

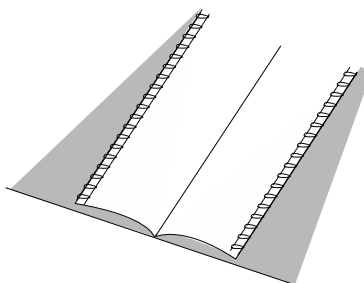
# Choosing the Correct Seam Finish

Which seam finish should be used on a 4-H project? That is a question that does not have just one answer. You will have to look at your fabric and your pattern then decide on your seam finishes. You have to use a different seam finish on different seams with your garment. Take scraps of your fabric and try several different seam finishes. Try some on straight seams and some on curves. Press to see how the finished seam looks on the right side of the fabric.

You may want to use a different seam finish on a curved seam than you do on a straight seam. Don't forget to consider the style of the garment and the weave and weight of the fabric. You must decide which one is the right for your fabric and garment style. The only requirements are that the seam finish isn't too bulky, is neat, and keeps the seam from raveling. You should be able to explain to your judge why you have chosen your seam finish. The following are examples of some of the seam finishes available that you might use.

## OVERCAST SEAM

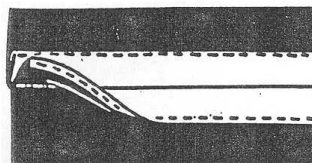
Press seam open. Serge or zigzag close to the edge or on the edge if the material does not pucker. Use on many fabrics – cotton, knits, wools and blends. The weight of the fabric will determine whether or not the finish is best. Lightweight fabric may pucker.



## EDGE-STITCHED SEAM

Press seam open. Turn under the raw edges and machine stitch close to the folded edge.

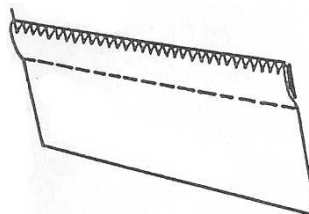
\* Use on fabric that is NOT bulky.



## SEAM OVERCAST TOGETHER

Press seam open, then press seams to one side. Even the width of the seams with scissors then zigzag or serge together. May be done in one step with a serger.

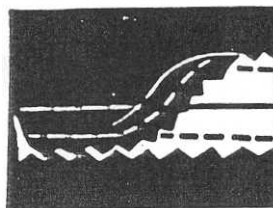
\* Use at arm hole, waistline, yoke or back of a pleat.



**STITCHED-PINKED SEAM**

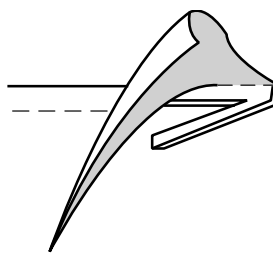
Press seam open. Straight stitch or zigzag close to edge. Trim edge with pinking-shears. This is not a commonly used finish since the fabric can still ravel to the row of stitching.

\* Use on tightly woven fabric.

**FRENCH SEAM**

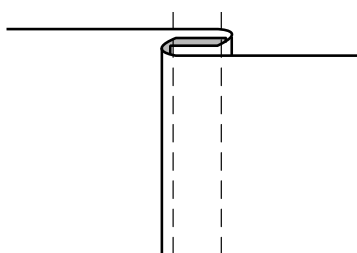
Stitch a plain seam on the right side of the material 1/4" from the edge. Press the seam open. Turn the material to the wrong side, creasing sharply along the seam line. Then stitch 3/8" from fold.

\* Use on lightweight or transparent fabrics, as in sheer blouses, dresses, or lingerie.

**FLAT-FELLED SEAM**

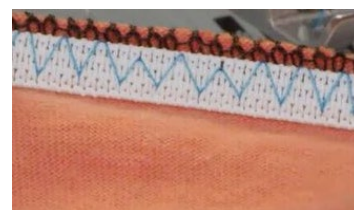
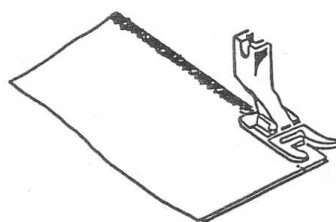
Stitch along the seam allowance on the right side of the material. Trim one edge to 3/8" from the seam. Lay the other seam allowance over the seam. Then turn under the other raw edge and top stitch it flat to the material. The finish seam should not measure more than 5/16" between the two rows of stitching.

\* Use when you want a strong seam and a tailored or finished look as in shirts, jeans, and P.J's.

**ELASTIC SEAM**

With the right sides of the fabric together using the special stitch (either stretch stitching or serging) join the fabrics together and finish the seam in one process.

\* Use on knitted or stretchable fabrics.

**HONG KONG SEAM**

Press seam open. Enclose each side of the seam with a light weight fabric cut on the bias or bias tape, so that no raw edges show.

\* Use on unlined jackets, coats, vests or other tailored garments.

