

Sewing Machine Practice Workbook

Progressive exercises to learn straight stitch and zigzag.



How to Use the Practice Sheets

These sheets are designed to help you learn how to guide your sewing machine before working with fabric.

The goal is not to create a finished project, but to understand the movement, speed, and consistency of the stitch.

Print the sheet in A4 format. Sit comfortably in front of your machine as you normally would.

Use a standard needle in good condition.

Without Thread

Start with a first practice session without thread. Remove the upper thread and the bobbin. Set the straight stitch to 2.5 mm.

Place the sheet under the presser foot and simply sew along the printed lines. Keep your hands flat and let the machine feed the paper. Do not push it forward.

This exercise helps you understand how to guide the material and stabilize your speed.

This step is short. Ten minutes is enough to feel the motion.

With Thread

Print another A4 sheet and rethread your machine normally. Keep the stitch length set to 2.5 mm.

Sew along the lines again, this time adding backstitching at the beginning and end.

Turn the sheet over to observe the regularity of the stitches.

If the stitches look uneven or the paper tears, slow down slightly and check your tension.

Simulating a Hem

To simulate a hem, fold the sheet once at approximately 1 cm, then fold it a second time. Topstitch along the edge as you would on a pair of pants.

This allows you to practice maintaining a consistent distance without wasting fabric.

Paper will dull the needle slightly.

Once the exercises are complete, replace the needle before moving on to fabric.

On Fabric

If you prefer to practice directly on fabric, you can transfer the PDF lines by tracing them through the fabric.

Use a lightweight cotton in a light color. White, off-white, or pale pink work well. The fabric should be light, around 100 to 130 g/m².

A heavier fabric will not allow the lines to show through clearly.

Place the fabric over the printed sheet in good light. The lines should be visible through the fabric. Trace them using a fabric pencil or tailor's chalk, preferably with a fine tip.

Once the lines are traced, sew normally using a 2.5 mm straight stitch. Add backstitching at the beginning and end.

Observe the consistency of your stitches and your ability to stay precisely on the line.

This method adds an extra level of difficulty, since fabric moves more than paper.

It is most useful once you understand the basic guiding motion.

Continuous Liness

Sew on the lines to improve control

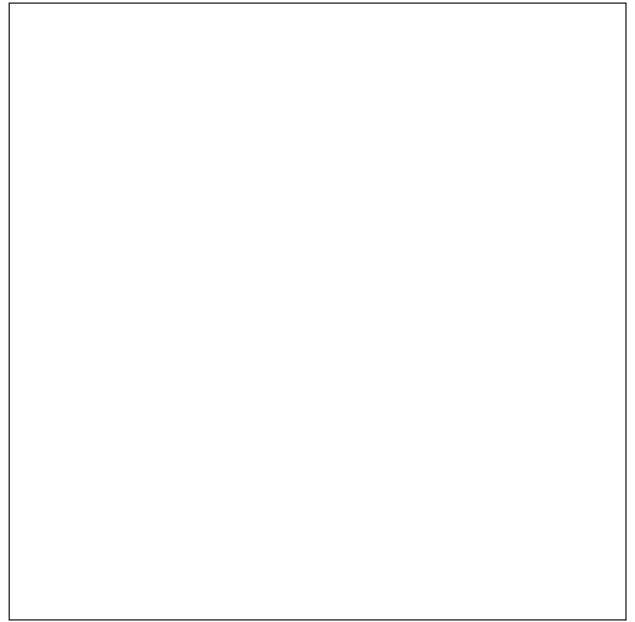
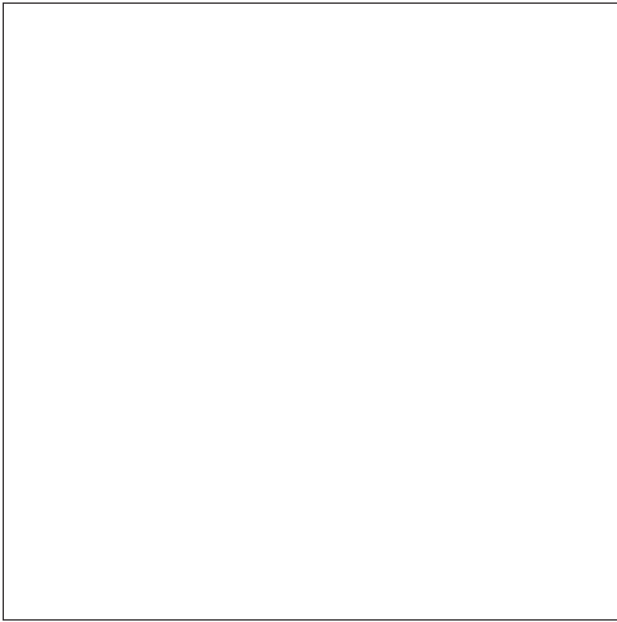


