

**THE WISS STORY
OF SHEARS & SCISSORS**

"Marriage resembles a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated; often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing anyone who comes between them."

Sidney Smith

*"Needles and knives
Will Love drive away
But spoons and scissors
Will Love Amplify."*

Old Danish Jingle

*"There goes but a pair of shears between them.
They match each other as from the same cloth."*

Old Proverb

This booklet has been prepared as a service to
teachers, students and all those who like to sew.

HISTORY AND EVOLUTION

OF SHEARS AND SCISSORS

Science follows shears back to the Iron Age, when their invention is credited to Italian shepherds of the Third Century B.C. However, it is probably true that shears are the product of several cultures.

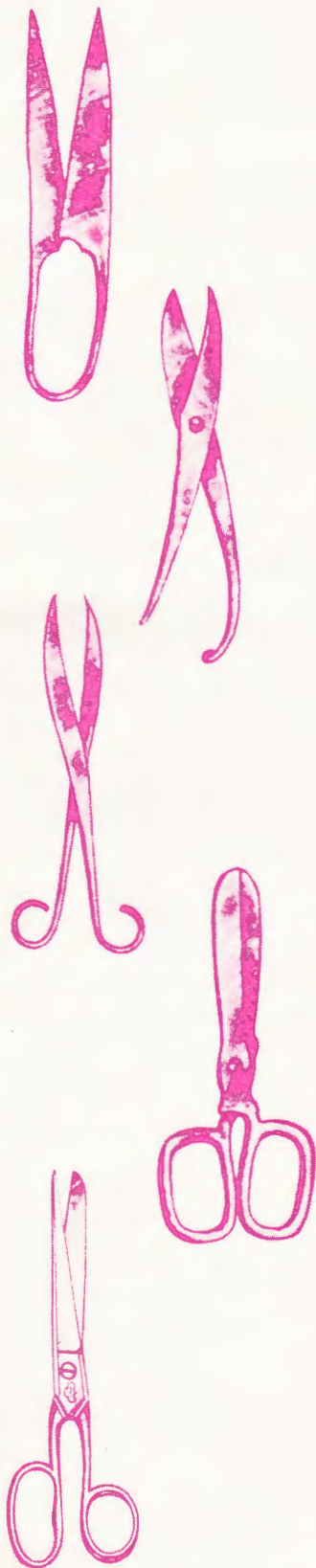
All of the early shears had two things in common—their design, and primary function. The Greek, Roman, or Egyptian shears were usually of one piece of iron or bronze, bent into a “U” shape. The bottom of the “U” operated as a spring and the arms as blades worked against each other by the pressure of the hand. They were used for clipping sheep, and exactly this same type of shears is still in use. The Romans also used their shears for trimming myrtle and hedges, as well as cutting the hair of nobles and dandies of the emperor’s court.

The development of the first cross-bladed shears occurred in the First Century. Among the first written references is one in the Fifth Century by Isidore of Seville who described them as tools of the barber and tailor.

In the late 1800’s an ancient Egyptian tomb was opened containing, among other things, a woman’s work basket in which were needles, pins, combs, and a pair of bronze shears inlaid in silver with designs of ancient artistry.

Through the ages the best shears, swords, and knives were made by individuals of great skill among whom were the famous sword makers of Damascus. These craftsmen welded twisted strips of metal to attain a cutting edge that is described in legends as capable of splitting a warrior’s coat of mail without breaking.

Experiments made by researchers in the Wiss factory revealed that welding together two kinds of steel—one very hard and the other malleable—produced shears of superior keenness and durability. No finer shears have ever been made than those produced in this manner, and shears so made are described as having inlaid blades. In the present day production of fine shears and scissors from a bar of steel—through forging, grinding, heat treating, polishing, and adjusting there may be as many as 175 separate steps. Regardless of the method of construction, however, the most priceless ingredients are the skill and the reputation of the maker.



