

BERNINA
eBook Series



JUST OVERLOCK IT!

Overlocker / Serger Techniques

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Securing Seams ▪ Corners ▪ Curves & Circles ▪ Gathering
Lettuce Edge ▪ Blanket Stitch ▪ Flatlock Weaving

OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

Once there is a basic understanding of how the overlocker/serger operates, such as threading, basic stitch formations and creating a balanced stitch, it is time to start refining these sewing techniques and skills. This machine can be a real asset to a sewing studio, and in no time it will be easy to utilize the amazing features of an overlocker to benefit all different types of sewing projects. This eBook will cover practical techniques like securing stitches, sewing corners and curves, as well as some decorative techniques including gathering, lettuce edges, flatlock weaving and blanket stitch.



BERNINA L 460 OVERLOCKER

OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

SECURING A STITCH: Most often an overlock stitch is sewn over or into another seam, which automatically secures the stitch. However, there are times that stitches do not begin or end within other seams or edge finishes, so knowing how to secure the seam is important.

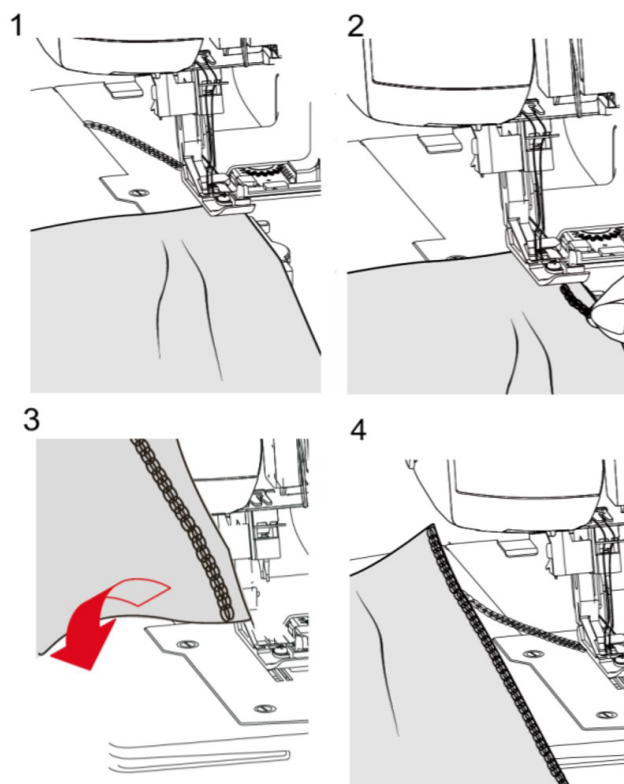
Method One (Machine)

Beginning:

- Chain off approximately 3-4" of thread tail before taking the first stitch into the fabric edge. (Figure 1)
- With needles down, raise the presser foot and pull the thread tail in front of the needles and lay on top of the fabric. (Figure 2)
- Sew over the chain for approximately 1", then trim the remaining thread tail into the seam using the machine's cutting knife. (Figure 3)
- Continue sewing the seam until the end.

Ending:

- Sew the overlock stitch to the end of the seam, stopping one stitch off the edge of the fabric.
- Raise the needles and presser foot.
- Gently pull the seam off the stitch finger. (This can be done by disengaging the stitch finger with the rolled hem selection lever—just remember to re-engage before sewing.)
- Flip the fabric so that the back is facing up and place it in front of the needles just under the presser foot. (Figure 3)
- Lower the needles into the fabric edge for the first stitch and sew over the overlock seam for approximately 1" before turning off the fabric edge. (Figure 4)



OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

SECURING A STITCH, continued

Method Two (Off-Machine)

Beginning / Ending Options:

- Tie a knot in the thread chain close to the fabric edge and trim.
- Use a tapestry needle, bodkin or such tool to weave the thread chain back into the looper threads (hook and hide).
- If sewing in the round, simply overlap the overlock seam approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ "-1", raise the foot and chain off or rotate the fabric out from under the foot and chain off.

