

AoH DD Sewing Part 1 - 4:26:22, 2.28 PM

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SPEAKERS

Allison, Jan Lockhart



Allison 00:02

Hello homemakers Welcome to the Art of Home Podcast, where we are exploring how homemakers cultivate a place to belong. I'm your host Allison Weeks. I'm a wife, a mom and I have been homemaker for 30 years. If you are a regular listener to the podcast, welcome back and thank you for tuning in to another episode. If you're new here we are so glad you found us here at the Art of Home. We are seeking to inspire and encourage you and your practice of homemaking, whether that happens full time Monday through Sunday, or in the margins after your nine to five. So we just kicked off our sixth season last week with a homemaker portrait and today, we're beginning our two part deep dive into the art of sewing. I am excited to bring this series to you all I'm chatting with Jan Lockhart, who you might remember from her homemaker portrait back in season two. And in part one of this deep dive, we're gonna go into Tools, sewing machine basics, fabric patterns, and much much more. And then next week in part two, we're going to talk specifically about sewing clothing both adult and children's sewing for the home, and sewing as a business. Before we start, I want to give you a few fun historical facts about the history of sewing. Sewing is one of the oldest of the textile arts. Before the invention of spinning yarn or weaving fabric. archeologists believe people across Europe and Asia sold fur and leather clothing, using bone, antler or ivory sewing needles, and the thread they would use would be made of various animal body parts including sinew, cat, gut, and veins. Doesn't that sound delightful? For 1000s of years all sewing was done by hand. But as early as the late 1700s inventive thinkers started to begin working out how to mechanize sewing. The world's first sewing machine was patented in 1790. by Thomas St. By the early 1840s. Other sewing machines began to appear. Okay, you're gonna hear me do my very best with a difficult French word here. A man named bhakti li Mei T Manya introduced a simple sewing machine in 1841 to produce military uniforms for Francis army. Shortly afterward, a mob of tailors broke into T mon yeas shop and through the machines out of the windows, believing that these machines would put them out of work. By the 1850s, Isaac singer developed the first sewing machines that could operate quickly and accurately and surpass the productivity of a seamstress or tailor sewing by hand so the French tailors did have reason for concern. However, eventually, hand sewn garments became associated with high fashion, couture, tailored and custom made garments that only the wealthy could afford. By the 20th century sewing machines were more portable and affordable for the middle classes, and the demand for patterns grew. Wikipedia says women had become accustomed to seeing the latest

fashions in periodicals during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, increasing the demand for sewing patterns even more. American tailor and manufacturer Ebenezer Butterick met the demand with paper patterns that could be traced and used by home sewers. The patterns sold in small pockets became wildly popular. Several pattern companies soon established themselves and women's magazines also carried sewing patterns, and continue to do so for much of the 20th century. This practice declined during the later decades of the 20th century when readymade clothing became a necessity as women joined the paid workforce in larger numbers, leaving them with less time to sew if indeed they had an interest. Today, the low price of readymade clothing and shops means that home sewing is confined largely to hobbyist and Western countries, with the exception of cottage industries and custom dress making and upholstery. Sewing as a pleasurable hobby has gained popularity as attested by the BBC television show *The Great British Sewing Bee* on air since 2013, which by the way, cannot be viewed anywhere in the United States, which I think is an atrocity because that is the best show ever. I digress. Anyway, sewing of all kinds hand, machine, quilting, embroidery has grown in popularity throughout the early part of the 21st century. Fast fashion has, for some, raised ethical objections, added astronomically to our landfills and left most of us with a longing for not more but better choices in what we clothe ourselves and adorn our homes with. Renewed interest in slow living and returning to old ways has people dusting off grandma's vintage singer and scouring YouTube for how to sew videos. Well we are here to encourage you that while sewing can seem intimidating to the beginner, it's a valuable skill to pursue and like cooking once you have the fundamentals down, you can modify and be creative to your heart's content for the specific needs and desires of your family and of your home. Whether you're a complete novice or a seasoned sewist, we know you will enjoy this discussion about the art of sewing. All right, I'm back with Jan Lockhart, who you probably will remember from season two, her homemaker portrait aired way back when. We are going to talk about sewing. We're gonna go into a deep dive on all things Sewing. I'm very excited for this conversation because Jan has been sewing for a long time. So Jan, why don't you give us a little history about sewing in your life. How long have you been sewing?

J Jan Lockhart 05:45

Forever. I really started probably sewing in the fourth or fifth grade. I'm from Illinois, small farming community. Four H was huge. And at that time, there was boys four h and there was girls four h and girls, four h focused on sewing and cooking. And we started sewing about fourth or fifth grade.

A Allison 06:07

Okay, so we have a lot of international listeners. So I want to explain what is four h is like literally the number four dash the letter H. What does that mean?

J Jan Lockhart 06:17

Four H's stand for heart home? Health, and I don't remember happiness, I'm not sure but it's literally four h or H's. Okay, that goes together. And it's everything from people show animals to canning to cooking. It's all kinds

A Allison 06:36
of stuff. Cool. That's okay.

J Jan Lockhart 06:38
And that is where you learned. That's where I learned. Yes.

A Allison 06:41
Okay. So what kind of sewing have you done? Or do you typically do

J Jan Lockhart 06:47
started out because of four h and because my mom sewed a lot of garments, things that you wear, you know, I sewed everything when I went to college, sewed my own clothes, then moved into home stuff. When I had my own my own home and I wanted pillows or curtains or something. I started sewing those. Then when I had my own business, I went in into evening wear and bridal stuff. So I've really done it all. Mostly clothing.

A Allison 07:17
Okay, awesome. And we're going to talk about all of those fun things. Before we get into some of the nitty gritty details, let's talk about some reasons to so why why? Why should you so why is it a good idea?

J Jan Lockhart 07:31
Oh, there's lots of reasons. If you're creative, it's a wonderful outlet, you can find something that you like, and you can think, hey, I can do that I can make that I can make that for myself or for my kids or for my home. It can save you money. Not necessarily yet, if you're very creative, and if you have a good stockpile of things, you can save money, if you so it's a good release, it's good alone time you can put your headphones on you can listen to your music, your podcast, you can just get away lots of reasons.

A Allison 08:07
I think it's very sewing to me can be very meditative very much so just because it's it's there's a method to it. And you know, the preparing of the materials and the laying out of the fabric.
And

J Jan Lockhart 08:18

it's an ironing and all of this stuff. And it's just, it can be very calming a zone and just exactly by yourself.

A Allison 08:25

Do you feel like basic sewing is a necessary skill for homemaking?

J Jan Lockhart 08:29

I? Absolutely. Absolutely. Especially if you have kids who, you know, are so hard on clothes. Yeah, they are. And you want the hand me downs. And so the younger one has to wear them. So you have to fix them. Yeah,

A Allison 08:41

yeah, I agree. So for some people, nowadays, we are starting to become aware that first of all, most of us have too much clothing, there is a glut of clothing waste. And so as far as if sustainable, and ethical fashion is important to you, that can also be a role a side benefit of sewing

J Jan Lockhart 09:04

very much. So

A Allison 09:06

in the fact that you have control over not just what how your clothing fits or the items that you're bringing into into your home, but also where it's coming from. Because you're doing it yourself. You can either even source things in an ethical, sustainable way, by using garments that have been discarded or by using fabric that you get, you know, from the Goodwill store or wherever. So I'm not here to make it an environmental statement. But for some people that's really important. And it is just sewing to me is kind of the quintessential, reuse, recycle, repurpose it in practice in the home. And and then also the other reason too, so that we're going to get into more in part two, the episode two of this series is that it can be a potential source of income that can and that's something that you have experienced. Well I have. So we're going to get more into that later. But what we're going to talk about In this episode, is we're gonna get into the basics and and more than basic, but if if you've never sowed before, or you have some experience or maybe you're even, you know, a more seasoned Sower, we hope that you'll gain some insight and you'll be able to take something from these episodes, but we're going to talk about sewing supplies. We're going to talk about fabric patterns, sewing economy. So a little bit about how you can save money because sewing can become a very expensive hobby if you're not careful. We're going to talk about organization and give you

some funds sewing war stories from both Jan and I, and then maybe a little bit about expectations and sewing and then how all of this relates to the art of home. Okay, let's talk about supplies. What would you consider to be the essential supplies for sewing? Must Haves?

