



Workshop Etiquette

By Mary-Fay Green

Workshops provide you with an opportunity to learn new techniques and perfect old stand-bys. For a novice or beginner it is a means by which they can LEARN.

Most workshops won't end the day with "X" number of finished items, but there should be a lot of new ideas bouncing around in your head. (Tip – write them down while they are still fresh). Most classes will require more work at home. Some classes are for technique only. Read the workshop advertising and be sure you thoroughly understand what is being taught.

Teachers spend a considerable amount of time preparing to teach a class and/or workshop. You will be provided with a supply list. Read that list over very carefully. It is taken for granted that courtesy, consideration, punctuality, common sense and good manners are on that list even though they are not listed. Go over the supply list provided by your instructor/workshop convener and put all of the supplies in one container, bag etc and check your list. Bring ALL of the supplies listed – your instructor spent time making that list, and if she said it is required, then it is. (Tip – if in doubt, bring it.)

When your sewing machine is listed on the supply sheet, it is up to you to make sure a day or two in advance that it is in good working condition, clean, oiled, bulb works, new needle and some spare needles, extra bobbins, etc. If you are borrowing a machine, the same still applies. In either case, make sure you know how to operate the machine and please – triple check the tension. You don't want to lose precious class time making adjustments you can do at home before class/workshop.

Punctuality is a priority. Wise students are 15 to 20 minutes early. You have to set up your machine, supplies, cutting board etc. When your instructor starts at the given time, give her your total and complete attention, take notes and be quiet. All of the members in the class have paid money to attend and they want to learn, don't deprive them of this opportunity. When you are late, you totally disrupt the entire class, you have to catch up and you give your teacher uncalled for and unnecessary work. Remember at the beginning what was stated on the unlisted basic supplies?

If you have a hearing or visual problem, sit near the teacher. Wearing your nametag is a real courtesy that is most appreciated by teachers.

Teachers want to teach, they want each and every student to thoroughly understand every phase and step of the lesson. Give your instructor your total attention – if you don't understand or question something, put up your hand and wait to be acknowledged and ask. HOWEVER if you think you have a better way, save it for the end of the class or talk to your teacher one on one as she goes around the classroom.

Don't forget to pack your lunch and bring your mug for an all day workshop. Lunchtimes are usually half an hour and this is the socializing time. Instructors get hungry too and they've been teaching so welcome a chance to enjoy some nourishment and general fellowship before continuing for the second half.

Considerate students bring shoes, slippers, etc. to change into when the weather outside is wet, snow covered etc. You are more comfortable. You can move about easier and the floors stay clean and dry. Ever dropped your last piece of white on white in a floor puddle or worse still, slipped and fallen?

DON'T be a workshop visitor. Either take the class and attend or show some consideration and good manners and stay away. Uninvited visitors disrupt the entire class, teachers and students alike.

Sometimes instructors have something you may wish to purchase so remember to bring your money and/or cheque book. Exact amount for kits is appreciated. Most teachers don't have a lot of change for large denomination bills.

Lots of us bring a camera to class, but before you take pictures, be sure to have permission. Many artists have original designs protected by copyright.

Be a neat student – put clippings threads, etc. where they belong ... in the trash.

Last but not least – say good-bye to your instructor and tell her thank-you for the class and if necessary, give her a much appreciated hand in packing up her supplies, and samples, etc. A mailed thank-you note with an enclosed snapshot of your finished project is a teacher's bonus.

Basic Sewing Kit

- ✓ Pins
- ✓ Needles
- ✓ Thimble
- ✓ Thread
- ✓ Fabric scissors
- ✓ Small trimming scissors
- ✓ Stitch ripper
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ White pencil or chalk marker
- ✓ 6" ruler
- ✓ Tape measure
- ✓ Tape – magic transparent or masking
- ✓ Band-Aid

For workshops you should really add :

- ✓ Pin cushion
- ✓ Tweezers
- ✓ Notepad and pencil for taking notes
- ✓ Rotary equipment (board, ruler, cutter, spare blade)
- ✓ Template plastic
- ✓ Mechanical pencil
- ✓ Coloured pencils – great for drawings
- ✓ Gray and ecru thread
- ✓ Your sewing machine and it's operating manual
- ✓ A Good Sense of Humour