

## Café Curtains, Vintage Style

by Janie Lantz

Stitch up light and airy vintage-look curtains and hang on inexpensive round café curtain rods to brighten your room with filtered light while maintaining privacy. With a few tips and tricks, working with sheer fabrics can be easy. Embellish with a border along the bottom edge if desired to give your project individualized style.

### Supplies:

- HUSQVARNA VIKING® sewing and embroidery machine
- Utility Foot A
- Edge Stitching Foot 412796745
- Sheer fabric, pre-laundered and pressed or pre-cleaned to reduce later shrinkage
- INSPIRA® Microtex needles
- Matching sewing thread
- Round café style curtain rod and brackets
- Measuring tape
- Rotary Cutter, transparent fabric ruler and cutting mat or Fabric Shears
- Erasable marking tool
- Steam Iron and pressing cloth



## Fabric Selection Tips:

Natural fiber fabrics such as silk, cotton, rayon or linen press more easily and hang with graceful folds, but will fade and deteriorate more quickly in full sun.

Synthetics such as polyester or nylon will wear indefinitely but are difficult to press into a sharp edge for hemming and are often more prone to ravel easily. Nylon and other synthetics may also be heat-sensitive (shrink or melt) when pressing. You might need to lower the temperature of your iron and/or use a pressing cloth. Always test press on scraps.

If you are a beginning sewist on a budget, look in thrift shops for large sheer panels that you can launder and cut up for your first project.

## Calculate Dimensions:

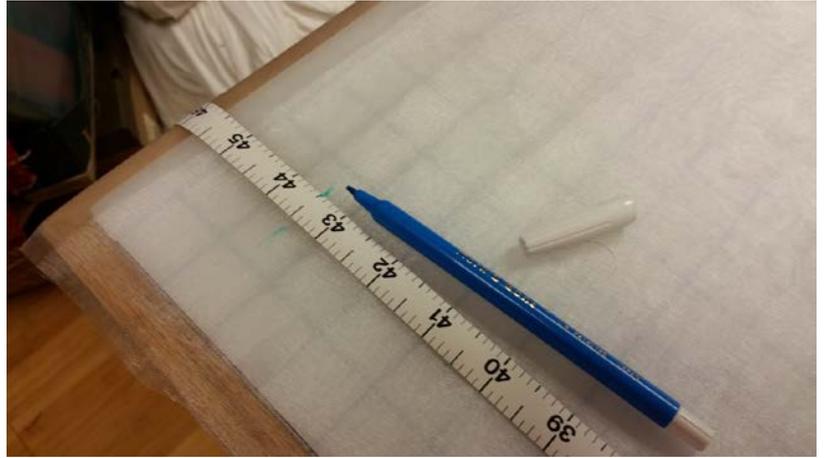
1. Measure desired finished curtain length and width from the top of the curtain rod to the level desired for the bottom edge of the hem.
2. Double the width measurement to add fullness to the finished curtain. (*Tip: For multiple side-by-side windows or double doors, make a panel for each section.*)
3. Add 2¼” to the length for a top pocket that shirrs over the rod.
4. Add 3¼” to the length for a finished bottom hem.
5. Add 2½” to the width to allow for a hem at each edge.

## Cutting:

1. Lay the fabric on a flat surface.
2. Trim off the selvages (tightly woven edges along the lengthwise edges of the fabric) so they don't pucker later when you launder the curtains.



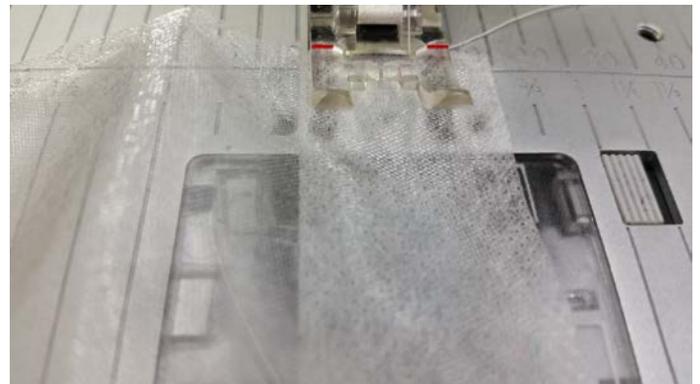
3. Mark the cutting line on the fabric using the erasable marking tool and fabric ruler, making sure to cut correctly along the lengthwise and crosswise grain lines, so the curtains will hang straight without sagging over time.
4. Cut with rotary cutter, ruler and mat, or with fabric shears.
5. Use the erasable marker to label the top of the curtain to help you identify it later when you sew in the top casing and hems.
6. Handle the fabric carefully at this point as many sheer fabrics unravel easily.