J Jan Lockhart 10:50

You don't need a lot. You really don't you need a dedicated pair of fabric scissors. Okay. Dedicated fabric scissors. These aren't the scissors that you keep in your junk drawer that the kids used to cut out their paper with. But it doesn't have to be an expensive pair of scissors a basic Fiskars which you can get them for under \$20. Yeah.

A Allison 11:10

And why? Let me ask you why? Why do they need to be dedicated?

J Jan Lockhart 11:13

Because that dulls them when you cut paper, it dulls them and especially if you're using fine fabrics. Yeah, like just a thin fabric or a sheer something. You'll mutilate the fabric if you have a scissors that does not cut very sharp. Okay, so just keep a dedicated scissors. I also like to have a small scissors for like snipping Yes. into little bitty tight spaces. So just a little bitty scissors works. You need pins, fabric pins, safety pins are a nice thing to have. You don't necessarily have to have safety pins, but you need straight pins, right? You need a tape measure. A good iron.

A Allison 11:52

Yes. Let's stop and talk about that for a minute. Okay, why do you need a good iron? And what constitutes a good iron?

J Jan Lockhart 11:58

You iron all the way through your sewing project? At least you should? Yes,

A Allison 12:04

I agree. To me,

J Jan Lockhart 12:05

you can tell when something has been made. If they have not pressed it, okay? Because not only do you have to press the wrinkles out of the fabric, but you have to press each step as you go. Because that just kind of finishes the look. So pressing is very important. And iron. You

know, you need an iron that will do steam. Yeah. You need an iron that has a little bit of weight

A

Allison 12:29

to it. Yes, yes, it needs to be hefty, her hand iron

J

Jan Lockhart 12:33

so that you can get into and I liked the irons that have the sharp Yes, point and the tip. Because, you know, if you're pressing out a darker if you're pressing a seam sleeve, you need to get into that point and a nice rounded iron, you could, but you're going to struggle a whole lot more. So if you're going to buy an iron, that's what I would recommend you buy.

A

Allison 12:53

Yeah, and I mean, it's a little bit of an investment. I think the last iron I purchased was maybe about \$60 if mine was to winter, and you can get a really very expensive way more up into the hundreds of dollars. If that's not necessary, you can get a good quality iron, like what we're talking about, for about 60 bucks. And another thing about irons to keep in mind, this is especially important when it comes to you've just bought this beautiful piece of fabric and you're going to we're going to talk about that more, you're going to take care of it, clean it before you sew with it. And then you're going to iron it. And if you have crud inside your iron, and you go to iron this lovely fabric and then it stain that

J

Jan Lockhart 13:34

crud comes out the fabric. Yeah, so a couple

A

Allison 13:37

things to keep in mind is care for your iron, take care of your iron, make sure it's clean. I personally always use distilled water in my iron because we have really hard water here. And the mineral deposits from the water will build up in that iron. And then when you go to iron something or spray out some steam, it'll just send these chunks. So frustrated, and it's really frustrated. Yeah, so it's very important to take care of your iron and to have a good one and to take care of it. Okay,

J

Jan Lockhart 14:04

and while we're talking about irons, and you're talking about about those kinds of things. I always have an old piece of fabric like an old piece of sheet, a 24 inch piece of sheet, sometimes fabric you need, you need to see if your iron is going to spit so I lay that down first

and then you iron on that and I just always have it. So that's just something. Yeah, it's not an essential. That's a great tip, but it is kind of nice to have just stuck somewhere close to your sewing stuff.

A Allison 14:30

That's a really good tip. Yeah, yeah. Okay, so we talked about irons and scissors .

J Jan Lockhart 14:35

You need a seam ripper. Because you will be making mistakes.

A Allison 14:38

I saw the cutest thing one time. I think it was like a little cross stitch years and years ago and it said, As you sew so shall you rip.

J Jan Lockhart 14:49

So true. Yes. Very true. It's very true. Even

A Allison 14:52

the most experienced seamstress, you're gonna have to rip out seams.

J Jan Lockhart 14:55

Oh, yeah. I rip out things all the time.

A Allison 14:58

I think you can get one for like \$1

J Jan Lockhart 14:59

Oh, there Not expensive, they're cheap, no very cheap. Yeah. So you need one of those, because you will do that. It's also nice to have either fabric chalk or they have fabric markers. Because you will be doing marking, you'll need to mark things sometimes. So that's, I would consider that an essential. And



A

Allison 15:19

the thing about also, I wanted to say about fabric chalk or tailors chalk, you should have more than one color, yes, because traditionally, it'll come in white. But if you're dealing with a white fabric or a light fabric, you need to have a color that will show up. I'm personally not a huge fan of the blue traditional blue pencil fabric marking pencil because I've had fabric where it didn't come out and come out. So that's another thing you might want to do is find a little piece scrap piece of your fabric, test your chalk or your marker that you're using on it and make sure you can get that out. Because that's pretty devastating if you've marked up the fabric and it doesn't come off because they

J

Jan Lockhart 16:00

do have these new fabulous pins that go away with heat. Oh, really. And they come in like a four pack of colors. And it looks just like a pin. You take the top off like a pin, you mark it the first time my friend did it. She's marking on my fabric I'm like, because no watch and she takes over the iron and the heat just makes it disappear. It's amazing. Marvelous. I just ordered my Oh, I ordered some on Amazon. Okay,

A

Allison 16:24

and I'm working to have some extensive show notes. For this episode. I'm gonna link all this stuff that we're talking about. Ones that we recommend, and I will definitely make sure I link that because I have to get some of those I have never heard of that are

J

Jan Lockhart 16:37

amazing. Just amazing. That's pretty

A

Allison 16:38

awesome. Okay, is there anything else that we didn't cover? In essential supplies?

J

Jan Lockhart 16:43

You need a hand needle? Something if you're going to do you know, mending? Yes, hemming. You need a needle you need basic color thread. White, black gray.

A

Allison 16:54

Yeah. Also, if you're going to be doing some hand sewing, a thimble. Yes. Because if you've ever tried to push a needle through more than a couple of layers of fabric, it you can't Yeah, you'll have you know, holes in your fingers. Do

J Jan Lockhart 17:09
it on the counter. Yeah, push it through on the countertop. So yeah, you need a thimble.

A Allison 17:12
And there's lots of you can get met traditional metal ones, but they also have little rubber ones that fit on your fingertips and stuff. So yeah, those are those are definitely a must. Yeah. Okay, well, let's talk about some of the things that are not necessary but nice to have. Okay,

J Jan Lockhart 17:25
there's I don't even know what they're called. But they're those foldable pattern. I wanted to look this up to see what they're actually called. So that you can cut out your fabric if you if you only have space to lay it on the

A Allison 17:36
floor. Oh, yeah. A fabric board like a fabric pattern cutting water and cutting.

