

Thread Painting

First Flowers



Supply List

1. Background fabric—(1) 8”x10” piece of blue batik
2. Stabilizer—(2) 8”x8” pieces of clear water soluble stabilizer film such as 4X by Superior
3. (2) 8”x10” pieces of water soluble stabilizer backing such as OESD’s Aqua Mesh
4. 6” wooden or plastic embroidery hoop
5. Thread—40 weight polyester or rayon
 - A. Stems & leaves—Dark, medium, bright and light green
 - B. Dirt—Dark brown & medium rust
 - C. Flowers—Medium red, charcoal, bright gold, orchid
4. (1) bobbin filled with 60 weight gray bobbin thread
5. Basic sewing supplies—80 machine needles, pins, tweezers, etc.
6. Sewing machine with open toe free motion foot

Tracing the design onto the clear stabilizer

1. Center the clear water soluble stabilizer on the master pattern. Tape in place. Trace the stems.
2. Repeat Step 1 to trace the flowers.

Hooing the design

1. On a flat surface lay the 2 pieces of white stabilizer backing, then the background fabric and the drawing of the stems on top. Pin in place.
2. Unscrew the screw on the hoop and slide the outer ring of the hoop under the 4 layers with the screw assembly at 6 o’clock. This will assist in locating the screw.
3. Push the inner ring on top of the drawn on stabilizer until it is secure inside the outer ring. Push down on the inner ring keeping your fingertips on the inner ring. Gently pull the top stabilizer to remove any ripples inside the hoop. Grip the top stabilizer close to the edge of the hoop to keep from stretching it.
4. Work your way around the hoop pulling the top stabilizer until the wrinkles are gone keeping pressure with your fingertips on the inside hoop.
5. Keeping your finger tips on the inner hoop slide the hoop to the edge of the table and tighten the screw about 90 percent.
6. Evaluate and if necessary adjust the top stabilizer until no more ripples are apparent. Tighten the screw all the way down.
7. Pick up the hoop and with your thumbs press down on the inner hoop until about 1/8” of the inner hoop shows on the back side of the hoop. This adds extra tension on the stabilizer. The bottom of the stabilizer sits slightly below the outer hoop.
8. Pin any excess fabric and stabilizer toward the hoop. This prevents any excess fabric from getting caught underneath the hoop.
9. Pull the bobbin thread to the surface, secure a few stitches and cut the thread tails.

General Notes

1. For better control reduce the machine speed if possible.
2. Keep the line you are thread painting parallel to the table edge.
3. Cut the connecting threads when you are done or when they are in the way.

Please view **Thread Painting—Stitches with Attitude** for explanation of the differences between the straight and zigzag stitch.

Video Workshop—First Flowers

Thread #	Design	Thread color	Stitch	Figure #
#1	1st stem color	Dark green	Straight	Figure 1
#2	2nd stem color	Medium green	Straight	



Figure 1



Figure 2

1. *1st stem color*—See Thread #1. Pull the thread to the top. Begin thread painting on the left side of the plant. Rotate the hoop so the stems are facing you.
2. Following Figure 1. Begin the stitch slightly into the dirt area. Thread paint about 1/2” out the 1st stem and then return on the same line to the dirt
3. The idea here is to keep the darkest part of the stems at they base where they would naturally be the darkest and thickest.
4. Thread paint to the 2nd stem and again thread paint up part of the stem and back to the dirt area. Tops of the thread should be irregular.
5. Continue Steps 2-4 until you reach the right plant.
6. As you approach the smaller plant on the right where the stems arc to the left, thread paint through them following Figure 1.
7. At the center of the right plant thread paint down to the dirt. Follow the left arc on the stems thread painting over the vertical straight stitches already in place.
8. Thread paint back to the right side of the right most plant and complete the stems on the right.
9. *2nd stem color*—See Thread #2 and Figure 2. Starting on the left plant begin thread painting 1/8”-1/4” into the dark green thread already in place. The idea is to blend the medium green into the dark green thread below so there is a gradual change of color.
10. For the next stem thread paint in between the stitches already in place. Then begin the next stitch 1/8”-1/4” into the dark green thread. It is not necessary to just stay on the drawn stem line.
11. Using Figure 2 as a reference and following Steps 9-10 thread paint the stems as shown.
12. When reaching the left arc of the right plant, do not stitch over the dark green stitches already in place.

