

Great Scott!

By Scott Goodman



Scott Goodman, owner of Sewing Machine Warehouse & Kneedle.com has been servicing the sewing public since 1976.

This is How We Do It-Cutwork Edition

I love cutwork. Elegant in home dec projects and tres chic in fashion-forward garments; adding a stylish and graceful touch to your project.

Cutwork concept and execution are easy with the right tools. There are a multitude of embroidery brands that support cutwork on your current or next machine. Software programs like Artistic Suite, Bernina CutWork and Husqvarna Viking/Pfaff 5D Cutwork can enable you to create beautiful custom cutwork designs.

This is how we do it, (Drop the bass) put your hands in the air ...

Automatically: Many embroidery machines can accept special color-coded cutters that are inserted in place of the needle. These cutters are oriented at different angles. A digitizer sequences the design to cut a different angle with each “color” so that different custom shapes or windows can be formed. The stabilized fabric is embroidered and cut in a sequence determined by the digitizer. Often, reinforced running-stitch outlines are embroidered around the shapes that will be cut out. Up to four cutters are inserted, on demand, as the shapes are cut. Your machine will politely and patiently wait for you to remove the “chads” and remnants.

Next, a sheet of water-soluble stabilizer is placed on top and the process continues, as satin-stitch detailing around the holes, completes the finished look. “Just add water” is the final step as water-soluble stabilizer is subtracted from your elegant project.

This process is amazing to watch on multi-needle models by Baby Lock and Brother. Needles one through four are replaced with cutters. Much of the embroidery and cutting is done unattended, until time for chad and water-soluble stabilizer removal.

Not so-automatically: The manual process starts differently, but ends the same. Finished designs, in your format, can be downloaded from Bernina Design Studio, Myembroderies and others. Cutwork windows are usually outlined with running stitches. The project is removed while in the hoop, and the top fabric layer is cut away, with scissors, up to the stitch line, without cutting the stabilizer beneath. Satin stitching usually completes the process.

Reverse appliqué for lettering (think Gap sweatshirt) has a high-value look. Because areas are filled with a common fabric backing, instead of intense fill stitches, large areas are embellished in minimal time without puckering or distortion. This looks great with satin-stitched outlines or the ragged-edge finish.

*Have some neat results that you want to share?
Send me a picture. I will post fascinating examples
on the Great Scott Facebook page.
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