

Svenska Mönster's Vocabulary for Sewing Amateurs

Back piece	The pattern piece or pieces that are intended to be placed on the back part of the body.
Basting/tacking stitch	Stitch sewn by hand or with the longest stitches on the sewing machine. Can be used to quickly assemble the most important parts of a garment for fitting or for staystitching.
Bias cut	The pattern pieces are cut on the bias of the fabric, 45 degrees to the regular grainline. Provides a beautiful drape to the garment but increases fabric consumption.
Buttonhole thread	A thicker thread suitable for hand-sewing buttonholes and tacking.
Coverstitch machine	A machine that simultaneously sews 2-3 stitches next to each other, usually on hems and edges of knitwear. Its job is simply to hem your finished garment edges or do decorative chainstitching.
Crotch seam	The seam on a pair of pants that runs from the front waist, around the crotch, to the back waist.
Cutting	When you cut out the parts of the garment from the fabric.
Dart	A common technique used for shaping garments. Bust darts or other darts are used for a better fit over the bust, back, waist, and more. Usually sewn as a triangular fold towards the wrong side of the fabric.
Drape	Drape is the term used to describe the way a fabric hangs on the body, under its own weight when the garment is finished. Different fabrics drape differently due to properties of different fibers as well as the fabric's weave, weight and finishing treatment. It can be heavy, soft, or stiff.
Ease	The allowance of space in a pattern for fit, comfort and style, over exact body measurements.
Elastane	A brand name for thin rubber threads that are knitted into jersey fabrics to provide stretch that also returns to its original shape.
Fabric clips	Small clips that you can use to attach fabric pieces that, for example, are to be sewn directly in the overlock machine or as an alternative to pins if the fabric is too heavy to be pinned.
Fabric consumption	The amount of fabric you need to sew your garment.
Fabric scissors	Scissors that are well-sharpened and used exclusively for cutting fabrics.
Facing	A piece that is turned with the garment's outer edge and then lies against the wrong side. For example at neckline, sleeve opening, waistline, pocket edge. Compare to waistband.
Flatlock machine	A machine, usually 3-threaded, that sews stretch material flat and overlapping seams, with a decorative effect. Flatlock is the stitch often used in active wear that looks like two flat raw edges are sew together by butting the edges up to each other - no overlap or seam allowance.

Front piece	The pattern piece or pieces that are intended to be placed on the front part of the body.
Gathering	A way of gathering the fabric to create fullness in the fabric, such as ruffles. It is a technique for shortening the length of a strip of fabric, so that the longer piece can be attached to the shorter piece.
Grainline	The direction of the fabric's threads along the selvage. The arrows on the sewing pattern indicate the same direction. The pattern piece should be placed on the fabric so that the arrow runs parallel to the grainline.
Hem	A hem on something such as a piece of clothing is an edge that is folded over and stitched down to prevent threads coming loose. The hem of a skirt or dress is the bottom edge.
Inseam	The seam on the inside of a pant leg
Interfacing	A type of thin reinforcement fabric, often with one adhesive side. Mostly nonwoven fabric but can also be woven. Using an iron, interfacing is pressed onto the wrong side of parts that need extra stability, such as collars, front facings, pocket flaps, waistbands, or areas where buttonholes will be placed. There are many different brands, such as Vlieseline or Permess.
Jersey fabric	Fine-knit fabric with stretch threads (see elastane, spandex, lycra) that make the fabric stretchy; also referred to as knit fabric. It is important to use sewing patterns designed for stretchy fabrics. See also knit fabric.
Knit fabric	Collective term for fine-knit fabric with stretch threads that make the fabric stretchy; also called jersey fabric. It is important to use sewing patterns designed for stretchy knit fabrics.
Length of garment	Measurement from the inner shoulder point (neck) down to the garment's lower edge.
Lining	A piece of material used to finish the inside of a garment. Linings can hide the seam and make the garments easier and more comfortable to wear.
Lycra	A brand name for thin rubber threads that are knitted into jersey fabrics to provide stretch that also returns to its original shape.
Machine stitch	Usually a straight stitch on a regular sewing machine.
Measurement chart	The body measurement chart that you compare with your own measurements and choose the pattern size accordingly.
Measuring gauge	Small ruler used to measure seam allowances, hems, buttonholes, etc. Also called Pfiffikus (brand).
Measuring tape	Soft tape, usually 150 cm long and marked in centimeters. Used to measure lengths and circumferences on both the body, pattern pieces, and fabric.

