

Mini 4-H

# SEWING

Cass County



*Draft Developed by:*

Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service  
Area 7 4-H Youth Development Educators from  
Blackford, Delaware, Fayette, Franklin, Henry, Jay,  
Madison, Randolph, Rush, Union, & Wayne counties



# Mini 4-H Parent's Page



Welcome to the Mini 4-H Program! Mini 4-H is designed for youth to explore a variety of project areas.

Your child received this project manual when enrolling in Mini 4-H. This manual will provide fun, age-appropriate learning activities throughout their year(s) in Mini 4-H and their interest in this project.

As a Mini 4-H parent, your job will be to guide and encourage your child through the activity. It is highly suggested that you do not complete the activities for them. Instead, help them, guide them, work with them, and let them do all that they possibly can. The 4-H motto is "learn by doing" and is the best educational tool that we can provide for youth.

Additionally, the Mini 4-H program is set up to allow your child to exhibit a project at the 4-H Fair. This project is based upon information within this manual.

The 4-H Fair is an exciting time for 4-H members and families. It is a week that allows community youth to showcase their talents, interests and enthusiasm for learning.

Mini 4-H is fun! Your child will certainly enjoy it. You can have fun too, by guiding and helping as your child participates in the program. Encourage and praise your child as he/she has fun learning and sharing with you.

If you have any questions regarding Mini 4-H or other 4-H programs, please feel free to contact your local Extension Office.



# Mini 4-Her's Page



Welcome to Mini 4-H! You are now a member of the 4-H family. You are a special person.

Mini 4-Hers have lots of fun! There are lots of activities for you to explore. You can try new things. You can share it with your friends and family.

Mom, Dad, or another adult can help you with your project. Bring your project to the 4-H Fair and lots of people will be able to see what you have done. You also get a ribbon made just for Mini 4-Hers.

## Things to Know About 4-H

The 4-H Symbol:

A four-leaf clover with an "H" in each leaf.

The 4-H Colors:

Green and white

The 4-H Motto:

To make the best, better.

The 4-H Pledge:

I pledge my HEAD to clearer thinking,  
my HEART to greater loyalty,  
my HANDS to larger service, and  
my HEALTH to better living, for my club,  
my community, my country, and my world.





## Exhibit Tips



1. Choose 1 of the 5 activities to exhibit. Next year choose a different exhibit.
2. In some of the activities, there is a choice of exhibits. Choose one of the choices — both exhibits are not required.
3. You are to complete the Mini 4-H Sewing Record Sheet (included at end of this manual) to turn in when you take your exhibit to the fair.
4. You are encouraged to enter your exhibit at the Cass County 4-H Fair on Saturday prior to the start of the fair. You should enter your exhibit between the hours of 7:30 - 9a.m. Be sure to bring your Mini 4-H Sewing Record Sheet.

# Good Luck!





## Why Sew?



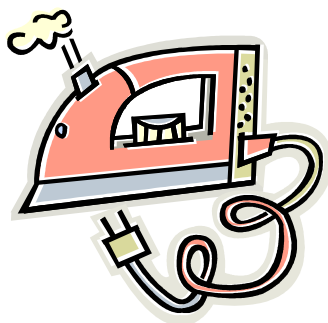
Sewing is an important life skill. You may someday need to know how to sew a button on your shirt, repair a hem, or stitch closed a hole in a pocket. In this project you will learn the basic skills needed for sewing. You will also begin assembling the equipment necessary for doing basic home sewing and repair work.

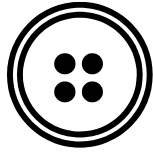
It is not necessary to have a sewing machine to do this project. There are several projects listed that do not require a sewing machine. There are also several you can do with a machine. It's up to you to choose!

## Rules of the Game!

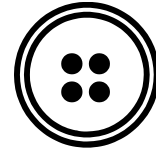
Good sewing habits begin as you start learning how to sew. Remember these simple rules:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly before you start sewing or working with fabric.
2. Good posture always helps.
3. It's always easier to sit at a table than to work from your lap.
4. Work in an area that has enough light.
5. Always put your work away when you're finished for the day.
6. Good pressing helps keep work neat.





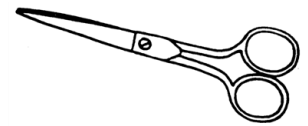
# The Basics



## Know Your Basic Sewing Tools

Here are some basic sewing tools you should include in your sewing kit. It is important to know what your tools are, to be able to use them, and to be able to call them by name. You may already be familiar with some of these tools.

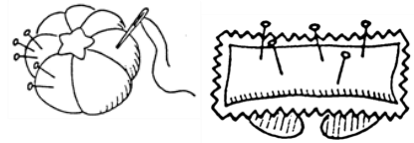
**SCISSORS**: Used for clipping and trimming; scissors are small and have straight handles.



**RULER OR GAUGE**: A 6-inch ruler or seam gauge is useful for measuring hems or seams.



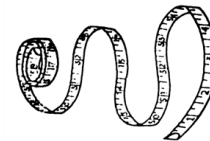
**PIN CUSHION**: Used to hold pins. (You may choose to make your own. It is Activity 2 in this book.)