CONSIDER THE MATTER OF SCISSORS (AND SHEARS)

There is a difference between shears and scissors. For instance: **shears** generally measure 6" or more in length and have one small ring handle for the thumb and a larger handle for the insertion of two or three fingers for better control and leverage. **Scissors** range in length from 3" to 6" and are made with ring handles of equal size. They should be used for lighter cutting jobs such as embroidery, ripping, trimming and clipping thread, or the care of cuticle and nails.

The way a pair of shears or scissors is manufactured has much to do with its utility and cost. There are two methods of producing shears and scissors at the lowest expense:

1—by casting. These are often brittle and breakable, have limited durability and are often fitted with a rivet instead of a genuine screw so that proper adjustment is soon lost.

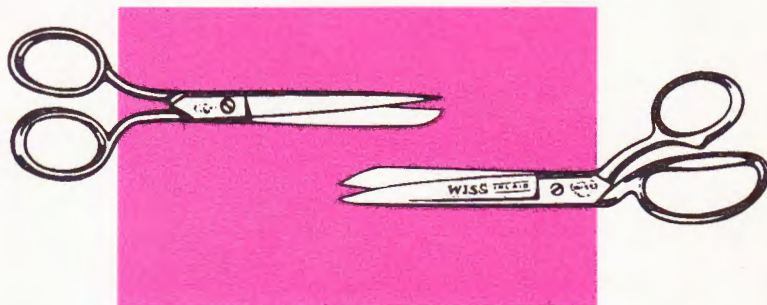
2—by cold pressing, sometimes misnamed cold forging. This method produces shears or scissors that are soft, will not maintain an edge, and can be used with only limited satisfaction.

The finest shears and scissors are made by hot-drop forging. A bar of steel, red hot, is pounded several times with a heavy drop hammer. There is no other method of steel fabrication that brings out the qualities of steel as well as hot-drop forging. Shears and scissors made in this manner will retain their keenness longer, can be adjusted to a permanent finish, and can be repaired to operate like new.

A variation on the hot-drop forging method of production is the inlaid process by which a blade section of high carbon crucible steel is welded to a tough, malleable frame to achieve the highest development of the two essential qualities in fine shear making: adjustability and blade hardness.

Although manufacturing centers in Germany and Italy are capable of producing good shears and scissors, the great majority brought into the United States are imported on a price basis and are not of a quality equivalent to that of the best American producers.

Consider your shears and scissors as your own precision tools. Just as any artisan is particular in the choice of his tools, and jealously guards them against misuse, so should you select your shears and scissors with care, then treat them with the respect they deserve.



HOW TO SELECT SHEARS AND SCISSORS

A Pair For Every Purpose

Do you ever stop to think how important shears and scissors are to our daily living, and how difficult it would be if we were suddenly deprived of them? They are among the real necessities of everyday life. Without them many people would not be able to earn a living, or could not do their work properly.

Shears are often made either with black handles and nickel-plated blades or fully nickel plated. There is no difference in their usability. Those fully plated are a little more expensive. Scissors are usually fully nickel plated. Wiss shears and scissors are also available with an extra coat of chrome plating over the nickel to provide a more lasting rust-resistant finish. These are very handsome in appearance and are available in attractive gift boxes.

There is a type of shears or scissors to meet almost any specific requirement. Each type is usually made in several different sizes to accommodate the comfort and need of the user.

Here and on the following pages are a few members of the shears and scissors family which find the greatest usefulness in the average household:

SEWING SCISSORS

THE MOTHER'S LITTLE HELPER—perfect for numerous light cutting tasks such as ripping, snipping, darning, cutting light material, wrapping gift packages and so on. Choose between those with two sharp points, and those with one sharp and one rounded point. They are indispensable for the sewing basket. The size range is 4" to 6".



