to suit the fibre: lower for synthetics and silk, higher for cotton and linen.

Finishing touches

Before handing over a garment, trim loose threads, check the fastenings, compare its sizes with the measurement card and give it a final press.

A garment is judged by its inside as well as its outside. Neat seams and finishes are the mark of a skilled tailor.

KEY POINTS

- Basting is temporary; backstitch is a strong hand seam; slip stitch makes near-invisible hems.
- A French seam encloses raw edges and suits sheer fabrics; a flat-felled seam is strong, as on jeans.
- Clip inward curves, notch outward curves and grade bulky seams.
- Finish raw edges by pinking, zigzag, overlocking, turning or binding.
- Press every seam before another seam crosses it.

TRY THESE EXERCISES

1. Make a sample board with a 10 cm piece of each hand stitch from the table, labelled.
2. Sew a plain seam, a French seam and a flat-felled seam on scraps of cotton and compare their strength and neatness.
3. Sew a curved seam on two scraps, clip or notch it correctly, turn it right side out and press it flat.

Design Elements, Fashion Illustration and a Simple Portfolio

Elements of design

- **Line:** vertical lines lead the eye up and down and tend to make the wearer look taller and slimmer; horizontal lines lead it across and can make an area look wider; diagonal lines add movement; curved lines look soft. Lines come from seams, pleats, borders, yokes and stripes.
- **Shape (silhouette):** the outline of the garment, such as straight, A-line, fitted or flared, as in an Anarkali.
- **Colour:** described by its **hue** (the colour name), its **value** (lightness or darkness; adding white makes a **tint**, adding black makes a **shade**) and its **intensity** (brightness or dullness).
- **Texture:** how fabric feels and looks. Shiny satin reflects light and tends to make an area look larger; matte fabrics absorb light.

Principles of design

- **Balance:** symmetrical, with both sides matching, or asymmetrical, with different sides of equal visual weight, such as a one-shoulder design.
- **Proportion:** how the sizes of the parts relate, such as a long kurta with slim trousers.
- **Emphasis:** a focal point that draws the eye, such as an embroidered yoke or neckline.
- **Rhythm:** repetition that moves the eye, such as a row of buttons or pleats.
- **Harmony:** all parts working together as one design.

Colour schemes

Scheme	Description	Example
Monochromatic	Tints and shades of one hue	Light blue kurta with navy trousers
Analogous	Hues next to each other on the colour wheel	Yellow, yellow-orange and orange
Complementary	Hues opposite each other on the colour wheel	Red and green, or blue and orange

Scheme	Description	Example
Triadic	Three hues equally spaced on the wheel	Red, yellow and blue

Fashion illustration basics

- A **croquis** is a fashion figure template on which designs are drawn. Croquis figures are usually drawn taller than real proportions, often about nine head-lengths tall, while a real adult is roughly seven to eight.
- The **balance line** runs straight down from the pit of the neck to the ground; in a standing pose the weight-bearing foot falls on or near it, so the figure looks balanced.
- Draw the croquis lightly, sketch the garment over it showing how the fabric falls, add details such as seams and embroidery, then colour it with pencils, markers, watercolour or vector software such as CorelDRAW.
- A **flat sketch** shows the garment laid flat, front and back, with accurate proportions and construction details but no body, so a tailor knows exactly how to make it.

A simple portfolio

A portfolio shows your best work to clients, employers or colleges:

1. An introduction page with your name, contact details and skills.
2. A few complete projects, each with a **mood board** of inspiration images, a colour palette and fabric swatches, illustrations, flats, photographs of the finished garment and a short process note.
3. Samples of technical work, such as a measurement card and a pattern draft.
4. A clean, consistent layout with every page labelled.

Choose quality over quantity, and keep a digital copy as a PDF of scanned or photographed pages.

Show finished, well-made work and explain the thinking behind it.

KEY POINTS

- The elements of design are line, shape, colour and texture.
- The principles are balance, proportion, emphasis, rhythm and harmony.
- Complementary colours sit opposite each other on the colour wheel; analogous colours sit side by side.
- A croquis is the fashion figure for illustration; a flat sketch shows the garment laid flat with no body.
- A portfolio presents a few complete projects with mood boards, illustrations, flats and photographs.

TRY THESE EXERCISES

1. Paint a twelve-part colour wheel and use it to plan one monochromatic, one analogous and one complementary outfit.
2. Trace a nine-head croquis, draw a kurta design on it, and draw the matching front and back flat sketches.
3. Make one portfolio page for a garment you have sewn: a mood board, fabric swatch, illustration, flat sketch and photograph.

CHECK YOURSELF

Practice questions

Choose the best answer for each question. The answers, with a short explanation, are in the next chapter.

1. Why do dressmaker's shears have a bent handle?

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) So they can cut thick pattern paper and cardboard more easily | b) So they can also be used to unpick stitches from a seam |
| c) So the lower blade rests flat on the table and the fabric stays flat | d) So they cut a zigzag edge that stops the fabric fraying |

2. What are pinking shears used for?

- | | |
|---|--|
| a) Cutting a zigzag edge that frays less | b) Cutting buttonholes in a shirt front |
| c) Cutting pattern paper only | d) Removing machine stitches |

3. Which tool removes stitches without damaging the fabric?

- a) Thimble
- b) Tracing wheel
- c) Bodkin
- d) Seam ripper

4. What is a French curve mainly used to draw?

- a) Long straight hem lines
- b) Smooth curves such as armholes and necklines
- c) Buttonhole positions
- d) Right angles at the corners of a draft

5. For sewing machine needles, what does a larger size number mean?

- a) A finer needle, suited to sheer fabrics
- b) A thicker needle, suited to heavier fabrics
- c) A needle meant only for hand sewing
- d) A shorter needle for children's clothes

6. Which fibre comes from the stem of the flax plant?

- a) Cotton
- b) Silk
- c) Polyester
- d) Linen

7. Which of these is a synthetic fibre?

- a) Polyester
- b) Cotton
- c) Wool
- d) Silk

8. What is viscose rayon made from?

- a) Silkworm cocoons
- b) Sheep's fleece
- c) Cellulose, usually from wood pulp
- d) Flax stems that are woven directly

9. Denim is an example of which weave?

- a) Plain
- b) Satin
- c) Knit
- d) Twill

10. In a woven fabric, which way do the warp yarns run?

- a) Crosswise, from selvedge to selvedge
- b) Lengthwise, parallel to the selvedge
- c) Diagonally, at 45 degrees to the selvedge
- d) In interlocking loops, as in a knit

11. Why should washable cotton fabric be washed or soaked before cutting?

- a) To make it stretch permanently to a larger, looser size
- b) To soften the selvedge so it can be cut off more easily
- c) To pre-shrink it, so the finished garment does not shrink later
- d) To change its plain weave into a stronger twill weave

- 12. Which part of a sewing machine moves the fabric forward under the presser foot?**
- a) Feed dogs
 - b) Spool pin
 - c) Take-up lever
 - d) Bobbin winder
- 13. Why should the presser foot be raised before threading the upper thread?**
- a) So the tension discs open and the thread can sit between them
 - b) So the needle moves faster once you start sewing
 - c) So the bobbin is wound automatically at the same time
 - d) So the stitch length is reset to the normal setting
- 14. Which way should the hand wheel of a sewing machine be turned?**
- a) Away from you
 - b) Either way, it makes no difference
 - c) Towards you
 - d) It should never be turned by hand
- 15. Tangled loops of thread form under the fabric. What is a common cause?**
- a) The fabric was pre-shrunk before sewing
 - b) The upper thread is not seated in the tension discs
 - c) The machine has been cleaned of lint
 - d) The reverse lever was used at the start of the seam
- 16. What should you do after oiling a sewing machine?**
- a) Start sewing a silk garment straight away
 - b) Wash the machine with water
 - c) Pour more oil onto the feed dogs
 - d) Stitch on a scrap of cloth to soak up any extra oil
- 17. How tight should the measuring tape be when measuring the body?**
- a) Pulled as tight as possible so the figure comes out smaller
 - b) Hanging loosely so the client feels comfortable
 - c) Snug but not tight, with room for one finger under it
 - d) Wrapped twice around the body for a double reading
- 18. How should the tape be held for round measurements such as bust and hip?**
- a) Slanting down at the back
 - b) Twisted to show the centimetre side
 - c) Over a thick sweater
 - d) Parallel to the floor
- 19. Where is the hip measurement taken?**
- a) Round the fullest part of the hips and seat
 - b) Round the natural waist, at the string
 - c) Just under the arms, across the back
 - d) Round the fullest part of one thigh

20. What is ease in garment making?

- a) A seam that encloses the raw edges inside it
- b) Extra room added to body measurements for comfort, movement and style
- c) The firmly woven edge of the fabric that does not fray
- d) The diagonal direction of the fabric, at 45 degrees

21. What is drafting in pattern making?

- a) Pinning and shaping fabric directly on a dress form
- b) Drawing a pattern on paper directly from body measurements
- c) Sewing a trial garment in inexpensive fabric first
- d) Stitching the hem of a finished garment by hand

22. How should a pattern piece's grain line arrow be placed on the fabric?

- a) Parallel to the selvedge, measured from both ends of the arrow
- b) At 45 degrees to the selvedge, so the piece drapes well
- c) In any direction, as long as all the pieces fit on the fabric
- d) Along the cut end of the fabric, from selvedge to selvedge

