

Decorating Sewlutions:

LEARN TO SEW AS YOU DECORATE YOUR HOME

Author Q & A

1. *Why did you write **Decorating Sewlutions: Learn to Sew as You Decorate Your Home**?*

I wrote this book in response to the many requests I received from women who didn't learn how to sew in school (or they have horrible memories of their home economics classes). Now that they have homes of their own, they want to decorate with unique items to express their individuality. But resources to teach you to sew are not very plentiful. It used to be that we learned how to sew from our mom, or a neighbor. An entire generation did not learn to sew because it is no longer being taught in schools. My book fills that void. As the author, I assume the role as being the readers' private teacher who works with them on a one-on-one basis.



Donna Babylon, author

2. *Who's your target market?*

This book is perfect for anyone who wants to decorate their home to reflect their personalities. Sewing is the absolute best way to achieve this dream. Items you buy in stores are so limited in style and color because they are mass-produced. But by sewing your own projects, you have the freedom to choose the fabrics, size, color, and even how much you want to spend. Sewing for the home is a great way to save money!

I emphasize how easy it is to create your individual style by sewing because you are virtually guaranteed that your item will be one-of-a-kind. You'll never have to worry about walking into your neighbor's home and having to say, "Oh, I have those exact same curtains (or duvet cover, or pillows)."



3. *Do you cover both sewing and decorating in the book as the title suggests?*

Yes. I think it is very important to see the big picture when sewing for the home. To me, sewing and decorating go hand in hand. I believe the more information you have, the easier you can make decisions. So, I dedicated the first part of the book to decorating basics with additional decorating tips sprinkled throughout the book. I want my readers to be well informed so they make decisions confidently and so they can enjoy both sewing and decorating.

4. *You mention that only three basic sewing techniques are needed to make the projects. What are they and is this really the case?*

I wanted to keep this book as simple as possible so I wrote the book with the easiest techniques in mind. Basically, the three sewing techniques are stitching a seam, turning a corner, and sewing a blind hem. I included some other techniques that are unique to home dec sewing (like how to match fabric repeats), but the actual sewing is only done with simple seams. It's really that simple!

5. *You have 10 projects included in the book. Why did you choose these particular projects?*

I carefully selected projects that reflect popular decorating styles found in all the catalogs and stores. But I selected ones that will be popular for a long time. These styles are not fads. The selections reinforce my brand, More Splash Than Cash®. My MSTC philosophy is that the time you spend and cash you invest—whatever that amount might be—are well spent and results can be enjoyed and admired for many years.

The projects are easy and achievable to make and, when complete, will have an immediate impact on the room. I am an “immediate gratification” kind of girl! But, most importantly, I want the reader to have a successful and fun sewing experience. Projects don't have to be complicated to be beautiful. In fact, I believe that simple lines show off the fabric the best. I consider that a major plus because the fabric is actually doing most of the work—and we get the credit!

In **Decorating Sewlutions**, I explain how to make these 10 projects explicitly. Then I suggest many other projects you can make using the same steps and techniques—just by changing the cutting dimensions. For example, in the chapter, “Soft Landings”, a basic square pillow can be made as tiny as a potpourri sachet for your dresser drawer or as large as a floor pillow to plop on in front of the TV. Change the shape to a rectangle and you can make any thing from the daintiest boudoir pillow to a snuggly body pillow. I also show you how to incorporate an additional seam at each corner to transform a square pillow into a box shape. Then you can make a bench cushion for your home or deck, a mattress for a futon, or a cushion for your favorite outdoor lounge chair—even a new bed for your favorite furry friend! Overall, you can make over 100 projects using the same three techniques and the instructions I provide.

6. *What sets Decorating Sewlutions apart from all the other sewing books on the market?*

Decorating Sewlutions is like getting three books in one. It's a very complete package. The first part of the book is all about decorating including how to determine your personal decorating style, work with color, select fabrics, and even how to arrange furniture. I also included information on how to shop in a fabric store, set up a work area, and how to buy a sewing machine.

The second part of the book is actually a technique book. This is where I explain the three sewing techniques used to create all of the projects, but I also include so much more to help the reader be successful and have a beautiful project.

Then, the third part of the book is all about the projects. The instructions are complete and to the point and supported with lots of illustrations and photography. And, if the reader gets a little confused, there are indicators as to where to find the answer in the book.

Never before has so much practical decorating advice and sewing know-how been assembled in one place.

7. *What is your favorite part of the book?*

That's a really hard question—there are so many great features. But one of the best parts of the book is the HELP chapter (Help for Every Little Problem). This chapter is full of solutions in case you make a mistake (they happen to all of us). All of the mistakes and solutions come from personal experience. It seems like most mistakes always happen in the middle of the night when no one is available to call. Now all you have to do is turn to this chapter.

8. *Is this book just for a beginning sewer?*

Oh, no—not at all! Decorating divas, DIYers, and even scared silly beginners will all love this book. Beginning sewers will love the easy, hand holding, step-by-step instructions. Decorating divas and DIYers will love the projects.

9. *Who is Home Dec Beck and what purpose does she serve?*

Isn't Beck cute? I just adore her! Well, "Beck" is a nickname my friends and family call me when they want to know an answer to sewing, decorating, or even a cooking question. I was a home economics major in college—that's where the name came from. So, when I was writing this book, I created Home Dec Beck as a character who offers words of wisdom, observations, and also tips and mini-projects.

10. *What is your background?*

I have been sewing since I was seven years old. This passion led me to major in home economics in college. After graduating from college, I was a middle and high school teacher for several years. Just imagine teaching 25 to 30 kids (in a classroom) how to sew. Whatever could go wrong did go wrong! For my sanity, I quickly learned how to adapt my instructions to bypass any potential problems. When I did that, the classroom was much calmer and my students had immediate success. I had no idea when I was in the classroom that I would one day be writing how-to books. But when that opportunity presented itself, I decided to write my books the same way I taught—by offering simple and stylish projects with well-thought-out instructions. I see so many creative opportunities with sewing— especially for the home.

So, the story continues with this book (my fifteenth). I enjoy sharing my sewing and decorating advice by conducting seminars and workshops around the country. I have also appeared on over 250 television shows including HGTV, Lifetime, and Discovery. I design patterns for Simplicity

Pattern Company, I'm a certified window treatment consultant through the Window Coverings Association and also a master sewing instructor (one of only nine such recipients) through the Sewing Educators Alliance.

Throughout the process of sculpting my career, I created my own indie publishing company and developed my More Splash Than Cash® brand. I publish my books and design a line of sewing patterns called Room Mates™. This aspect of my career has been the most fun. I do everything when I create a book or design a pattern. I write, sew, photograph, illustrate, and draft the patterns. I love that my books help people create beautiful things.

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