The job of the presser foot on your sewing machine is to hold the fabric against the feed dogs and guide it in a straight line as you sew. That's why you have to raise the presser foot when you want to move your fabric out from under the needle. You can do quite a lot of sewing with just the standard foot that came with your machine, however, some techniques can be a bit of a challenge with this very basic foot. That's when it helps to know about all the great specialty feet that are available. Sewing machine feet come in a wide array of designs; picking the right one for the job can make things go so much easier and faster, and can also give you much more professional looking results.

Depending on the price range of your machine, you have either a basic or deluxe set of feet that came with your model. Consult your manual for helpful tips about using the feet included with your machine.

When it's time to purchase a specialty foot that may be optional for your machine, you want to see your sewing machine dealer. He or she can tell you if it's the foot you really need and then can help you find one designed for your specific machine. Before you make a trip to their store, be sure you know the brand and model of your machine. You can also review many of the Janome presser feet through their library of short how-to videos.

And, just in case you were wondering – sewing machine feet do not wear sewing machine socks or shoes.

**Our favorite basic sewing feet**

You can find a version of the following feet for virtually all models of sewing machines. Some more advanced machines will have them in the wide 9mm width.
Also called the Standard Foot or Zig Zag Foot, this foot is traditionally attached when you lift your sewing machine out of the box. You can use the foot for all kinds of general sewing, just like the name implies: straight sewing, zig zag, even decorative stitching.
The Zipper Foot is used for – you guessed it – attaching zippers. But that isn’t the only use of this versatile foot. Use it whenever you need to get in close, such as when creating your own piping. The Janome Horizon Memory Craft 15000 has a cool version of the Zipper Foot as part of its AcuFeed Flex™ fabric feeding system which is shown in the "action" photo above.

Use this when your fabric is slippery or when need to sew several layers at once without shifting. This is a favorite foot among quilters. Janome offers a Standard Walking Foot, as well as the ultimate fabric feeding system, called AcuFeed™ and AcuFeed Flex™. Depending on the Janome model, these AcuFeed™ feet come in different widths and can either be easily moved out of the way or completely detached from the machine when not in use.
This foot allows you to create buttonholes that exactly correspond to the size of the buttons you are using in your project. Simply place the button in the foot, and the machine uses the foot as a gauge as it creates a perfectly-sized buttonhole for you.
The **Button Sewing Foot** attaches buttons (Didn't see that one coming, did you?). It contains a bar on the bottom for extra stability, and often has a rubber covering to help grip the button as it sews. You can only use it to attach flat buttons; it doesn't work for buttons that have a shank back. And, it's necessary to adjust the stitch to accommodate the holes your button. Use this foot once and you won't be able to live without it. Take a look at our [full tutorial on sewing on buttons by machine](#).

The **Gathering Foot** will create soft gathers in your fabrics. The bottom of the foot is specially designed to feed the fabric so it gathers between each stitch, creating a soft gathered edged as you sew. Density is controlled by varying the stitch length, the longer the stitch the more gathers. This is a different technique than full-on rufflers. We list more about the Ruffler foot below as well as a link to our ruffling tutorial.
A blind hem is exactly what it sounds like: a hem with stitches you barely notice. It's perfect for window coverings, garment hems, or anywhere you want a clean finished edge. The Blind Hem Foot has a metal guide in the center. When sewing, the fold in your fabric will rest against this guide so you can maintain an accurate seam. The foot also has grooves on the bottom, which grip your fabric to prevent slipping as you sew. Check out our step-by-step tutorial on blind hemming.
Also called the Overcasting Foot, this foot can help finish the edge of fabric so it won't ravel or fray, much like the finished edge a serger provides. The foot must be used in combination with the Overcast Stitch on your sewing machine.

**A few of our favorite more specialized sewing feet**

Once you've mastered the basics, you can move into the wide world of even more specialized feet. The selection of available feet is impressive; we've listed just a small sampling below. These are the pro-series feet, the ones that allow you to do some impressive decorative techniques and give your project a quality finish. Visit your local sewing machine dealer to try out all the great foot options available for your machine.

![Quarter Inch Seam Foot](image)

This is one of our favorite presser feet at Sew4Home, its handy flange is set at a perfect ¼” width for precise seaming as well as edgestitching and topstitching. If you're a quilter, the Quarter Inch Seam foot is a must-have.
Insert thin ribbon or strung sequins through the guide on the foot, and they will feed through evenly as you sew. Besides affixing the ribbon, a wide ladder stitch can be used with narrow ribbon to make an easy and functional drawstring.
Hand sewing strings of beads and pearls to your project takes a long time. Use a [Beading Foot](#), and you can attach long stands in seconds. This foot is popular for bridal and evening wear as well as crafts. There are different versions of the foot for large and small beads. Take a look at our [full tutorial on the Janome Beading Foot Set](#) then get ready to add a bit o’ beading to your next project.

If you want to sew perfectly parallel rows of stitches for a decorative effect, you’d normally have to get out your ruler and fabric pencils. But the [Border Guide Foot](#) lets you do it with virtually no measuring or marking. Simply line up your previous row of stitching with the red guide lines and you can immediately sew perfectly spaced of rows. We’ve even used it for straight line quilting, as shown in the photo above. Janome has a nice [video tutorial on how to use their Border Guide](#).
This foot has a guide that allows you to perfectly place stitches along edges and seams. It's great for tucks, hems and fine edge work, such as a decorative edge done in lace or ribbon. A Janome foot, this option is only available in the 9mm width.

Want more specialty feet fun, check out the full tutorials we've done on these Janome presser feet:

Ultimate Ruffler

Rotary Even Foot

Roller Foot

Clear View Quilting Foot & Guide Set

And, we have a general article that outlines the best specialty feet and tools for working with trims.

There are many other specialized feet for all kinds of fun techniques. They're a great way to add new capabilities to your existing sewing machine. Visit your local sewing machine dealer today to try out a few.

Buying Guide

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