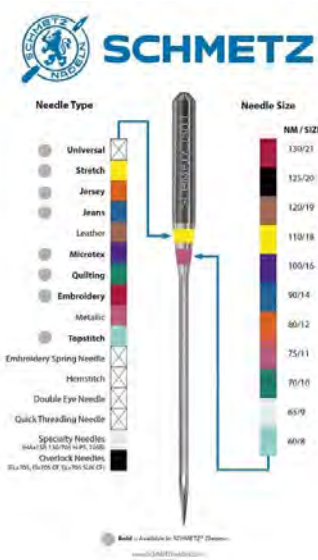


Sewing for Swimming

FACT SHEET - Choosing the right needle for your sewing machine



Needles come in a range of standard sizes. The size relates to the diameter of the needle and is indicated by two numbers; 70/10, 80/12, 90/14 etc. The first one is the European or Metric indicator. The second number is the American or Imperial indicator. The higher the number, the thicker the needle.

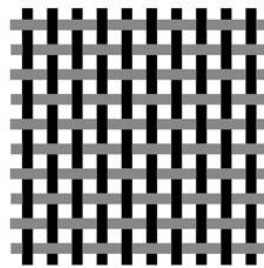
You will also see that some needles have a coloured band on the shaft. This tells you what fabric the needle is suitable for.

Some needle manufacturers also have a second band of colour.

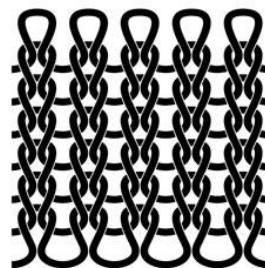
The top band indicates the fabric or needle type.

The bottom band indicates the size of the needle.

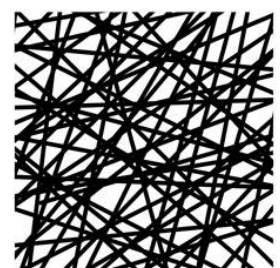
Swimming cozzie fabric is a knitted fabric, it is formed from interlocked loops and has an additional fibre added to it to give it more stretch and recovery capacity. Elastane is the additional fibre which is also called lycra and spandex added to a polyester base to create a fabric suitable for swimwear.



woven



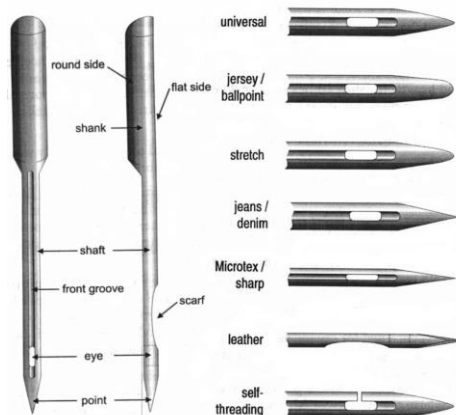
knit



non-woven

Elastane is a delicate fibre which can be easily damaged/split when sewn with the incorrect needle.

A standard sewing machine needle is sharp to enable the thread to be plunged through the fabric and link to the bobbin thread – to form a stitch. As the elastic fibres in swimwear fabric are fragile, using an ordinary machine needle on cozzie fabric can damage the fibres, causing them to split and make tiny loops on the surface or ‘drag’ the fabric or skip stitches.



There are specific needles engineered for use with stretch fabrics. These have a Ballpoint i.e., they are rounded at the end so they glide in between the loops of the fabric and don't pierce the fibres.

So, you can purchase a standard use BALLPOINT needle which is also referred to as a JERSEY needle.

You can also use a STRETCH needle, which has a more refined ballpoint. Stretch needles can have an eye positioned higher up the shaft so bigger loops are created in the stitch to allow for more stretch and movement.