

Embroidery is the decorative addition of thread to fabric which is stitched onto and into the surface with a needle.

It can be used to patch and mend cloth or developed in a variety of creative techniques to add texture and to embellish the material. Decorated garments and cloths carry the histories, symbols and traditions of cultures and represent status or identity.

For example, Kantha embroidery is a style traditionally practiced in Bangladesh and Odisha, which commonly features images of birds, animals, flowers and everyday activities made using running stitches.

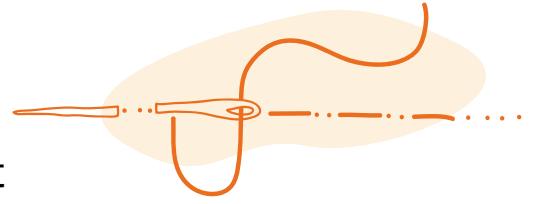
Blackwork is a traditional English embroidery technique that uses black thread to stitch onto linen or cotton fabric, commonly used to decorate shirts, collars, cuffs, and smocks.

In *Threads*, the tiny details found on Richard McVetis' *Variations of a Stitched Cube* are meticulously hand-embroidered using black thread. The repetitive stitches were made to record the passing of time. Artist Alice Kettle uses machine embroidery to create her textured, narrative large-scale stitched works. *Ground* illustrates the experiences of displacement and migration, and embroidery is used to recreate the drawings contributed by refugees.

HOW TO DO BASIC EMBROIDERY STITCHES

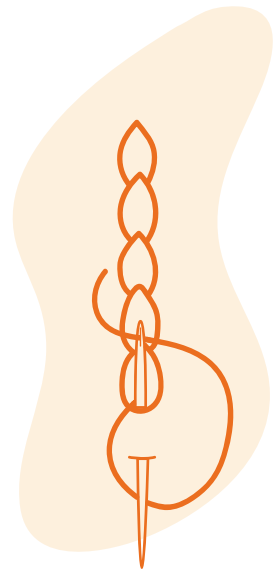
RUNNING STITCH

A running stitch is made by drawing the needle through the cloth from back to front at regular intervals.



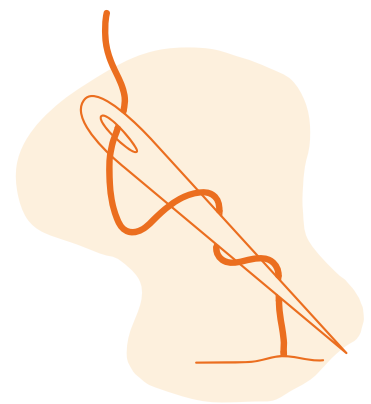
CHAIN STITCH

1. Bring your needle up through the fabric and pull the thread through.
2. Bring the needle back down through the same hole, leaving a small loop.
3. Bring the needle up through the fabric a couple of millimetres from the original place and within the loop of thread.
4. Pull thread and repeat from Step 2.



FRENCH KNOT

Bring your needle up through the fabric. Hold the needle horizontally so it points away from you and wrap the thread around the needle 3 times. Push the wrapped needle down through the fabric right next to where you began the stitch. Pull the thread through until a knot forms. You've got your first French knot! Use this stitch to create flowers or delicate stars.



Mending is a practice which encourages maintaining and repairing fabrics and garments instead of buying new items.

It encourages us to be more sustainable. It can be as simple as replacing a missing button, hemming a pair of trousers, or patching a hole in a sweater.

Visible mending can turn damage into a new feature, or even a work of art. For example, darning is a technique in which holes can be filled in with colourful embroidered patterns that reproduce woven textures.

The Japanese art of Sashiko uses simple running stitches to create geometric patterns which reinforces fabric while making it look beautiful.

Artist Celia Pym uses mending to make damage visible. Pym says that the act of mending is also an act of care and paying attention. She has undertaken multiple mending projects where she repaired a person's garment while listening to their stories, creating a snapshot of everyday life that become part of the clothing, holding an imprint of the wearer.

