

Sewing Instructions for AMC Performance Fabrics

Getting the best results from AMC performance textiles starts with proper sewing technique. Whether you're constructing boxed cushions, installing welt, or setting up a zipper closure, the right thread, needle, and seam type make the difference between a durable finished product and one that fails prematurely. Below, we've outlined our recommended thread and needle guidelines, common upholstery seam types, and a step-by-step sewing sequence to help your team get consistent, professional results with our fabrics.

Basic Upholstery Sewing Instructions

1. Choose the Correct Thread

1. Bonded polyester is the industry standard for most upholstered furniture because it offers excellent UV resistance and strength.
2. Bonded nylon is very strong but is better suited for indoor applications.
3. Common thread sizes:
 1. Tex 70 – Light upholstery
 2. Tex 90 – Standard furniture upholstery
 3. Tex 135 – Heavy-duty commercial seating

2. Use the Proper Needle

Needle size should match both the fabric and thread. For vinyl and coated fabrics, leather-point needles often produce cleaner stitches.

Thread Size	Needle Size
Tex 135	#22-24
Tex 90	#20-22
Tex 70	#18-20

3. Common Upholstery Seams

Plain Seam

The most basic seam. Used where the seam will not receive heavy stress.

1. Place right sides together
2. Sew a ½-inch seam allowance
3. Open the seam

Topstitched Seam

Adds strength and a finished appearance. Very common on cushions.

1. Sew the plain seam
2. Fold seam allowances to one side
3. Sew through all layers approximately 1/8–1/4 inch from the seam

French Seam

One of the most attractive seams for upholstered furniture.

1. Sew the panels together
2. Open the seam
3. Fold allowances apart
4. Sew two parallel rows of stitching

Frequently used on:

1. Hospitality seating
2. Marine upholstery
3. High-end residential furniture

Welt (Piping)

Adds definition and protects edges. Use a welt foot for best results.

1. Wrap fabric around welt cord
2. Stitch close to the cord
3. Sew the welt between two fabric panels

Boxing Cushions

A boxed cushion consists of:

1. Top panel
2. Bottom panel
3. Boxing strip
4. Welt (optional)

Steps:

1. Sew welt to the top panel
2. Sew boxing to the top
3. Install zipper in the boxing
4. Sew the bottom panel
5. Turn right side out
6. Insert foam

4. Installing a Zipper

For reversible cushions:

1. Use upholstery zipper (typically #5 or #10 nylon coil)
2. Install in the boxing rather than the cushion face
3. Leave 1–2 inches unsewn at each end
4. Always open the zipper before sewing the final seam so the cover can be turned right side out

5. Stitch Length

Typical upholstery stitch lengths:

1. 6–8 SPI for woven upholstery fabrics
2. Decorative topstitching: 5–6 SPI

Avoid extremely short stitches in vinyl, as they can perforate the material.

6. Fabric Alignment

Always:

1. Match fabric grain
2. Match pattern repeats
3. Center stripes or plaids
4. Mark centers before sewing

Poor alignment is one of the first things customers notice.

7. Cutting Tips

1. Use a rotary cutter whenever possible
2. Cut with the fabric face down
3. Label each panel
4. Mark centers with small notches or chalk

8. Sewing Sequence

A common workflow is:

1. Cut all panels
2. Mark centers
3. Sew welt
4. Attach welt to top panel
5. Sew boxing to top
6. Install zipper
7. Sew bottom panel
8. Turn cover
9. Steam lightly
10. Insert foam

9. Machine Settings

A walking-foot industrial sewing machine is preferred because it feeds multiple layers evenly.

Typical settings:

1. Thread tension balanced so stitches lock in the middle of the material
2. Presser foot pressure just enough to prevent slipping
3. Medium stitch speed for better control

10. Quality Checklist

Before completing the piece, check that:

1. Seams are straight
2. Stitch length is consistent
3. No skipped stitches
4. Welt is even around corners
5. Pattern matches across seams
6. Zipper operates smoothly
7. Cushion corners are full and square
8. No puckering or wrinkles

Need more detail on a specific application?
Contact us – we're here to help.