Evenly Spaced Lines

Sew between the lines, keeping a 1 cm distance between each line

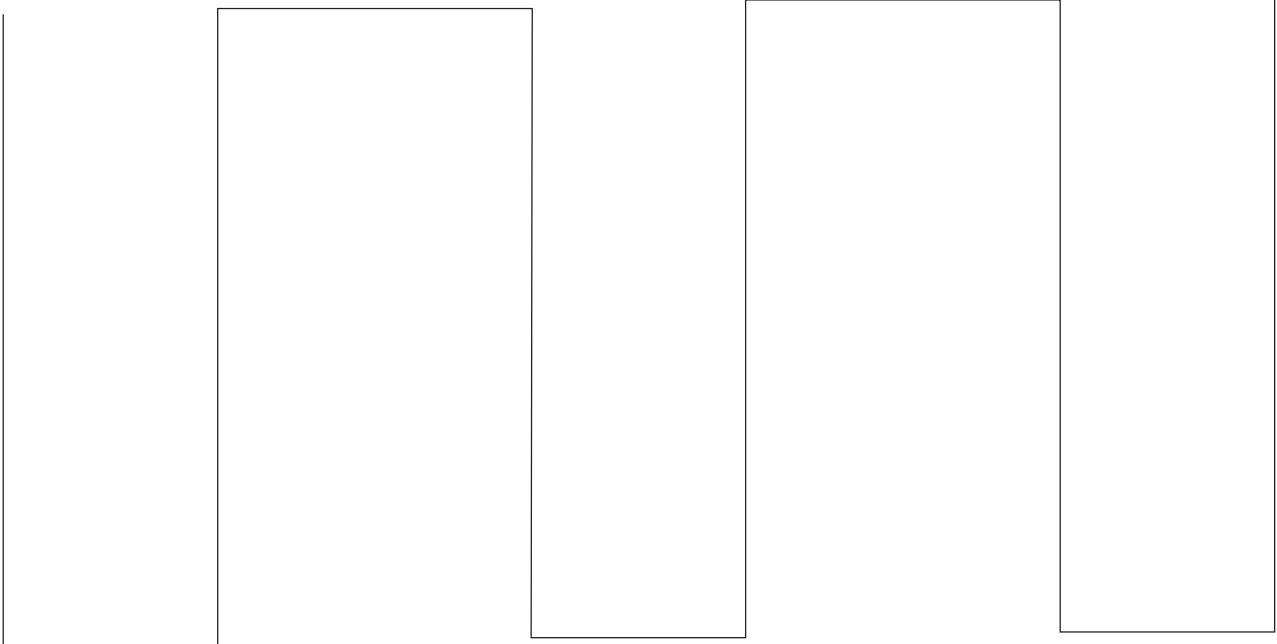
Squares

Practice pivoting at corners