DRESSMAKERS' SHEARS

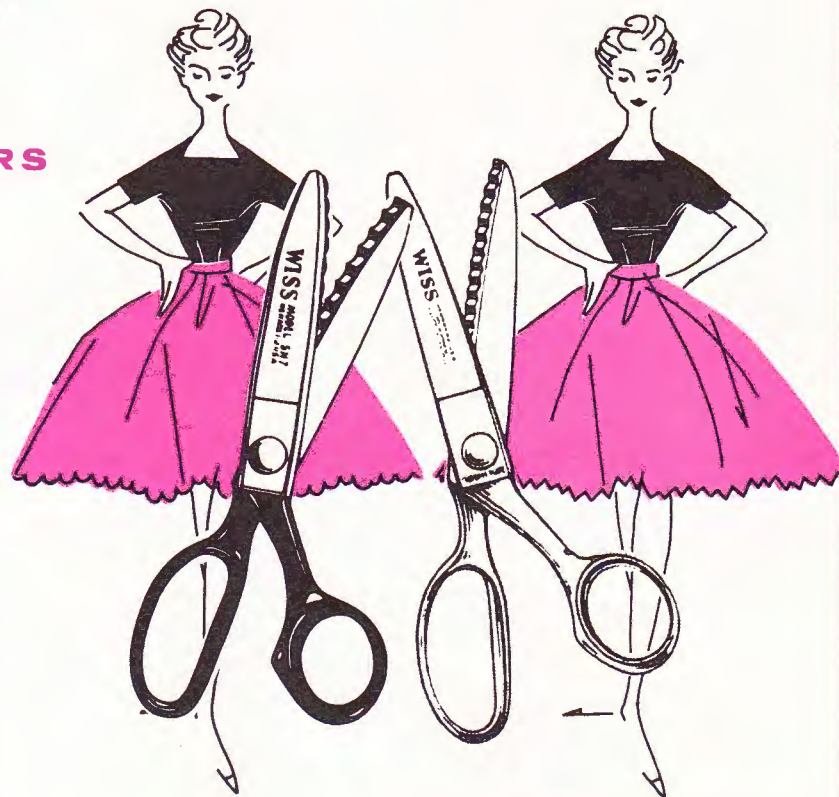
THE CAREER GIRL of the sewing family—dedicated to dressmaking and bent on efficiency! These shears, the same type used by professionals, are designed for effortless and accurate cutting. Their bent handles permit the blade to rest flat on the table, making it easier to follow a pattern outline precisely. The most popular for home dressmaking are the 7", 7½" and 8" sizes. A left hand model is also available in 7½" and 10" sizes.

PINKING SHEARS AND SKALLOPING SHEARS

ARE TWINS that do the same things but in a different way. Both these finishing shears give a ravel-resistant seam finish—an edge that differs in appearance, as the names imply. Pinking Shears cut a neat zig-zag edge, Skalloping Shears cut a small graceful scallop.

Even if you never make a dress you will find many uses for these shears around the house. They give a highly decorative finish to many fabrics such as glazed chintz, felt, suede, chamois, oilcloth and plastic. Both Pinking and Skalloping Shears are also popular for use in occupational therapy.

Wiss Pinking Shears come in 5½", 7½", 9" and 10" sizes. The teeth of the 9" and 10" are slightly larger than the standard. Wiss Skalloping Shears are in 7½" and 9" lengths, with the scallop of the 9" size 25% larger than the 7½" size. The smaller pink and scallop are intended for seam finishes in lighter fabrics such as cottons and silks. The larger pink and scallop are to insure a greater ravel-resistance on heavier fabrics such as wools and tweeds.



DECORATIVE TRIMMINGS
MADE WITH SKALLOPING
AND PINKING SHEARS



EMBROIDERY SCISSORS

THE GRACEFUL DANCER of the sewing scissors family—light and slender, with blades that taper into two sharp points. Generally small in size, 3½" and 4" being most popular, these scissors are specially designed for intricate cutting, embroidery and the finest kind of needlework. Also ideal for a traveling kit.



NAIL OR PEDICURE SCISSORS

THE BEAUTY EXPERT—keeps hands and feet well groomed. Sturdy, with slightly curved blades, Wiss Pedicure scissors cut the heaviest nails smoothly, leaving no ragged edges. Size range in various styles 3", 3½" and 4".



