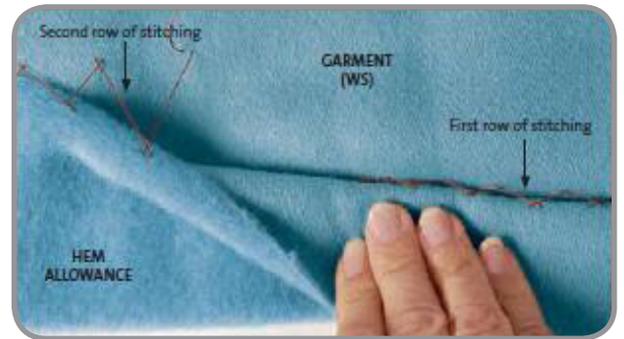


Sew Mayhemming

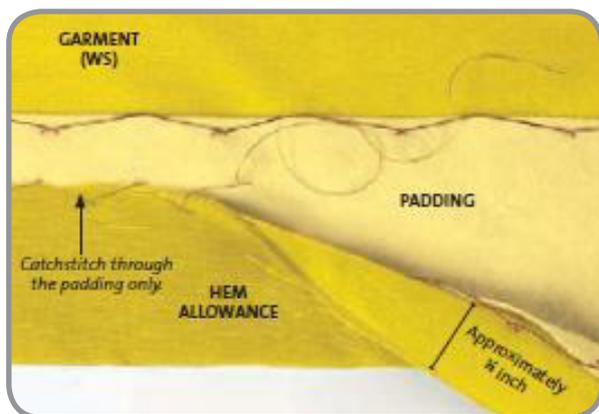
It's Sew Mayhem - time to brush up on your hemming techniques

Support heavy fabric with an extra row of stitches
Heavyweight fabric can get bulky and cause distortion as it pulls away from the garment because the hem allowance needs a little support. Two rows of stitching can be useful here; sew one about midway in the hem allowance and a second near the top edge, as shown at right.

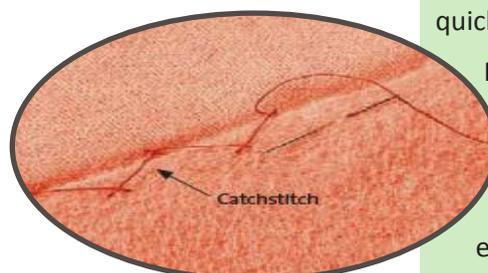
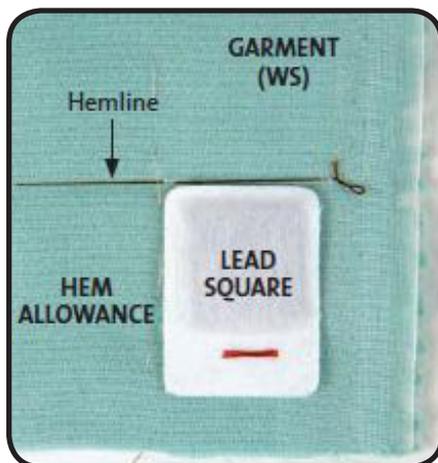


Insert padding for soft support

To create a gentle fold in coat-weight fabrics and velvet garments, add padding to a heavy hem. Padding cut on the bias adds support and produces a soft fold instead of a hard crease. First, catchstitch a strip of padding fabric such as cotton flannel to the hem. Make the strip as wide as the hem allowance, and place it approximately 3/4 inch in from the raw edge. Then, fold up the garment hem, and catchstitch the raw edge to the padding only.



Add weight for balance
Weights help a garment hang properly on the body and provide a well-defined hemline. This is particularly useful on garments that swell away from the body like a full skirt in a heavy fabric or that have a defined drape or train. To balance the hem, hide small, flat, fabric-covered lead squares in the hem allowance.



Hemming Fundamentals

When sewing a hem, it's important to treat the raw edge correctly and then master the stitches required to secure it.

Stabilize the raw edge

If a hem allowance is covered with a lining, you typically don't need to do anything to its raw edge. If the hem allowance is visible, stabilize it. You can apply hem lace or hem tape or try hand-overcasting. Regardless of which treatment you choose, make sure you don't create any sort of ridge or thickness that's visible from the garment's right side.

Secure with catchstitching

Catchstitching is ideal for hems; the interplay between the directions of the thread balances the layers and keeps the hem allowance absolutely flat against the garment. With the catchstitch, there isn't any shifting that sometimes occurs when a hem allowance is whipstitched into place. The downside is that a lot of thread is visible. But, as long as the stitches are covered with a lining, catchstitching is quick, sturdy, and easily variable in size.

Regardless of the stitch you choose, always secure your stitches with an extra stitch every so often; that way, if the hem stitches catch on something, you won't rip out the entire hem.