J Jan Lockhart 17:40
Yeah, it's like folds up like four different. They're huge. They're huge. Yeah. And you can lay all your fabric out on your floor, you can cut it on the floor. If you want to save your countertop, you put it on your countertop. Those are nice to have because they also have inch measuring Yes, markings. They have a grid on a grid,

A Allison 17:59
so that you can line things up perfectly square. Yeah, and they're typically I mean, I've only seen the made of cardboard actually, I've only seen the made of cardboard, too. Yeah, they've been around forever. I actually have to I have I found a vintage one at Goodwill one time night. It was still in like this plastic sleeve. Nice. I was pretty excited. I think I paid \$1 for it. Oh, nice. Yes, but those are great because they help protect the surface. That you're they are working. Those

J Jan Lockhart 18:24
are good. Um, let's see what else. rotary cutters are nice. There's a thing called a ham ruler. It's a little metal ruler, it's probably about five, six inches long, has this little red tab in the middle that you can slide up and down to help you measure your hem. That's nice. So you don't have to pull a ruler out.

A Allison 18:44

Yep. pattern. Let's talk about pattern weights versus pinning a pattern. Okay. Why would you want pattern weights?

J Jan Lockhart 18:50

Personally, I don't like pattern weights. Okay, as it moves, they move for me, I will almost 95% of the time I will pin it. But if you are only sewing something if you're making curtains, and you just need to keep it straight, you know to do a long straight line long straight line. Pattern. Wait.

A Allison 19:09

Okay, cool. Okay, so those are nice to have, but not necessary. Right. So let's talk a little bit about sewing machines. Okay. All right. What can you do? First of all, what can you do without a machine?

J Jan Lockhart 19:22

A lot of things hemming, mending. Fixing little rip slit in seams. You can do all of that by hand.

A Allison 19:31

I mean, you can do it. Technically, you could do any technical. I had to do anything. Because what I was gonna look this up to I don't remember when the first sewing machine was invented for the home either. I'm

J Jan Lockhart 19:39

curious like that, too.

A Allison 19:41

I think it was a singer probably. But the trestle, the ones that had the foot panels. I mean, those are old, maybe 1800s.

J Jan Lockhart 19:49

I would think I think mid to late 80s. Late 1800s. Yeah.

A Allison 19:53

So

J

Jan Lockhart 19:54

before that, folks, people were sewing by hand everything by hand. everything by hand. Yeah. So you technically you can, but you can go a lot faster with the machine.

A

Allison 20:03

That is true, very true. Okay, so what should you look for in a basic machine?

J

Jan Lockhart 20:09

If you're just starting out, keep it simple. You just want a machine that does your basics, the more bells and whistles you have, the more things can break down. And the more you can get things messed up by changing dials and changing knobs. So if you are just starting out or if you are just buying your first machine, I would say you want one that zigzags and I think they all zigzag now pretty much yeah, because that that gives you a nice finish to your edge. If you don't want to travel, you might want it a buttonholer if you're going to be doing things with buttonholes, one that gives you various feet. Yes, is that you can put a zipper in, you can put an invisible zipper in, you can put a button hole in, you can put buttons on their feet that let you do buttons. And really other than that, if you're just starting out, that's really all you need. Because everything else is just technique, right can do. You know, you can do a blind hem on a machine if you have the foot that goes with it. So I'd say the fewer bells and whistles the better.

A

Allison 21:12

Okay, good. That's good to know. How about taking care of your machine.

J

Jan Lockhart 21:19

If you have been sewing something where the fabric has a lot of fuzz, yeah, if you're done sewing it, open up where the bobbin goes. And you will see all of this was in lint and lint. Yeah, there. And so if I have done a really fuzzy Yeah, project, I will clean it every time. I'm getting a little worse about that because I'm getting a little lazy. And you can hear your machine it makes it will be much noisier it will rattle it will clink it will Clank so you just take that little brush that comes in you open up that bobbin compartment and you get all that little fuzz out of there, take your needle off clean the hole out really good, right? You know, just That's it for basic if you do a lot of sewing, and if you do a lot of changing of your tension and all that stuff. I would get it professionally tuned once every year or so. Yes, yes. That's what I do. Just to put everything back into working order. Because sometimes I'm like, Huh, what was that supposed to be said? I don't really Yeah, then you guess and then it's just a mess. But do your basic cleaning often doesn't take but you know, 30 seconds to clean that little section out down there. Yeah, and then get it cleaned. When it's really dirty.

A

Allison 22:30

I want to make a plug here for buying your machine from a sewing machine dealer, that's very smart, if you can, they have all price ranges, most dealers, reputable dealers will carry beginner line from a very affordable price. And they may even have refurbished used ones that they have tuned up. And these are people who know the insides and outsides they've been trained on the machines, they know exactly how to smart make them work well. And you could get a nice machine at a very affordable price. And the benefit of buying from a dealer is that you have access then to their mechanics. And you know, if you bought from them, typically they'll give you a discount on your annual cleaning. Yeah, if you buy a new machine from a dealer, this has been my experience, they usually have a class a free class, yes,

J

Jan Lockhart 23:24

that they helpful that they will teach you

A

Allison 23:27

everything your machine does. You come to this class, maybe a couple of sessions, and then they will show you exactly how to use all the functions on the machine. So you might pay a little bit more than if you buy it at Walmart or Joanne or off of Amazon. But you're getting an aspect of customer service, that's gonna be so helpful. Good point. And just I've had a machine before where I just thought, okay, my machine is possessed. I do not know what I'm doing wrong. And I just called them and I said, this is what it's doing. Please help me Yeah. And they were able to tell me over the phone, you know, try this. Try this. Try this. So I can't recommend that. highly enough. Good advice. Okay. And so another thing I just want to touch on really quick since we're talking about machines and cleaning and them doing weird things. I have been sewing for over 30 years. And I never knew you probably know this already. I did not know that when you thread your machine, okay. you thread it, it goes from the top of the machine down into the machine and into the needle. That's the last place if you're going to unthread it. Okay. You do not clip the you don't Okay, if you're going to unthread it, you don't pull it from the top to take the thread out of the machine. You never grabbed the the spool of thread at the top of the machine and pull that thread all the way through from the base where it's into the needle all the way out the top did not know that. The reason is because it messes up the tension. You're kidding Oh, look at that it is never supposed to come out of the top of the machine. The only it's only supposed to go down. So think gravity, it's supposed to go down. And if you want to take if you're changing your thread out to a different color or whatever, you clip it at the top, clip it right by the spool, okay, and pull it from the bottom from the needle.

J

Jan Lockhart 25:21

Wow, I had no idea. There you go. There's your tip for the day. No idea. I didn't know

A

Allison 25:27

A Allison 25:27

this until about a year ago when I had got a new machine. And yeah, that's when I learned it. They were like, no, no, no, no, don't pull over the top. It messes up the tension.

J Jan Lockhart 25:37

Good to know. Oh, no. Hope I can remember that. Yeah.

A Allison 25:40

All right, we're gonna move on, we're going to talk about fabric, the wonderful world of fabric, which is huge and overwhelming.

J Jan Lockhart 25:48

It can be. Okay, so

A Allison 25:49

let's talk a little bit about what, where and how to buy fabric. Okay, we're not going to get into too much detail about specific fabrics, because we're going to cover that more in the second episode where we talk specifically about sewing clothes and sewing for the home. But just in general, what should we be thinking about with fabric?

