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Simple tips for setting your machine to sew shirring with Elastic thread:

A note about the elastic: Note that I use the term "**thread**" lightly as this is not really thread in the normal sense of the word. The best thread for this technique is strong with a high amount of stretch. Tightly pull a short amount of the thread to test the strength. It's a good idea to test your stitched sample by laundering it when you are using it for garment sewing. I have found that most any kind of elastic has a certain shelf life. If elastic items are stored for a long period of time the elastic may lose its resilience. From my experience regular laundering seems to help preserve elastic so the issue may be with storage conditions. The threads below are what I prefer for this technique.



64% Polyester 36% Polyurethane Elastic thread
[Gutermann](#) brand sold in big box fabric stores.



**.5mm Elastic cord commonly sold
with jewelry making supplies.**



Machine set up: Set up machine for straight sewing using the longest stitch length and a high upper tension. A long stitch and tight upper tension produces the most shirring. For most machines the tension should be set near the maximum amount. Make sure you tie off thread tails by hand and **DO NOT** use the thread cutter function. To prepare bobbin, begin by feeding a tail of elastic thread through the hole in the top of the bobbin. Temporarily use a small piece of tape to hold the tail in place. Next, hand wind approximately 4 yards of elastic thread onto the bobbin, winding slowly and evenly, without stretching the thread. Place bobbin in machine as you would for a normal threaded bobbin. Thread through the tension disc and then leave the elastic tail uncut. Thread top with thread to match fabric. To bring the elastic thread to the top of the throat plate, turn the flywheel by hand to send the needle down and then up, pinching both threads after the needle comes up. Pull a slight amount of excess thread behind the foot to start. Be sure to test your stitching on a scrap of fabric.

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