23. In which direction does the bias of a woven fabric run?

- a) Along the selvedge
- b) Straight across, from selvedge to selvedge
- c) Only along the fold line
- d) Diagonally, at 45 degrees to the selvedge

24. How should pattern pieces be laid on velvet or a one-way print?

- a) In alternate directions to save fabric
- b) Only on the bias
- c) All in the same direction
- d) Without any grain line

25. What is a toile?

- a) A dart sewn at the bust to shape the bodice
- b) The firmly woven edge along a length of fabric
- c) A type of tailor's chalk that washes out in water
- d) A trial garment made in inexpensive fabric to test the fit

26. Which seam encloses the raw edges and suits sheer fabrics such as voile?

- a) Plain seam pressed open
- b) Pinked seam
- c) French seam
- d) Basted seam

- 27. Which strong seam, with two visible rows of stitching, is commonly used on jeans and shirts?**
- a) French seam
 - b) Flat-felled seam
 - c) Basted seam
 - d) Rolled hem
- 28. What is basting (tacking)?**
- a) Long, temporary stitches that hold layers before final sewing
 - b) A permanent decorative stitch used for embroidery
 - c) A machine that trims and finishes raw edges in one step
 - d) A method of pressing seams open with a sleeve board
- 29. Why are small snips cut into the seam allowance of an inward curve, such as a neckline?**
- a) So the allowance can spread and the seam lies flat after turning
 - b) To make the seam stronger so it does not tear later
 - c) To add extra ease to the neckline for more comfort
 - d) To mark the grain line clearly on the seam allowance
- 30. Which hem is commonly used on dupatta and scarf edges?**
- a) Faced hem
 - b) Rolled hem
 - c) Flat-felled hem
 - d) Deep double-fold hem
- 31. What effect do vertical lines in a garment usually have?**
- a) They tend to make the wearer look shorter and wider
 - b) They make the fabric shrink
 - c) They tend to make the wearer look taller and slimmer
 - d) They hide all the seams of the garment
- 32. Colours opposite each other on the colour wheel form which colour scheme?**
- a) Analogous
 - b) Monochromatic
 - c) Triadic
 - d) Complementary
- 33. What is a croquis?**
- a) A type of tailor's chalk used for marking
 - b) A seam finish used on the raw edges of fabric
 - c) A fashion figure template on which garments are drawn
 - d) A plain-weave cotton fabric used for shirts

34. What does a flat sketch show?

- a) The model's face, hairstyle and pose on the runway
- b) The garment laid flat, front and back, with construction details
- c) Only the colours planned for the whole collection
- d) The inspiration images collected for a project

35. What do you get when you add white to a hue?

- a) A shade
- b) A complementary colour
- c) A texture
- d) A tint

ANSWER KEY

Answers

1. **(c) So the lower blade rests flat on the table and the fabric stays flat.** The bent handle keeps the lower blade flat on the table, so the fabric stays in place and the cut is accurate.
2. **(a) Cutting a zigzag edge that frays less.** Pinking shears have zigzag blades; the zigzag edge reduces fraying on woven fabrics.
3. **(d) Seam ripper.** A seam ripper (unpicker) has a sharp point and a small blade that cut stitches one by one. A bodkin threads elastic, and a tracing wheel marks lines.
4. **(b) Smooth curves such as armholes and necklines.** A French curve is a shaped ruler for smooth curves; straight lines and right angles are drawn with a scale and an L-square.
5. **(b) A thicker needle, suited to heavier fabrics.** Machine needles are numbered so that a larger number is thicker, for example 70 for fine fabrics and 100 for heavy ones.
6. **(d) Linen.** Linen is made from flax stems. Cotton grows around the seeds of the cotton plant, silk comes from silkworm cocoons, and polyester is synthetic.
7. **(a) Polyester.** Polyester is made from chemicals; cotton, wool and silk come from plants or animals.
8. **(c) Cellulose, usually from wood pulp.** Viscose rayon is a regenerated fibre made by processing cellulose, usually from wood pulp.
9. **(d) Twill.** Denim is a twill weave, which forms the diagonal lines you can see on its surface.
10. **(b) Lengthwise, parallel to the selvedge.** Warp yarns run along the length of the fabric, parallel to the selvedge; weft yarns run crosswise.
11. **(c) To pre-shrink it, so the finished garment does not shrink later.** Cotton may shrink in its first wash; pre-shrinking before cutting keeps the finished garment at the right size.

