

# FACT SHEET

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## UNDERNEATH IT ALL

### ... Sewing Lingerie

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Sewing lingerie is the latest enthusiasm among women who value individuality or enjoy a new challenge that's different and fun.

#### FABRICS

Fabrics such as crepes, satins, chiffons, nets are popular lingerie fabrics and present no real problems to the home sewer. The most popular fabric, as well as the most difficult to sew, is *tricot*.

Tricot has all the qualities desirable in lingerie: durability, easy care and comfort because of stretchability. It is a knit of either nylon or triacetate or a blend of the two. A medium weight is most generally used in lingerie.

#### PICK A PATTERN

All major companies carry a few lingerie patterns. These patterns have a measurement chart on the envelope and are sold by dress size. Buy patterns for pants, petti-pants and half-slips to fit hip measurement; full slip and gown to fit bust; or make your own patterns from old garments that have both a style and fit you like.

#### TOOLS

Your regular sewing equipment can be used with some possible additions.

**Shears**—Use bent shears because they lift the fabric less. Wipe lint from blades as you cut, and cut through sandpaper #00 to sharpen.

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**Pins**—Use the finest, sharpest you can find.

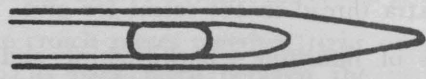
**Marking**—Use red or blue pencil which will wash out. DO NOT use lead pencil or dressmaker's carbon paper.

**Thread**—Use the cotton-polyester core thread which is strong and has "give."

**Needles**—Use ball point or rounded point needle. This pushes the yarns aside instead of piercing and damaging them. If you cannot find this, then use a #9 machine needle; however, this is hard to thread and bends easily. Use #9 needle for hand sewing.



BALLPOINT NEEDLE



REGULAR NEEDLE

#### FINDINGS

**Elastic**—Use "soft" elastic, or elastic with one fluted edge and one straight edge, and either edge may go up. Nylon elastic is best for lingerie with 1/2 inch for waist and 1/4 inch for legs.

**Lace Edging**—Stretch lace for curved edges. Non-stretch lace that has been preshrunk can be used for straight edges.

**Shoulder Straps**—Ready-made adjustable straps can be purchased. You may make them of ribbon or self-fabric.

### FABRIC PREPARATION

Mark the wrong side at selvages with red or blue pencil or tape. Determine wrong side by stretching fabric edge on the crosswise grain. It will roll to the right side. Since tricot stretches, don't let it hang off the flat surface when cutting.

Arrange pattern pieces so the crosswise grain goes around the body to give stretch where most needed. The pattern may need to be weighted down to prevent shifting.

**Marking**—Cut notches rather than snipping into seam allowances. Transfer markings with pins or pretested red or blue pencil.

### SEWING TRICOT

#### Preparation of Sewing Machine

- Use a straight stitch or zigzag machine. Do not use zigzag attachment because it "grabs" and damages tricot.
- Loosen tension as much as possible, keeping balanced stitch.
- More pressure than usual is needed on the presser foot.
- Use 10–12 stitches to the inch.

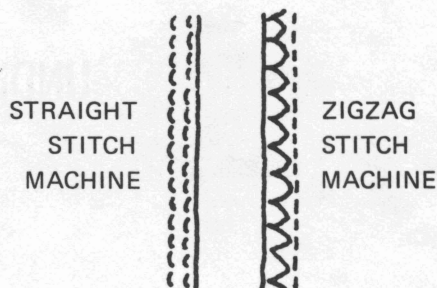
#### Stitching

- Tricot must be lightly stretched in stitching to put extra thread in the seams for give.
- Causes of bunching—Backstitching and static electricity which may draw threads to bobbin area, so hold both thread-ends back when lowering needle.
- Eliminate skipped stitches with slow, even stitching speed. Stretching keeps the fabric down and prevents skipping.

#### Seams

- First Row—use a straight stitch.
- Second Row—either a straight or zigzag stitch can be used. For a straight stitch make the

second row  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the first row. For zigzag stitch, sew close to the first. Trim seam if necessary. In general, tricot seams do not have to be pressed.



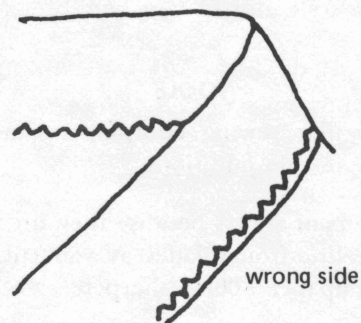
### ELASTIC

To determine the length needed, follow these directions:

- Waist—for casing, deduct 2 inches from waist measurement. For topstitched, deduct 3 inches.
- Hips—(for bikinis) for casing, deduct 8 inches from measurement where top edge comes; for topstitched, deduct 9 inches.
- Legs—for panty briefs use elastic the same measurement as around the top of the leg. For bikini legs, try on panties and hold tape measure around leg along edge of fabric. Use this measurement. If elastic is topstitched deduct 1 inch.

