

HANDLING SPECIAL FABRICS





Certain fabrics because of their design or fabrication require special care and attention during layout and construction. Some fabrics fall into this category where special handling required is usually not difficult. Often you need only to add one more step, such as a seam finish, or exercise a little more.

CHIFFON

- Chiffon tends to be slippery and will slide when being uncut, unless a non slippery surface is used. An old sheet or tablecloth on the cutting surface should suffice. Use fine dressmaker pins and cut with very sharp shears. Use a fine machine-stitch and a fine machine needle. The feed dog may catch the fabric surface, so it's best to stitch over tissue paper, which may be torn away after stitching.



CHIFFON



- Preferred seam finishes for sheer fabrics are the French seam and hand rolled edges.
- As wider seams show through, when facings are needed, it is best to make the entire garment section double, rather than have the edges show through to the right side of the garment.

CREPE



- The spongy quality of crepe, which makes it drape so beautifully, also tends to make it stretch when being machine-stitched.
- To prevent stretching, stitch over tissue paper. Fit crepe garments fairly snugly as they usually stretch after wearing.
- Don't fit too tightly or your garment will pull and stretch in all the wrong places.

CREPE



- Allow crepe garments to hang at least overnight before marking the hem, since the fabric tends to stretch when hanging.
- Press it lightly, always using a press cloth to prevent shine.

FELT



- Felt does not present many difficulties in construction. It may be cut in any direction since it has no grain. It does not ravel, needs no edge finish and usually felt garments have no hems. Choose very simple patterns for felt, without a great many construction details. It is hard to ease seams in felt. Use lining fabric or iron-on tape for facings to avoid bulky seams. Use a fairly long machine-stitch and medium tension. Press felt with a warm, dry iron; steam-pressing tends to shrink it.

FUR FABRIC



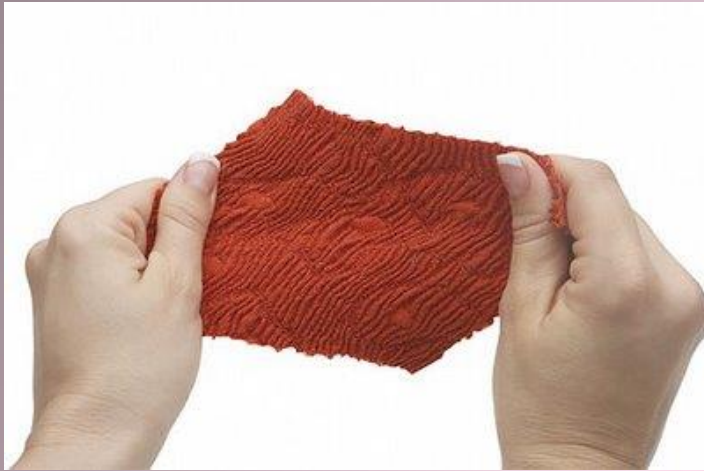
- When working with the fabulous fakes, follow the layouts and directions for cutting napped fabrics. Baste seams together by hand before stitching , since the pieces tend to slip when machine-stitched. Use a light tension on machine, and a long stitch (8-10). Use a needle to smooth pile out of the seams on the right side of the fabric. Use lining fabric for facings, and hooks and eyes, snaps or loops for closings. Buttonholes should be avoided, since they are very difficult to manipulate in heavily napped fabric.

Stretch fabrics



These include single knits, jerseys, t-shirt knits and swim wear such as Lycra. For jersey or any knit fabric that comes in a tubular form, you may have to cut the tube open following a lengthwise rib if the pattern layout shows the pieces cut singly.

Stretch fabrics



- Open flat, square off ends, and steam-press to remove fold or creases.
- Pin pattern securely to wrong side of the fabric to keep edges from rolling. Stay-stitch each piece immediately after cutting to prevent its stretching out of shape. For permanent stitching, use a long machine-stitch (10-12 to the inch) with loose tension. Stretch the material slightly without pulling.





