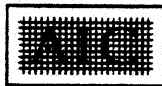


**THE DIRECTORY OF  
HAND STITCHES  
USED IN  
TEXTILE CONSERVATION**

Second Edition



The Textile Speciality Group  
1995

Second Printing  
2002



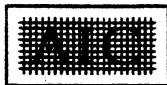
# THE DIRECTORY OF HAND STITCHES USED IN TEXTILE CONSERVATION

A project originated by the Study Group on Threads and Stitching  
Techniques, The Textile Conservation Group, New York.

Compiled by Martha Winslow Grimm

Illustrated by Rachel Paar

Second Edition



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2002

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For additions or corrections to this publication contact:  
Martha Winslow Grimm  
Textile and Costume Conservation Services, Inc.  
4347 E. North Lane  
Phoenix, Arizona, 85028-4141

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR BOOK USE

There are three sections to this publication and their use will depend upon the needs of the reader. The first section is titled "Textile Conservation Processes and Appropriate Hand Stitches". It lists basic treatment processes a textile conservator performs and the hand stitches used. A conservator desiring to research methods of handling a stitching task associated with a treatment may read this section for solutions selected by others in the profession. Page numbers indicate where the stitch information is located.

The second section is titled: "Hand Stitches Used in Textile Conservation" is a compilation of hand stitches in use today by the textile conservation community. Each page features one stitch with directions and diagrams on how to complete the stitch, other names for the stitch, related stitches and how the stitch is being used. These pages are also useful as a tool for standardization of stitch terminology and can be used when writing treatment reports.

Finally, a "List of References" featuring writings about hand stitches and textile conservation is offered as an aid for those who wish to learn more about the subject.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Stitch Directory Committee, part of the TCG Study Group on Threads and Stitching Techniques, researched, wrote, reviewed and edited the information contained in this book. The members are: *Elizabeth Brown, Julia M. Burke, Margaret (Meg) Geiss-Mooney, Martha Winslow Grimm, Molly Hope, Ada H.(Dusty) Logan and Audrey M. Spence.*

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## **DISCLAIMER**

The techniques for executing hand stitches used in textile conservation may differ from stitches in other disciplines of needlework. The condition, type and decoration of the artifact and its proposed treatment dictate how the stitches are completed.

The inclusion of stitches in this directory is not a professional endorsement nor recommendation of their application.

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## INTRODUCTION

In 1989 The Textile Conservation Group, Inc., a special interest membership group based in New York City, embarked on the long term project of compiling an inventory of functional hand stitches currently used in textile conservation. A survey was conducted among the U.S. membership. The Directory of Hand Stitches Used in Textile Conservation is a result of this survey, contributions of members and a review of literature.

The purpose of this stitch directory is to provide a record of hand stitches in use by conservators today as well as their possible applications and a standardization of the terminology. The directory is meant to be a reference for conservators and educators working in the field of textile conservation. The goals are to aid in hand stitch selection, to facilitate communication among colleagues and to clarify written documentation. This is not a guide or "how-to" study of stitches and their uses. The application and adaptability of each stitch is the responsibility of the individual conservator, and is part of the much greater process of decision making in the treatment and care of textiles.

The "Processes" section included in the beginning of the directory classifies the thirty nine hand stitches by their application or association in textile conservation. Stitches are listed in alphabetical order, with the most common American term used as the primary name. To facilitate cross-referencing, as many alternative names as possible have been included. In addition to the directions for completing the stitch, there are comments about structural function and application. Diagrams, essential to the comprehension and reproduction of these stitches, are included.

It is the hope of the Textile Conservation Group, Inc. that the result of this study will enhance communication among colleagues and improve the clarity of written reports. As a preliminary inventory, there is much more that needs to be done and this body of work does not represent the experiences of the textile conservation field at large. We hope The Directory of Hand Stitches Used in Textile Conservation will draw attention to the importance of stitching in textile conservation and encourage others to continue this work.

Julia B. Swetsoff

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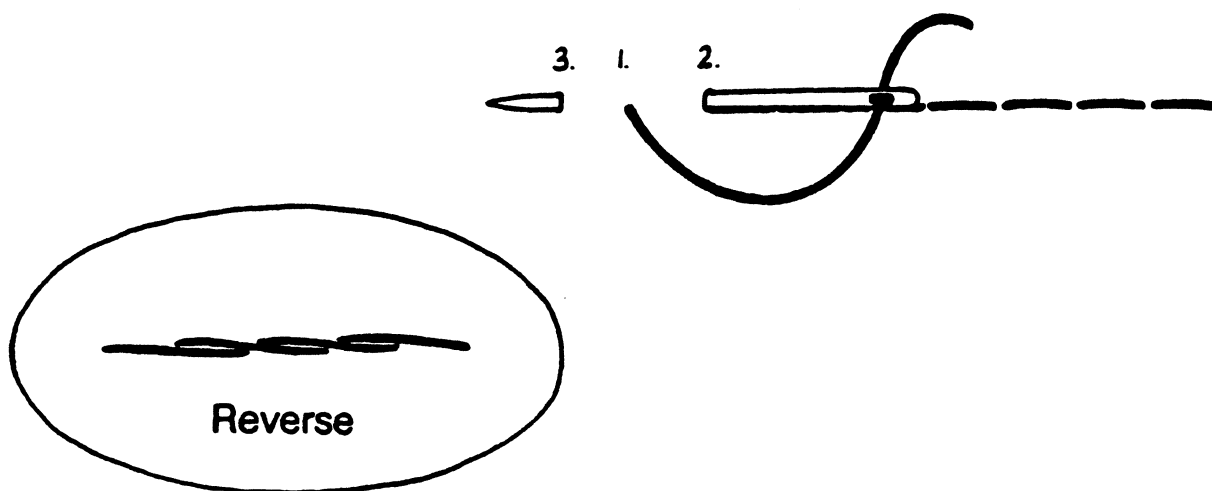
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## BACK STITCH



### Directions

Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Move slightly to the right and insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 2. To continue, bring needle out to the front side one stitch length to the left at 3. Move back to 1 and insert needle through fabric to the reverse side. Repeat.

### Comments

This technique forms stitches which touch each other. A series of back stitches resembles straight machine stitching on the front side. Stitches on the reverse side overlap and are twice the length of those on the front.

### Possible uses for this stitch

- Creating Seams
- Joining Fabric
- Mounting
- Reinforcing Holes and Tears
- Stabilizing Seams

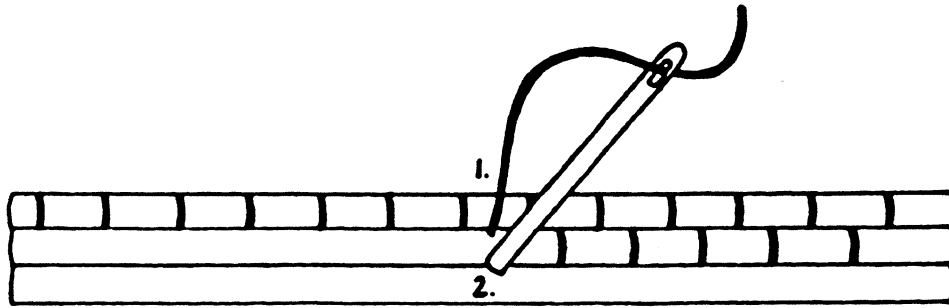
### See also

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# BASIC COUCHING STITCH

## Other name

Simple Couching Stitch



## Directions

Place loose yarn of the artifact into its proper position. Bring needle with a new thread out to the front at one side of the loose yarn at 1. Lay new thread across (perpendicular to) the loose yarn. On opposite side of the loose yarn at 2, insert needle through fabric to the reverse side. Repeat. Vary placement of the perpendicular stitches when more than one yarn is being couched.

## Comments

This stitch is used to secure a warp, weft or supplementary yarn that has become detached from its original ground.

## Possible uses for this stitch

- Reinforcing Holes and Tears
- Reinforcing Weak Areas
- Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric
- Securing Loose Threads to a Ground Fabric

## See also

Laid and Couching Stitch  
Self Couching Stitch

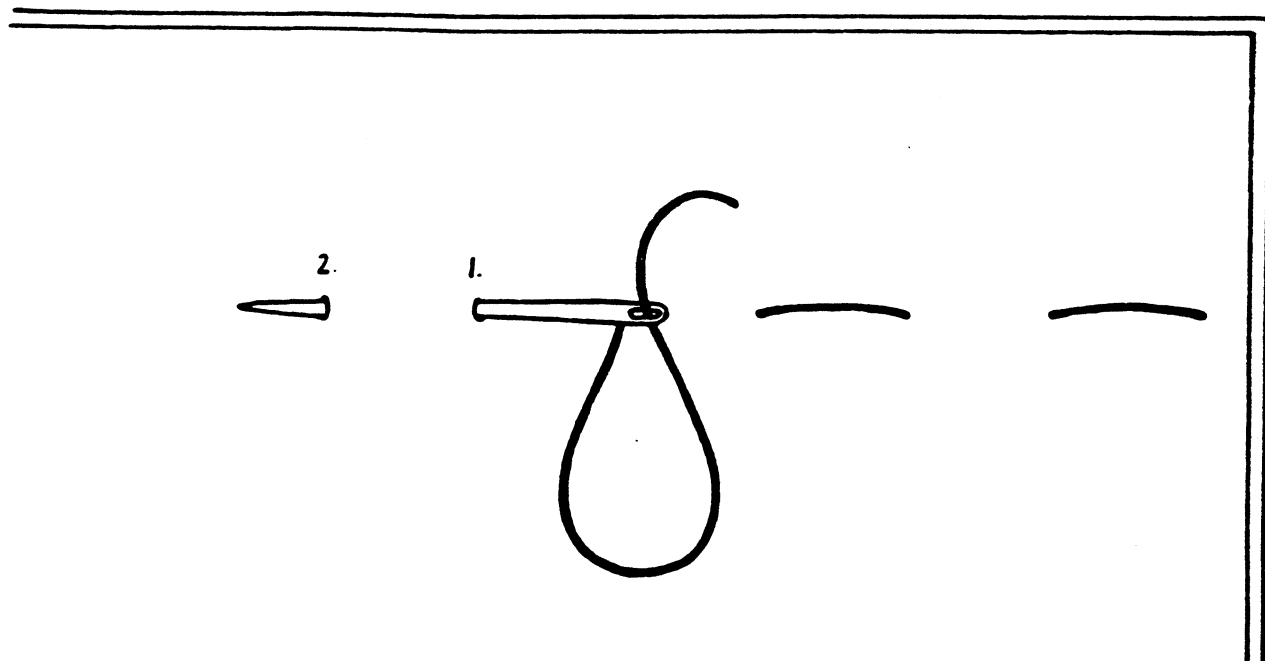
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# BASTING STITCH

## Other names

Regular Basting Stitch  
Tacking Stitch



## Directions

Work from right to left. Insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 1 and bring out to the front side at 2, at least 1/2 inch to the left. Repeat.

## Comments

This temporary stitch is used to hold two or more layers of fabric together. It is worked the same as the Running Stitch except the stitches are longer.

## Possible uses for this stitch

Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric  
Temporary Stitch

## See also

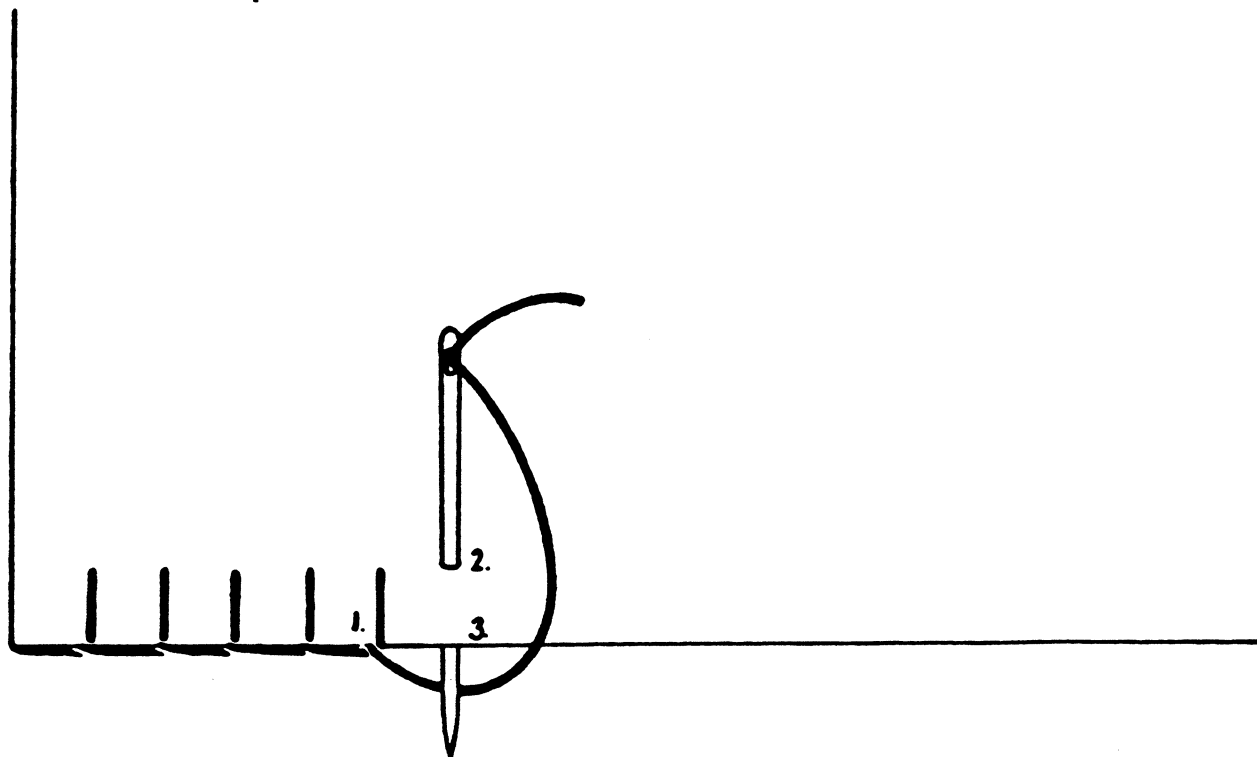
Diagonal Basting Stitch  
Running Stitch

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# BLANKET STITCH

## Other names

Buttonhole Stitch  
Loop Stitch



## Directions

Work from left to right. Bring needle out to the front side near the textile edge at 1. Move slightly to the right and insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 2. Bring needle down to the edge at 3. Before pulling needle through, carry thread from the previous stitch under point of needle. Repeat.

