

## **How to Make a Blind Hem on Your Sewing Machine**

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A blind hem is exactly what it sounds like: a hem with stitches you can barely see. It's perfect for window coverings, the hem at the bottom of a garment, or anywhere you want a clean finished edge. When I first started sewing, attaining a perfect blind hem was like finding the Holy Grail. And then a funny thing happened, I practiced it a few times, and realized it was really easy. It's sort of like learning to use chopsticks – at first it seems so awkward and difficult and then, suddenly, it's second nature. Try a blind hem and you'll never drop a wad of sticky rice in your lap again. This is one of our most popular techniques ever on Sew4Home; so much so, we try to re-run it at least once a year in order to stamp out the fear of blind hems for both new and returning visitors.

First, you will need a blind hem foot. This is a special foot that comes standard with most sewing machines. The foot shown below is the 9mm Blind Hem foot that came with our Janome Skyline machine. Your presser foot version might be slightly different depending on the brand and/or model of your sewing machine.

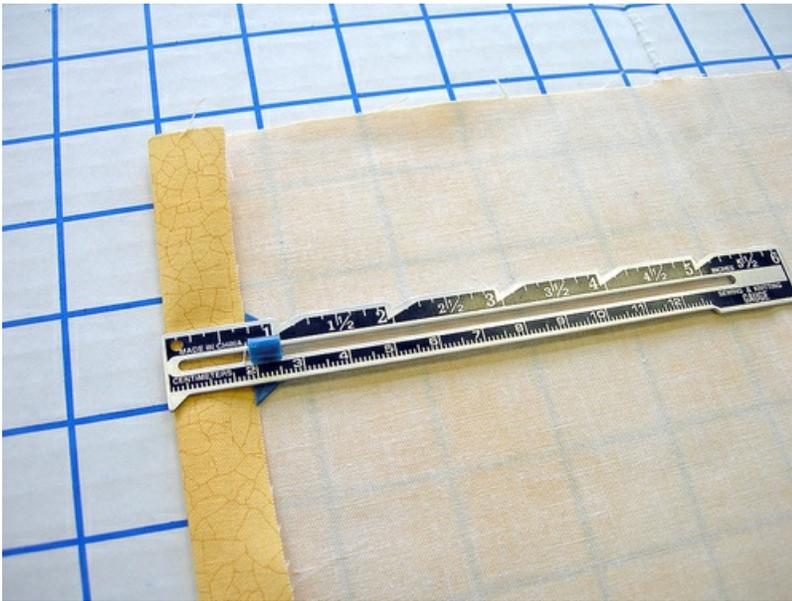


Notice the black part in the middle of the foot (it may not be black on your machine's foot). It's called a "flange." This is your new word for the day; try to work it into a conversation. The flange acts as a guide. It will rest against the folded edge of the fabric as you sew, allowing you to maintain a straight seam and make sure the space between the main stitches and the blind stitches is accurate.

## Enough semantics; let's actually do the stitch

### Make a simple hem

1. Figure out how big of a hem you need to get the finished length you want. Most people prefer to err on the side of narrow over wide so there's less bulk to the folded fabric and the hem will lay nice and flat. In fact, it's often better to trim your fabric just a bit rather than make a giant hem.
2. Let's say you have 2" to work with. First, fold back the raw edge  $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Then, fold back an additional  $1\frac{1}{4}$ ". The first fold rolls inside the second and you end up with a nice folded edge along both the top and bottom.
3. Press the hem.



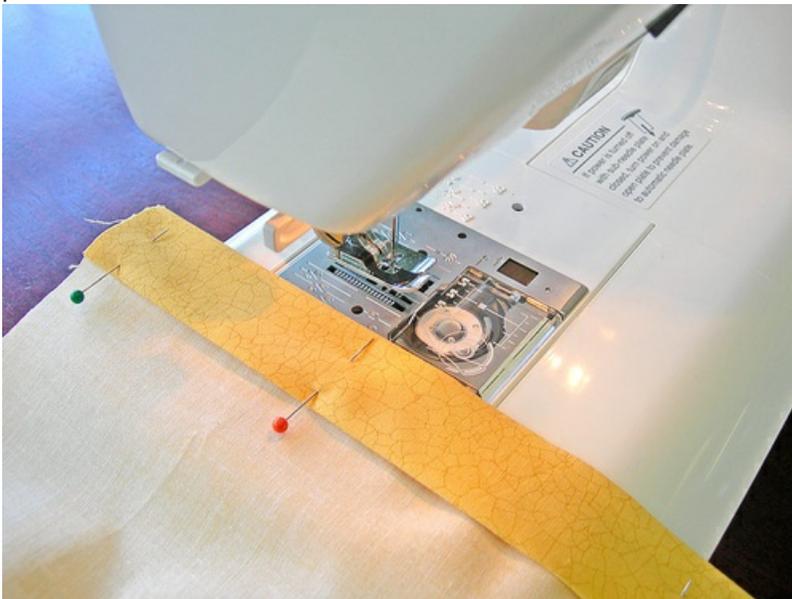
## Pin the hem

1. Notice of the position of the pins in the photos below. It *is* much easier if you place the pins with their heads facing toward your main fabric – away from the hem's edge.



## At the machine

1. Take the project to your machine. It should be wrong side up, showing that nice folded hem you just made and pinned in place.



2. Make sure the blind hem foot is attached and the machine set to make a blind hem stitch. Refer to your machine's manual to confirm the foot and the stitch number.
3. Place the hemmed fabric on the bed of the machine so the edge of the bottom folded edge of the hem is facing the foot and the heads of the pins are facing away from the foot.
4. Tuck the hem under the wrong side of the main fabric, leaving about a 1/4" of the hem's edge sticking out. The heads of the pins will now be pointing toward the foot.



5. Slide your fabric under the blind hem foot so the flange is resting against the folded edge of the *main* fabric.
6. When the needle drops it will be sewing mainly into that ¼" of the hem's edge that is sticking out while catching just a tiny bit of the main fabric.



7. Continue sewing along the entire hem, keeping the flange against the fold of the main fabric.



8. When complete, the bulk of the stitches will fall along the hem's edge and every third stitch or so will catch in the main fabric.



9. Open the hem to straighten the seam, gently stretching the hemmed stitches so they lay flat, if necessary. Press well.  
NOTE: *We used a contrasting thread for these instructions so you could see our work. You'll want to choose a thread color that matches your fabric so the stitches on the front will barely be visible. Blind!*



10. You can adjust stitch length if you want fewer or more stitches catching the main fabric.

#### Sewing Tips & Tricks

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