

Lingerie Fabric & Habby suggestions by Hannah-Rose Smith

There are many types of fabrics and haberdashery one can use when making lingerie. I've compiled the ones that I often use and recommend.

Elastics:

The elastics used in lingerie tend to be softer and easier to work with than regular/braided elastic. I've found that regular elastic is a bit too stiff when it is the required width (1cm or less) for sewing lingerie. It tends to stretch out when sewn and is too thick/bulky which also makes it uncomfortable to wear.



Picot or Lingerie elastic is a narrow (usually 0.6cm - 1cm wide) elastic that has a decorative edge. Sometimes it is scalloped or has a little loops along the edge. Usually it is decorative on one edge and straight on the other. Sometimes one side of the elastic has a plush/soft texture and the other side is shiny. You usually would want the plush side against your skin.

You can get wider (1.5) picot elastic which is sometimes called band elastic. I like to use at the waistband of undies or the bottom of the bra band (like the Maya bra style bra).



Fold-over elastic is a wider elastic (usually 1.5cm) that has a groove down the centre. It encases the raw edge of the lingerie as it is folded over the edge creating a bound edge.

The fold over elastic I've found available tends to lose its stretch a bit once sewn. Therefore, it isn't one that I like to use.



Plush elastic has a soft textured side. These come in different widths and type of stretch.

For straps I like to use the 1cm or 1.2cm wide plush & shiny type that has a tighter stretch. What I mean by this is that while it has a stretch, it is strong enough to support your chest but provides enough give for comfort at your shoulders.

The wider plush knit elastic (also sometimes called band elastic) is great for bralettes that only have an underbust band like the Venus bralette. It tends to have more of a soft stretch.

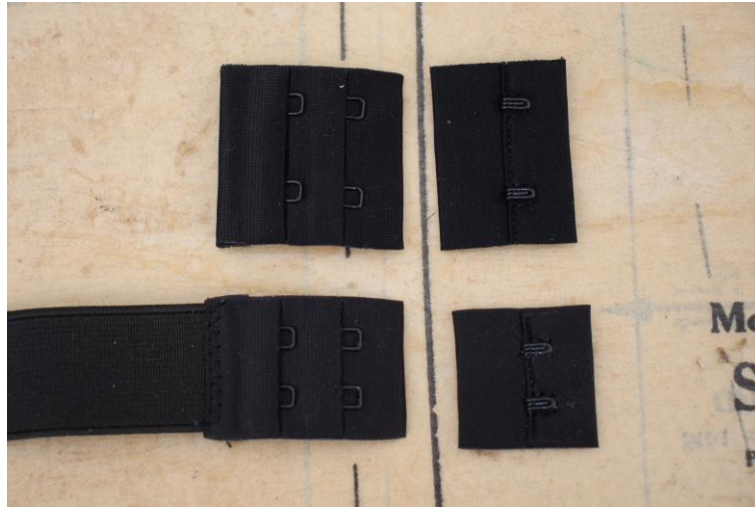
Habby:



Rings & Sliders are required if you want your straps to be adjustable.

They come in different sizes, colours and materials. I prefer to use the metal type rather than plastic as they last longer and tend to look more professional.

Choose the size based on the width of your strap elastic. Your elastic should fit through them without any bunching and there should be minimal space between the sides of the elastic and the slider/ring.



Hook & Eye tape is the closure used on most style bras & bralettes. It allows you to be able to adjust the side of the bra band.

Fabrics

Your pattern will usually determine what fabrics to use as it has been drafted with specific stretch percentage (or no stretch) in mind.

Stretch percentage is important as it will be the difference between a comfortable pair of undies that provide full coverage, versus a pair that are a bit too tight when you sit and you can never keep them covering your full *derriere*. It is also important to check if the pattern calls for 2 way stretch or 4 way stretch as this could further exacerbate this fit issue.

Google "How to calculate stretch percentage" for help.



Cotton knits or knits of natural fibres are great for everyday wear. They make the most comfortable and breathable lingerie. When making undies, it is recommended to use cotton fabric in the gusset for best hygiene.

You can even repurpose a tshirt, just check the stretch percentage with that of your pattern.



Power mesh is a lightweight, breathable knit fabric with 4 way stretch. It is more stable/sturdier and lighter than regular mesh fabric. You can make sheer lingerie with it or use it as a lining to help make them more supportive. I personally don't like to use it for undies as I've found it makes them slippery if used as a lining (I can feel the 2 layers moving when I sit) and it can leave an imprint on the skin after sitting for a while. But power mesh is great to use in bras and bralettes.



Tulle can be used as long as it has the stretch percentage recommended by your pattern. Just check that the fabric is soft enough against your skin. I would recommend lining it with power mesh. There are various types of tulle available, some have a more open weave, some are softer and drapier and you also get embroidered tulle (pictured here is embroidered power mesh).



Stretch lace is used a lot in lingerie as the scalloped edges create beautiful effects. As it comes in various widths it is also less wasteful and often more cost effective than buying regular lace fabric that is 150cm wide.

If you are using lace in lingerie for the first time, I would recommend using a pattern that has been drafted to be made with lace. More often than not, the pattern has been drafted to be made without elastic to show off the lace edge and the designer has factored in how to still keep the garment supportive.