

# The Perfect Stitch

## Forming A Straight Stitch

The straight stitch is formed by bringing the needle thread and the bobbin thread together, forming a loose knot. This knot should be buried in the middle of the two layers of fabric being sewn together so the joining of the threads is not seen.

Correct Stitch Formation



If the tension is not balanced, loops of thread will show on either the upper or lower fabric. This results in a weakened stitch that doesn't hold the fabric together as well as it should. The problem can usually be corrected by adjusting the upper thread tension to balance the stitch. If the loops form on the upper fabric, the needle tension is too loose and should be tightened by adjusting to a higher number. If the loops form on the lower fabric, the needle tension is too tight and should be loosened by adjusting to a lower number. *Note: Most tension problems can be solved by adjusting the upper tension. The bobbin tension has been set at the factory and rarely needs adjusting. If it does, it is best to have it corrected by an authorized technician.*

Incorrect upper tension results in loops or thread breakage



Too Loose



Too Tight

To easily test the balance of a straight stitch, use contrasting colors of thread in the needle and the bobbin. The stitch is balanced when you cannot see two colors of thread on the fabric. This technique, sometimes called contrast quilting, is often used when a quilt top is of a different color than the backing and matching colors of thread are desired on each.

*The beauty of the straight stitch is often overlooked in today's age of technology which gives more elaborate stitch choices at the touch of a button. Aside from the practical uses of the straight stitch for tasks such as seaming or hemming, there are more decorative applications such as quilting, topstitching, and making tucks. Understanding how the stitch is formed and what affects the quality of it makes it easier to get the best stitch possible.*

## Straight Stitch Tips

*Change your needle often, starting each new project with a fresh one.*

*Use the correct type and size needle for the selected fabric.*

*Match the size of thread to the size of needle. The thread should fit easily through the eye and lay in the groove on the front of the needle. The point of the needle should make a hole in the fabric just the right size for the thread to go through.*

*Use a straight stitch plate to give the most support to the fabric as the needle enters it. This is especially important on fine and delicate fabrics.*

*The thicker the thread, the longer the stitch length should be to allow it room to lay flat.*

*Use stabilizer or interfacing when needed to give fabric enough support for the stitches.*

*If one thread is heavier than the other (ex., a 30 wt. embroidery thread in the needle and a 60 wt. bobbin thread in the bobbin), the tension needs to be adjusted in order to balance the stitch. In this case, it needs to be loosened until the bobbin thread is no longer pulling to the front.*