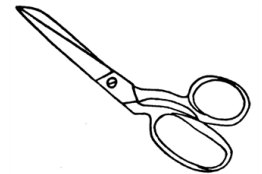
**NEEDLES**: Straight, sharp needles come in different sizes. The ones with long eyes are easier to thread.



**MEASURING TAPE**: A 60-inch coated measuring tape is best because it won't stretch.



**SHEARS**: Used for cutting fabric, shears are 7 or more inches long and should be sharp. Shears with bent handles make it easier to cut on a flat surface.



**PINS**: Used to hold pieces of fabric together for sewing. Dressmaker, silk, and ballpoint pins are available. Do not use bent or rusty pins.



**THREAD**: It should match your fabric. You may want to ask your parent or the sales clerk for help in selecting the best type and color.



## Let's Learn Some Sewing Definitions

**BASTING STITCHES** — Large, loose stitches that weave in and out of the fabric. Stitches are all approximately the same size.

**DOUBLE THREAD** — A double thread is made by threading a needle, folding the thread in half so the two ends are together, then tying the two ends together.

**FOLD** — Simply refers to the edge of the fabric that is folded, when a piece of material is folded in half.

**KNIT** — This is a certain type of fabric that stretches easily when pulled. A knit fabric has a lot of "give" to it.

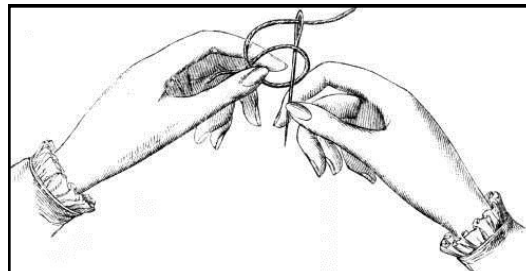
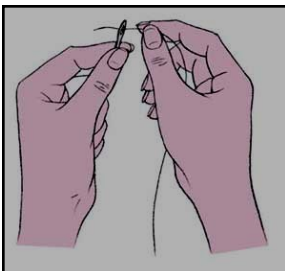
**PATTERN** — a guide (like the ones found in this manual) that is pinned to fabric and cut around.

**STRAIGHT STITCH** — Done by sewing in and out of the material. Put the needle and thread through the fabric, bring the needle back through the fabric. Stitches are all approximately the same size. Repeat.

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## Tips for Knotting a Thread

1. Thread your needle with your favorite color of thread. Fold the thread in half so that both ends match and the needle is in the middle of your thread. This is called a double thread. With this method your thread will not come out of the needle while you are sewing.
2. Twist the end of the threads around the first finger of your hand 2 times, and with your thumb, roll it off your finger. Pull the thread with your finger and thumb, and you will have knotted the thread.



If you are still having problems — try the following for help:

[www.wikihow.com/Thread-a-Needle-and-Tie-a-Knot](http://www.wikihow.com/Thread-a-Needle-and-Tie-a-Knot)

# Practice, Practice, Practice

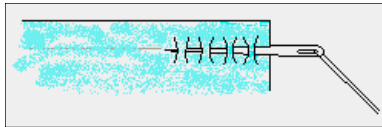
## The Straight Stitch (also called Running Stitch)

You will need:

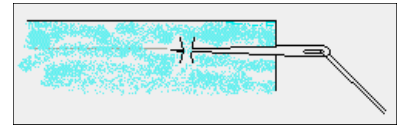
- Hand sewing needle
- Thread to match fabric
- Scissors
- Straight pin or toothpick
- Fabric or Practice Sheet (located in back of manual)

While holding the fabric tight, bring the needle up from the back of the fabric and pull up the thread. This will place your knot on the back of the fabric. Take the needle and run it through both pieces of fabric (approximately 1/4 inch). You may need to make larger stitches when you first begin. Practice until you can make your stitches smaller and even in size. The smaller the stitch the better. You can do several stitches at once (like picture A shows) or do one stitch at a time (see picture B).

Picture A



Picture B



After each set of stitches, pull your thread snugly before continuing (Picture C). For a more professional and secure seam, try to make all your stitches the same size in length across the top. The stitches across the top of your fabric should be the same size, or larger, than the stitches at the bottom.

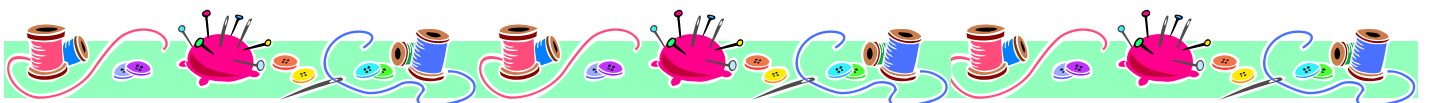


Picture C

If you are still having problems—  
try the following for help:  
[www.wikihow.com/Sew](http://www.wikihow.com/Sew)

## Joke Time!

Q: How is your job at the  
sewing machine shop?  
A: It's hanging on by a thread!







