

Table of Contents

The boring stuff!

Fabric

- Patchwork Cotton/Bondaweb/Pelmet Vilene/Wadding

Tools and Equipment

- Needles/Irons/Scissors/Templates/Clips/Gel Pens

Consumables

- Thread/Beads/Sticky Stuff: PVA/Double Sided Tape/Fabric Glue Pen/Textile Glue/Uhu

Getting More Interesting : Stitch Instructions!

Starting Off/Finishing

During Beading : When Edge Stitching/When Picot Stitching

A Surgeon's Knot

Hand Sewing : Whip/Ladder

Beading Stitches : Edge/Single Pass Picot/2 Pass Picot

The Best Bit : Projects!

- 3 Folds
- Geometrics
- Pine Cone
- Bauble

About the Author

The Glorious Art of Fudging

And Finally

Fabric

There are four basic types of fabric or material that I use for the manufacture of the Cottons Collection and they are listed below. But, like much of my work, there are no hard and fast rules as to what should/shouldn't be used – if you prefer some other similar material then use that. It could even be better than the fabric I use – if so, let me know please!

That said, I must state that you may get a different result if you use something other than what I suggest. Your choice.



The designs in this book call for small pattern fabric – anything with a large pattern would get cut off and lose the effect. All over patterns are good

Christmas Patchwork Cotton

For making all the items in this book I used ordinary (!) Patchwork weight cottons which can be bought in a variety of ways – by the metre or parts thereof; fat quarters, skinny quarters, charm packs You could also use clothes that are no longer worn but you like the pattern. As long as it is cotton and doesn't have a pile i.e. like deep plush velvet, then you can use it.

Then I've only used one pattern per item -why not mix and match? This would especially good for linings etc. In which case, you would need smaller quantities of different fabrics as opposed to one piece of one fabric. You get my meaning.

Anyway – there is more than one manufacturer of Patchwork fabric and many, many suppliers/sellers of it too – so I won't make a list of these people. But I will say, you get what you pay for quality wise. 'Nuff said.

Just a note here – you probably won't need to pre-wash your fabric unless you think the colour dyes will rub off during use – you're not making anything that will be worn so there's no need for this step. At least, I've never done it.

Bondaweb

Or whatever name you use – it's the paper covered, two-sided adhesive stuff that you can use for adding appliques to items and which also prevents fraying. This is the name I call it and it can be bought in a roll, in a pack etc. Thinner lengths are used for hemming garments.



Pelmet Vilene

And again, this is what I call this material – my supplier calls it Needle Felt Buckram but we both know what the other means. To me it is a stiff-ish material that is used for making curtain pelmets and can have an adhesive layer on one side, which is great for what I use it for. I buy it in 33 metre roll but that's from a wholesaler. It is not heavy iron-on interfacing – that is not strong enough to hold a shape.

Wadding

There is no rule as to how thick a piece of wadding should be for the projects in this book – but it shouldn't be too thick that it takes up too much fabric when the latter is folded over. I put Vliesliene/Vilene 280 in my kits which is washable but that doesn't matter for the purposes here.



Tools and Equipment

I have collected a number of useful gizmos and gadgets over my crafting years – some I have bought because I've started a new project/hobby and it's been a case of 'You must have these items in order to make this!' – but that's not the case here. I hate people who force others to buy things they don't really need. OK, their particular craft might need a special tool – that's fine, but if you can use something else in the meantime, until you have decided to want to carry on with this hobby, then don't get me to 'waste' my money. Ease me in gradually please.

And that's what I try to do here. You don't have to have every tool or piece of equipment that I use – you could already have something you can use in the meantime until you get so hooked with bead embroidery that you decide to splash out and treat yourself. I use what I find convenient and makes life easier.

Needles

You must have needles to make the items in this book. But where you buy them or who makes them is entirely up to you. Beading needles come in various sizes, according to the type and size of bead you are using. I tend to use size 10 beading needles made by John James. I have used others which bend as soon as you look at them but they were bought because they were cheaper. I have also used Miyuki's own brand of needles which I found to be as good as the name. But because I buy in bulk I use John James, and they are the needles supplied in all my kits. They will bend, break and blunt, but then all needles will do that. But some sooner than others!

I also use JJ sewing needles and that's a hang-over from my millinery days. I have no idea which needles should be used for what, to be honest, other than the name of the type of needle i.e. beading, sewing, embroidery etc. So, if you're doing your own thing and not using one of my kits (why not, might I ask?), then use a sewing needle that you are comfortable with.



