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eBook Series



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# Performing Denim Jean Repairs Using the BERNINA 480

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Using the BERNINA Stitch Regulator to Patch Jeans  
Using the Height Compensation Tool on Denim Jeans  
Total Stitch Control with Combi-mode ■ Hemming Denim Jeans

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# Performing Denim Jean Repairs Using the BERNINA 480

The new [BERNINA 4 Series](#) sewing machines are great for beginning sewists, and what is a better beginning sewing project than repairing, altering, or perhaps even making your very own pair of jeans! This eBook will help you discover some characteristics of the [BERNINA 480](#) that will make all basic sewing techniques and denim repairs go smoothly.

## BERNINA 4 Series Overview of Features

The features discussed below will be talked about in more detail later in this eBook.

- The firmware that operates the sewing machine is just as engineered as the rest of the BERNINA machines and offers help and even advice for different sewing projects.
- The touchscreen makes selecting and editing designs quick and easy!
- The **Creative Consultant** feature is something that every beginning sewist should have. Rather than worrying about getting stuck on a project, this feature will keep you from getting off track in the first place! It knows the ideal settings for many different materials and numerous different techniques.
- **Total Stitch Control** is another perk that the BERNINA 4 Series gives any sewist. All of the sewing machines in the 4 Series line-up have a large library of decorative stitches that can be used and adjusted for any project. It has never been easier to make your own pattern of stitches with the B 435, 475, or 480 using the Editing and Combi-mode features.
- Once the perfect stitch has been made, save it to the machine's memory and use it for your project later.
- With the ability to use the optional **BERNINA Stitch Regulator** (B 480, 475 only), the possibilities for creativity are endless. Using the BSR can help add uniqueness and innovation to whatever is being created.
- By working mostly with denim for this eBook, you will be able to see the BERNINA 4 Series' penetration power and the strength of the DC motors. Another tool that will be shown is the use the Height Compensation Tool.



**BERNINA 480**



**BERNINA 475 QE**



**BERNINA 435**

**CLICK ON THE MACHINE PICTURE TO VIEW MORE INFORMATION FOR THAT MODEL**

# Using the BERNINA Stitch Regulator (BSR) to Patch Denim Jeans

The BERNINA 480 and 475 QE both have the ability to use the optional **BERNINA Stitch Regulator**. The BSR will help keep the stitch length consistent when free-motion stitching no matter how fast or slow you move.

Use the following steps to help patch up the holes in that favorite pair of jeans!

1. First, reinforce the hole in the jeans with an interfacing applied to the wrong side of the fabric.
  - An iron-on interfacing is preferred.
  - Choose the interfacing to match the weight of the fabric being patched.
  - When ironing on the interfacing, make sure to close up the hole that you are trying to patch as much as possible. Also make sure that the interfacing extends at least ¼" past the area of the hole.
2. Once the interfacing is in place and ironed on, attach the **Clear Sole** to the **BERNINA Stitch Regulator #42**. This sole gives a clear view of the project and won't get caught in the fabric as you stitch.
3. Attach the BSR Foot to the machine and plug the jack into the port on the back of the machine.



4. The BSR display will automatically open when the BSR Foot is plugged in.



5. Lower the feed dog. Note: The machine will not allow the user to sew with the BSR unless the feed dogs have been lowered.
6. Place the area to be patched under the BSR Foot and lower the foot. Once this has happened, the green light on the Start/Stop button will illuminate.
  - It may be helpful to remove the Slide-on Table and slide the jean or material over the large free-arm.



# Using the BERNINA Stitch Regulator (BSR) to Patch Denim Jeans

7. Select BSR Mode 1 or BSR Mode 2.
  - **BSR Mode 1** is active by default. Pressing the green Start/Stop button while in this mode will cause the machine to begin stitching continuously. It will continue to stitch until the button is pressed again to stop it. The speed is regulated by how quickly the fabric is moved underneath the foot.
  - If in **BSR Mode 2**, once the green Start/Stop button has been pressed, the machine will take a few stitches and then will wait until the fabric is moved to stitch again.
  - It is suggested that you use the Start/Stop button because operating the foot pedal while moving the fabric at the same time may be difficult.
8. Stitch back and forth over the hole until it can no longer be seen. Stitch in whatever pattern or design is preferred. The BSR will help keep the stitches at a consistent length, no matter how fast or slow you stitch or move the fabric.