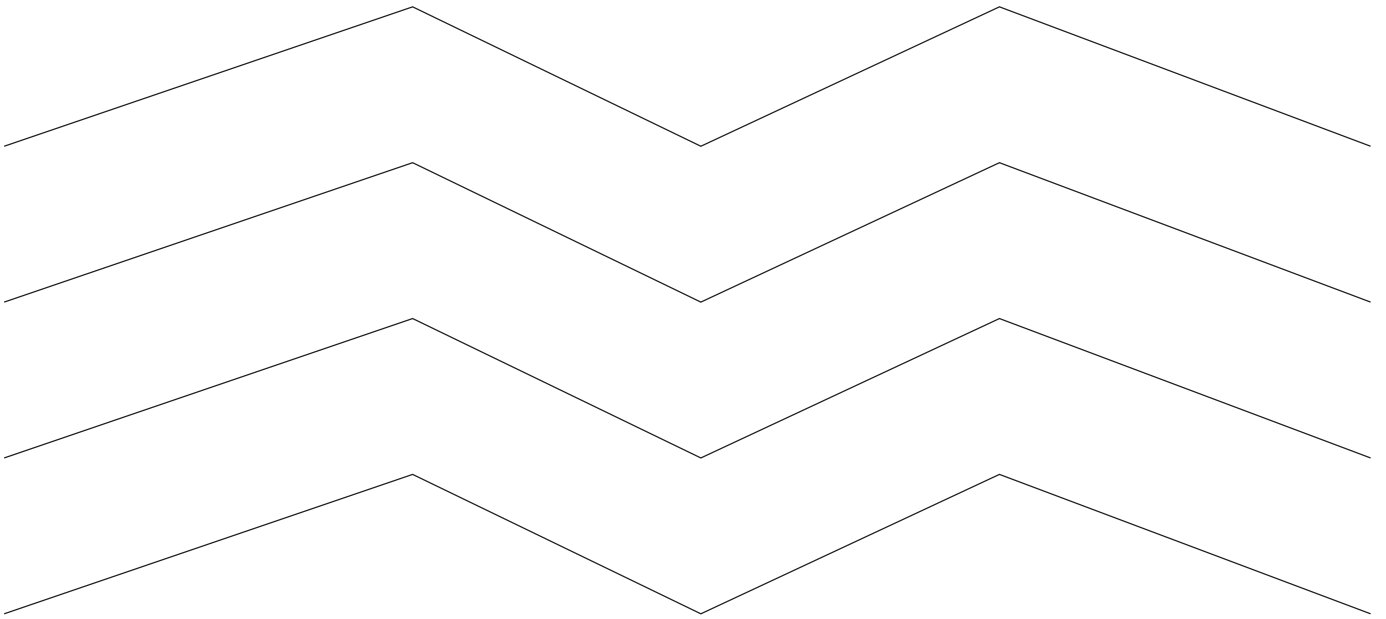
Corners

Practice the pivoting motion



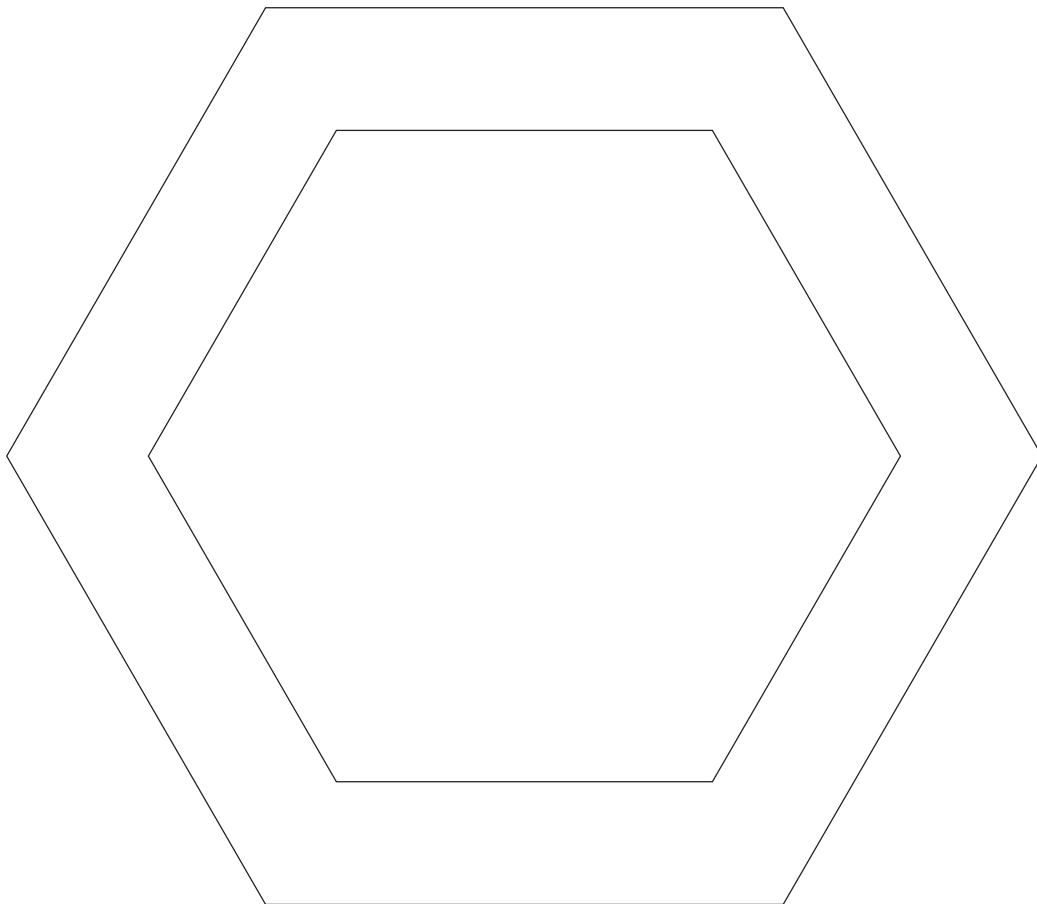
Repeated Corners

Practice pivoting at every change of direction



