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What is an Overlocker?

The main purpose of an overlocker or surger as it is sometimes known is to neaten seams which it achieves by trimming while sewing. It is not a replacement for a sewing machine, which is needed for straight stitching, making buttonholes and attaching zips. However an overlocker sews faster than a sewing machine and there are attachments available that enable it to be particularly useful for a range of purposes including stitching rolled hems, gathering and attaching bindings. An overlocker is useful for neatening seams on knits such as jersey, since its multi thread stitching prevents the fabric from stretching along the seam.

When fabrics enters the machine, it is moved through the feed dogs. These small tracks push the fabric towards the blades, which then trim the fabric. The fabric is then stitched by the loopers and needles and pushed out by the machine. Thread is fed from spools, not bobbins at the back of the machine which enables up to five threads to operate at once. An overlocker uses a two blade cutting system, which works like a pair of scissors. The top blade moves cutting against the under blade, trimming both fabric and the thread.

Overlockers have a large range of add-on accessories available to achieve even more creativity to your projects. These accessories come as an array of feet and attachments to compliment your overlock machine

The Standard presser foot:

The standard overlocker presser foot is used with most overlocking applications, including overlock stitching, flatlock stitching and rolled hemming. The sloe of the foot is flat, keeping layers of fabric in constant contact with the feed dogs.

Overlocker multi purpose foot and guide:

The Overlocker multi purpose foot is designed for a wide variety of tasks. Stitching strands of sequins, pearls and beads as well as making and attaching piping. This foot allows cording to be quickly and easily covered for custom made piping while evenly trimming and over casting the seam allowances. Piping can easily be attached to a layer of fabric as it is covered, with a little practice it can even be stitched to a layer of fabric being gathered as for a pillow ruffle. Strands of pearls, beads and sequins can be attached singly or in multiple rows, sewn to an edge or flat-locked to a fold and pulled flat. Different weights and colours of thread will add texture and interest to the stitched strands.

The Overlocker elasticator:

The elasticator guides and stretches elastic with precise control while stitching, this makes it useful while constructing lingerie, swim wear, sports wear, dance wear and home decorating projects.

The Overlocker cording foot:

The cording foot is useful when overlocking small cord, wire fish-line, perle cotton or fine yarn into a rolled hem stitch. The applications vary from reinforced edges and stand-up ruffles to shapeable bows and the cording foot makes it easy to include any or all of these techniques in a project.

The Overlocker gathering attachment:

The gathering attachment easily gathers fabric and also allows fabric to be gathered and attached to a flat piece, all in one simple step. In addition the edge is finished, preventing ravelling and producing a professional looking seam. This attachment is especially useful for producing long lengths of ruffled fabric, gathered inserts, puffing, bed skirts, ruffled borders and edges.

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