## Sewing on a Button

You will need:

- Hand sewing needle
- Thread to match button or fabric
- Scissors
- Straight pin or toothpick
- Button\*\*
- Fabric or garment

1. Thread needle, double the thread, and knot. (See page 7.)
2. Place the needle into the fabric so that the knot will end up on the back of the fabric.
3. Make one or two small stitches in the fabric where the button is to be located. This is called *anchoring the thread*.
4. Lay the button on the place you will be attaching it.
5. Bring the needle up through one of the buttonholes. Lay the straight pin or toothpick on top of the button. Take the thread over the top of the straight pin and bring it back down through the buttonhole on the other side. Repeat until 6 stitches have been made.
6. For a button with four holes, repeat step 5 for the other two holes.
7. Bring the needle and thread down through one of the buttonholes to the back of the fabric and knot the thread in the threads showing on the fabric. Cut the thread.
8. Remove the straight pin or toothpick and gently pull up on the button to "snug" the button.

### \*\*Button selection:

For this activity you will want to use a Flat or Sew-Through Button. They can be found in all sizes and colors and usually come with two or four holes. (There are also "shank" buttons, which are harder for youth to attach.)

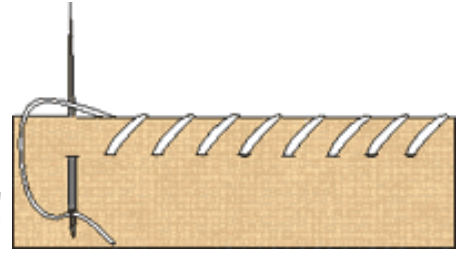


If you are still having problems, try the following for help: [eHow.com](http://eHow.com)  
"How To Sew on a Button"



## The Overcast Stitch

The overcast stitch is used to finish the raw edges of your fabric. This will keep the fabric from unraveling (falling apart). The stitch is done on the diagonal over the edge of the fabric. Start by bringing your knotted thread up through the fabric approximately 1/4 inch below the edge. Take the thread over the edge and bring it up again 1/4 inch from your last stitch.

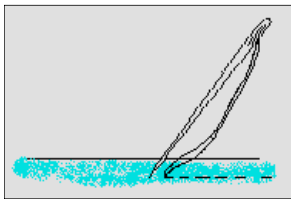


Practice this stitch! You will need:

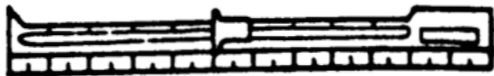
- 5-inch square of fabric. Since this is for practice, any size will do.
- Needle & thread

Practice the Overcast Stitch by going around the outside of the square of fabric. Practice until you can work the stitches evenly.

## Let's Review!



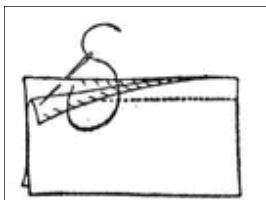
This is an example of what kind of stitch?  
\_\_\_\_\_



What is this? \_\_\_\_\_



What are these? \_\_\_\_\_



This is an example of what kind of stitch?  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Introducing the Sewing Machine

Dear Parent or Adult Helper,

First of all — using a sewing machine may not be right for your child. Only you will know when your child is ready to use a sewing machine. You will need to work closely to determine if your child is ready. We have provided several practice pages at the back of this book that you can use to help. They are to be used with **NO THREAD** in the machine.

Below are pictures of sewing machines. We suggest you use the one that came in your manual to help your child become familiar with the machine. Although there are many parts to a machine, the following are good to start with:

Power Switch

Balance Wheel

Spool Pin

Foot Control

Bobbin

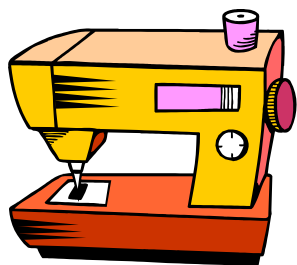
Needle

Presser Foot

Presser Foot Lifter

**Also, please remember to never leave a child alone with a sewing machine.**

Practice helps you learn to use a sewing machine. Follow these steps:



1. Begin by running the machine with the presser foot up. Try different speeds. Learn to start and stop slowly and smoothly. Do your first stitching without thread. Use the practice stitching guide in this manual to practice stitching straight lines.

Start by putting the needle through one of the lines. Next, put the presser foot down and begin to stitch. Guide the paper gently with your left hand. Don't push or pull, and be careful that your fingers don't get too close to the needle.

2. Now try turning a corner. To turn a corner, leave the needle in the paper, raise the presser foot, and turn the paper. Then lower the presser foot and start stitching again.

3. Practice stitching corners and curves. Use the practice stitching guide in this manual.

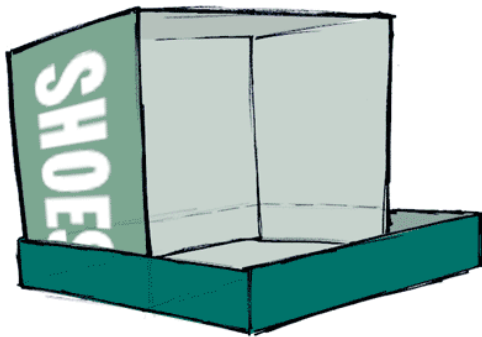
4. Once you can stitch straight and curved lines and turn corners, you are ready to sew with thread using scraps of material. Ask your parents or leader how to thread the machine and wind the bobbin.



