



Heritage Shoppe

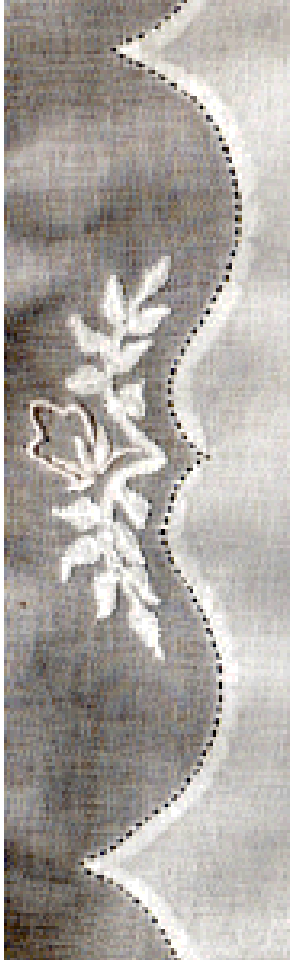
Pin Stitching Part One: Hem Preparation

Pin stitching is a beautiful embroidery accompaniment to garments and linens. When applied to shaped hems on skirts, or edges of collars, pockets, and cuffs, it is currently referred to as Madeira applique. But pin stitching is just as interesting when placed on a straight hem - adding detail not found in ready-to-wear. Dependent upon material (usually light-weight or loose-woven), the resultant holes cause onlookers to wonder how you did that.

Of equal importance to designers is its versatility. It can be used to create interesting curved lines by the use of cording (corded pin stitch). Pin stitching can also be a decorative but sturdy accent to flat felled seams.

It is an easy stitch to accomplish. The preparation, however, can be time consuming - though not difficult. Once that is out of the way, pin stitching goes quickly. Unlike other forms of embroidery, it is forgiving. Being worked in hand (no hoops required), it can be picked up when convenient, and makes for a non-frustrating endeavor while busy with guests or when your attention cannot always be focused on your work.

A NOTE ABOUT THREADS: Pin stitching can be worked in all manner of threads or floss: silk, cotton or linen. Fine threads don't fill up the holes as much and produce a daintier look. If using fine thread, make sure it is strong enough to withstand the tight pulling required to open the holes.

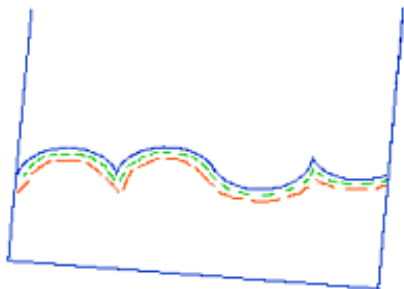
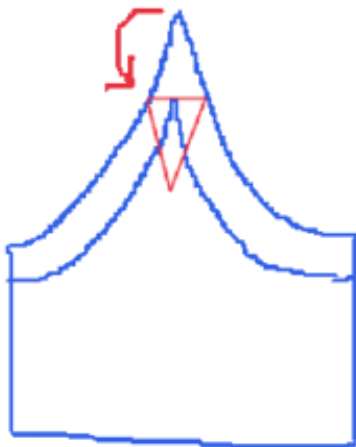
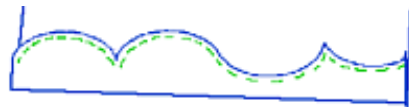


This is a portion of a hem worked in pin stitching on Swiss lawn. Notice the embroidery often used to complement modern pin stitched hems: shadow work (leafy stalks) slanted satin stitch and padded satin stitch flower. The actual length of the piece in the illustration is approximately 3-1/2 inches.

The following illustrations demonstrate the steps necessary to pin stitch a shaped hem. This hem can be self-fabric, or the introduction of another color. The hem (or border as on a placemat or collar), is first seamed to the ground fabric by hand or machine. The hem is then turned up onto the right side of the ground fabric. If the hem is placed on the back side of the ground fabric, the effect is shadow applique, and the stitching proceeds on the back of the article being worked.

As you stitch, you may notice a puckering of the fabric. This is normal, and the fabric, once washed and pressed, will lie flat. This is not the same puckering that might occur if you do not baste correctly as noted below.

Two lines are carefully drawn upon the fabric: One for the fold line, one for the cutting line. Normally, the distance between the two is about 1/8-inch.



Outside curves are notched by cutting out a V-shaped area around the curve. Inside curves are merely clipped. Care must be taken to only notch or clip within one or two threads of the fold line. Don't overdo it.

After clipping, fold the seam under carefully along the line of the design. Hand baste with small running stitches very close to the fold to catch the turned under portion.

The tip of a pointed area is turned under first. Then the sides are folded in. If you cut accurately, you should not have to snip any extra fabric. The fabric should fold nicely into a point. Since that's not always possible, clip out any excess fabric very carefully.

The hem is then hand basted to the ground fabric very close to the first line of basting. If you merely pin the fabric, (trying to shortcut this step) - or baste too far from the edge of the fold - you will find that your material has shifted slightly because pin stitching pulls the fabric. This shift will cause puckers, design shifting, and a loss of your straight of grain. This basting step insures the final step will go quickly and without problems.

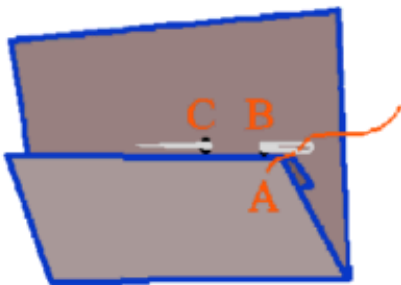
Pin Stitching Part Two: Pinstitching the Hem

Having prepared the applique, you are now ready to start pin stitching the hem in place.



Begin by taking two or three tiny back stitches in the hem of the folded edge. Even though the picture shows stitches separated, go in and out the same holes. This will make your thread quite secure.

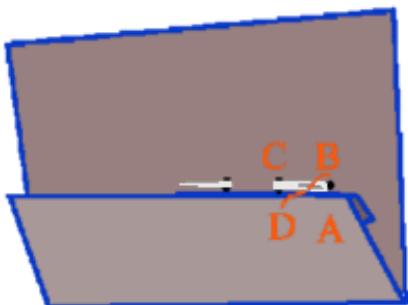
The distance between B and C is a scant 16th of an inch (2 to 3mm).



UP at A - DOWN at B - UP at C in one motion.

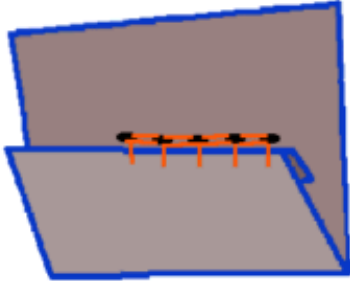
DOWN at B - UP at C and **pull slightly**.

DOWN at B - UP AT D (see next illustration) and **pull firmly**. You have now put two stitches between C and B.



"D" now becomes "A" and the process is begun again. Continue along the length of the hem in this manner. **Please Note:** Some books teach you to hold the hem at the top. Either method is correct. The important consideration is that you enter and exit the same holes, that the stitches be drawn tightly to open the holes up sufficiently to create the effect, that the thread comes straight up from A to

B. In addition, you will have to adjust the length of your stitches to fit around points so that a hole is created at each peak (^) or center of a valley on an inverted peak (v).



This is how the finished stitching should look. If you missed it the first time you viewed this page, an actual embroidered sample is shown at the link below.

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