- For extra reinforcement, double-stitch or tape seams at points of stress such as waistline, underarm, elbows of long sleeves.
- Hang garment for at least twenty four hours before making hemline.
- Line jersey garments to prevent them stretching out of shape.

NET



- Nets presents very little trouble. Seams on net garments may be trimmed without raveling.
- The number of stitches to use per inch on the machine depends on the size of the mesh, so test a scrap before doing any permanent stitching.
- Transparent horsehair provides nice finish for the hem, but is not essential.

NYLON



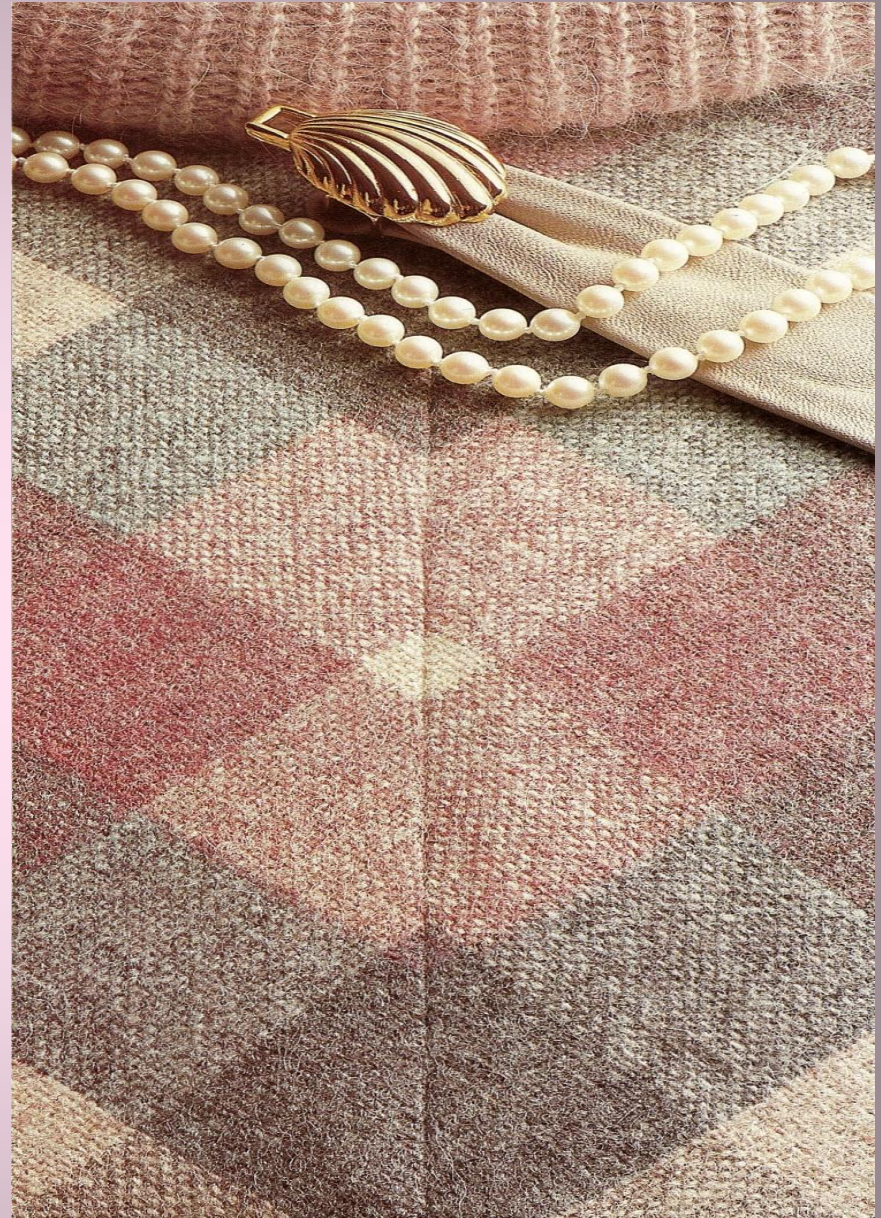
- The biggest problem in working with nylon and some of the other pure synthetics is seam puckering.
- Stitching tends to draw seam lines and ripple the fabric on either side.
- Bias or off-grain seams pucker less than straight lengthwise ones, so it's best to select a style with flared gores cut with bias seams.