# Activity 1 — Sewing Kit

Everyone should have a sewing kit. You never know when you will need to sew on a button or repair a hem that is coming undone. With this project you will make a sewing kit. You will put things into the sewing kit that will help you sew. The objective of this project is to give you experience cutting and handling fabric.

1. Find a sturdy box with a lid — a shoe box works well.
2. Find some scraps of fabric and trim to use to decorate your sewing kit. (See Making your Kit)
3. Visit a fabric store. Look at all the things it has that will help you sew. You may want to buy some of these items for your sewing kit. Take this book along so you will know what you need.



## Making Your Sewing Kit

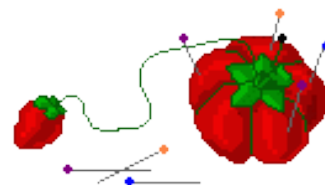
Use a sturdy shoe box with a lid for the kit. Cover the box and lid with fabric. You can use scraps of material such as denim, cotton, or knit. Use fabric glue or spray glue to attach the fabric to the box.

After covering the box with fabric, you may want to decorate it with lace, rick rack, fringe, braid, or other trim. Attach the decorations with glue.



## Suggested Tools for Your Sewing Kit

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scissors   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pins                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small ruler or sewing gauge                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Thread                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tailor's chalk*                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Needles (size 7 or 8) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tape measure                                     |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pin cushion (you can make your own — Activity 2) |  |

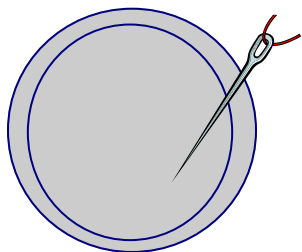
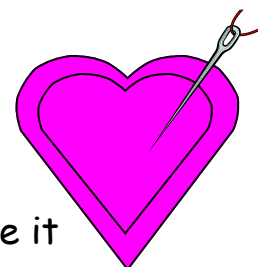


# Activity 2—Pin Cushion

You will need:

- Scissors
- Embroidery floss or yarn
- Pattern (back of book)
- 1 piece of craft felt (approximately 8 x 11 inches)
- Large-eyed needle or #14 arts & crafts needle
- Straight pins
- Tailor's chalk\*
- Polyester stuffing or batting

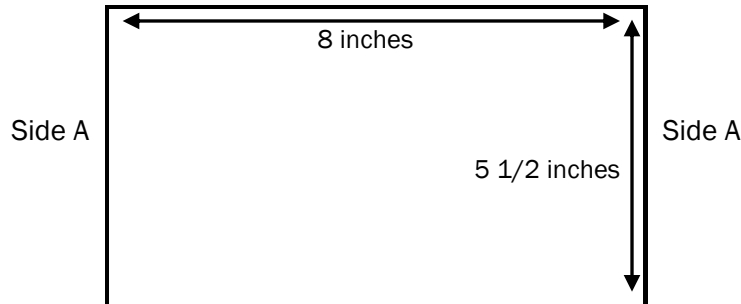
1. Select the pattern you would like to use.
2. Using scissors for cutting paper, cut out your pattern.
3. Fold the felt in half. Place your pattern on top and trace it out with the tailor's chalk.\*
4. Cut out your shape, keeping the two pieces of felt together.
5. Thread your needle and, using the straight stitch, stitch around the shape 1/4-inch from the edge. Leave an opening about 2 inches long.
6. Fill your shape with the stuffing.
7. Finish stitching closed.
8. Be sure to knot your thread so it does not come undone.



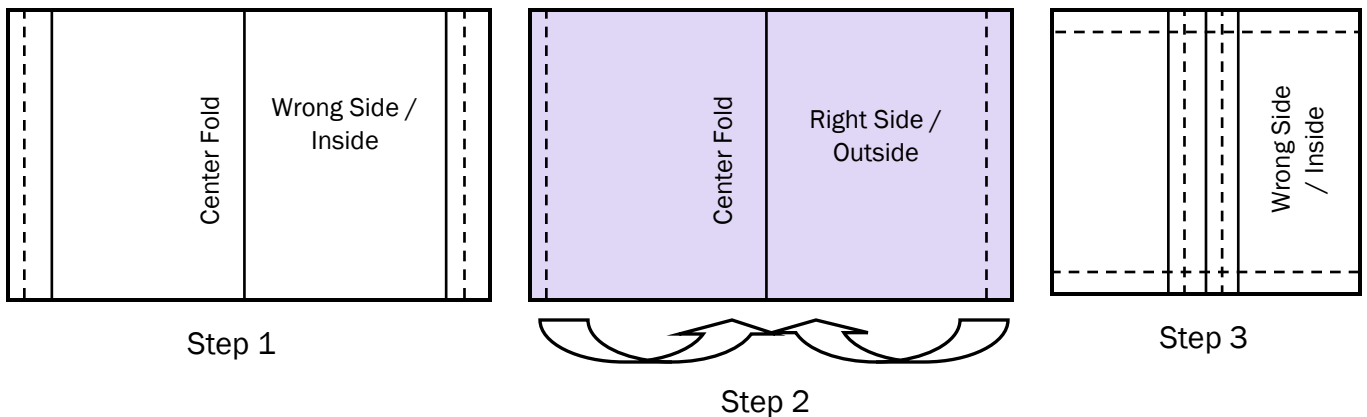
\*You can use a pencil if you do not have tailor's chalk.

