

- Baby Lock Serger, such as the Triumph 8-thread serger
- Wonder Clips
- Serger thread or 40 wt. embroidery threads
- Elastic in various widths (1/2" and 1/4" used in video)
- 1/4" wash away or fusible tape
- Shown in the video:
 - Polyurethane Laminated Fabric (PUL)
 - Heat Transfer Vinyl cut on the Scan N Cut
 - KAM Snaps on the little bathing suit straps
 - Patterns McCall's 4280 and Simplicity 1600A (both may be out of print)
- Feet and Attachments used in Video:
 - Curve Foot
 - Open Toe Foot
 - Overlock Table
 - Fabric Guide
 - Blind Hem Foot
 - Elastic Foot



Start to Explore Garment Sewing on a Serger with "Little Clothes"

Construct a garment with any sewing machine, but using the serger makes many parts of garment construction faster, easier and more professional. Try making children's clothing

if you want to start exploring garment making or want to explore the functions of the many serger stitches, stitch combinations or feet/attachments. Children's clothing takes very little fabric, exposes you to all the techniques of adult clothing construction and fit is seldom an issue. It's a great way to dip your toe into garments.

Don't have a little one to sew for? Donate any children's garment to charity or sew premie garments for the local hospital. You will find takers for whatever you make. Children's patterns are easy to find. The major pattern companies make patterns with detailed instructions for delightful designs. Downloadable patterns abound on the internet and many are free. Look in the remnant section of your local fabric store for any of the small quantities of yardage that you will need. Depending on the pattern, you may also need elastic, snaps (such as Kam snaps or snap tape), zippers and serger thread. What are some of the basic skills for serger garment construction? Let's get started.

Simplify Construction Tasks with a Serger

Some patterns have instructions for serger construction and will generally say so on the pattern or in the description. Patterns written for construction by a sewing machine are easily converted to be made up with a serger. Read the instructions for the garment and keep the following principles in mind to streamline construction using a serger.

Seaming and Finishing Simultaneously – the overlock stitch on the serger will seam the fabric and finish the edge at the same time saving a tremendous amount of time. When the instructions call for “finishing the edge” that step is usually unnecessary. When sewing seams visible on the inside of the garment, one pass with the serger and you are done. Overlock seams are ideal for active wear and knit garments because the overlock stitch has some built in stretch. Use a flatlock seam on active wear for a very flat seam that will not chafe the skin with movement. For a more stable/strong seam, add a chain or cover stitch to the inside of the overlock stitch. This 5 to 8 thread combination stitch is also just one pass with the Baby Lock serger.

Flat Construction – areas of a garment are more difficult to access when the garment comes together as a “tube”. For easy



serger (and sewing machine construction) try to keep the garment as flat as possible during the construction process. Typically, the sleeves, neckline, crotch seam and zippers can be moved forward in the order of sewing before the side and inseams. This makes access to these areas much simpler than inside the “tube” formed when these seams are sewn first. Look at the pattern instructions and see if you can change the sewing order. Practice with a similar children’s garment to get the feel of putting a garment together in this order.

Elastic – elastic is a simple finish to a waistband or arm/leg openings and even easier when sewn directly in with the serger. If possible, leave one seam open and finish it after attaching the elastic. Measure the amount of elastic needed and sew directly to the edge of the garment with a three-thread wide overlock stitch. Cut the elastic to the correct size or mark the end directly on the elastic. Divide the opening in



sections (halves, quarters and eights) and the elastic in the same sections. Pin or clip the elastic to the edge of the opening. Start sewing at the edge by taking a few stitches (about ¼” into the fabric. Lay the elastic up to the needle and inside of the cutter blade. (Try not to cut the elastic, only the trim the fabric.) Take a few stitches into the elastic. Stretch the

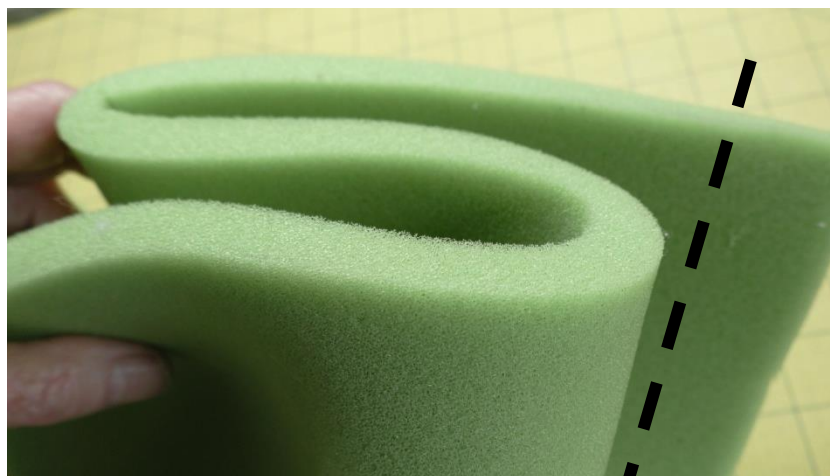


elastic in front of the needle to fit the opening. Sew along the edge of the elastic while stretching it to fit. Stop at the first clip/pin and remove it. Re-stretch elastic by holding it in the front and back of the foot if necessary. When coming to the end of the opening, use a stylus to hold the end of the elastic in place leaving about a ¼” without elastic. Close the final seam with a serger overlock stitch. Fold the elastic to the inside and stitch along the stretched edge with the sewing machine through all thickness.

