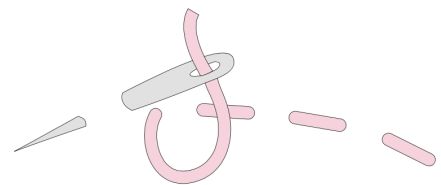


How to thread the needle. Getting the right length thread for you. To do this hold the end of the thread in your fingers and stretch the arm that is holding the thread out as far as it will go while pulling the spool of thread or floss to your opposite shoulder, cut at the shoulder end of the thread. This is the amount of thread you will want to start with. Thread the needle (thread through the eye - the little hole opposite the pointed tip) and pull the thread through and down to meet the other end. Make a knot with the two threads together. you will have what looks like a needle neckless, that's how you know you did it right. You may use more thread this way, but you don't have to rethread the needle as often, or tug to get a knot tied at the needle through the fabric.

The Running Stitch (done like a basting stitch)

This stitch looks like a dashed line.

To Start Sewing: Thread your needle and tie a knot. Run your thread up from the back side of the fabric so that the knot will be hidden when your project is finished.



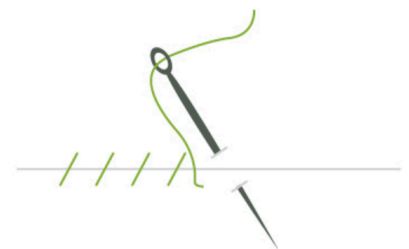
To make a running stitch: Swim your thread and needle in and out of the fabric. I know we all learned the down and pull/up and pull for the running stretch but I find it is much simpler for kids and grown folk to take the stitch like a dolphin swimming - dashing in and out of the water - in and out always staying on the top of the fabric. The stitches on the surface are best if they are of equal length and evenly spaced, not too big or too small, but just right. And, they will hold even if they are not evenly spaced or equal in size. This is about fun not perfection remember that for yourself and your little sew mate

To end: Bring your thread down to the back side of the fabric and tie it off. Cut close to the final stitch.

Whip Stitch

(for visual learners go here www.holiday-crafts-and-creations.com/whip-stitch.html)

This stitch is designed to hold two or more layers together - it looks like it wraps around the edge of the project



To Start Sewing: Thread your needle and tie a knot. Run your thread up from the back side of the top layer of the fabric so that the knot will be between the layers when your project is finished.

To Start Sewing: Line up your project pieces and begin by poking your needle up through the top layer of fabric, about 1/8" inch or so, from between the two pieces. This way the knot will be between the two pieces of fabric and will not show when you are finished.

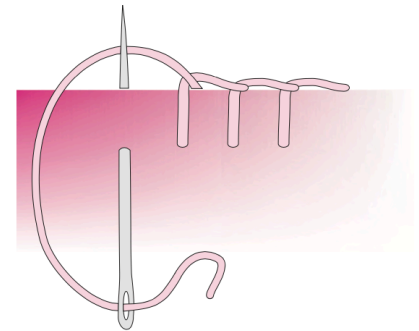
To make a Whip Stitch: Once your needle is set in the top layer of fabric, pull your thread around to the back, now poke the needle up through both layers of fabric so the needle and thread come up in almost the same place. This will make the thread wrapped around the edges of the fabric. It is important to pull the stitches so they are snug, but not overly tight. We are going to stuff these things we are making and we don't want any guts (stuffing) coming out.

Keep doing this but move your needle about every 1/8 of an inch over to the side with each stitch- whip around to the bottom after poking through the top of both fabrics.

To end: To make the knot, you may have to pull the two pieces of fabric apart a little. With your threaded needle grab one of the stitches you did from its middle (between the top and the bottom layer) and pull your needle until there is a little loop - have your needle jump through the loop and then pull to make a little knot. To hide your thread, poke your threaded needle in between the layers and up into a spot of your project that is a bit away from your stitches - pull the thread snug and cut close to the fabric, rub the thread end back into the fabric - and you have buried your knot.

The Blanket Stitch - a more advance stitch because the threads can get knotty as they pass each other - the key is to go slow - even with a tangle - slow - is how you get it out) It is very much like the whip stitch, only your needle jumps through the loop made when you are going through the two layers before pulling snug)

(for visual learners go here <http://www.holiday-crafts-and-creations.com/how-to-do-blanket-stitch.html>)



The blanket stitch can be used to attach two pieces of fabric together along their shared edge while making a pretty closure on both sides. The blanket stitch can also help to keep fraying edges from loosening up and causing your project to un-raftle.

To Start Sewing: Thread your needle and tie a knot.

To make the blanket stitch: Line up your front and back fabric pieces together. From between the layers, run your threaded needle between the top layer of fabric and the bottom layer of your project so that the knot will be hidden when your project is finished.

The ideal stitch will have its width and depth that are the same; one-quarter of an inch (half a cm) is a good. If too large, your project edges might pucker, if too small the project will feel tedious. But the goal of the project is to have fun - so perfect is not what we are looking for, joy is, if your stitches shift in length that's ok - it's YOUR perfect mark on your project.

Loop your thread around to the top and poke through both fabrics so that your needle comes out in the same spot (or near to) where you took your first stitch on the top layer. Pull your needle up until you are near pulling it all the way through - stop - poke your needle through the little loop in the thread that is left before you pull it all the way through. Think of it as jumping through the hole before it closes.

tip: Pick a way to go either up into the loop or down into the loop it makes it easier to make lots of these.

NEXT, loop around and poke the needle in from the bottom of your project up to the top and pull until there is a small loop - jump through it before it closes. Keep doing this over and over again - it starts to feel very simple and sweet after a few minutes. once your hands learn what to do.

What you will see after a few stitches a line on the edge of your fabric, I think it looks really clean.

Re-threading with the blanket stitch is just a little tricky: If you run out of thread before finishing your blanket stitch, you'll want to try and hide your knot between the two layers. When your thread is close to the end - 3 inches from the needle is a good place to knot, begin your last stitch but only piercing through the top layer of fabric. Pull your thread through snugly, then tie a knot at the inside of the top layer, careful not to poke through to the front. cut or tuck your threads close to the knot. Re-thread your needle. Poke your newly threaded needle between the fabrics, right next to the knot you just tied, BUT poke through to the bottom layer in the spot where your last stitch would have come out if you had gone all the way through the project. Make a project-knot-knot-project sandwich. With your needle, grab the thread from the previous half-stitch on the top layer, and pull it up so that it runs on the edge of your project. Keep going like before.

To end: When you are at your end of your project, make your last full stitch, then slide your needle under your very first stitch, along the edge of the two fabrics and knot it (Don't cut the thread off the needle yet - use your needle to help you make a nice tight knot). To hide the tail of your thread, poke your threaded needle back into your project

close to your last stitch, and bring it back out to the front a little bit away. Cut your thread free close to the fabric and rub the spot so the thread will go back into the fabric. This is called burying the knot.