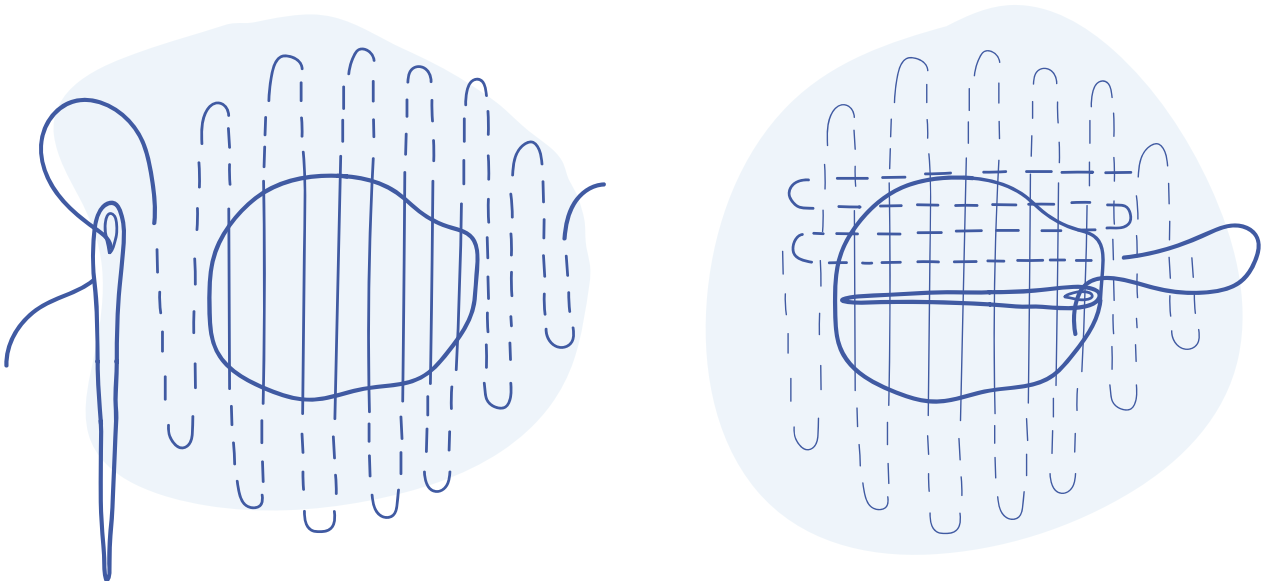
In *Threads*, her work titled *Hope's Sweater*, features a moth-eaten sweater which used to belong to her mother and then later her brother, mended with purple wool. Her series titled *Mended Bags* consists of paper bag packaging stitched into with coloured wool.

HOW TO MEND A HOLE

BASKET DARNING

Place the hole over a darning mushroom to keep the fabric flat and taut.

1. Start your first stitch a centimetre or so below and to the side of the hole, leaving a short tail that you can weave in at the end.
2. Create running stitches up and down to the side of the hole as far as you'd like. Continue this, up and down, but try to place the stitches, randomly so that they don't lie exactly beside each other.
3. When you reach the hole, create one long stitch that goes from one side of the hole to the other. Remember to keep your stitches over the hole close together.
4. Then do the same across the hole at right angles and weave the needle in and out of the long stitches, like with weaving.



Knitting is where you create a stretchy and elastic fabric by continuously looping and interlacing yarn or thread using two or more needles.

By changing the size of the needles and yarn, you can form various stitches, textures, and patterns. The knitted fabric can be shaped to create forms. Knitting has been an essential technique to different cultures to make clothes, stockings, hats, scarves sweaters and blankets.

For example, the island of Fair Isle north of Scotland, gives its names to Fair Isle knitting from where it originates. It is known for its complex patterns passed down through generations and made using double-pointed needles.

