

Sewing threads – Basic guide for hand and sewing machine stitching.



This guide excludes overlocking/serger, embroidery (see tutorial – www.rosamaycrafts.com), machine embroidery, elastic, quilting, metallic and silk threads.

DISCLAIMER: Please note this is my very own guideline, there are so many guides and tips, use which one you feel works for you.

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QUICK 'GO TO' GUIDE.

INTERNATIONAL SIZE	AMERICAN SIZE	FABRIC WEIGHT	FABRIC TYPES
60	8	Very fine Light weight	Silk, chiffon, Voile, lace, organza and sheer fabrics Cotton, lining
65	9		
70	10		
75	11	Light weight	Cotton voile, silk, lycra
80	12		Quilting cotton
90	14	Medium weight	Cotton, velvet, linen, wool, fleece, stretch
100	16	Heavy weight	Denim, Corduroy, canvas, leather
110	18	Very heavy weight	Heavy denim and canvas, upholstery fabric, faux fur

Sewing machine needles have excellent information on the packaging. Most machine needle packs come with the various sizes. For example: - a Universal sewing needle pack will have the sizes 60 to 90. Using the basic chart above as guideline for which sewing machine needle to use for which fabric type.

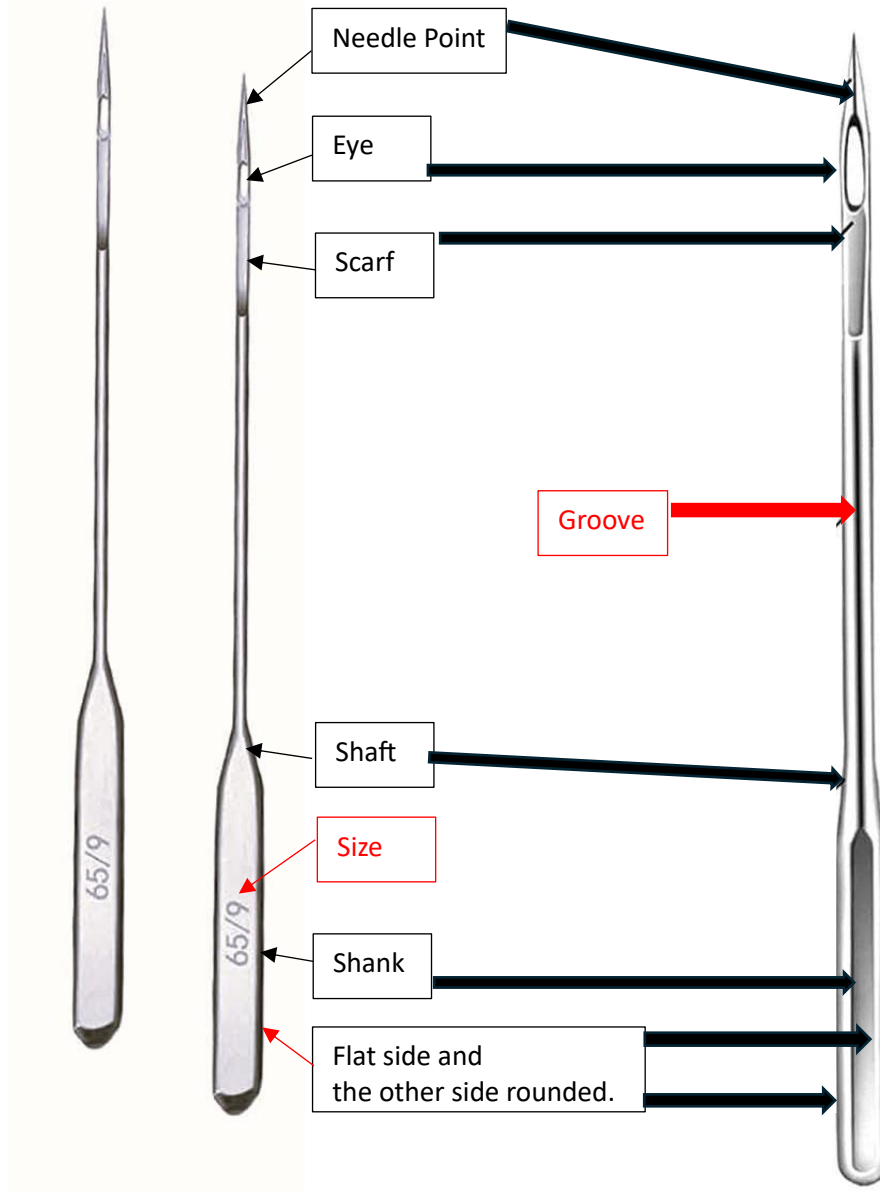
As with crochet hooks and other craft tools, sewing needles come in American and European sizing. American sizes are 8 to 19 and European are 60 to 120. These numbers determine size of the point/tip. The bigger the size, the bigger the point/tip. The size of the needles is above each needle, and it will tell the basic uses and which fabric to use them on.