Nap	A fabric texture or printed pattern that runs in a particular direction, and requires all pattern pieces to be cut facing the same orientation.
Nonwoven	A type of flexible material that is not woven or knitted but machine-fabricated to resemble fabric. In sewing, it is often coated with adhesive or batting on one side, called interfacing.
Notch	A notch marking, marked at the end of the seam allowance.
Overlay	This refers to the top layer of fabric, when there is a different one underneath.
Overlock machine	Machine that simultaneously sews the seam and trims excess seam allowance, often used for knit fabrics or instead of zigzag stitches in woven fabric. Never use pins and be cautious with fingers as the machine has built-in knives.
Overlock thread	Thin thread that is best suited for overlock machines.
Paper scissors	Scissors primarily used for cutting paper.
Pattern pieces	The parts made of paper or thin plastic that you cut out in fabric and sew your garment of. See also Sewing Pattern.
Pins	The pins you use to attach fabric pieces and patterns to fabric. See also fabric clips.
Press	Ironing with high heat and steam. The iron can have a Teflon soleplate that protects the fabric, or use a pressing cloth made of fabric between the garment and the iron. Pressing is done after each stitched seam and can help shape the garment.
Press open, press seam open	To iron the seam allowances in opposite directions.
Right side	The side of the fabric you want to show outward. See also Wrong side.
Seam allowance	The narrow edges that remain on the inside of the garment after you have sewn a seam, the width of the fabric beyond the seam line. Seam allowances are added to the pattern or directly to the fabric before cutting and sewing.
Seam ripper	A small, sharp tool used to unpick a seam that has been sewn incorrectly.
Selvage (or selvedge)	The woven edge that runs parallel to the lengthwise grain. The selvage often has small holes formed during the weaving process in the factory.
Sewing machine needles	The needle that is inserted into the sewing machine—different types may be needed for different machines. The needle type and size must be adapted to the fabric you are sewing.
Sewing machine, regular	A machine that sews straight stitches, zigzags, and often many other stitches, such as buttonholes.
Sewing notions	The small items you need in addition to fabric and patterns, such as scissors, sewing thread, buttons, zippers, marking pens, measuring tape, and pins.

Sewing pattern	Pattern pieces made of thin paper or plastic that you lay on the fabric, then cut out all the parts of the garment to be sewn together. The term "sewing pattern" also refers to the entire package with sewing instructions, patterns, and an image of the garment you are going to sew.
Sewing thread	Thin thread that works in various types of sewing machines.
Sideseam	The seam located on the side of a garment.
Sleeve	The garment part/pattern piece that you dress on the arm.
Spandex	A brand name for thin rubber threads that are knitted into jersey fabrics to provide stretch that also returns to its original shape.
Staystitching	Basting stitch sewn by hand or with the longest stitches on the sewing machine to hold the shape of, for example, a neckline that could otherwise stretch while you work on the garment.
Stitching	Visible seam of any type, usually a straight stitch.
Twin needle	A type of sewing machine needle for a regular sewing machine. Consists of two needles joined together and requires that your machine has space for two thread spools for the top thread.
Underlay	The layer of fabric underneath another layer of fabric.
Understitching	A straight stitch sewn from the right side, 1-2 mm in on a facing (usually in neckline or sleeve opening without a sleeve) where seam allowances are simultaneously stitched down underneath. This is done to make the facing lie neatly against the inside of the garment.
Waistband	Visible part sewn at the top/waistline of pants and skirts.
Walking foot	A presser foot that steps across the fabric, as opposed to sliding.
Woven fabric	Fabric that is woven and stiff, not stretchy.
Wrong side	The back of the fabric, the side you want to face towards your body. Compare with the opposite Right side.
Yardage	A term for an undefined length of fabric.
Yoke	A panel across the shoulders or the waistline.
Zigzag stitch	Found on regular sewing machines and used to sew along raw edges to prevent them from fraying. An alternative to zigzag is to use an overlock machine.

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