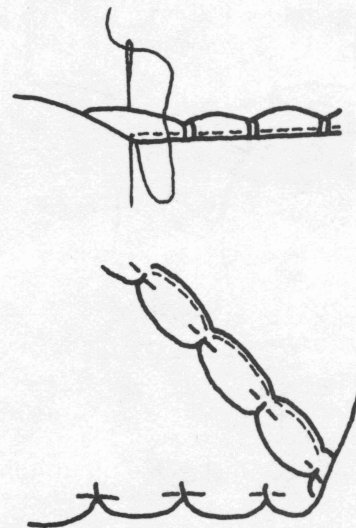
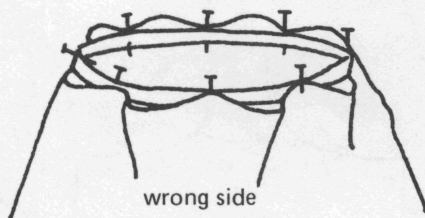
#### Attaching Elastic

- Elastic in casing—Seam allowance should be the width of the elastic plus  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. Fold edge to



wrong side on seamline; pin. Stitch close to raw edge with straight or zigzag stitch; leave small opening. Insert elastic. Overlap ends  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch and stitch securely; close opening.

- **Topstitched Elastic**—Cut seam allowance away. Join elastic ends in  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch seam, sewing back and forth several times. Open seam and sew flat with a rectangle of long stitches. On elastic and garment edge, mark off eight equal parts. At these points, pin wrong side of elastic to right side of garment with edges even. Stitch very slowly along lower edge of elastic, stretching both elastic and tricot. Repeat along upper edge. If using a zigzag stitch around leg, make one row of stitches through middle of elastic (stitch half the width of elastic).



There are other finishes such as tailored hem, rolled hem and French binding.

### EDGE FINISHES

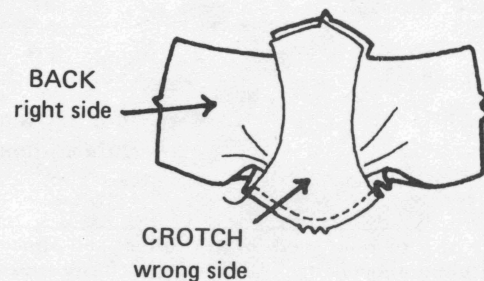
- **Lace**—At corners, form miters. Pine lace in place, folding it with excess on the wrong side. Remove lace and topstitch miter. Cut excess lace close to stitching. Repin lace to garment; stitch. Tricot may be trimmed away under lace for a see-through effect.
- **Shell Edging**—Trim seam allowance to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch; fold to wrong side on seamline. Working on wrong side, take 2 or 3 small running stitches along raw edge in seam allowance only. Take two stitches over edge of hem pulling thread taut.

*Note the next two illustrations at top of page.*

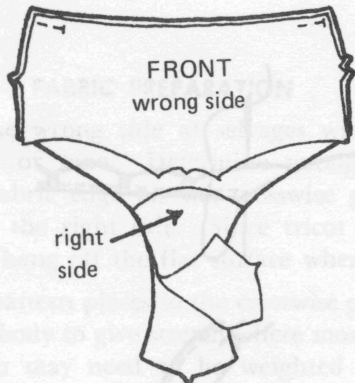
### SEWING THE CROTCH

This is a machine method where all seams are enclosed. Crotch seam allowances are generally  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch, and the wider end of the crotch is the back.

Place crotch pieces together, right sides facing. Place pants back piece between the two crotch pieces and pin in center with all edges even; stitch.

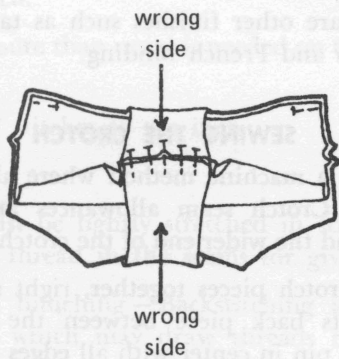


Place front and back pieces together, right sides facing.

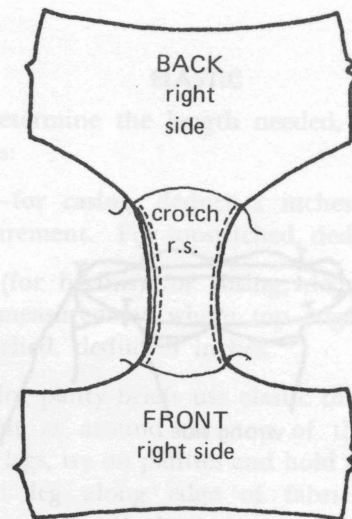


Bring end of top crotch piece up to front crotch seam, right sides facing; pin.

Wrap free crotch piece back around panties over waist, and pin to front piece, right side of crotch piece to wrong side of front piece; stitch.



Pull out panties and edge-stitch open crotch pieces together.



#### Acknowledgment

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