# Activity 3—Tissue Cover

- Fabric 5-1/2" x 8"
- Thread
- Scissors
- Needle
- Seam gauge (or ruler)



1. Using your gauge, fold under 1/2-inch on each side A. Have an adult help you press the fold. Use a straight stitch (if making by hand) or machine stitch 1/4-inch from the edge. (See Step 1 below)
2. Fold side A to side A and press again. Open the fabric back up. This is the center of your tissue cover.
3. Place the fabric print side up in front of you and fold each side A to the line you pressed into the fabric center line. (See Step 2 below)
4. Stitch each edge. (See Step 3 below)



5. Putting your fingers into the center opening, turn the right side (print side) of your fabric to the outside.
6. Insert tissue packet.





# Activity 4—Placemat

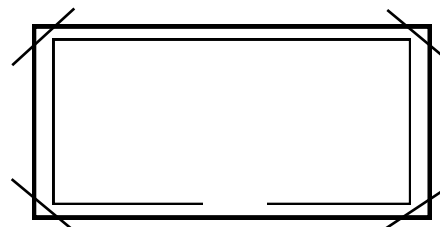


This project can be done by hand or on the sewing machine.

You will need:

- Thread
- Scissors
- Seam gauge (or ruler)
- 1 yard of fabric or 1/2 yard each of two different fabrics
- Needle
- Pins
- Tailor's chalk or pencil

1. Place fabric right sides (print sides) together.
2. Cut a rectangle 14" x 12" (through both layers of fabric).
3. Using your pins, pin around the edges to hold the two layers together.
4. Measure around the edge of your placemat and mark 1/2 inch in with a pencil or tailor's chalk.
5. To hand sew: Thread your needle and knot the end.
6. Using a straight stitch — stitch around on your line. Do NOT stitch all the way around. Leave a 2-3" opening. Tie off your thread (knot the end) so it will not come undone.
7. Clip off the corners.
8. Open between the two layers of fabric and pull the right sides (printed side) to the outside. Work with the corners so they are flat.
9. Using the overcast stitch — stitch closed the opening.



**If using a sewing machine:** Instead of stitching by hand, use your machine to stitch 1/2" from the edge of the fabric. You still need to remember to leave an opening to pull the right side to the outside. Hand stitch the opening closed using the overcast stitch.





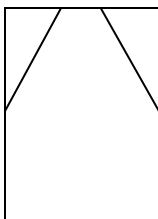


# Activity 5—BBQ Apron

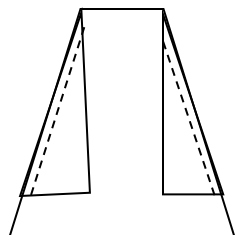


You will need:

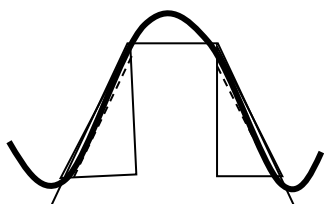
- Iron (parents use)
- Scissors
- 2 yards of 1/2" to 3/4" wide ribbon
- Cotton, terry, or linen dish towel, washed & dried
- Sewing machine (optional)
- Fabric pencil
- Seam gauge (or ruler)
- Needle & thread



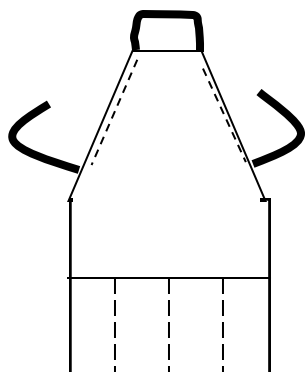
Step 1: Parent or adult helper: Fold over the top corners of the towel and press the creases flat with a hot iron.



Step 2: With your seam gauge, measure 1 inch from the fold line on each side and mark with a pencil or fabric pencil. Stitch along that line. You can do it by hand or on a sewing machine.



Step 3: Thread the ribbon up through one of the folds then down through the other, leaving a loop at the top for your head and the ends to tie. You may want to tie a knot in the end of each ribbon to keep it in place and to keep it from unraveling.



Step 4: Fold the bottom of the towel up on the front of the apron to the desired length. Parent or adult helper can press the pocket in place. Sew two or three lines down the front (by hand or machine) to make the pockets.



# Why Sew?

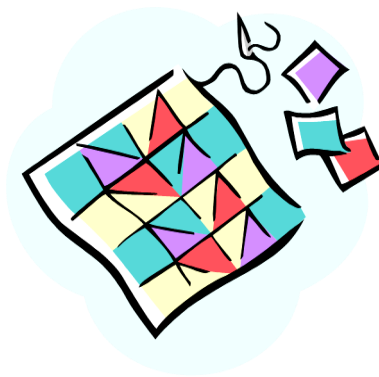
People use sewing for many reasons.

