

## Stupendous Stitching – May 2026

It's time to take advantage of those seldom-used decorative stitches on your sewing machine to create a fiber work of art. In class we will learn some tips and techniques for decorative stitching on the surface of fabric. After class, you'll be able to turn that fabric into a project of your choice, such as a wall hanging or bag. So grab that blank canvas (fabric) and a broad selection of fibers and threads, and let's get stitchin'.

### Fabric

Select a piece of fabric with a high thread count (batik works great). It can read as a solid-ish or can be multi-colored as long as the color changes are subtle. Avoid busy prints. The stitching is the star of the show, so you don't want your fabric to compete. See the class samples, and the book, which has some great examples of what works and what doesn't.

### Class Supplies:

*Stupendous Stitching* book by Carol Ann Waugh. Although my technique differs somewhat from Carol's, her book offers great tips, techniques, and inspirational photos.

A sewing machine with a nice selection of decorative stitches. Leave those embroidery machines at home, and don't worry if your machine doesn't have an extra wide stitch width. Make sure your machine is clean and oiled and has a new needle (see below).

Decorative threads (cotton, poly, metallic, rayon, silk, variegated, or any combination of those) to coordinate (but not blend) with your fabric.

Optional: Variety of fibers, yarns, and ribbons for couching to coordinate with your fabrics. See class samples and pages 21-22 of the *Stupendous Stitching* book.

Lightweight (60 or 80 weight) thread for the bobbin in a neutral color.

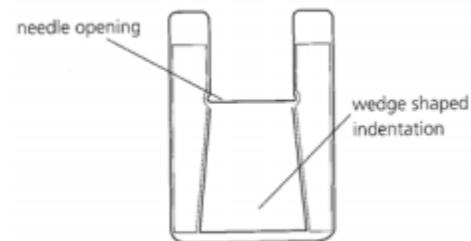
Optional: If your machine has a special bobbin case for embroidery, bring it.

Needles to correspond to your threads. I recommend embroidery 90, jeans 90, or sharp 90 for 40-weight threads, topstitch 90 or 100 for heavier threads, metallica 90 if you are using any metallic threads.

Medium weight woven fusible interfacing.

Feet for your machine:

- A foot that glides easily over decorative stitches. The open-toed embroidery foot is my favorite.
- If you wish to stitch (couch) heavier threads/fibers to the surface of your project, you need a foot with a groove on the bottom that closely matches the size of fiber you are couching. These feet might be called couching, cording, pintucking, braiding, or bulky overlock feet. See pictures.
- Optional: Edgestitch foot works well for sewing wider ribbons.
- Optional: free-motion foot and/or free-motion couching foot.



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### Before class:

Prepare your fabric.

- For a wall hanging: Cut your fabric 2-3 inches wider and longer than your desired finished size. You will trim it after stitching. A fat quarter is a great size for your first project.
- For a bag: Select a bag pattern that has large panels so there is plenty of room for your decorative stitching. The class sample uses the "Essential Tote" pattern by Around the Bobbin. Cut your fabric 2-3 inches wider and longer than the pattern calls for, and remember, you'll need fabric for both the front and back of the bag.
- Press well using spray starch, spray stabilizer, or Best Press.
- Back with two layers of medium weight woven fusible interfacing.
- Cut some extra pieces of fabric also backed with interfacing to audition your fibers, threads and stitches.

Wind a couple of bobbins with a 60 or 80 weight thread in a neutral color.

Browse the Creative Idea Gallery beginning on page 44 of the *Stupendous Stitching* book. You can also look at samples in the Stupendous Stitching Gallery on [www.carolannwaugh.com](http://www.carolannwaugh.com).

### After class: Finish your wall hanging

Additional supplies:

- Fusible batting or fusible fleece for quilting.
- Fabric for backing and binding or facing.
- Thread to match the front (or monofilament) for quilting.
- Either a walking foot or free-motion foot for quilting.

Finishing:

- Press stitched panel face down into a pressing cloth or terry towel. Some Best Press and some pressure from your iron should help remove most of the wrinkles and puckering.
- Cut backing and a piece of fusible batting just larger than the size of the stitched panel.
- Iron fusible batting to wrong side of the backing fabric. Layer backing and stitched panel.
- Quilt wavy lines following the lines of the decorative stitching. You can do this with a walking foot or free motion foot.
- Trim to desired size.
- Bind or face. My favorite facing method can be found by Googling "Robbi Joy Eklow We All Sew Facing". Or finish the edge with a rattail binding as Carol does; see page 39 of the book.

### After class: Finish your Bag:

Additional supplies:

- Other supplies as called for by your bag pattern.

Finishing:

- Press stitched panel face down into a pressing cloth or terry towel using some Best Press.
- Trim panels according to pattern instructions, and assemble bag as instructed.