Nylon



- When stitching nylon, always use a fine machine needle, and either nylon or mercerized thread.
- Use a fairly small stitch (12-15 to the inch) and loosen both bottom and top tensions as much as you can to produce one good stitch. Avoid stitching over pins.

PLAIDS AND STRIPES





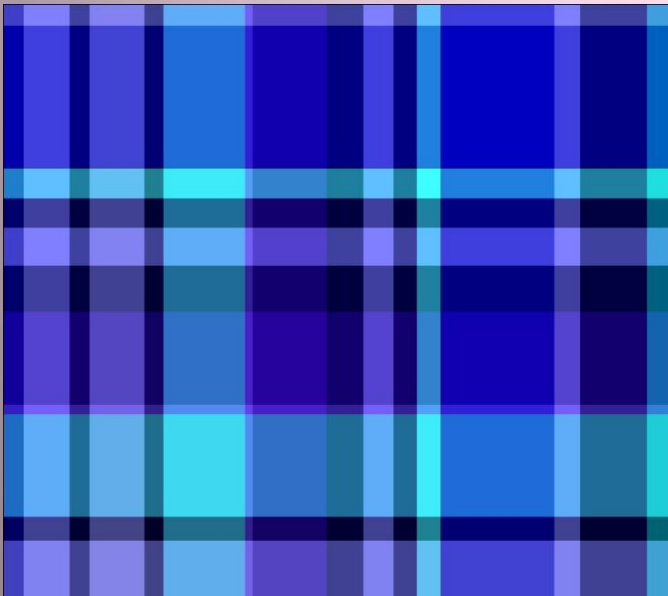
Select simple styles for plaids and stripes. Complicated fashions can distort the fabric design. Avoid princess seam line, diagonal bust line darts, long horizontal darts and patterns designated “not suitable for plaids and stripes.”



It is easier to work with even plaids and balanced stripes than uneven plaids and unbalanced stripes. Even plaids have the same arrangement of colors and stripes in both lengthwise and crosswise direction. The area of repeat is perfectly square.



In uneven plaids the color and stripes form a different arrangement in the lengthwise and crosswise direction or both. Balanced stripes repeat in the same order in both directions; unbalanced stripes do not. To match at the seams , all uneven plaids and some unbalanced stripes must be cut from a single layer of fabric, using each pattern piece twice.



How to determine if
plaid is even or
uneven?

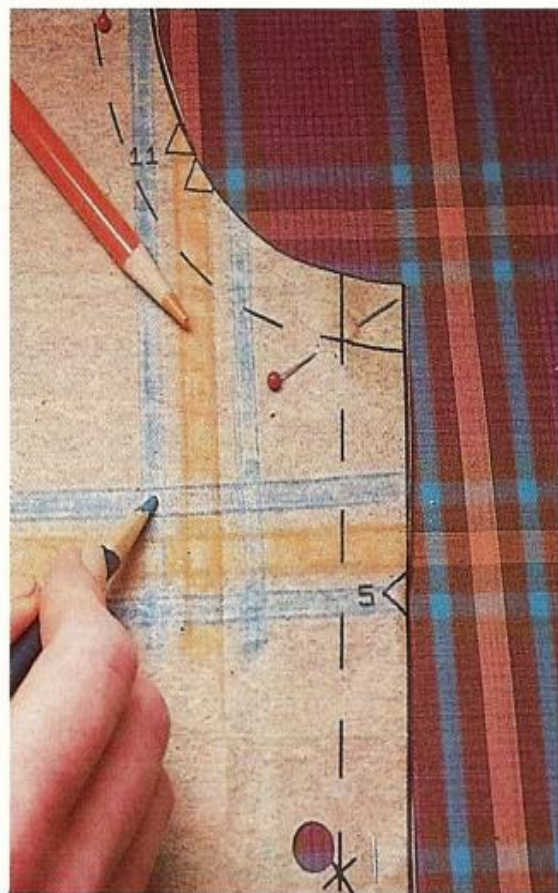
Even plaid has
matching stripes and
colors when fabric is
folded diagonally
through center of
any repeat.