Irons

Now this is where I do have a strong preference. I don't use a normal, everyday size iron for my work except for when ironing out creases in pieces of fabric. Assembly work is all done, either by travel iron or the Clover mini iron, but the travel iron will work for everything. The mini iron makes life easier, that's all. I do recommend it however and the extra tips you can buy are useful not just for fabric craft – I have used them for making silk flowers, which is fabric craft I suppose in a millinery way.

Clips – Bulldog and/or Quilting

These are to hold two pieces together while sewing/beading. I don't recommend paper clips as they can tear the fabric



Gel Pens

I use these on dark colour fabrics. Any pen will do as long as it doesn't 'bleed' into the fabric. On light colour material a normal biro will do.



Scissors

I do suggest you have different scissors which are used for individual purposes i.e. cutting paper, fabric etc. Only because paper will blunt your scissor blades so quickly that they will only cut paper and not fabric. If you have two pairs of scissors that look the same, put a loop of ribbon on those you use for cutting fabric and warn the rest of the family NEVER to use those for cutting anything else!

My list of scissors goes like this:

Paper:

- Small – like those used in 3D decoupage
- Medium – for cutting around templates etc.
- Large – for cutting out roughly



Fabric:

- Embroidery – for cutting thread etc.
- Short blade/wide handles – for intricate fabric cutting
- Long blade/wide handles – for long fabric cutting
- Pinking shears – to prevent fraying at seams
- Rotary cutters – small and large circle blades
- Craft knife – for lifting off double sided tape paper backing etc
- Applique – duck bill like blades for trimming linings

As I stated earlier, you don't need all these scissors just because I have them, and this is especially in the case of the Applique scissors – they are handy and make cutting back linings much more easy, but the job can be done using ordinary scissors. They are not a must-have, they are a nice-to-have.

Templates

In some cases I provide greyboard templates which are laser cut and will need wiping down before use. (The burning process can (and does) leave a smidgeon of burned board on the edges which will mark fabric and fingers etc.) Otherwise paper templates are good as they are easily re-printed and cut out with PAPER scissors!

Plastic templates are something being looked into and for future projects.



THE ONLY MUST DO IS, WHEN USING TEMPLATES ON PELMET VILENE, CUT OUT JUST **INSIDE** THE LINE, NOT ON THE LINE, UNLESS OTHERWISE INFORMED

Consumables

These I class as items that are used up as you go along. I have preferences for particular brands for some things, others as I find them in the shops. So here goes:

Thread

Nymo. I use Nymo. Nothing but Nymo. Some people swear by it; others swear at it. But I use it and provide the same in all kits. If you prefer to use another thread then please do so. Go ahead, your choice.

Here's a few :

Monofilament
One-G Thread
Silamide
Sono
Wildfire
Sonoko Nuzue
C Lon

S Lon
Dandyline
Fireline
Miyuki
Hana Beading Thread
K.O.



CLon



Fireline



KO Thread



Nymo

The above are available from various beading suppliers and are good for either one type of beading or another. Some are for heavy bead weaving such as Fireline and Wildfire, others for more intricate work. As with everything, the choice is yours so use what you are comfortable with, as long as you're prepared for the finished item possibly looking slightly different to mine. It could even be better!



Beads

For the purposes of the items in this book I use Miyuki seed beads (11⁰ and 15⁰) and bugles (3mm and 6mm). Only because I know I can rely on their 99% quality (you do get some mis-shapes). For sequins I tend to use Gutermann's for basic colours. For other colours I scour the internet!

When it comes to beads I don't go by their colour names but by how they look. I found out the hard way when making hats, that what one person calls blue another calls aqua – when in reality it turned out to be turquoise – to my mind anyway! So, when I'm having a designing splurge I gather together all the beads that I think complement each other and it's only when I write things up that I find out the names. If I'd relied on names only I probably would never have chosen to incorporate some beads in designs.

If you wish to change the colours/brands of beads I use in this book then please go ahead. It will then be completely different to the finished design colour wise, but it will be your colour choice.



Sticky Stuff

When a milliner the word 'glue' was a four-letter word to me. I refused to use any sort of glue but sewed everything together. That meant that hat décor could be removed safely with no marks/residue left behind and the hat could then be re-decorated.

But fast forward to bead embroidery and I now use glues in some form or another, apart from Bondaweb and the adhesive side of Vilene.

