

Seamstress

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The sewing business is a traditional work at home enterprise that has several different fields you can choose to specialise in. Alteration services offer small and large alterations to all sorts of clothing. If you have more of a creative flair combine sewing and design right at home and create your own fashion label. If you love to sew and don't mind long hours alone this affordable work at home business is for you.

Before The Start-Up Let's Not Get Ahead Of Ourselves

If you have no sewing experience but like the idea of becoming a seamstress it's quite possible to learn the skills necessary over a period of time. However as with most work at home careers passion is what matters an enjoyment of sewing is essential.

To quickly get your business up and running experience is essential whether you plan on doing alterations or designing your own clothing, your sewing skills will always be under close scrutiny. If you do plan on designing your own clothing, its helpful to be able to sew without the use of purchased patterns.

The Start-Up

A good quality sewing machine will be your biggest start-up expense, expect to pay around \$1000 (USD) for a new one - however second hand commercial machines usually go for around \$400 (USD). You'll also need a work space and appropriate sewing area in your home. If you have children spend time designing a storage system that places dangerous items out of reach or behind lock and key.

To market and run your business effectively you'll need [business stationary](#) such as business cards, a letterhead and an invoice template. Make sure you always have business cards on you - word of mouth will be your central means of marketing making business cards essential.

The type of sewing business you decide to start will depend on your specific skills, experience and preferences, here are a few ideas.

Alterations

This is the safest seamstress business option. There is always a demand for clothing alterations and marketing expenses are very minimal.

Custom sewn clothing

Also known as a dress maker, a custom clothing seamstress creates unique garments for clients who appreciate fine clothing.

Clothing designer

Rather than sewing on request a clothing designer creates various unique designs and markets them under a label. If you have extensive sewing experience and a flair for design and marketing, this is an exciting business to start.

Either as a dress maker or clothing designer there are numerous niche markets to specialize in such

as pet clothing, crafts, home decor, and weddings.

Making It Work

If you decide to specialise in alterations, put together several standard price packages for the most common types of jobs charge per hour for irregular work not covered on your job card.

If you decide to specialize in dress making or clothing design, do extensive research before starting-up. Carefully construct a [business plan](#) and choose the most suitable niche for your skills and interests. Spend time researching the competition; remember some that some competition present is always a good sign that an industry is profitable.

Before deciding on your rates do comparative shopping with local seamstress services. If you're starting a dress making or clothing design business, price research will be essential before deciding on your own rates.

Marketing

Market your alterations service by networking with local clothing shops and dry cleaners, owners are always looking for good seamstresses to recommend to their clients. Carry plenty of business cards to leave at check out counters. An advertisement in the Yellow Pages, local newspaper classifieds and on community bulletin boards are also good ideas. Word of mouth will be your primary marketing tool. Attach your business card to all items you send back to customers once you have an established client base you can hopefully stop marketing all together.

If you decide to start a dress making or fashion design business the same advice could apply. Target all marketing efforts at your chosen niche. Most fashion design businesses sell their clothing through local stores network with local store owners and shop around for different offers before you decide which stores to display your clothing in.

Don't Forget

This business has excellent potential for expansion. No matter which model you choose to follow it might become possible to hire staff once you become busy - before that happens be prepared to spend at least half of your work day alone.