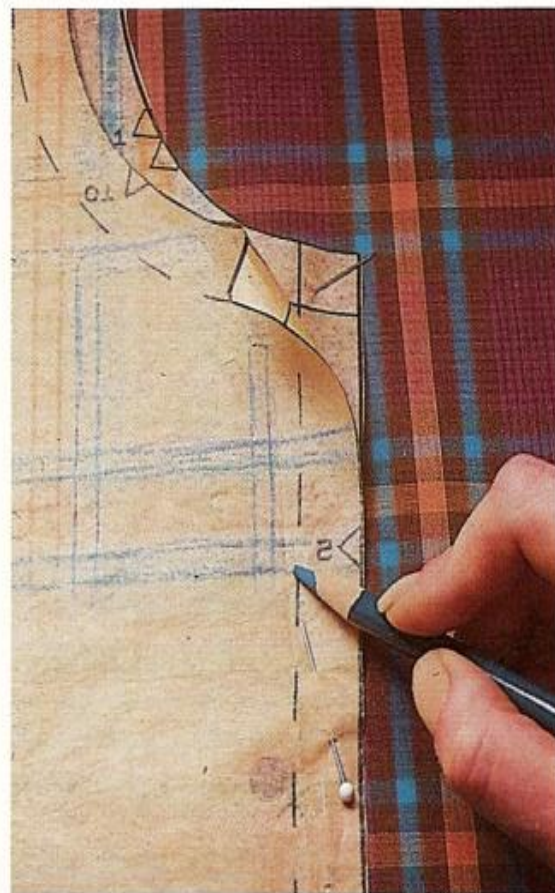
Uneven plaid
creates
unmatched stripes
and colors in one
or both directions
when folded
diagonally
through the
center of repeat.



How to Match Even Plaids



1) Position a front or back pattern piece on the fabric. Trace design of plaid onto pattern piece in the area of a side seam notch. Identify the colors.



2) Place adjoining pattern piece on top of first piece, matching notch and lapping seamlines. Trace plaid design onto reverse side of the second piece.



3) Position second pattern piece on fabric so traced design matches design of fabric. Pin in place. Repeat with other pattern pieces to be matched.

