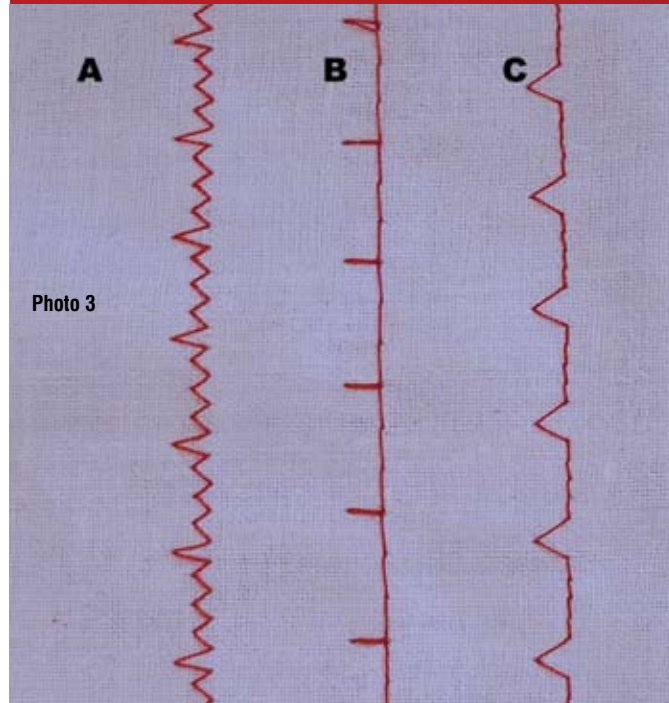
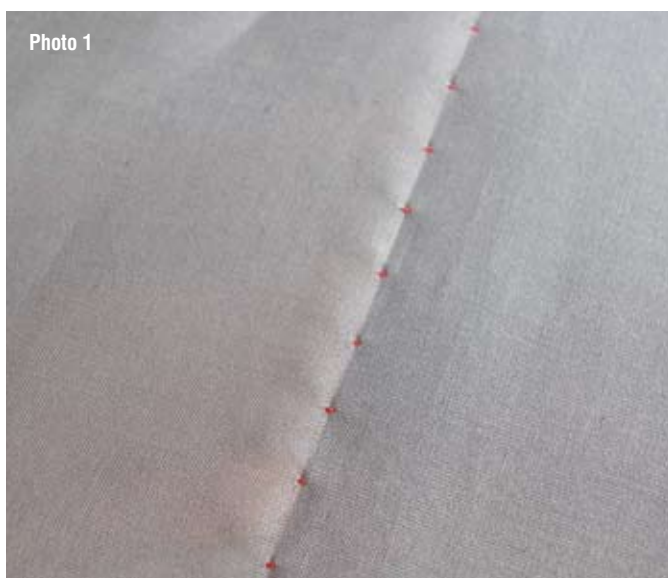


# Machine Blind Hemming

By Martyn Smith



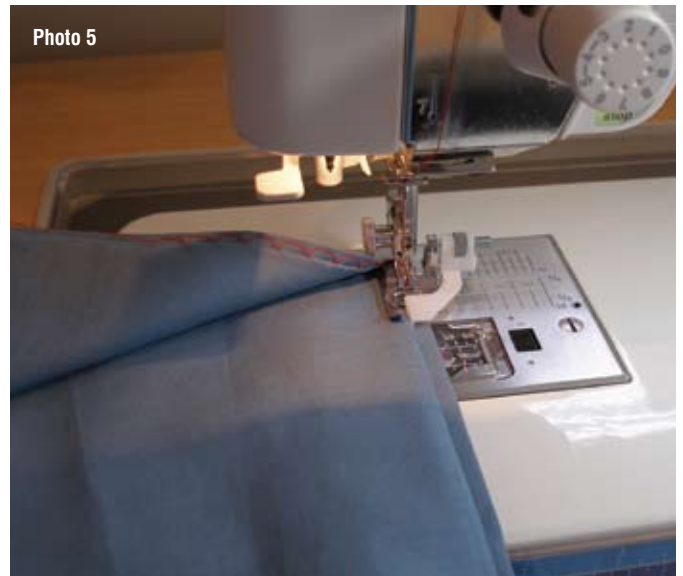
Every machine seems to be able to do a version of a blind-hem stitch. See photo 1.

The pictures here show A, B and C, the three main stitches you can use to achieve this and also three of the many different blind-hem feet that help as a guide when stitching. See photos 2 and 3. This machine function produces a finished result that is more even than hand sewing and stronger. The ‘pick’ or small stitch on the right side of the fabric, as long as it’s not too noticeable, becomes quite invisible once the work has been pressed.

Hems should either be well pressed or even basted into place, especially around a curved area. See photo 4. An overlocked edge is ideal as well, as the finished stitch formation blends really well into the overlocking. Photo 5 shows the traditional way of setting up and stitching the most common blind-hem stitch. Follow the instruction in your machine manual to set your machine and foot to achieve this.

By ensuring that the hem edge and the folded edges are on top of each other before moving under the foot of the machine, a finished stitching result will be achieved. See photos 6 and 7.

Most machines will require the needle and bobbin threads to be held when starting off, especially if your machine does a lock-off or fixing knot at the beginning of the sequence. The machine will be forming the three side running stitches without fabric under it and will then swing across to the left and sink a stitch



into all layers for one stitch. This results in a twisted strand forming between each 'pick' on the wrong side of the work. Reducing the top tension on the machine by a few notches sometimes helps the needle thread to look a little looser on the right side of the work. See photo 8. Setting the blade or the fabric guide of the foot will determine how much of a 'bite' is taken (how big the stitch on the right side of the work will look) so adjusting it may take a little practice. Some feet don't have an adjustable blade so you will have to adjust the needle swing with the zigzag width on the machine. Use invisible thread in the needle (try SewArt for machine quilting), especially if the sewing thread is not a good colour match; but note that this sort of thread doesn't like coming in contact with an iron, so be careful when pressing.

I haven't met a machine that CAN'T do this but some do grumble a bit when starting off, due to the side stitches having to form with no fabric under the foot. Some manmade fabrics will want to creep away from the foot blade while stitching and will miss stitches occasionally. Give it a go and see if you can speed up the hemming process, it even works on velvet!