## Finish edges:

1. Thread machine with sewing thread on top and bobbin. Snap on **Edgestitching Foot**. Set *Sewing Advisor*® to Light Woven.
2. Adjust the needle position right or left until the fabric can be aligned with the right edge of the foot to make a 1/4" seam. (Some HUSQVARNA VIKING sewing machines have a 1/4 " stitch that can be selected)
3. Shorten the stitch length to 1.5mm. A shorter stitch will help prevent the fabric from gathering or puckering.
4. Stitch 1/4" from all four edges of the fabric.

*(Tip: If the sheer is slippery, place 3/4" wide strips of water soluble stabilizer under the sheer to help it feed more easily. The stabilizer can be rinsed out when the curtain is finished. Do not use steam when pressing*



*seams with water soluble stabilizer as it will begin to dissolve and pucker, requiring you to rinse it out before proceeding.)*

5. Place the fabric right side up on the sewing machine bed. Finger press to turn the ¼” edge under along the stitched line to form a narrow folded edge. This narrow fold will keep the fabric from raveling.
6. Edge stitch ⅛” in from the fold to secure the edge and add stability to prevent the fabric from raveling.



7. Trim excess fabric away on the wrong side, being careful not to cut into the stitches or nick the body of the curtain fabric.

*(Optional Serger Technique: Skip steps 1-6 above. Set the serger for a narrow three thread overlock stitch and sew, trimming away the extra ¼”, to finish all edges instead of the stitch and fold pre-finish.)*

## Hem Side Edges:

1. Mark the hemlines down the sides of the curtain with the erasable marker, 1” from each pre-finished side edge of the curtain.
2. Press the fabric under along the mark, folding to the wrong side.
3. Snap on **Utility A foot**. Adjust the stitch length to 2mm for a more attractive finish.
4. Pin in place, with pins at right angles to the folded edge so you can easily pull them out.
5. Place the fabric under the presser foot right side up, with the hem on the bottom side, to help ease the pre-finished edge with the presser foot, avoiding tucks and bubbles in the hem.

6. Top stitch along the folded edge to form the hem along the curtain's sides, removing pins before the reach the needle.
7. Repeat to hem the other side of the curtain panel.

*(Alternatively, select a decorative stitch to add texture and interest. Be sure to test the decorative stitch on scraps of fabric to ensure it will stitch appropriately!)*

### **Sew Rod Pocket:**

1. Mark a line across the fabric, 2” down from the top edge.
2. Press the fabric to the wrong side along the marked line.
3. Stitch from the top, with the hem at the bottom side, as before.
4. Top stitch along the edge of the fold

### **Hem Bottom:**

1. Mark a line across the bottom edge of the curtain panel, 3” from the edge.
2. Press the fabric to the wrong side along the marked line.
3. Top stitch along the edge of the fold.

### **Finishing:**

1. Rinse out all fabric marker and/or strips of water soluble stabilizer.
2. Press using an iron set for the fabric type and steam, and a pressing cloth if fabrics are heat-sensitive or delicate.
3. Shirr the top pocket onto the round café style curtain rod and snap the ends into the brackets.
4. Enjoy the view!



## Embellishing Ideas

- Stitch multiple lines of decorative stitches in contrasting thread to form a bottom border.
- Applique a row of flowers by hand or machine to form a cheerful border!
- Embroider a continuous border along the bottom using a line-style embroidery design or openwork embroidery, and hooping with wash-away stabilizer.

*(Tip: Embroidery designs with dense stitching can pull and cause puckering on sheers.)*

- Add decorative laces, trims, bangles, or buttons in rows along the bottom edge. Place the decorations in wavy lines to add a whimsical touch.