## Comments

This stitch is commonly used on edges.

## Possible uses for this stitch

Closing Slits  
Finishing and Stabilizing Warp Ends  
Reinforcing Selvedges

## See also

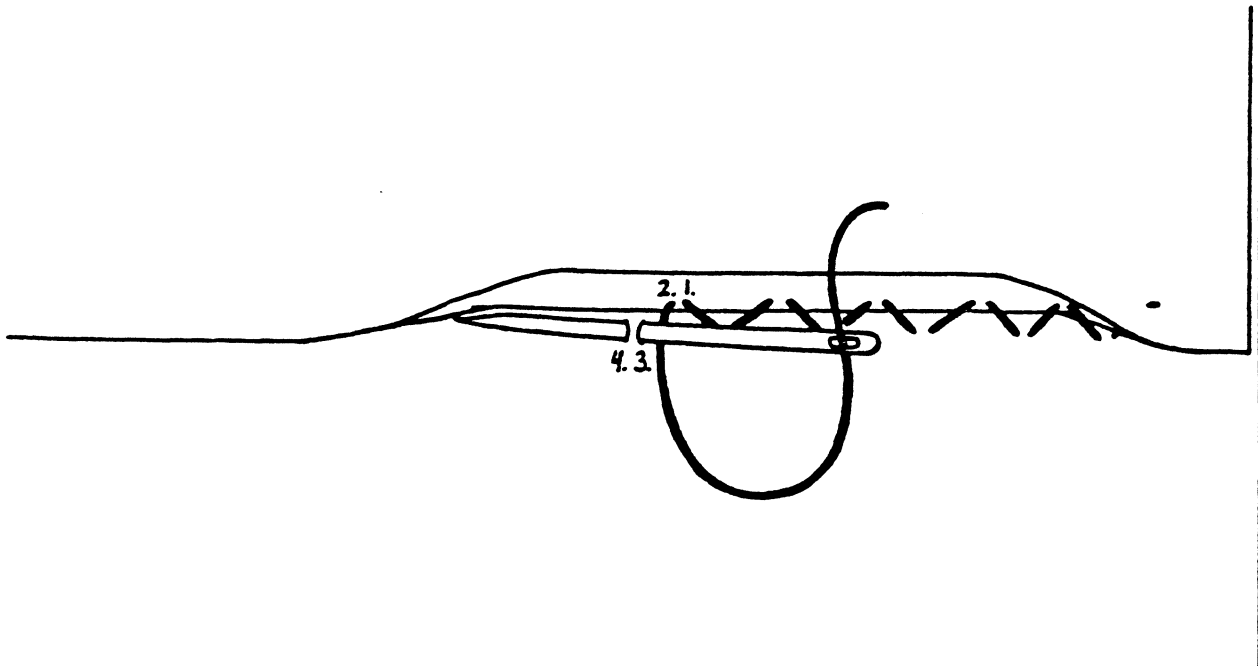
Reverse Blanket Stitch

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## BLIND STITCH

### Other names

Invisible Stitch  
Tunnel Stitch



### Directions

Work from right to left. This stitch is executed between two layers of fabric. Roll back the edge of one layer of fabric. Insert needle into this fabric at 1, catch a few threads and bring out at 2. Move needle slightly to the left and insert in the second layer of fabric at 3. Catch a few threads and bring needle out at 4. Continue to alternate the stitches between layers of fabric. Do not pull thread taut.

### Comments

These stitches give the appearance of the Running Stitch on the reverse sides of the fabric layers.

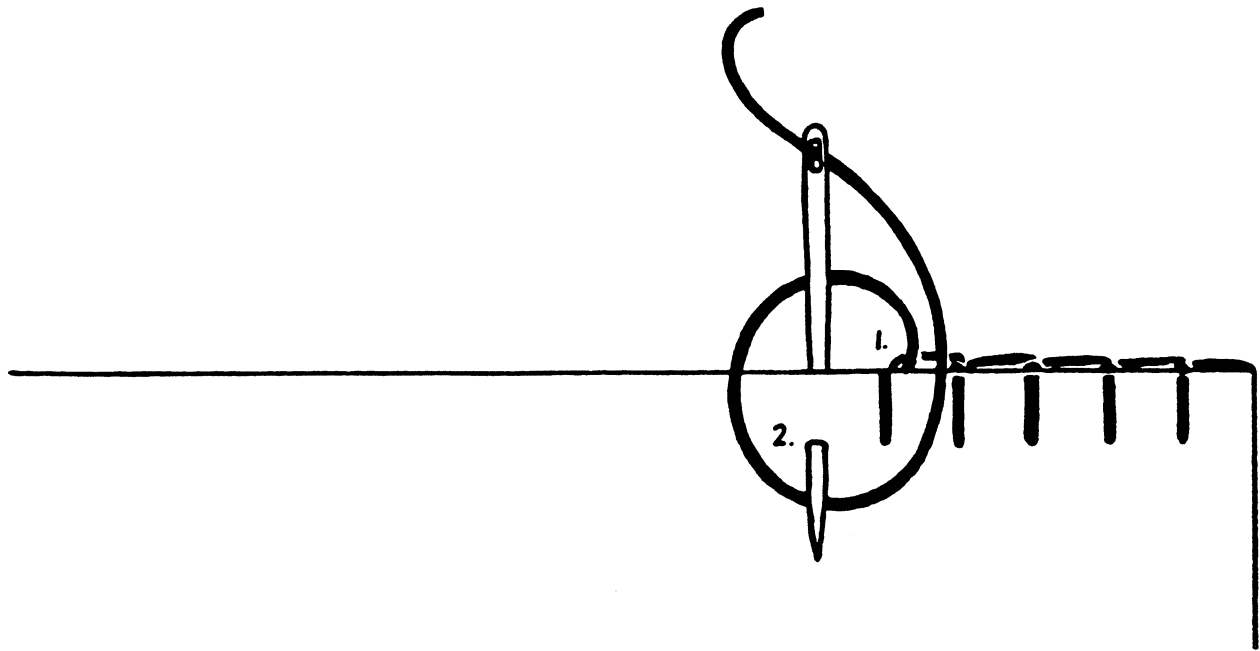
### Possible uses for this stitch

Attaching Lining, Dust Covers and Backings  
Hemming  
Joining Fabric

# BUTTONHOLE STITCH

## Other name

Handworked Buttonhole Stitch



## Directions

Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side near the textile edge at 1. Loop thread to left, then down to right. Insert needle from the reverse side at 2, keeping looped thread under both point and eye of needle. Pull needle through and place the purl (knot) on the top edge. Repeat.

## Comments

This stitch is sewn on a textile edge. It can be used as a covering for the slit of a buttonhole when stitches are spaced very closely together.

## Possible uses for this stitch

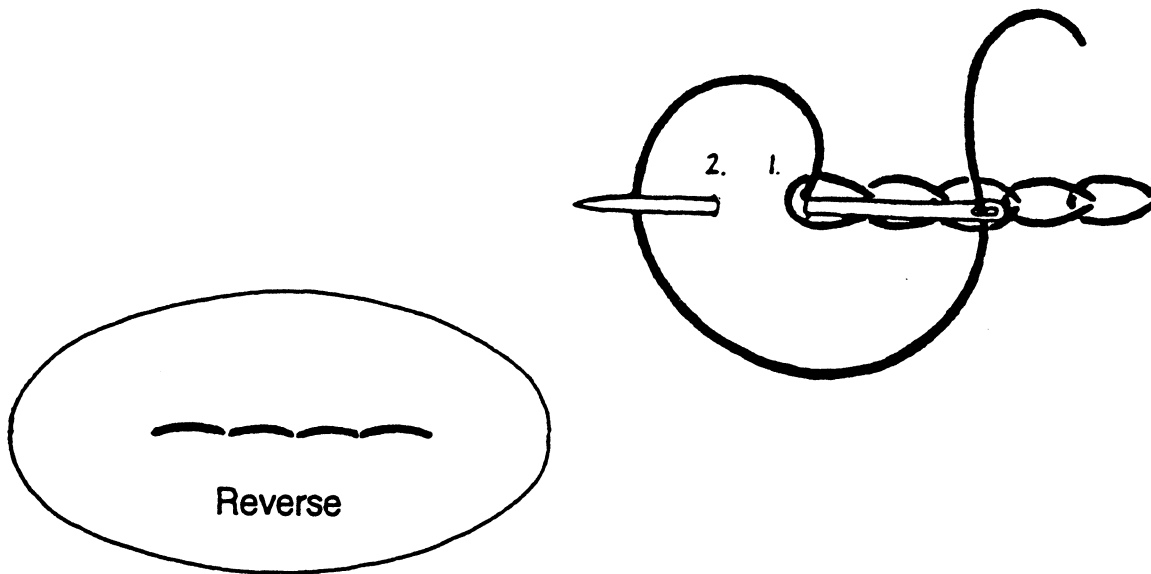
- Closing Slits
- Finishing and Stabilizing Edges
- Finishing and Stabilizing Warp Ends
- Reinforcing Selvedges

## See also

Blanket Stitch

page 8

## CHAIN STITCH



### Directions

Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Loop thread up to the left and around. Insert needle in at 1 and out of fabric, over looped thread at 2. Pull needle through to form looped stitch. 2 becomes 1 for next stitch. Keep the thread loose.

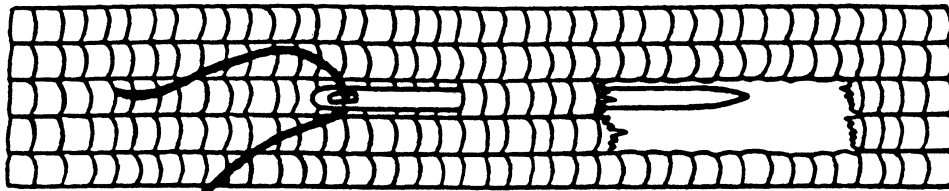
### Comments

This stitch forms a series of interlinked loops of thread on the front side.

### Possible use for this stitch

Finishing and Stabilizing Warp Ends

## CHANNELING



Warp yarns are horizontal in this diagram.

### Directions

At approximately one-half inch to one inch before the weak area of the textile, insert a threaded needle in the space between the warp and the wefts that encase the warp, leaving a thread tail. Draw the needle through this space to the area of repair. If this technique is used for rewarping, carry the thread to the other side of the damaged area and channel through the other part of the same warp.

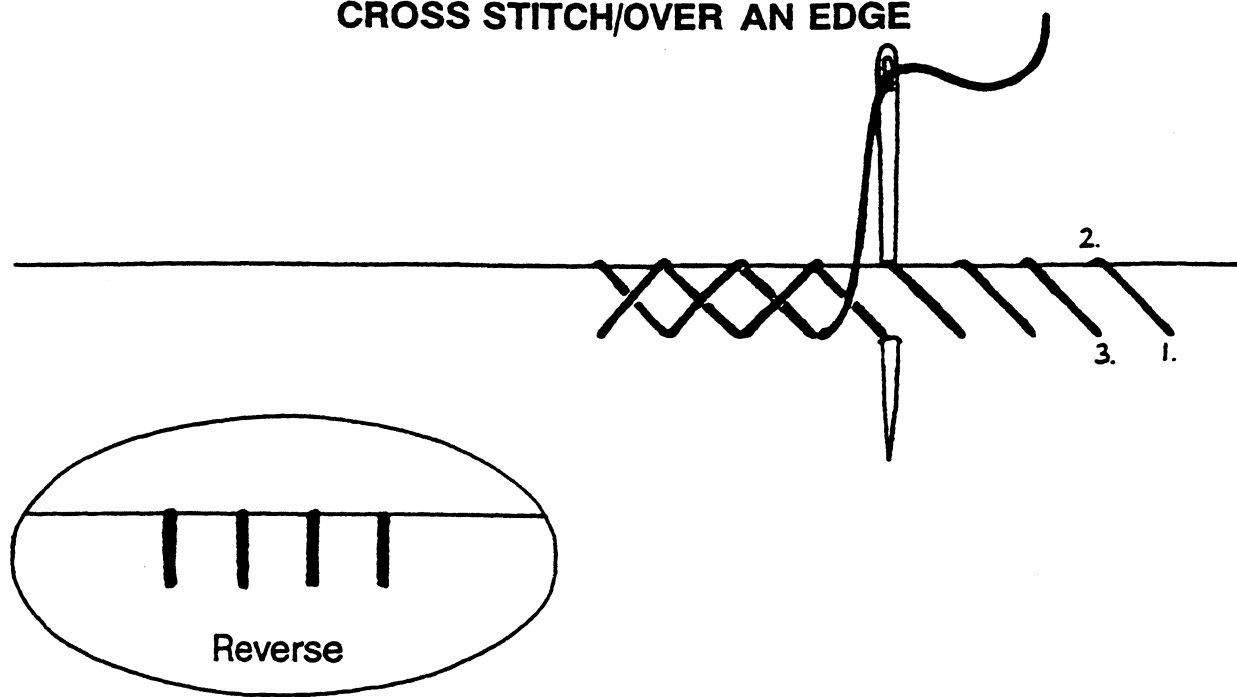
### Comments

The channel is the space between a warp and the wefts. Channeling is a technique for securing the ends of repair thread in tightly woven textiles. It is also used to anchor a thread or yarn used as a replacement warp or to add an additional warp in a textile.

