NEEDLES & THREAD

Needle & Thread Guide

The right needle fixes most stitch problems. Find the needle type for your fabric, then pick the size by fabric weight and thread.



Needle types

Needle type	Use it for	Common sizes	SCHMETZ colour band
Universal	Most woven fabrics: cotton, linen, quilting cotton, light upholstery	60/8 – 100/16	○ none
Microtex (Sharp)	Fine wovens, silk, microfibre, batiks, precise piecing and topstitching	60/8 – 110/18	purple
Jersey (Ballpoint)	Knits: T-shirt jersey, interlock, fleece, sweatshirt	70/10 – 100/16	orange
Stretch	Very stretchy knits: spandex, Lycra, swimwear, activewear	65/9 – 90/14	yellow
Jeans / Denim	Denim, canvas, duck, heavy twill, many layers	70/10 – 110/18	blue
Quilting	Piecing and machine quilting through layers	75/11 – 90/14	green
Embroidery	Machine embroidery with rayon or polyester embroidery thread	75/11 – 90/14	red
Metallic	Metallic and specialty threads (larger, polished eye)	80/12 – 90/14	pink
Topstitch	Topstitching with heavy or doubled thread (extra-large eye)	80/12 – 100/16	light green
Leather	Real leather and suede (not for vinyl or faux leather)	80/12 – 110/18	brown



Embroidery needles


All-purpose cotton thread


Metallic thread

Choose the size by fabric weight

Fabric weight	Examples	Needle size
Very light	Chiffon, organza, voile, silk	60/8 – 65/9
Light	Lawn, batiste, shirting, lightweight knits	70/10 – 75/11
Medium	Quilting cotton, linen, poplin, jersey	80/12
Medium-heavy	Corduroy, flannel, light denim, fleece	90/14
Heavy	Denim, canvas, upholstery, coating	100/16 – 110/18

Match the needle to your thread

Thread	Typical use	Start with
60 wt (fine)	Bobbin thread, fine piecing, appliqué	70/10 Microtex
50 wt	All-purpose sewing, piecing	80/12
40 wt	Machine embroidery, quilting, topstitching	90/14
30 wt	Bold quilting and topstitching	100/16 Topstitch
Metallic	Embroidery and decorative stitching	80/12 – 90/14 Metallic

Needle tips that save projects

- Change your needle every new project, or after about 8 hours of sewing.
- Skipped stitches, snags or a "popping" sound usually mean a dull or wrong needle.
- Check your manual: most home machines use system 130/705 H needles. Industrial machines use different systems.
- If the thread frays or shreds, go up a needle size or switch to a needle with a larger eye.

Sizes are a starting point. Always test on a scrap of your fabric first. Colour bands shown are SCHMETZ's; other brands use their own markings. Shop needles at allaboutsewingmachines.ca/collections/needles-all.