Hexagon

Practice precise pivoting at each corner

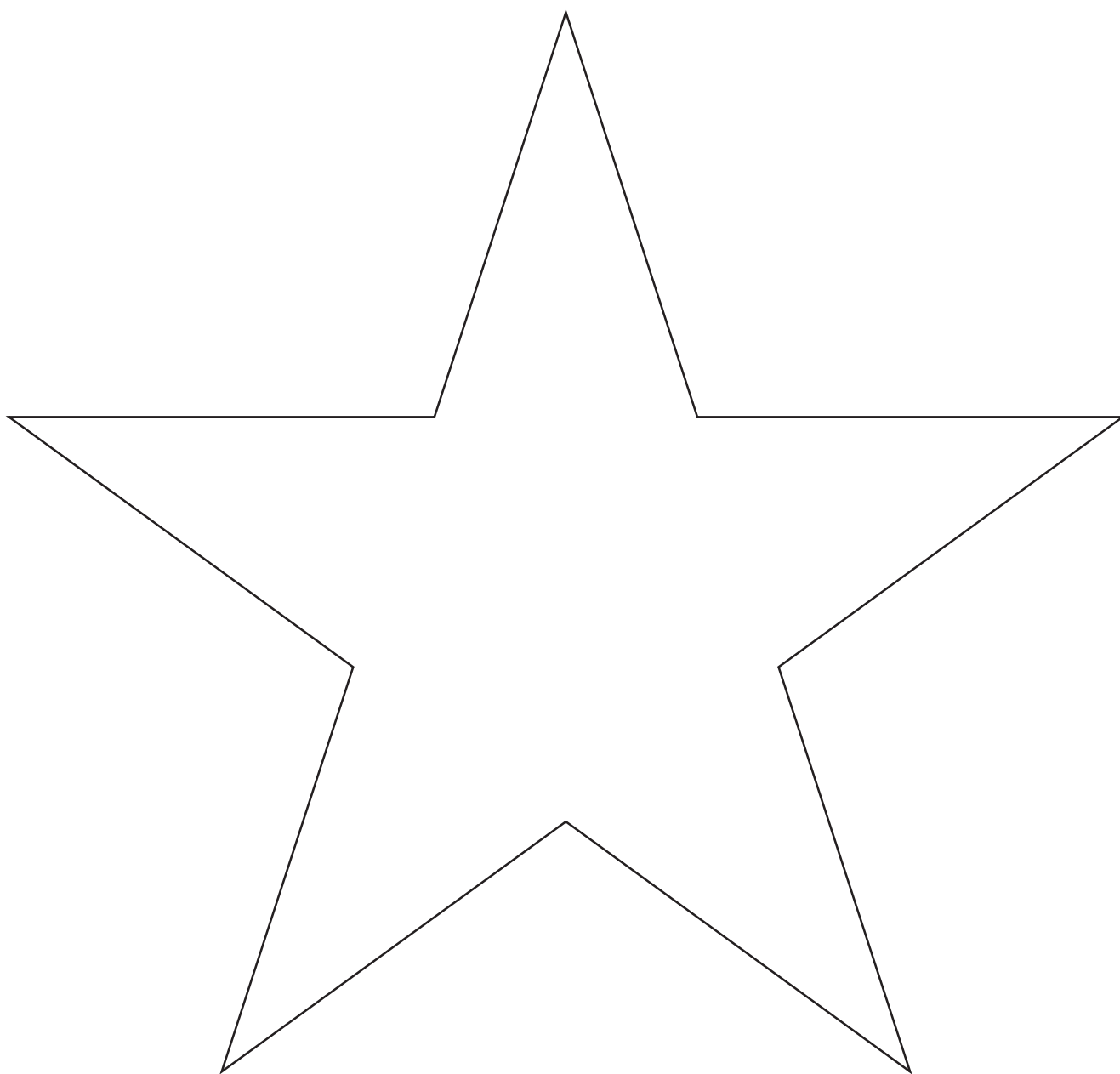


Star

Practice precise pivoting through sharp angles



Paule .