J Jan Lockhart 26:11

If you're starting out again, and I kind of always preface everything, if you're new to this, right? Go to a fabric store. Go to Joanne's go to Hobby Lobby, if you know what you're looking for, you can buy online, but it's hard to tell if you're looking for something and they say oh, it's it's visqueen. And you're like, What in the world is that? You know, it looks pretty and the little swatch that they've told you on within you. You get it and you're like, holy smokes. This is upholstery fabric. I can't I can't sell my daughter skirt out of this. So go look feel yeah, see what you like find the wait. So you know, Joanne's Walmart. Walmart has Walmart has fabric. Yep. And I mean, you can even get fabric at at resale stores. Yes, they will have them goodwill will have bolts of fabric, our little, you know, little sale store up here will have bolts of fabric that you can buy. So I think the point

A Allison 27:05

that you just made is really important to know, the different types of fabric, just you know, it can be overwhelming, because there's so many different types, and they have specific names and but there are some broad categories. So you should know you know, there's your natural fibers. So things like cotton, and linen. Those are things that are naturally occurring right in

nature. And then you have your synthetics and you have blends. Yes, you should kind of understand the basics of those the basic properties. When we throw out words like that, we need to understand what that means

J Jan Lockhart 27:39
and how they're going to look in a finished,

A Allison 27:43
right, how they're gonna drape how they're gonna lie, how they're, how easy there'll be towards in construction or not, you know, you probably don't want to start out your first project with a stretchy fabric. That's more advanced. Anything. Yeah, anything with spandex or anything that's got a stretch to it. Six your

J Jan Lockhart 28:01
cotton or your cotton poly blends. Yeah, definitely no understand fabric. And I

A Allison 28:07
mean, it's not, I'm not saying go do a crash course. And you need to know all the types and all the things. But just that as you approach it, you need to understand that different fabrics have different properties that are going to cause them to behave differently. In whatever it is that you're sewing, whether it's a garment or a pillowcase or, you know, drapery or whatever you need to understand the differences.

J Jan Lockhart 28:28
You can even look in your own closet. Yeah, if you have a blouse that you love how it feels, look and see what it's made of. That's a great tip. And then you you know, you know, oh, okay, well, it's got 65% polyester, so I don't want to get 100% Cotton, probably.

A Allison 28:44
Yeah, that's a really great tip. Okay, and we're going to talk a little bit about the care of fabric, which is something to consider when you're buying when you're purchasing for your project is you need to understand how do I take care of this fabric? How is it washable? Or is it dry cleaning, that's really important to know.

J Jan Lockhart 29:02
The end of the boat will always tell you that if you go to the store, if you look at the end of the

bowl, where it tells you what the price is per yard, it will tell you what the fiber content is. And it will also tell you care instructions dryclean only hand wash, machine wash.

A Allison 29:16

And a quick tip on that is when you purchase your fabric. Take a picture of the end of the bolt of the fabric.

J Jan Lockhart 29:24

I wish I had learned that a long time ago.

A Allison 29:27

Well, we didn't have cameras all the time.

J Jan Lockhart 29:31

Maybe I could have written it down. I yeah, I didn't. And then you get your like, feels like it should be dry clean. Oh

A Allison 29:39

yeah, definitely take a take a picture of it. So you can remember how you're supposed to take care of that fabric. Yeah. What about scraps and leftovers? So a very popular thing now in soloist. And by the way, I'm saying so just because the post is seamstress that is the appropriate term now to talk about people who sew a soloist in the soloist community, it's very popular now to do what's called no waste sewing, where you use the piece of fabric and you don't waste any of it and you create this amazing garment. So we're not going to talk about that, really, because that's a whole other thing. But you will have scraps and leftovers. If you're not doing a no waste pattern. What are some things we can do with our scraps and leftover so they

J Jan Lockhart 30:19

can be fun? You can do matching doll outfits. If you're making an outfit for your little girl. You can do hot pads, you can do placemats you can do hair bows, yeah, you can do gift bags, you can make little little tied gift bags that you could put gifts in lots of stuff you can do with that make a quilt?

A Allison 30:42

Yeah, I was gonna say traditionally, they would make quilt out of the scraps, which I'm starting

to do. Yeah. We're gonna talk more about that later. I'm excited. Okay, so let's talk a little bit about patterns. All right, patterns can be like, trying to read hieroglyphics versus for some of us. So how about where do we even begin with patterns? What where should we be looking? How do we buy them? Where do we start?

J Jan Lockhart 31:11

Wow. Uh, again, I would stick to an actual physical pattern. If you're just starting out. There's a lot of online patterns available. And my daughter who has just started sewing really likes them. Me. Maybe it's because I'm used to an actual pattern. They're confusing to me. I feel like they don't explain things well, but your basic simplicity pattern will have everything you need. Right there.

A Allison 31:41

Okay. So, for the absolute novice who knows nothing, and is not at all versed in the world of sewing, there's kind of four major pattern houses which you say design houses. So that would be

J Jan Lockhart 31:55

simplicity. Butterick. McCall's Vogue. Okay.

A Allison 31:59

At least in the US. Yes. Those are the those are the big players. There's a couple of other ones. Berta. And there's quick so yeah, which is and they move very simple. They may be owned by some of the bigger names. Well,

J Jan Lockhart 32:13

city and Butterick. No, McCall's and Butterick are the same company. Oh, really? Okay. Yeah.

A Allison 32:19

And eat in all of those have, like, some sort of easy section. So when you go to the fabric store, this we're talking traditional, you know, I know some of you may be looking at things online. But if you're going to like go to Joanne or go to Hobby Lobby, or wherever you're getting Hancock fabrics, you go back, it's usually in the back of the store, there's a table, and there'll be these giant books. And they're full of photos. And if you find a photo of a garment that you like, or they also have home decor sections, the books are usually divided up by gender, and then by the have like a children's section, then they'll have like, costumes section, costume section, and then a home decor and a gift section maybe. So you find the section you're looking for you find a pattern you like and there'll be a pattern number. And then you go to the little

metal drawers that are usually near that table, and you find the brand and then you find the corresponding number. And hopefully they have it in stock. And then you pull that pattern out. So all of those books will generally have like an easy so section that you can go to, and they'll have easy. So women's men's kids home stuff. It's a small little section within the bigger book. But that might be a good place to start. But would you say that with those major brands, there's some that are a little harder and some that are a little less easier? Yes. So what would you how would you distinguish,

J Jan Lockhart 33:44

just as the name says, simplicity would be your easiest, okay. And you can get some beautiful patterns, beautiful patterns, you can also get your very basic, a lined elastic waist skirt on simplicity. That would be the easiest. McCall's and Butterick are probably intermediate and then Vogue. Yeah, always has been always will be. The more complicated. Yeah,

A Allison 34:11

it's just more advanced technique. Yeah. More advanced design. Yeah. It's just going to be a little bit more challenging to do evoke crowd but also more expensive. And they are more expensive. That's true. Yeah. Very true. And patterns can be used to like take out a second mortgage to buy patterns, but I know that they're always on sale. I think they're always on sale at Hobby Lobby. I'm not sure. They're always very cheap at Walmart, but Walmart doesn't have as big of a selection. Yeah, very limited, very limited. And then Joanne is usually running some kind of sale.

J Jan Lockhart 34:44

And then also if you go look through the pattern book, and like you had said, hopefully it will be there. Yeah, let's say you have picked out Butterick pattern 752 Nobody has Butterick 752 You can go to butterick.com. Yes and or Are 752 and they will have great sales? Yes, that's always true. That's very good. You may even do that you may check before you buy it and Joanne or Hobby Lobby, see if you can get it cheaper. Yeah, right directly through the company.

A Allison 35:12

Right? Okay, cool. We've picked out our pattern, we have our little pattern envelope in front of us. And then we turn it over and we see all of this information on the back of the envelope. What do we do with that? What does all that mean?

J Jan Lockhart 35:29

Well, there's a lot of information on the back of that pattern. And we may talk about this later. But my suggestion would be always buy the pattern first. Take it home, and study it. Don't try to buy everything. Unless you've been sewing for years, and you know exactly what you need, what you have what the pattern says. Take it home. Yeah, figure out what size you need. Figure

out what what pattern on the pattern you're making, because they will have different views. ABCDE Am I making a or am I making D, figure all of that out, make your notes, then go back to the store and buy what you need.

