



The Thread Exchange

Internet-based Thread Sellers
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Backing and Stabilizer Buying Guide



Use embroidery backings and stabilizers to prevent puckering. Puckering happens because embroidery thread is stronger than the fabric and pulls the fabric as it is being embroidered. The result is wrinkled, lumpy work as shown on the left. Our Llovet backings and stabilizers solve this problem by temporally strengthening the fabric while it is on the hoop so it resists the pulling that causes puckering. They are removed by tearing, cutting or washing when the job is done.

How to buy the right backing - Understanding backing types and styles, weight in ounces, color, the difference between sheets and rolls and how to do price comparisons are key to buying the right backing.

Type and Style - Experienced sewers will tell you that selecting the right type and style backing is more important than the brand. Type refers to a class of backings such as tearaways or cutaways. Style refers to specific kinds of backings. By convention, we use Hollingsworth and Vose style numbers that are used by many in the industry. [Download their Embroidery Backing Guide](#)

Ounces - As a general rule the backing's weight should increase as the fabric's weight decreases. Backing weight is expressed in ounces per square yard. It refers to the backing's density not its thickness. Backings are soft and spongy so measuring thickness with calipers is meaningless.

Color - Most of are backings are white, but we do sell some black backings at a price. The conventional wisdom is to use white backings with light fabrics and black backings with dark fabrics. In practice, the backing's color does not matter if it is completely removed from the finished garment.

Sheets and Rolls - We sell backings in precut sheets and large rolls. Precut sheets are convenient and easy to use one at a time. Rolls are heavy, bulky, and must be cut into sheets before they can be used. But, they are much less expensive.

We stock 8" x 8" sheets for all styles and sell them in 100 and 500 sheet packages. Other sheet sizes and rolls are shipped within four business days. [Please call](#) if you have an *ongoing* need for a specific putup. *Also call for special pricing on ten or more rolls or 500 sheet packs.*

Prices - The best way to understand backing prices is to know their cost per square yard. Please download our [Backing Price Comparison Worksheet](#). It shows our prices and cost per square yard helps you calculate our competitors' cost per square yard.

Types of backings - We sell tearaway, tearaway / washaway, cutaway, and water soluble backings and stabilizers

Type	Applied to	Excess removed by	Comments
Tearaway	Back of fabric	Tearing	First choice for stable fabrics. Faster removal. No risk of damaging work with scissors
Tearaway / Washaway	Back of fabric	Tearing. Any remaining backing comes out with the first washing	Best all around backing.
Cutaway	Back of fabric	Cutting with scissors	Best for stretchy, delicate fabrics, maintains design detail, more bulk, better needle perforation resistance. Risk of damaging work with scissors
Water Soluble	Front of fabric	Steam or fine spray	Used with high profile fabrics such as fleece or terry cloth. Use with a Tearaway / Washaway backing.

Tearaway Backings - Remove tearaway backings by tearing them from the embroidered fabric. This is faster and less expensive than cutting because our tearaways are specially designed to be torn from any direction. Tearing also eliminates the risk of ruining work with scissor cuts. Tearaways work well with most fabrics. But they are not recommended for exceptionally delicate or stretchy fabrics such as loosely knit sweaters. We have two tearaway styles:

Style	Description	Used to embroider
1525	Style 1525 is a 1.5 ounce, general purpose, tearaway with a medium-firm hand.	Aprons; leather jackets; sweats; t-shirts; blouses - silk and polyester; coat linings; felts; shorts - cotton and nylon; socks; ties - knit and silk; tote bags; webbing and belting.
3020	Style 3020 is a heavy duty, 3 ounce, tearaway that tears exceptionally well in all directions leaving a fuzz-free edge.	Caps and hats

Tearaway / Washaways - This backing is the closest thing to a "universal" backing available today. Remove tearaway / washaways by tearing them from the fabric in any direction just like our tearaways. Any residue dissolves with the first washing. Our Tearaway / Washaway backing provides excellent hoop stability and stitch performance on high stitch-count applications, difficult garments such as socks and bathing suits, and as backing for water soluble toppings. It often replaces two layers of regular tearaway backing on delicate materials.

