

Sewing Machine Headaches

My thread keeps breaking

1. You may be using a thread that is too thick for the needle, check the needle is over size 70
2. Always rethread the bobbin when you rethread the top thread, it may have become misplaced
3. Bits of fluff may have built up which causes tension problems and makes the thread snap
4. The needle may have been inserted slightly off centre
5. Make sure that the bobbin is in the right way round
6. Thread may be a low quality and just not strong enough, don't skimp on quality
7. Your needle is damaged –check to see if it is slightly bent
8. Are you using the right type of needle for the job?
9. Check that the top tension is set to a medium number

I've got a bird's nest under the bobbin

1. The needle needs changing
2. The presser foot was left up (the most common mistake when machine embroidering)
3. Rethread the top thread and bobbin
4. The thread ends weren't pulled to the back when you started to sew and got caught
5. The bobbin tension is too loose
6. Make sure that the bobbin is threaded the right way round– it usually turns anti clockwise when you pull it through.

The needle keeps breaking

1. You are pushing your fabric through rather than letting the dog teeth move it
2. Too many layers of fabric or the needle isn't suitable for such a thick fabric
3. You are stitching through pins, sequins or beads
4. The top tension is too tight
5. The needle is too thin for the fabric

The stitching isn't even on the top and bottom

1. The tension needs checking
2. The bobbin is the wrong way round
3. The top thread is caught somewhere along its pathway

The fabric won't feed through

1. Have you left the dog teeth down?
2. Check if the thread is tangled underneath
3. The bobbin winder switch is still pulled across
4. A thread is caught round the presser foot
5. The presser foot is still up
6. The fabric is too thick for the presser foot

My threads are knotted up and I can't get my fabric out

1. Make sure there is enough fabric under the needle or that you are not too close to the edge
2. Check that the top thread is threaded up correctly- don't miss any hooks out
3. When rethreading your machine, make sure that the presser foot is always up
4. Check your bobbin case area for fluff and lint- clean it out with a dry paintbrush

My needle unthreads itself when I start sewing

1. Check that the needle is in the highest position when you thread it and that the presser foot is always up before you pull and cut the threads off.

My stitches are uneven

1. Most often this is the bobbin. Check it is in the right way round (pulls anticlockwise) and that the thread is pulled through the grooves in the bobbin case.

As a general rule of thumb, always pull your thread through in a forward direction through the threading channels- do NOT pull it backwards through the tension discs as over time this can damage the fine alignment of the tension disc settings.

Often, people think they have a faulty sewing machine when in reality, their chosen thread is not a quality thread. Before you start sewing, check how strong the thread is, if it breaks easily when you pull it, then it is going to break when you start sewing too. Polyester and Mercerized Cotton are preferable.

Right then happy stitchers- Hoping this will be a useful guide in addition to your instruction manual.

Julie x