Tip: Adding Fray Check or other type of seam sealant to any thread tail or seam ending will help ensure that the thread stays in place longer.



Click the icon to download the Just OVERLOCK It: Overlock Stitch Application eBook



Click the icon to download the Just OVERLOCK It: Overlocker Threading eBook



Click the icon to download the Just OVERLOCK It: Overlocker Care eBook



OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

SEWING CORNERS: Sewing corners along outside and inside edges may seem like a basic technique, but because an overlocker is also cutting while it is sewing, it takes a little extra care and practice. Being aware of where the cutting edge is will be key to making clean corners on this machine. Unlike a sewing machine, sewing inside corners on an overlocker can be challenging to learn and to stitch precisely. If precision is needed, consider using your sewing machine first and finishing the edge with the overlocker instead.

OUTSIDE CORNERS:

Method One (Trim and Turn)

- Begin by finishing along one edge and sew off leaving a 2-3" thread chain.
- Pivot the fabric 90 degrees and sew the adjacent edge, trimming the thread chain from the first stitch.
- Continue around all four sides and end with a securing stitch of your choice.

Method Two (Continuous Corner)

- Stitch exactly to the end of the fabric edge on the first side.
- Raise the needles and the presser foot.
- Pull a little thread slack in the needle threads and gently release the thread from the stitch finger.
- Pivot the fabric 90 degrees and position under the presser foot lining the needles up with the fabric edge.
- Lower the needles and presser foot and remove any thread slack.
- Sew the next side, repeating until around the perimeter and secure the last thread tail.



OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

SEWING CORNERS, continued

INSIDE CORNERS:

- Snip into corner approximately 1/4" (more may extend beyond the finished overlock seam).
- Sew along first edge, stopping just before corner leaving needles in the fabric.
- Pull the second edge out straight in front of the presser foot and continue sewing as if the corner is one straight line.



OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

SEWING CURVES: Like sewing corners, learning to sew curved edges on an overlocker takes some practice. Always remember to keep the fabric edge straight in front of the knife; do not try to turn the fabric into the knife. This is different than how we handle the fabric with a sewing machine, so take time to learn how it feels. It is easy for loops to form at the fabric edge when sewing curves. To avoid this remember to always trim off a small amount of fabric.

Tip: For more even stitches around curved edges, try a smaller cutting width.

INSIDE CURVES:

- Place the fabric under the presser foot, aligning raw edge with the knife.
- Move the fabric to the left, keeping it aligned with the left side of the knife.
- Try to always be guiding the fabric to position it in front of the knife. Do not try to move fabric in a circular fashion.
- If a curve is tight, raise the presser foot to help ease the fabric under it as you go.
- To end, gently stitch off the edge of the fabric and finish the thread tail with your favorite method.

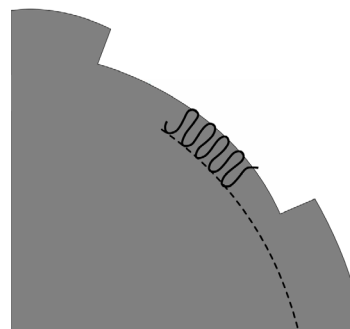


OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

SEWING CURVES, continued

CIRCLES / OUTSIDE CURVES:

- Place the fabric under the presser foot, aligning raw edge with the knife.
- Begin by cutting a starting notch into the outer edge that will allow you place the fabric under the needles at the beginning and the ending (approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 2").
- Align the presser foot and needles to the fabric edge at the notch and begin sewing, trimming as you go.
- When sewing an outside curve, move the fabric to the right to align it in front of the foot and knife.
- Sew around the perimeter of the curved edge.
- When you arrive at the beginning, stop sewing and raise the presser foot to release the fabric from the stitch finger, move the fabric behind the needle and chain off a thread chain (some machines require that you lower the presser foot to do this).
- Hide the thread chain under the stitches on the wrong side and seal with a seam sealant.