### Possible uses for this stitch

Rewarping  
Securing Thread

## CROSS STITCH/OVER AN EDGE



### Directions

Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Move thread to the left and to the textile edge at 2. Wrap thread over the edge and insert needle from the reverse side to the front side at 3. Work across the entire area. To make crosses, repeat the stitch in the opposite direction.

### Comments about stitch

Even tension control of the thread is needed when worked over an edge.

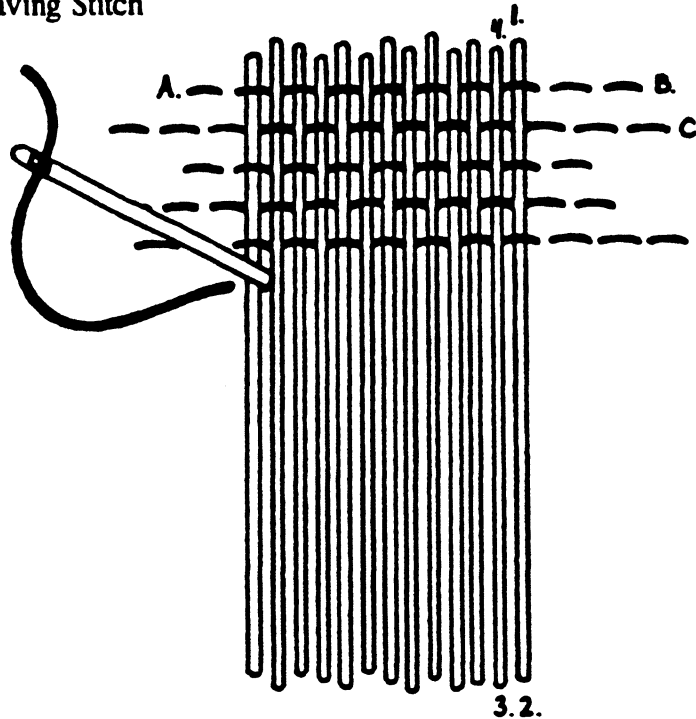
### Possible uses for this stitch

Finishing and Stabilizing Edges  
Finishing and Stabilizing Warp Ends

## DARNING STITCH

Other name

Weaving Stitch



### Directions

Begin and end rows of stitching in a stable area of the textile. **Warp:** Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 2 (directly below). Bring needle out to the front side at 3. Insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 4 (directly above) and repeat for as many yarns as needed. Keep warp yarns loose to accommodate the new wefts. **Weft:** Work from left to right, starting at the upper left corner. Bring needle out to the front side at A and weave across the warps, going over and under alternate lengthwise yarns. Insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at B. Bring needle out to the front side at C and make the next crosswise run, putting the thread over and under opposite yarns than in the previous row. Continue until the area is covered. Vary the point where rows begin and end.

### Comments

This is used to fill in missing yarns. The fabric surrounding the hole must be strong to support the reweaving or it will cause more damage.

### Possible use for this stitch

Reinforcing Holes and Tears

### See also

Invisible Darning Stitch

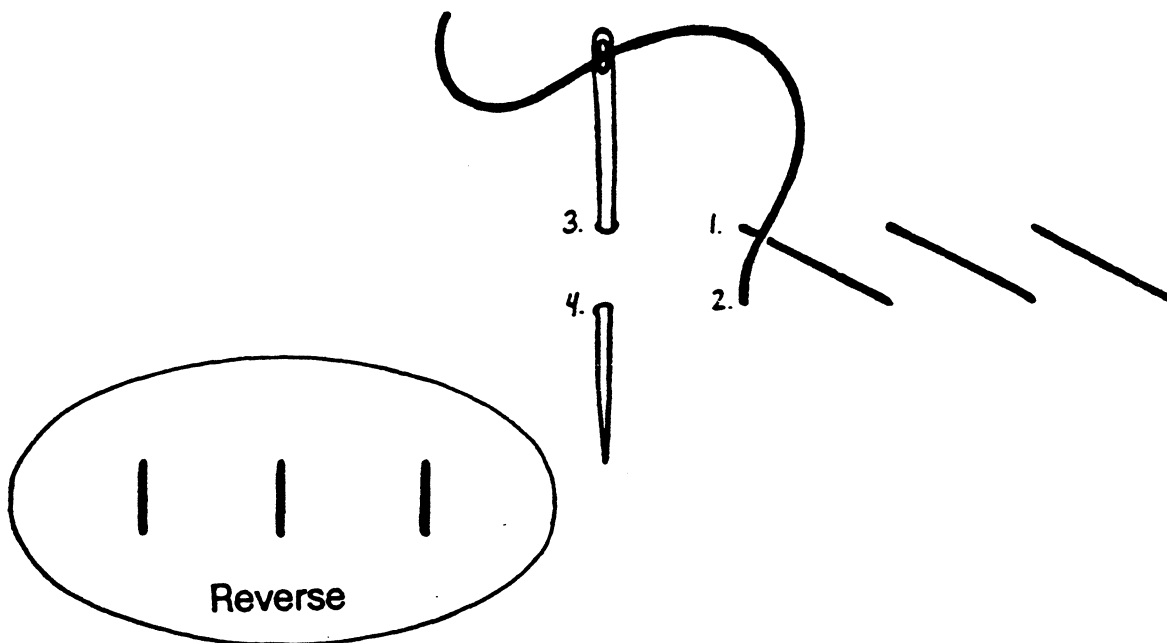
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## DIAGONAL BASTING STITCH

### Other names

Crosswise Basting Stitch  
Half Cross Stitch  
Tailor Basting Stitch  
Tent Stitch



### Directions

Work from right to left. Insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 1 and bring out to the front side at 2, so the stitch formed on the reverse side is parallel to either the warp or the weft of the fabric. Insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 3, to the left of and even with point where needle was first inserted, forming a stitch on the top side diagonal to the warp and the weft. Bring needle out to the front side at 4 to begin next stitch. Repeat.

### Comments

This large stitch is used to control layers of fabric within the area being conserved.

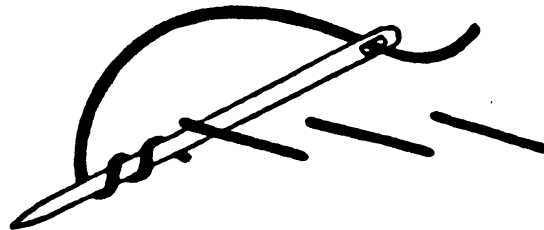
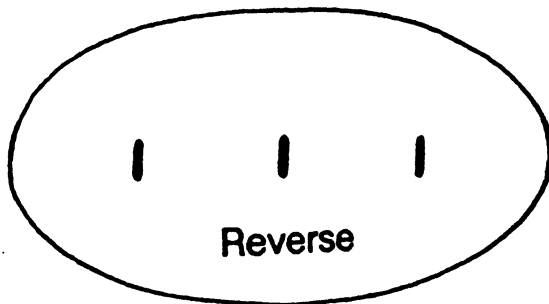
### Possible uses for this stitch

Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric  
Temporary Stitch

### See also

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Oversewing Stitch	page 29
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## DIAGONAL STITCH/KNOT OVER PREVIOUS STITCH



### Directions

Work from right to left on reverse side of the textile. Modify a Diagonal Stitch by having the thread on the front side of the textile go over the warp yarns. Keeping the needle perpendicular to the fabric, stab straight through the Velcro, lining and textile but avoid piercing the textile yarns. When needed, insert the needle through previous stitch, form a knot on the needle and pull towards you to tighten. Move the needle to the left and insert to begin the next Diagonal Stitch. **Knot:** Holding thread taut with the left hand, wrap thread around the needle once or twice. Keeping fingers over the wrapped thread, pull the needle through.

### Comments

The knot is used occasionally with a series of Diagonal Stitches. It is used when the warps run in the same direction as the row of Diagonal Stitches. Although knots are rarely used in textile conservation, they are often used when securing Velcro to heavy textiles. It is reasoned that if a stitch were to break, a large portion of the stitches could be pulled out by the weight of the textile. Knots are added to guard against this happening.

### Possible use for this stitch

Securing Velcro Heading Band to Reverse, Top Edge of Heavy Textiles.

### See also

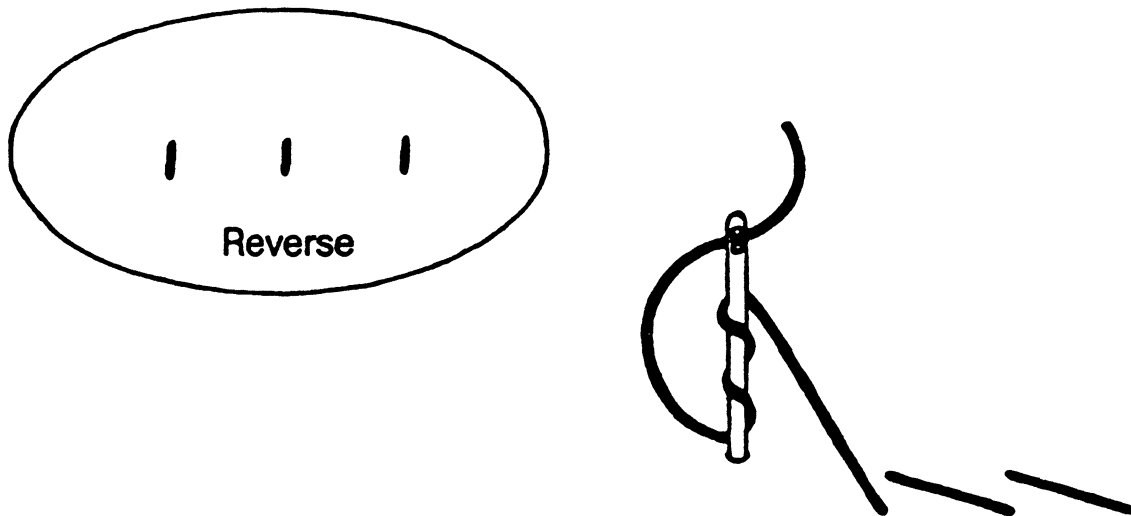
Diagonal Basting Stitch

page 15

Diagonal Stitch/Modified French Knot

page 17

## DIAGONAL STITCH/MODIFIED FRENCH KNOT



### Directions

Work from right to left on reverse side of the textile. Modify a Diagonal Stitch by having the thread on the front side of the textile go over the warp yarns. Keeping the needle perpendicular to the fabric, stab straight through the Velcro, lining and textile but avoid piercing the textile yarns. When needed, secure thread with a Modified French Knot before re-entering the textile. Modified French Knot: Holding thread taut with the left hand, wrap thread around the needle once or twice. Keeping fingers over the wrapped thread, insert the needle into the textile and pull through. (Unlike a true French Knot, this stitch does not begin and end in the same location.)

### Comments

The Modified French Knot is used occasionally with a series of Diagonal Stitches. It is used when warps run in the same direction as the row of Diagonal Stitches. Although knots are rarely used in textile conservation, they are often used when securing Velcro to heavy textiles. It is reasoned that if a stitch were to break, a large portion of the stitches could be pulled out by the weight of the textile. Knots are added to guard against this happening.

### Possible use for this stitch

Securing Velcro Heading Band to Reverse, Top Edge of Heavy Textiles.

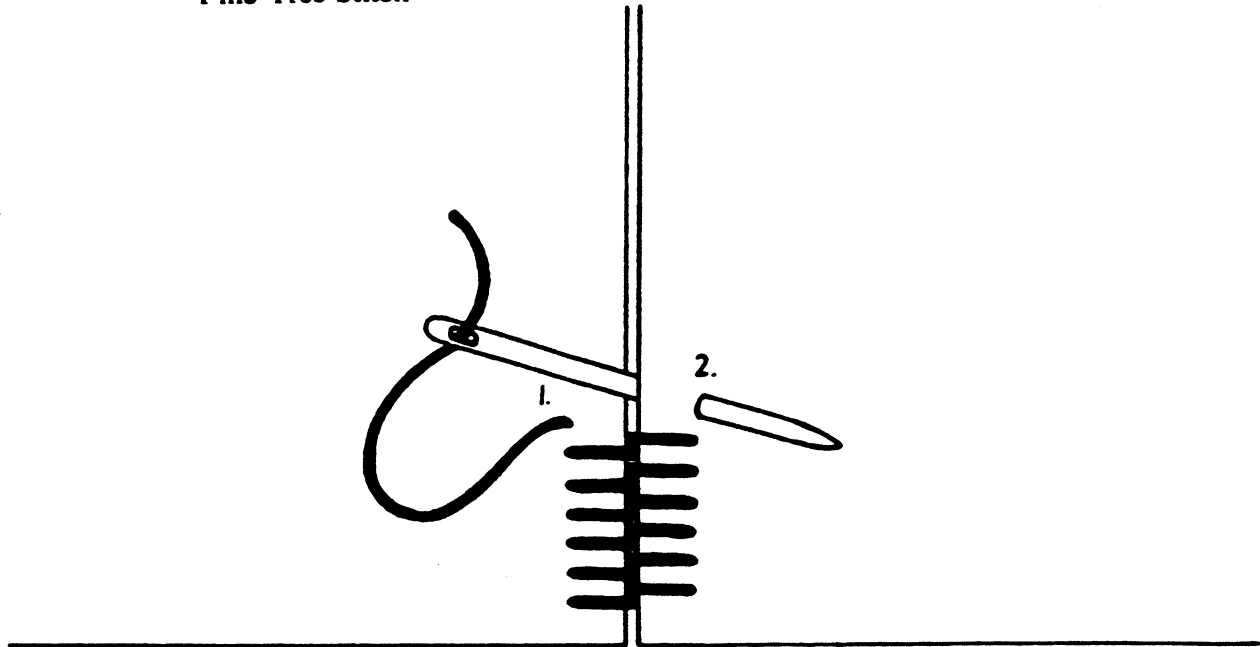
### See also

Diagonal Basting Stitch page 15  
Diagonal Stitch/Knot over Previous Stitch page 16

## FIGURE 8 STITCH

### Other names

Antique Stitch  
Pine Tree Stitch



### Directions

Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Insert needle through the fabric slit and bring out to the front side from the reverse side at 2, which is on the opposite edge of the slit and slightly above 1. Thread must appear to lie perpendicular to the slit. Go in the opposite direction for the next stitch sequence. Repeat. The threads will cross each other in the repaired slit.

