



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Market Sector

Sewing

Cost of Doing Business Support

For information on **reducing the cost of running your business**, the [Find Business Support](#) website has links to advice, funding and regional support.

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Sewing** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **August 2022**. If you find the information contained in this document useful, tell us about it! Send us feedback [here](#); we will use your comments to help improve our service.

What do I need to know about the Sewing market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ Some 37% of adults have participated in art and craft activities in the past 12 months. Amongst this group, over half have done painting or drawing, and 44% have taken part in textile activities like sewing or knitting. More specialist creative activities, in order of popularity, include making jewellery, plant/flower craft, metal/ woodwork, pottery and sculpture. (Intel, Hobbies and Interests UK 2022).
- ◆ Specialist textile product retailers are estimated to account for 19.1% of industry revenue in 2021-22... This segment has shrunk over the past five years, with specialist retailers priced out by department stores, supermarkets and online retailers. The ongoing rise of online retail poses a significant threat to the future of this market. Recovering consumer confidence is expected to benefit this segment. Some high-end stores have benefited from sustained demand over the past five years, with certain wholesalers that cater to this market, such as Turner Bianca, performing particularly well. (IBISWorld, Textile Wholesaling in the UK, February 2022).
- ◆ One in five Brits (21%) took up sewing or embroidery during lockdown, making it the nation's favourite lockdown hobby. According to the survey of 2,000 people conducted by Brother Sewing, more men aged 25-34 took up sewing than women in the same age group (23% compared to 21%). (Craft Business, "Sewing is the Nation's Favourite Lockdown Hobby", April 2021).
- ◆ There has been a definite growth in the craft market in the past couple of years, especially with all textile crafts such as knitting and sewing. Embroidery has become extremely popular, and I see this becoming an even stronger trend in 2022. (CraftFocus.com, "Craft trends for 2022", March 2022)
- ◆ The national organisations for this industry include [Craft Scotland](#), [Crafts Council](#), [Creative Scotland](#), [Arts and Business Scotland](#) and the [Society of Designer Craftsmen](#).



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Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

- ◆ COBRA – Sewing and Embroidery Service (November 2020). Consumer demand for sewing and embroidery services may be affected by the rapidly growing interest in textile crafts among younger consumers and the increasing popularity of creative hobbies during the various national and regional lockdowns across the UK in 2020. In March 2020, sales of sewing accessories at London department store Liberty rose 380% year-on-year
- ◆ COBRA – Haberdashery (November 2021). Haberdashers have benefitted from the growing number of textile craft enthusiasts who sell their work via online craft marketplaces such as Etsy, and who need to source supplies for their activities. However, as well as encouraging demand for haberdashery items, Etsy and other online craft marketplaces are a source of competition for haberdashers, since they usually sell craft supplies as well as finished craft items. Etsy's craft supplies section has a 'Sewing and needlecraft' category with supplies for a wide range of textile crafts. In October 2021, the category listed over 3.3 million items for sale.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ Craft Business is an industry news website with sections on knitting, stitching and haberdashery, as well as insights into the craft retail industry in general. Their stories feature new trends and innovations, product releases, and details of upcoming events you may be interested in if you have a business in the sewing, haberdashery or textile sectors (tinyurl.com/yckv3efm).
- ◆ The Craft Scotland website has a directory of makers across all crafts, including sewing, needlework, upholstery and other textile work. They also have a What's On section covering upcoming events in Scotland, as well as free resources for makers through their Craft Community page which includes job volunteering opportunities; commission work; surveys; research and more (craftscotland.org).
- ◆ Arts and Business Scotland is a charity that works with arts, culture and heritage related businesses. On their website you can find information about upcoming events, industry news, as well as upcoming funding opportunities, as well as free resources published by the charity (aandbscotland.org.uk)

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#) ,[Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these website, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.

How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

We hope you find this Market Report useful and we'd love to hear your feedback [here](#).

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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