
Pressing and Finishing Seams with Liesl Gibson

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

- Finishing seams gives your projects a professional look and just as important, it keeps your fabric from fraying. (playful music)

Chapter 2 - Pressing and Finishing Seams

Pressing and finishing

- [Instructor] The first step after you've sewn a seam, is to press that seam flat and by pressing it flat, you're allowing the seam itself to really become embedded in your fabric and become a part of the fabric itself. It's different than ironing, ironing is generally moving your iron back and forth, you know, getting the creases out of it, with pressing is a gentler process. You're just allowing the iron to work with your fabric and you're simply pressing it, leaving it in one place. Most of the time, you'll be pressing the seam allowances open, on occasion, you'll be pressing them to one side or the other, but in general, for most sewing projects, we press the seam allowances open and once you've pressed them open, then you can go ahead and finish those seam allowances. Now, there are a lot of different ways ^of finishing the seam allowances, many, many ways, ^I'm gonna show you three of the basic methods of finishing ^those seam allowances. The first one is using a pinking shears, and a pinking shears is a special scissors that has like a zig zag blade to it and when you use it to cut the very edge of your fabric, it's going to cut it with a zig zag edge, which will then prevent the fabric from raveling and from fraying, it's not a very professional looking finish but it's quick, it's easy, it doesn't involve a lot of time, so it's one of the simplest methods for finishing a seam allowance. The second method is to use your sewing machine to zig zag over the edge of the cut fabric. I'm stitching with a two-millimeter long zig zag and it's about five millimeters wide, you can see I'm stitching on and off the fabric, with each zig zag, and mostly using my overlock foot, so that it's holding those zig zags stitches and preventing them from pulling in and puckering the fabric. The third method is what's called a Mock Serger Stitch. It's the same thing I'm using my overlock foot, and this is the slowest stitch because it's doing that straight stitch right next to the zig zag stitch, you can see it takes a lot longer to do, so you have to be patient with it, but it does give a really nice professional looking result, almost the same as a serger stitch, but not quite, but as close as you can get, without actually getting a serger. ^When you get beyond straight seams, ^and you start doing corners, and curved seams, we also need to think about clipping into those seam allowances. When we have a corner, we cut the seam allowances at the corner. This is a bamboo point presser, and this is great for pressing the corners, so I'll slip it inside, and then turn it to the side, so that when I press it on the iron, opening up the seam allowance, right on top of that point presser so that I can press it on that side, and then I turn it over and do the same thing here, putting the bamboo right underneath the seam. Bamboo is great for things like this because it absorbs some of the moisture from the steam and slowly releases it, with the heat, so it really give you a nice crisp, press. And then, when we turn this right side out, gently use your point presser to coax that out, be really careful not to force it, because you could poke a hole in the corner and then when we press it, by taking those seam allowances out, you get a nice, crisp corner, like that. For a curved seam allowance, it's a good idea to clip into the seam allowance periodically in order to release the seam allowance and allow the curve to lie flat, you can see with this curved seam, that after I finish the

seam allowance, I went in and I just clipped it periodically to allow it to lie flat when it's pressed open.