PVA glue

Household stuff that can be bought from craft stores, in the children's craft department – wherever. A small inexpensive brush and little saucer is all you need, although the saucer could be done away with if the glue bottle isn't too deep to dip your brush into directly! It usually dries quite clear although it does change the texture of the fabric i.e. stiffens it.



Narrow Double-Sided Tape

Use it a lot to keep fabric in place while I do something else to it. Any make will do and the width depends on the job in hand.

Fabric Glue Pen

A recent discovery of mine, although they've probably been around for a while – I'm slow to catch on to things! I use this sometimes instead of Double Sided Tape when sticking fabric to Vilene



Textile Glue

For use when wanting to stick pieces of fabric together in a permanent bond. I use this when attaching a glue-in purse/bag frame to fabric.

Uhu

This I use for attaching magnets to items, although I do add double sided tape as well. It does 'string' when squeezing out so be ready to wind these strings up and out of the way. It will not wash out

There are other glues that I use but not for the items in this book, so it would be silly for me to add them here and confuse things. Let's get onto something else – the stitches!



And that's about it with regard to the things I use. Now it's time for the fun stuff – some stitches!

Now for some instructions!

Starting off.



Bring the threaded needle up from underneath



Then take it back down really close to where you came up.



Tie a surgeon's knot and cut off any excess and you're ready for the off!

Finishing

If you are whip-stitching or ladder stitching the item together then just leave the end tail of your thread loose, add a new thread by making a surgeon's knot and carry on for a few stitches, then leave your new thread loose, go back and tie a surgeon's knot with both old tail and new tail, thread up a tail and, as close to the knot as possible, take the needle down and through the fabric coming up a little way away. Pull gently to bring the knot close almost into the fabric and cut off the excess thread sticking out the fabric. Mind you don't cut the fabric. Repeat with the second tail.



Just tie a surgeon's knot with the two tails



Then fasten off by taking each tail in turn through the fabric – get as close to the knot as possible



Repeat with the other tail



Take both tails through the fabric, pull slightly taut and cut off the excess thread.

Make a False Start

Sometimes when you get to the end of a bit of beading there's not 'spare tail' to knot your working thread with to finish off. When faced with this I make a false start. I exit out from the base of an edge bead and then cut my working thread to a length of 6"/15cm. Then with more thread in the needle, take said needle up an edge bead and down the adjacent edge bead, (both of these beads being next to where the old tail is), make a surgeon's knot as if casting on. I then surgeon's knot with the tails – both new and old, then take each tail (there will be 3) through the fabric in turn and cut off. All secure.

During Beading

This is similar to the process used during assembling the item, except beads are now in play.

When Edge Stitching

Leave your old thread coming out of the top of a bead and with new thread in your needle, tie a surgeon's knot close to the last bead. Take the needle up through the last bead and continue with the edge stitch for about 5 - 6 beads. Let your needle down and turn your attention back to the tails of old and new threads. Put a needle onto the old thread and take it down through the first bead added by the new thread. Tie a surgeon's knot with old and new thread tails, then take each tail through the fabric to pull the knot close into the fabric, cutting off any excess. Continue beading.

When Picot Stitching

Leave your old thread coming out of the bottom of a bead and with new thread in your needle, tie a surgeon's knot as close to the base of the beading and next to where the old tail is situated. Come up through the next bead in the picot stitch sequence and continue for a few stitches then lay your needle down. Tie the two tails together with a surgeon's knot and take the ends through the fabric as above. Cut off any excess and continue with the picot stitch.

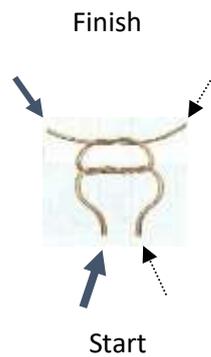
A Surgeon's Knot

We (should) all know how to tie a Reef/Square Knot - yes? Left over Right, finger down to hold then Right over Left?

Well a Surgeon's Knot has one more 'Left over Right' so the sequence reads:

'Left over Right, Left over Right, pull tight then Right over Left.'

There is no need for a finger to hold the first part of the knot down - and this knot can be used to tie shoelaces, tie-belts and all sorts. And it's very useful during surgery of course!



Hand Sewing

I use two main hand sewing stitches when assembling items – Whip Stitch and Ladder Stitch. I prefer the former but use the latter now and again. The choice is yours as to which you use.

Whip Stitch



Lay your fabric edges so that they are flush with one another, right sides together usually. Secure your thread with a surgeon's knot on one edge and then over sew just once to bring the corners together.