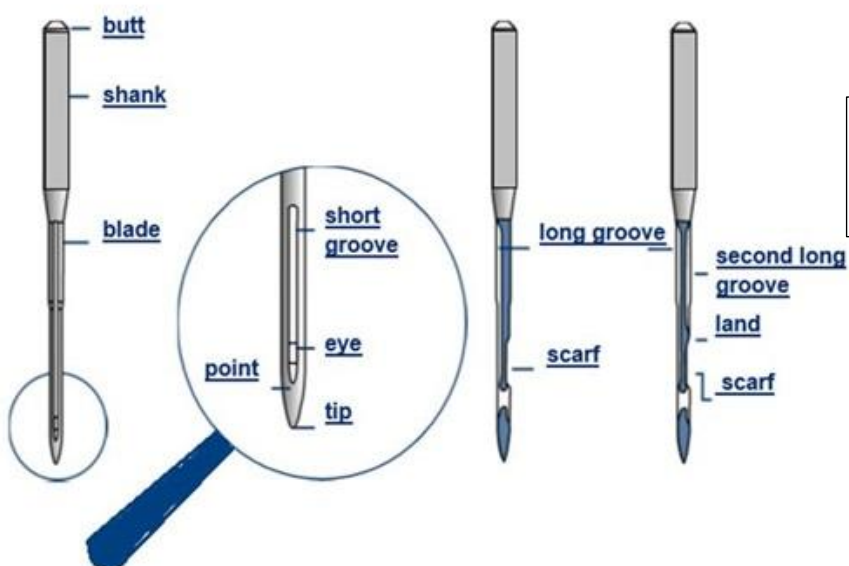
Most needles are compatible with all types of sewing machine but always check the information in the description and/or detail section if buying online or speak to your local fabric shop.

There is a wide variety of needles, and it all depends on the weight of the fabric – silk or denim, the type of thread – cotton or metallic and type of craft – general sewing or quilting.

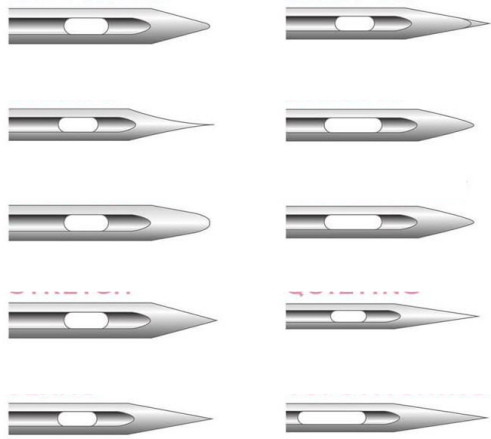
BASIC ANATOMY OF A MACHINE SEWING NEEDLE



The Groove and the size does not appear on all makes of sewing machine needles.



Credit image – www.coats.com
<https://www.coats.com/en/info-hub/all-about-needles/>



The different types of needles are all about the point and tip – this is where the needle first enters the fabric and causes the least amount of damage to the thread/weave of the fabric.

These are 4 basic sewing machine needle types you will use when creating projects and patterns from Rosa May Crafts – www.rosamaycrafts.com

Please note that if you are creating leather products or heavy duty curtains, you will need to use other types of sewing machine needles.

1. Universal

This is the most popular needle as it is so versatile and can be used with a variety of fabrics – woven, synthetic and some knits.

Fabrics – Cotton

Threads to use - Polyester/cotton mix, Cotton.

The needle between a sharp point and medium ball point



2. Stretch

Fabrics - Spandex, Lycra, silk jersey, indeed elastic itself.

Threads to use –

The has a 'scarf' which allows extra room for the hook to pass close by and prevents skipped stitches making it ideal for use with fabrics such as Lycra, power net, two way stretch knits, silk jersey, spandex and highly elasticated synthetic fabrics or indeed elastic itself. Polyester or cotton



3. Ballpoint

Fabrics - Jersey knits, fleece and stretch fabrics – velvet

Threads to use - Polyester/cotton mix, Cotton

The needle has a more rounded tip (point) than the universal needle.



PLEASE NOTE THAT CERTAIN MANUFACTURERS COMBINE THE STRETCH/JERSEY AND BALLPOINT NEEDLES

4. Heavy Duty

Fabrics - Denim, thick woven fabrics, canvas and working with thicker and heavier projects – I find these are wonderful – e.g. creating a padded placemat.

Threads to use – Synthetic, 100 % polyester

The needle has a very sharp point and a stronger shank so that the needle does not break when going through the heavyweight fabric



There are various thoughts on when to replace your needle, as with choosing your needle brand, you need to decide which you would prefer.

On a personal level, I use my needles for various projects and months at a time, but several bloggers/crafters, sewing pros suggest you change after every project.

Other suggestions as to when to replace your needle:

- when your needle is bent, even slightly.
- when your fabric is damaged or puckers when sewing.
- when you are skipping or have uneven stitches.
- when your threads are breaking or shredding.

PLEASE NOTE: that the above reason may apply to other issues with your machine or threads. You may replace your needle and the issue continues – say your thread is splitting/shredding, you replace the needle and the problem continues, then the next supply could be that your thread is not correct.

Please visit for lots of wonderful and easy guides -

<https://www.schmetzneedles.com/pages/schmetz-sewing-resources>



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