# How to Choose a Sewing Machine

## For Kids & Beginners

# **“Sewing Made Easy”**

Part 1) How to Choose a Sewing Machine

**Hello, I'm Katrina Marie!**

I began sewing when I was a kid, and I have never stopped. When I was just five years old, I began sketching and creating paper dolls. At 10, I created my first line of doll clothing and marketed it at a local craft show on a small table next to my parents. As a teenager, I made clothes for myself and for my friends.

By the time I was 19, I had worked for pay in an alteration shop, a costume shop, a theater, and a dance wear studio. So, I decided I was ready to start my own fashion business. For the next 10 years, I designed and made thousands of dresses, and enjoyed traveling to juried art festivals, renaissance fairs, and trade shows around the United States to sell my designs.

So, as you can see my mother teaching me to sew at a young age served me very well. My wish is that your children will reap the same rewards as I have with sewing. I hope this guide helps!

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Children need creative outlets. They need to be able to run and jump, explore and play. They need to imagine and dream. The fantasies of children can take them farther than you would expect. When you introduce your children to the wonderful world of sewing, these wild dreams of theirs find an outlet. Suddenly, what they imagine in their heads can become a reality. Learning to sew makes them artists, it gives them a way to express creativity. This guide is part of a three part series that is designed to help you encourage your children to express their creativity through sewing. In this first piece to the series, I will help you choose just the right sewing machine for your children. With this first step taken care of, they will be ready to enter into the wonderful, creative world that is the art of sewing! So, let's start creating!

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## A Little History

Ever wonder why you had to take a history class? Did you ever find yourself listening to a lecture on the Civil War and wonder why you were there? A lot of times this is our reaction to history lessons. We want to know why they matter. So, before I tell you a bit of history regarding sewing machines, let me tell you why. The world of sewing has been around for ages. People have been sewing longer than any of us have been alive, and because of this, this great art has a rich history. The past of sewing is filled with stories of real people, real parents and grandparents like you seeking to teach their children the art of sewing. When I look back at the history of sewing, it is not to bore myself or memorize facts. When I look back at fashion designers that came before me, I feel inspired to become a part of the sewing legacy they have begun. There is something nostalgic about following in their footsteps. I think this is a great, exciting part of the art of sewing!

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This is one of the reasons I work on a vintage 1950s Pink Singer featherweight. In my **Kids Sewing DVDs**, you'll see that I am using this small, pink, sewing machine. Though they normally come in black, I custom ordered mine to make my sewing experience all the more personal! Singer started making sewing machines in 1851, and is a well reputed brand in the sewing world. For these reasons, you know the machine is made well! Though these machines can be pricey, running anywhere from $600 to $1800 (**from DeskDave**), they are well worth the investment as they are sturdy and work very well. Do not be discouraged if this machine is outside your price range, you can always save up for one...like I did.

1950's Pink Vintage Singer Featherweight
(This is my custom painted machine)

Also, there are plenty of well made machines on the market today for your children including new and used. The vintage models simply bring a piece of fashion design history into your sewing room, transporting you to a different time and place.

1950's Turquoise Vintage Wizard made by Brother

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For many of us, the history of sewing is deeply personal. Our mothers taught us to sew the way their mothers taught them. If this is you, you may wonder if your children can use Great Grandma's sewing machine.

1950's Black Vintage Singer 99K- Straight Stitch
(I have 4 of these for teaching beginning sewing classes)

They most certainly can! There are simply a few things you would want to do before they begin sewing on it. It is important that you discover the make and model of the machine so that you can research the manual and discover how to work it properly. Once you have read the manual and set it up, you can test it to make sure it is running and fully functioning. This is where you may run into problems. Some vintage sewing machines will need repairs, especially if they have not been used or taken care of. This can be discovered by having a sewing machine mechanic look at it. This can be costly, however, once you get it back to working order, it will serve your children very well and will last through many more generations! Whatever the machine, whether vintage or new, it is encouraging and inspiring to remember that we are entering into a legacy of creativity. As your children learn to sew, they begin to add their own creative touches to the history of this great art!

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## Choosing a Sewing Machine Today

Walking into the sewing machine aisle at a craft store can be very overwhelming. One might wonder where to even begin. With several different brands and makes to choose from, people often do not know where to start. In order to choose the best sewing machine for your children, you must first decide what level sewers they are, as well as, what your budget may be.

