

INTERMEDIATE  
SEWING  
TECHNIQUES

Sample Book

[www.yellowspool.com](http://www.yellowspool.com)

# SAMPLES

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Sample Rectangles: 3"x5", cut 25

XL Sample Rectangles: 3"x10", cut 8

# INTERFACING

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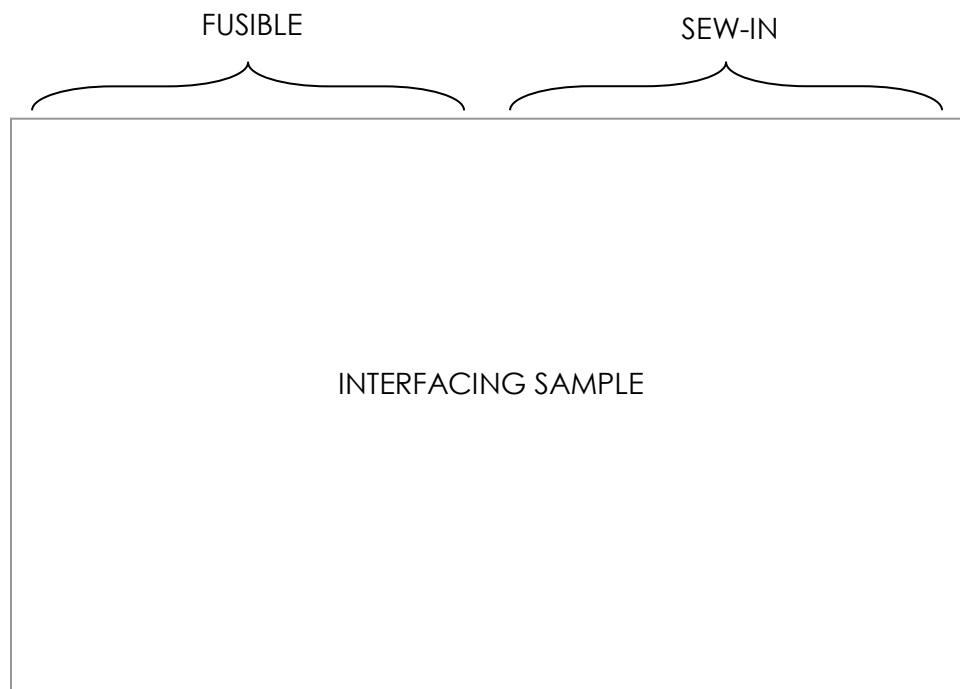
Fabric stabilizer that can be either iron-on (fusible) or sew-in, comes in varying weights. The heavier the interfacing, the more stiffness it adds to the fabric.

## FUSIBLE

Similar to fabric, before starting a project you'll want to be sure to preshrink the interfacing. To do this, just set the interfacing on the fabric where you need it, glue side down, and hover the iron over the interfacing while steaming for about 5 seconds. Once it's been steam-shrunk, you can iron or sew it on according to the instructions on the directions.

## SEW-IN

Rather than ironing the interfacing to hold it in place, sew-in interfacing is what the name implies. Sew with a lengthened straight stitch near the edge of the interfacing. Be sure to sew nearer to the edge than the seam allowance of the finished product will be, so the stitching from the interfacing isn't seen later.



**NOTES:**

# ELASTIC

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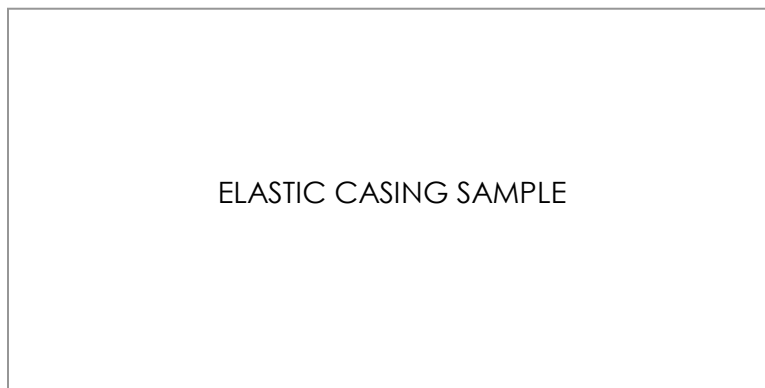
## SEWN TO THE FABRIC

To allow some stretch in your stitching, set the stitch to either a longer straight stitch, or a zig zag. Cut the elastic about 3/4 the length of the fabric and pin evenly to the wrong side of the fabric. Sew a few stitches to secure the elastic to the fabric, then pull on the elastic as you sew.



## CASING

Sew down the side seam to make a large tube and press the seam open. Iron the top edge under about 1/4" all the way around, and once more about the width of your elastic + 3/8". Top-stitch the casing down at the inner edge, leaving about a 2" opening. Thread the elastic through the casing, overlap the ends, and sew over it back and forth several times. Clip the tail of the elastic, lay it flat inside of the casing, and sew over the opening to close it, trace stitching at the beginning and end a few stitches to secure the stitch.