9. After pressing the Start/Stop button to stop the machine, lift the needle and presser foot to release the fabric.

## HELPFUL HINTS!

- ◇ Make sure to use the correct needle and thread. The **Creative Consultant** will give tips on what to use depending on the material selected.
- ◇ Create your own design when patching the hole! Patching holes does not have to be boring! To give denim jeans a more custom look, use a different color of thread to really make the patchwork pop!
- ◇ Go at a speed that is comfortable. The BERNINA Stitch Regulator is a great tool for beginning sewists who want to focus on the project without having to worry about the foot pedal because it regulates the speed for the sewing.
- ◇ The same technique for patching can be done using manual free-motion stitching and Darning Foot #9. The only difference between this and the BSR is that the stitches are not regulated to consistently stay the same length and/or width as they are with the BSR attachment.



**CLICK THE BUTTON TO VIEW A VIDEO ON HOW TO USE THE BERNINA STITCH REGULATOR (BSR) TO PATCH DENIM JEANS.**

# Using the Height Compensation Tool on Denim Jeans

The **BERNINA 4 Series** is a collection of powerful machines designed to penetrate even the thickest and toughest materials in the sewing world.

However, sometimes a sewing machine needs a bit of help getting the perfect stitch when stitching over thick bulky seams, and that is where BERNINA's **Height Compensation Tool** (an included accessory for the machine) comes into play.

Again, the focus for this example is on denim, a thick material that is not always the easiest to maneuver under a sewing machine. With the help of the Height Compensation Tool and the B 480's penetration power, any pair of jeans can be altered to fit the wearer. This portion of the eBook serves as a guideline on how to alter a pair of jeans to fit a desired size.



1. Start by pinning the pants to the desired fit. This will help set up the new seam line.
  - Pin straight down the already stitched seam. To ensure a positive and successful fit, keep the leg as straight as possible when pinning. It may be best to pin while the jeans are being worn inside out.
  - It may be easiest to have someone assist in the pinning.



2. Mark the line that will be sewn with tape, chalk, or other type of marker. While marking the line, be sure that all pins are secure in the material.
3. Place the jeans underneath the presser foot and mark the starting point of the stitching by lowering the needle, beginning the first stitch.
  - As with the patching on denim, be sure to have the correct needle and thread in the sewing machine.
4. Lower the presser foot and note how uneven the foot is as you stitch toward the waistband seam.

To balance this out and create a level stitch and seam, place the needed number of Height Compensation Tool plates underneath the back part of lowered presser foot until it sits flat, as if stitching on a normal material.



5. Begin sewing slowly, making sure not to force the fabric through the sewing machine.
  - Note that if the fabric is not moving smoothly, additional plates from the Height Compensation Tool may need to be added underneath.
  - Do not force the fabric underneath the presser foot, but rather place the needed number of Height Compensation Tool plates underneath the back of the presser foot and proceed to guide the fabric forward.
  - Even though the presser foot may appear to be sitting higher, the needle still has the power to penetrate through the fabric, creating a precise stitch and seam every time.

## Using the Height Compensation Tool on Denim Jeans

6. Once the presser foot has traveled over the seam and is sitting at a downward facing decline, move the Height Compensation Tool under either side of the foot.

- Be sure to keep the plates clear of the needle to avoid sewing through them.

Use the Height Compensation Tool on fabrics such as denim, canvas and extra bulky fabrics or felt.

Use the Height Compensation Tool where seams are thick or high, and it is difficult for the presser foot to get over such as hems, side seams, binding or bulky folds.



