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How often should I press?

In the sewing industry and especially with people who are new to sewing, how often do I need to press? is a question that is asked time and time again and the simple answer is, press after every sewing stage that you complete resulting in a clean cut and professional garment. Each stage in the sewing process is vital to the end result of a garment and pressing plays a huge part, in fact pressing a garment takes up 50 - 60% of the garment creation time from start to finish. To achieve a professional garment in terms of fit and look, there are some really good pressing aids available. The most common is of course the steam generated iron with a built in water reservoir which is the essential starting point when it comes to pressing. The iron is so vital in that without one you simply cannot press and in return cannot create a finished garment, unless you are creating a garment in stretch lycra and therefore need no pressing at all. The other pressing aids are just as important as they perform various tasks to achieve the overall look in a finished garment and these are used in conjunction with the steam generated iron.



Pressing a dart into a pair of trousers using a tailors ham for shaping in conjunction with the steam iron.

The process of pressing a garment

A garment can take many days to complete which includes hundreds of stages consisting of a combination of sewing and pressing. Whatever the garment, the process always remains the same, sew a stage of the garment and then press. For instance if you were making a skirt and you were attaching the side seams together, you would stitch the panels together, when that stage of sewing is complete, you would then take your garment over to the ironing station and press the seams open. This can be achieved by placing the panels onto a seam roll and pressing the seams open. When nicely pressed, you are then ready for the next stage of the garment which is to sew the next part in the garment make up process. This process is then repeated until the garment is finished resulting in a clean cut, crisply pressed garment.

A tailors last word

Pressing is the most important part of the garment make up alongside sewing the actual garment together. Always press after stitching a certain part and repeat the process, if you stick to this simple rule, not only will your garment look professional but each stage is easier to sew to progress to the next.

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