

# Troubleshooting Your Sewing Machine

These GENERIC solutions will help with most sewing problems of most brands of machines. Machine failures account for about 10% of problems. **Operator Error account for 90%.**

## CHECK YOUR THREADING - FIRST !!!!

PROBLEM	SOLUTION
WON'T PICK UP THREAD	Needle in reverse, needle bent, threaded incorrectly, wrong needle for fabric.
SKIPS STITCHES	Bent needle, wrong needle, wrong presser foot for the fabric, check throat plate.
MACHINE SEIZED	Tread jammed into shuttle or hook area. Clean. Oil machine. Look for foreign object under throat plate. (children put things in there).
MACHINE TURNS HARD	Thread in the shuttle area, wrapped around inside of rotary hook. Pull out thread. Oil machine thoroughly.
MACHINE RUNS WHILE WINDING BOBBIN	Bobbin not set correctly to wind. On some machines, loosen clutch on hand wheel.
KNOCKING NOISE	Broken spring on hook driver .....the part that forces the hook to turn. (shop service)
MOTOR SMELLS	"O" zone odor caused by excessive wear of carbon brushes in motor. Too much oil will also smell and smoke (see sewing machine cleaner section).
DOES A ZIG ZAG ON STRAIGHT SETTING	Oil machine and exercise all knobs several times
STITCH ISN'T STRAIGHT	Needle and fabric weave.....Oil machine and exercise all knobs several times
BREAKS NEEDLE	Too small a needle for work. Operator "helping" to fast. Shuttle re-assembled improperly. Too tight top tension or <b>mis-threaded</b> .
WON'T SEW HEAVY MATERIAL	Get a bigger needle or the correct point on the needle. More pressure on the presser foot. Use proper presser foot for the fabric.
ELECTRICAL SHOCK	Foreign object in motor. Lamp wiring or motor short (shop service).
WON'T FEED SMOOTHLY	Lint under throat plate, wrong presser foot, feed dogs not in "up" position, insufficient pressure on presser foot.
PUCKER FABRIC	Stitch length too long. Scoring on bottom of presser foot, needle marks on throat plate. Loosen top tension. Lessen bottom tension of secondary bobbin case.
FINISHED SEAM "TURNS UP"	Upper tension too tight.

STITCH IS LOOSE REGARDLESS OF TENSION ADJUSTMENT	Needle not all the way "UP" into the needle bar. Lint under throat plate.
SLOPPY ZIG ZAG	Change presser foot. Change thread, check threading route ( <b>re-thread</b> ).
	Improper type of foot for purpose.
SATIN STITCH IS TYING KNOT ON TOP	Upper tension is too tight or bobbin tension is too loose. Only change bobbin tension on secondary bobbin.
BREAKS NEEDLE ON REVERSE ONLY	Upper tension is too tight, links keep upper tension spring from functioning properly.
FABRIC WILL NOT STEER GOOD	Presser foot tension, wrong presser foot, feed dog must be "UP".
MACHINE JAMS UP FREQUENTLY	<b>Improperly threaded</b> , burr on hook beak, bent bobbin, improper winding of bobbin.
	Check bobbin case spring. Upper tension spring not functioning or dirty with thread residue. Bent needle due to improper selection of size.
NEEDLES WON'T LAST VERY LONG	One dress = one needle. Less than that - look for correct point style, needle size, operator "helping" the fabric through the machine (usually by ex-power machine operators.)
FABRIC WILL NOT PULL -OUT AFTER STITCHING	Presser foot lever should activate the release of the upper tension to allow the thread to pull easily, should release with needle in uppermost position. (shop service)
MACHINE EATS MY FABRIC	Wrong needle - presser foot - throat plate combination. Check for scoring on throat plate. Check front of throat plate section. Feed dogs too high for thin fabric or there is too much pressure foot pressure.
TEARS FINE FABRIC AND SILK	Feed dogs too high, too much pressure on presser foot, feed dogs have broken tooth, throat plate has needle marks or burrs.
PRESSER FOOT ISN'T HIGH ENOUGH	Most machines have a second lift. Let repair shop adjust for additional height.
BASTING STITCH PUCKERS FABRIC	Assist (don't pull) fabric out the rear. When basting (longest stitch) lower upper tension to about #1 or loose.
The above should solve most general and generic problems. Certain brands have specific problems and solutions inherent to that brand only. If you have a particular obstinate problem send a S.A.S.E. with machine I.D. and disorder description. We will be glad to R.S.V.P. with a likely solution.	
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