

Great Scott!

By Scott Goodman



Scott Goodman, owner of Sewing Machine Warehouse & Kneedle.com has been servicing the sewing public since 1976.

You Got Questions? I Got Answers!

Recently, Eileen's Blog asked for your questions to life's most perplexing problems. I saved my favorites to share with you...

Lynn Z: I am an avid embroiderer and love making presents for all my friends. Sometimes I have my embroidery machine busy from dawn till dusk. Is that too hard on my machine? Should I be turning it off and letting it "rest" every so many hours? It never complains, and just keeps on happily embroidering – but I sure wouldn't want to wear it out. What do you suggest?

Great Scott: Hi Lynn, Most machines are designed for continuous use, but get a little "throaty" when they need their "Spa Treatment". Funny sounds, registration problems and other adolescent tantrums are ample warning. Use the heck out of your machine. New features on future models may prompt your next purchase before wear 'n tear take its toll.

Dale F: Scotty, how long can we expect to be able to get replacement parts for our machines? Sure I would like a new machine, but being retired & living off of social security, a new machine is not in my future.

Great Scott: Hi Dale, While most manufacturers supply "high mortality" parts for many years, my tea leaves cannot portend the future for replacements. When parts do run out, many dealers have a graveyard of old machines that are willing to donate their organs to prolong the life of your relic. The greater question is how long can you operate with floppy disks?

Beth R: Scotty, Where can a home enthusiast go to find out information about the reliability and useful life of different brands of embroidery machines? Not something that Consumer Reports normally covers!

Great Scott: Great question, Beth! Consumer Report® never recommends the "Best", only the "Best Buy". CR would have more industry credibility if they included expert opinion in their rating. Durability is not an issue. Most machines will last for years. I am still servicing embroidery models that are 20+ years old. Here is the challenge: Cheap machines can be quite durable, but they may not handle fabric well or may otherwise be challenging to use. Until there is a better method, find a local or regional dealer that you are comfortable with. They will listen to your needs and make recommendations based on your intent and desires. Specialty retailers (sewing machine stores) carry models that are not available on the internet or at mass retailers. Most embroidery models can only be sold by trained dealerships in a face-to-face environment. Take advantage of that.

Joyce: Scotty, I have an older Baby Lock esanté and just got a new computer with Vista. I am wondering if I can use the my computer to transfer my designs to my machine or do I need to upgrade the machine.

Great Scott: Hey Joyce, The 90*s called...they want their shoulder pads back. Seriously though, your machine is quite functional. You don't have to upgrade.

Baby Lock Palette software suite v9.0 or Palette Petite include a cardwriter and blank card. They work beautifully with your Esante and are Vista/Win7 compatible. Check with your local dealer about upgrading older software. That being said...Newer machines feature newer technology. Easier, faster, bigger, better, equals more fun, more productivity, less frustration. Embroider fantastic, today!

Alice: Hi Scotty, I have a Baby lock Ellure Plus and it has been squeaking when I stitch. I am pretty sure it isn't the carriage and that it is in need of oil but I cannot find anything in my machines books on where or how to oil it myself and taking it to the shop is not an option right now. Can you tell me where I might find this info or give me some general direction on oiling these electronic machines?

Great Scott: STEP AWAY FROM THE OIL CAN! Now slowly... reach to your bookshelf...and retrieve DiME Volume 68. My column, Great Scott! features "Spa Treatment for your Sewing Machine". These machines cannot be maintained correctly by the end user. Find a qualified technician at <http://www.babylock.com> click on the dealer locator. Meanwhile, if the squeaking becomes unbearable, crank up that iPod!

Susan: Hi Scotty, I own a Pfaff creative Vision and seem to be having issues with my thread shredding ONLY when using the embroidery unit. I've had it in for service on this issue and it was fine for a few weeks, but it is back again. The dealer is over one hundred miles away, so I was wondering if you had any ideas. Here are the changes I've tried: different needle sizes and kinds, different thread brands, different stabilizers, rethreading from the spool down to the needle.

Great Scott: Hi Susan, I am working on a script for a new TV show, "CSI-Embroidery". Shredding takes detective work. Assuming you are using quality thread and your needle is good, I would sew out a "built-in" design. If that design sews well, your problem, most likely, is density. Check out Designer's Gallery "DensityWorks". If the design still shreds, follow these two steps: 1. Drive more than 100 miles. 2. Let tech fix Creative Vision. Let us know what worked.

Karin: Hi, Scotty, I have a Baby Lock Ellegante & sometimes the buttons for auto-thread, needle up/down, & presser foot up/down, just all don't work. I can turn it off & back on, still nuthin. The only way I've found to get them to work again is to leave it off overnight, or sometimes, hit the button for stopping with presser foot up & needle down (toggle it). What's up with that??? I've had 2 different dealer repairmen check it out. Hubby suggested that maybe I overheated it (had been using it steadily for over 8 hrs first time it happened, but proved that wrong after it did it after only a couple hours use). Doesn't happen just on embroidery, but mostly. THANKS!!!

Great Scott: Hey Karin, Try standing on one foot when you press that button and orient the machine in an easterly direction. Seriously though... Usually broken machines stay broken. We rarely find machines with intermittent problems which is why I have most of my hair intact.

Have you been able to duplicate the problem with a technician present or does it occur when nobody else (qualified) is around? The button cluster is attached to a circuit board that connects to another board with a delicate cable. The button board may have issues, the cable or its connectors may be damaged. What may be less remarkable for this blog, but huge for normal people is 8 HOURS OF USE!! Please consider Baby Lock's Enterprise- 10 needle embroidery machine or at least the Endurance with 6 needles. Tell hubby that "Great Scott" thinks you deserve it!

The holidays are upon us and, like you, I am working this year's latest techniques into my holiday gifts and projects while putting the new 2012 models and upgrades through their paces. For me, the holidays are a great time to reminisce and show gratitude to my fans, associates, friends and loved ones. Great Scott would not be great without these relationships. May all your holiday dreams come true!

Great Scott is at your service. Questions, comments, want to share? Write to me at: GreatScott@kneedle.com