

Bumper Feet Replacement

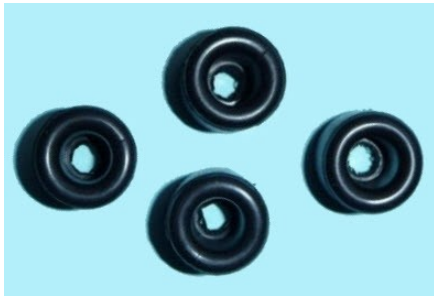
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A lot of vintage Singers from the 40s through to the 70s were made to sit atop a desk or table on rubber bumper feet. These bumpers not only cushion and protect the work surface beneath, but also help to keep the machine from sliding around on the desktop while in use.



Unfortunately, the original rubber feet can crumble over time, or actually soften and "melt" from exposure to sewing machine oil.



Replacements are available, but they are kind of pricey and not always obtainable locally. From most on-line sources, they run about \$1.25 USD apiece -- at today's exchange rate, that's about \$1.60 CDN -- plus shipping.

That's rather expensive, especially if you've got several machines to fit out, as I have.

If you are interested in an authentic restoration of your Featherweight or 301, or any of the other Singers from the period, you'll likely want the correct replacement feet.

But if your main concern is functionality, you may be interested in what for me has been a great alternative: concave silicone bumpers from Lee Valley (item #0052021). They cushion the machine nicely, and keep it steady on the desktop. Best of all, they end up costing less than a quarter of the price of the "real" replacement feet: about 40 cents each (CDN) before tax.



There are a couple of minor drawbacks: first, these bumpers have no hole in the centre to accommodate the teeny screwbolt that holds them to the machine.



I use an awl to make a hole through the bumper, pushing it into the middle of the indentation and right through the back of the bumper. Once that's done, I can push the screwbolt through the hole and attach it to the machine.



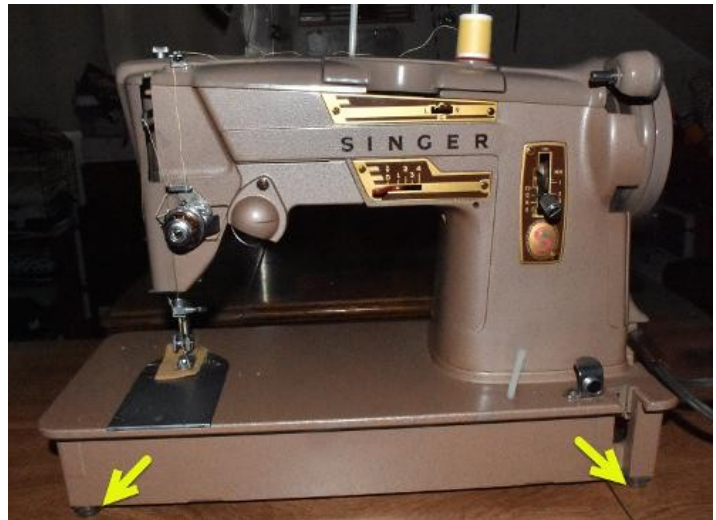
The other small issue is that these bumpers are a little larger in diameter than the recess on the machine, so they won't fit nicely inside the indentation the way the proper replacement feet would do.

However, they can still be made to work.



Lining up the end of the screwbolt with the screwhole in the bottom of the machine, I place the foot in position. It has an adhesive back, so it will stick in place. I then push on the bolt with my screwdriver until it makes contact and can be tightened into place. This process takes a bit of fiddling, but once you get the hang of it, you can install a set of these silicone bumpers in only a few minutes.

Once the machine is upright, the feet aren't really visible, but they really do keep the machine cushioned and secure from excess movement.



I have installed these on a couple dozen of my vintage Singers, including most of my slants, all of my 301s, several Featherweights, and some of the Stylist series, like this model 328, and have found them to be a very satisfactory substitute for the authentic bumpers.