Sewing is used to make clothing. You may want to one day make something to wear. You can do just that in the 4-H Sewing project when you are in the third grade.



Sometimes clothing that you buy may need to be fixed. You can learn to repair your clothing. Sewing on a button is a way you can fix your clothes instead of having to buy something new.

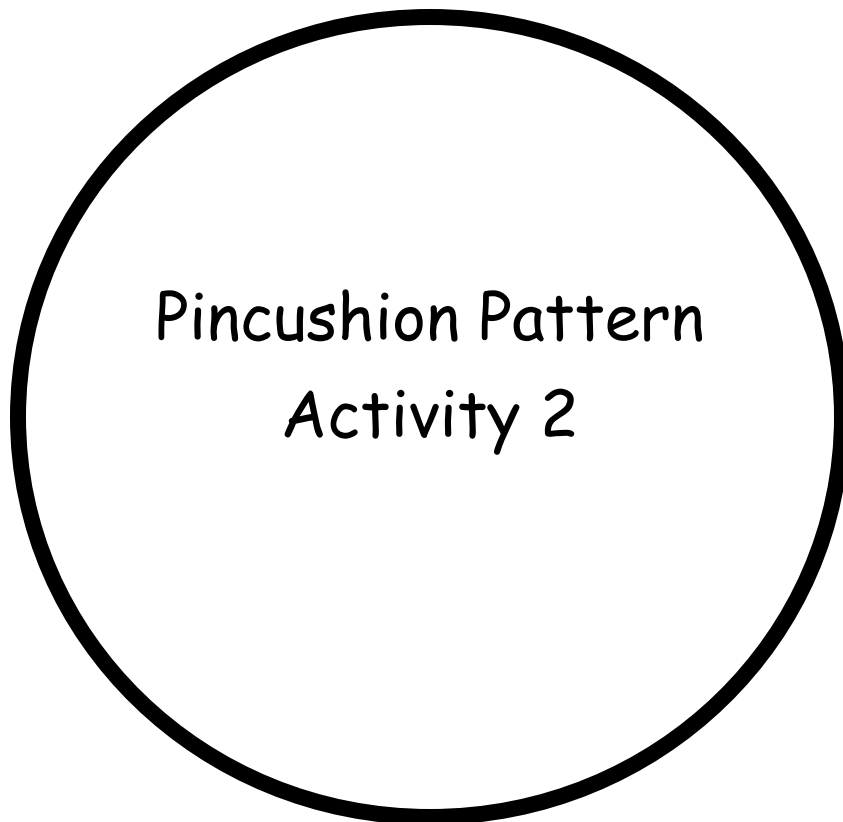
People sew to make things for their houses. You can make a pillow in Mini 4-H. You can make many projects for your home in the 4-H Sewing project. In the past and still today, many people like to make quilts. There are many ways to make a quilt and you can make it any size.



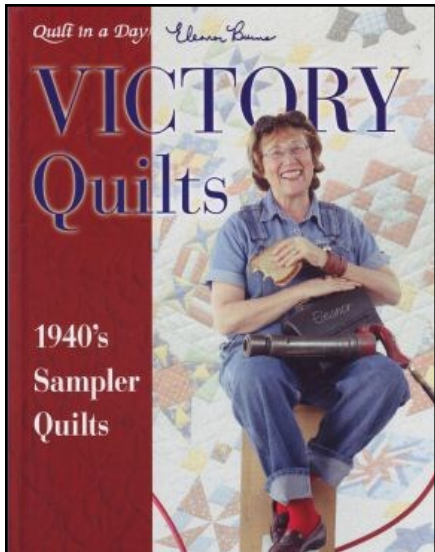
## Joke Time!

My grandmother tried to show me how to thread a sewing machine. I don't understand how someone that knows how to do all of THAT can't figure out my Game Boy!





# Famous People



Eleanor Burns started sewing quilts from discarded fabrics to support her and her two young sons. Today her Quilt-in-a-Day products and TV show are know around the world.



Elizabeth Keckly started life as a slave. She became the seamstress for First Lady Mary Lincoln.



Louisa May Alcott was a seamstress before she became know as an author. One of her works, *Little Women* (1868), is still popular today.

## Joke Time!

Q: What did the frog say when she made a mistake while sewing?



A: Ripp-itt, Ripp-itt!