A

Allison 36:05

That's a good tip. And maybe that's where buying online. Buying your pattern online comes in handy. Because honestly, I mean, just to go sit unless you just love hanging out at the fabric store, which I do. But I do too. You know, if we're talking to busy moms here, yeah, you don't have time to go hang out and peruse the books at the at the pet. But if it's 10 o'clock at night, and you've got a spare 30 minutes, you could look online and and then order online. Yep. When it comes in, you can study it like you're saying, I think that's a really great tip. Yeah. Because there's been many times I've opened up the pattern in the store. No, me too. And I have all of the instructions opened up. And I'm trying to figure out, you know, the layout, and then I'm trying to make sure I have everything I need. Yeah, yeah. It sounds it probably be way more efficient to

J

Jan Lockhart 36:50

probably, like I said, you're usually there by yourself. There's not many people back in the pattern section. No,

A

Allison 36:56

not typically. Yeah. But yeah, we will get more into the nitty gritty details of reading a pattern specifically for clothing versus home sewing, and all the things you need to consider when we get into that in part two of our series. So let's talk a little bit about economy with sewing. Because, like we said, you can save money with sewing, but you have to be pretty intentional. And you have to be intentional to not lose money sewing. True. Because it can be really expensive. It can be really expensive. I would say even don't don't go into sewing thinking I'm doing this to save money, because you're not because you're probably not. And that's where we get back to the sort of ethical, you know, we have fast fashion now, in the past 20 years, I'd say that's been this phenomenon where clothing is so cheap, and it's costing somebody something somewhere along the supply chain. But for the consumer on this end, you can go to Walmart, and you can buy Oh, yeah, something for just a few dollars. Yeah, now, it's not gonna last very long. Yeah. And I had a story here that I wanted to share my grandmother in law. So there's my, my husband's grandmother, who has been sewing her whole life, said to me when we were first married, my husband and I, she said, You know, I used to sew all my children's clothes. And then it just got to the point where I could buy it, it was so much cheaper, and it just wasn't worth it all the effort to put in. But she said the quality is just not the same. I mean, she knew that. And that's very true. But so let's talk about that. Let's talk a little bit about what are some things we can do to help cut cut the costs?

J

Jan Lockhart 38:38

We talked about patterns being so expensive. So if you have friends that so swap patterns, because the good thing about patterns is they don't make them one size anymore. They're like

because the good thing about patterns is they don't make them one size anymore. They're like everybody who decides 21 pattern. Yeah. So if you're careful about how you cut it out, you can pass your pattern on to your friend and you can say, hey, I made this skirt. Now you can go ahead and make this top right, because the patterns are the good chunk of what you're going to spend on your the item you're sewing. You can also share notions, which isn't a whole lot. But when you when you get a pattern and it says you need bias tape, and you buy a whole thing of bias black bias tape, and then you have us two inches of it that just sits in your notion drawer. So make an inventory of things. And then when you're going go with your friends and say oh no, I have that at home. Don't worry about it. You can have mine we're going to swap Do you know,

A

Allison 39:36

we should probably define notions. We've used that that word a couple of times and I realized we didn't define what that is.

J

Jan Lockhart 39:43

notions are all of the things that go up besides the fabric. It's your zipper, your buttons, your applique whatever you want to put on it. Anything that is not the fabric would be your notions thread. All of that. The pattern back the pad back of the pattern will tell you all of the notions that you need.

A

Allison 40:01

Okay? If you need snaps if you need get buttons, it'll tell you exactly the size of button that you do the exact size of zipper that you need. Yes. Thread. I mean, all of that would be guessing notions. Okay. I just wanted to, to clarify that for the listener. Another idea about where to get patterns cheaply would be thrift stores, and garage sales. There's always, almost always there's a little section in the back that's got some some patterns. Now they might be dated. But an a line skirt isn't a line skirt. In 1973, or in you know, 2000 a

J

Jan Lockhart 40:37

photography may look different on the front of the pattern, but it's still in a line skirt. Right?

A

Allison 40:41

Yeah. Right. So and some people love to sew with vintage patterns, because they're looking for that vintage vibe. So that's a really fun thing. And also resale stores will have patterns. Yes. Yeah. So that's, that's a great place to look for that. So sewing with friends, by sharing patterns and Oh, fabric swapping to

J

Jan Lockhart 41:00

Yes. If you if you are making yourself a skirt, and you're not doing the you know, no, no waste sewing, you're going to have waste. So you give that to a friend who maybe is making some gifts and needs it for Hotpads to give her mother in law for Christmas or baby clothes, baby clothes. Yep, things that

A Allison 41:24

require less Jabra. Right? Yeah. Okay. Or if you're like me, and you collect fabric because she just can't pass it up. You might have quite a stash. So doing something like a fabric swap. Great idea, all your sewing friends, everybody bring you fabric that you need to part with, because it's just been sitting there for two years. Yeah, you haven't done anything with it yet. And do a fabric swap.

J Jan Lockhart 41:48

And so that's also a good little tip. If you do buy fabric. And you don't really have anything in mind for it yet. Put a little note on there. How much you bought? Yes, that's two and a half yards. Yeah. Then it's just right there. Yeah, yeah.

A Allison 42:01

Because a lot of times I'll buy a piece of fabric at Goodwill or a thrift store. And usually they'll tell you how much is on them. How much is on that roll or in that little bundle of fabric? Yeah. But that's a good reminder to make myself a note. Because when I bring it home, I wash it and yes, and I just fold it up and I have a little stash that I can wear ahead keep it all okay, cool. How about repurposing things. So maybe using old clothing. To make new clothing.

J Jan Lockhart 42:30

I have seen the cutest on Pinterest, I have seen where people take dad's shirts and turn them into little girls dresses. And I think it's just precious you can actually use the buttons in the front. Yeah. So you know, a man's shirt has a lot of fabric. Yeah, just make it a little girl's dress. It's got a lot of a lot of fabric in it. So you can do that skirts by I have actually gone to Goodwill, and found the cutest skirt, cutest fabric and ugliest skirt. But you know, it's got tons of fabric. Yeah. And I've used that if you're creative, you can come up with a lot of things.

A Allison 43:05

Okay. What about do you save? If you have an item of clothing that is beyond repair? Okay. What about saving parts of the fabric for another project? Or maybe even taking the buttons off?

J Jan Lockhart 43:20

Buttons are usually all I will say, Okay, if they're cute buttons, if they're generic buttons, I don't bother. But if they're really pretty buttons and a good size? Absolutely save those.

A

Allison 43:30

Yeah, just put them in a little button box.

J

Jan Lockhart 43:31

Me First of all, we used to love my mom's button tin, shell, you know, cookie tin like this, it was filled with buttons. And you got to look through that and find the matching buttons like treasure was? Yeah, but there are there are people that do save a lot of the parts, but I just honestly, I don't,

A

Allison 43:52

I think you would have to know buttons are multipurpose, you can do a lot with buttons. And it's great to have a collection of them because you never know even on a piece of storebought clothing that loses a button right? I'll go searching through my stash to find something close enough to match to replace the button if it didn't come with a replacement. But I would say if I was going to save a zipper out of a pair of pants or something like that,

J

Jan Lockhart 44:15

I mean if you're really trying to save money, absolutely. It's a basic zipper.

A

Allison 44:20

Yeah. You might be on Yeah, number of things. Not just another pair of pants, you might use it on, I don't know a pillow or something.

J

Jan Lockhart 44:29

Anything. Okay.