### TIPS FOR SUCCESS!

- ◇ Make sure to not catch any extra fabric underneath when using this tool. The added bulk may be caused from having the extra fabric stuck underneath.
- ◇ When using the Height Compensation Tool, be sure to support the back of the presser foot, as well as the front. It may be helpful to put the needed number of plates on either side of the presser foot, keeping them parallel to the feed dog.
- ◇ When altering jeans, be sure to measure first.
  - Fit the jeans to the body type first using pins.
  - Try the jeans on inside out and pin all the way down the leg, keeping the leg as straight as possible.
- ◇ Seams on jeans may be stitched twice for extra reinforcement to make ensure that the seam lasts.
  - Using a straight stitch, such as straight stitch #1 will be the most basic stitch.
  - Triple straight stitch #6 would also work and be beneficial.
  - Seams can be finished with a serged edge, or finished with the edges sewn individually or together using a zigzag stitch. Try zigzag stitch #2 or triple zigzag stitch #7 on the machine.
  - The waistline may need additional reinforcing to ensure the quality will last each time the pair of jeans is worn.
- ◇ You may also need the Height Compensation Tool when the presser foot becomes uneven on one side (left or right).
  - Once the presser foot is lowered onto the seam, place the needed number of Height Compensation Tool plates underneath the left or right side of the foot.
  - Keep the plates parallel to the feed dogs, making sure not to stitch over them.
- ◇ Use the Creative Consultant to automatically set the machine's settings to work with denim.



CREATIVE CONSULTANT

# Total Stitch Control with Combi-Mode

By now it should be clear that the BERNINA 4 Series is a great line of machines designed for ease of use by the beginner. However, the number of features available to sewists is almost too good to be true.

Another unique asset of the BERNINA 4 Series is **Combi-mode**, which allows the operator to combine different stitches together, either regular or decorative, to create their own style for the project. The process is simple and can be done by using the touch screen.

When applying a decorative combination of stitches to denim, use the following steps.

1. If redesigning the back pockets, first remove the pockets from the original pair of jeans by turning them inside out and using a seam ripper to detach the seams.

- It may also be beneficial to remove any stitching on the pockets that is not desired.



2. Decide which stitches would be best suited for the project.

3. Once the stitches have been decided upon, press the Combi-mode icon (“+”) on the lower part of the screen. (Insert image 12)



4. After pressing the Combi-mode icon, a display opens and you can add as many different stitches to the combination as you want.

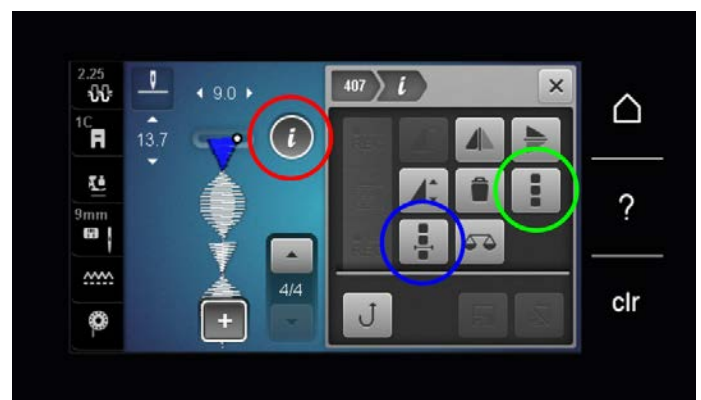
- To add multiples of a particular stitch, touch the stitch on the screen as many times as desired.

5. Stitches can be edited individually or as a complete combination with the simple touch of a button.

- The **Information** icon (“i” circled in red below) must be selected first.

- From there, touching the **Edit the Complete Combination** icon (circled in green below) will allow you to edit the pattern as a whole.

- Selecting the **Edit Combination at Cursor Position** icon (circled in blue below) will give you the option to edit each stitch individually within the pattern.