How to Lay Out Plaids



DIRECTIONAL FABRICS

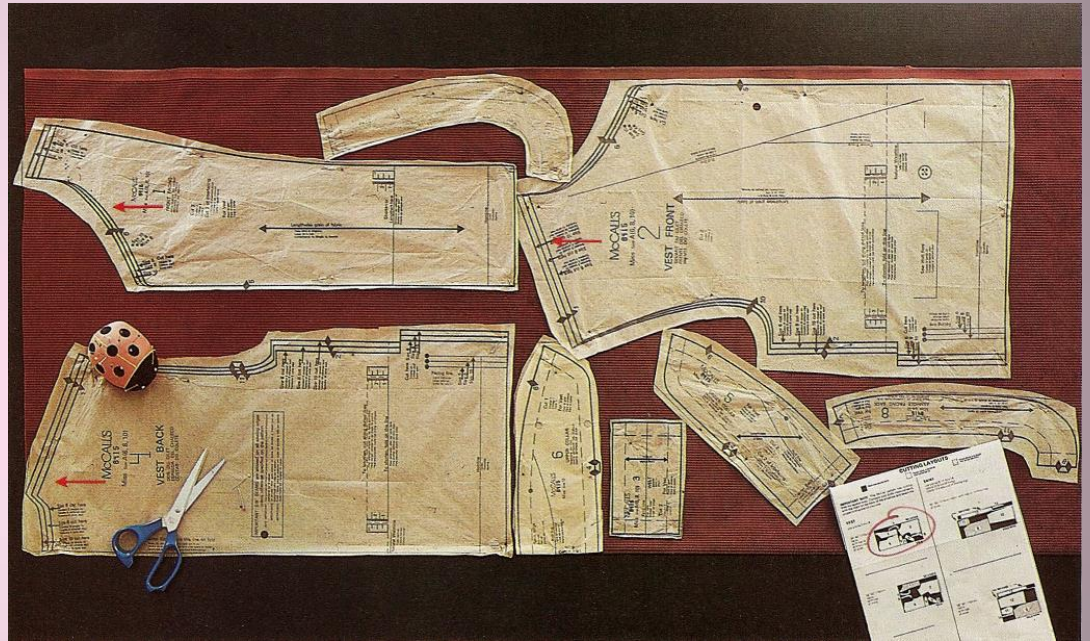


Directional fabric are so called because they must be laid in one direction for cutting ; they are described as “with nap” on pattern envelope and guide sheet. Included in this category are truly napped fabrics ; designs that do not reverse (one way design) ;and surfaces that reflect light in varying ways (shaded). Example of directional fabrics are napped-corduroy, velveteen , flannel ;shiny- taffeta , satin ; twill weave fabrics- denim, gabardine and one way prints etc.

Laying out directional fabrics

- Choose the direction your fabric will run, then lay out the pattern pieces according to the “with nap” layout on the pattern direction sheet.

- To ensure proper placement, mark each pattern piece with an arrow pointing to the top of the piece.



