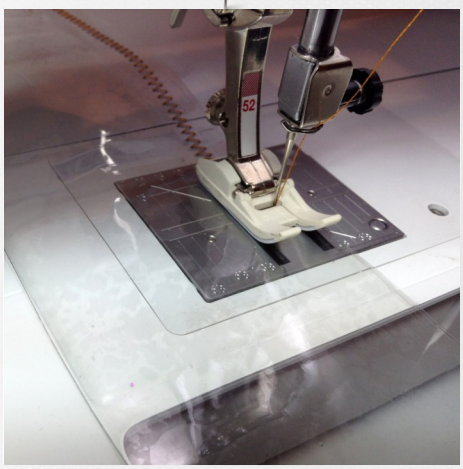
eBook SERIES

Just SEW It!

Solving Sewing Challenges

- Minimizing Challenges
- Thick Fabrics, Multiple Layers
- Uneven Sewing Surfaces
- Textured Surfaces
- "Sticky" Surfaces

Solving Sewing Challenges

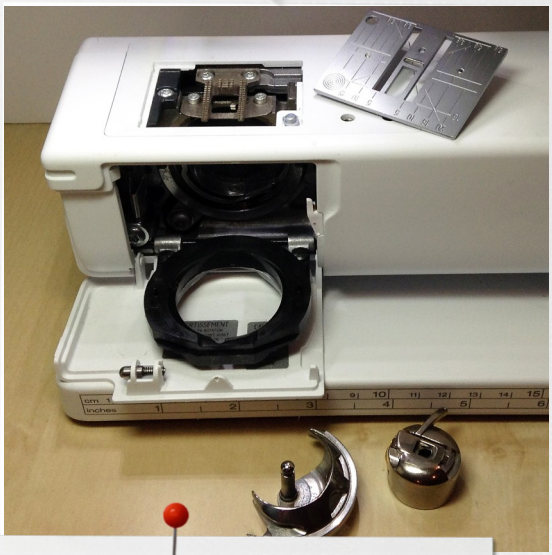


Take the fear and frustration out of sewing. Be ready to create any project with minimal frustration. Try these simple methods to solve some of the most common challenges that confront today's sewers. Helpful notions and useful presser feet smooth the way for trouble-free sewing.

Solutions to these common challenges are on the following pages:

- Thick Fabrics, Multiple Layers
- Uneven Sewing Surfaces
- Textured Surfaces
- "Sticky" Surfaces

Minimizing Challenges



The best defense against challenging sewing situations is to keep your machine in peak running condition. The better it performs, the better it will be able to handle unusual or difficult sewing situations. Follow a regular cleaning and maintenance schedule

Basic cleaning after 6-8 hours of sewing.

- Remove the presser foot, stitch plate, bobbin case, and hook (if applicable—check manual for specifics).
- Using a soft brush, clean all lint and fuzz from the feed dog and bobbin areas.
- Oil the machine as directed in the owner's manual.
- Reassemble the parts of the machine.

Yearly maintenance

Machines should be thoroughly checked and adjusted by a trained technician once a year. Along with a deep cleaning and proper oiling, the tension and other settings are checked and adjusted to factory specifications. *Tip: Have your machine serviced during your birthday month so you'll always remember when to visit the technician.*

When a machine is not stitching as nicely as usual, the fastest and easiest fix is to insert a new needle. Most of the time, the problem will be resolved. If it is not, check the threading and the tension settings. Most likely, one of these three issues needs to be addressed and doing so will correct the situation. If it doesn't, it's time to have a professional take a look and go deeper into the machine to assess the problem.

Thick Fabric, Multiple Layers

One of the most common problems that sewers encounter is stitching through heavy fabric. Adding to the difficulty are multiple layers and crossing seams. Denim, canvas, and upholstery fabrics can pose a problem that is easily overcome with the right tools and techniques.