## **NOTES:**

# BIAS TAPE

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The bias runs at a 45 degree angle on your fabric. It's the stretchiest part on the fabric, which is why you use it to make bias tape, so it can stretch around corners and curves when you're binding something.

Make a 45 degree cut, and cut your strips 2". If needed, sew multiple strips together, with the ends cut at 45 degree angles, to lengthen the tape. Press the seam open, clip excess fabric, and continue.

Fold the strip in half with wrong-sides-together and iron. Open it back up, and fold the edges in towards the center (one side at a time) and iron. Fold it back in half and you have double fold bias tape.



BIAS TAPE SAMPLE

# GATHERING

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Lengthen the stitch all the way. Line the edge you'd like to gather 1/8" from the needle and sew down the length you'd like to gather. DO NOT reverse stitch at the beginning or end of your stitching. Line the same edge of your fabric at 1/4" and sew down the same way you did before. Hold onto the bobbin threads at one end and use your other hand to scrunch the fabric and gather. When you have your gather the length you need, sew the gathered edge to another piece of fabric. Press the seam up, away from the gathered piece.



GATHERED SAMPLE

**NOTES:**

# SEAM FINISHES

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Finishing your seams keeps them secure, tidy, and prevents the edges from fraying.

## OVERSTITCH (ZIG ZAG)

The over stitch seam finish is most similar to the overlock/serged seam finish. With right-sides-together, sew a standard seam. Now do a basic zig zag stitch that goes over the edge a little bit.



## CLEAN FINISH

The clean finish is basically a hem on the raw edge of the seam allowance. With right-sides-together, sew a standard seam. Press the seam open. Press the raw edges of the seam under 1/4" on both sides. Then simply edge stitch for the clean finish.



# SEAM FINISHES

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## BOUND EDGE

The bound edge is clean, and gives the option of adding a little color to your seam finish with bias tape. With right-sides-together, sew a standard seam. Sandwich the seam allowance inside bias tape. Top-stitch the bias tape to the seam edge.



## PINKED EDGE

A pinked edge is a seam allowance made with no sewing. The 45 degree angles on the pinking shears cut the fabric on the bias in a zig zag and prevent fraying. With right-sides-together, sew a standard seam. Use a pair of pinking shears to cut the raw edge of your seam.



# SEAM FINISHES

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## FRENCH SEAM

The French seam takes the most time and knowledge, but the outcome is very rewarding. The raw edge is completely encased in this seam allowance. With wrong-sides-together this time, sew a seam with a 1/4" seam allowance. I know it seems backwards- it's supposed to. Trim your seam allowance down to about 1/8". Fold the fabric over with right-sides-together and press. Sew a seam with a 1/4" seam allowance. When you open it, it will look like a basic stitch on the right side, and completely closed edge on the wrong side.



FRENCH SEAM SAMPLE

**NOTES:**



# BUTTONHOLES

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## MANUAL

Draw a template for the buttonhole 1/8" wide, and slightly longer than the button. Set the sewing machine to a zig zag stitch. Center the first long line under the needle and stitch the zig-zag. Adjust the stitch back to the standard straight stitch setting, and sew the small bar stitching at the top of the buttonhole. Stitch back and forth 3 or 4 times. Pivot the fabric again, and set the machine back to the zig zag settings, and sew down the second long line. Finish with the straight stitching along the bottom of the buttonhole.

## STANDARD

Set the machines stitch settings for the buttonhole and put the buttonhole foot on the sewing machine. Place the button on the fabric and mark just above and below the button, to indicate where the buttonhole will be. Line the marked fabric underneath the presser foot with the lower marking directly below the needle. Sew each portion of the buttonhole (side, top, side, bottom), turning the buttonhole dial on the machine as you complete each step, and using the markings you made earlier as a guide. There is no need to change the stitch settings or pivot the fabric as you go because the sewing machine will make the necessary changes automatically each time you turn the dial.

## AUTOMATIC

Start by placing the button on the fabric and marking just below the button with a pencil or fabric marker. This will indicate where to sew the buttonhole. Push the back extension out on the automatic buttonhole foot, place your button inside, and tighten it back in. Put the buttonhole foot on the machine and select a buttonhole stitch. Pull down the buttonhole lever. Place the fabric underneath the buttonhole foot with the marking you made earlier directly under the needle. Make sure the fabric is lined up straight. Hold onto the thread, and sew. The machine will do all the work, so you don't need to worry about changing the stitch or pivoting.