Go up the fabric a little further and repeat taking the needle through all layers, just catching the tops of all the layers



Make **very small** stitches because you don't want the thread to be seen from the right side



. Continue in this fashion sewing all the edges together.

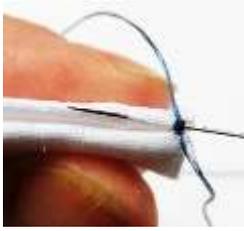


The finished piece from the wrong sides



And from the right sides

Ladder Stitch



Secure your thread (I usually use beading thread and a beading needle for this) at the corner of your shape then take your needle through the fold of one side



Bring your thread over to the other side and where it 'hits' the other side



Take your needle through the second side. Pull gently then take your thread over to the first side again



Go through the fold again and continue along the sides to be joined



From the wrong sides



From the right sides laying flat



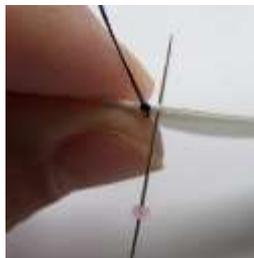
And from the right sides pulled at right angles

Beading Stitches

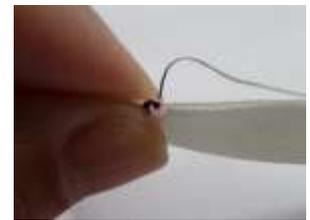
Edge Stitch



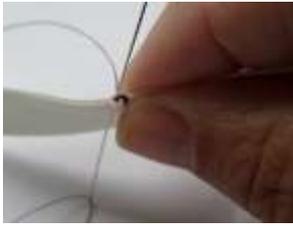
Fasten on your thread with a surgeon's knot on the very edge of one side of fabric.



Pick up one bead and go across the tops of both edges in an 'away-from-you' direction.



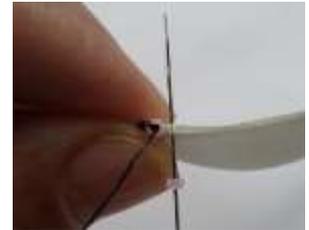
Bring the thread around the side of the direction in which you are travelling – I am going from left to right so the thread is brought around the right side of the bead. If you are left handed you may find travelling from right to left better – then bring the thread around the left side of the bead



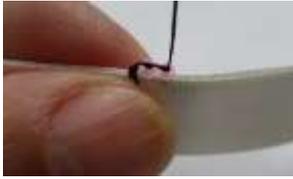
Now pass your needle up through the bead so that it comes out of the top



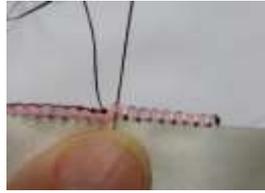
Your bead should sit across the top of both edges of fabric/ribbon



Pick up another bead and take your needle through the very top edges again – a half bead space away from the previous bead

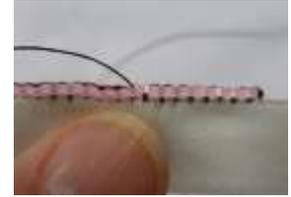


Take your thread around the appropriate side and the needle up through the bead just added. Pull to bring the bead close to the top edges. Continue in this way until you have covered the area required.

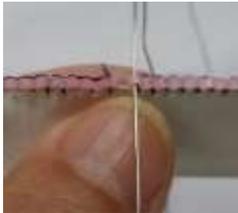


To join up

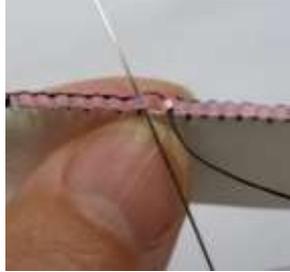
Put a bead on your needle and just lay it down in the space left between the end and the beginning of your stitching. If it fits neatly then add the bead as normal.



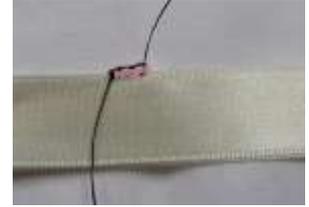
If it doesn't fit in nicely – like below – then remove the bead. You will have a slight gap which can be overcome by either undoing a couple of beads (reverse stitching is the technical term!) and re-stitching them with bigger spacing, or



.... (and this is how to finish off whether a bead fits or not,) take your needle down through the first bead you added i.e. the next bead in the line

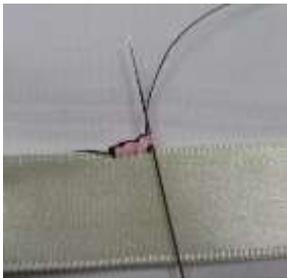


And then go back up your last bead pulling the two beads together slightly to close the gap a little more.