Two-Thread Flatlock Stitching – is a useful technique for adding trims, creating a casing for elastic or hemming. Ruffles were attached in the video by folding along the attachment line

right sides together and laying the ruffle on top. Stitch catching the edge of the ruffle and the fold of the fabric with a wide two-thread flatlock. Pull the fabric after stitching to flatten the seam.

Sport Hem or Elastic Casing - create a casing for elastic by leaving one garment seam open. Fold the fabric wrong sides together and folding again towards garment to form an "S" shape (see photo). Pin folds in place through all layers. Position garment with the wrong side up and the fold just to the left of the knife. If using the Blindhem foot, place the



fold along the guide of the foot. Stitch along the fold with a three-thread overlock (dashed line in photo) and trimming a small lip of fabric. The casing can also be created with a flatlock seam. Using the same fold thread the machine for a two thread wide flatlock with a decorative thread in the needle for a decorative casing that is very flat. After stitching, pull the fabric to flatten the seam and insert the elastic. The stitching will show on the right side of the garment. In all cases, the casing should be slightly wider than the elastic. Use either of these techniques to create a hem.



Rolled Edge – the rolled hem on the serger is not just for the edges of napkins or ruffles. When seaming fine, sheer or lightweight fabrics the rolled hem or narrow hem is a delicate seam. Stitch the seam with the widest cutter width possible that results in a good-looking stitch. When working with sheers that ravel easily, use the widest cutter setting available. After stitching, the edge may look gathered. Gently run the edge through



your fingers or along the edge of a table to set the stitch and even it out. Don't use very thick or bulky threads with these stitches. As shown in the photo, place two 40 wt. embroidery threads (orange and teal) on the additional spool pins and thread through the loopers as one thread. The Baby Lock Exclusive Wave stitch is available as a narrow rolled hem.

Ribbed Necklines & Arm Openings – can be finished with attached ribbing. Ribbing will be folded in half with wrong sides together. Most patterns will indicate the width and length of the ribbing. A good rule of thumb is that the ribbing should be about 70-75 % the length of the opening. Take the measurement of the opening and multiply it by .75 to get an approximate finished length. Add seam allowances. The wider the ribbing, the more you need to stretch it so it will lie flush to the neck. Ribbing is generally attached to a complete opening when all seams have been sewn and the ends of the ribbing are also seamed. Use a quartering method to find the halfway and quarters of both the ribbing and the opening. Note that the shoulder seams are generally not at the quarter or half marks. Match the marks and pin or clip align the raw edges of the ribbing and opening. Position the edges under the presser foot and take a few stitches through all thicknesses. Stretch the ribbing and stitch to the first pin/clip. Remove the pin and continue. Try to stretch only the ribbing and not the neckline while stitching. Press the seam towards the garment. The ribbing can be flattened and held in place by topstitching a cover stitch over the completed ribbing such as with the unbound neckline technique below.



Unbound Neckline – clean finish a neck or arm opening with a cover stitch. Press the edge down and clip if necessary to create a flat hem. Hold the edge in place with ¼” wash away tape or ¼” fusible web. This technique is for a closed opening with all seams sewn. Set up the serger for a cover stitch or a triple cover stitch. Use a seam guide or the markings on the foot to stitch so the left or O1 needle is just to the left of the raw edge of the fold on the wrong side. The back of the cover stitch will cover the raw edge on the inside. Stitching from the right side, sew along the edge keeping a consistent distance

from the folded edge. Be careful not to stretch the neckline. Stitch slow and careful because this detail will be front and center of the garment. The Curve foot or Open Toe foot is a good choice for this technique.

Polyurethane Laminated Fabric – is a specialty fabric that is a perfect choice for anyone choosing to make unique, money saving items for babies. It is long lasting and use it for making diaper covers, bibs, changing pads, wet bags and breastfeeding pads. Machine wash PUL in warm water, but you can periodically use hot water for extra sanitation. Do not use fabric softeners or other additives. After laundering, line dry or tumble dry on low heat setting. Before sewing, press the **fabric** side of the PUL with a steam iron no hotter than a cotton setting. Always perform a test on a small corner of the PUL first to determine the best setting with your iron. **Do not touch the hot iron to the coated side.** For best results, use a press cloth over any reflective iron board cover. Let the PUL cool before beginning the project. Pin in the seam allowance or use clips as much as possible. Pinholes will create small holes that are not “water proof”. After sewing, put the project in the dryer for 20 minutes to seal any holes made by sewing or pins. Use polyester thread for sewing seams and trim any loose threads to deter “wicking” of moisture. Embroidery on PUL is possible, but leaves many holes. Use heat transfer vinyl to decorate PUL without creating any leaks as shown in the video.

