TO SEW OR NOT TO SEW?

What is your sewing focus?
Apparel for yourself or others... Home decor projects... Learning to sew... The purchase of sewing equipment... Changing from being a light sewer to a heavy sewer... A quick sew project... To show off sewing skills...

Like other activities, interest in sewing items at home has its highs and lows. "Does it pay to sew?" is often asked. Only the person asking the question can answer it. Both positive and negative aspects need to be considered.

The answer is YES if:

. The product brings satisfaction in the creating as well as the using.

. You have a positive attitude about the importance of sewing.

. You really enjoy sewing.

. Sewing makes you a more attractively or better dressed person.

. You have fitting problems that make it difficult to alter ready-to-wear.

. You have proper sewing space, tools, and equipment so that each process can be done efficiently, creating a custom-made look.

. You believe that sewing expresses individuality, while shopping expresses conformity.

. You are aware of the swing to popular fashion made by manufacturers of sewing machines, over-the-counter fabrics, and patterns.

. You realize the actual cost of sewing. Patterns, fabrics and notions are not the only costs - also, you must figure the cost of electricity, time, and wear and tear on equipment.

. You can produce at acceptable cost, a product of high quality.
The answer is NO if:

- The quality of ready-to-wear, suited to your clothing budget, does not meet your standards.

- You are willing to devote the time necessary to ready the fabric before you start to cut, to adjust patterns to your measurements, and to rip out stitching that is not right.

- You are more satisfied with the fit of garments you make than the fit of garments bought ready-made.

- Chic is as important as techniques.

The answer is NO if:

- Many of the products made end up as "closet cases" - something that you put in the closet or drawer and never finish, wear, or use.

- Sewing is drudgery.

- You don't know how to sew and are not enthusiastic about learning.

- Your interest is such that it would not be wise to invest in the necessary sewing tools and equipment.

- Working with your hands doesn't appeal to you.

- You think that people who sew are those who can't afford ready-to-wear.

- The time devoted to sewing disturbs the family routine to the point that there is conflict and misunderstanding.

- The type of sewing you are capable of doing doesn't meet your taste level.

Only you can answer the questions, "Does it pay to sew?"

Prepared by: Beatrice Kalka, Ed.D
Extension Specialist
Clothing and Textiles