CUTICLE SCISSORS

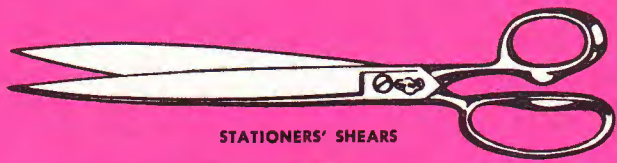
THE DAINTY ONE — keeps cuticles trim with a delicate touch. These scissors (when of good quality) have extremely fine, razor-sharp blades for close cutting, and are adjusted to cut well with either hand.



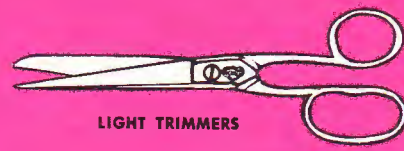
KITCHEN SHEARS

"JACK OF ALL TRADES"—capable of almost any cutting job, in or out of the kitchen. These shears are extremely useful in preparing vegetables, salads, and cutting up poultry, meat and fish. They are ideal for flower arranging too. You can even cut light wire without damaging them. The Wiss Kitchen Shears come fully chrome plated or with handles in Red, Yellow, Green, Turquoise or Pink to compliment your kitchen decor. The handles are formed to unscrew tight jar tops, decap bottles, pry and hammer.

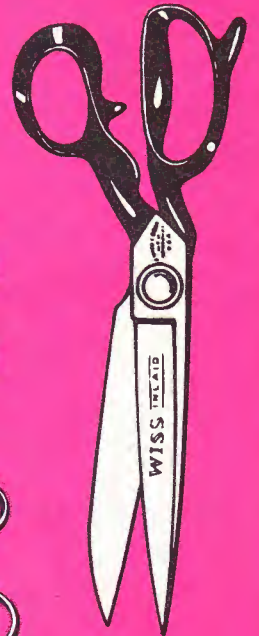
THESE ARE THE SHEARS AND SCISSORS NO WELL EQUIPPED HOUSEHOLD SHOULD BE WITHOUT.



STATIONERS' SHEARS



LIGHT TRIMMERS



TAILORS' SHEARS



HOUSEHOLD SHEARS
Also for left hand



BARBERS' THINNING SHEARS



BUTTONHOLE SCISSORS



NOSE SCISSORS



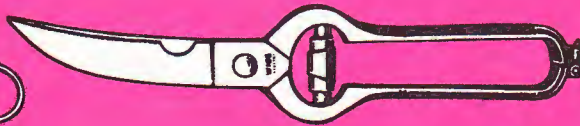
DESK SCISSORS



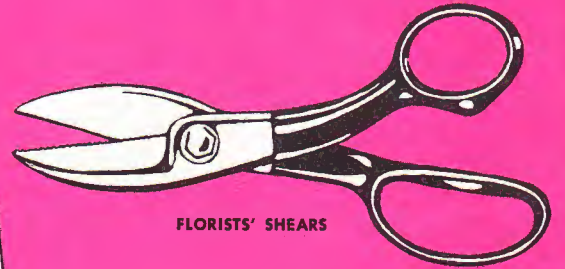
BABIES' NAIL SCISSORS



BANDAGE SHEARS



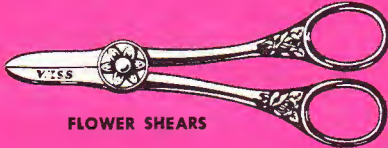
POULTRY SHEARS
(These vary in style)



FLORISTS' SHEARS



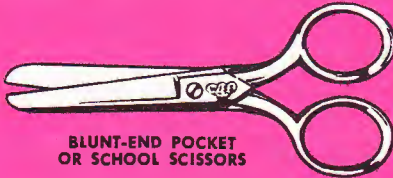
LOBSTER SHEARS



FLOWER SHEARS



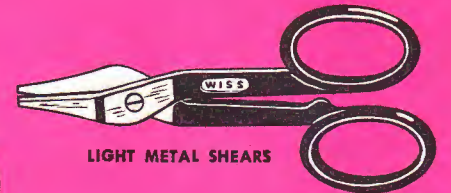
BARBERS' SHEARS
(These vary in style)



BLUNT-END POCKET
OR SCHOOL SCISSORS



CUTICLE NIPPERS



LIGHT METAL SHEARS



NAIL NIPPERS
(These vary in style)



RUG SHEARS

There are many others in the Wiss scissors family, each with its own characteristics and individual function. Illustrated above are some of the widely used styles.