Style	Description	Used to embroider
2020	Style 2020 is a 2 ounce Tearaway / Washaway stabilizer. It lets embroiderers tear away backing and know that remaining small pieces will	Aprons; baby bibs; bandanas; blankets - stadium and horse; caps - canvas, cotton, and knit; coat linings; duffel bags - cotton and nylon; felts; fleecewear - light, medium, and heavy; golf shirts - herringbone, loose, and

Free Download

[Buying Guide PDF](#)
[Backing Price Comparison](#)
[Hollingsworth and Vose](#)
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disappear with the first laundering.

pique; jackets - satin and nylon; karate belts; leather; suede; vinyl; scarves; sheets and pillowcases - percale and satin; shirts - denim, twill, linen, oxford, cloth, and turtleneck; shorts - bicycle, cotton, and nylon; swimsuits; tablecloths; napkins; placemats; ties - knit; towels - bath and golf; t-shirts - medium and heavy; and umbrellas.

Cutaways - Delicate and stretchy fabrics with high stitch-count designs need the cutaway backing to maintain crispness and design details. They provide a stable base before and after embroidery, prevent fabric from being forced down the machine's throat plate, and retain the design's shape through repeated washings.

Excess cutaway backing has to be removed with a scissors and work can be ruined with a bad scissor cut. Our cutaways reduce this risk by being easy to cut and still maintaining stability. You can further reduce this risk by not cutting too close to the design, using a gliding scissor motion, avoiding blunt-end scissors, and not using nippers or clips.

Soft-N-Stable Cutaways® - These cutaways are exceptionally soft and comfortable, easy to cut, and very stable.

Style	Description	Used to embroider
8820	Style 8820 is a 2 ounce, Soft-n-Stable, cutaway backing that is soft to the touch, comfortable, and wearable. It is lightweight for low to medium stitch-count applications.	Knit caps; heavy fleecewear; light golf shirts; nylon jackets and windbreakers; and turtleneck shirts.
8825	Style 8825 is a 2.5 ounce, Soft-n-Stable, cutaway backing that is soft to the touch, comfortable, and wearable. It is a very versatile, soft cutaway for medium stitch-count applications.	Double knits; light, medium and promotional fleecewear; golf shirts; satin and wool jackets; and Shetland sweaters.
8830	Style 8830 is a 3 ounce, Soft-n-Stable, cutaway backing that is soft to the touch, comfortable, and wearable. It is a heavier soft cutaway for higher stitch-count applications.	Loose and pique golf shirts; high-density stitching designs, and Shetland sweaters.

StitchBacker Cutaways® - Standard cutaways that are easy to cut, have good hoop stability, resist perforations, remain stable after repeated washings or dry-cleanings.

Style	Description	Used to embroider
9925	Style 9925 is a 2.5 ounce StitchBacker backing used as an all purpose backing for medium and high stitch-count applications.	Sweats and t-shirts; double knits; fleecewear; golf shirts; satin and wool jackets; and sweaters.
9930	Style 9930 is a 3 ounce StitchBacker backing used for high stitch-count applications.	High-density stitching designs; and Shetland sweaters.

Water Soluble Toppings - Water soluble toppings are also known as Sol-U-Film® and Solvy®. They are used to prevent stitches from sinking into high profile fabrics such as fleece and terry cloth as shown on the right. Apply topping to the top of the fabric and remove it with steam or a fine water spray. Always use a backing with a water soluble topping. We recommend our Tearaway / Washaway backing. Here is a list of popular water soluble topping applications.



Monogramming	Computerized embroidery	Lace work
Quilting	Appliqué	Buttonholes
Bridging	Edges	Cut work
3-D work	Heirloom sewing	Serging
Hand-turned appliqué	Thread sketching	

Backing Styles for Embroidery Applications - Here is a list of fifty embroidery applications and the backing styles that work best with each application. Just click on a style to see our selections.