### Comments

This stitch is very similar to the Lacing Stitch except Figure 8 Stitches are sewn more closely together resulting in straight stitches on the front.

### Possible uses for this stitch

Closing Slits  
Joining Fabric

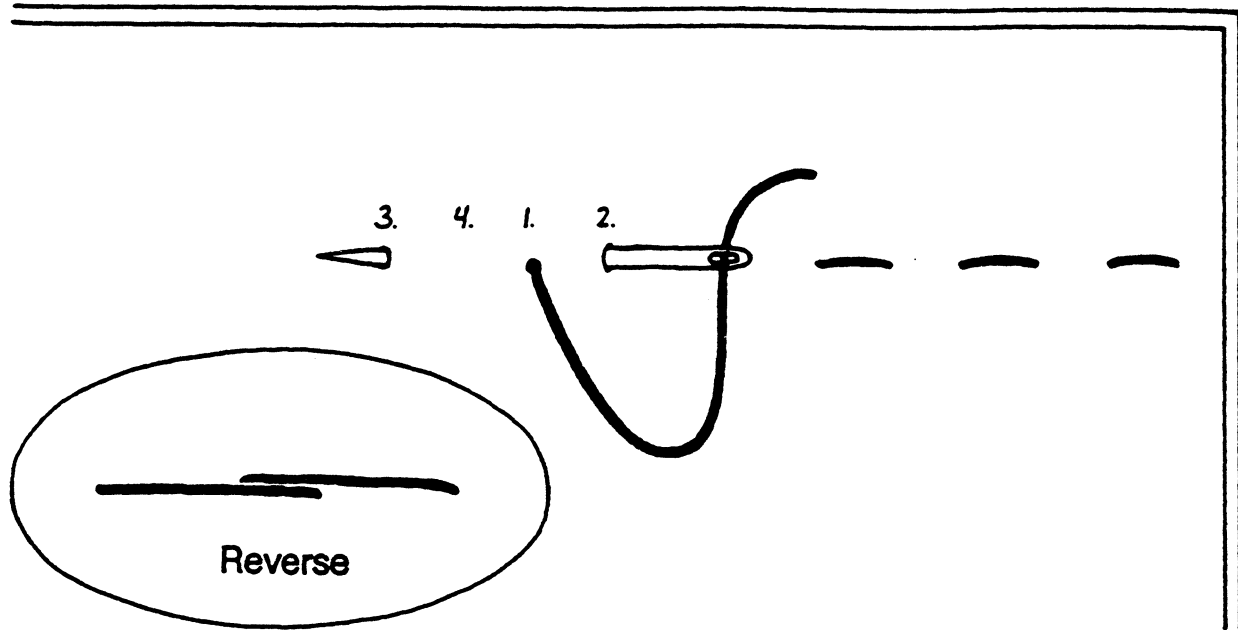
### See also

Lacing Stitch                      page 24

# HALF BACK STITCH

## Other name

Uneven Back Stitch



## Directions

Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Move needle desired stitch length to the right and insert through fabric to the reverse side at 2. Move needle twice the stitch length to the left and bring out to the front side at 3. Move needle one stitch length to the right at 4 and insert needle through fabric to the reverse side. Repeat.

## Comments

This stitch is worked in a similar manner to the Back Stitch but with spaces left between stitches on the front side.

## Possible uses for this stitch

- Creating Seams
- Mounting
- Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric
- Stabilizing Seams

## See also

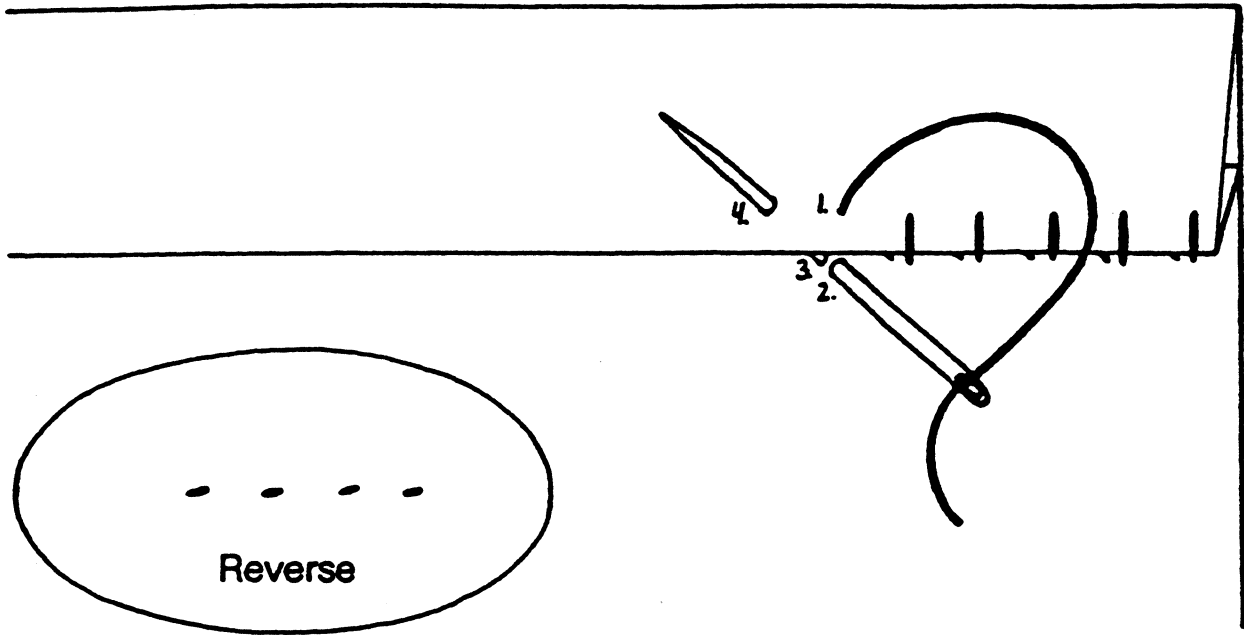
Back Stitch  
Running/Back Stitch

page 5  
page 33

# HEMMING STITCH

## Other names

Hem stitch  
Vertical Hemming Stitch



## Directions

Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side through the top fabric layer at 1. Move needle directly below and insert in the bottom layer of fabric at 2. Catch a few threads and bring needle out to the front side at 3. Move slightly to the left and into the top fabric. Bring needle from the reverse side to the front side at 4 to begin the next stitch. Repeat.

## Possible uses for this stitch

Attaching Linings, Dust Covers and Backings  
Hemming  
Joining Fabric  
Mounting

## See also

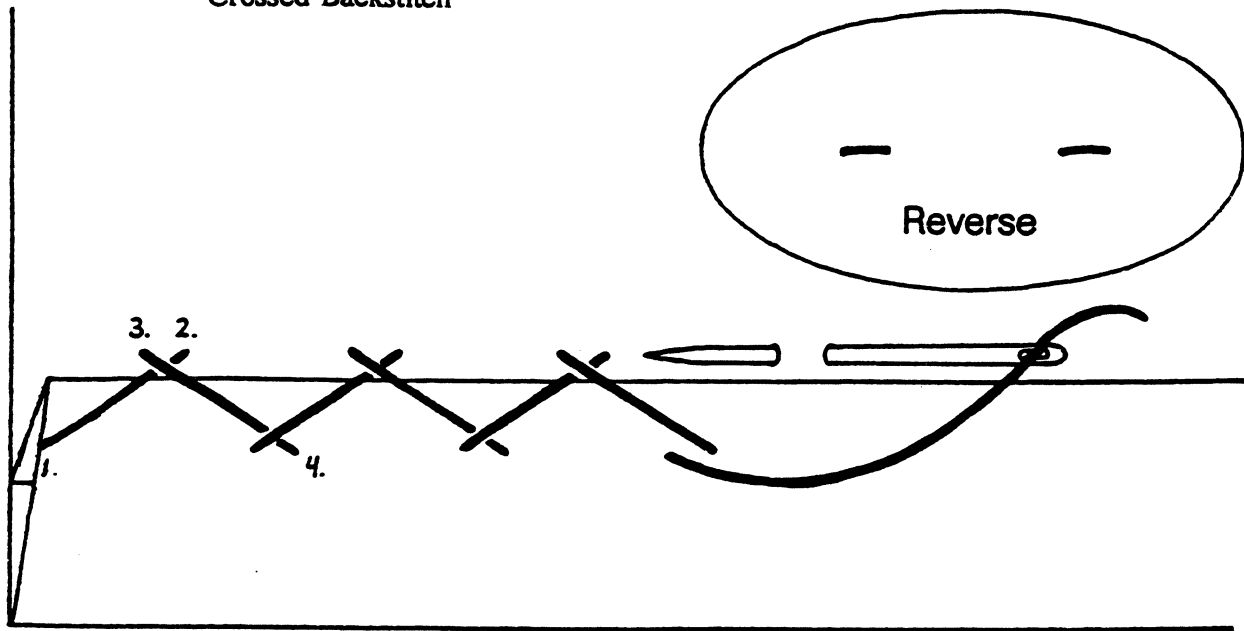
Slip Stitch

page 35

# HERRINGBONE STITCH

## Other names

Barred Witch Stitch  
Cat Stitch  
Catch Stitch  
Crossed Backstitch



## Directions

Work from left to right. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Take a slanting stitch to the top right, insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 2. Move needle a short distance to the left and bring out to the front side at 3. Move needle down to the right and insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 4 to complete stitch. Repeat.

## Comments

This stitch is sometimes worked from the front side of the textile with the long segments on the reverse side.

## Possible uses for this stitch

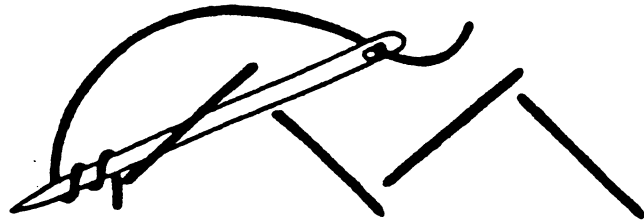
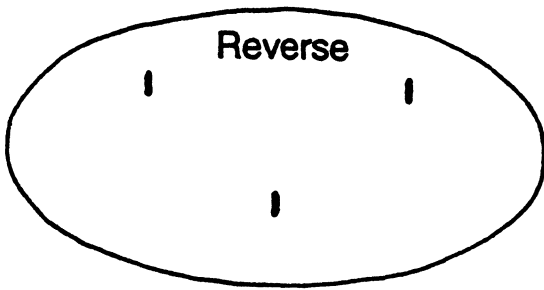
Hemming  
Mounting  
Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric

## See also

Herringbone Stitch/Knot over Previous Stitch

page 22

## HERRINGBONE STITCH/KNOT OVER PREVIOUS STITCH



### Directions

Work from right to left on reverse side of the textile. Modify a Herringbone Stitch by opening the stitches so the threads do not cross one another. The short segment of the stitch should cross over the warp and run vertical instead of horizontal. Keeping the needle perpendicular to the fabric, stab straight through the Velcro, lining and textile but avoid piercing the textile yarns. When needed, insert the needle through the previous stitch. Form a knot on the needle, pull towards you to tighten and slip knot onto thread. Move needle to the left to begin the next Herringbone Stitch. **Knot:** Holding thread taut with the left hand, wrap thread around the needle once or twice. Keeping fingers over the wrapped thread, pull the needle through.

### Comments

The knot is used occasionally with a series of Herringbone Stitches. It is used when warps run in the same direction as the row of Herringbone Stitches. Although knots are rarely used in textile conservation, they are often used when securing Velcro to heavy textiles. It is reasoned that if a stitch were to break, a large portion of the stitches could be pulled out by the weight of the textile. Knots are added to guard against this happening.

### Possible use for this stitch

Securing Velcro Heading Band to Reverse, Top Edge of Heavy Textiles.

### See also

Herringbone Stitch

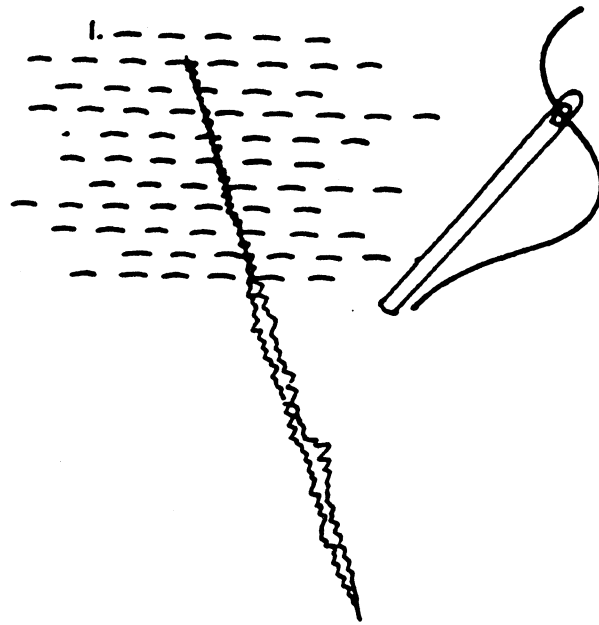
page 21

Diagonal Stitch/Knot Over Previous Stitch

page 16



## INVISIBLE DARNING STITCH



### Directions

Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Make rows of tiny Running Stitches, back and forth, keeping the stitches parallel with the grain of the fabric. Submerge the stitches in the thickness of the textile and keep the thread loose. Vary the point where rows begin and end.