Thread #	Design	Thread color	Stitch	Width	Figure #
#3	3rd stem color	Medium bright green	Straight		Figure 3
#4	4th stem color	Light green	Straight		Figure 4
#5	1st dirt color	Medium brown	Zigzag	2.0 mm	Figure 4

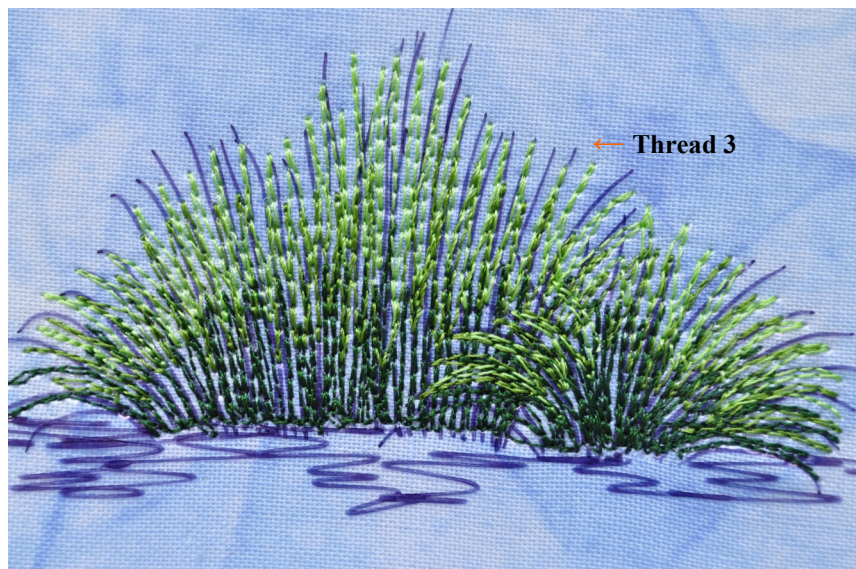


Figure 3

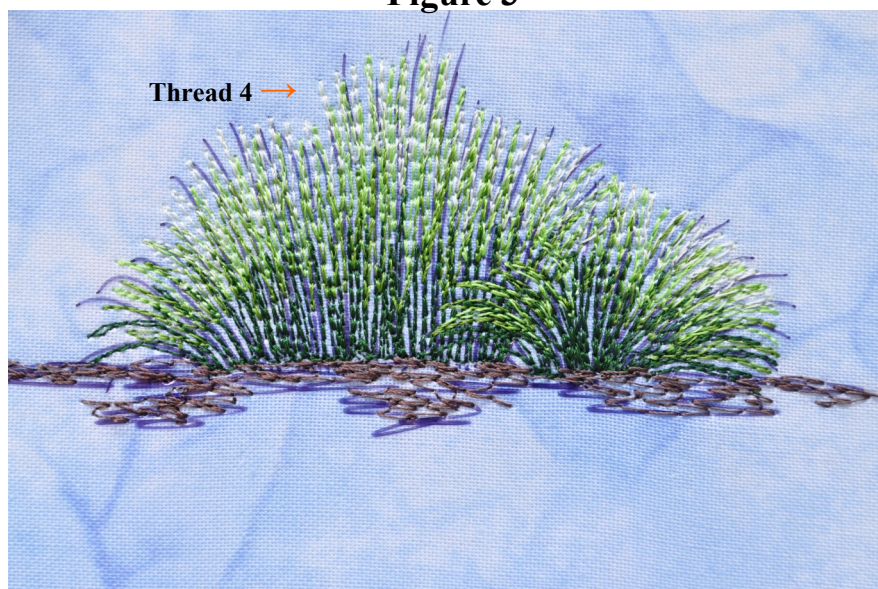


Figure 4

1. *3rd stem color*—See Thread #3. Using Figure 3 as a reference and following Steps 9-12 on the preceding page, thread paint the 3rd stem color starting 1/8”-1/4” into the 2nd stem color.
2. *4th stem color*—See Thread #4. Using Figure 4 as a reference and following Steps 9-12 on the preceding page, thread paint the 4th stem color starting 1/8”-1/4” into the 3rd stem color.
3. *1st dirt color*—See Thread #5 and Figure 4. With the dirt facing you move the hoop slowly right to left to thread paint the dirt.
4. Thread paint slightly into the bottom of the stems. Don’t fill in too much as there is a 2nd thread color.

Thread #	Design	Thread color	Stitch type	Stitch width	Figure #
#6	2nd dirt color	Medium light rusty brown	Zigzag	2.0 mm	Figure 5
#7	Poppy petals	Medium red	Zigzag	2.0-1.5 mm	Figure 6
#8	Poppy centers	Charcoal	Zigzag	1.0 mm	Figure 7

