

## Series 900 - 1960's Elastic Thread De-Mystified with Londa Rohlving

Many variables affect success with Elastic Thread - whether in the bobbin of the sewing machine or in a chain looper on a serger/cover hem machine. These include the following:

- Diameter of the thread: fatter will 'pull up' more than thinner
- Winding Technique: Londa recommends winding directly from one's lap to the bobbin winder mechanism itself (no tension) on the machine, with thread guided between thumb and forefinger close to the bobbin. Use SLOW speed to control. Hand winding is not consistent.
- Bobbin orientation of the machine. For vertical systems use an additional bobbin case on which the screw can be manipulated.
- Stitch length: longer stitch lengths will pull up more.
- Decorative Stitch foot allows for more pull up than regular, flat-bottomed foot.
- Steaming: hovering a steam iron over the elastic will draw it up.
- Use of the chain stitch on a cover hem machine or serger will pull up more than on the sewing machine and is somewhat more 'utilitarian'. IN general, Londa found the following adjustments as tension builds on the looper the longer distance stitched..... Experimentation is necessary.
  - Chain Looper needs to be loosened about 3 notches more than chain stitch recommendation.
  - Needle tension should be loosened by 1 notch from chain stitch recommendation.



Securing the rows is NECESSARY - tying threads on serging, and securely crossing threads on a sewing machine.

At the machine, great creative possibilities exist when 'seeing' elastic thread as a way to create interesting texture.

To determine how much fabric is needed, depending on the settings decided upon for pulling up the fabric as determined in testing:

1. TEST a 20" strip to refine technique and to determine the ratio of 'pull-up'.
2. Set up a proportion as follows and solve for X

$$L2S : L2E = X : LD$$

Length **to** Start (L2S) is to the Length **to** End (L2E) as HOW much length do I start with (X) is to what Length is **Desired** (LD) when gathered (which will still stretch) - for example...circumference of a wrist, or a waist or midriff.

**For Example:**

In a test sample, 20" fabric gathers up to 14" so that is 20:14 (L2S: L2E)  
X is how much length of fabric I then need to start with (this is what you are solving for)  
if I want it to end up gathered to 10"

$$\begin{aligned} 20": 14" &= X : 10" \\ 14X &= 200 \\ X &= 14.28 \end{aligned}$$

The Chambray Peasant Top features a raw edge bias at the neckline edge. To achieve this edge, stitch and finish raglan sleeve seams first, then...

1. Cut a 2" bias the length as needed for the neckline.
2. On the wrong side of the bias, mark a placement line 1" from the raw edge.
3. Lay the wrong side of the upper neck edge along this marked line (see Photo A) Stitch 1/4" from the upper neckline edge. ]



**Photo A**



**Photo B**

4. At the center front, through BIAS only (fuse a square of interfacing on the wrong side), work a 1/2" buttonhole.
5. Flip uppermost bias edge downward, into position and stitch close to the raw edge (see Photo B). Finger 'rough up' the bias edges.
6. Create a long turned tube (or use a ribbon) to guide through the 'casing' created to gather up the neckline edge and tie into a bow at the front buttonhole.