

# Hold those thread tails!

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<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/hold-those-thread-tails>

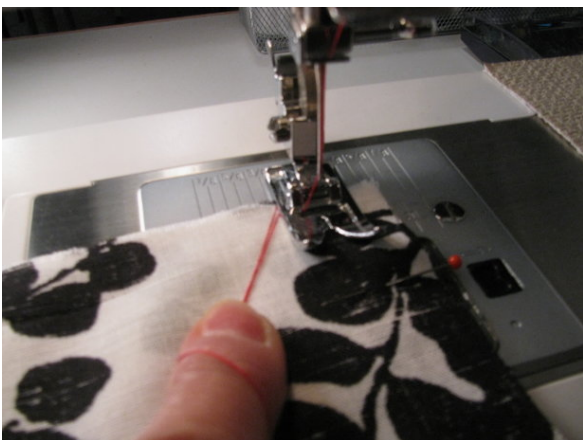
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How many times have you started to sew a seam and before you barely get going the machine locks up? Or, when you look at the underside of a locked seam there is a jumbled mess of threads knotted up at the beginning of the seam? Why does this happen?

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## Step 1 — Thread tail length



Hold those thread tails!

It is important you always have at least a 5 inch tail of both the top spool and bobbin thread. The reason is that when you begin to sew and as the machine needle raises up it pulls the thread tails into the mechanism of the machine under the feed dogs. If you have too short a tail, the threads get sucked under and caught into the mechanisms which cause the machine to lock up. So, the longer the tails the better.

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## Step 2 — Hold the thread tail



Hold the thread tails as you begin to sew. This is all part of the rhythm of sewing. This is something almost no manual will tell you. Its one of those step you will unconsciously perform as part of the sequence of stitching on your machine and something you should do every time you sew. As you begin to sew in reverse to lock your seams, grab a good hold of the tails to prevent the threads from being pulled down into the machine. I like to twist the threads around my index finger, but gently pressing down the tails will work as well. Hold the tails throughout the reverse stitching. Once you have completed the reverse stitching, you can release the tails. In addition to preventing the threads from being pulled into the machine it also prevents those ugly knots that sometimes appear on the underside at the beginning of the seam.

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## Step 3 — No knots



Not all machines are alike and this issue may not be one for your machine. But as a sewing instructor I have seen this happen on both inexpensive and very expensive machines. Once you get in the practice of doing this as part of the sequence of sewing, as I do every time I sew, it becomes an unconscious step.

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