

Know Your Threads (1009-1)

Here's some top tips on threads. Using the appropriate threads for your projects and your sewing machine will make life so much easier.



1. Don't Use Cheap or Poor-Quality Thread

It does not make economic sense to spend hundreds – or even thousands – of pounds on a sewing machine and then try to save money with budget threads.

2. Don't Use Old Thread

Old threads can become flattened on the reel and cause all sorts of problems from noisy running to thread and needle breakage.

3. Use a Good-Quality, All-Purpose, Polyester Thread for Your General Sewing Needs

Good quality polyester threads are:

- Durable
- Strong
- Colourfast
- Keep their shape and recover well after stretching.

4. Use a 100% Cotton Quilting Thread when Attaching Buttons and Bindings

Cotton threads are:

- Soft
- Strong
- Adjust well to any shrinkage in the fabric

5. Think Before You Use Nylon Monofilament Thread

When using nylon monofilament thread be aware of the following:

- It is not heat resistant
- It is not colourfast and will yellow over time
- It will become brittle with laundering

6. Know Your Thread Weights

A 40w thread is labelled as such as 40 Kilometres weighs 1 Kilogram. A thread labelled 30w would only have 30 kilometres in a kilogram, as it is a thicker thread.

Remember:

The lower the number, the thicker the thread and the more it will show on your work.

7. You Don't Have to Use the Same Thread in the Bobbin as on the Top

It is perfectly acceptable to use lightweight polyester (50w) in the bobbin while using a heavier weight decorative thread in the top. Indeed, some threads, such as rayon embroidery or cotton quilting threads are springy and may cause snagging if used in the bobbin.

8. Know Your Spool Types

If you buy a large spool of thread, which is wound onto a cone-shaped core and has a large hole in the base, you cannot use this on your machine's spool holder as it will not unwind correctly. Use a thread stand instead.

9. When Buying Metallic Thread...

Check for the following:

- **Uniform winding** – if a thread is poorly wound it is probably poor quality.
- **Uniform colour** – changes in colour may indicate that the winding tension is too high and the thread has become damaged.
- **Bruises or flat spots** – if the thread has been roughly handled it may be damaged.

10. Don't Use Adhesive Tape to Stop Threads Unwinding from their Reels

The adhesive will rub off onto the thread which will leave deposits on the tension disks of your machine and in the needle eye.
