

***You're It!***

**SEW**

**SHORT READ**

**Your Way  
to Home Business  
Success Now & After  
COVID-19**

**EXACTLY HOW TO  
DIVERSIFY**

*Plus Never See A Soul & Be Wildly Successful*



**Phyllis Smith**

**The \$100 Startup for Super-Hero Sewists**



**ALTERATIONS BY PHYLLIS**  
with  
**DANCING FABRICS**

**If you sew and sew well, you don't need to despair a lost job because you can grab just \$100 from somewhere and get going providing alterations and sewing services including fabric artistry that people are still seeking from the comfort of your home.**

**The time is now. Get going!**

**Home Sewing Business  
Success *During & After*  
COVID-19**

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<http://www.alterationsbyphyllis.com/video-tutorials>

**Exactly How To Diversify  
Plus Keep Clients Remote When You  
Don't Want Foot Traffic To Your Home**

**Imagine** that you're sitting in your dedicated sewing room just a year from now surveying all that you've created with great satisfaction.

**In one corner** of the room is your attractive, eclectic, and maybe even quirky collection of sewing machines and tools that customers admire.

**Across one of the walls** you display your emerging brand of women's designer clothing line consisting of pullover hoodie, leggings, tank or tee, flared skirt short dress for over leggings and skort/shorts. Just 5 hot items that clients can't leave without.

**And what's a wardrobe without** its designer handbag that you've acquired the perfect machine to stitch up and clients go gaga over.

**Folded neatly on display in another area** is your emerging brand of children's clothing, baby layettes, adorable toys, simple and irresistible designs.

**Available on shelves** are DIY kits of various types – hand embroidery, beginner sewing for kids, fabric painting, fabric marker coloring, cut and sew – you conjure it, you create it!

**Unforgotten** are other fab items you've created that perhaps are not fabric artistry yet are complementary such as paper creations, bead art, ceramics – honestly, don't let me overwhelm you with YOUR.OWN.TALENT.

**How can you achieve your new REAL normal?**

**Let me show you.**

You can do all this and never have to see a soul if that's your desire!

Since you're tech savvy, a must in this situation, you can do all of this online and drive to locations for other ideas. Let's take a look below.

Naturally, you're going to offer alterations as your bread and butter service, at least at first, and we'll explore that in a moment.

But how about diversifying in some or all of the following, most of which require minimal to no contact:

**Design an easy line of clothing** including online home pop-up shops doing Facebook live shopping including alterations of that clothing. When I say "easy" I mean it – 5 simple pieces such as pullover hoodie, leggings, tank, shorts and short dress (that pairs with leggings). See these YouTube channels: Coolirpa, With Wendy, Rosery. Start with these and don't stop there! Hold 1:1 in-person by appointment sales events and Facebook live shopping events regularly. Decide if you will ship out products or require all local pickup at your home. **Minimal contact opportunity.**

**Sew designer handbags.** Don't you think your local community would be crazy intrigued about and proud to purchase quality handbags from a local sewist/designer? See these YouTube channels: Lauren Mormino, Easy to Sew. Start with these two and explore the multitude of others. Hold 1:1 in-person sales events by appointment and Facebook live shopping events regularly. Decide if

you will ship out products or require all local pickup at your home.

**Minimal contact opportunity.**

**Flip designer clothes.** Got a Good Will store or second-hand clothing boutique nearby? My neighborhood Good Will store stocks tons of mint condition designer clothing cast off by wealthy people. Usually one day of the week is a sale day when you can grab amazing finds on the cheap, post them on social media and resell them in your home shop – plus alter them if necessary. Do you mark pieces up as high as a retailer would. Probably not in today's COVID/post-COVID world. But you can figure out a nice profit while providing an exclusive experience to customers who now do not have to forage somewhere for this item elbow-to-elbow with others. **Minimal contact opportunity.**

**Upcycle and recycle clothing.** Tangent to the above, find cool stuff at a Good Will or other second-hand clothing store and make it better. Would the sleeves off one item refresh the bodice on that almost dreary blouse? What if an almost perfect dress needs a neckline re-do? Could that plain pair of pants use improvement with lace ankle vents? Is this unremarkable pair of jeans perfect for a hand embroidery spiff-up. Hold 1:1 in-person sales events by appointment and Facebook live shopping events regularly. Decide if you will ship out products or require all local pickup at your home. **Minimal contact opportunity.**

You get the idea about flipping ready-made, right? You don't need to sew a line of clothing from scratch if flipping is more you.

