

A Sewing Machine Technician's Check List

It's been over a year since your last sewing machine service. Your machine is starting to sound a bit louder than when it was new, the stitches are not as even and lint keeps popping out of places that you thought you had cleaned. It's time to have your machine professionally serviced. Our store is lucky enough to staff one full time authorized service technician and two for your Vacuum cleaner to, that can keep up on all the incoming repairs within 1-5 days. And their talents are something to behold. They are capable to cleaning ALL brands of sewing machines, embroidery machines and sergers including SINGER!

So what exactly do they do when you drop off your machine? Below is a check list of every part of the machine that they check.

- First, they place the machine on an anti-static mat and attach themselves to the mat with an anti- static wrist strap. This prevents any electrostatic discharge by safely grounding themselves while working on any electronic sewing machines.
- Pull off all covers to get to all major components.
- Remove all lint, dust, and old oil.
- Remove any thread wrapped around the hand wheel and take up lever.
- Check top tension disks and remove lint build up from low quality threads.
- Check timing belt/motor belt for belt tightness. Look for any excess wear spots.
- For older machines: check motor brushes and make sure the motor is turning freely.
- Check all shafts for any play or wobble.
- Check wear in all barrings.
- Check the mechanism that drives the feed dogs for any play.
- Check all gears that drive the machine.
- Check the mechanism that drives the hook in the bobbin case area.
- Check for any excess play between the hook and the hook driver.
- Tighten any gears that are getting loose or wobbly.
- Check bobbin winder.
- Check feed dog height. A slight change in height can effect the way fabric is pulled through the machine.
- Check feed dog alignment checking to make sure the feed dogs are straight and not rubbing on the stitch plate.
- Oil every moving part of the machine.
- Check that the needle is centering in the needle plate both from side to side and from front to back. The slightest bit off in any of the four directions can cause extra needle breakage when sewing extra wide stitches or heavy fabrics.
- Check needle and hook timing.
- Check that the presser foot sits straight on the feed dogs and is at the proper height.
- Time the feed dog movement to the machine needle.
- Calibrate bobbin case tension.
- Check and clean bobbin case of any excess build up of lint.
- Check foot control's electronic contacts, cord, cord end and look for any cuts in the cord. **Test Sew Out** Once all areas of the machine has been completely checked, oiled and adjusted. It's time to see how it sews. The technicians are looking for a smooth running sound, balanced tension, even needle swing, centered needle position, proper feed dog movement/balance of stitches that stitch forward and reverse. They also test sew at full sewing speed. If even the smallest area is off, it will be magnified when sewing at full speed. They use a high quality polyester thread and also insert a new Universal size 80/12 needle. **Sergers:** Sergers receive extra care as the technicians check looper timing both for the upper and lower loopers, feed dogs, cutting knife and needles. Sergers must have precision clearance or else it will not work! **Embroidery Machines:** Embroidery units require special checking of all sensors, belt tension and arm movement. They are cleaned of any lint and oiled. When sewing out an embroidery test pattern, they look for precise alignment of outlines and proper tension.

Walking Feet:

Walking feet can be cleaned and oiled for smooth quiet motion. Bring the walking foot along to have it checked through!

What to bring with a machine for service?

Machine, foot control, power cord, standard zig-zag presser foot (not a 1/4 inch foot), a standard zig-zag throat plate (not a straight stitch throat plate), bobbin case and correct bobbin. If bringing an embroidery machine, also include an

embroidery hoop and the embroidery foot.

A yearly service will prevent any heavily worn areas to be caught before they cause worse problems down the road. For example, if a shaft or barring is not properly aligned, the excess wear will eventually cause other areas of the machine to be prematurely worn out. Most machines do not need major replacement of parts when preventative maintenance is scheduled. Just like our bodies, teeth and car receive yearly check-ups, make sure your sewing machine receives equal treatment.

Can't live without your machine for more than a day? Call and schedule a Same Day service or plan to leave your machine next time you are going out of town.

Thanks Sara from Heirloom Creations: