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Fact Sheet 09

Thread Problem Troubleshooting

Problem	Causes	Solutions
Upper Thread Breaks	*Incorrect threading* *Knots or twists in thread* *Tension too tight* *Damaged/old needle* *Needle too small* *Thread catching on spool*	*Rethread machine properly* *Replace thread* *Reset bobbin and top thread tension* *Replace needle* *Use correct needle for thread and application* *Turn spool round or use a net*
Bobbin Thread Breaks	*Bobbin case incorrectly threaded* *Bobbin case incorrectly inserted* *Bobbin does not turn smoothly in bobbin case* *Lint in bobbin case*	*Remove bobbin and re-thread* *Remove and re-insert bobbin case* *Check that bobbin case and bobbin are in correctly* *Clean bobbin case and surrounding machine area*
Skipped Stitches	*Thread tension too tight* *Needle damaged* *Needle wrong size* *Sewing machine out of adjustment*	*Reset top and bobbin tension* *Replace needle* *Use correct needle size* *Have sewing machine professionally adjusted for timing*
Frayed Thread	*Needle too small* *Tension too tight* *Damaged thread*	*Increase needle size* *Reset tension* *Replace thread*
Thread Loops on Bottom	*Thread not in top tension* *Top machine threading incorrect* *Bobbin threaded incorrectly* *Top tension too loose* *Burr on hook mechanism*	*Rethread machine with presser foot "up"* *Rethread machine incorporating take up lever* *Rethread bobbin, checking it is not upside down* *Reset top tension* *Remove burr*
Irregular Stitches or Malformed Stitches	*Wrong needle size* *Incorrect threading* *Upper tension too loose* *Operator pulling fabric* *Bobbin wound unevenly*	*Ensure correct needle for fabric & thread* *Un-thread machine and carefully rethread* *Reset lower and upper thread tension* *Check presser foot pressure* *Rewind bobbin*
Fabric Puckers	*Excessive stitch length* *Needle point is blunt* *Excessive thread tension* *Fabric is too soft or fine* *Thread displacement — too much thread in a small area* *Fabric not feeding*	*Decrease stitch length* *Change needle* *Check upper tension* *Use stabilizer* *Decrease field density; scale embroidery designs; increase stitch length* *Check presser foot, needle plate, feed dogs*

Important Points to Remember:

- Needles DO NOT last forever, they should be replaced approximately every 8/20 hours depending on the type of fabric and sewing technique being used
- Use the appropriate needle for the type of fabric being used
- Use the appropriate size of needle for your fabric
- Do not alter your bobbin tension. If you need a different bobbin tension for decorative techniques, use a dedicated bobbin case

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