

Needle Types Reference Guide

The printable companion guide to support your sewing projects.

NON-STRETCH

LIGHTWEIGHT FABRICS

(e.g., silk, voile, lawn, lightweight cotton, microfiber)

Needle Type	Best Sizes	Usage
Universal	60/8 - 75/11	Most everyday sewing
Microtex (Sharp)	60/8 - 80/12	Very fine fabrics, silky or tightly woven cloth
Embroidery	75/11 - 80/12	Decorative threads, machine embroidery
Metallic	75/11 - 80/12	Metallic thread stitching

Pro Tip: If stitches look puckered, switch to Microtex

MEDIUM WEIGHT FABRICS

(e.g., cotton quilting, linen, poplin, chambray, medium canvas)

Needle Type	Best Sizes	Usage
Universal	80/12 - 90/14	Most everyday sewing
Microtex (Sharp)	80/12 - 90/14	Crisp seams and precise topstitching
Embroidery	80/12 - 90/14	Decorative stitching, machine embroidery
Quilting	75/11 - 90/14	Piecing & quilting layers
Topstitch	80/12 - 100/16	Heavy thread or visible stitching
Overcast	70/10 - 90/14	Seam finishing on woven fabrics
Double Eye	80/12 - 90/14	Decorative double-thread effects

Pro Tip: When unsure → Universal 80/12 is a safe starting point.

HEAVY WEIGHT FABRICS

(e.g., denim, canvas, upholstery, leather, coated fabrics)

Needle Type	Best Sizes	Usage
Microtex (Sharp)	90/14 - 110/18	Coated fabrics, vinyl, precision seams
Topstitch	90/14 - 100/16	Heavy or multiple threads
Denim / Jeans	90/14 - 120/19	Denim, heavy twill, thick seams
Leather	90/14 - 120/19	Leather & faux leather (cuts instead of piercing)
Hemstitch (Wing)	100/16 - 120/19	Decorative holes in linen & woven fabrics

Pro Tip: For thick layers, increase needle size before increasing tension.

STRETCH

LIGHTWEIGHT FABRICS

(e.g., t-shirt jersey, lightweight knits, bamboo knit, thin rib knit)

Needle Type	Best Sizes	Usage
Jersey (Ball Point)	70/10 - 80/12	Everyday t-shirt knits
Stretch	75/11	Very stretchy, elastic blends
Universal	60/8 - 75/11	Stable knits (less stretchy fabrics)

Pro Tip: If stitches skip on a t-shirt, switch from Universal to Stretch needle.

MEDIUM WEIGHT FABRICS

(e.g., cotton spandex, interlock, double knit, ponte)

Needle Type	Best Sizes	Usage
Jersey (Ball Point)	80/12 - 90/14	Most knit garments
Stretch	75/11 - 90/14	Spandex blends, athletic knits
Universal	80/12	Stable ponte or firm double knits

Pro Tip: If fabric tunnels or pops stitches, use Stretch 75/11 or 90/14.

HEAVY WEIGHT FABRICS

(e.g., thick ponte, sweatshirt fleece, sweater knits, scuba knit)

Needle Type	Best Sizes	Usage
Jersey (Ball Point)	90/14 - 100/16	Thick stable knits
Stretch	90/14 - 100/16	Thick elastic fabrics
Universal	90/14 - 110/18	Very stable heavy knits

Pro Tip: For sweatshirt fleece, 90/14 Jersey is a safe choice.