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What is the best sewing thread on the market?

Sewing thread is the central point of a sewing project and should one of the first things you purchase every time you start a new garment. The match of thread to the cloth that you are working with is essential as this is what you see on the outside of the fabric. There are various companies that produce thread for the sewing industry including traditional sewing thread, embroidery thread and quilting thread. The most popular for the domestic sewing market is a company called Gutermann. Gutermann threads are known for their quality and strength as well as a huge range of colours.

There are various sewing threads used for different applications within your chosen sewing project. Threads are used to form the stitches that hold the fabric parts together. They can be described by fibre type, construction and size. Threads can be made from a singular fibre type such as cotton, linen, silk, rayon, polyester or rubber or from a combination of fibres such as a cotton and polyester mix.

The most common natural fibre used for threads are cotton threads, they have excellent sew ability with little kinking or skip stitching, (Gutermann specialize in cotton threads). They are rarely affected by hot needles, a common element of high speed sewing machines and even sew well on poorly adjusted machines. Cotton threads dye well and since they mould to the fabric better than other fibres they are particularly attractive to top-stitched garments. Compared to synthetic threads their strength and resistance to abrasion is inferior and they shrink and mildew when wet. Cotton threads are produced with three finishes: soft, glaze and mercerised. Soft finish threads receive no additional processing except bleaching and dyeing. Used on inexpensive garments, they are relatively inexpensive with good sew ability but because they have a high shrinkage, seam puckering is frequently a problem after washing.

Glaze threads are treated with wax and special chemicals for a hard, glossy finish. They are stronger, more resistant to abrasion and stiffer than other cotton threads. They are available in a limited colour selection and used for gathering and for sewing heavy materials such as leather, vinyl and canvas.

Mercerised threads are treated with a caustic solution to create a smooth, strong, lustrous thread. They are frequently used on cotton garments that will be dyed. Linen and silk threads are rarely used in the industry because of their high cost.

Synthetic threads. The most common synthetic threads are polyester and nylon which were developed to perform well on synthetic fabrics and withstand the chemicals and heat of durable press treatments. Compared to cotton threads of the same size, they are stronger and more resistant to abrasion, mildew and ultra violet radiation and have less shrinkage.

Combination fibres are one of the most common threads in use today. These threads are a combination of cotton and polyester, which combines the sew ability of cotton with polyesters strength and resistance to abrasion.

Although there are a variety of thread constructions, most threads used in today's garments are twisted, core spun, monofilament or textured.

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