

Hand Sewing Basics: Stitches

Threading the Needle

Single threaded

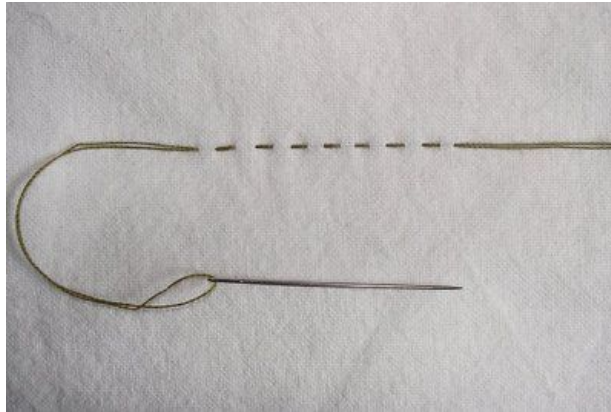
1. Pull the thread through the eye so that the needle is a few inches from the end
2. Cut the length of thread that you like.
3. Knot the longer single thread however you like and begin sewing.

Double threaded

1. Pull the thread through the eye and double it up. The end that's threaded through the eye will meet up with the thread from the spool.
2. Knot together the two tail ends and then sew with the doubled up thread.

Straight or Running stitch

A straight or running stitch is the most basic stitch. It is formed by running the needle and thread through the fabric at a regular distance.

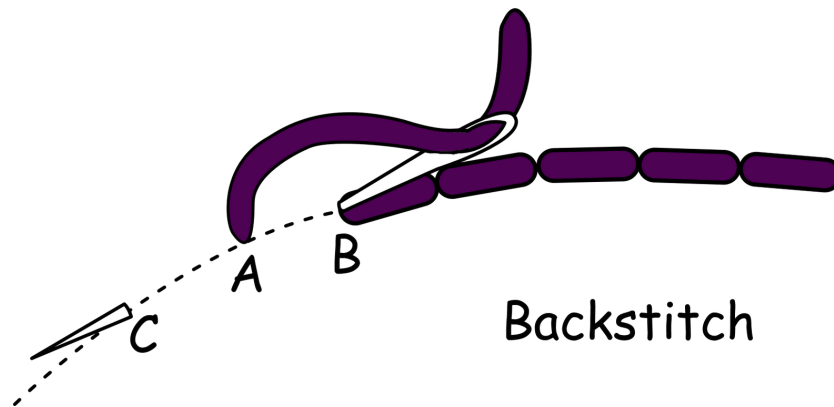


1. Single-thread your needle (unless you need a particularly thick stitch, then double-thread).
2. Library Name
3. Tie a strong knot in the end of the thread.
4. Working from the back, push the needle through to the front of the fabric and pull until the knot is flush to the back of the fabric.
5. Push the needle through the fabric from front to back, a short distance from where you pulled it through. Increase the distance between where you pull the needle through from the back to where you push it through from the front to create a looser basting stitch.

Running or straight stitches are used for delicate seams, where you don't want a lot of thread. You can also use it to create a line for decorative embroidery. Using larger spaces between stitches make this stitch good for hand-basting: holding two pieces of fabric together loosely and usually only temporarily.

Back stitch

Another straight line stitch, similar to the running stitch.

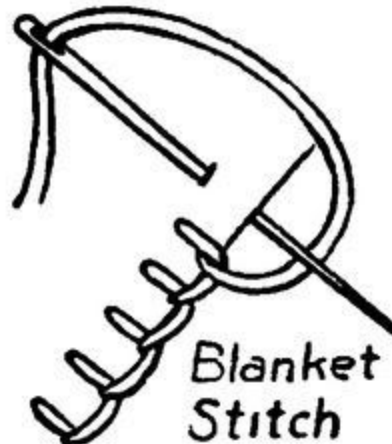


1. Single-thread your needle.
2. Tie a strong knot in the end of the thread.
3. Working from the back of the fabric, push the needle through to the front of the fabric and pull until the knot is flush to the back of the fabric.
4. Push the needle down one stitch length to the right (or left, if you are left-handed) of where you pulled it up. This forms one stitch.
5. Pull the needle up from the back of the fabric one stitch length to the right (or left, if you are left-handed) of where you pushed it through.
6. Push the needle down in the same spot or butting right against where you pushed it down for the previous stitch. Continue, moving one stitch length forward when the needle is behind the fabric, and one stitch length back to push the needle back through from the front.

This creates a very solid stitch, useful for finishing seam or mending things.

Blanket stitch

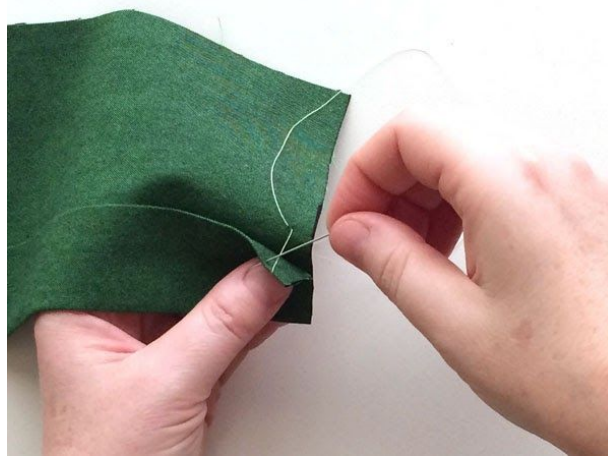
Used to edge fabric (can join two pieces or simply edge a single piece), for decoration, and to create buttonholes without a machine.



1. Double-thread your needle (single thread if using embroidery thread).
2. Tie a strong knot in the end of the thread.
3. Hide the knot between the two pieces of fabric you're sewing together by inserting the needle from back to front of the top piece of fabric, a short distance from the edge of the fabric so the knot is between the two pieces. (If you are edging a single piece, do the same but know that you can hide the knot slightly by sewing over it as you stitch.)
4. From the same spot you hid the knot, insert the needle through both layers of fabric, from back to front or front to back - whatever is most logical for you! *The distance from the edge that you choose will help create your decorative look.*
5. Pull the thread through most of the way, leaving a small loop rather than pulling it all the way through the fabric.
6. Put the needle through the loop that is left, and pull the stitch tight. You now have one stitch.
7. Determine the distance you wish to keep between stitches (again, a decorative decision for the most part). Start your next thread at that distance, to the right of your first stitch (or the left if you are left handed).
8. Put the needle through both pieces of fabric at your determined distance away from the first stitch, pull it almost all the way through leaving a loop, then put the needle through that loop and pull tight before beginning the next stitch. This will leave a row of thread along the edge of the pieces you've joined.
9. To use this stitch for a buttonhole, leave no space between the stitches so that you cover the raw edge completely.

Hemming/Whip Stitch

Use this to create a hem on a garment.



(from How to Hand Sew, Craftsy.com)

1. Single thread your needle and tie a strong knot at the end.
2. Hide your knot inside the folded over hem, bringing the needle to the outside hem edge.
3. Move $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to the left of where you hid the knot, and insert the needle just above the hem edge, catching just a couple strands of the fabric. The goal is that this is almost invisible on the outside or right side of the garment.
4. Pull the needle through then push it through the hem edge so the place where you caught the outside fabric is centered between the stitches on the hem edge.
5. Repeat to finish the hem.