

Janome 381

Janome 381 Electronic Sewing Machine Instruction Manual

Model: 381

1. IMPORTANT SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

When using an electrical appliance, basic safety precautions should always be followed, including the following:

- Read all instructions before using this sewing machine.
- Keep these instructions in a suitable place near the machine.
- To reduce the risk of electric shock, always unplug the machine from the electrical outlet immediately after using and before cleaning, removing covers, or making any user servicing adjustments.
- Do not allow children to operate the machine unsupervised.
- Keep fingers away from all moving parts. Special care is required around the sewing machine needle.
- Always use the correct needle plate. The wrong plate can cause the needle to break.
- Do not use bent needles.
- Do not pull or push fabric while stitching. This may deflect the needle, causing it to break.
- Unplug the sewing machine when making any adjustments in the needle area, such as threading the needle, changing the needle, threading the bobbin, or changing the presser foot.
- Never drop or insert any object into any opening.
- Do not use outdoors.
- Do not operate where aerosol (spray) products are being used or where oxygen is being administered.

2. PRODUCT OVERVIEW

The Janome 381 is an electronic sewing machine designed for a variety of sewing tasks, from basic utility stitches to decorative applications. It features a robust design and user-friendly controls.

Key Features:

- **23 Stitch Programs:** Includes straight, zigzag, stretch, and decorative stitches.
- **4-Step Buttonhole:** For consistent and easy buttonhole creation.
- **Adjustable Stitch Length:** Up to 4mm for versatile sewing.
- **Adjustable Stitch Width:** Up to 5mm for various stitch types.
- **Reverse Sewing Function:** For securing seams.

- **Drop Feed System:** Allows for free-motion sewing and darning.
- **External Thread Cutter:** Conveniently located for quick thread trimming.
- **Twin Needle Capability:** For decorative stitching with two threads.
- **Snap-on Presser Feet:** Easy and quick changing of presser feet.
- **Shuttle Hook System:** Reliable bobbin system.



Figure 2.1: Front view of the Janome 381 sewing machine, showcasing its main controls and a sample of available stitches.

3. SETUP

3.1 Unpacking and Initial Placement

Carefully remove the machine from its packaging. Place the machine on a stable, flat surface. Ensure there is adequate lighting and space for comfortable operation. Connect the power cord and foot controller to the machine and then to a suitable electrical outlet.

3.2 Winding the Bobbin

1. Place a spool of thread on the spool pin.
2. Guide the thread through the upper thread guide and around the bobbin winding tension disc.
3. Insert the thread through the hole in the bobbin from the inside.
4. Place the bobbin onto the bobbin winder spindle and push it to the right.
5. Press the foot controller to start winding. Stop when the bobbin is full.
6. Cut the thread and remove the bobbin.

3.3 Inserting the Bobbin

1. Open the bobbin cover plate.
2. Insert the bobbin into the bobbin case with the thread unwinding counter-clockwise.
3. Pull the thread through the tension spring and into the guide slot.
4. Close the bobbin cover plate.

3.4 Threading the Upper Thread

1. Raise the presser foot lever.
2. Place a spool of thread on the spool pin.
3. Guide the thread through the upper thread guide.
4. Bring the thread down the right channel, up the left channel, and through the take-up lever from right to left.
5. Guide the thread down to the needle bar thread guide.
6. Thread the needle from front to back.



Figure 3.1: Front view of the Janome 381, illustrating the threading path and control dials.

3.5 Needle Installation

1. Turn the handwheel towards you to raise the needle to its highest position.
2. Loosen the needle clamp screw.
3. Remove the old needle.
4. Insert a new needle with the flat side facing the back of the machine. Push it up as far as it will go.
5. Tighten the needle clamp screw securely.

4. OPERATING THE MACHINE

4.1 Selecting Stitches

The Janome 381 offers 23 stitch programs. To select a stitch, turn the stitch selector dial to the desired stitch pattern. Refer to the stitch chart on the machine for available options.

4.2 Adjusting Stitch Length and Width

- **Stitch Length:** Use the stitch length dial to adjust the length of your stitches. The maximum length is 4mm.
- **Stitch Width:** Use the stitch width dial to adjust the width of zigzag or decorative stitches. The maximum width is 5mm.

4.3 Reverse Sewing

To sew in reverse, press and hold the reverse lever. The machine will sew backward as long as the lever is held. Release the lever to resume forward stitching. This is useful for securing the beginning and end of seams.

4.4 Buttonhole Sewing

The machine features a 4-step buttonhole function. Attach the buttonhole foot, select the first buttonhole step, and follow the markings on the foot to create precise buttonholes. Proceed through steps 2, 3, and 4 as indicated in the stitch selector.

4.5 Drop Feed System

To engage the drop feed system for free-motion quilting or darning, locate the drop feed lever (usually at the back or side of the free arm) and move it to the 'down' position. Remember to raise it back up for regular sewing.

5. MAINTENANCE

Regular maintenance ensures the longevity and optimal performance of your sewing machine.

5.1 Cleaning

- **Lint Removal:** Regularly remove the needle plate and bobbin case to clean out lint and dust accumulation with a small brush.
- **Exterior Cleaning:** Wipe the exterior of the machine with a soft, dry cloth. Do not use harsh chemicals.

5.2 Needle Replacement

Replace the needle frequently, especially after 8-10 hours of sewing or if it becomes bent or dull. A dull or bent needle can cause skipped stitches, thread breakage, or damage to your fabric.

5.3 Lubrication

This electronic sewing machine is designed for minimal user lubrication. Refer to a qualified service technician for internal lubrication if necessary.



Figure 5.1: The Janome 381 sewing machine shown with its protective hard cover, ideal for storage and transport.

6. TROUBLESHOOTING

This section addresses common issues you might encounter during operation.

Problem	Possible Cause	Solution
Skipped Stitches	Incorrect needle, bent needle, improper threading, wrong needle size for fabric.	Replace needle, re-thread machine, use appropriate needle for fabric type.
Thread Breakage	Incorrect tension, poor quality thread, improperly wound bobbin, burrs on needle plate or bobbin case.	Adjust tension, use good quality thread, re-wind bobbin, check for burrs and clean.
Fabric Jamming	Incorrect tension, pulling fabric, wrong presser foot.	Adjust tension, guide fabric gently, use correct presser foot.
Machine Not Starting	Power cord not plugged in, foot controller not connected, bobbin winder engaged.	Check power connections, ensure bobbin winder is disengaged.

7. SPECIFICATIONS

- **Model:** Janome 381
- **Type:** Electronic Sewing Machine
- **Stitch Programs:** 23
- **Buttonhole Type:** 4-step
- **Max Stitch Length:** 4 mm
- **Max Stitch Width:** 5 mm
- **Power Source:** Electric
- **Weight:** 11.99 kg
- **Color:** White

8. WARRANTY AND SUPPORT

For warranty information and customer support, please refer to the documentation provided with your purchase or contact your local Janome dealer. Keep your proof of purchase for warranty claims.