FACTS TO REMEMBER

WHEN BUYING SCISSORS

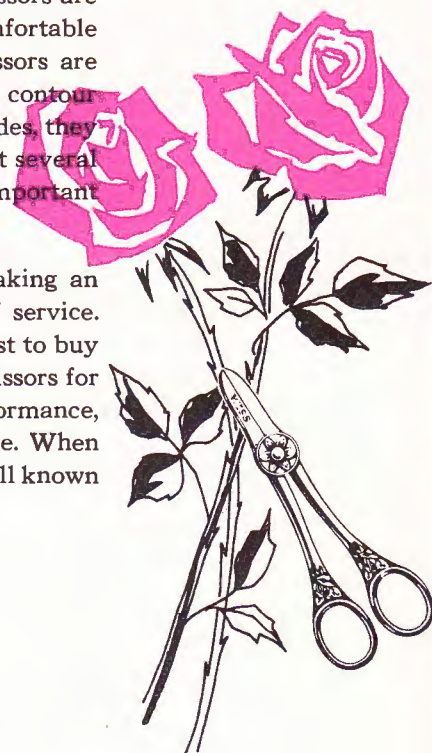
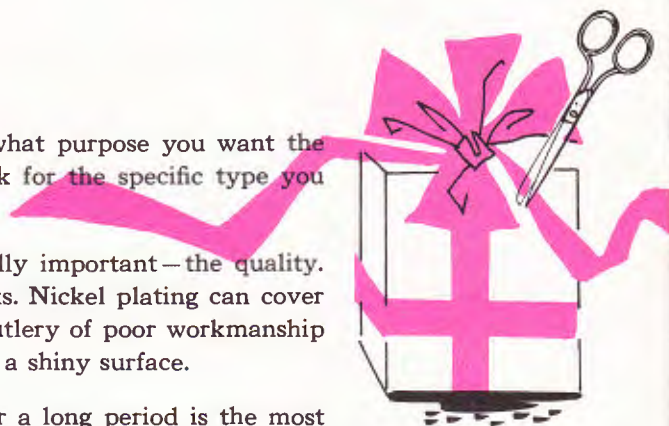
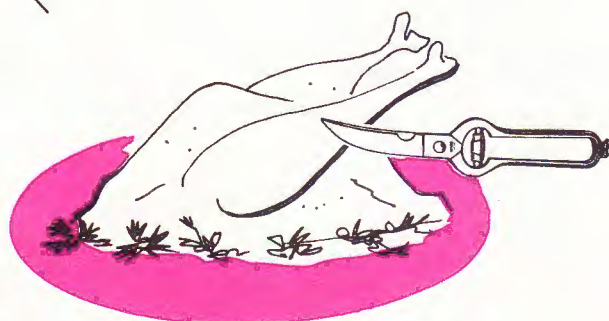
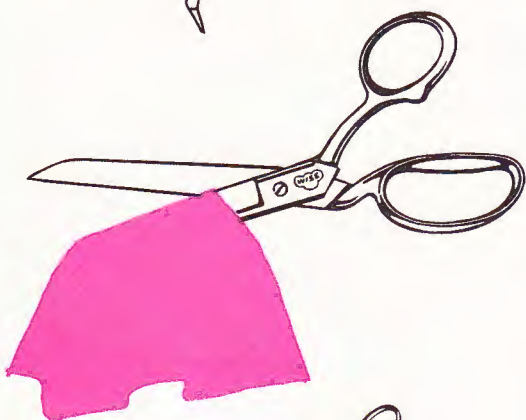
First, decide for exactly what purpose you want the shears or scissors, then ask for the specific type you need.