**Offer designer face masks and other health-related products.** What about scrub outfits? While health field personnel can get this stuff easily online, make it super easy for them to get to your location and try on scrub outfits, which are easy-sew projects, you zipped up in the fun fabrics you sourced, and clients pay no shipping. Make this happen on your social media. Hold 1:1 in-person sales events by appointment and Facebook live shopping events regularly. Decide if you will ship out products or require all local pickup at your home.  
**Minimal contact opportunity.**

**Trick out an RV and go mobile to hosted parties and/or regularly scheduled parking lot alterations and pop-up shop events.** You'll need to check out where you can do this legally...but how about this – entice your clients to host pop-ups and one-day events in their driveway or garage utilizing your RV. No fuss no muss setting up because it's all in the RV with perhaps a smattering of racks set outside. (Side note: Do not price garage sale prices). Host is responsible for inviting a vast network of friends and earns item(s) based on sales. Naturally, advertise to your peeps on social media. While **not a minimal contact opportunity**, you can minimize contact by requiring a controlled filtering of people process by the host – such as one at a time allowed in the shopping area, kind of like when you go to the doctor and at check in you have to stand back and away from the person currently being helped for privacy reasons. If

this kind of filtering does not seem like it would fly very well, then space out display racks and allow only one person in the RV at a time. You have the right to require face masks...or not.

**Do office park contract alterations pick up and drop off.** Similar to above, entice employees to come out on their lunch hour and get fitted for alterations, and set up return appointments. You can do this by contracting with businesses or simply tweet your arrival and allow this kind of systematic availability become routine for office park employees. Plus offer pop-up shop hosting opportunities to businesses to earn points/products based on sales. Don't you think there is big opportunity to get a swarm of business park patrons around your RV? Again, while **not a minimal contact opportunity**, you can minimize contact by requiring a controlled filtering of people, or not since people are on a time crunch because they're on company time, then space out display racks and stagger scheduling different companies so that you aren't swarmed by building escapees dying for a diversion. You have the right to require face masks...or not.

The above RV ideas work well with smaller RVs, too. A client of mine got a used and obviously older Winnebago Rialta and does very well. It's set up with a sewing machine ready to alter including private fitting room and computer to take sales. Imagine a neighborhood or office park lining up to try on and purchase your products. Dreamy!

Do neighborhood contract alterations pick up and drop off. This would work like the Drop Box section below except the drop box is at the client's home outside and easily accessible. **Minimal contact opportunity.**

Become the adjunct or main alterations specialist for dry cleaners – you pick up and drop off alterations completed at your home. See the extensive section below on that subject. **Minimal contact opportunity.**

Get involved in promotional products contract sewing. Reach out to companies and inquire what promotional items you can sew in bulk for their trade shows, etc. Imagine that the same office park clientele that come to your pop-ups on their lunch hour to purchase personal items also clamor for the promotional items you create from their input. Once you commiserate with a business on a product(s), you offer a free sample on a tiny scale, once approved get a sizeable down payment, produce the item, notify the business rep of your arrival, they come out to your vehicle and finalize the deal. **Minimal contact opportunity.**

Sew for local designers and their clothing or product lines. I cannot tell you how many times I've been approached by clothing designers who do not sew, therefore, need a sewist to translate the design. See the prototyping section below for more info. There seem to be a lot of millennials interested in design careers of various types, including "fashion" design, yet a lot of them don't intend to sew –



unless post-COVID times become more influential for more folks to sew, any sewist who takes clients is going to be approached by designers and inventors. Opportunity abounds. **Minimal contact opportunity.**

[Sew wholesale to local boutiques.](#) Check out Indie Retail Academy online – this retailer’s sense of humor can’t be beat! **Minimal contact opportunity.**

Better yet – run your own online boutique on your own website utilizing Facebook Live or go live on YouTube and incorporate some or all of the ideas above. Hold 1:1 in-person sales events by appointment and Facebook live shopping events regularly. Decide if you will ship out products or require all local pickup at your home. **Minimal contact opportunity.**

[Offer virtual sewing classes from home for groups or one-to-one.](#) Or do community ed classes. Think how the world has gone wild about home gardening – isn’t it time folks got more self-sufficient around sewing? You’re the one, darling! This is a **minimal to no contact opportunity.**

[Fill your studio with fab items for online Christmas in July and December boutiques.](#) Hold 1:1 in-person sales events by appointment and Facebook live shopping events regularly. Decide if you will ship out products or require all local pickup at your home. **Minimal contact opportunity.**

Get involved in cosplay and the huge world of costumes and theater production. Do it at the theater or arrange to do it at home. Once you step into that world, **minimal contact opportunities** abound.

