





## Cutting shaped seams

**Clipping** means snipping into a seam allowance within a seam that curves in (figure 6).

Clip inward curved seams to relieve strain on fabric edges and prevent the seam allowance from folding back within an enclosed seam. Facings for necklines and armholes are examples of inward curved seams.

When there are two or more layers of fabric, clip each layer separately and alternate clips so they do not leave a sharp double edge (figure 6). Clip only where needed to relieve strain or pull. On gentle curves, few clips will be needed. On sharp curves, more clips are necessary. Clip to within  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch (1.5 mm) of the staystitching. Do not cut through the staystitching.

**Staystitching** is a row of regular-length machine stitching placed just inside the seamline. It is done immediately after the garment has been cut out and marked and the pattern pieces are removed from the fabric pieces.

Stitch through a single layer of fabric. Stitch with the yarn direction and change the direction of the stitching as necessary to keep going in the yarn direction.

When seaming together an inward curve and an outward curve, as in a princess seam, you may need to do a little clipping before stitching the seam to fit the two curves together and additional clipping after stitching the seam to prevent the seamline from stretching out of shape during handling or garment construction.

**Notching** means cutting a small triangle of fabric from a seam that curves out (figure 7).

Notch an outward curved seam by cutting out a small, triangular wedge of fabric from the seam allowance to reduce bulk. Rounded collars and round-cornered patch pockets are examples of outward curves.

When there are two or more layers of fabric, notch each layer separately and alternate notches so they do not leave a sharp double edge (figure 7). Notch only as needed to reduce bulk. On gentle curves, few notches will be needed. On sharp curves, more notches are necessary. Notch to within  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch (1.5 mm) of the staystitching. Do not cut through the staystitching.

If an inward curve requiring clipping and an outward curve requiring notching are combined into a curved seam, such as a princess seam, alternate the clips and notches (figure 8). If a clip and a notch line up, the seam may not form a smooth curve.

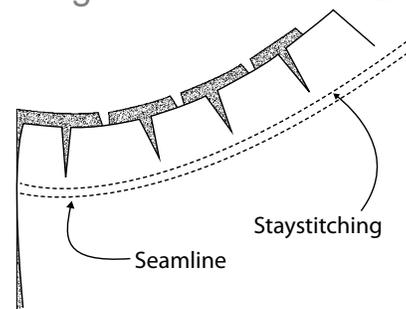


Figure 6. Clip an inward curved seam.

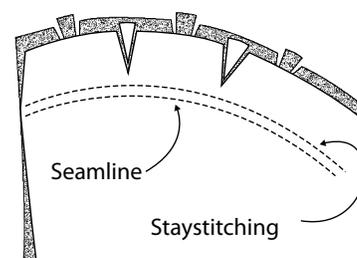


Figure 7. Notch an outward curved seam.

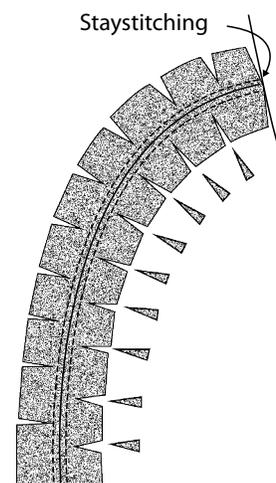


Figure 8. Curved seam, shown pressed open, with notches on outer curve and clips on inward curve.

## References

Zieman, N. (1991). *Let's Sew! A Beginner's Sewing Guide*. Beaver Dam, WI: Nancy's Notions.

Reader's Digest. (2005). *Complete Guide to Sewing*. (2005). Pleasantville, NY: The Reader's Digest Association.

By Pamela Rose, 4-H Youth Development specialist, family and consumer science and expressive arts, Oregon State University.

This publication is based on and replaces OSU Extension publication 4-H 92112, *Cutting Skills: 4-H Clothing, Skill Level 1*, by Ardis W. Koester, Extension textiles and clothing specialist emeritus; and Barbara J. Sawyer, Extension specialist emeritus, 4-H Youth Development; both of Oregon State University.

© 2014 Oregon State University.

Extension work is a cooperative program of Oregon State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Oregon counties. Oregon State University Extension Service offers educational programs, activities, and materials without discrimination based on age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran's status. Oregon State University Extension Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Published October 2014.