### Comments

This is a technique for securing loose threads around a tear and for closing a tear. A fine thread is desirable when executing this stitch.

### Possible uses for this stitch

- Closing Slits
- Reinforcing Tears
- Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric

### See also

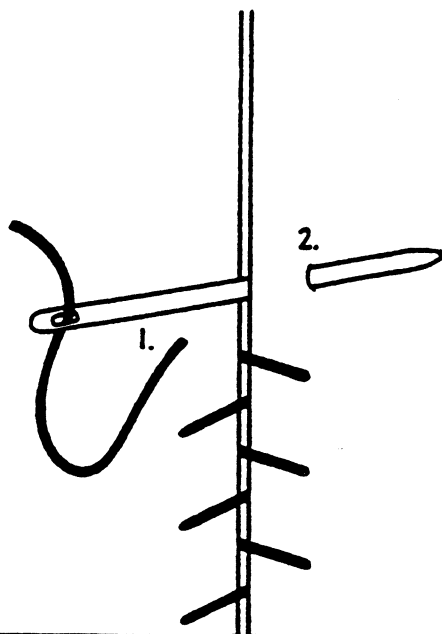
Running Stitch

page 32

## LACING STITCH

### Other names

Ancient Stitch  
Ball Stitch  
Baseball Stitch



### Directions

Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Insert needle through the fabric slit at a diagonal and bring out to the front side from the reverse side at 2, on the opposite side of the slit and above 1. Go in opposite direction for the next stitch sequence. Repeat. The threads will cross each other in the repaired slit.

### Comments

This stitch is very similar to the Figure 8 Stitch except Lacing Stitches are spaced farther apart resulting in slanted stitches on the front.

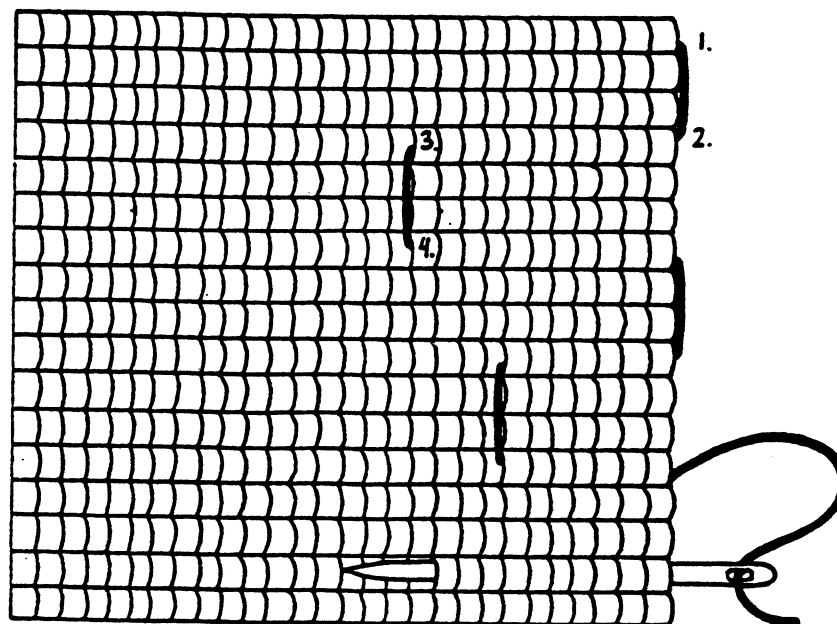
### Possible uses for this stitch

Closing Slits  
Joining Fabric

### See also

Figure 8 Stitch                      page 18

## LADDER STITCH



Warp yarns are horizontal in this diagram.

### Directions

Work from reverse side of the textile. At least two inches beyond the area of deterioration, insert needle through the reverse side of the knots (or through wefts) exiting at the edge of the textile at 1. Bypassing two warps, insert needle at 2, tunnel back through the knots (or through wefts) and bring needle out at 3. Bypass at least two warps, insert needle at 4 to begin next stitch. Stitches should not be noticeable from the front. The length of stitches should be staggered.

### Comments

This stitch is used on an edge to secure the last rows of weft. Thinner thread than the yarns of the textile should be used to reduce the stress of additional thread through the textile's structure.

### Possible use for this stitch

Stabilizing Weft

### See also

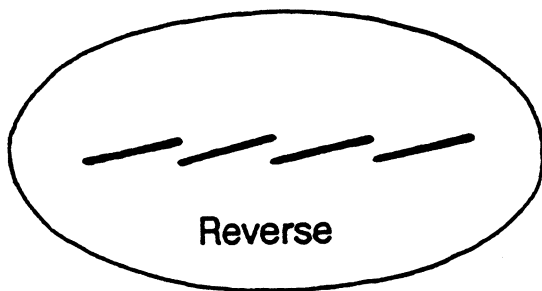
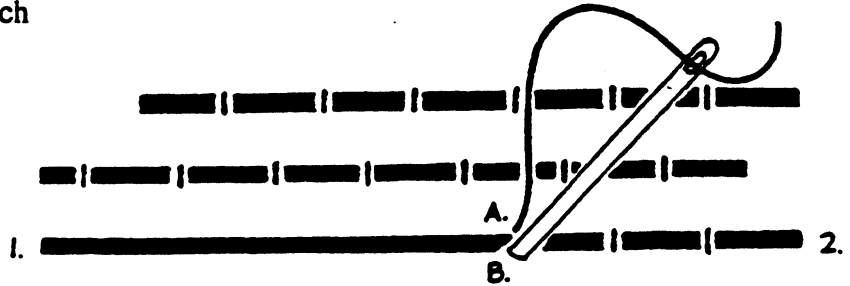
Channeling

page 12

## LAID AND COUCHED STITCH

### Other names

Laid Stitch  
Laid Couching Stitch



### Directions

Using one thread, bring needle out to the front side at 1. Lay a long stitch in the warp or the weft direction and insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 2, making sure the thread follows the grain of the fabric. Using a second thread, bring needle out to the front at A at one side of the first thread. Lay the new thread across (perpendicular to) the first thread and insert the needle through fabric to the reverse side at B. Repeat perpendicular stitches to secure the first thread. If there is more than one row of stitches, vary the point where rows begin and end.

### Comment

The two threads used can be of different weight and/or material.

### Possible uses for this stitch

Closing Slits  
Reinforcing Holes and Tears  
Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric  
Securing Loose Threads to a Ground Fabric

### See also

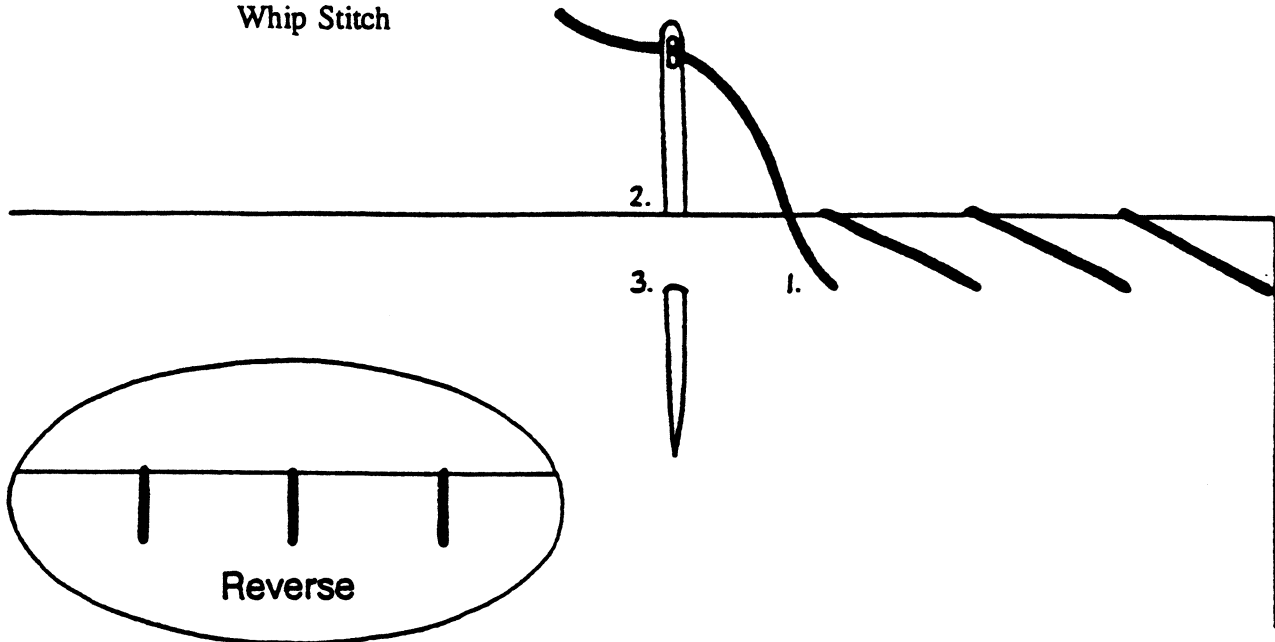
Basic Couching Stitch  
Self Couching Stitch

page 6  
page 34

## OVERCAST STITCH

Other name

Whip Stitch



### Directions

Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Move thread to the left and to the textile edge at 2. Wrap thread over the edge, keep needle perpendicular and insert needle from the reverse side to the front side at 3. Repeat.

### Comment

This is the same technique used for the Oversewing Stitch but this stitch covers an edge.

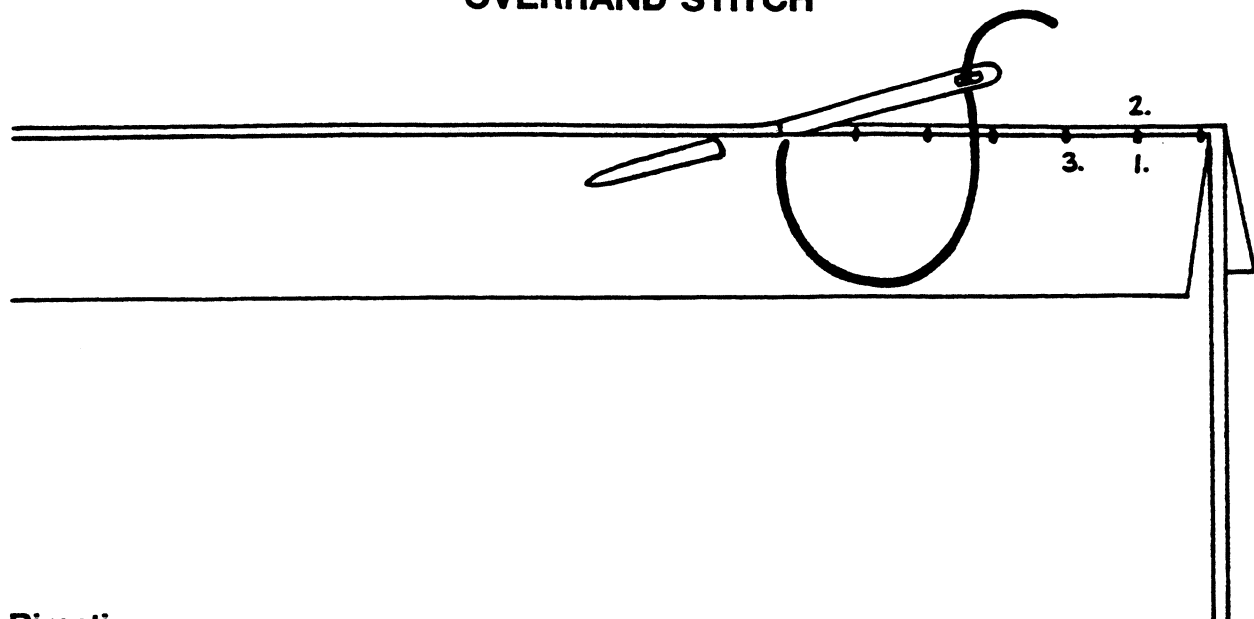
### Possible uses for this stitch

- Attaching Linings, Dust Covers and Backings
- Finishing and Stabilizing Edges
- Finishing and Stabilizing Warp Ends
- Mounting
- Reinforcing Selvedges

### See also

Diagonal Basting Stitch	page 15
Overhand Stitch	page 28
Oversewing Stitch	page 29
Tapestry Overcast Stitch	page 41

## OVERHAND STITCH



### Directions

Work from right to left. While stitching, the two fabrics should be stacked on top of one another. Bring needle out to the front side on one fabric piece at 1. Move needle directly across to the second piece of fabric, insert needle at 2. To continue, bring needle out to the front side in the first fabric one stitch length to the left at 3. Repeat.

### Comment

This stitch is used to hold two edges or two folds together.

