

Unusual Threads

The world of threads is very large and there is a lot to know about them. It is best to educate yourself before you try a new thread. We are all familiar with the threads we use for piecing and machine quilting, I am going to introduce you to a different group of threads that I call "THE UNUSUALS". For most of us, we use a 40 or 50 wt thread for both our piecing and our machine quilting. But the threads tonight are very different

1. Silk
 - a. machine quilting
 - i. requires a smaller needle (8 or 10) Microtex or quilting
 - ii. A finer thread in the bobbin is helpful (Sew Fine or Bottom Line)
 - iii. Must adjust tension carefully and always test it on a sample first
 - b. machine applique
 - i. requires a smaller needle (8 or 10) Microtex or quilting
 - ii. Must adjust tension carefully and always test it on a sample first
 - c. hand applique
 - i. many colours, but often 3 shades of grey will do everything
 - ii. fine sharp hand applique needle
2. Metallic
 - a. Core Wound
 - i. Polyester core with the metallic wound around it
 - ii. Must use a metallic needle or topstitch needle size 14
 - iii. Frays easily
 - b. Mylar
 - i. Flat like a ribbon
 - ii. Many colours
 - iii. A wide variety of reflective surfaces – opalescent and sparkles

Special Considerations for Metallic threads

- Parallel wound spools MUST feed off the side of the spool and work very well on a vertical spool pin.
- Cross wound spools MUST feed off the top of the spool and usually work best on a horizontal spool pin or on a vertical spool pin on a separate thread stand with a thread guide on it.
- The top tension MUST be reduced to a lower number, usually 2 or 1.
- Use needles made specifically for metallic thread like Schmetz Metallic size 14. A size 14 topstitch needle can also be used successfully.
- Always use a fine polyester thread in your bobbin. (Sew Fine or Bottom Line)
- Reduce your stitch speed with all metallic threads.

Specialty Threads

3. Pearl Crown Rayon
 - a. Many colours
 - b. Equal in weight to a size 8 Perle cotton hand embroidery thread.
4. Dazzle by Wonderfil
 - a. Rayon thread with a metallic accent.
 - b. Equal in weight to a size 8 Perle cotton hand embroidery thread.
 - c. Many colours
5. Sizzle by Wonderfil
 - a. Metallic with a bit of rayon
 - b. Very shiny
 - c. Very rough
6. Candlelight by YLI
 - a. Like Sizzle but finer
 - b. Many colours

Special Considerations for Specialty Threads

These threads are too heavy for the top of your machine. They are best used for bobbin work or for couching on to the surface of your work.

CONCLUSION

When using these types of threads for embellishment, a little goes a long way.