## DROP BOX ALTERATIONS

Consider doing alterations for people who aren't desirous of seeing you or entering your home either. That would necessitate organizing a drop-off and pick-up box and involve only simple alterations, like hems, that clients would be responsible for grabbing a safety pin and figuring out lengths themselves. Believe it or not, plenty of folks are willing and able enough to do it that way.

You would need to have a solid policy in place for payment – which should be in full up front and online, firm policy about client accuracy, and prompt pickup. Many is the time a client simply would sling a garment on a curtain rod magnetized to my inner door and out of sight from the public for me to alter and toss back onto the door when it was ready for pick up.

This method might be perfect for you. Figure it out and do it.

## ABOUT WORKING FOR DRY CLEANERS OFF SITE

There is such a thing as picking up loads of garment alterations at your local dry cleaners and taking it home. You might like this alternative as the happy medium between traffic in your home and being a company alterations specialist. The tradeoff is the dry

cleaners will most likely want a 20-25% cut. If you can live with a cut like that, then yours is the ultimate freedom if you do not want to deal with customers in person as you would otherwise.

In this situation you will need to be vigilant about communication with the dry cleaners, however, especially alterations instructions. Primarily your instructions will come via tag attached to garments written out by counter clerks who are not necessarily fluent in alterations-speak. You might find yourself spending more time than you like clarifying with clerks or calling faceless customers about what is wanted. I did alterations this way for several years and really liked it. I will say in a one-liner that you can go ahead and read between the lines – the owners of dry cleaning establishments can be exceedingly challenging to deal with. Trust your gut on this one, too, and make sure you are getting paid in a timely manner with plenty of accurate bookkeeping to back you up.

The timing has to be right to get in with a dry cleaning establishment; it has to be the right moment when they are just displeased enough with the current sewer, or are losing that person, or are just starting to consider offering the service. You might be “tried out” for a time and become on-call and then one day something shifts, and you are in top position.

There is not much room for error in this alterations scenario, especially when it comes to timeliness. Sometimes all you have to do

is mess up once and then you are out as suddenly as you were in. If that happens to you, just remember what I indicated about dry cleaning establishment owners and move on. Also they tend to be jaded with worry that you will steal their customers, and when you are not an employee it is easy to dispense with you. Do not take it personally and be prepared for that potential eventuality with other income streams and have other plans in place. I could tell you a ton of stories about working off-site for dry cleaners as an independent contractor...just figure you'll collect plenty of your own stories if you go this route.

### CONTRACT SEWING, PIECE WORK & PROTOTYPING

You may be contacted by local companies to do contract sewing or piece work. That means they have a product that needs to be sewn en masse. I did that at home for a while for a children's clothing company. They provided all the supplies while I used my industrial machine that sews very fast. In the end, it was a great experience making such cute stuff for children, but it did not pay nearly as well per hour as I am able to command doing alterations. It required picking up and dropping off, and sometimes the deadlines were very demanding. I'm certainly glad I had the experience. You might be enticed to work on-site for a company using their equipment. You would seldom make per hour what you could doing alterations, but it may be worthwhile to get the experience. The reason it was such a good experience for me to sew countless pieces of children's

clothing is because I was considering doing that myself. When the opportunity came along to gain insight into what that would entail, I was very glad to find out what kind of energy and investment expenditure such an undertaking requires, and I decided it was not for me at this stage in my life.

Prototyping, on the other hand, can result in a good payout. Always charge your top price per hour to translate designs, if you possess patterning skills. The reasonable inventor understands that prototyping costs more per piece than when producing en masse. If a potential customer seems paranoid that you would steal their design and wants you to sign multi-page non-compete contracts or anything like that, my advice is to pass on the job. Prototyping for someone should be, in my humble opinion, a fun and gratifying experience for both you and the client, and that does not include the pressure of legal ease.

Okay! That ought to be enough for many of you to find something viable, who understandably don't want crowds traipsing through your house. Believe me, you can manage social distancing beautifully, and become wildly successful.

Visit my Amazon [author page](#) and consider a few other short reads to round out your business skills.

Or visit my website for an even better short reads deal [here](#).

Skills Assessment – Do You Have What It Takes?

14 Essential Business Setup Tasks, Step-by-Step, In Exact Order

How Much Money Can I Expect To Make?

How To Prevail Alongside Competition

How To Write A One-Page Easy Business Plan

How To Deal with Invoicing, Bookkeeping & Taxes

Tools of the Trade

How To Write Store Policies To Save Your Butt

Don't Want People In Your House? Loads of Alternatives, Darling!