A

Allison 44:30

Good ideas. Okay, let's talk about organization in regard to sewing. Because just based on this conversation we've had so far you can see there's a lots of pieces and parts and you can very quickly have a mess on your hands. So first of all, what about if you have a dedicated space? What do you need for a basic setup? Really even without a dedicated space? What do you need for a basic setup to have a sewing session to sit down and

J Jan Lockhart 44:59

play Put the sewing machine table to put the sewing machine someplace to plug it in. Someplace for your iron ironing board. Yeah, plug it in. Good chair. Yes, it'd be sitting for a while come to light, good lighting. Yes. And that's and space to work. So a folding table, a dining room table,

A Allison 45:20

right? So if you don't have a room dedicated to sewing that you can just keep set up all the time. What are some portable sewing station ideas that we could recommend,

J Jan Lockhart 45:31

besides a folding table? Yeah. Lots of tubs, bins, baskets to put stuff in. Because if you're only if you only have an hour during naptime, and you have to get things out and put away quickly, you bring out your three bins, one of them has the fabric, one of them has the supplies. One of them has everything else, then you know, when you're all done, you take that bin and that table and you just scoop it all back into that van, and you're done.

A Allison 46:00

Yeah, I think that's really good just to have a designated storage container of some sort, yes, that you can just easily put things back in, put the lid on, and it'll be secure, and nobody's gonna mess with it, and things aren't gonna get separated. Yeah. Another thing that I used to do is I would take stuff, I'd cut out a pattern. And so I had my, my, all my pieces already cut out. And that was maybe all I could do that day. So I would take all of those pieces, and I would either drape them over a hanger, or I would clip them on, you know, if it was like a pants hanger, you could clip them all together. But usually I would drape them over a hanger, and then hang them up in the closet that way. All of those pieces stay together. And they didn't get all because I took the time to press them. Yes. As we talked about, so I didn't want to fold them up, right, and stick them in a box. Yep. And then have to press them again when I took them back out. So I would lay them over a hanger. The other thing you could do is those long, rough totes that fit underneath your bed.

J Jan Lockhart 47:03

Oh yeah,

A Allison 47:04

they're usually really long, really long. So if you had a long skirt, or a long pair of pants, you could lay that whole piece down in there without having to fold it in half. Good idea eight creases. Yeah. So that would be another thing that you could do. And bonus, you can store it

under your bed. So it's out of the way out of the way out of sight. What about other storage ideas for whether you have a designated space or not? So the ways to store things,

J Jan Lockhart 47:28

the thing that I used a lot when I first started sewing for a business and had a lot of projects going at once is those hanging shoe racks? Not Not the kind where you put like, you know, it's got a place for for shoes, horizontally, but it hangs vertically. Yeah. And they're about five inches wide. I think then I could take my fabric, my pattern and my notions and stick that in there. And then I could do it for the next one and the next one and the next one. Okay, so

A Allison 47:57

you're talking about

J Jan Lockhart 47:57

the ones that are more like a shelf like a box or like a box like a box one Yeah, one box right on top of another and they and they hang in there, hang the hang from your closet. Then you can put all that stuff back and you can see at a glance, Oh, I gotta get started on this. You know, this outfit right here. Or you can also do that if you have, there's a great sale at Joanne's and you bought four pieces of fabric. You're like, Oh, I forgot about that piece of fabric. Well, now you can see it because it's right there. Yeah, I did that a lot. I

A Allison 48:24

love that using vertical using your vertical space. Yeah, in ways like that. Speaking of using storage, hanging storage, things that weren't necessarily meant for sewing. I got this idea from my grandmother who got it somewhere online. I don't know she saw this hack somewhere where you, I think I might have mentioned this to you before. It's a jewelry organizer. Okay, it's a hanging jewelry organizer. And it's usually double sided. And it's got clear pockets, little pockets that you would put little pieces of jewelry in so there's probably I don't know, 50 pockets on one side. They are the perfect size for storing spools of thread. That's brilliant. So what I do is I put the spool of thread with its bobbin matching bobbin inside each little pocket. And I have I'm like color coordinated all the way down.

J Jan Lockhart 49:15

That is really I got to do that.

A Allison 49:17

I thought that was so smart. It is so smart, because they do make different storage solutions for thread. Some of them hang on your wall and they you know, the little spokes stick out and you

stack them on there. Those are cute. But again, if you don't have a space for that what I love about this system is it's literally taking up I don't know two inches of space that's great and it hangs in a closet randomly that I don't you see at a glance up there's my red thread and it's protected from dust good point in those little clear pockets. They don't close but they're pretty well protected in there. They don't get all dusty like they would if they were sitting on the on the wall right point. So I really love that tip. That's a great one. Okay, what about organizing our patterns? Are you the kind of person who tries to fold the pattern back up and put it in its original envelope?

J Jan Lockhart 50:07

It will be 100% the lines that it was when I took it out of the pattern,

A Allison 50:12

How do you even do that?

J Jan Lockhart 50:14

It takes me a long time. But I am crazy about that. I don't know why I just I have to do that. Because if you don't, your pattern is this fat and then it just like, oh, okay,

A Allison 50:28

so let me tell you what I do. Okay. I take a an envelope, like, I don't even know I'll have to link it in the shownotes. There. I don't it's about a it's bigger than eight by 10. But it's about that size. I don't know, maybe it's 11 by 14. Anyway, it's bigger than the pattern envelope originally. All right. And it has a little clasp a little Brad that keeps the flap closed on the top. Okay. And so I take my pattern, my original envelope, and I cut it so that my front side and my backside are two separate pieces. Okay, you're going with I tape the front side, or glue it or whatever, onto the front of that envelope. And then I do the back on the backside. So basically, I just create my own new envelope. But I keep the original front and back. I fixed them to the front and back of my bigger envelope. And then

J Jan Lockhart 51:19

you can fold it any way you

A Allison 51:20

want. Exactly. It's much easier, much easier. It's true. So that's how I do that. But where do you keep yours?

J Jan Lockhart 51:27
I have pattern boxes.

A Allison 51:28
Okay. And that is a thing they make? Box? Are they cardboard? Are they plastic?

J Jan Lockhart 51:33
Cardboard. I have every pattern I've bought since college.

A Allison 51:36
How do you organize them? Do you organize them by brand?

J Jan Lockhart 51:39
I organize them like as my collection of patterns grew, I've had to redo it. But like I have a a girl's ,a costume, a casual wear, a skirt.

A Allison 51:53
So it's by type. And then inside I'm, I'm an organizing person. There's no organization rhyme or reason within the inside. Because I'm thinking there's no because they're probably all different brands and numbers. You couldn't really do it that way. Okay. That's, that's interesting. I love to know how people organize their things. We're going to tell some sewing war stories. Yes, we must. Because we want everybody to know that. Like we said, As you sow, so shall you rip, you're gonna have some major failures. That's how you learn. That's just the way it is. We would wish that you wouldn't, but we know you will. So we're going to just share, we're going to be vulnerable here. So what's a particular fail that you learned from?

J Jan Lockhart 52:39
Well, what I want to say the very first one I'm going to tell you is because no matter how long you've been sewing, you're still going to make mistakes. It was not that long ago, I was making flower girl dresses for a girl I work with and put the sleeve in this little girl's dress this big, puffy sleeve. And it was in backwards. And I went so I had to rip it and it's delicate fabrics. So I had to rip the whole thing out and I put it back in. backwards again. Oh, no. So you still make mistakes. I've been sewing a long time and I still make mistakes. But I've made some I've made some mistakes.

