

Preparing The Pleater

- 1) Check that all needles are in place. (If any are missing or broken, replace according to General Instructions No. 2)
- 2) Thread required number of needles, starting from the left-hand side of the pleater. Be sure your threads are long enough to be knotted at each end to the correct width when pleating is completed.
It is a good idea to use different coloured threads to make it easier to pick up smocking points correctly.
- 3) Lock the pleater to your work table with the securing clamps (if purchased as an accessory).

Preparing material

- 1) There is actually no limit to the width of material that can be pleated, but as a general rule, reckon that the original material width should be three times the finished pleated width.
- 2) Stiff material and material with seams in should first be pressed with a damp cloth.
- 3) Cut off all selvages carefully.
- 4) Placing material 'smocking side' down on the table — fix to a dowel stick with masking tape and roll up. Ensure that material is cut squarely and taped squarely to the dowel with masking or similar tape. (If using the Read Pleater magnetic fabric feed rod, masking tape will not be required.)
- 5) Insert rolled material and dowel into the back of the pleater, so that the area to be pleated is correctly located in relation to the already threaded needles.
The material should stretch the full width of the pleater with sufficient overlap on one side, so that you can ensure that the work goes through the machine straight.
- 6) Position the front edge of the material between the two back rollers and turn the handle slightly so that the material is just caught between the rollers over their full width.
If material is caught crookedly or puckers, reverse the handle and start again.
- 7) Hold rolled material in the middle with one hand and turn the handle with the other. (It is advisable to use both handles when working with the 24 and 32 row pleaters.)
- 8) When the needles are full of pleated material gently ease off on to threads by hand. Do not attempt to feed more material through the rollers, until you have removed the material already on the needles.
- 9) Be particularly careful in feeding a seam through the rollers, otherwise you may break the needle points.
(See General Instructions No. 2 for procedure when needle breaks.)

Increasing the number of rows of smocking

If your garment requires longer pleats than you can achieve with the number of needles on your pleater, follow this procedure:

- 1) Establish how many more rows you need than the maximum your pleater will give you.
- 2) Gather up this number of rows on the left-hand side of your pleater, but ensure that your threads are a little longer than the full, flat width of the material. Be sure you always use strong threads for this double-run operation.
- 3) Remove, spread out to full width, ensuring that threads still protrude over the edges and press with a damp cloth.

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- 4) Thread up all needles for the second run and roll material back on to dowel.
- 5) Feed material into pleater making certain that the space between the last thread of the first run and the first thread of the second run is the same as all the other spaces. (If the last thread of the first run is just visible outside the left side arm, the spacing will be correct.)
- 6) When the second run is completed, knot one end of all threads, gather up pleats by hand and knot other ends.

Shaping Armholes and Neckline

If armholes and necklines need to be shaped out of already pleated material, follow this procedure.

- 1) Mark out cutting lines in French chalk on the pleated material.
- 2) Pull the affected threads clear from the side to be cut away until you reach the chalk line and re-knot.
- 3) Cut out, taking care not to sever any of your revised threading.

Fine smocking ("Mini-smocking")

You will see that on the left-hand side of your pleater, all the rollers have additional grooves. For fine smocking, use only this section and fit additional needles in the spaces.

Elasticising

If you wish to elasticise a garment, simply use shirring elastic instead of threads.

Round Neck Garments

A round necked garment with raglan sleeves may be pleated in the following way:

Cut out material according to pattern. Measure circumference of neck and thread number of needles required with enough cotton for entire neck measurement.

Place the material with side to be smocked facing down on table and starting with raglan side of right back, roll the right back piece onto dowel stick so that when fed through the pleater, the centre back must come out of the machine first and the raglan side last, feeding only the material to be smocked through the pleater and keeping the remainder of the material outside of the sideplate on the left-hand side of the pleater.

Once the right back is pleated, follow this by feeding through the right sleeves, then the front piece, then the left sleeve, finishing with the left back (all five pieces of garment being pleated onto the same threads).

Draw up the required measurement by pulling up the threads and knotting them (the neck threads \pm first three rows to be pulled tighter than the rest). When commencing with smocking, start at the centre back of right side, going on to the right sleeve then the front piece, then the left sleeve and finally the left back. (At the seams, skip three pleats on either side). All smocking to be continuous, i.e. on the same threads.

Once the smocking is completed, sew all seams and bind the neck with the binding cut on the straight grain of the material (i.e. not on the cross).

(It is possible, if pattern pieces are fairly straight at the neckline once joined together, to sew up all seams first and then feed through the pleater, keeping bulk of material outside the machine.)

N.B. Use strong threads to avoid them breaking when gathering up the material.

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GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1) Dummy run

Before you use your pleater for the first time, run a piece of cheap material through (without threading it up) to clear any protective oil from the rollers. Do this several times if necessary.

In rare instances there may be excessive oiliness. To correct, wipe the rollers with meths or benzine and allow to dry.

2) Replacing needles

i) 16 Row Pleater.

- Loosen the two securing screws on tension adjusters (9), but do not remove them.
- Slide the two tension adjusters towards you.
- Prop up the front of the pleater, so that it is tilted backwards. In this way the needles will not fall out when the top roller is removed.
- Lift out the top roller (the one immediately over the needles).
- Insert new needles, ensuring that the points of the needles face downwards (as shown here).



- Check that remaining needles are still correctly in place.
 - Replace front top roller, taking care that the side with the extra grooves is placed on the left of the pleater.
 - Replace the tension adjusters and tighten securing screws so that the top roller is tight but not stiff.
- #### ii) 24 and 32 Row Pleaters
- On the 24 and 32 row pleaters the tension adjusters operate differently from the 16 row pleater. Insert a screw driver into slot provided and turn adjuster so that the slot in the adjuster lines up with the bottom slot in the side plate. Top removable roller can then be removed.

N.B. Buying inferior needles can only cause troubles. Always buy Read needles and you'll know you have the best.

3) Positioning Tension Adjusters (16 row pleaters only)

Should it become necessary to remove the tension adjusters for any reason, it is important that they should be correctly reassembled.

If you examine a tension adjuster closely you will observe that:

- Looked at from the top, one end is more rounded than the other. The rounded end must face towards you.
- Looked at from the side, the tension adjuster is slightly curved. The concave (hollow) side must face downwards.



4) General

- When starting to feed material through the rollers, do this carefully and slowly, to ensure the material feeds through straight. It may be necessary in the beginning to turn the handle back and forward a few times until the front edge of the material has been fed correctly on to the needles.
- Once the material has come through the rollers on to the needles, do not attempt to wind the handle backwards again.

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