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[this] book is a must."** Sue Hausmann, host of America Sews and America Quilts Creatively

Sewing

FOR

DUMMIES[®]

2nd Edition

Jan Saunders Maresh
Nationally known sewing educator

A Reference for the Rest of Us!



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About the Author

Jan Saunders Maresh is a nationally known sewing and serging journalist and home economist. After graduating from Adrian College in Michigan, she became the education director of one of the largest sewing machine companies in the country, and then the director of consumer education for the largest fabric chain in the country. Both professional experiences give her a solid foundation in the home sewing industry, which she continues to serve with her many writing, marketing, and industry consulting projects.

In addition to writing for several home sewing publications, she is a best-selling author for several publishers, with 14 books to her credit. Many of her titles have been chosen as main selections for the *Crafters' Choice Collection*, a division of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

To promote her projects, Jan has been a frequent guest on several PBS television shows. Jan also makes regular appearances on the Home Shopping Network and the Home & Garden Network. One of her segments has been the most popular with viewers since the series started in 1995. When she's not writing (or running kids to soccer practice), serving as founder and president of her own direct sales company keeps her busy teaching and motivating consumers by helping them to create beautiful homes using her do-it-yourself home decor products.

Jan currently resides in Camas, Washington (just outside Portland, Oregon), with her husband, son, dog, and a collection of books, sewing equipment, fabric, and crafting products stashed in every available corner of her home.

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At age 7, I learned to sew under the watchful eye of my grandmother. When I had finished hand-stitching the set-in sleeves of a doll jacket, I cried and cried because it didn't look right. Grandma gently grabbed the jacket from me and turned the sleeves "inside out." It was a miracle — the jacket looked just like the one in the store. From that moment on, I was hooked on sewing. It's been an intimate part of who I am ever since. Thank you, Grandma, for being my first teacher.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the memory of Chris Hansen, the wonderful illustrator of this book. Chris's incredible talent and extraordinary hand added clarity to my words about sewing (and those of many other writers in this industry) for over 30 years. He illustrated with a terrific sense of humor and an incredible knowledge of sewing, which made all of us better at our craft. The sewing community is much richer because of Chris and we all miss him.

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Introduction

I love to sew. Period. First, there's the immediate gratification of completing a project using beautiful fabrics and great timesaving tools. Then there's the personal recognition — I get to admire my work and hear praise from my family and friends. On top of that, I save money sewing. Wow, what a hobby!

I'm betting that, after you have a couple of projects under your belt, you'll love to sew as much as I do.

About This Book

Sewing For Dummies, 2nd Edition, is a book for both absolute beginners and experienced sewers. If you're a stone-cold beginner, you may appreciate that I explain everything necessary to sew beginning-level projects and that I don't assume that you've ever even picked up a needle and thread before. If you've had some experience with sewing, *Sewing For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, still has something to offer — I give you tips and tricks that it took me years to pick up. All sewers can enjoy the projects in this book, no matter what their level of experience.

If you're new to sewing, I suggest that you start by reading the chapters in Parts I and II. You can find some fundamental information on sewing in those parts. After

that, you can skip around from chapter to chapter in the book, reading about the types of sewing and the projects that interest you.

What's New in This Edition

With the home decorating craze in full swing, anyone who wants to beautify his or her home touches a piece of fabric. But then what? Never fear, *Sewing For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, is here. This time around, I tell you the best ways to put those creative juices into your home decor projects with tips, tricks, secrets, and fun projects I've used successfully in my own home, as well as in the homes of my family, friends, and neighbors. In this edition, you also find new illustrations that ensure your sewing success, an updated list of the most popular fabrics and how to use them, and even more innovative sewing shortcuts and techniques.

Conventions Used in This Book

As you sew, you're going to rely heavily on the tools in your Sewing Survival Kit, which I describe in Chapter 1. Keep it handy and well-stocked. You need it for just about every project listed in this book, and I wrote this book assuming that you have and use these tools.

You also see instructions throughout the book that can be completed by using a sewing machine or a serger. A serger is a specialized machine that saves a lot of sewing time; it sews the seam, overcasts the edge, and then cuts off the excess fabric from a seam allowance — all at the same time. I think of a serger like the microwave oven of sewing — you wouldn't want make an entire project on a serger, but it sure speeds up the process.

Foolish Assumptions

As I wrote this book, I made some assumptions about you and your needs:

- ✔ You don't yet know how to sew or are looking for a refresher course.
- ✔ You want to master the fundamentals of sewing.
- ✔ You're looking for tips and tricks to make your sewing and home decorating projects easier and more fun.
- ✔ You want to start sewing as soon as possible.

If this sounds like you, you've come to the right book!

How This Book Is Organized

I organized this book into six parts so that it's easy for you to find exactly the information you need.

Part I: Hardware and “Softwear” for Sewing

In this part, I tell you about the hard and the soft tools you need for sewing and how to work with them, including your sewing machine, fabric, thread, and patterns.

Part II: Sewers! Start Your Engines!

Read the chapters in this part to find out how to do some things fundamental to sewing, including threading a needle, tying a knot, sewing on a button, sewing a seam, and hemming.

Part III: Fashion Fundamentals

When you sew clothing, you usually start out with a pattern and a set of instructions for putting the project together. For a beginner, these pattern instructions can sometimes be a little intimidating. The instructions may tell you to do something (like sew a dart or apply a zipper) that you don't know how to do. The chapters in this part help you decipher these sorts of techniques, which are essential to successful fashion sewing.

Part IV: Sewing for the Home

This part of the book lets you turn a little sewing knowledge into untold savings for your home. I show you how to sew pillows, duvet covers, dust ruffles, draperies and slipcovers, napkins, table runners, tablecloths, and more. Using the chapters in this part, you can create coordinated looks for almost every room in your home, quickly and inexpensively.

Part V: Alterations and Quick Fixes

Are you suffering from the “terrible too’s” — clothes that are too tight, too loose, too long, or too short? Then read the chapters in this part when you want creative solutions to fixing what ails your clothing. I also show you how to do some basic repairs on holes, rips, and other mishaps.