A Allison 53:22

A Allison 55:22

Yeah, yeah. So have I Okay, so one of my stories is when I was first learning how to sew, my mom was always a soloist. She made a lot of my clothes and but my mom was also she worked full time as a nurse. And then she was going back to school, about the time that I was really interested in learning how to sew, I needed to learn because I was in theater and I needed costumes. And then specifically for a play that I was in, I needed an apron like a tie. It was a pioneer time, so I needed to tie on an apron. So I figured it out. It was not a pretty apron. But it was a theater. So it didn't really matter because it was a costume for the stage. It was far enough away. But I got to the point where I wanted to make. I wanted to make like an actual outfit that I was going to wear in public. And I had bought the fabric and I had all these plans. And this was before the internet people. Okay, so I couldn't just look up a YouTube video. And I didn't have any books. I learned I learned later on to go to the library and check out books but I didn't do this. At that point. I was just going to figure it out myself. Well, I could not get my seam straight. And I was so frustrated. I tried and tried to try it. I just ruined the fabric and I and I ended up telling my mom you know, I just don't understand how I can't get the needle to stay straight and the fabric to stay straight and the thing and she's like well, you know, there's those lines on the on the metal thing. The stitch plate, those are seam guide lines like you're supposed to follow. I mean something so basic like that. And the moral of the story is if if just asked my mom to help me.

J Jan Lockhart 55:02

In the beginning, she would have been happy to help me. Yeah. But I was

A Allison 55:05

being stubborn. And I was like, No, I'm gonna learn under those myself.

J Jan Lockhart 55:08

Yeah. But yeah,

A Allison 55:10

just don't. Don't be ashamed to ask for help. No. You know, if you get stumped, call your grandma or your mom or somebody you know your sister or somebody you know, who sews and ask them. Better yet, if you can, like, sit under them, watch them and have them watch you because YouTube is awesome. And it's a wonderful resource. But there's nothing quite like having someone stand over your shoulder and watching you do it. And say no, actually, why don't you try this? Or, you know, let me just show you this little trick, right? That just makes all the difference.

J Jan Lockhart 55:43

Because a lot of sewing what you don't realize until you're in there is manipulating the fabric as it's going through the machine. And like you said, you really can't tell that by watching

it's going through the machine. And like you said, you really can't tell that by watching someone on YouTube because they're just going because they're not thinking about it. Right? You're watching a new soloist. And you're like, Okay, can I just make a suggestion? Why don't you put your hands and then

A Allison 56:02

world a difference? Yeah, world a difference makes all the difference. Yeah. So be sure to ask for help. Yeah. Okay, let's talk about an achievement, a sewing achievement that you're proud of.

J Jan Lockhart 56:13

Again, there's a lot of them probably just a simple thing is all of the dresses that I made my daughter for her Easter, you know, Easter Sunday, she had beautiful dresses, and I was just always so proud of them. Those weren't difficult, but probably the proudest two things. When I was sewing for other people, I there was a bride who came to me and she wanted to dress she was on a very limited budget and she had this grandiose thing she wanted and I wanted to help her. She had the whole bodice that was back in the 80s You know, when the badasses were heavy and lace? Oh, yeah, he did. And beaded lace. Well, she couldn't afford the beaded lace. So we made the dress, I added the lace and I did all the beating myself. And I added it onto the train on the back. And it was hours and hours and hours. But it was beautiful when it was done. So I was very proud of that. But then also one time, somebody came to me and she had a picture out of Vogue magazine of this green velvet and satin dress. They had this jacket with a stand up collar and I recreated it. I don't know how to this, and I don't have a picture of it makes me so sad. I never did get a picture of that. But when you do something like that, like I said, my daughter's dresses, I'm so proud of those when you can look at that and go, I took a bolt of fabric, I took three yards of fabric and I made this. That's a good feeling.

A Allison 57:34

It is a really good feeling now, probably, I have a couple that I'm particularly proud of I haven't sold nearly as much as you have. But I did make a roman shade one time. But for you. I was I was very proud of that. And it took me a long time. Those are hard. And I had four little children. I think I think I had a one year old at the time. Actually I was I was this was when I was much younger and a

J Jan Lockhart 57:59

lot more energy energy. Yeah, no that but I was really

A Allison 58:03

proud of that. And I made a flower girl dress for my daughter, oh, to be in my sister in law's wedding. And that I still have that, oh, wow, maybe somebody will get to use it one day. And it's, I was very proud of that one. Because I had never done anything like that before. But I just

want to encourage people to that. You know, like I said, it took me a long time to make that roman shade because I had four young children and I only had, you know, 10 minutes here, 15 minutes there. And when it comes to sewing, it's okay, if you can only do it in bite sized chunks, you'll eventually get it done. It's just gonna take a little bit longer. So yeah. So that leads very well into the next section that we want to talk about, which would be sewing expectations. Having some realistic expectations about sewing and whatnot. So what are some important things to remember?

J Jan Lockhart 58:57

You can't get it all done in one day. Yeah. You may not get it done in one week. And that's okay. Because unless you're under a tight deadline, yeah, there's no hurry. But so what's the difference? You know, if you wear the dress this Sunday, are you worried a month from now?

A Allison 59:17

Be okay with that? Yes. And I would recommend do not put yourself under a tight deadline. So if you've never made a bridesmaids dress before, don't promise somebody Oh yeah, I'll make my bridesmaid's dress and you know, no, no, no, no, don't do that. Don't do that to yourself. Definitely be careful

J Jan Lockhart 59:37

realistic expectations. You do have to set very realistic expectations of what your abilities are and what your time is. Because if you have little ones at home, like you said, you have you have maybe 15 minutes, you may have an hour at naptime, and then it's when they go to bed at night and you're exhausted. So don't put that kind of pressure on your side.

A Allison 59:55

So be realistic about what you what your capabilities are what your skill level is currently what kind of time you have. And also what kind of budget like you mentioned, the bride that you were sewing for. Just be realistic in your expectations, and lower

J Jan Lockhart 1:00:12

your expectations. And that's okay. Yeah, you know, the dress may not have, I don't know all of the little things that you want it to have. But you've finished the dress and you're wearing it and you're damn proud of it

A Allison 1:00:26

for sure. Also, we want to make sure that we understand and expect that it's a process that we need to be patient with the learning how to sew and the sewing itself. You have to be patient

with how long it takes the talk just a minute about the prep with sewing. Like, how important is that

J Jan Lockhart 1:00:51

very important. It's like anything, PrEP is just as important. You if you buy your fabric and you know it's going to be a garment, I would suggest take it home, immediately wash it, you know may need to be pressed a little keep in mind that you're going to press it as you go. But it's horribly, horribly wrinkled, you're going to want to press it because you know what those wrinkles to sit in. Look over the pattern study the pattern. When I was first sewing and even for years, if I still do this, if it's a pattern that I've never done before, I will like you said open up the whole pattern, read through the whole pattern and say, Okay, what's going to what's going to trip me up here? Yeah, take the time to do that. Because if you're in the middle of it, you're frustrated and you're on a wad that whole thing up in the trash it goes.

A Allison 1:01:34

Especially if you're working in 1015 20 minute increments, it you will maximize the time that you have available to so if you've done that in prep work of you know, look through all the steps in the pattern, make sure you understand if there's a technique in there that you've not done before go YouTube it now's the time to YouTube it before you start. Yeah, for sure. And then understanding that to me. Sewing prepping for sewing is a lot like prepping to paint a room, you're going to do about 50% of the work in the prep. Yeah. And you just need to know that you're not going to actually put a needle and thread to fabric until you've done a whole lot of steps beforehand. And

J Jan Lockhart 1:02:14

it makes the actual sewing so much smoother. Yeah, it does. Yeah.

A Allison 1:02:19

So that's important to understand. And keep that in mind. Yeah. So let's end our time. This this episode kind of reflecting on how sewing is part of the art of home. So how do you think that sewing can add to this practice that we call the art of home.

J Jan Lockhart 1:02:36

If you're literally sewing for your home, like curtains or pillows, you're putting a unique touch on to your house that nobody else has. So that when they come in, they see a piece of you. And it's really the same if you're sewing garments to they are seeing a piece of you because you can take two people can take a pattern and put them side by side when they're done. And you have no idea. It's the same pattern, right? They pick different fabric, they pick different colors.