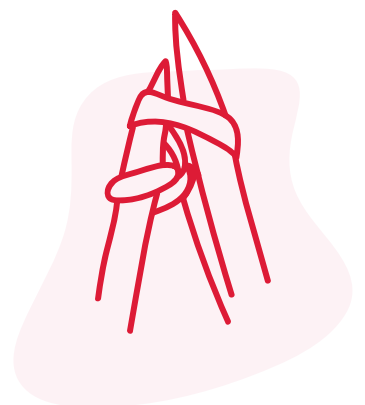
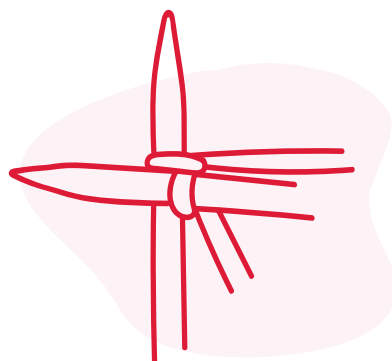
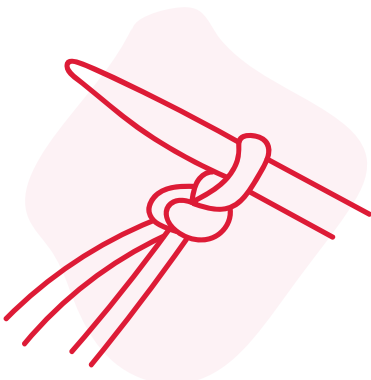
China has a long, ancient tradition of silk knitting, known for its luxurious quality, where silkworms were first cultivated, and silk fabric manufactured.

Artist Esna Su knits strips of leather to create her hollow, textile sculptures titled *The Burden II 'My Trousseau'*. The knitted fabric has been wetted to make the material stiff and then moulded around treasured items. When she took the items out, the sculpture retained its shape, making it look like it is holding ghostly items.

HOW TO START A KNIT

LONG TAIL CAST ON

1. Create a slip knot. Place the slip knot on the left needle and insert the point of the right needle.
2. Insert needle into the slip knot. Insert the tip of the right needle into the slip knot and cross it under the left needle.
3. Bring the working yarn around the right needle tip. Take the yarn with your right hand, and loop around the right-hand needle.
4. Bring right needle under the left and through to the front.
5. Bring the yarn under the right-hand needle to create a loop (stitch).
6. Transfer the stitch to left needle. Now remove the right needle so the loop is transferred to the left needle. Pull the yarn to secure.
7. You will now have two stitches on your left-hand needle.
8. Repeat!
9. When you have enough stitches, turn the needles around and knit stitches by slipping the right-hand needle up and through the cast-on stitches, (your first row of stitches) then wrapping the yarn around the tip. Then, pull the yarn through the stitch.
10. Continue each line at a time.



Weaving involves two sets of threads: the warp and the weft.

The warp threads run vertically and are attached to a loom, providing a stable foundation. The weft threads, are woven horizontally through the warp, creating the fabric's structure. The weaver passes the weft thread over and under the warp threads, repeating this pattern to create a design.

Navajo weavers are known for their distinctive geometric patterns woven into blankets, cloaks, dresses, saddle bags and rugs.

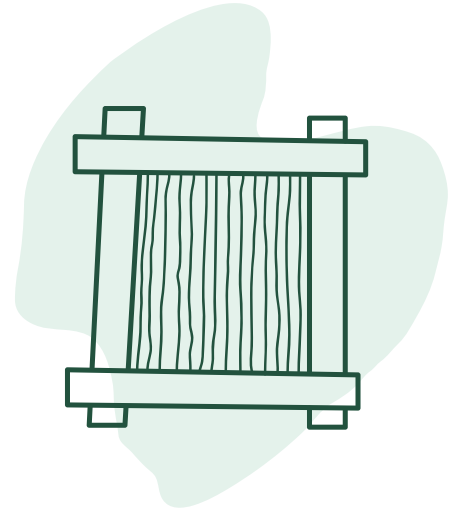
Persian rugs are known for their time-consuming process which involves tying a series of knots in between the woven threads. These are just a small example of weaving traditions across the world.

In *Threads*, Olga de Amaral creates large-scale tapestries made with woven linen covered in layers of gold and gesso, which can be seen in *Viento 2* and *Cesta Lunar 50B*. Raisa Kabir's installation *Nil. Nargis. Blue. Bring in the tide with your moon* includes tapestries woven with jute, indigo and linen. Will Cruickshank's experimental sculptures *Wound Frame No.3* and *Wound Frame No. 4* are made using mechanical processes inspired by spinning and weaving traditions. David Penny's *Screen for Another Focus* documents the process of making a hand-woven tapestry through film and moving image.

