



Indiana 4-H Sewing Skills and Techniques

Youth and their mentor/volunteer leader/instructor should use this chart as a guide when deciding appropriate skills to incorporate in a sewing wearable or non-wearable article, garment or outfit for exhibit. While this list is a guide, it is not meant to be an all-inclusive list and youth should demonstrate skills they are most comfortable mastering. For example, some youth in a 4th grader might feel comfortable attempting 6th grade level skills, but it is unlikely a 4th grade level exhibitor will be able to successfully master the 10th grade level skills. Exhibited items must demonstrate the minimum skill techniques from their given grade level but may also include higher/lower level techniques that have been mastered. Any higher/lower level techniques will not be counted as part of the minimum skills, but nevertheless will be evaluated for quality. Youth are encouraged to utilize a number of resources such as web sites, print material, social media, and television shows when learning sewing skills and techniques. Skills learned from these types of resources may be demonstrated provided they are age/grade appropriate.

Grade 3 – Demonstrate at least 2 of the following skills:

- Insert elastic or drawstring
- Sew and trim a crotch curve
- Machine topstitch hems
- Use a simple seam finish
- Stitch in the ditch

Grade 4 – Demonstrate at least 2 of the following skills:

- Use interfacing
- Staystitch and understitch
- Apply a facing or binding
- Stitch curved seams
- Trim and grade seams
- Work with fiberfill
- Machine topstitch hems

Seam finishes are recommended on all exposed seams.

Grade 5 – Demonstrate at least 3 of the following skills:

- match fabric design
- gather fabric
- insert zipper
- use a drawstring
- hand-stitch a hem
- sew a simple sleeve
- apply purchased trim or ribbons
- sew patch or inseam pockets
- use a simple lining
- do a machine blind hem
- apply machine topstitching
- do a machine topstitched hem
- sew with knit
- insert elastic
- apply facings
- sew buttons
- apply binding
- use batting

Seam finishes are recommended on all exposed seams (except knits). Interfacing, understitching and trimming should be used when appropriate.

Grade 6 – Demonstrate at least 4 of the following skills:

- make darts
- set in sleeves
- insert a lapped zipper
- hand-stitch a hem
- make buttonholes
- sew tucks or pleats
- sew ruffles
- hand sew buttons
- apply trim
- sew a simple lining

- sew patch pockets
- apply bindings
- do a machine topstitched hem
- sew facings
- apply ribbings
- sew a simple collar
- do a machine blind hem
- sew with knit
- match fabric design
- use fiberfill
- apply machine appliqué
- insert piping
- apply machine topstitching
- construct with a serger
- sew inseam pockets

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Grade 7 – Demonstrate at least 5 of the following skills:

- make darts
- set in sleeves
- sew facing
- apply ribbing
- apply a collar
- sew on buttons
- use doll joints
- apply inseam pockets
- apply front hip pockets
- match fabric design
- apply trims
- apply machine or hand appliqué
- apply machine topstitching
- insert a lapped zipper
- insert an invisible zipper
- insert a separating zipper
- insert a fly front zipper
- do machine quilting
- do a hand-stitched hem
- do a machine topstitched hem
- do a machine blind hem
- attach cuffs
- apply binding
- sew lining
- apply ruffles
- insert piping
- make buttonholes
- use fiberfill
- apply patch pockets
- use a twin needle
- apply tucks/pleats
- construct with a serger
- apply machine embroidery

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Grades 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 – Demonstrate at least 6 of the following skills:

- make darts
- make tucks
- add lining
- add facings
- add plackets
- add lapels
- make sleeves
- add gathers
- apply trim
- apply ribbing
- add a drawstring
- use shaped seams
- use fiberfill and/or batting
- add a waistband
- add patch pockets
- add front hip pockets
- match fabric design
- make shoulder pads
- apply machine embroidery
- coordination of fabric for quilted item
- attach cuffs
- make pleats
- insert elastic
- add boning
- apply a collar
- insert piping
- make a neckband
- add vents
- sew buttons
- add underlining
- add ruffles
- sew with knit
- make button loops
- do hand beading
- add inseam pockets
- add welt pockets
- use twin needle
- create bound edges
- hand/machine beading
- make a reversible item

- do machine or hand quilting
- apply machine or hand appliqué
- apply machine topstitching
- insert an invisible zipper
- insert a separating zipper
- insert a fly front zipper
- insert a lapped zipper
- insert a hand picked zipper
- do a machine topstitched hem
- do a machine blind hem
- do a hand-stitched hem
- make self-covered buttons
- use specialty threads
- make self-enclosed seams
- sew with difficult fabric
- construct with a serger
- make machine buttonholes
- make bound buttonholes
- piece quilted item
- other skills not listed above

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