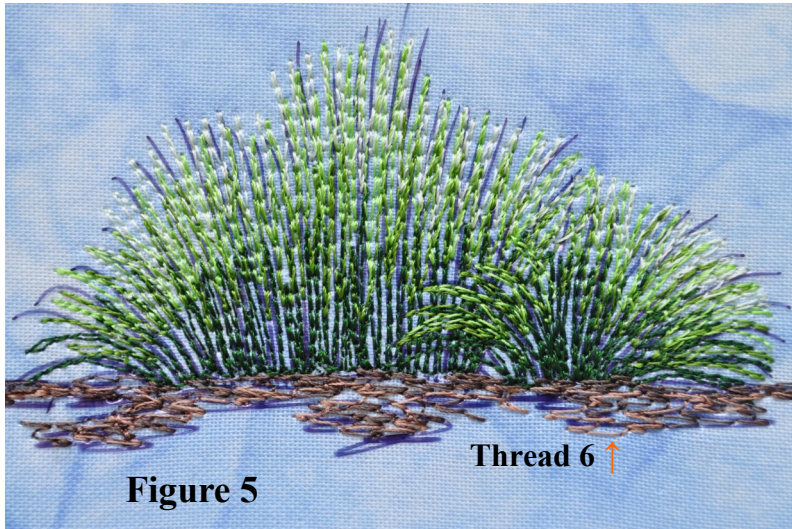


Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

1. *2nd dirt color*—See Thread #6 and Figure 5. Repeat Steps 3-4 on the preceding page but this time thread paint between the stitches already in place.
2. Lay the stabilizer on which the flowers were drawn in place on top of the stitched stems to make sure that none of the flowers are sitting in the air. Add more stitching to the stems if necessary.
3. Cut away the top stabilizer close to the stems.
4. See Figure 6. Lay the drawn stabilizer with the flowers in position on top of the stems; pin in place; hoop; remove the pins.
5. *Red poppies*—See Thread #7 and Figure 6. Use a 2 mm zigzag on the larger poppies and a 1.5 mm on the smaller ones.
6. Rotate the hoop so the poppy is facing you. Move the hoop in a circle watching the right swing of the needle on the right side of the poppy (the needle should touch the right outside line) and the left swing on the left side (the needle should touch the left outside line).
7. The needle will make some noise as it stitches over the thread already in place.
8. Moving the hoop slowly assures that there will be no holes in the outside edge.
9. Continue around the inside of the petal until complete. Don't cover up the center.
10. Raise the needle and repeat Steps 5-9 to complete the remaining poppies.
11. *Poppy center*—See Thread #8 and Figure 7. Move the hoop in a circle to fill the center.

Yellow Flowers

Thread #	Design	Thread color	Stitch type	Stitch width	Figure #
#9	Yellow flower petals	Bright gold	Zigzag	1.0 mm	Figure 8
#10	Yellow flower center </td <td>Dark brown</td> <td>Zigzag</td> <td>1.0 mm</td> <td>Figure 8</td>	Dark brown	Zigzag	1.0 mm	Figure 8
#11	Orchid flowers	Orchid	Zigzag	1.25 mm	Figure 9 & Diagram 1



Figure 8



Figure 9



Diagram 1

1. *Yellow flower petals*—See Thread #9 and Figure 8. When using the zigzag as a fill stitch, make sure the line you are thread painting is parallel to you.
2. Reduce the machine speed if you need to maintain control.
3. Rotate the hoop so the side of one petal is parallel to you. Move the hoop slowly right to left to fill in the 1st petal. Make sure that the needle ends up at the center of the flower before moving to the next petal.
4. Rotate the hoop again making sure the next petal is parallel to you.
5. Repeat Steps 3-4 to complete all the petals on the 1st flower.
6. Raise the needle and repeat Steps 3-5 for the remaining yellow flowers.
7. *Yellow flower centers*—See Thread #10 and Figure 8.
8. With the flower facing you move the hoop in a small circle to fill in the 1st center.
9. Raise the needle and repeat Step 8 to fill in the remaining centers.
10. *Orchid flowers*—See Thread # 11 and Figure 9. See **Diagram 1** for execution of the stitch.
11. Rotate the hoop so the first flower is facing you and insert the needle in the center of the drawn circle.
12. Hold the hoop **still** with the needle in the down position and slowly stitch the petal 8 times ending up in the center.
13. Rotate the hoop a quarter turn and repeat Step 12.
14. Rotate the hoop a quarter turn and continue Step 12 until the petals are complete on the 1st flower. The completed flower should look like the one in Diagram 1.
15. Raise the needle and insert the needle in the center of the 2nd flower. Repeat Steps 11-14 to finish the flowers
16. Evaluate the design an touch up where necessary.

Removing the Stabilizer from the Fabric

1. Remove the project from the hoop.
2. Cut away the top and bottom stabilizers to within 1/2" of the design. Be cautious—don't cut into the fabric.
3. Run water over the design. As the water breaks the stabilizer down, it turns the stabilizer into "goo".
4. Continue rinsing the design under running water until all the "goo" is gone from the front and back.
5. Take some soap (bar or hand) and rub it into the design on the front and back. The soap will help to break down the stabilizer trapped inside the stitches.
6. Place the project into a sink of cold water and fabric softener (1 part fabric softener to 3 parts water) and let soak for about an hour.
7. Rub the top and back of the design between your thumb and forefinger. If your fingers are tacky, the project needs to soak longer. Change the water and continue soaking until there is no more tackiness and the stabilizer is out.
8. Leaving any residue in the design will leave it stiff so try and get all the stabilizer out.
9. Blot and allow to air dry. Press from the back to remove any wrinkles.
10. Use a pressing cloth over the thread if you want to press from the top. Don't press right on the thread.