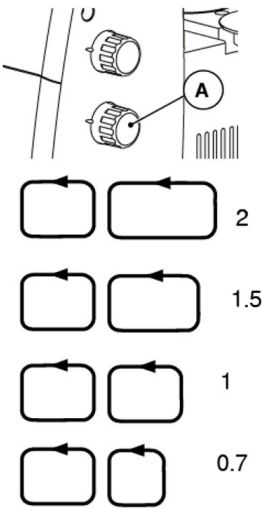


OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

DIFFERENTIAL FEED TECHNIQUES: Differential feed allows you to control the rate at which the front feed dog moves. By setting the differential feed to 2, the front feed dog will make a longer stroke and the fabric will gather into the stitch. By setting the differential feed to .7, the front feed dog will make a shorter stroke and the fabric will be stretched into the stitch. Not only can this be used to prevent puckering on silky fine fabrics and stretching on knit and bias cut fabrics, but it can be used to create decorative effects for gathering and lettuce edge finishes.

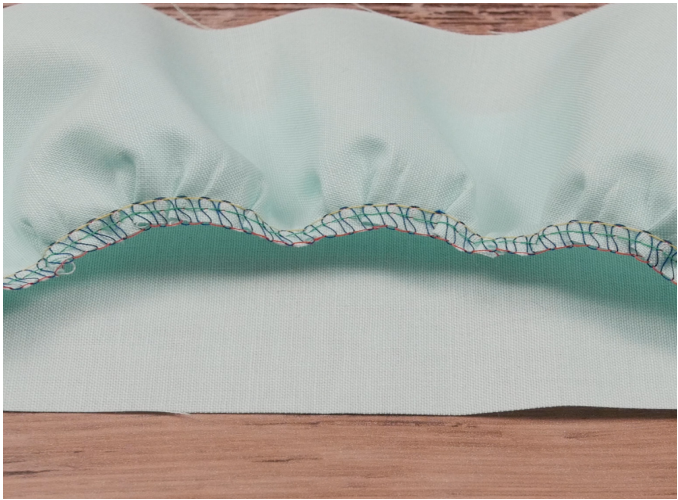


Differential Feed Adjustment



GATHERING:

- Set the machine for a 4-thread overlock.
- Adjust to a longer stitch length.
- Set the differential feed to 2.
- Adjust needle tensions to higher setting to further enhance the gathering effect.
- Test sew and adjust settings as necessary for desired outcome.



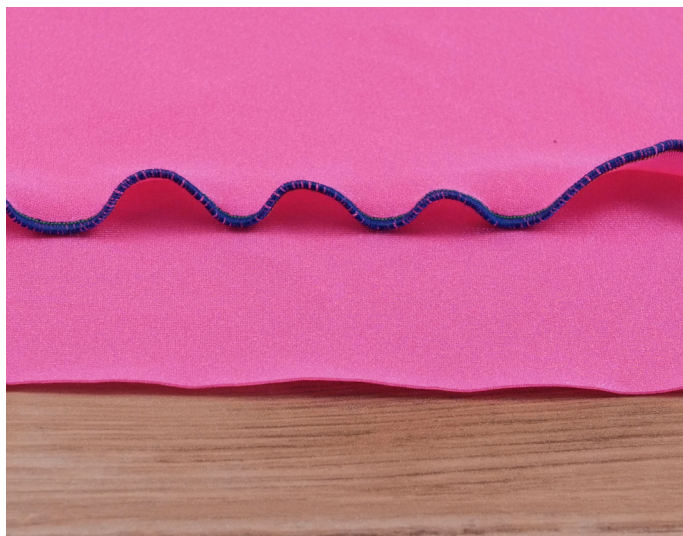
THREAD TENSION SETTING				MACHINE SETUP				
LEFT NEEDLE	RIGHT NEEDLE	UPPER LOOPER	LOWER LOOPER	ROLLED HEM LEVER	UPPER LOOPER CONVERTER	CUTTING WIDTH	STITCH LENGTH	DIFFERENTIAL FEED
5	6	4	4	▲	-	7	3	2

OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

DIFFERENTIAL FEED TECHNIQUES, continued

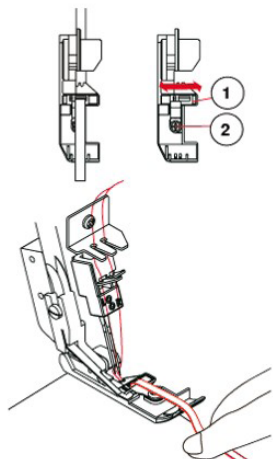
LETTUCE EDGE:

- Set the machine for a 3-thread rolled hem.
- Set the differential feed to .7.
- Begin by sewing a few anchor stitches into the fabric.
- Stretch the fabric evenly from the front to the back while sewing the edge.
- Sew at slow speed, making sure the fabric moves evenly and freely.
- Textured thread in the upper looper (woolly nylon, maxi-lock stretch) makes for a nice even edge finish.




THREAD TENSION SETTING				MACHINE SETUP				
LEFT NEEDLE	RIGHT NEEDLE	UPPER LOOPER	LOWER LOOPER	ROLLED HEM LEVER	UPPER LOOPER CONVERTER	CUTTING WIDTH	STITCH LENGTH	DIFFERENTIAL FEED
-	3	4	8	▽	-	5	R	.7

Tip: Use the tape guide on the standard presser foot to add fishing line to this edge finish for a stronger more sculptural look



OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

DECORATIVE FLATLOCK TECHNIQUES: A flatlock stitch can be used in a variety of decorative ways. Considering that it has two distinct looking sides of the stitch and the numerous threads that can be used in the loopers, the possibilities are nearly limitless. The ladder side of the flatlock stitch allows for the unique opportunity to weave beads, ribbon and other trims into the stitch. Take the flatlock to the edge of your project, and with the help of some removable stabilizer you can create the look of a blanket stitch using your overlocker.

THREAD TENSION SETTING				MACHINE SETUP				
LEFT NEEDLE	RIGHT NEEDLE	UPPER LOOPER	LOWER LOOPER	ROLLED HEM LEVER	UPPER LOOPER CONVERTER	CUTTING WIDTH	STITCH LENGTH	DIFFERENTIAL FEED
2	-	-	4	▲		6.5	3	1

FLATLOCK WEAVING:

- Attach the upper looper converter.
- Set the machine for a 2-thread flatlock using the right or left needle.
- Adjust stitch length to a longer stitch as desired.
- Test sew to achieve desired results.
- Sew from the wrong side of the fabric either on the fold or trimming as you go.
- Pull apart the fabric to lay flat.
- Thread a large eye tapestry needle with ribbon and create your woven design. Tip: Disengage the cutting knife to eliminate a trimmed edge for desired outcome. Using the seam guide can also be helpful in keeping a consistent distance to the fabric edge.



OVERLOCKER / SERGER TECHNIQUES

DECORATIVE FLATLOCK TECHNIQUES, continued

FLATLOCK BLANKET STITCH:

- Attach the upper looper converter.
- Set the machine for a 2-thread flatlock using the right or left needle.
- Adjust the stitch length to a longer stitch as desired.
- Place a strip of stabilizer, right sides together, along fabric edge.
- Disengage cutting blade.
- Sew along edge with flatlock stitch.
- Pull the stabilizer away from the fabric to reveal the ladder side of the stitch at the edge.
- Remove stabilizer.

Tip: Use thicker thread and topstitching needle to give a more pronounced look to the stitch.

