



Standard Terminology Relating to Seams and Stitches Used in Home Sewing¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This terminology covers basic stitches made by sewing machines designed for home use and provides a uniform, easily understood language for the definitions and descriptions of seams and seam finishes used in home sewing.

1.1.1 These terms and definitions are not necessarily consistent with those used in the apparel or home furnishings manufacturing industries.

1.1.1.1 This terminology provides a common base for use in the preparation of educational materials and pattern guide sheets for home sewing.

1.1.1.2 Each stitch is identified with a definition, a discussion of how the stitch is formed and might be used and an illustration of one or more possible stitch patterns. This terminology does not include stitches made by sergers, hemmers, or by attachments to the home sewing machines.

1.1.1.3 These seams and seam finishes may be produced on a conventional sewing machine or by hand.

1.1.1.4 Other seam types or finishes may be more appropriate if equipment other than the conventional sewing machine is available.

1.1.1.5 Section 3, Terminology, is categorized into two subsections, specific to the two areas of specialization under this document: Relating to Seams and Relating to Stitches.

1.2 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D123 Terminology Relating to Textiles

D6193 Practice for Stitches and Seams

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D13 on Textiles and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D13.54 on Subassemblies.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

2.2 Federal Standard:³

Fed. Std. 751a, Stitches, Seams and Stitching

3. Terminology

RELATING TO SEAMS

back side, *n*—in textile materials, the side of the material that faces innermost in the completed product. (Ant. **face side**, *right side*. Syn. *wrong side*.)

bound seam-finish, *n*—in home sewing, a seam finish in which another material is used to enclose the cut edges of one or more seam allowances. (Compare **Hong Kong seam finish**.) (See Fig. 1.)

DISCUSSION—A bound seam-finish is made by (1) enclosing the cut seam allowance edge(s) in another fabric and (2) machine stitching through all thicknesses close to the edge of the binding. Material used may be strips of lightweight bias-cut woven fabric or lightweight knit fabric such as tricot or net. If tape or binding is used, the wider fold side of the tape or binding is positioned underneath the seam allowance. Usually each seam allowance edge is enclosed individually; however, seam allowances may be placed together and treated as one, such as the armseye seam allowances of an unlined jacket or on a bound neckline.

clean-finish seam finish, *n*—in home sewing, a seam finish in which the cut edge is folded under and the fold line is edge stitched. (See Fig. 2.) (Syn. **turned and stitched seam finish**.)

DISCUSSION—A clean-finish seam finish is made by (1) turning under each cut edge of a plain seam allowance approximately 3 to 6 mm (1/8 to 1/4 in.) and (2) stitching close to the folded edge. A stabilizing line of stitching 3 to 6 mm (1/8 to 1/4 in.) from a curved cut edge will facilitate turning before stitching close to the fold.

complex seam, *n*—in home sewing, a seam made in two or more steps. (Ant. **plain seam**.)

DISCUSSION—Complex seams have one or more stitching lines as part of their construction and include double-welt seams, flat-felled seams, French seams, lapped seams, mock French seams, slot seams, tucked seams, and welt seams. They do not include plain seams or seam finishes or decorative additions to seams.

double-welt seam, *n*—in home sewing, a complex seam formed on the inside of the product, in which one trimmed

³ Printed in 1965 as Federal Standard No. 751a, Stitches, Seams and Stitching, General Services Administration, Washington, D.C. 20407. Available from Standardization Documents Order Desk, Bldg. 4 Section D, 700 Robbins Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19111-5094, Attn: NPODS.