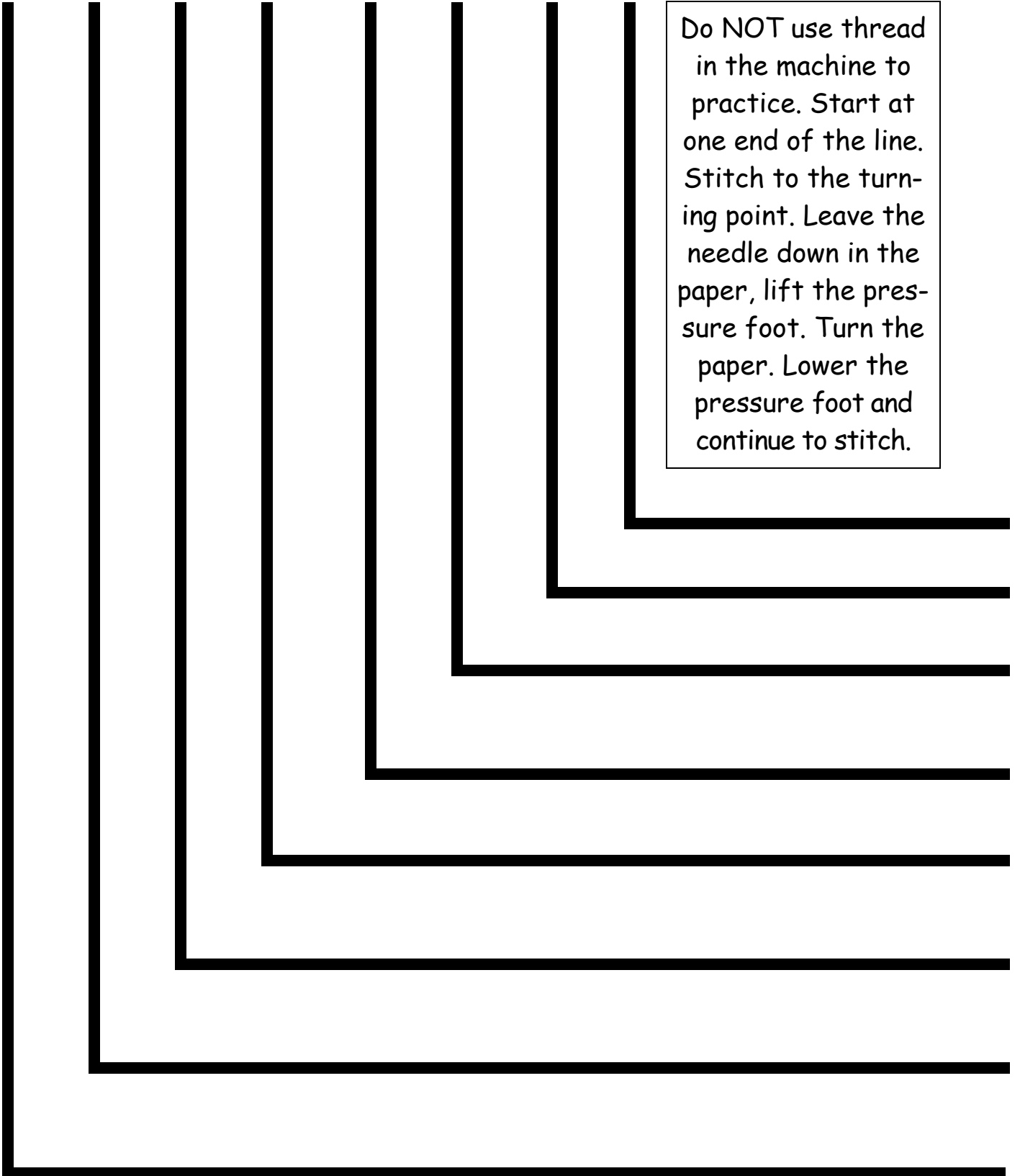
Rosa Parks was a retired seamstress who took a stand for civil rights by refusing to give up her seat on a bus.



