

# 10 *Barb's Top* Sewing Room Secrets

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## Sewing Machine

To sew, you HAVE to have a good sewing machine even if you don't know how to sew very well.

### 1 Secret

You deserve it! Don't be hesitant to invest in a great machine.



## Presser Feet

The essential things you need to move the fabric through your sewing machine are called presser feet. Most dealers and websites have loads of presser feet options. You need them, but which ones do you REALLY need?



### 2 Secret

If I could have only 3 presser feet I'd choose:



*Open-Toe Foot*

*Free-Motion Foot*

*Edgestitch foot*



## Needles

There are lots of different types and sizes of needles for your sewing machine. What you need depends on the type of sewing you plan to do and the kind of thread you like to sew with. Buy needles that are the right ones for your particular sewing machine.



## 3 Secret

Here is the anatomy of a sewing needle.



Butt

Shank

Shoulder

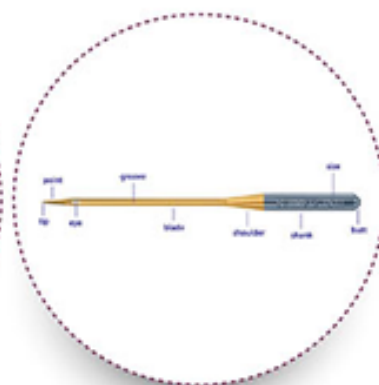
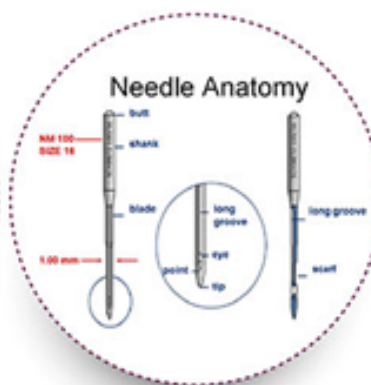
Blade

Groove

Eye

Point

Tip



## Threads

Really good quality thread costs more than the bargain bin stuff but it stitches so much better. Buy top quality thread even if it costs a little more!



# 4 *Secret*

- Good thread generates less lint in your machine.
- You get beautiful results in your sewing.
- It breaks less often.
- It's a win-win. Both you and your machine are happy.



## *Scissors*

Absolutely nothing replaces high quality shears and scissors. If you sew on fabric, buy great fabric shears. If you sew on paper, you still need quality scissors but you don't need fabric shears.



# 5 *Secret*

- ALWAYS use a small scissor around your sewing machine.
- Large scissors can cause a lot of damage if you accidentally whack your machine.
- For paper, invest in some Paper Edgers or Pinking Shears.



*Large Scissors*



*Paper Edgers*



*Small Scissors*

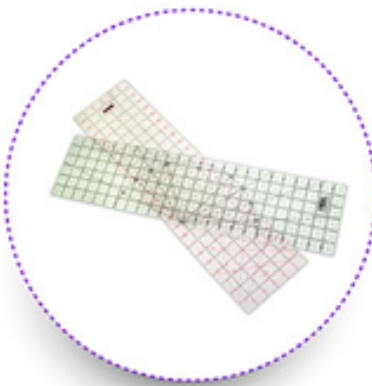
## Rotary Tools

I love using a 28mm rotary cutter for quick straight cuts. It's also small enough to cut gentle curves. Always close the guard around the rotary cutter blade so it's NEVER exposed when not in use. They are extremely sharp and deserve the utmost care and attention.



## 6 Secret

- You will also need a self-healing mat so that you don't damage your surface.
- To create those straight cuts, you'll need a Rotary Ruler.
- The rulers I most often reach for are 6x12 and 6x24.



## Pins

High quality, sharp pins are a must for every sewing room. I prefer glass-head pins because they don't melt if I touch them with my iron. Large heads show up more easily on the floor and in your sewing project because you can see and feel them. Above all else, pins need to be sharp!



# 7 *Secret*

- My favorite pins are thin and strong with glass heads.
- Get the Large headed pins.
- Store your pins on a magnetic pin holder for easy access.
- Get a weighted pin cushion so you only need one hand to get or stick the pins.



# *Freezer Paper*

Perhaps the biggest secret in my sewing room is Freezer Paper. I use it every time I sew. I can't do anything without freezer paper! The wax backing of the paper makes it perfect to temporarily iron on to fabric.



# 8 *Secret*

You can use freezer paper for:

- Patterns
- To create stitching guides
- To create your own stencils





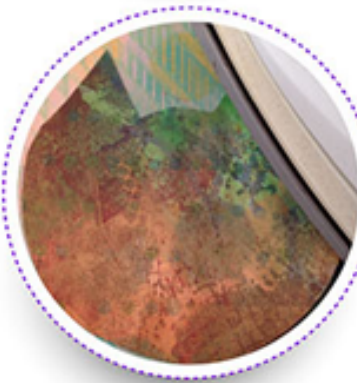
## Fusible Web

This is heat-activated glue. Some brands have paper backings on both sides of the glue. Others are paper-backed on one side and still others have no protective paper at all. I use fusible web to fuse fabric and paper in all sorts of applications.



## 9 Secret

Always read the Package because some fusibles are not intended to be stitched at all and will cause your sewing machine to be quite unhappy with you.



## Iron

If you use anything fusible - interfacings or fusible web - you need a decent iron. Irons are as varied as the stars in the sky it seems! My preference is a mid-range priced iron. Even the most expensive iron is guaranteed to eventually spit water on your project. Use a spray bottle of water and a dry iron instead.



# 10 *Secret*

- Keep your iron clean with Hot Iron Cleaner and a terry cloth towel.
- Use the Hot Iron Cleaner by Faultless. Works like a charm to keep your iron gunk free!



*Barb Owen*

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