

## KWIK SEW® Swimwear Tip

Featured in the Feb. 2009 Issue of ASG Notions

Some feel that sewing swimwear can be intimidating but with a few simple tips, making your own swimwear is much easier and faster than you can imagine.

High quality swimwear fabrics have excellent shape retention and resist chlorine and salt water. There are a variety of these fabrics available and most have the greatest degree of stretch on the lengthwise grain, but some have the greatest degree of stretch on the crosswise grain. It is important when cutting out the pattern pieces to pay close attention to the stretch and place the pieces with the greatest degree of stretch going around the body.

When sewing swimwear, it is important to use a stretch stitch.

On a standard sewing machine, Sew the seam with an overlock stitch (sews and overcasts in one step). (A) Or, sew the seams with a narrow zigzag width and a medium stitch length and overcast seam allowances together, using a wide zigzag stitch or a three-step zigzag stitch. (B,C)

Hold the fabric taut in front and back of the presser foot while sewing. Or, a serger (overlock) works well.

On swimwear, the outer edges are finished with elastic. Choose elastic specifically designed for swimwear, this is very important. Swimwear elastic has been treated to resist the effects of salt water and chlorine and will not lose its elasticity when wet. Kwik Sew recommends using 3/8" (1 cm) wide swimwear elastic to finish all outer edges, such as neckline, leg and armhole openings.

To finish edges with elastic, place edge of elastic even with the raw edge of fabric. Stitch in the center of elastic, using a wide zigzag width and a medium stitch length or a three-step zigzag stitch. (D, E) Or, stitch over the edge using a serger (overlock) machine. (F)

Fold under elastic to form hem. Stitch over inner edge of elastic, using a medium zigzag stitch. Or, topstitch using a double needle. (G, H)

When applying elastic to leg openings, pin elastic to front leg opening without stretching and stretch elastic on the back to fit. (I)