The next decision is equally important—the quality. Don't be deceived by looks. Nickel plating can cover a multitude of sins, and cutlery of poor workmanship can easily be disguised by a shiny surface.

The ability to cut well for a long period is the most important function of a pair of scissors. Be sure that the scissors you are considering have been hot-drop forged. Ascertain whether or not a genuine screw or bolt has been used, as rivets will loosen easily and cannot be tightened again. Loose blades will tend to “chew” the material.

At most cutlery counters a small piece of fabric is available for testing scissors. Try out several pairs before buying. First make sure they cut sharply from near the back of the blades right up to the points, and immediately release the fabric when the cut is completed. If the points cling to the fabric, the scissors are defective. Secondly, the scissors should be comfortable in your hand. The best shears and some scissors are made with fitted handles to conform with the contour of the hand. When you open and close the blades, they should feel neither too loose nor too tight. Test several types and sizes and feel the difference. It is important that they should suit you personally.

When you buy a pair of scissors you are making an investment which should pay off in years of service. Therefore, it is worth the little more it may cost to buy the best, and to have the correct shears and scissors for every job, not only for the satisfaction of performance, but also for the economy of long-term service. When you buy shears or scissors, remember that a well known brand is your best assurance of quality.



HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR SCISSORS

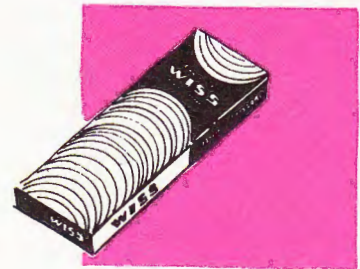
After you have availed yourself of the best possible equipment, the next consideration is proper care. Scissors, just like any other precision tool, need proper treatment to preserve their efficiency.

The care of shears and scissors is very simple. Keep them dry; oil occasionally at the screw; be sure to remove all excess oil.

Smooth operation is usually assured by running one thumb along the inside of each blade to remove accumulated lint and dust.

Any reputable cutlery repair shop can usually recondition high quality shears and scissors to cut like new. *Pinking* and *Skalloping Shears* are the exception. They can only be properly sharpened and repaired by the manufacturer.

Note: When your Wiss Pinking or Skalloping Shears need sharpening they can be completely reconditioned to cut like new for a fraction of their original cost. Write J. Wiss & Sons Co., Dept. P, Newark 7, N. J.



CUTTING HINTS

Sewing equipment need not be extensive for the beginner. However, in the interest of efficiency, there are three essential types of scissors necessary for dressmaking:

Sewing Scissors

Bent Handle Dressmakers' Shears

Skalloping or Pinking Shears or both

Before you start to cut out a garment, press the pattern pieces with a lukewarm iron. It will make cutting easier and more accurate.

For a straight grain line. Before starting to cut out your pattern, make sure the grain line of your fabric is absolutely straight. Clip selvage, catch one crosswise thread and pull it gently. Cut along this line to the opposite selvage. It is a good idea to press out the center fold of your material as it is sometimes off grain. Refold by bringing the selvages together and pin. The selvages and the straight cut ends should come together evenly.

Before you start to cut. The entire pattern should be laid out and pinned to the fabric on a table or other flat surface.

Use Bent Handle Dressmakers' Shears to cut out the garment. Cut close to the edge of the pattern with the shears always on the right side for greater accuracy. Slide the under blade of the shears along the table in long even strokes, never entirely closing the blades. Some sewers prefer to cut out the pattern with Pinking or Skalloping Shears. This is not recommended for beginners, as these shears are primarily designed for finishing seams and are not as easy to handle as Dressmakers' Shears for the initial cutting out of the garment.