Machine Settings

- Jeans Foot #8/8C/8D
  Note: Foot #8D is for 7 or 8 series models with Dual Feed; the D stands for Dual Feet and this function helps move the layers of fabric without shifting.
- Straight Stitch or Triple Straight Stitch
- Jeans or Denim Needle, #100 or 110
- Straight Stitch Plate
- Center Needle Position
- Engage Needle Stop Down

Step 1

Insert the Jeans Needle and attach the straight stitch plate; select Straight Stitch or Triple Straight Stitch.

Step 2

Sew as usual, slowing down to go over areas with multiple layers, such as at seams. Foot #8 has a hinged sole that will travel up and over many thick areas with ease. If additional help is needed, see the tip below.

Tips

Increase the stitch length when stitching thick layers as it takes more thread to go through the fabric and lie flat on the surface.

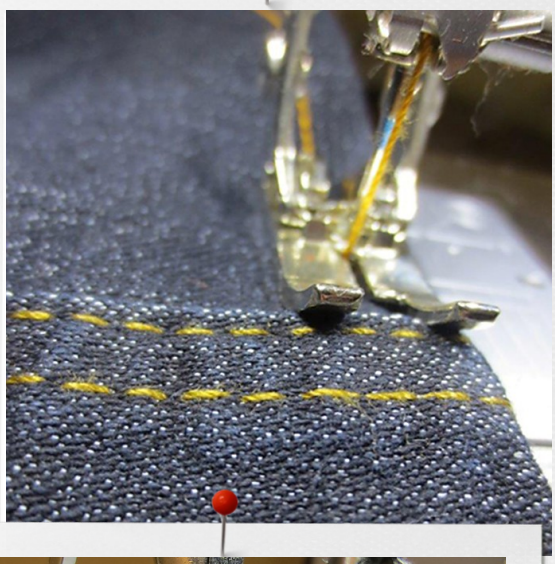
Reducing the presser foot pressure can also help move fabric that isn't feeding smoothly and easily.

When sewing thick layers, use the Freehand System to lift the presser foot to place the fabric under the needle. This gives 3mm-7mm more space, depending on the model.

If needed, use a height compensation plate to go over thick or bumpy areas such as when crossing seams. When the needle comes to the thick area, stop with the needle in the fabric. Lift the foot and place the height compensation plate under the back of the presser foot; this equalizes the surface, making it all the same height so the foot can smoothly ride over the thick area. *Note: The BERNINA height compensation plate has three pieces and can be used at 1, 2, and 3 levels as needed.*

Triple Treat

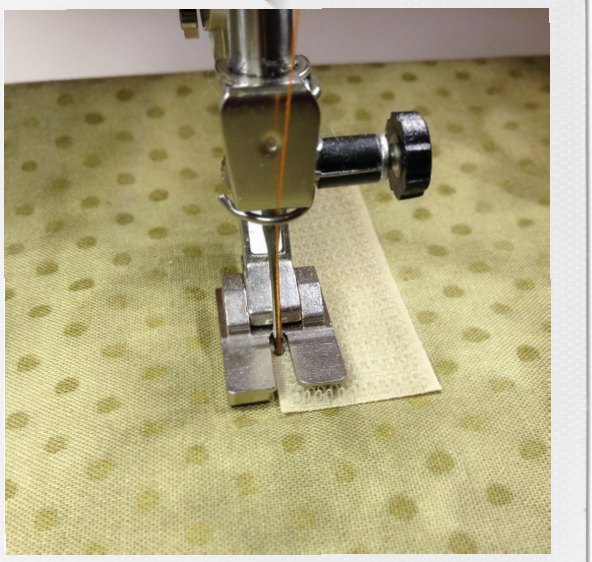
Using the combination of a denim needle, Jeans Foot #8 and a straight stitch plate results in strong penetrating power that drives the needle through multiple layers of heavy fabric.



Click for Video!