HOW TO WEAVE

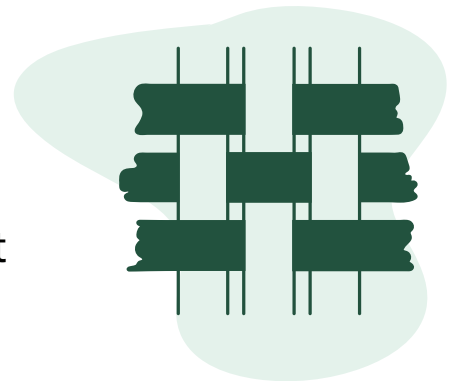
WARPING A FRAME LOOM

1. Tie one end of your string to the frame. You can use a simple knot.
2. Bring the string across to the other side of the loom, wrapping it around the notch once. Bring it across to other side again, wrapping it around the notch each time. Make it taut but not overly tight.
3. Repeat until you get to the other side of your loom and tie it. You are now ready to weave!



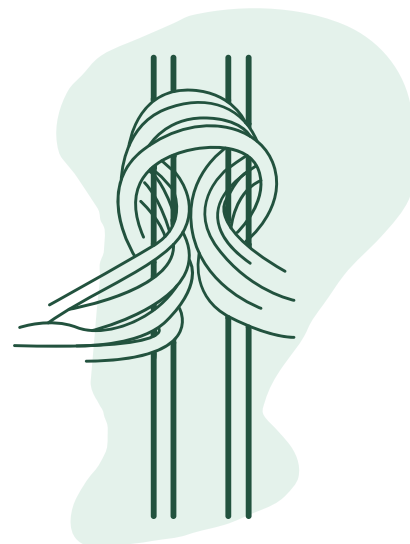
PLAIN WEAVE

Plain weave is where the weft (horizontal) threads go over an under the warp (vertical) threads. The weft does the opposite in the next row, traveling under/over a warp thread it previously went over/under.



RYA KNOTS

1. Bring 4 strands of yarn over 4 warp threads.
2. Wrap the right side of yarn around the warp threads and through the middle. Next wrap the left side of your yarn around your other warp threads so that the ends meet up in the middle.
3. Pull through so that it is taut but not tight. You now have a rya knot.



Crochet is a French word meaning 'hook'. It is a type of needle craft where you use a hooked needle to create fabric from interlocking loops of yarn.

Crochet needles can be made in wood, steel and plastic and in different sizes, which creates different fabric textures. What was once a technique used to create nets to fish, animal trapping, or clothes, has become an intricate artform. We can create a wide variety of things with crochet from lace, doilies, scarves and shawls, and even plush toys and accessories.

Types of crochet include Amigurumi which is an art form that originated in Japan and refers to the making of small, stuffed toys or creatures made from yarn. Clothesline crochet which can be traced back to indigenous communities in Nepal is a technique where traditional crochet stitches are worked over a thick rope or twine to make circular mats and baskets. Irish crochet was used to create lace that imitated expensive Venetian lace.

In *Threads*, artist Esna Su uses traditional Turkish crochet techniques to add the finishing touches to her knitted sculptures titled *The Burden II 'My Trousseau'*.

HOW TO START A CROCHET

START A CROCHET CHAIN

1. Make a slip knot by forming a loop with your yarn and then pulling the working yarn (the part leading back to the yarn ball) through the loop. Pull the tail end of the yarn to loosely tighten the knot, leaving an open loop.
2. Slide the crochet hook into the loop and tighten the knot, making sure it isn't too tight. Keep the crochet hook facing upwards. Twist the working yarn around the back of your forefinger and hold the tail end of the yarn with your thumb and middle finger.
3. Start the chain by twisting the thread around the hook from back to front. Twist the hook towards you to capture the yarn and pull it through the loop. You've now made a chain. Try not to make it too tight or too loose.
4. To make another chain stitch, yarn over the hook and pull it through the loop. Repeat as many times as necessary until you've made a chain.