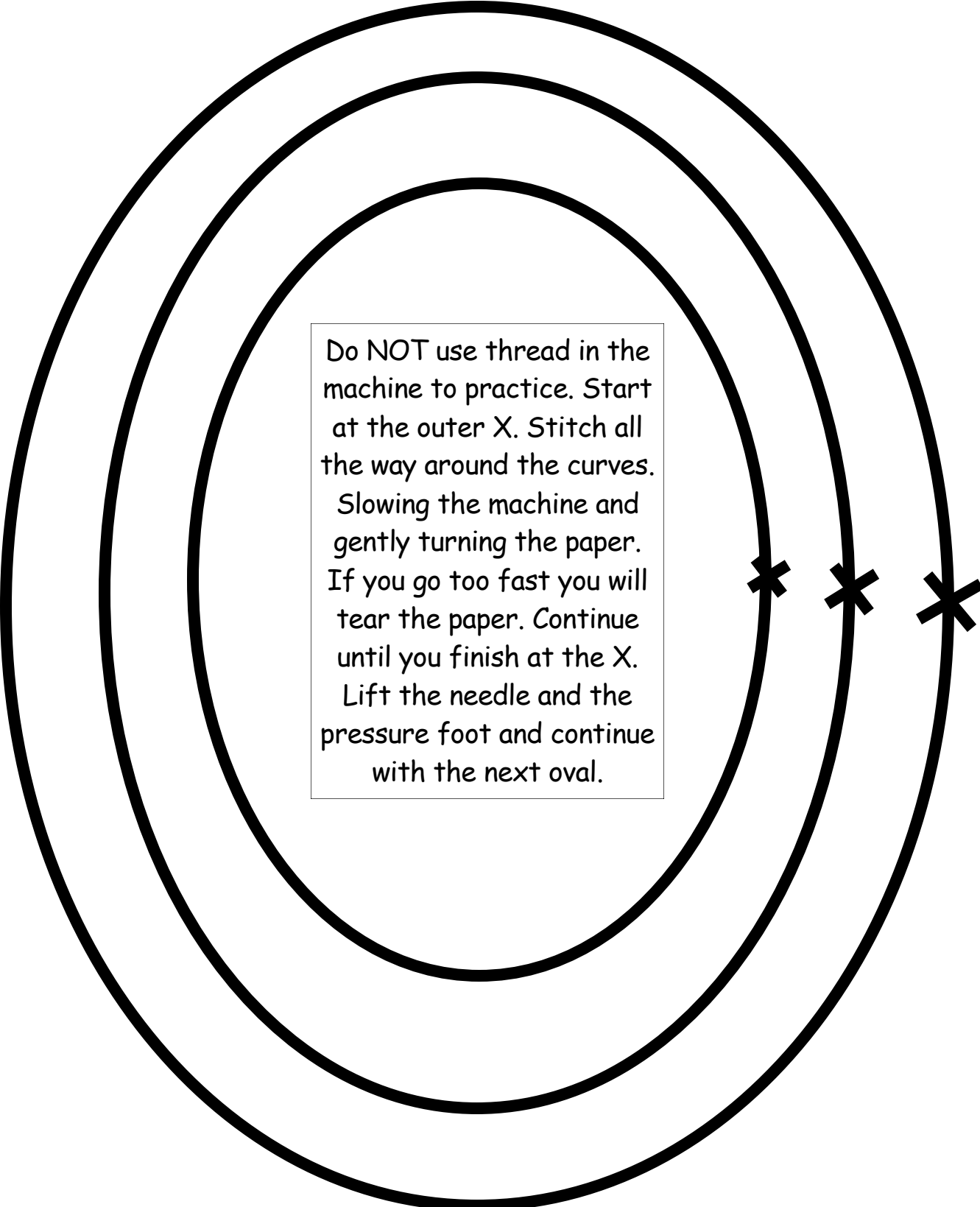
Betsy Ross made our first United States flag.

# Practice Sheet for Sewing Machine

Do NOT use thread in the machine to practice. Start at one end of the line. Stitch to the turning point. Leave the needle down in the paper, lift the pressure foot, turn the paper. Lower the pressure foot and continue to stitch.



# Practice Sheet for Sewing Machine



Do NOT use thread in the machine to practice. Start at the outer X. Stitch all the way around the curves. Slowing the machine and gently turning the paper. If you go too fast you will tear the paper. Continue until you finish at the X. Lift the needle and the pressure foot and continue with the next oval.

# Indiana Academic Standards

Indiana Academic Standards in this Manual:

## **Kindergarten:**

- English/Language Arts—K.5.1 Draw pictures and write words for a specific reason.
- Mathematics—K.3.2 Identify, copy, and make simple patterns with numbers and shapes.
- Science—K.3.2 Investigate that things move in different ways, such as fast, slow, etc.

## **First Grade:**

- English/Language Arts—1.2.4 Follow one-step written instructions.
- Mathematics—1.5.3 Recognize the need for a fixed unit of length.
- Science—1.1.4 Use tools, such as rulers and magnifiers, to investigate the world and make observations.

## **Second Grade:**

- English/Language Arts—2.2.8 Follow two-step written instructions.
- Mathematics—2.5.3 Decide which unit of length is most appropriate in a given situation.
- Science—2.1.6 Use tools to investigate, observe, measure, design, and build things.

## 2009 Reviewed and Edited by Area 7 Extension Educators

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## 2009 Resources and References

About.com/sewing

eHow.com

Monkeysee.com – "How to Sew by Hand"

thecraftstudio.com

Pyzam.com

sewandserge.com

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February 1997

Updated, January 2024

## Original Resources and References

*Mini 4-H Sewing I,II, III Manual*, Madison County

*Mini 4-H Clothing Manual*, Henry County

*Mini 4-H Sewing A,B,C Manual*, Franklin County

*Mini 4-H Sewing Manual*, Blackford County

*Mini 4-H Sewing Manual*, Decatur County

*Sewing for Fun*, Nebraska Cooperative Extension 4-H 169

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# SEWING MINI 4-H RECORD SHEET



FILL OUT THIS MINI 4-H SEWING RECORD SHEET AND BRING IT WITH YOUR EXHIBIT TO THE 4-H FAIR.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

YEAR IN MINI 4-H SEWING PROJECT \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE IN SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

CLUB ATTENDED \_\_\_\_\_

1. WHAT DID YOU LEARN MOST FROM YOUR MINI 4-H SEWING PROJECT? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. HOW MUCH TIME DID YOU SPEND MAKING YOUR MINI 4-H SEWING PROJECT? \_\_\_\_\_

3. WHO HELPED YOU WITH YOUR MINI 4-H SEWING PROJECT?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. HOW DID THEY HELP YOU? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. DESCRIBE YOUR MINI 4-H SEWING PROJECT. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





## SEWING MINI 4-H RECORD SHEET



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