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ready?



Brought to you by Joanne Banko

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Fancy Footwork Tip Sheet for using a Non-Stick Presser Foot



Standard Non-Stick Presser Foot



Roller Style Non-Stick Presser Foot

- ✂ **Standard Non-Stick Presser Foot:** This style of foot is available for most any modern machine that exists. Computerized models frequently have a foot that is specific to the machine model or category of models. A low-shank style foot that screws onto the machine will work for many low end or more generic machines. You can also explore the possibility of purchasing a screw on shank that will adapt many standard snap-on feet. There may be additional methods for adapting a foot to fit your machine. This is where a sewing machine dealer can help. If possible, bring your machine into your local shop or bring your standard zig-zag sewing foot with the shank attached. A good sewing machine dealer can help you determine your options for adding a standard Non-Stick presser foot to work with your personal machine brand and model number.
- ✂ **Roller Style Non-Stick Presser Foot:** This style of foot has an added bonus in the form of rolling "wheels" built-in to the foot. This helps the foot travel over the sticky surface and also helps accommodate slightly uneven surfaces. This foot can take the place of a metal style roller foot and do double duty, traveling over uneven textures and traveling over sticky surfaces. Brother International Sewing Machine Company makes a Roller Style Non-Stick Presser Foot that fits a wide range of machine models. [CLICK HERE](#) to read more about this particular foot.

About the foot:

Your standard metal presser foot simply cannot glide over a surface that does not slide easily. The metal bottom causes too much friction with surfaces that are sticky or by nature grip the foot. This causes uneven stitching. Pulling on the layers and trying to help advance them as you stitch is a recipe for disaster. First of all, it is impossible to maintain even stitching if you are exerting force on the fabric. Second, if you happen to pull while the needle is down you will likely cause the needle to break. Remember, there is a tool for every task. The Non-stick foot is designed to rescue these situations.

The Non-Stick foot is made from a special material that is slippery by nature. While there is a trade name associated with this idea, the name is trademarked so you will generally see these feet generically called **non-stick**. If you think of a pan you use to fry eggs or bake brownies so they slip out easily, the technical trade name will come to mind. As it is described, non-stick means that this foot is designed to slide over sticky surfaces like vinyl, leather, suede, laminated cotton fabrics, and plastic. You can use this foot for smooth sewing over any and all surfaces that are similar to the ones described here.

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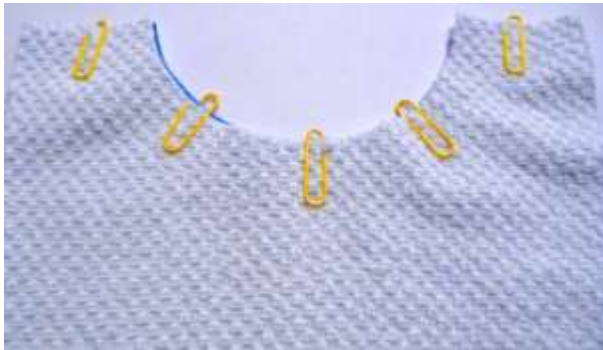
If you do have a choice between the two types described above it is important to note a few differences. The standard non-stick foot is designed to sew like a standard combination zig-zag/straight stitch foot. This means that the foot has a moderate groove on the bottom designed to sew good quality straight stitches, yet flow over a standard zig-zag stitch. Because the groove is moderate, it makes good contact with the fabric with both of these stitch types. Good contact is essential for sewing straight and standard zig-zag stitches because it helps put a bit of pressure on the fabric to help form the stitch, and to help advance the fabric in combination with the machine's feed dogs.

There are instances when this standard style foot would be a better choice over the rolling style foot. So how do you know when to use which one? I would say if you have to pick just one, then choose the standard style and consider it an all purpose foot. I like to think of the roller style as a multipurpose foot. It can substitute for a metal rolling foot and perform well on sticky fabrics. Admittedly, I am a sewing enthusiast who believes you can never have too many feet so I would opt for both feet in my sewing toolbox. When it comes time to choose one over the other I use my standard rule . . . "to test is best." Try out each foot using fabric and circumstances that match your actual project, and see which one performs best as you test!

A Few Tips for Sewing Sticky Fabrics such as thin vinyl, plastic, or laminated cottons:

For straight sewing, use a stitch length slightly longer than the average 2.2 to 2.5. I like to use a length in the range of 3.0. to 4.0. Select a good quality polyester thread. When selecting a needle, a universal point needle generally works well. If you have trouble with skipped stitches try switching to a needle designed for stretch fabrics. Use the smallest needle size you can get away with considering the thickness of the fabric, or the amount of fabric layers you are using. The idea is to perforate the fabric as little as possible. If your stitch creates holes that are too large, or too frequent there is a likelihood that the seam will pull away at the stitching line. Never use pins, instead consider using paper clips or other special fabric clips such as [Wonder Clips](#) from Clover notions.

See example below:



Paper clips used to secure terry cloth to laminated fabric layer on a baby bib.

It is important to know that the non-stick foot must make contact with the sticky surface. If you need to sew with the sticky side against the throat plate of the machine (this may happen if you have a sticky surface on both top and bottom), you will need to create a "buffer" between the throat plate and the sticky surface. Consider using a lightweight wash away or tear away stabilizer as an added layer against the throat plate and feed dog area on the machine. Just make sure this added layer is easily removed from your finish project.

With this special non-stick presser foot in your sewing toolbox you can successfully sew surfaces that would normally leave you in a "sticky" situation. Now that you know some tricks are you ready? Let's go sew!