

This information is taken for the John James Needles site.

Which Needles?

Choosing the right sewing needle and size

As a guide always remember the general rule of the bigger the number the finer the sewing needle.

Traditional Craft

Depending on the type of craft or project you are working on will determine the type of needle you will require. Sometimes you may need to use the same needle type across a variety of sizes to complete your project or indeed you may require an array of different types of needle.

Tapestry/Cross Stitch



These needles have a large eye and a blunt round point designed for the use in needlepoint, petit point, countered cross stitch and plastic canvas work.

Size 13, 14 Suitable for children to use when stitching on Binca or 6hpi Aida fabric.

Size 16, 18, and 20 Suitable for tapestry

Size 22, 24, 26 and 28 Commonly used in cross stitch and petit point.

Embroidery/Crewel



Embroidery needles have a long eye which makes threading the needle so much easier when using multiple strands of thread. The most popular sizes used to embroider are size 7 and 9.

Because of their large eye these needles are suitable for general sewing. They are ideal for people who have difficulty seeing the eye of a needle.

Chenille



These needles have a large eye and a sharp point and are used in the art of crewel embroidery and ribbon embroidery. Sizes range from 13 to 26; the most popular sizes are 16 to 26. Size 13 and 14 are commonly used for heavy and coarse fabrics.

Quilting



These needles are very short and fine with a round eye. The shorter length allows the quilter to create quick and even stitching. Sizes range from 5 to 12, we recommend a beginner to use a size 7 or a size 8. Big Eye Quilting needles are designed with a big eye for the ease of threading. These needles are available in size 10.

Beading



Standard Beading needles are very fine and long, with long eyes and are available in sizes 10 to 15. These needles are suitable to use with beads, pearls and sequins and they are particularly useful in the art of threading and stringing pearls. Short Beading needles are ideal when attaching beads to fabric featuring additional embroidery.

Milliners/Straw



These needles are long with round eyes and are traditionally used in the art of hat making. They are also used for pleating and creating fancy stitching commonly known as smocking.

General Sewing

Sharps



These needles are the most popular needle for general sewing.

Size 2, 3 and 4	suitable for medium to heavy fabrics
Size 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10	suitable for light to medium fabrics
Size 11 and 12	suitable for fine fabrics or creating small delicate stitches

Machine

Machine needle sizes are always quoted in imperial and metric. Regular point machine needles are designed for domestic regular sewing machines and are used for basic stitching.

Size 9/70	Suitable for light fabrics, silk and taffeta
Size 11/80	Suitable for medium fabrics, cotton, linen and satin
Size 14/90	Suitable for medium to heavy fabrics, this is an ideal in between needle
Size 16/100	Suitable for heavy fabrics, denim, tweeds, curtain fabrics and soft furnishings

Ballpoint

These machine needles are ideal to use on jersey, stretch and synthetic fabrics

Superstitch

These needles create trouble free seaming and are the perfect complement to jersey and synthetic fabrics.

Jeans

These needles are designed for heavy duty stitching and are suitable for denim fabrics.

Twin Pointed

This needle forms parallel stitches.

Size 11 x 2mm	Suitable for fine to medium fabrics.
Size 14 x 4mm	Suitable for medium to heavy fabrics

Threaders

Needle Threaders

Use the standard needle threader for threading cotton/thread and the chunky threader when using chunky yarn.

Bodkins

Bodkins and Weaving needles are great for threading tapes and elastics.

Repair

Short Darners



These needles have long eyes, and are used for mending and darning using cotton or yarn.

Long Darners



In addition to being a darning needle these needles are useful to use during basting and layering fabrics together.

Yarn Darners

These are long needles with long eyes making them ideal for spanning large holes during mending, using cotton or yarn. Size 14/18 are useful needles to use when sewing pieces of knitting or crochet together.

Curved Repair

Curved needles are great for those difficult tasks: sewing fabric boxes together or repairing lampshades.

Leather Needles – Hand and Machine



These needles are available for hand stitching and machine stitching and are ideal when working with leather, suede and other tough materials.

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