## Using the Height Compensation Tool on Denim Jeans

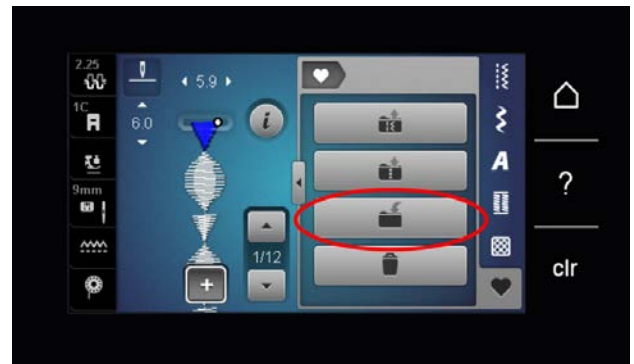
6. Test the stitch pattern on a separate fabric before starting the project to ensure that it meets your approval.
7. If working with pockets, once the Combi-mode decorative stitch has been stitched, topstitch the pockets back onto the pair of jeans.
  - Use the Creative Consultant to select the presser foot, needle, and thread settings.
  - Use the Height Compensation Tool to get over bulky areas.
  - Pin the pockets on first before stitching.



8. Make sure to reinforce the tops of the pockets by stitching back and forth a couple of times.

### TIPS FOR QUICK AND EASY RESULTS!

- ◇ Remember to use the Mirror Image feature (which completely flips the design either left/right or up/down) so you do not have to try and manipulate the bulk of the fabric to fit under the head of the machine.
  - Press the Information ('i') icon; select Mirror Image Left/Right and/or Mirror Image Up/Down as needed.
- ◇ If you want to save the combination stitch for future use, or if both pockets will be getting the same design, the **Personal Program** (heart) icon and select **Save Stitch Pattern** (circled in red below). Touch **Confirm** (check mark inside green box) and the stitch pattern is saved.



- ◇ The B 480 has a large enough memory to hold up to four stitch combinations. These combinations will be remembered, even if the machine is shut off.
- ◇ Make sure to test out the stitch being used before starting on the final product. It is a lot easier to test on a spare fabric than to rip out the stitching on the final piece.

Have fun combining stitches using Combi-mode to create a fun, unique look!



# Hemming Denim Jeans

Many think that it is impossible to hem their own pair of jeans. But with the BERNINA 4 Series machines, this task could not be easier!

1. Start by measuring and pinning the jeans to the desired length.
  - Another person may be needed to assist in this task. If not available, try on the pair of jeans and keep the leg as straight as possible and mark the desired length.
2. Mark the desired length with a marking pen.
3. Measure down and add 1 ¼" below the line. Cut any extra fabric away.
  - Be sure that you have measured and marked
  - Use a rotary cutter and ruler, or cut as straight as possible using a pair of scissors.



4. Turn the jeans inside out. To finish the edge with a clean look, turn the unfinished edge up about 1/2" and press on high heat. Turn the pressed edge up again, this time at 5/8" and press. Pin in place.



5. Set the sewing machine's settings using the Creative Consultant, or increase the stitch length for topstitching.
  - Attach the **BERNINA Jeans Foot #8** to the machine. This is an optional foot for the B 480 that is especially designed to be used with a straight stitch and a Jeans or Denim Needle. A size 100 or 110 Jeans Needle is recommended.
6. Remove the Slide-on Table and slide the leg of the jean over the frearm and underneath the presser foot. Sew all the way around the pant leg.



- Be sure to use the needed number of Height Compensation Tool plates when maneuvering over seams. Let the penetration power of the sewing machine do the handiwork for you!
7. Sew about 1/8" away from the folded edge.

# Hemming Denim Jeans

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## TIPS AND TRICKS!

- ◇ There is always room to shorten jeans, but once the cut has been made, there is no going back! Be sure to measure multiple times to ensure that you have added the hem allowance and are cutting at the right length.
- ◇ Remember which way each of the leg seams is facing when sewing. Keep them going in the direction they were originally sewn, whether that be open or facing a certain direction.
- ◇ If the jeans appear to not be moving smoothly under the presser foot, you may need the help of the Height Compensation Tool.
- ◇ To ensure that the seam stays reinforced, you may wish to stitch the new hem a second time.
- ◇ Be sure to use a Jeans Needle when sewing on denim. This needle is designed with a sharper point and is much less inclined to break.
- ◇ Match the thread to the rest of the jeans or use a different color of thread to create a unique look!



**CLICK THE BUTTON TO VIEW A VIDEO ON A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT  
TECHNIQUE FOR HEMMING JEANS**