

## CLOTHING

### 4-H PERSONAL APPEARANCE GUIDELINES

Following are suggestions and helpful hints for the clothing project. They are not hard and fast rules, but rather some guidelines that leaders may want to use and are encouraged to. The Simplicity Sewing Book is a good resource book and is a recommended guide for leaders.

Each 4-H'er who signs up for a clothing project should be given a copy of these guidelines to share with his/her parents. This would be helpful when it comes time to choose an appropriate pattern and material. The ideas listed are just suggested techniques and learning experiences that could be learned at the various stages. It doesn't mean that the 4-H'er has to learn all of the techniques during that time period. It depends on the individual and how much they can handle. Each 4-H'er should have a new learning experience with each project. It is vitally important not to let the 4-H'er get overwhelmed with his/her project.

The Personal Appearance Committee feels that sewing skills, techniques or methods should be taught and advanced from year to year, and the guidelines are written with this objective. There is a lot of flexibility in the guidelines, with the primary objective being that the 4-H'er learns some basic methods so he/she can build on those methods while in 4-H or later on.

At our style revue and fair, the sewer enters according to his/her age. (First Year - 9 years old; Young - 10-11 years, Junior, 12-14 years; Senior, 15-19 years.) From the tags or during the judging, the judges will receive information on the age of the 4-H'er and number of years in the project. It should be assumed the project or 4-H'er will be considered on this individual basis. The new 4-H'er who has no clothing construction experience will need to start at the beginning level and learn the basics so he/she can build on those basic sewing skills and advance from project to project. Perhaps the older 4-H'er who has good coordination could combine more than one year into his/her project, or complete two stages in one year. This should be a determination to be made between the 4-H'er, leader and parent.

Each 4-H'er may want to create a loose leaf sewing reference workbook from all the sewing skills learned. Samples demonstrating techniques learned could make up the workbook. This is a learning tool, not to be judged at style revue or the fair, though it could be displayed. Following are some techniques that might be included in this workbook. First Year - pattern selection and layout, seam finishes, fasteners, etc.; Young Sewers - machine seam, gathers, hem finishes, etc.; Junior Sewers - zipper, top stitching, pockets, buttonholes, etc.; Senior Sewers - bound buttonholes, seam finishes, etc..

Members may also choose to sew non-wearable items such as stuffed animals, appliance covers, doll clothes, etc. These items cannot be evaluated at style revue, but can be evaluated and exhibited at the fair in a separate class in the doll or other arts, crafts and hobbies divisions.

## **GENERAL SUGGESTIONS**

- \* Girls and guys in the sewing project must have a new learning experience each year (techniques, fabrics, tools and equipment, etc.)
- \* Important to keep in mind when choosing a project: do not let the 4-H'er pick something that will overwhelm and eventually discourage them. Truly lasting and enjoyable skills are most often learned gradually.
- \*The project should have the leader's approval on both the pattern and the material. The 4-H'er should be encouraged to choose something he/she will like and can enjoy constructing.
- \* Use color, line and design to compliment member's figure type or body build.
- \*Correct pressing techniques and **PRESS AS YOU SEW** are probably the most important part of having a really nice looking outfit when completed.
- \* Be sure seams are finished properly - zigzag, pink or straight stitch.
- \* Increase knowledge of the sewing machine each year - both use and care.
- \*Member evaluation with the leader at the end of project is helpful to both member and leader.

## **LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

### **First Year (9 years old)**

- \*Use Simple to Sew patterns for garments - no zippers, darts, set-in sleeves, buttonholes, collars, or ruffles.
- \* Learn how to read the pattern book and select appropriate patterns.
- \* Learn how to select material appropriate for garment and ability.
- \* Learn simple use of machine - threading, winding bobbin, stitching.
- \* Learn care and use of basic sewing tools, shears, pins, etc.
- \* Learn correct way to sew on fastenings, if needed - snaps, hooks, etc.
- \* Learn to lay out pattern, cut out pattern, and follow pattern instructions.
- \* Learn simple seam finish.
- \* Learn to **PRESS AS YOU SEW!**
- \* Stress simplicity! Must know basics before moving to other projects.

Suggested Fabrics: Select a plain weave fabric. Cotton or cotton blends are easiest to sew on. Plain or napped material and single knits are very difficult and may cause frustration.

### **Suggested garments for beginners:**

skirt (draw-string elastic waistband)  
vest  
slacks  
shorts  
jumpers  
Or a combination of the above.

### **Second Year (10-11 years old):**

- \* Remember to pick a new learning experience.
- \* Choice of fabric and pattern is up to the individual 4-H'er with suggestions by the leader.
- \* It is still wise to stress simple projects.
- \* Learn stay-stitching, darts and facing techniques. Also zippers, pockets, sleeves, collars, or buttonholes can be new learning experiences.
- \* PRESS AS YOU SEW!

Suggested fabrics: Cottons, cotton blends, and some knits are easiest to sew on. Plaid or napped materials are still very difficult and may cause frustration.

Suggested garments:

Simple dress	Skirt	
Pants	Vest	Shorts
T-shirt	Simple shirt or blouse	Night gown & robe

Or a combination of the above.

**Third and Fourth Year (12-14 years old):**

- \* Remember to pick a new learning experience.
- \* Choice of fabric and pattern is up to the individual 4-H'er, with suggestions by the leader.

Suggested techniques to be learned:

1. darts
2. waistband & cuffs
3. pockets
4. facings, different varieties of interfacings, & understitching
5. gathering and easing
6. collars
7. zippers
8. raglan & set in sleeves
9. use of simple trim
10. top stitching
11. buttonholes
12. pleats
13. tacking
14. belts
15. seam tape, plain, stretch, etc.
16. catch-stitch hem
17. seam finished (french, flat-felled)

- \* Remember to use color, line and design to compliment figure type or body build.
- \* Select a harder to handle fabric (blends, corduroy or other napped fabrics, velvet is not encouraged)
- \* Learn the characteristics of several different types of fabrics (visit a fabric shop).
- \* Learn fabric selection coordination - color and types to go with present wardrobe.
- \* Learn about fabric use and care.
- \* Learn to fit your pattern and simple alterations if needed on pattern.

Suggested fabrics: Almost any fabric. Formal materials such as satin, crepes, and velvet are not recommended and may cause frustration.

Suggested garments:

Almost any garment or combination of garments such as:

Recycled garment (with before and after pictures)

Jumper	Blouse	Dress
Jacket	Slacks, suit	Bathing suit
Robe	Shorts suit	Painter pants

Nightgown

Jacket and skirt

**Fifth Year and up (15-19 years old):**

- \* BE SURE TO PICK A NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCE EACH YEAR.
- \*Don't be afraid to try new! If you run into something you really can't figure out there is always someone who can and will help you.
- \* Continue to learn about fabric use and care.
- \* Try new fabrics and different techniques each year.
- \* Compare costs of ready-made articles and articles you can make for yourself.
- \*Learn new techniques - hems, buttonholes, bound buttonholes, fastenings, trims, tailoring, original creation, etc.
- \* Learn to use more machine attachments.
- \* **PRESS AS YOU GO!**

Suggested fabrics and garments:

Choose fabrics and garments according to your needs and abilities. Check your closet to see what you need. There are also classes for recycled garments.