Janome Derby 3/4 Machine - 10 Stitch
This machine comes in 6 colors Purple (as shown), Fuchsia, Orange, Pink, Blue, and Teal

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For beginner sewers, which will be most children who have not had years of experience sitting behind a sewing machine, I recommend a basic machine that is not computerized. Often the computerized machines come with far too many extra buttons and settings that are not necessary for the beginner, and even most advanced sewers. For a child sewer, those will simply become a distraction and possibly even a frustration. If you stick with a machine that has around eleven stitch settings, you'll be in really good shape. Now, while most children will be beginners, their age will also play a role in determining what machine to choose. Children ages 5-8 do really well on the 3/4 machines such as the **Janome Sew Mini** or the **Janome Derby** which comes in 6 really fun colors, perfect for kids. These models both sell for around $69. Once they're a little older, around 9-12, you can promote them to a full size machine like the **Brother XL2610** or a **Singer 3232**. These machines receive high ratings and can be found online for around $99 on Amazon. As long as you do your research and check reviews you can find a great machine online and usually save money on free shipping.

Janome Sew Mini 3/4 Machine - 2 Stitch
(My son got this machine when he turned 6)

Brother XL2610 - 25 Stitch

Singer Simple 3232 - 32 Stitch

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## Buying a Used Sewing Machine

1960's Mint Vintage Singer - Straight Stitch

Another way to save money when looking to buy a sewing machine for your children is to buy a used machine. Some parents are wary of this method, thinking it could lead to more issues regarding machine maintenance in the future. However, this is not always the case. Sewing can be expensive when starting up as you need a machine, fabric, needles, thread and other things. However, there are many ways you can bring the cost down, and buying a used machine can be one of them. Sometimes you can find a working machine for as little as $25, but if they are vintage then they usually start around $150 which is more than new. So you'll need to be a smart shopper.

1972 Yellow Vintage Brother Galaxie 221

Though eBay and Craigslist will give you a lot of cheap options, it is important that you make sure that all of the pieces, including the pedal, bobbin, and needle are there. The safest way to buy a used machine is to do so in person either at a garage sale or a second hand store. This way you can plug the machine in and ensure that it is working properly. A lot of good machines were made between 1960 - 1985 so these are usually the safest to choose from, but you may find a newer one from 1990 to present that has hardly been used that will work too. Just try it before you buy it!

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Once you find just the right machine for your kids, get them started right away. Do not leave the machine in the box to collect dust. Pull it out. Let their little creative imaginings flow out through the sewing machine. Though learning to sew takes time and patience, the more you work at it the better it will get. Simply stay optimistic and have fun creating with your kids. With the right machine, the right tools, and the right projects they will be having a blast in no time!

**Now it's your turn!**

I would love to know which sewing machine you choose for your kids to learn how to sew on!

Please share photos with the hashtag **#SewingMadeEasy** on your favorite social media and be sure to follow us at [http://facebook.com/kidssewing](http://facebook.com/kidssewing)

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**Meet Star Student, Adelyn!**

This is my 6-year-old star student, Adelyn Rae. You can watch us sew together in my **Pixie Projects Series**.

In these videos Adelyn makes 8 projects including a Neck Roll, Sewing Bag, Back Pack, Summer Dress, Chalk Board, Tooth Pouch, Sweet Skirt and her very own Pixie Doll with ruffled skirt. We had so much fun sewing together, just like I hope you do with your kids. I'm sure you will enjoy watching these bonus features. Kids love to watch other kids sewing and being creative!

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## Want to Begin a Sewing Journey Together?

In 2009, I started teaching **Kids Sewing Classes** which grew out of my love for sewing and my desire to share and teach children this incredibly valuable art. As both a mother and sewing teacher, it is such a wonderful feeling to share the experience of discovery with a child, watching as something comes to life in their hands, and seeing their faces light up when they finish a project.

Kids Sewing is one of the avenues for me to pass these memorable experiences on to other parents, children, and teachers. I want to be able to share my love of sewing with not only my own children, but with moms and their children anywhere in the world, now with my videos, I can!

I'm so happy to be on my new found sewing teacher journey! I'm sure you and your kids will enjoy sewing, and I hope to inspire you to have fun sewing and creating together.

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## NOW AVAILABLE...

## Online Classes and Sewing DVDs!

## Get Started Today at KidsSewingDVDs.com

Make these 7 beginning projects, plus 38 more with our **Kids Sewing Online Classes and DVDs**. Learn step-by-step in real time how to make all these kid-friendly projects from start to finish. Our videos make sewing easy! Your kids will enjoy making these projects almost completely on their own. In fact, this instruction is perfect for beginners of any age. Even if you don't know how to sew, you and your kids can learn together.

Start sewing today and create memories that will last a lifetime!

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**Next Up...**

Part 2) Getting Setup
to Start Sewing

# SEWING MADE EASY

www.KidsSewingDvds.com