

What seam should I use when sewing my SAORI cloth?

I've developed a simple chart to help you determine which seam to use when sewing your SAORI cloth. This chart is especially useful when using the Japanese pattern books since the "pictures are in English¹" but the words are in Japanese. The pictures clearly show measurements, cut lines, and sewing lines but don't specifically say what type of seam to use. This chart will help you to make that determination.

To use the chart, determine if the edges you are sewing are raw/unfinished edges or selvage/finished edges. A fringe edge that you are using in your design is considered a finished edge. The Reference column shows the page number for the description of the seam in the SAORI Self-Innovation Through Free Weaving book. If there is a second number in the reference column, it is the page number for The Beginners' SAORI Clothing Design book (English).

Edge Finishes	Seam Type	Notes	Reference
2 Selvage Edges – sewn together at a shoulder, side, or other outside edge.	Superimposed Seam (Preferred Method)	In SAORI, the selvage edges are typically sewn to the outside.	100 10
2 Selvage Edges – sewn together to make a larger piece of cloth, or at a center front, center back, or other inside seam.	Intersecting Seam	OPTIONAL double-seam method: Sew the seam very near the selvage edge on one side of the cloth following the edge of the cloth. Turn the piece over and sew again down the opposite selvage edge, again following the edge of the cloth.	100 10
1 Selvage Edge & 1 Raw Edge – often used when attaching a jacket yoke to the back of the jacket.	Welt Seam		100
2 Raw Edges – This is the seam that is often found on the side of jeans.	Flat Fell Seam		101
2 Raw Edges – Especially good for very lightweight fabrics.	French Seam		100
Any 2 Edges – where you do not want the edges or seamed cloth to show. Also for use when making darts, gussets, and other shaping techniques.	Traditional Seam	NOTE: if you are sewing raw edges in a traditional seam that will not be covered by lining fabric, then the edges will still need to be finished.	
1 Raw Edge – like at the bottom of a garment or around an armhole or neck opening.	Hemming	OPTION: If your fabric is too bulky for a nice hem, you can use a hem tape to cut down on the amount of the fabric in the hem.	101 11

¹ At the 2014 Saori Conference in Peachtree City, GA, Kenzo Jo made a comment referring to the Japanese books that "the words are in Japanese but all the pictures are in English."