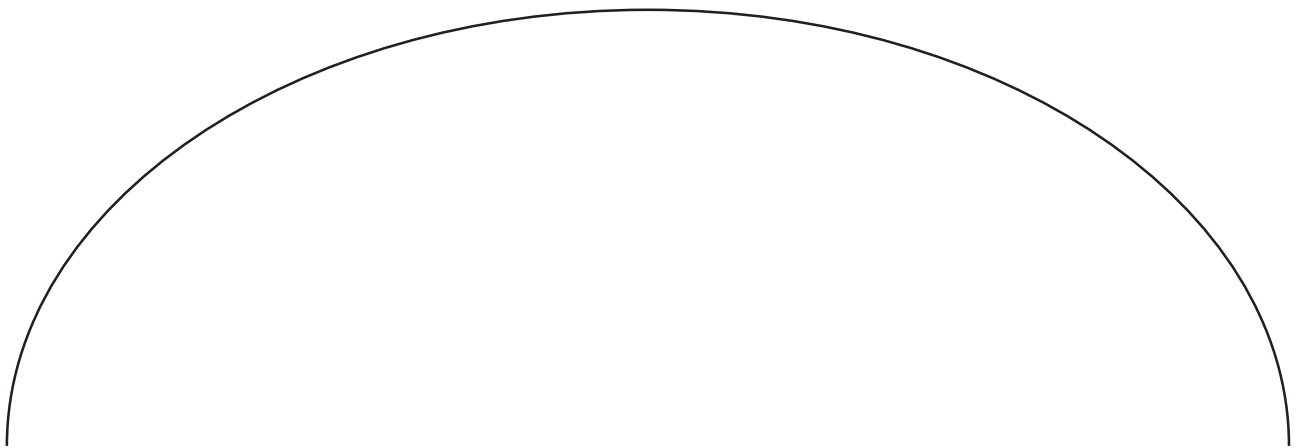
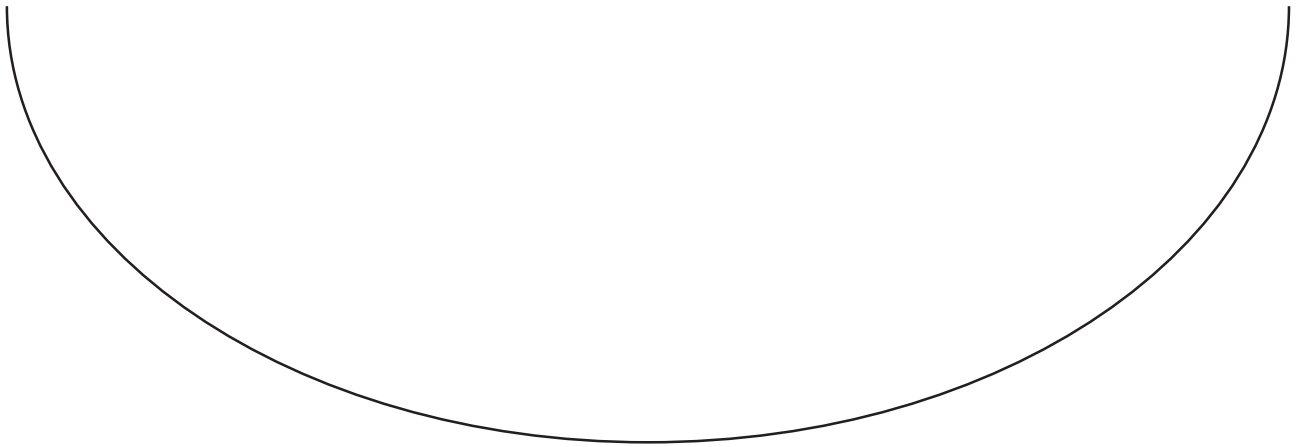


Wide Half Circles

Guide the fabric smoothly without jerking

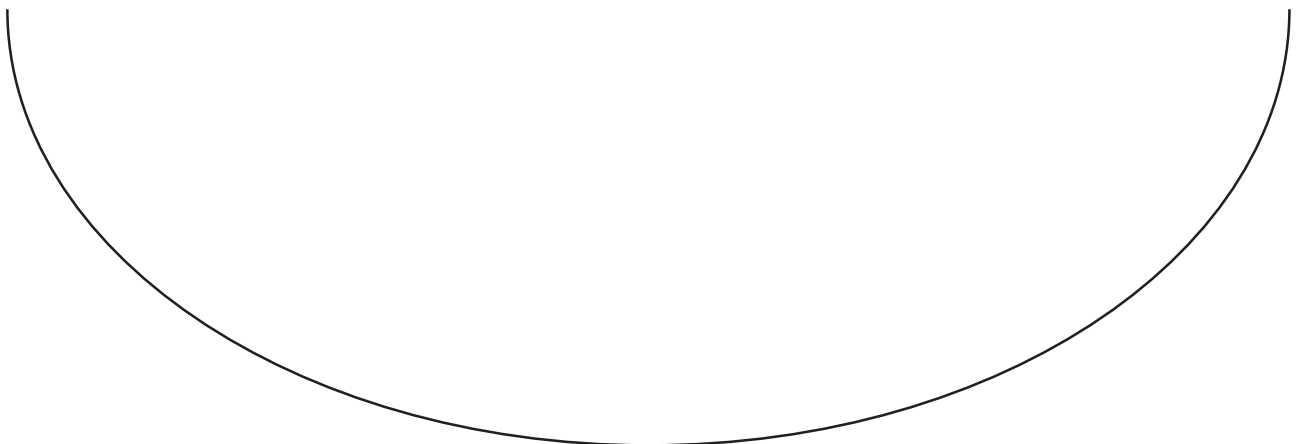


Paule .