And it's a reflection of you. And it's a reflection of what God has made you the things that He has given you. Are you a bright person? Are you a muted person? Are you you know, whatever person, right, it just, it shows who you

A

Allison 1:03:19

are? Yeah, absolutely. I agree. I think it's also a way to express, it can be a way to express love and care for the people that we share the home with, you know, one of my very favorite things to do when my kids were growing up was to create costumes for Halloween for me too, you know, and we would sometimes make them from patterns. But one of our favorite things to do was to like go to Goodwill, see what we could find. Okay, so we had a theme, everybody's going to be something related to like knights and princesses this year. So you know, we would go find fabric, some kind of something at the goodwill that kind of looked like chainmail. So I was able to make like a little chainmail vest that look like a little suit of armor. You know, that kind of thing. Getting our kids involved. was really fun for us. And it was a way for for us to, to bond.

J

Jan Lockhart 1:04:09

Yeah. And absolutely it really is this a family thing. That's just one example of that.

A

Allison 1:04:15

So how can sewing help to bring beauty and meaning into the sort of ordinary tasks of home making do you think?

J

Jan Lockhart 1:04:24

I think it can bring color sure to your life. It can bring if if you look at your life as tasks, that's all Yeah, it's all you do all day long as tasks and you know, I'll talk to my daughter, my daughter in law and they're like, I have to fix them dinner again. You know, it's like just tasks when you when you bring in something like sewing. It's a task, but it's it's not I have to do this task. And so this is I'm adding this to my life because I want to bring a little color. Yeah. And to me, that's huge, especially when you're home with little ones all day long. Like I said, in the very beginning of As I said, it's a creative outlet. Sure. And a healthy creative outlet.

A

Allison 1:05:05

Yeah, absolutely. And they get to watch you do something creative and like you're feeding your creative soul. And they get to see you do that. And I think it makes a big impact on your kids. I love to the meditate, we talked about this before, but the meditative sort of calming at of sewing, I feel like that really helps me as a homemaker to just kind of find a happy place. And, you know, if I can sit down for a few minutes with a piece of fabric and some thread and just do that meditative act, it'll just call me right down. If I'm in a bad place, right, having a bad attitude about my work in the home, that was just and that's not for everybody. I'm not saying it's the right all for every situation. And some people sewing is not their thing. And that is okay,

absolutely. But if it's something you're interested in, I just would highly recommend that, that you think of it that way too, as a way to just sort of calm your your mind and your body and give something for your hands to do while you're sitting in front of the TV at night with the family or you know, whatever. It's really great. So let's end with a piece of advice that you would give to someone just starting out and sewing.

J Jan Lockhart 1:06:23

Start simple. And like I said earlier, lower your expectations, right? If you see a dress on Pinterest, and you're like, I'm going to make this dress, you know, you can, but at some point, you may have to go, you know, it's not going to look like that. And it's going to be okay, because finished is what counts. In my opinion finished is what counts. If you can take fabric and a pattern and turn it into something you have made a huge accomplishment, I think you need to pat yourself on the back. But have realistic expectations and start simple. Okay.

A Allison 1:07:06

Good advice. I second that. Alright, so we will be back next time with part two of the deep dive of sewing, where we're going to get into much more specific detail on sewing clothing, both for adults and for children, sewing for your home. And we're going to talk a little bit about sewing as a business, which is something that Jan has a lot of experience with. So thank you very much, Jan, I look forward to part two.

J Jan Lockhart 1:07:32

Me too.

A Allison 1:07:34

We hope you've enjoyed this in depth look at the basics of the art of sewing. I know we covered a lot of information in this discussion. And so to help you remember some of the things we discussed, we have created a free resource for you. We're calling it the art of home sewing handbook. It has a list and description of the essential tools we talked about. It has a couple of pages of common sewing terms with definitions, which sometimes the pattern companies and the tutorials assume that you know these terms, but if you're a beginner, you probably don't. So this will be a handy reference for you. Machines can also be very intimidating. So we created a diagram of the basic parts of a machine to help you learn your way around one, as well as a list of trusted machine brands. These brands range in all prices. Some of the brands are a little bit more on the economic side, and some are on the higher end side. But almost all of them have an entry level machine. Now you might pay a little bit more for like, I don't know, a Bernina machine entry level than you would pay for a singer or a brother machine entry level. But they're all trusted brands. And you're going to get a decent machine if you go with any of these brands. We also have a fabric cheat sheet guide to remind you of the basic types of fabric and what they are best used for. And finally, we have a two page project journal template where you can record all the details about your sewing project. It's just a helpful little tool for the process of actually making an item. But also, it's a great record of everything that you've

made. And you may want to go back and reference things later. If you want to make that pattern again, or just to have a record of all of your creative endeavors. It's nice to look back on those things. This resource is available at the [art of home podcast.com/sewing](http://artofhomepodcast.com/sewing) And it will be linked in the show notes below as well. Thank you for listening, for sharing and for giving us your feedback through our email and our new voicemail link, which you can find on our contact page on the website. We love to hear from you. We want to hear your ideas, your thoughts on what we've covered and maybe what we could cover in the future. If you have any topics you want us to address. Are there questions that you would like for us to ask our guest so that we are not currently asking, please let us know. And if you're not receiving our weekly newsletter, email you are missing out, you will be the first to know about what's coming in the new season. If there's any new developments, new, new resources we're working on or new ideas that we're having, we tell the newsletter audience first. I often share parts of my own homemaking story and favorite recipes and my favorite books and resources. It's just a great little extra freebie resource put out by the art of home. I call it homemaker happy mail. And it shows up in your inbox every Friday morning, and will only cost you your email. And speaking of costs, we are happy. And when I say we I'm talking about me and my husband, because that's your dynamic duo team here. We are happy to offer this podcast and the companion resources for free. It's a ministry. In our minds, it gives me something to do in these empty nest years. It's a passion project. And I can be creative, and I absolutely love doing it. But it does take a lot to put it together and it does take resources to put out. So if you find value in the art of home, and you would like to support the show, help cover some of our costs, you can leave us a tip. That's the one way you can financially support us right now. We have a virtual Tip Jar over on [buy me a coffee](http://buymeacoffee.com/theartofhome), you just go to [buy me a coffee.com/the art of home](http://buymeacoffee.com/theartofhome). There's also a link down in the show notes. But I wanted to talk to you about this today because we're going to be exploring some ways that our listeners could give on a monthly or annual basis to help support the show to partner with us in this ministry of giving encouragement and inspiration to homemakers all across the globe. We don't know exactly what this is going to look like. But we're thinking some sort of membership situation where if you give monthly or annual support, you become a member and you get member perks, you get access to members only content, possibly a member roundtable discussion that we would turn into an episode and broadcast on the podcast. I don't know I have lots of ideas, we would not change our current content. This does not mean we're thinking about putting up a paywall, so that you have to pay money to access what we've been put been putting out, that's not something we want to do. We want to create a way for listeners like you who have benefited from the podcast to kind of pay it forward so that more listeners can hear so that we can pour even more resources into the podcast and the things that we make to go along with it. Just to make it even better than it already is. So I don't want to create a membership or some kind of program that doesn't serve anybody. So I need to hear from you guys. What do you want? What are your needs? What would be meaningful for you something that would be worth it for you to to partner with us financially? I want to hear your ideas. You can leave me a voicemail, or you can send me an email or you can leave a message on our contact page. Just go to the [art of home podcast.com/contact](http://artofhomepodcast.com/contact). And yeah, tell us what you think. We want to know. Well that is it for this episode of The Art of home. Wherever you find yourself today in your home making journey. Just know that we are cheering you on. You're doing an awesome job. And the work that you do in the home really matters. It matters to God, it matters to your family, and it matters to make the world a better place. We'll see you next week with our deep dive on selling part two. Until then keep practicing your art of making a home