





Sewing Machines: Then and Now

Before Sewing Machines

Long ago, people made clothes **by hand** using a needle and thread. It took a **very long time**—sometimes hours or even days—to finish one piece of clothing!

What Is a Treadle Sewing Machine?





A **treadle sewing machine** is a sewing machine powered by your **feet** instead of electricity.

-  You push a **foot pedal (treadle)**
-  The **big wheel spins**
-  A **belt moves the machine**
-  The **needle stitches the fabric**

 **Your legs power the machine!**

Why Were Sewing Machines Important?

Sewing machines helped people:

-  Sew **faster**
 -  Work **without electricity**
 -  Make and repair clothes at home
 -  Do work more easily and quickly
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Look Closely!

When you see a sewing machine, can you find:

- The **foot pedal**
 - The **large wheel**
 - The **belt**
 - The **needle**
 - The **wooden cabinet**
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Did You Know?

When sewing machines were first invented, some people were worried they might lose their jobs because machines could sew so fast!

Try This!

Circle or talk about your answers:

1. What powers a treadle sewing machine?
 Electricity Your feet Batteries
 2. What part moves up and down to make stitches?
 Wheel Needle Belt
 3. Would you rather sew by hand or use a machine? Why?
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Think About It

How is a sewing machine different from the machines we use today?