12. (a) **Feed dogs.** The toothed feed dogs under the presser foot move the fabric forward after each stitch.
13. (a) **So the tension discs open and the thread can sit between them.** With the foot raised, the tension discs open; threading with the foot down leaves the thread outside the discs and causes loops.
14. (c) **Towards you.** Turning the hand wheel towards you moves the needle and take-up lever in their normal direction; turning it the wrong way can tangle the thread.
15. (b) **The upper thread is not seated in the tension discs.** Without tension on the upper thread, loops pile up underneath; re-threading with the presser foot raised usually cures it.
16. (d) **Stitch on a scrap of cloth to soak up any extra oil.** Stitching on scrap soaks up extra oil so it does not stain the garment.
17. (c) **Snug but not tight, with room for one finger under it.** A snug tape gives a true body measurement; a tight tape gives a figure that is too small.
18. (d) **Parallel to the floor.** A level tape measures the true circumference; a slanting or twisted tape gives a wrong figure.
19. (a) **Round the fullest part of the hips and seat.** Hip is measured at the fullest part so the garment can pass over it and sit comfortably.
20. (b) **Extra room added to body measurements for comfort, movement and style.** Without ease a garment would match the body exactly and be too tight to move or breathe in.
21. (b) **Drawing a pattern on paper directly from body measurements.** Drafting uses measurements, straight lines and curves on paper; pinning fabric on a form is draping, and a trial garment is a toile.
22. (a) **Parallel to the selvedge, measured from both ends of the arrow.** Equal distances from both ends of the arrow to the selvedge show the piece is on grain, so the garment will hang straight.
23. (d) **Diagonally, at 45 degrees to the selvedge.** The bias is the true diagonal of the fabric; it stretches most, which is why bias strips suit curved edges.
24. (c) **All in the same direction.** Fabrics with a direction look different when turned, so every piece must face the same way or the garment will not match.
25. (d) **A trial garment made in inexpensive fabric to test the fit.** Making a toile first lets you correct the fit before cutting costly fabric.
26. (c) **French seam.** A French seam is sewn twice so that the raw edges are hidden inside, which looks neat on see-through fabric.
27. (b) **Flat-felled seam.** In a flat-felled seam one allowance is folded over the other and stitched flat, making a very strong seam with two rows of stitching.
28. (a) **Long, temporary stitches that hold layers before final sewing.** Basting holds pieces in position for fitting or machine sewing and is removed afterwards.

- 29. (a) So the allowance can spread and the seam lies flat after turning.** Clipping lets the allowance open out along an inward curve so it does not pull or wrinkle when turned.
- 30. (b) Rolled hem.** A rolled hem is very narrow and light, so it suits the fine edges of dupattas, scarves and sheer fabrics.
- 31. (c) They tend to make the wearer look taller and slimmer.** Vertical lines lead the eye up and down, which tends to make the figure look taller and slimmer.
- 32. (d) Complementary.** Complementary colours sit opposite each other, such as red and green; analogous colours sit side by side.
- 33. (c) A fashion figure template on which garments are drawn.** Designers draw garments over a croquis, a fashion figure usually drawn taller than real proportions.
- 34. (b) The garment laid flat, front and back, with construction details.** A flat sketch is a technical drawing that tells the tailor exactly how the garment is made; inspiration images belong on a mood board.
- 35. (d) A tint.** Adding white lightens a hue to make a tint; adding black darkens it to make a shade.

WORD LIST

Glossary

Basting

Long, temporary stitches that hold fabric layers in place before final sewing, also called tacking.

Bias

The diagonal direction of a woven fabric, at 45 degrees to the selvedge, which stretches the most.

Bobbin

A small spool that holds the lower thread in a sewing machine.

Croquis

A fashion figure template on which garment designs are drawn.

Dart

A tapered, stitched fold that shapes fabric to fit the curves of the body.

Drafting

Drawing a pattern on paper directly from body measurements.

Draping

Shaping fabric directly on a dress form to create a design or pattern.

Ease

Extra room added to body measurements for comfort, movement and style.

Feed dogs

Toothed parts under the presser foot that move the fabric forward as it is stitched.

Flat sketch

A technical drawing of a garment laid flat, front and back, showing its construction details.

French seam

A seam sewn twice so that the raw edges are enclosed inside it.

Grain line

An arrow on a pattern piece that must lie parallel to the selvedge when cutting.

Hem

The finished lower edge of a garment or sleeve.

Notch

A small mark on a pattern edge showing where pieces should be matched when sewing.

Pinking shears

Shears with zigzag blades that cut an edge which frays less.

Presser foot

The part of a sewing machine that holds fabric flat while it is stitched.

Seam allowance

The fabric between the stitching line and the raw edge.

Selvedge

The firmly woven finished edge of a fabric, which does not fray.

Silhouette

The overall outline or shape of a garment.

Tension discs

Discs on a sewing machine that hold the upper thread at the right tightness.

Toile

A trial version of a garment made in inexpensive fabric to test the fit.

Twill

A weave that forms diagonal lines on the fabric surface, as in denim.

Warp

The lengthwise yarns of a woven fabric, running parallel to the selvedge.

Weft

The crosswise yarns of a woven fabric, running from selvedge to selvedge.



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