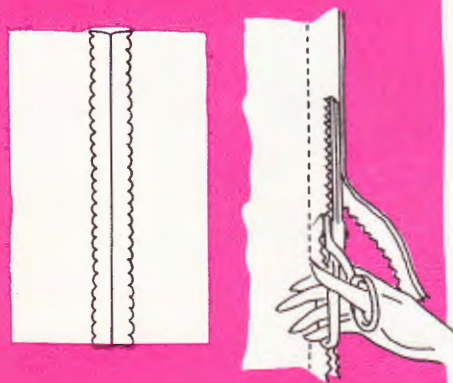
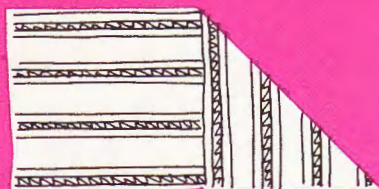
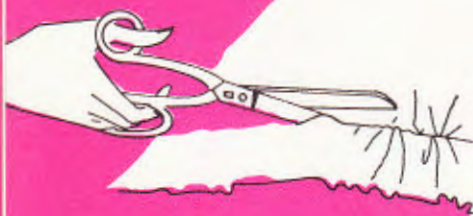
To thread a needle easily. Cut thread on a slant.

To cut bias binding strips. First find the true bias of the fabric by folding one end corner of the material to meet the selvage on the opposite side. Cut along the fold a strip twice the width of the finished binding desired, allowing for the seams.

To finish seams the easiest and quickest way. For all fabrics except those that ravel very easily, trim with either Skalloping or Pinking Shears. Hold both sides of the seam together and trim, then separate and press open.

NOTE: When using Skalloping or Pinking Shears, it is important to remember to place your fabric *in front of the two back teeth*, then cut. If fabric is jammed all the way back, the shears may refuse to cut properly — especially the heavier fabrics.

After you have finished using your shears and scissors, wipe the lint off of the blades before putting them away.

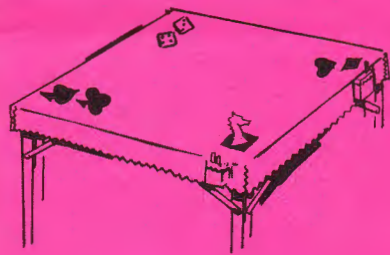




PATTERN NO. 128
A garden apron, and matching kneeling pad.
25¢



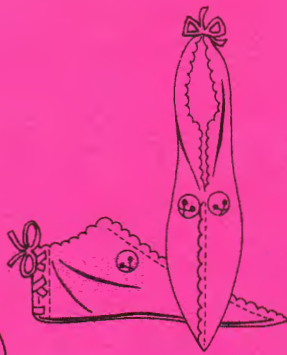
PATTERN NO. 96
Persian Slippers, Attractive, Comfortable and Easy to Make.
10¢



PATTERN NO. 139
A Card Table Cover with Pockets for Cigarettes, Appliques for Fun.
25¢



PATTERN NO. 143
Christmas Stocking and Tablecloth
25¢



PATTERN NO. 148
"Cat-Walks"
10¢



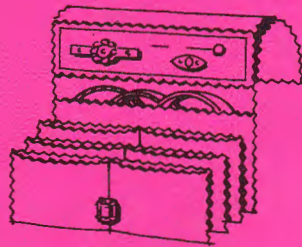
PATTERN NO. 156
Appliqued Eyeglass Case
10¢



PATTERN NO. 120
A Travelling Sewing Kit of Felt and Appliques, and an Eye Shade for Late Sleeping.
25¢



PATTERN NO. 124
Felt Flowers for Hat and Bag
25¢



PATTERN NO. 103
Travelling Jewel Case.
25¢



PATTERN NO. 144
Record "Tote" Bag.
25¢

PATTERN NO. 129
A Christmas tree skirt with appliques.
25¢



PATTERN NO. 158
"Glamour Puss"
Pajama Case
10¢



PATTERN NO. 101
Myrtle the Turtle and Belt Appliqued with a Farm Scene
25¢



PATTERN NO. 111
"Sorrento" Cap and Bag
25¢



PATTERN NO. 130
"South of the Border" Appliques
25¢

Here are some of the patterns available, order by number, send coin to:

J. WISS & SONS CO. Dept. W. S.
Newark 7, New Jersey

Send 10¢ for complete list of 40
Wiss Pinker Fashion Ideas

