



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 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. Exhibited items must demonstrate the minimum skill techniques expected for their given grade level as outlined in the exhibit requirements. 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. It is always recommended to follow pattern instructions and demonstrate those mastered skills. Before purchasing a pattern it is important it be age and grade appropriate for the 4-H member. Fabric type should also be appropriate for the 4-H member's age and grade.

Grades 3-7

Grade 3 and 4 exhibits must demonstrate two of the following skills, Grade 5 three skills, Grade 6 four skills, and Grade 7 five skills.

- Use a simple seam finish
- Insert elastic or a drawstring
- Do a machine-stitched hem
- Do a hand-stitched hem
- Do a machine-blind hem
- Do machine topstitching
- Stitch in the ditch
- Stitch curved seams
- Sew and trim a crotch or curved seam
- Trim or grade seams to reduce bulk
- Staystitch and understitch
- Apply a facing
- Use interfacing (can be iron-on or sew-in)
- Apply a collar
- Attach cuffs
- Make darts
- Gather fabric
- Insert a center-placed zipper
- Insert a lapped zipper
- Insert an invisible zipper
- Insert a separating zipper
- Insert a fly-front zipper
- Match fabric design (i.e. match plaids)
- Gather fabric
- Apply ruffles, trim, piping, binding, or ribbing (can be purchased or self-made)
- Sew with knit
- Insert sleeves
- Make/apply patch, inseam, or front-hip pockets
- Use a simple lining
- Hand-sew buttons
- Make machine buttonholes
- Sew tucks or pleats
- Construct with a serger
- Use machine or hand applique
- Do machine quilting
- Use a twin needle
- Any other skill not listed

Any additional skill(s) learned from using the pattern, or others taught by the mentor/instructor that are age and grade appropriate are also acceptable. Seam finishes are recommended on all exposed seams (except knits). Interfacing, understitching and trimming should be used when appropriate.

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

- Make darts or tucks
- Add lining
- Use underlining
- Add facings
- Add a placket
- Add lapels
- Insert sleeves
- Gather fabric
- Apply ruffles, trim, piping, binding, or ribbing (can be purchased or self-made)
- Insert elastic or add a drawstring
- Use shaped or curved seams
- Add a waistband
- Apply machine topstitching
- Make/apply patch, inseam, front hip, or welt pockets
- Match fabric design (i.e. plaids)
- Make shoulder pads
- Apply machine embroidery
- Do hand or machine beading
- Attach cuffs
- Make pleats
- Add boning
- Apply a collar and/or neckband
- Add vents (i.e. jacket)
- Hand-sew buttons
- Make machine or hand-bound buttonholes
- Make button loops
- Make self-covered buttons
- Sew with knit or other difficult fabric
- Use twin needle
- Make a reversible article of clothing
- Do hand or machine quilting
- Apply machine or hand applique
- Insert invisible, separating, fly-front, lapped, or hand-picked zipper
- Do a machine topstitched hem
- Do a hand-stitched hem
- Do a machine blind hem
- Use specialty threads (i.e. embroidery)
- Make French/self-enclosed, flat-felled/lapped, or Hong Kong/bound seams
- Use/apply lace work, smocking, or ruching
- Construct garment with serger
- Any other skill not listed

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

Non-Wearable Sewn Item Skills

Non-wearable exhibits may utilize wearable sewn garment skills above, or any other skill that is age and grade appropriate. 4-H members should learn and demonstrate skills following pattern instructions or those provided by their mentor/instructor.

- Any junior or senior wearable sewing skill
- Non-observable skills such as basting, adjusting or designing pattern, using an AccuQuilt, or Cricut
- Using decorative hem finish
- Hand or machine quilting
- Accurate piecing of quilted item (i.e. seam crosses match, etc.)
- Internal and external pockets (i.e. those used in a bag)
- Insert a zipper in a bag or other non-wearable item
- Use fiberfill and/or batting or foam (can be fusible)
- Use specialty scissors
- Use Prairie Points as a trim
- Use mitered corners
- Use safety eyes and ball joints for stuffed animals
- Apply machine embroidery
- Quilt in the hoop
- Coordination of fabric for a quilted item including using fat quarters, charm packs, layer cakes, jelly rolls
- And other age and grade-appropriate skill not listed