### Possible uses for this stitch

Closing Slits  
Joining Fabric

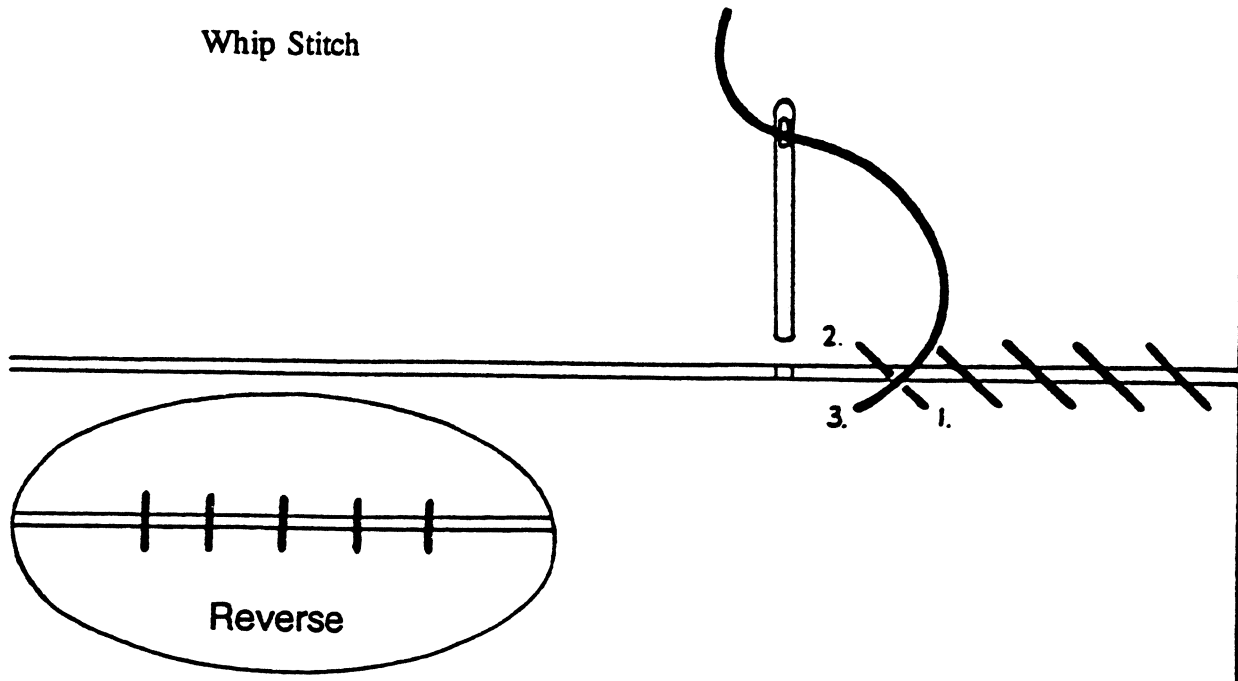
### See also

Overcast Stitch                      page 27  
Oversewing Stitch                  page 29

## OVERSEWING STITCH

### Other name

Whip Stitch



### Directions

Work right to left. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Move to the left, at a slant and insert needle through the second piece of fabric to the reverse side at 2. To continue, bring needle out to the front side in the first fabric at 3, a stitch length to the left. Repeat.

### Comments

The same technique is used for this stitch and the Overcast Stitch but here, it is used to hold two edges together.

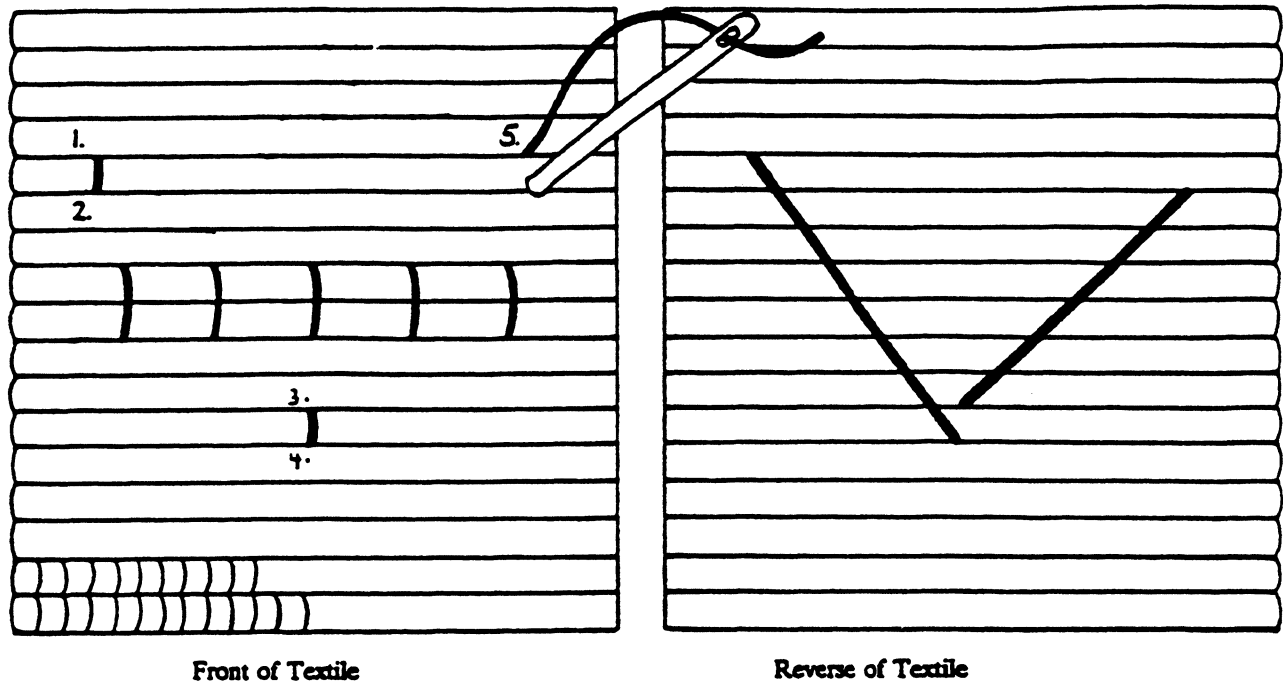
### Possible uses for this stitch

Closing Slits  
Joining Fabric

### See also

Overcast Stitch                      page 27  
Overhand Stitch                      page 28

## REINFORCEMENT/ZIG ZAG STITCH



### Directions

Work from left to right. About three-fourths of an inch above the left end of the slit, bring needle out to the front side at 1. Cross thread over one warp and insert needle through textile to the reverse side at 2. Move about one inch to the right and about three-fourths of an inch below the opposite side of slit and bring the needle out to the front side at 3. Cross thread over one warp and insert needle through textile to the reverse side at 4. Move needle diagonally to the right, returning to the first side of the slit. Bringing needle out to the front side at 5 begins next stitch.

### Comments

The Reinforcement Stitch is used as additional support on longer slits that have already been stabilized. It redistributes support into the stronger areas of the textile.

### Possible uses for this stitch

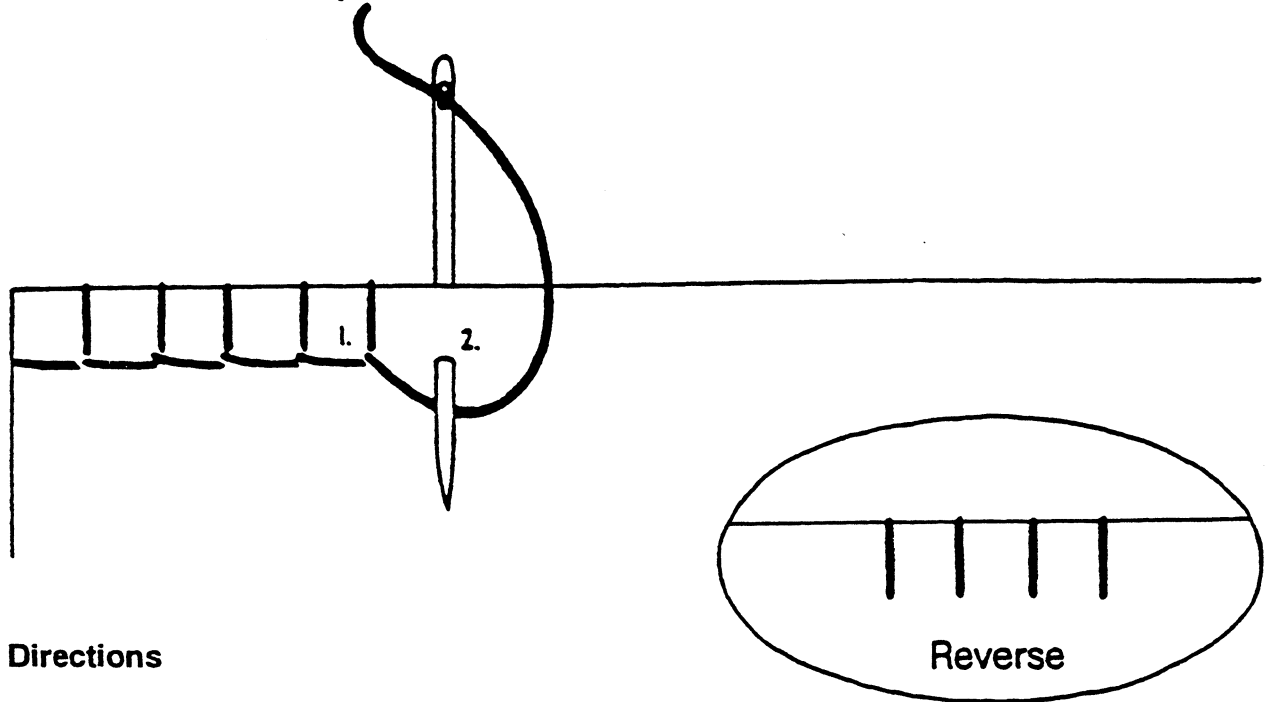
- Mounting
- Reinforcing Weak Areas
- Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric



## REVERSE BLANKET STITCH

### Other name

Reverse Open Buttonhole Stitch



### Directions

Work from left to right. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Move thread to the right and hold. Insert needle from the reverse side to the front side at 2. Pull needle through keeping held thread under point of the needle. Repeat.

### Comment

This stitch is used on edges.

### Possible uses for this stitch

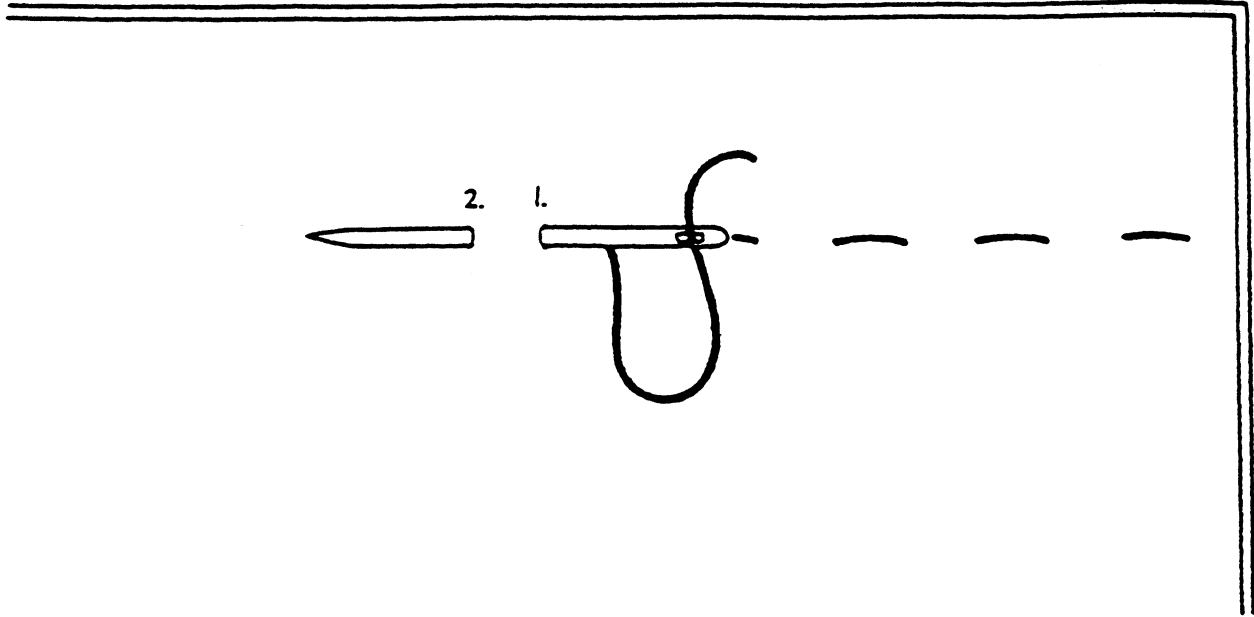
Finishing and Stabilizing Edges  
Finishing and Stabilizing Warp Ends  
Reinforcing Selvedges

### See also

Blanket Stitch

page 8

## RUNNING STITCH



### Directions

Work from right to left. Insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 1 and bring out to the front side at 2. Repeat.

### Comments

This stitch is used in joining two or more layers of fabric, in gathering, gauging, shirring, quilting and in seams not subjected to much strain. This stitch looks the same as the Basting Stitch but the stitches are shorter.