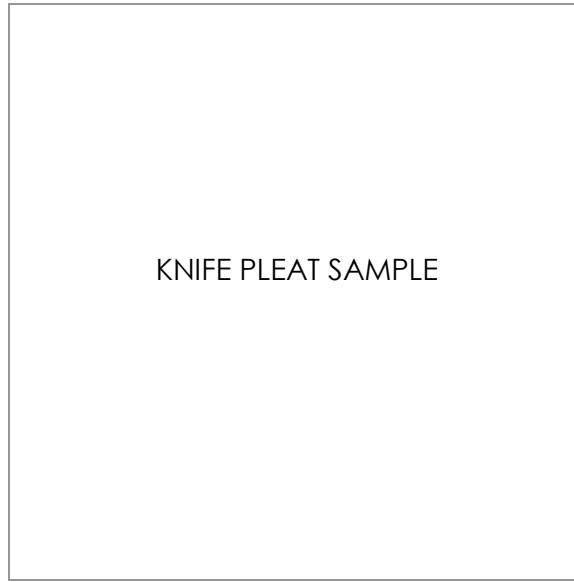
## **NOTES:**

# PLEATS

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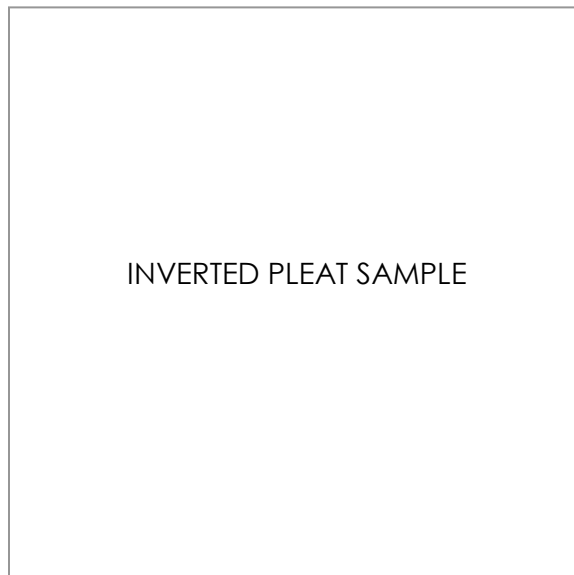
## KNIFE PLEATS

Start by placing a pin along the length of your fabric marking every 1". Pull the first pin over to your second pin, line them up, and pinch the first pleat with your fingers, and replace the marker pins with a pin to hold the pleat in place. Pull the next marker pin over to the pin next to it and continue. Press and stitch along the top.



## INVERTED PLEATS

Mark the center length with a pin. Use pins to mark 1" from both sides of the center pin. Pull the left pin over in front, to the center pin, pinch the pleat with your fingers, and pin the pleat together. Rather than continuing in the same direction like you do with the knife pleat, you now want to take the right marking pin and move it over in front, lining it up with the center pin as well (right to left). Pin the pleat in place. Press and stitch along the top.

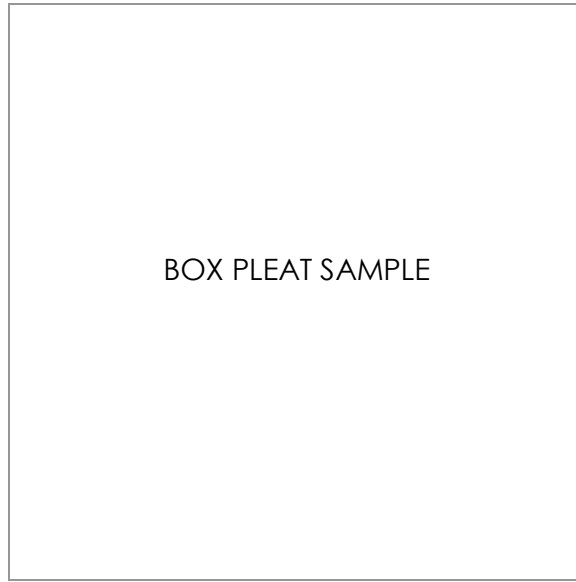


# PLEATS

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## BOX PLEATS

Look at the back side of your inverted pleat sample. What you see is a box pleat. To make a box pleat, use exactly the same method as the inverted pleat, but rather than bringing the left and right sides up to the center pin, you pull them behind towards the center pin. How's that for simple?



**NOTES:**

# ZIPPERS

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## CENTERED ZIPPER

Sew a standard seam using a 5/8" seam allowance. Press the seam open with an iron. Put the zipper foot on your sewing machine with the foot off-centered to the right.

With the wrong side of the fabric facing up and the right side of the zipper facing down, center the zipper over the seam and start sewing at the top right of the zipper. Sew around the corner, creating a square end at the bottom of the zipper and finishing down the other side back up towards the top of the zipper.

When the zipper is in place, use a seam ripper to take out the baste stitching and open the zipper.



CENTERED ZIPPER SAMPLE

# ZIPPERS

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## INVISIBLE ZIPPER

Put the invisible zipper foot on your sewing machine (you can also use a standard presser foot or zipper foot, as long as you sew about 1/8" from the zipper's teeth). Lay both pieces of fabric right-side up, with the zipper between them, also right side up. Unzip the zipper, and flip the right side of the zipper over to the fabric on the right, lining them with right-sides-together, lined along the edge of the fabric. Sew as close to the zipper teeth as you can down the length of the zipper. With an invisible zipper foot, simply feed the zipper teeth through the guide on the right side of the zipper foot. Line up and sew down the length of the other side of the zipper. Sew across the bottom of the zipper a few times to secure the stopping point at the bottom.



INVISIBLE ZIPPER SAMPLE

**NOTES:**