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Equipment for Pressing

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Equipment for Pressing

Cooperative Extension Service
South Dakota State University
U.S. Department of Agriculture
**WHAT DO I NEED?**

**Iron**
- Dry
- Steam and dry
- Spray, steam & dry

**Boards**
- Ironing
- Sleeve

**Pressing**

**Beater**

**Seam roll**

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**WHAT IS ITS USE?**

**Iron:**
In pressing, the iron's purpose is to create steam, not to flatten fabric. Good pressing doesn't depend on the iron's weight. For steam, use a steam iron or a dry iron with a dampened cloth.

**Boards:**
A regular ironing board is preferred for the large areas of garments. It also serves as a work table on which you can put other pressing equipment.

**Sleeve:**
A sleeve board (A and C) helps with ironing and pressing. It is especially useful for sleeves, blouses, children's garments and "difficult to get at" places in other garments.

**Pressing:**
A convenient addition is a pressing board. Use it on a table near your sewing machine so you will not need to move from sewing area when you press. Your own needs will help you determine best dimensions. Pad well and cover.

**Beater:**
Use beater to force steam through fabric, especially wool. With "slapping," it sharpens edges and creases in lapels, trousers, and pleats. Used gently, it flattens seams and hems. Best used over padded equipment.

**Seam roll:**
The seam roll makes it possible to press seams with pressure on seam line only, so seam edges won't mark fabric.

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**HOW TO SELECT OR MAKE**

**Iron:**
Select an iron with a thermostatic control. If you choose a steam iron, check for sufficient, well-distributed holes in the sole plate.

**Boards:**
Boards with adjustable heights work best. Pad board well with old wool or cotton blanket, silence cloth, or commercial padding. Use several layers to make padding ¾ to 1 inch thick. Cut each layer ½ inch wider than the one before. Start with smallest one next to board. Last layer goes over edge to give rounded effect. Secure all layers with tight cover (drill or muslin).

**Sleeve:**
You can buy a sleeve board, but it may need more padding and a more durable cover. Follow same procedure as for regular board. You can make a serviceable protective cover of unbleached muslin (preshrink first). A good cover resembles a moccasin with elastic in wide end to hold cover tight (B).

**Pressing:**
Make press board from ¾-inch board. A good size is 30 by 14 inches. Your own needs will help you determine best dimensions. Pad well and cover.

**Beater:**
For best results, make from hardwood. A good size is 12 to 15 inches long by 2 to 2½ inches thick. Taper from about 4 inches wide at one end to 2 inches at the other. Round edges and sand well. Finger grooves on each side make it easier to hold.

**Seam roll:**
Make seam roll by padding and covering tightly rolled magazine. Use about ¼-inch padding, have edges meet, and fasten by hand. Cover with colorfast wool or heavy cotton in the same way. Close end with a few hand stitches.
### WHAT DO I NEED?

- **Pressing cushions**
  - Use a pressing cushion to shape curved areas which fit rounded parts of body (darts, sleeve caps, hip area of skirts and trousers). A “ham” shape is good for general use. Consider additional shapes for specific needs.

- **Pressing mitt**
  - A pressing mitt helps in pressing small construction and curved areas. Wear on one hand while handling iron with other or slip it over end of sleeve board for shaping sleeve caps or other small rounded areas.

- **Press cloths**
  - The main purpose of press cloths is to protect fabrics from direct heat of iron and provide needed moisture for some fabrics. Press cloths are needed when pressing details on right side of garments made from some fabrics.

### WHAT IS ITS USE?

- **Pressing cushions**
  - To make ham-shaped cushion, cut two sections 12 by 16 inches—one of colorfast wool, one of firm cotton. Taper the sections to make width 12 inches at one end, 8 inches in center, and 2 inches at tip. Stitch together, leaving opening for filling. Stuff firmly with fine sawdust (fir or hardwood) which has been dried and sifted. Finely cut, slightly dampened scraps of wool also make a good filling.

- **Pressing mitt**
  - Make from heavy muslin or drill. Cut two pieces 10 by 8 inches and one piece 8 by 8 inches. Have straight edges on selvage if possible; curve one end of each piece. Place short piece between other two, matching curved edges. Stitch along sides and around curved end. Turn right side out. Insert % inch padding between two long parts.

- **Press cloths**
  - A good press cloth is smooth, seamless, lintless, and free from sizing. Choose wool, cheesecloth, muslin, or drill—18 by 24 or 27 inches. A good all-purpose press cloth is a square yard of fine quality cheesecloth used singly or doubly.

### OTHER HELPFUL EQUIPMENT

1. **Whisk broom, brush, or pile fabric**—for napped fabrics.
2. **Cardboard**—thin pieces to slip under pocket flaps, seams, etc, to avoid edge marks.
3. **Small bowl and sponge**—for wetting press cloth or areas on garment.
4. **Distilled or demineralized water**—for steam iron.

For methods of using pressing equipment, see FS 246, When You Press.