Curved Seam Allowance

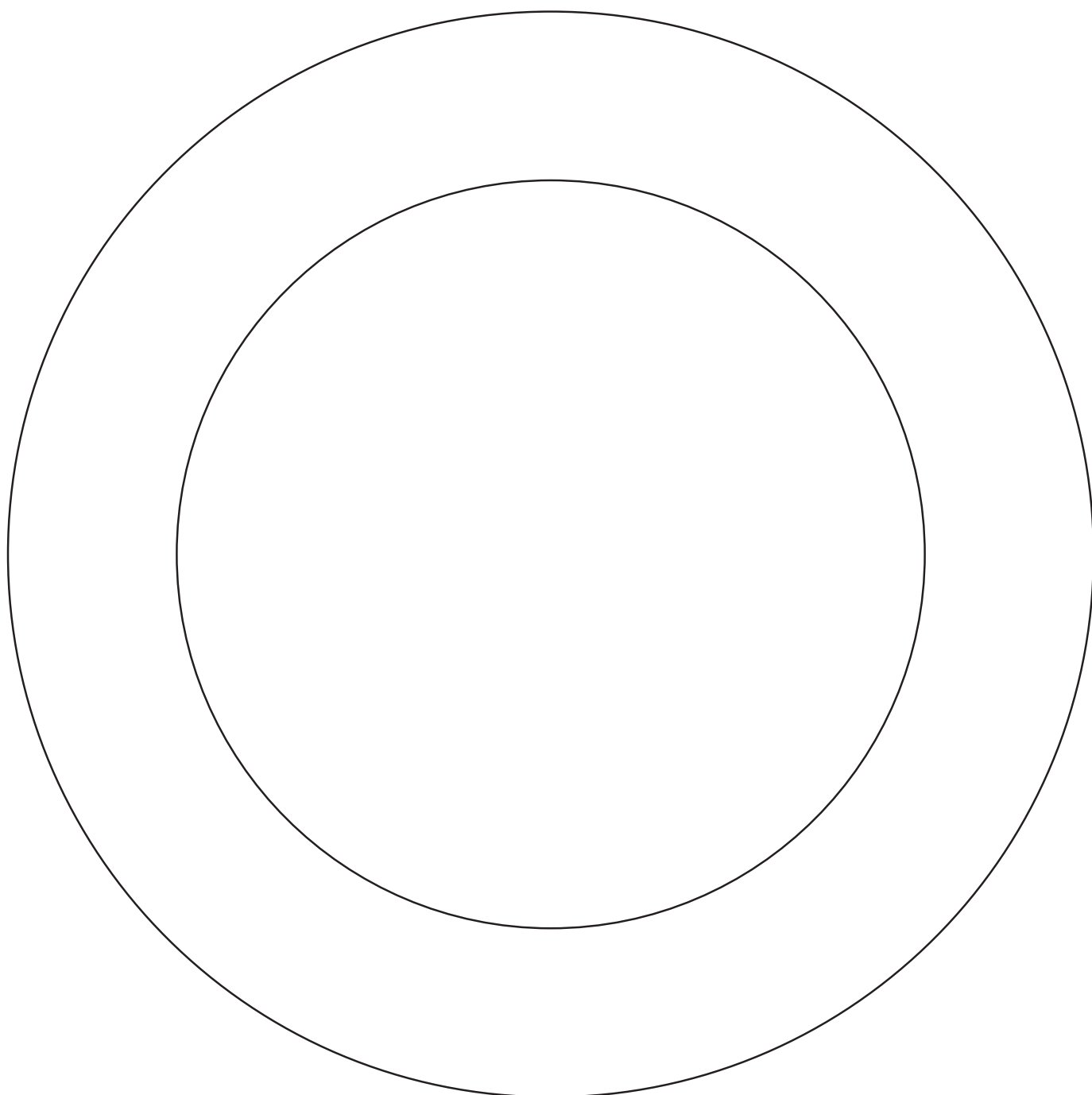
Stitch 1 cm inside the half circle



Circles

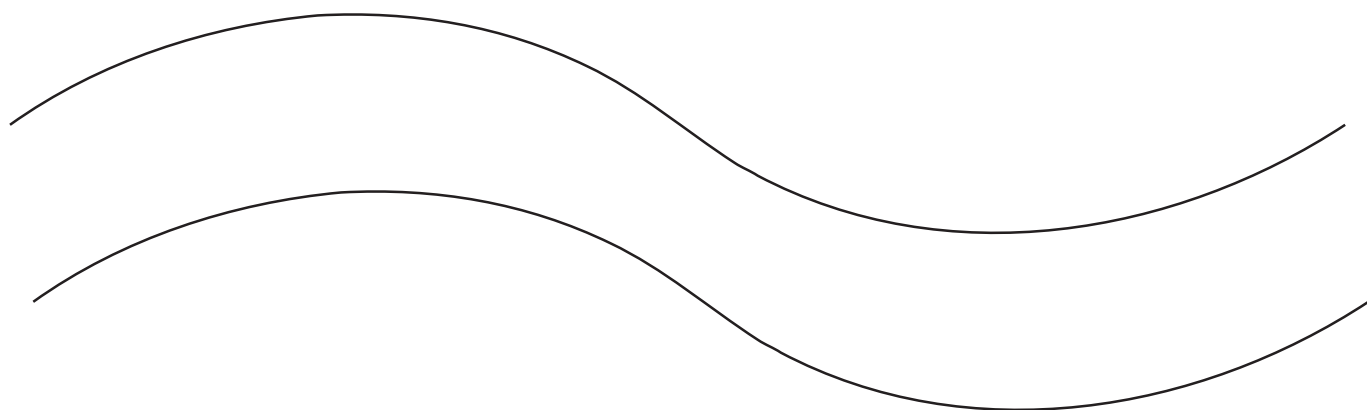
Stitch directly on the outer circle

Stitch 1 cm outside the inner circle



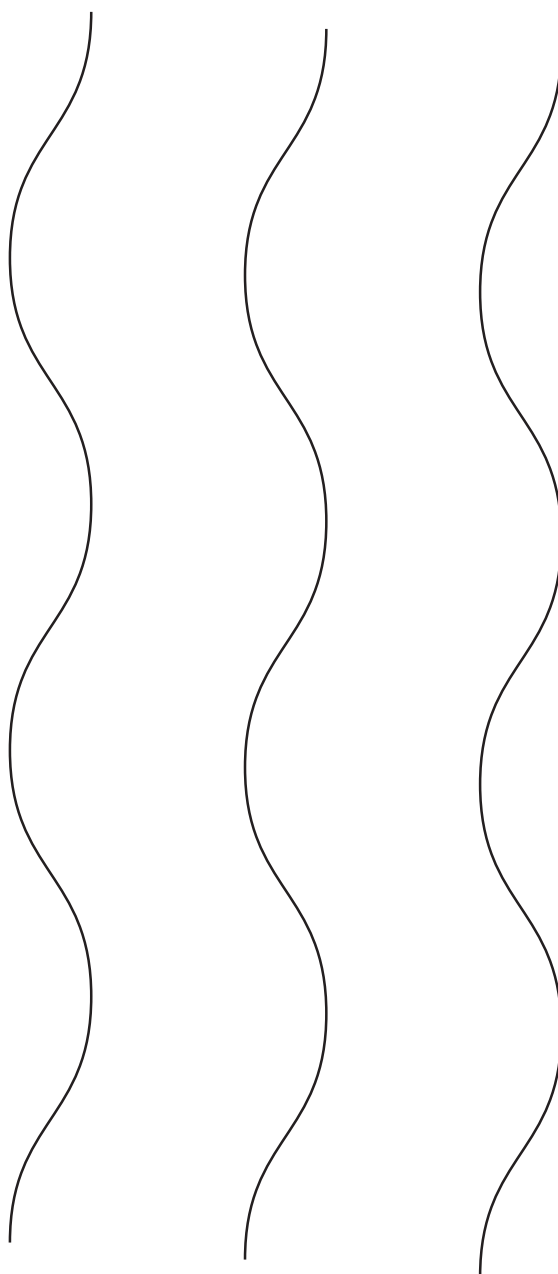
Wide Curves

Guide the fabric smoothly



S Curves

Control the change of direction



Zigzag Stitch



Center Line

Learn to center the zigzag stitch

Set the zigzag to medium width (3–4 mm) and 2.5 mm length.
Sew while keeping the line exactly in the center of the zigzag.

1 cm Band

Control the stitch width

Fill the band with zigzag stitches without crossing the lines.