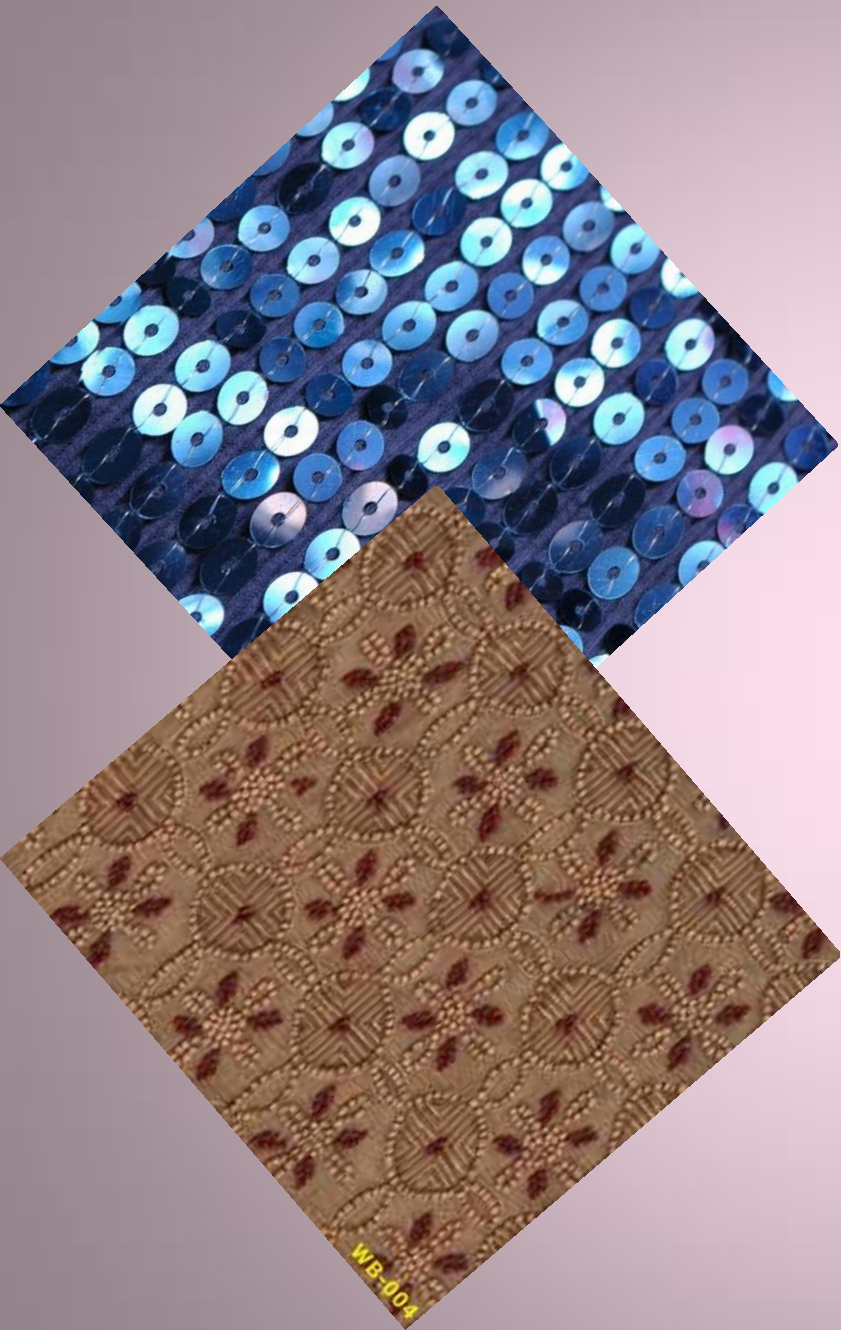
Beaded / Sequin Fabrics

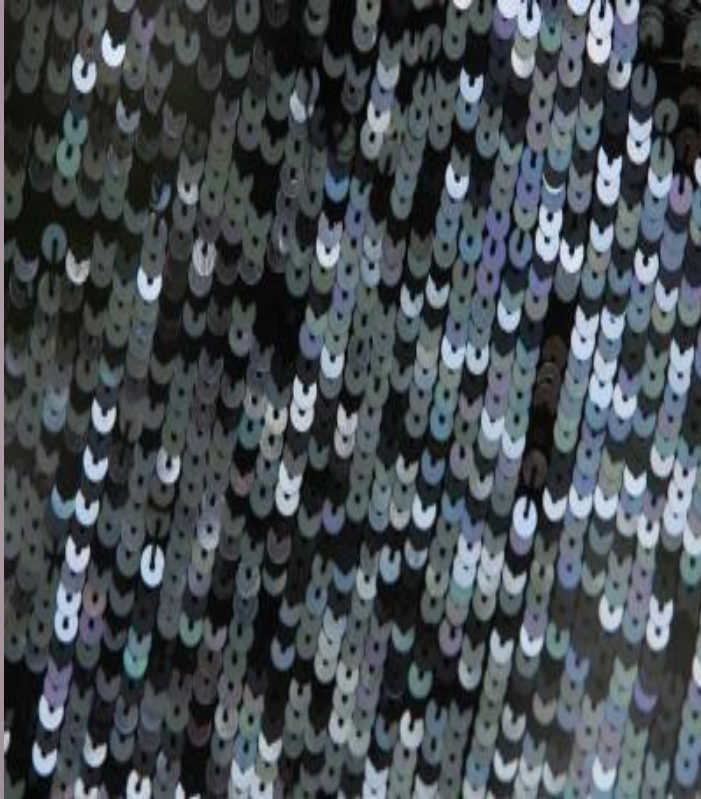


These beautifully decorated fabrics are best used on very simple garments with minimum seaming and few pieces. Typical uses are evening dresses or tops.

Sewing Beaded or Sequin fabrics

- Cut out in single layers, turning pattern pieces over to get right and left sides if necessary. Use the 'with nap' layout.
- Press on a soft surface such as a folded towel to prevent crushing the beads and always press on the reverse with a press cloth. Avoid steam or moisture, which may damage the beads and discolor the sequin.





- Cut facings from lining fabric rather than a layer of the beaded fabric. Use sew-in interfacings rather fusible.
- Use a zipper foot to sew seams if the beads prevent straight stitching.

Metallic fabrics



Metal thread woven into other fibers adds a touch of glitter but presents a few problems. Metallic fabrics must be pressed with moderately hot iron, or they may melt under high heat. Pin marks can mar (spoil) the surface when the fabric has a high percentage of metal, so its best to place all pins in the seam allowances. Most metallic fabrics tend to ravel badly so seams should be overcast and bound buttonhole should be avoided.

Thank you