### Possible uses for this stitch

- Creating Seams
- Joining Fabric
- Mounting
- Reinforcing Holes and Tears
- Stabilizing Seams
- Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric

### See also

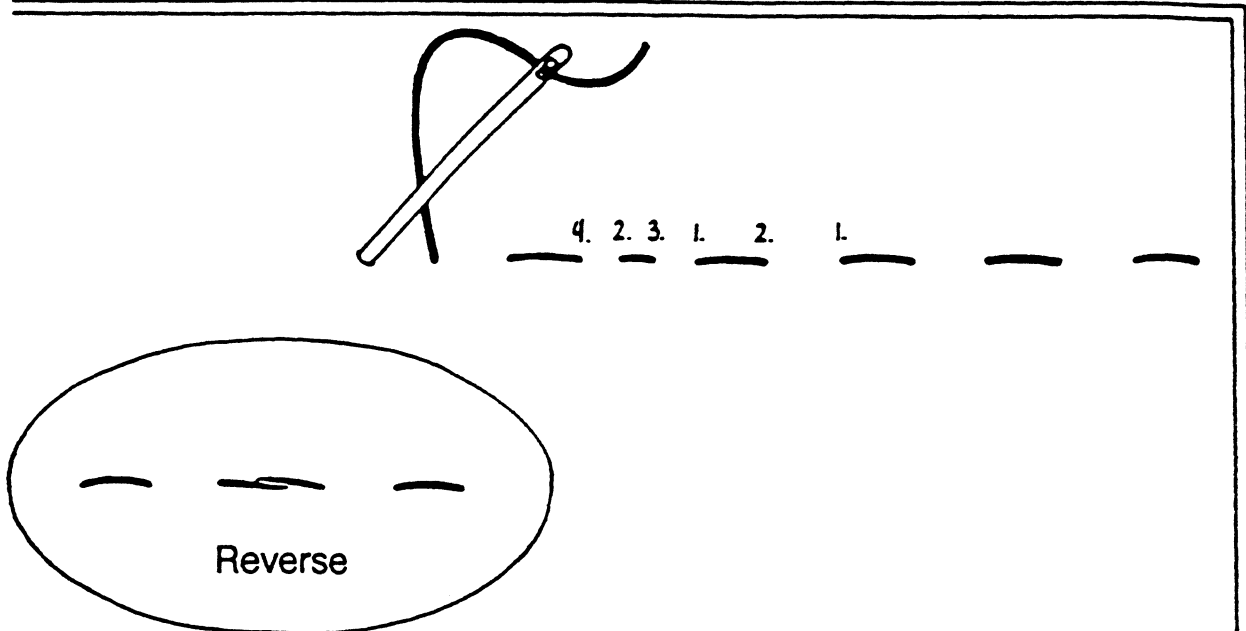
Basting Stitch

page 7

## RUNNING/BACK STITCH

### Other names

Combination Stitch  
Running/Back Combination Stitch



### Directions

Work from right to left. **Running Stitch:** Insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 1. Move to the left and bring needle out to the front side at 2. Repeat. **Back Stitch:** After completing a series of Running Stitches move half a completed stitch to the right and insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 3. Moving to the left, bring needle out to the front side at 4 and begin another series of Running Stitches.

### Comments

This stitch provides more strength than the Running Stitch. It is usually formed by inserting a Back Stitch between groups of three to four Running Stitches but this can be varied according to the strength required.

### Possible uses for this stitch

Creating Seams  
Joining Fabric  
Stabilizing Seams

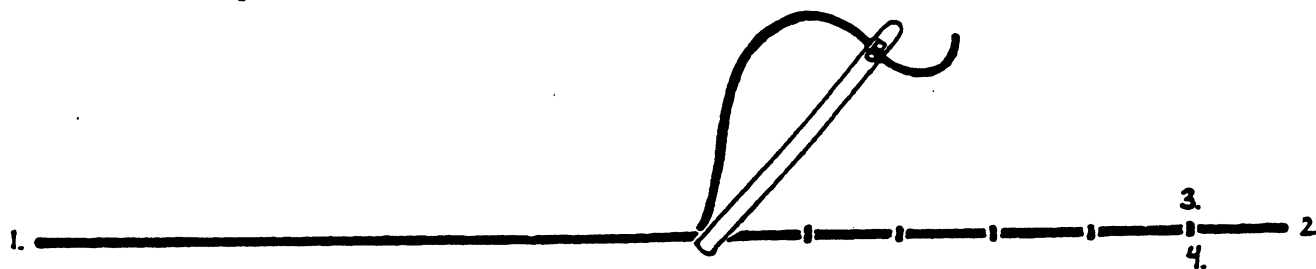
### See also

Back Stitch                      page 5  
Half Back Stitch                page 19  
Running Stitch                  page 32

# SELF COUCHING STITCH

## Other names

Convent Stitch  
Klosterstich  
Span Stitch  
Spannstich



## Directions

Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Lay a long stitch in the warp or the weft direction and insert needle through the fabric to the reverse side at 2. Bring needle out to the front side at one side of the first stitch at 3. Lay thread across (perpendicular to) the first stitch and insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 4. Repeat perpendicular stitches to secure the first stitch. If there is more than one row of stitches, vary the point where rows begin and end.

## Possible uses for this stitch

Closing Slits  
Reinforcing Holes and Tears  
Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric  
Securing Loose Threads to a Ground Fabric

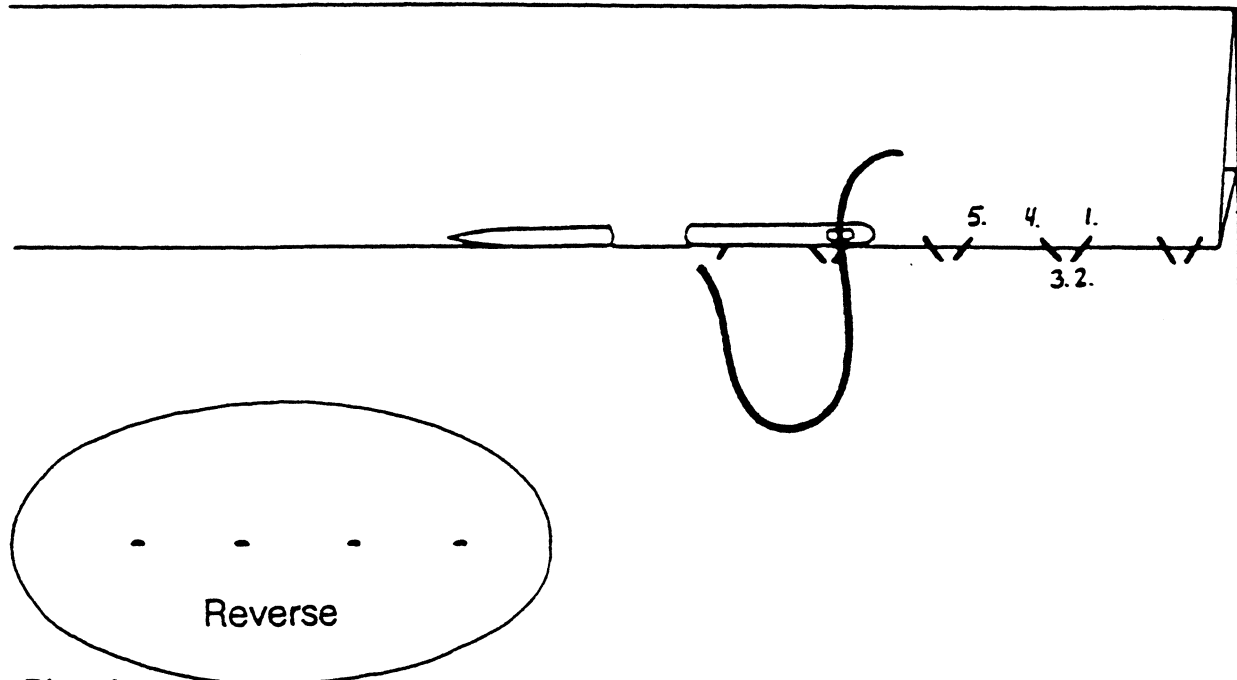
## See also

Basic Couching Stitch                      page 6  
Laid and Couching Stitch                page 26

# SLIP STITCH

Other name

Blind Hem Stitch



## Directions

Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side through the top fabric layer at 1. Move needle slightly to the left and insert in the bottom layer of the fabric at 2. Catch a few threads and bring needle out to the front side at 3. Move the needle above to the top fabric, insert at 4 and slip between fabric layers of the fold. Bring out to the front side at 5 to begin the next stitch. Repeat.

## Comments

This nearly invisible stitch is created by slipping the thread under a fold of fabric. It can be used to join two folded edges or one folded edge to a flat surface.

## Possible uses for this stitch

Hemming  
Joining Fabric

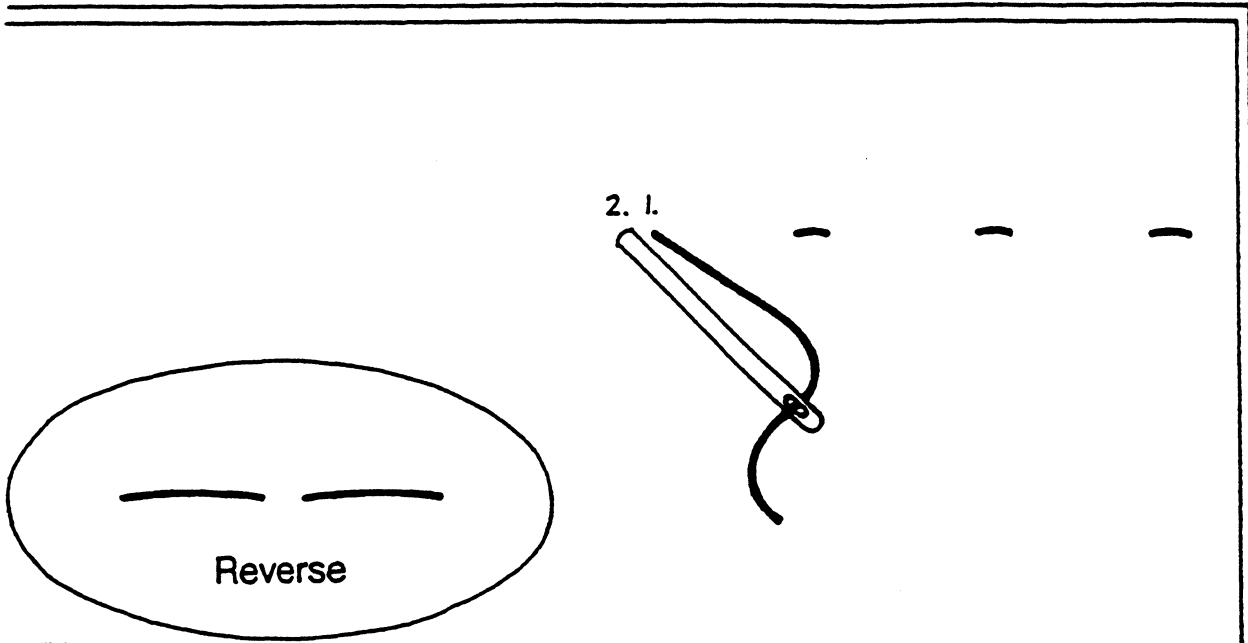
## See also

Hemming Stitch                      page 20

# STAB STITCH

**Other name**

Piercing Stitch



## Directions

Work from right to left. Bring needle out to the front side at 1, keeping needle perpendicular to the fabric. Move one small stitch length to the left and insert needle straight through fabric to the reverse side at 2. Move more than one stitch length to the left on the reverse side before bringing needle (still held perpendicular) out to the front side again. Repeat.

## Comments

A series of these stitches create short stitches on the front side and long stitches on the reverse side, having the advantage of low visibility.

## Possible uses for this stitch

Mounting  
Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric

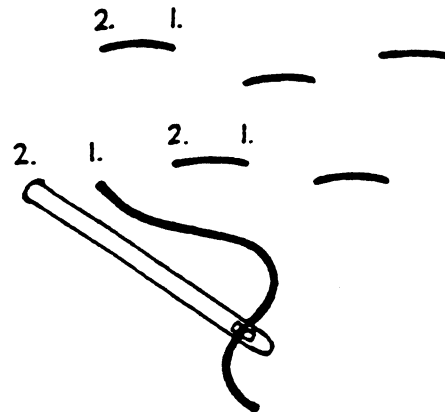
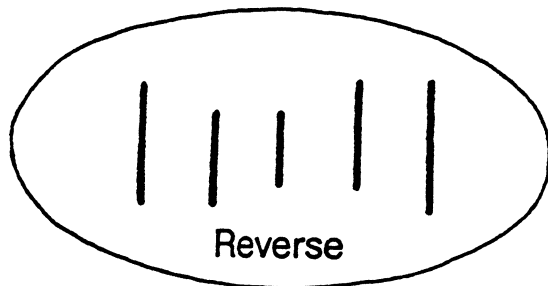
## See also

Running Stitch                      page 32  
Staggered Running Stitch        page 37

# STAGGERED RUNNING STITCH

## Other name

Walls Of Troy Stitch



## Directions

Work from right to left and hold the needle perpendicular to the textile. Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Move to the left and insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 2. Move to the left and up or down to execute next stitch.

## Comments

This stitch is used to avoid sewing over the same weak warp or weft yarns. It is also used when the Stab Stitch or the Running Stitch would be too noticeable, such as on a flat, smooth or tightly woven fabric. It is not appropriate for use when the two fabrics would react differently to gravity or humidity.