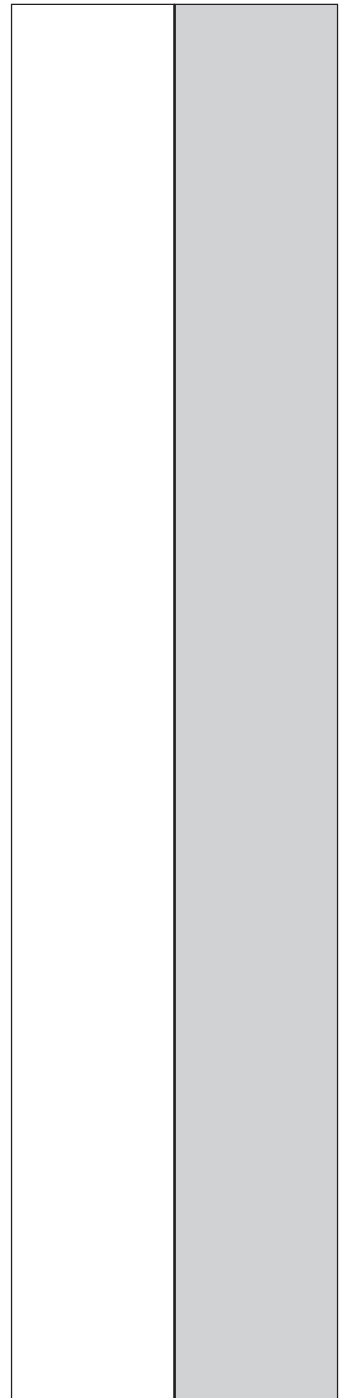
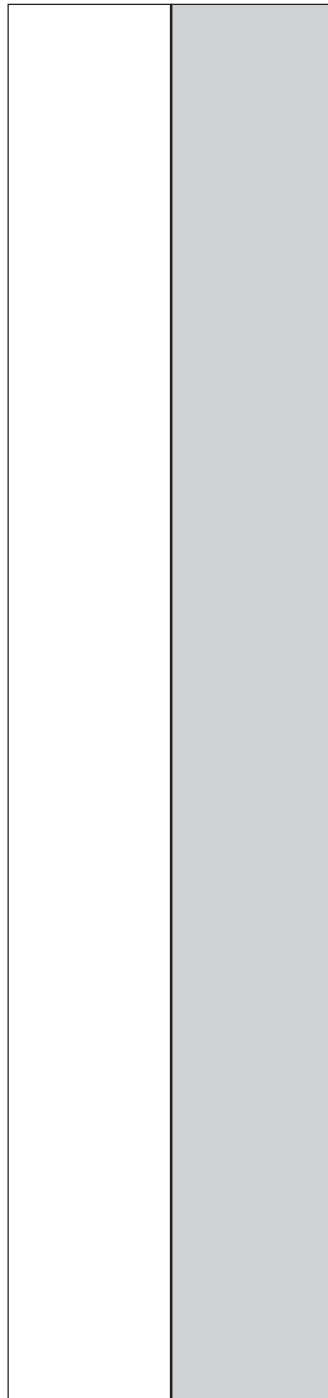
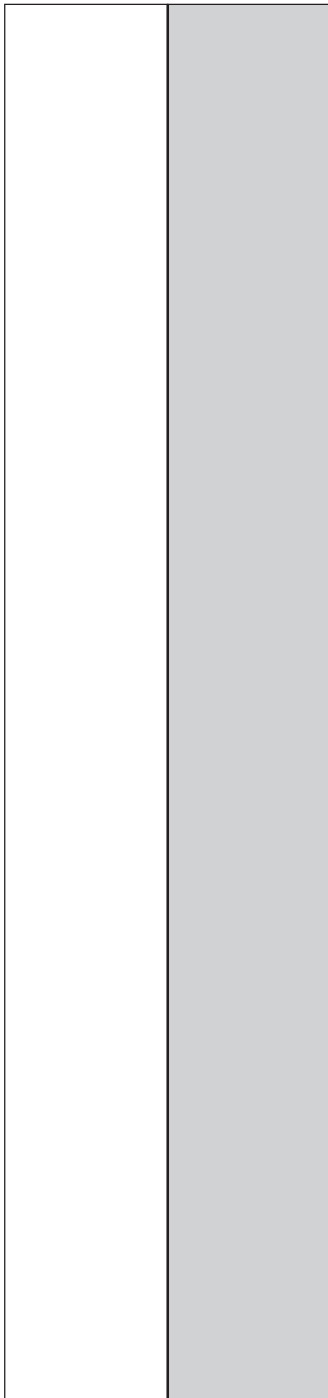
Simulated Edge

Learn to finish raw edges with a zigzag stitch

White = fabric

Gray = empty space

Sew so that half of the zigzag lands on the fabric and half goes off the edge.



Narrow vs Wide Zigzag

Control your stitch width

Sew on the line while keeping it centered within the zigzag.
Observe the difference in coverage.



Dense vs Open Zigzag

Compare density and stiffness based on stitch length

In the first band, select a zigzag stitch:

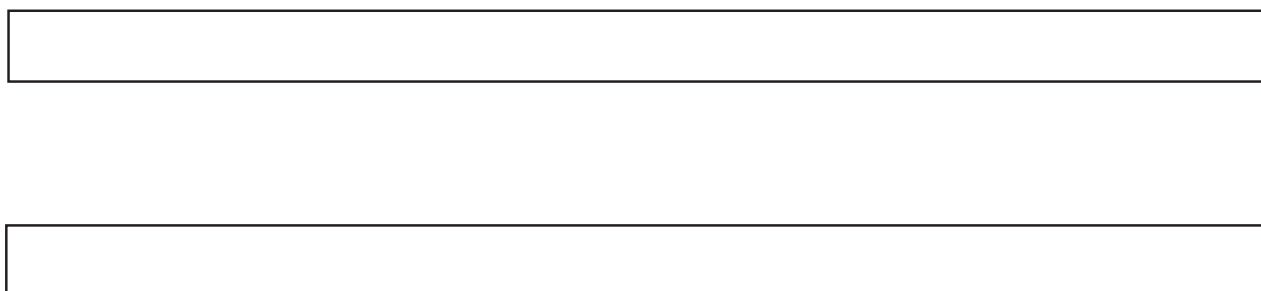
Width: 4 mm

Length: 1 mm

In the second band, select a zigzag stitch:

Width: 4 mm

Length: 3 mm



Curved Zigzag

Finish a curved edge

The white area represents the fabric.

The gray area represents empty space.

Sew so that part of the zigzag lands on the fabric and part goes off the edge.

Follow the curve without drifting away from the edge.

Objective : stabilize a curved raw edge using a consistent zigzag stitch.

