

## SEWING TIP ON EASING

**What does it mean to “ease” a seam?** To “ease” a seam means that you work in the fullness on the larger side, often a curved area, and make it match the opposite side without having visible gathers or obvious puckers.

**When** do you need to “ease” a seam? It is helpful to “ease” a seam when you have more fabric fullness on one side of a seam than you do on the other side.

**How** do you “ease” a seam? There are a number of ways to “ease” a seam.

**The most common way** is to sew a long machine stitch, essentially a gathering row (although you will not actually be gathering) along the seam line of the fabric to be eased. Pull the bobbin thread up tighter than you need and then flatten it back out with your finger tips. Be sure there are no puckers or gathers in the seam, although you will likely have a slight ruffled effect in the seam allowance. This is the goal. You will literally see the fabric “ease” itself with this technique— it will flatten out on the stitching line, but ruffle slightly in the seam allowance. You can use the tip of an iron to smooth out the stitching line and flatten the fabric in the garment itself, if necessary.

Notice how the curved area of the sleeve below has been “eased.” The excess fullness has been “worked” into the seam allowance, leaving a flat seam line, with a little fullness in the sleeve.



The result is a nicely rounded straight sleeve that does not “dig in” along the seam line. Not only is this a pretty, rounded sleeve, but it also adds comfort.



Notice the rounded area at the top of the sleeve, shown below.



Garment photographed: “A-Line Christening Gowns II”

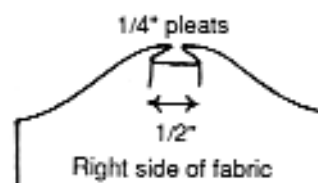
## STRAIGHT SLEEVE REMEDY

If you have trouble setting in a straight sleeve, you may make a 1/2” box pleat in the sleeve at the shoulder seam. This allows fullness for comfort, makes the sleeve easier to set in, and makes a neat appearance in the finished garment.



Garment photographed: “Boy’s Button-on Suit”

To **make** the box pleat, **fold** the sleeve at the shoulder seam, wrong sides together, and **stitch** 3/8” - 1/2” from the folded edge, going down approximately 1” from the top of the sleeve. **Press** the pleat flat at the top and let the fullness release into the sleeve at the base of the pleat.



The width of the pleat depends on the amount of fullness you want to remove.