Uneven Sewing Surfaces

When stitching along the edge of a thick material such as hook & loop tape, cotton webbing, or decorator trim, the challenge is balancing the foot on the surface while stitching. An all-purpose foot with a flat sole does not ride smoothly, which affects the formation of the stitches, often resulting in less than beautiful results. A foot with an "uneven" sole will hug the thickness of the trim and balance on the edge for perfect stitching.



Machine Settings

- BERNINA Piping Foot #38
- Straight Stitch
- Center Needle Position
- Engage Needle Stop Down

Step 1

Attach Piping Foot #38 to the machine. Select Straight Stitch and center needle position. *Note: Foot #38 is a straight stitch, center needle position only foot.*

Step 2

Position trim on the fabric as desired. Pin in place.

Step 3

Place under the needle with the "thin" part of the foot (right toe) on the trim. The trim should be against the "wall" of the sole.

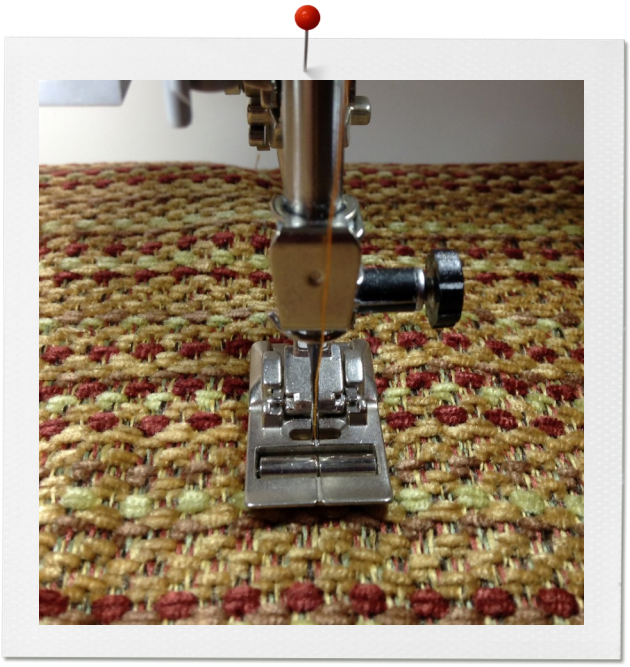
Step 4

Stitch along the edges of the trim until it is attached to the fabric.

Click for Video!

Textured Surfaces

Loops, pile, and heavy texture on the fabric surface can inhibit the feeding of the fabric as it moves under a regular presser foot with a flat sole. Using a roller foot can aid in moving the fabric along, resulting in good stitch formation. The rollers act as wheels to help "climb" over textured surfaces. A roller foot is also good for moving over leather, plastic, and vinyl.



Machine Settings

- Roller Foot #51
- Straight stitch or other stitch as needed, up to 5.5mm in width

Step 1

Attach Roller Foot #51 to the machine.

Step 2

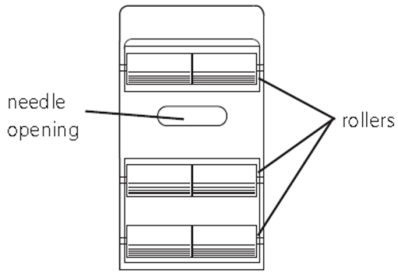
Select the desired stitch and adjust settings as needed.

Step 3

Sew across the surface of the fabric as desired.

Tip

Reduce the presser foot pressure if the foot "pushes" the fabric as it moves across the surface.

