

Time Out

New York

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Sew Fast, Sew Easy

147 W 57th St between Sixth and Seventh Aves (582-5889). Subway: B, D, E to Seventh Ave; N, R to Seventh Ave; N, R to 57th St. Call for a schedule; registration is ongoing

My head was spinning when I left Sew Fast, Sew Easy. The owner, Elissa Meyrich, seems to wear her customers down with nonsensical chatter, and she's so desperate to have her finger on the pulse, she can overwhelm. But for the same reasons, she's endearing and an excellent teacher. In her classes—even the large ones—she makes sure to provide a good deal of personal attention. "My philosophy is really savvy sewing," explains Meyrich, who seems to communicate in sound bites. "Home sewing is very tedious, very old-fashioned. The patterns don't fit, and it takes so much time. The generation that I'm working with wants it *now*."

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Courses are divided into four levels; in the first level, which involves four sessions, Meyrich teaches you how to make a simple skirt. After graduating from the first level, students work from computerized custom-fit patterns. At \$160 per course (plus a \$5 pattern fee), such instruction is mighty pricey. Meyrich says that, in part, the cost reflects the fact that Sew Fast teaches sewing based on "garment-industry secrets. I have doctors, a lawyer and a dancer from the Metropolitan Opera House—I even get drag queens. And in six months, students are sewing dresses with linings," Meyrich spouts. "Who can beat that?"

In her adjacent shop, Meyrich carries fabric, patterns and Elna, White and Singer sewing machines (\$199 to \$3,000).



Women of the cloth: Above, a sewing class at Sew Fast, Sew Easy and, below, bolts of luxurious fabric at the palatial B&J Fabrics in midtown.



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JOHN
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