## Possible uses for this stitch

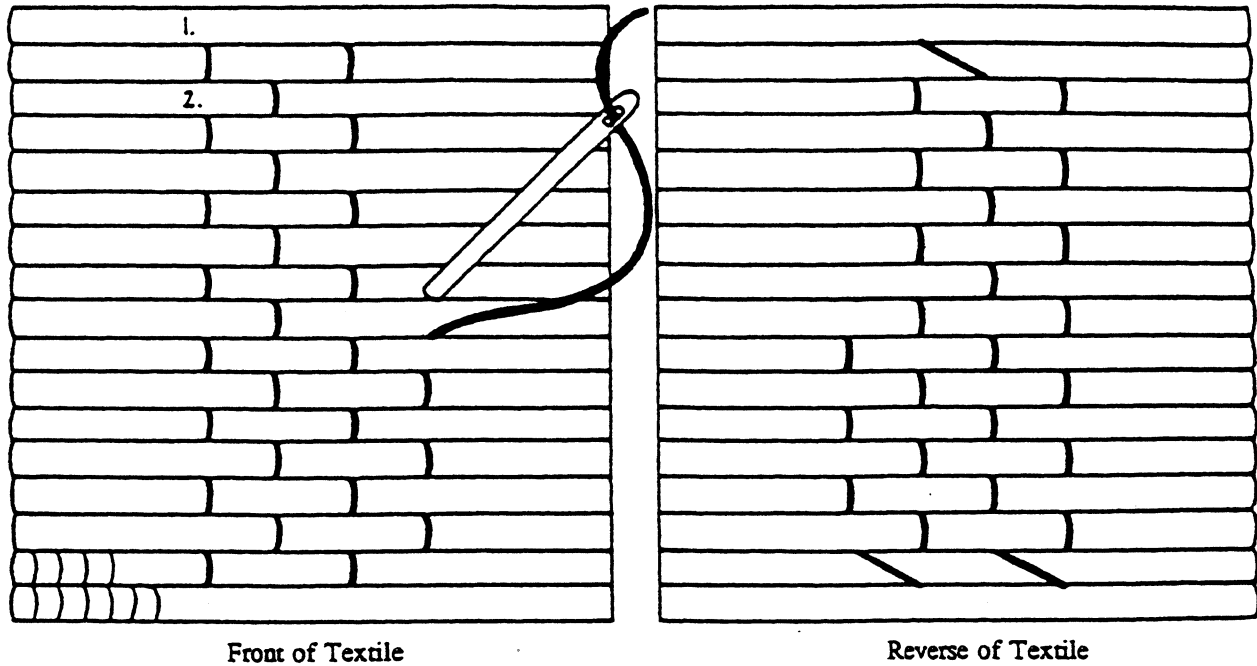
Attaching Linings, Dust Covers and Backings  
Mounting  
Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric

## See also

Running Stitch                      page 32  
Stab Stitch                            page 36

# TABBY STITCH

Other name      Open Tabby Mend



Front of Textile

Reverse of Textile

Warp yarns are horizontal in this diagram

## Directions

Anchor the thread in a stable area about four to six warp yarns from the area of deterioration. Bring needle out to the front side at 1, cross over one warp and insert needle through to the reverse side at 2. Pass under one warp and bring needle out to the front side. Continue going over and under alternate warps (duplicating the plain weave) through the deteriorated area and four to six warps into the next stable area. Move one fourth inch and repeat in opposite direction. If damage is severe, rows of stitches can be one eighth inch apart. The stitch rows will run parallel to the weft and will resemble the Running Stitch.

## Comments

This is used to reinforce areas suffering from weft loss or degradation but not exhibiting obvious flaws such as tears, holes or open slits. If all of the weft is gone, use multiple strands of thread. This technique is an alternative to reweaving and replicates the plain weave.

## Possible uses for this stitch

Reinforcing Weak areas  
Replacing Weft

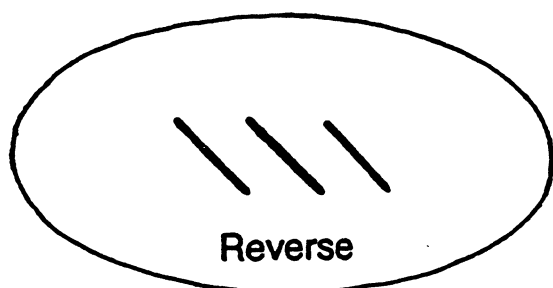
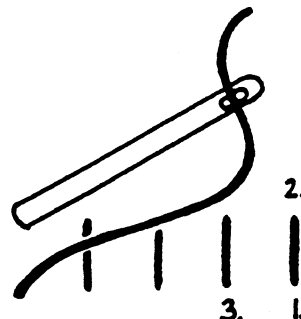
See also      Running Stitch      page 32



## TACKING STITCH

### Other name

Reverse Half Cross Stitch



### Directions

Bring needle out to the front side at 1. Move needle straight up, parallel to the warp or weft yarns and insert through fabric to the reverse side at 2. Move to the left but even with 1 and bring needle out to the front side at 3 to begin the next stitch.

### Comments

This is a temporary stitch used to control layers of fabric. The stitches are straight on the front side and diagonal on the reverse side. The stitch size varies according to the size of the area covered and the amount of control required. Rows may be worked in any direction.

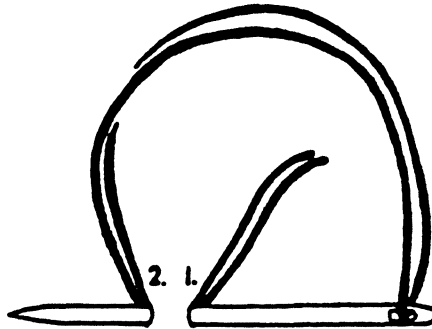
### Possible uses for this stitch

Securing a Damaged Area to a Support Fabric  
Temporary Stitch

### See also

Diagonal Basting Stitch      page 15

## TAILOR'S TACKS



### Directions

Use one or two threads in a needle. At the point to be marked, insert needle through fabric to the reverse side at 1. Move slightly away and bring needle out to the front side at 2. Take one more stitch in the same place, leaving a thread loop of one inch or more. Cut thread, leaving a one inch tail.

### Comment

This is a temporary stitch used to mark important points in a project.

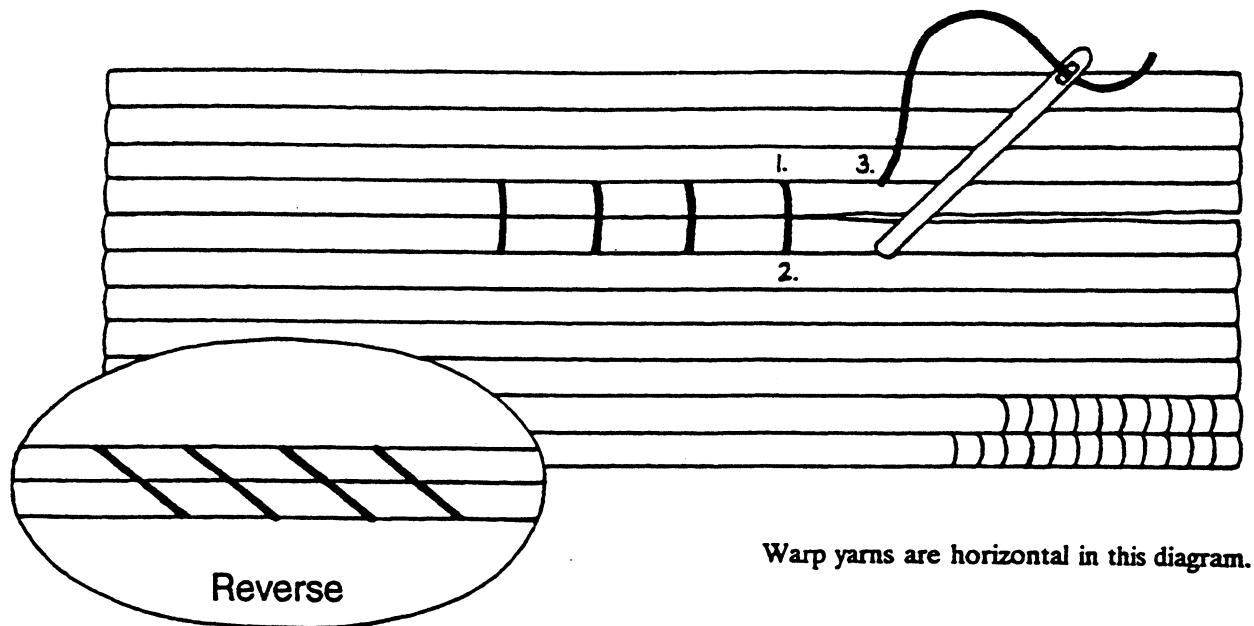
### Possible use for this stitch

Temporary Stitch

## TAPESTRY OVERCAST STITCH

Other name

Slit Stitch



### Directions

Bring needle out to the front side at 1, one warp over from slit edge. Bring thread across slit in a straight line to far side of adjacent warp, insert needle through to the reverse side at 2. Cross slit in the opposite direction, move away slightly from first stitch and bring needle out to the front side at 3 to begin the next stitch. Repeat.

### Comment

This is used on slits that were originally overcast.

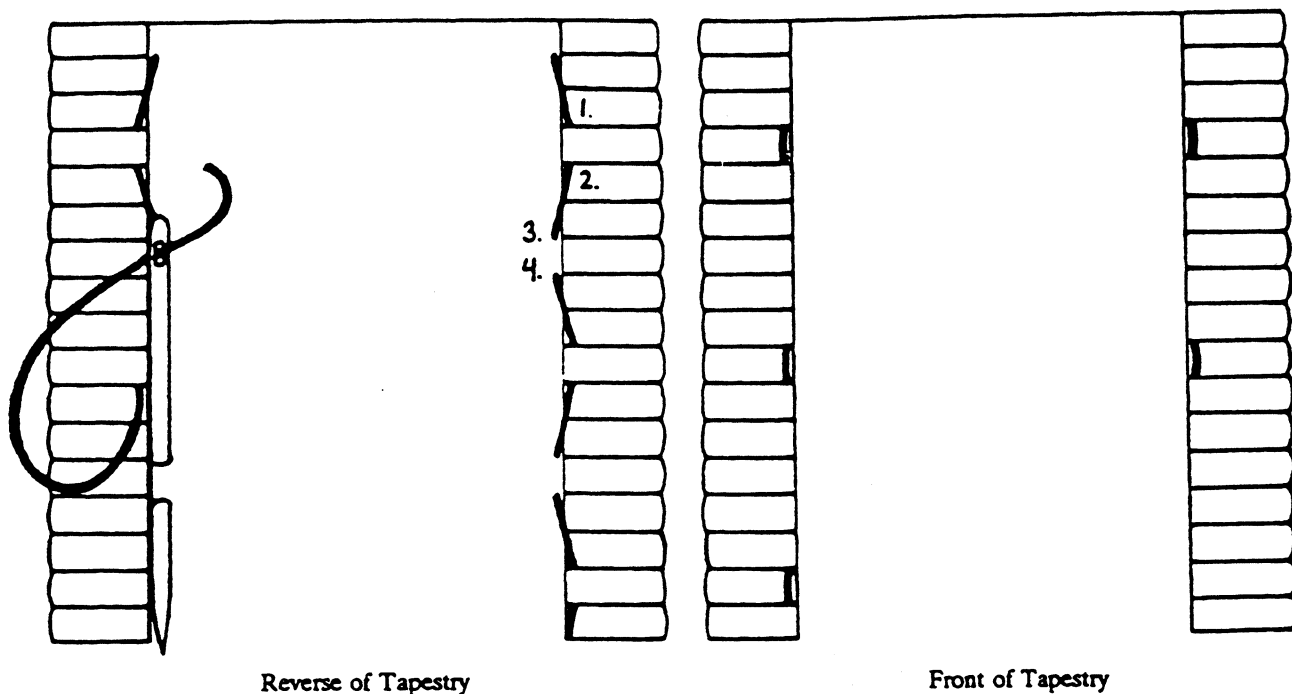
### Possible use for this stitch

Closing Slits

# TAPESTRY STRAP STITCH

Other name

Running Hem Stitch



Warp yarns are horizontal in this diagram.

## Directions

Work from the reverse side of the textile. Anchor thread in the strap. Insert the needle between warp yarns of the tapestry and bring out to the tapestry front side at 1. Cross over one warp and insert needle to the tapestry reverse side at 2. The next stitch is done only in the strap (fabric). Insert needle through the strap to the reverse side at 3. Bring needle out to the front side of the strap at 4. Continue alternating stitches between tapestry and the strap.

## Comments

This stitch is used when attaching fabric, straps, etc. to a tapestry in the vertical direction. Use a continuous thread, adding additional thread with a weaver's knot, if necessary. Stitches should run in a straight line to facilitate a straight hanging of the piece.

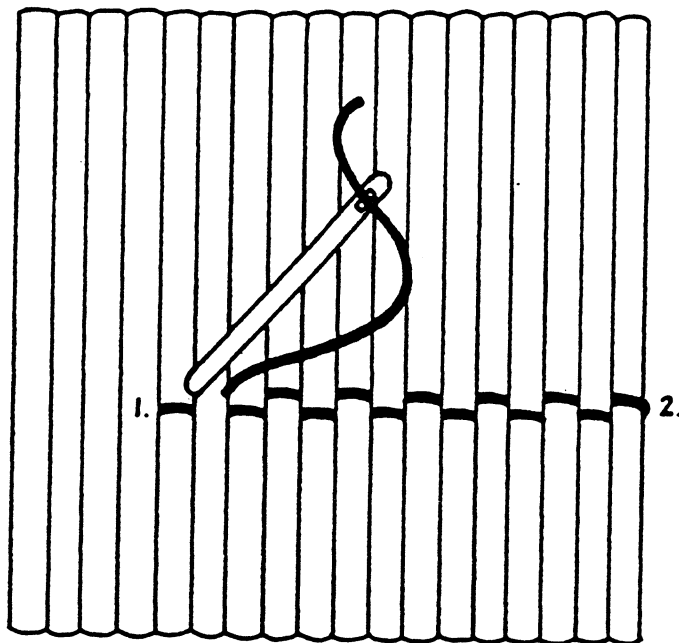
## Possible uses for this stitch

Attaching Linings, Dust Covers and Backings  
Hemming

## WRAPPING STITCH

**Other name**

**Figure 8 Wrapping Stitch**



### **Directions**

Begin and end rows of stitches in a stable area of the textile.  
Bring needle out to the front side at 1 and weave across the yarns, going over and under alternate yarns. Wrap the thread around the last yarn at 2 and weave it back into the textile.  
On the return row, insert the needle over and under opposite yarns than in the previous row.

### **Comments**

This stitch is one of the first treatments undertaken when selvages or ends begin to deteriorate. It may be used to secure two or more yarns.

### **Possible uses for this stitch**

Finishing and Stabilizing Edges  
Reinforcing Selvages

## LIST OF REFERENCES

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