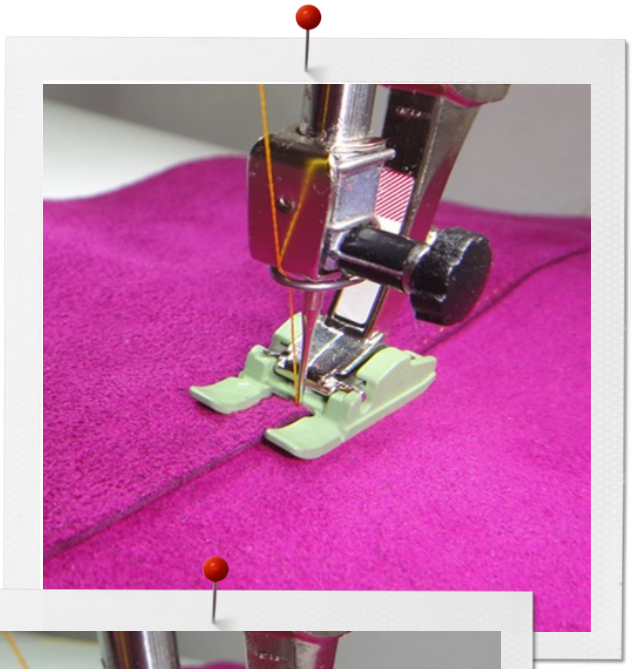


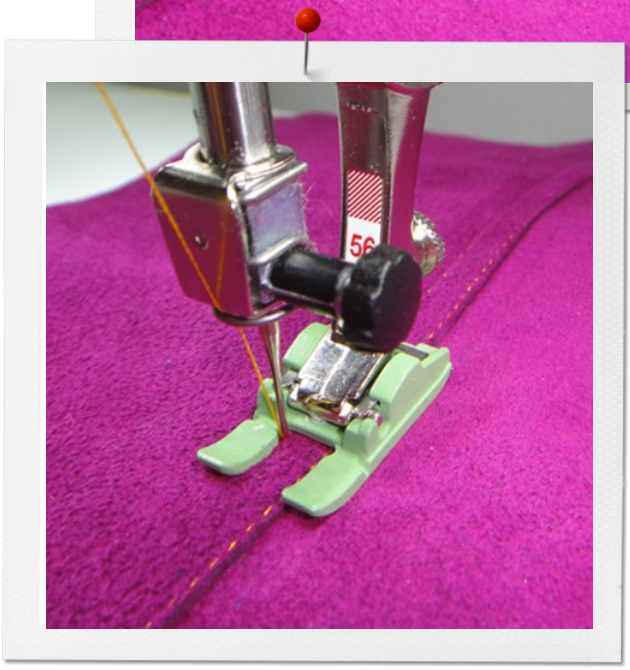
Because the front of Roller Foot #51 does not actually rest on the fabric, this foot is ideally suited for moving over uneven layers. The absence of "toes" keeps it from catching on textured fabrics.

"Sticky" Surfaces

Certain fabrics and materials have qualities that do not allow a metal or acrylic presser foot sole to glide over the surface. Leather, suede, plastic, and vinyl fit into this category as well as microfibers, or heavily glazed and polished fabrics. The non-stick feet are similar to other basic BERNINA presser feet, but each has a special coating on the sole to make it easy to sew most traditional techniques with ease.

A common and effective seaming technique for leather and plastic is a lapped seam. It is flat, strong, and bulk-free.





Machine Settings and Fabric Prep

- BERNINA Non-Stick Open Embroidery Foot #56
- Straight Stitch
- Needle Position as instructed below
- Engage Needle Stop Down
- Trim the seam allowance from one piece of fabric; overlap the two pieces by the width of one seam allowance (the trimmed edge should align with the seam line).

Step 1

Attach Non-Stick Foot #56 to the machine. Align the overlapped fabric as shown with trimmed edge next to inside toe.

Step 2

Adjust the needle position to stitch on the edge of the upper fabric. Sew the length of the fabric.

Step 3

Adjust the needle to far left. Align the foot in the same way as before and sew the length of the fabric to complete the seam.

Tip

If the material sticks to the bed of the machine, place lightweight tear-away stabilizer under it. Once the stitching is complete, remove the stabilizer by gently pulling it away from the material.

The Non-Stick feet are duplicates of four everyday feet with the added benefit of a coated sole to allow the foot to glide over fabrics and materials that tend to cause a metal or acrylic sole to "drag."

Zigzag Foot #52/52C/52D

Straight Stitch Foot #53

Zipper Foot with Guide #54