

Grab and Sew FAQ

1. What is Grab and Sew?

Grab and Sew is our service that brings free sewing machines for checkout to our library community. This service expands upon our exciting collection of non-traditional materials available to our patrons.

2. Why sewing machines?

San Mateo County Libraries is committed to making maker technology accessible to anyone interested in learning. We have also seen a great deal of interest during in-branch sewing experiences. Sewing machines are intergenerational, and home sewing has recently experienced a rise in popularity.

3. Which library can I check out a sewing machine from, and do you plan on expanding?

Currently, our sewing machine kits are available for checkout at [Brisbane](#), [East Palo Alto](#), [Half Moon Bay](#), [Millbrae](#), [North Fair Oaks](#) and [Woodside](#) libraries. In the future, if there is interest, we hope to expand this service to more libraries.

4. What is the minimum age to check out a sewing machine?

Patrons 18 years and older are invited to check out a sewing machine.

5. What is needed to check out a sewing machine?

Patrons must have a valid library card starting with "29041" or "29045". A signed electronic waiver will need to be completed as well. Sewing machines are reservable on our website. Visit the Grab and Sew reservation pages for the locations listed below to get started:

- [Brisbane Library](#)
- [East Palo Alto Library](#)
- [Half Moon Bay Library](#)
- [Millbrae Library](#)
- [North Fair Oaks](#)
- [Woodside Library](#)

You can always get help from our [Customer Care](#) staff by calling **1-833-YES-SMCL (1-833-937-7625)**. You will be given a rolling bag with the sewing machine, thread and accessories during your pick-up appointment. Just add fabric, new or upcycled!

6. Why must I sign a waiver to borrow a sewing machine?

Like any machine, risks are involved when using a sewing machine. Signing the waiver acknowledges that you understand these risks and agree to use the machine responsibly. Due to safety reasons, patrons should not make any modifications to our sewing machines. Any sewing machine should be returned in the original condition it was checked out in.

7. What does it cost to check out a sewing machine?

Like anything else in our collection, sewing machines are free to check out.

8. How long can I check out a sewing machine, and how do I return it?

Sewing machines are loaned for one week (7 days). They can be borrowed from Brisbane, East Palo Alto, Half Moon Bay, Millbrae, North Fair Oaks and Woodside libraries. The sewing machine should be returned to the location where it was checked out during that library's open hours.

9. What accessories come with the sewing machine?

Each machine comes with a power cord and pedal, thread, extra needles, bobbins (3), zig-zag foot, buttonhole foot, zipper foot, blind hem foot, seam ripper, thread caps and screwdriver.

10. What types of projects are these sewing machines suitable for?

The Baby Lock Joy is suitable for various projects from hemming, clothing construction, crafts and more.

11. How do I get started sewing?

We recommend the following videos to help you get the machine ready to sew:

- [How to Thread the Baby Lock Joy](#)
- [How to Wind a Bobbin](#)
- [How to Select a Stitch](#)

For more information on the Baby Lock Joy sewing machine, visit babylock.com. You can also [download the instruction manual](#).

12. Are the sewing machines regularly maintained?

After each use, our staff checks over the sewing machines to ensure they are clean and receive any necessary maintenance.

13. What happens if I miss my pick-up appointment?

Sewing machines are held for 24 hours. After this period, the sewing machine will become available for others to borrow.