To add thread mid stitching

Remove the needle from the 'old' thread and let hang loose – do not cut



Thread up your needle with some new thread and take up through the last bead added.



Go back down the second to last (penultimate) bead leaving a longish tail of thread



Now tie a surgeon's knot in the new thread. The old thread tail is still hanging around.



Take your needle back up through the last bead



And continue edge stitching for a few beads. Then, either remove the needle from the new thread and add it to the old thread tail, or thread up a second needle on the old thread. Take the old thread down through the first bead added with the new thread

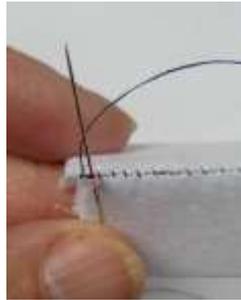


Tie a surgeon's knot with the two tails from the old and new threads. Finish off as per usual by taking each thread through the fabric

Edge Stitch joining two sides



Pick up one bead and take your needle across the tops of both sides. You should be covering any hand stitching



With the thread on the travelling direction side come up through the bead



Pick up another bead and go across the tops of both sides, approximately half a bead away from the first bead



Thread on the correct side and come up again through the bead just added



Here you can see beads added on the right side of the hand sewing

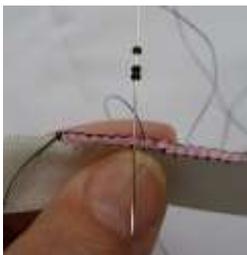


And here are beads added to the wrong side of hand sewing, which sometimes becomes the right side!



Sometimes I find it easier to sew this stitch from a 'bird's eye' viewpoint

Single Pass Picot Stitch



With your thread exiting from the top of an edge bead, pick up three beads. They can be in either a combination of all one colour or a sandwich of ABA.

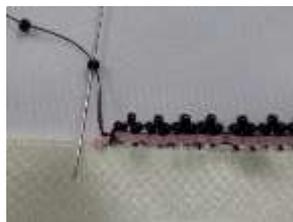
Take your needle down through the next bead to the left (right for left handers) of the bead you came out of



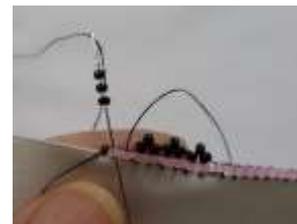
If, however, you end coming up the last bead, then you need to do a single picot.



Pull the beads down to form a picot as shown below. Take your needle up through the next bead to the left, pick up three beads and then down through the next bead to the left.



Pick up two beads and go back down through the first bead just added.



If you get back to the beginning of the stitching you will come across the short tail you left. If your beads were in pairs you will luckily end by going down through the last bead.



Take your needle back down through the edge bead and pull the two beads so that they form the single picot. It looks very noticeable now but when sandwiched between two 'normal' picots then it can hardly be seen. Fasten off as normal

Two Pass Picot Stitch

I find this stitch keeps its shape better than the single pass picot stitch.



Coming out of an edge bead, pick up two beads and go back down the adjacent edge bead. It doesn't matter which way you travel with this stitch



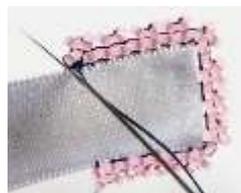
Come up again through the next edge bead



Pick up two more beads and go back down the next edge bead. Bead weavers might recognise the first row of herringbone stitch!



You will finish by being at the base of a set of cup and edge beads.



Take your needle through the very edge of the fabric



Then come up through the last edge and cup bead pair



Pick up one bead and go back down through the other side of the cup/edge bead pair



Come back up through the next cup/edge pair, pick up one bead and continue



When you get to a corner you may find it has a slight 'gap'



Come up through the next edge bead only



Pick up three beads and go back down through the previous edge bead



Now come up again through the first edge bead AND it's cup bead and continue with adding one bead



The finished two pass picot



If you have only one bead left then the single picot is as for the one pass picot stitch i.e. pick up two beads, ignore the last bead added, go down through the first bead then the edge bead.