



My name is Dawn Elliott. I've been sewing and crafting since I was 11, and probably earlier than that, but that's the first time I was 'taught'. I was fortunate that my school friend lied to our sewing teacher and said I knew how to use a sewing machine, which meant I got to make a night shirt (collar and placket and all) in my first year, and not the skirt with the elastic waist that everyone else was making. By the time I left school, I was making ball gowns for friends and was already seeing sewing as 'therapy'.

I have turned my hand to many things over the years, soft furnishings, upholstery, cross stitch, clothes, wedding dresses, patchwork, and quilting to name but a few. But there are still things that I never tried until they were challenges on the sewing bee. For example, I had never sewed with Jersey until the sewing bee challenge in 2020. And who ever heard of lutradur (sewing bee challenge 2021)? I am now a total fan of jersey and love how quick it is to make something if you have an overlocker.

I have the most basic sewing machine you can buy and have made so many different things that just proves you don't need an expensive machine to make lovely things (unless you want to do really big quilts, or embroidery designs). Having said that, I do have an overlocker, and I love it. It's a total pig if a thread breaks, but it's just so useful for neatening seams or sewing with jersey that it's totally worth the investment (and swear words if you ever have to rethread it).

My favourite thing is to find something on the internet, on Pinterest, or in a shop that I really like, and think 'I can make that'. Sometimes it works out, and sometimes it really doesn't, but the process of making a pattern and working out how to sew the bits together is so satisfying.

Sewing is my happy place. I find it very cathartic and can lose a whole day if I get completely engrossed in something. There is nothing more satisfying than taking a flat piece of fabric and turning it in to something three dimensional.

Here are a few of my makes over the years:

1. Upholstering a chair for the second time. It has been through many incarnations over the years.
2. One of my 'I can do that' copies of a bag I saw on Pinterest.
3. Jersey challenge for sewing bee 2020. I didn't pick an easy thing for my first go at working with jersey, but hey, in for a penny...
4. The first wedding dress I ever made. I still have a soft spot for this one, and I'm please to say the couple are still married (can't be said for all the dresses I made).

5. The blue jacket I made at school. They don't seem to make patterns like this anymore. I still wear it.
6. One of many cross stitches, one of the few that's actually framed and displayed.
7. A scraps catcher I made from a patten in a magazine, made out of scraps from a quilt.