Application	Backing Style(s)	Application	Backing Style(s)
Aprons	2020 , 1525	Karate Belt	2020
Baby Bibs	2020	Leather, Suede, Vinyl	2020 , 1525
Bandanas	2020	Scarves	2020
Blankets--Horse	2020	Sheets, Pillowcases--Percale	2020
Blankets--Stadium	2020	Sheets, Pillowcases--Satin	2020
Blouses--Silk and Polyester	1525	Shirts--Denim or Twill	2020 , 1525
Caps--Canvas and Cotton	3020 , 2020	Shirts--Linen	2020
Caps--Knit	8820 , 3020 , 2020	Shirts--Oxford Cloth	2020
Coat Linings	1525 , 2020	Shorts--Bicycle	2020
Double Knits	8825 , 9925	Shorts--Cotton or Nylon	2020 , 1525
Duffle Bags	2020	Socks	1525
Felts	2020 , 1525	Sweaters--Fine or Tight	9925
Fleecewear--7 Oz Light	8825 , 9925 , 2020	Sweaters--Shetland	8825 , 8830 , 9925 , 9930
Fleecewear--9 Oz Medium	8825 , 9925 , 2020	Sweats and T-Shirts	9925 , 1525
Fleecewear--12 Oz Heavy	2020 , 9925 , 8820	Swimsuits	2020
Fleecewear--Promotional	8825 , 9925	Tablecloths, Napkins, Placemats	2020
Golf Shirts--Herringbone	8825 , 9925 , 2020	Ties--Knit	2020 , 1525
Golf Shirts--Interlock	8825 , 9925 , 2020	Ties--Silk	1525
Golf Shirts--Light	8820 , 2020	Tote Bags	1525
Golf Shirts--Loose	8830 , 8820 , 8825 , 9925 , 2020	Towels--Bath	2020
High-Density Stitching Designs	8830 , 9930	Towels--Golf	2020
Jackets--Leather	1525 , 9925	T-Shirts--4 Oz Medium	8820 , 2020
Jackets--Satin (Baseball)	2020 , 9925 , 8825	T-Shirts--6 Oz Heavy	2020 , 9925

Jackets--Nylon (Windbreaker) [2020, 8820](#)
 Jackets--Wool (Varsity) [8825, 9925](#)

Umbrellas [2020](#)
 Webbing and Belting [1525](#)

Backing and Stabilizer Selections

[Tearaway](#) [Tearaway / Washaway](#) [Cutaway](#) [Water Soluble](#)
[Fire Retardant](#) [Closeouts](#)

More Choices

Embroidery Thread and Supplies

TTE Robison-Anton Store



Everything Robison-Anton in all colors, mini-king and king spools. Rayon, Polyester, Moonglow, "J" Metallic, variegated, Twister Tweed, sewing thread.

[Select](#)

Madeira



Madeira rayon and polyester are strong, glossy embroidery threads. Available in 48 colors for \$6.00 a spool.

[Select](#)

ARC Rayon



ARC rayon (a.k.a. Melco) is a sturdy, glossy thread designed for high-speed machine embroidering. Available in 250 colors at ~~\$3.75 a spool~~ **\$2.75 a spool**

[Select](#)

Fufu



Fufu polyester is a high sheen thread that can be laundered forever because it is very colorfast. Available in 7 colors for \$6.00 a spool.

[Select](#)

Marathon



Marathon rayon and polyester are our flagship black and white thread that we regularly stock. \$6.00 a spool.

[Select](#)

Sylko



Sylko polyester is a strong, medium-luster embroidery thread. Available in 25 colors for \$6.00 a spool.

[Select](#)

Llovet Backings Stabilizes



We have a full line Llovet backings - cutaways, tearaw washaways, water solubles. Retail a commercial pack.

[Select](#)

Multi-brand Kings



Our multi-brand King Spool features Salus, Ameth, Royal, Reflex, and TriStar embroidery thread. Single spools are \$3.00 and cases of 12 are \$12.00

[Select](#)

Multi-brand Cases



[Select](#)

Mini-King Spools



A collection of mini-king spools will 1,100 yards (1,000 meters) of embroidery thread. Available in 20 colors for \$1.50

[Select](#)

Grab Bags



Grab bags are a money-saving way to build a thread stash. You always know the kind of thread you are buying, but you never know the colors.

[Select](#)

Metallic Thread



Metallic embroidery thread to put finishing touches on embroidery and decorating garments. Available in 500 yard and 5,000 putups.

[Select](#)

Variegated Thread



Adds interest to your embroidery by changing color as you sew. Available in 20 colors for \$6.00 a king spool.

[Select](#)

Tweed Threa



Gives embroidery textured look by blending two care selected thread c Available in 15 cc for \$6.00 a king s

[Select](#)

Peacock



Peacock polyester is a strong, glossy thread similar to Madeira. Available in 9 colors for \$6.00 a spool.

[Select](#)

Monofilament



Nylon monofilament thread in clear and smoke. Available on king spools, canister refills, and cases of canister refills.

[Select](#)

Valdani Closeout



Valdani pearl cotton and 35 and 50 cotton solids and variegates. We are closing out this line so selection is limited. Everything is at 2009 prices.

[Select](#)

Bobbins and Bobbin Thread



Style A and Style L embroidery bobbins many are half priced. Also, black and white bobbin thread.

[Select](#)

Thread Cone Holder



Use economical king spools with machines that do not have the right type of spindle.

[Select](#)

Thread Sock



Use thread netting to stop your thread from puddling.

[Select](#)

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