

Roseana Auten

By: sewrose

<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/roseana-auten--3>



I learned to sew at a time when “zig zag sewing machines” still seemed to me like something special. I plugged away for many years on the family’s 1947 Kenmore, which only sewed a straight stitch. I thought not having a zig zag stitch precluded making clean finishes to my seams. So every garment I made had raw, unfinished seams inside. After all, who would see them besides me? Who would clean stray, unraveled threads out of the washing machine besides me? That’s one way of doing it. Another way is to take the extra time to finish the seams cleanly, which I think makes the garment wear and look better over the long run. If I’m making something from a sturdy woven fabric, most often I’ll finish the raw edges with a 3-thread overlock stitch on my serger. But many emerging sewists don’t yet have the budget to add a serger to their stock of sewing tools. One way to finish a seam when you don’t have a serger: Turn the raw edges down and stitch them with a straight stitch. Here’s how:.

Step 1 — Join the Seam



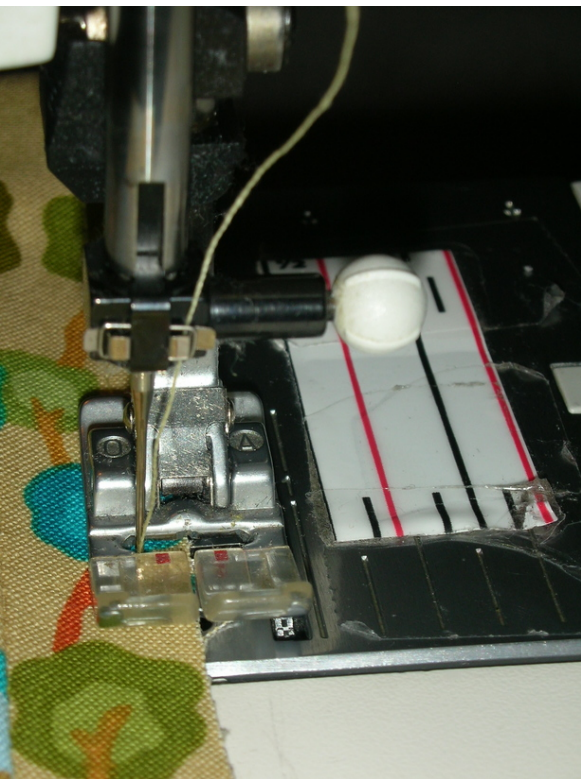
After you stitch your seam, press the seam flat to “meld” the stitches into the fabric.

Step 2 — Press the Seam Open



Then press the seam open.

Step 3 — Sew a Guide Line of Stitches 1/8" From Raw Edge Using Fusible Thread in the Bobbin



Next, sew a "guide line" of stitches 1/8" from the raw edge. Most often, I use fusible thread in the bobbin when I'm doing this. (Fusible thread is a little thicker than normal sewing thread, so you may need to loosen your bobbin tension. Practice on a scrap first before you dive into your garment and make sure your tensions are correct.) To make sewing this teeny, tiny edge much easier, change your needle position from center needle sewing to as far left as your machine will move it. This prevents your feed dogs from "chewing" that raw edge and pulling the fabric down into the bobbin shuttle. Oh, and set your stitch length a little longer than normal, at 3.5 or 4.0.

Step 4 — Press the Raw Edge Under



Press the raw edge under, along the line of stitches you made. Guess what? The fusible thread melts under the heat of your iron and sticks that tiny little edge down and makes it behave! Once the fabric has cooled off, pull the top thread out. It will come out pretty easily, because there's no more bobbin thread (it melted, remember?) and your stitches are fairly long. _If you're making something that needs to be very sturdy and won't be washed, such as a tote bag, you can leave that top thread right there. It won't hurt anything. But on garments, I find that too many threads in the edges weigh the seam down. So I remove my top thread from my guide line once I've pressed the raw edge down._

Step 5 — Sew the Edge Down



After reloading your bobbin case with regular sewing thread and readjusting your bobbin tension (if you changed it), make a row of stitching along your turned-down edge.

Step 6 — You're Done!



You now have a clean finish to your seam. You'll probably find you like this technique best when you have two or four seams in a garment, and your fabric is a firm woven. Try it sometime soon!
Notions: <http://www.redrockthreads.com/misc-thread/fusible-thread.asp>

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