

Grand Quilt Guild February 2023 Challenge of the Month

GETTING FANCY! USING DECORATIVE STITCHES IN QUILTING



Presented by Brenda Dagg

We all have them, even on the most basic machines- those wonderful fancy stitches that most of us never use.

Your Challenge for February is to create a block, mug rug, table topper, bag, tea cozy, placemat..... whatever you desire using some of the decorative stitches on your machine.

Ways to use Decorative Stitches

- To add personality and beauty to your project. This pinterest photo shows decorative stitches used in a crazy quilt. While this was traditionally done by hand, you can easily use a variety of your machine's special stitches on a crazy quilt, string quilt or crumb quilt.

To Quilt Your Quilt

If you use your decorative stitches after you have sandwiched your batting and backing, then they can be used to quilt your quilt.

In this photo, I am stitching in the ditch but using a herringbone pattern. This pattern goes from side to side around the centre line, so I can stitch right down the seam. (Note the red line on my presser foot- this makes keeping straight much easier.)



On this table topper, I used a wavy line and centred it over each of my seams and across the centre.



The horizontal lines on this little quilt were quilted with a different stitch. This stitch orients to one side only so I had to experiment to see where to put my centerline to have the stitches end up where I wanted them.

The decorative filigree in the centre of the white square was also one of the fancy stitches on my machine. To make it stop after only quilting one repeat, I pressed the end button on my machine. If you don't have one of those, just go slowly and stop when the shape you want is completed.

To put on binding without hand stitching

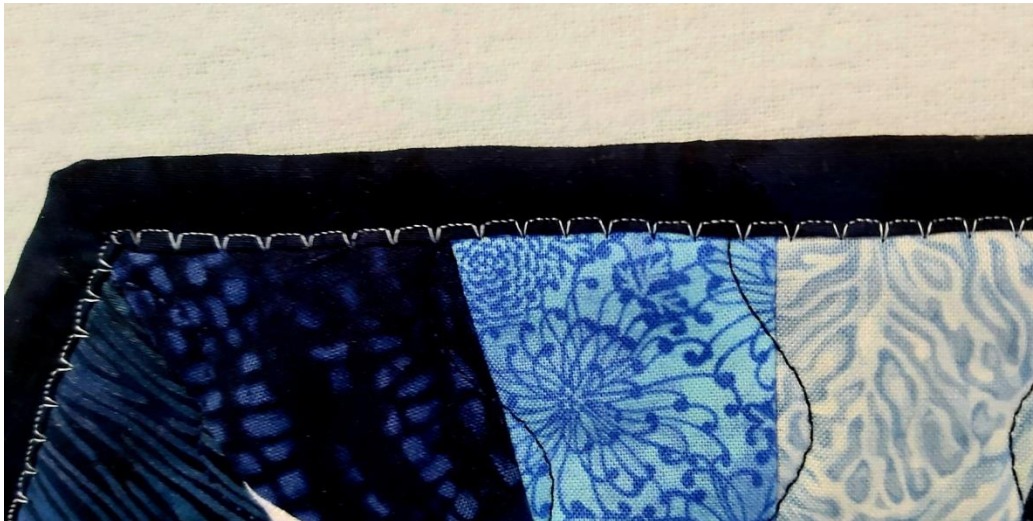
To use a decorative stitch to finish off your binding, sew the binding to the back side of your quilt. Then flip it to the front, clip or pin if you like, and choose your desired stitch. I found that it was easiest to start and stop at the square corners, rather than trying to go around them, but that's just me. If you do start at the corners, you may find it hard to get going because of the bulk. This is where you use that little tool that comes with most of our machines to put under the back of your presser foot to lift it a bit so it's not trying to climb up the "mountain" of fabric. (Photo below). If you don't have one of these use a square of fabric folded twice to make four layers to put under the back of your foot. You can use one, two, or even three layers of this tool to raise your foot till it's level.



Here are a couple of examples of stitches I used to bind these quilts:

Note- The first time I tried this, for a set of placemats, I chose quite an elaborate pattern. By the time the first one was done, I didn't want to see that stitch ever again, and I had 5 more placemats to go. (The denser and more elaborate the pattern, the slower it goes.) So save those elaborate patterns for small projects and choose something simpler for anything larger.

A slightly scalloped stitch on this binding.

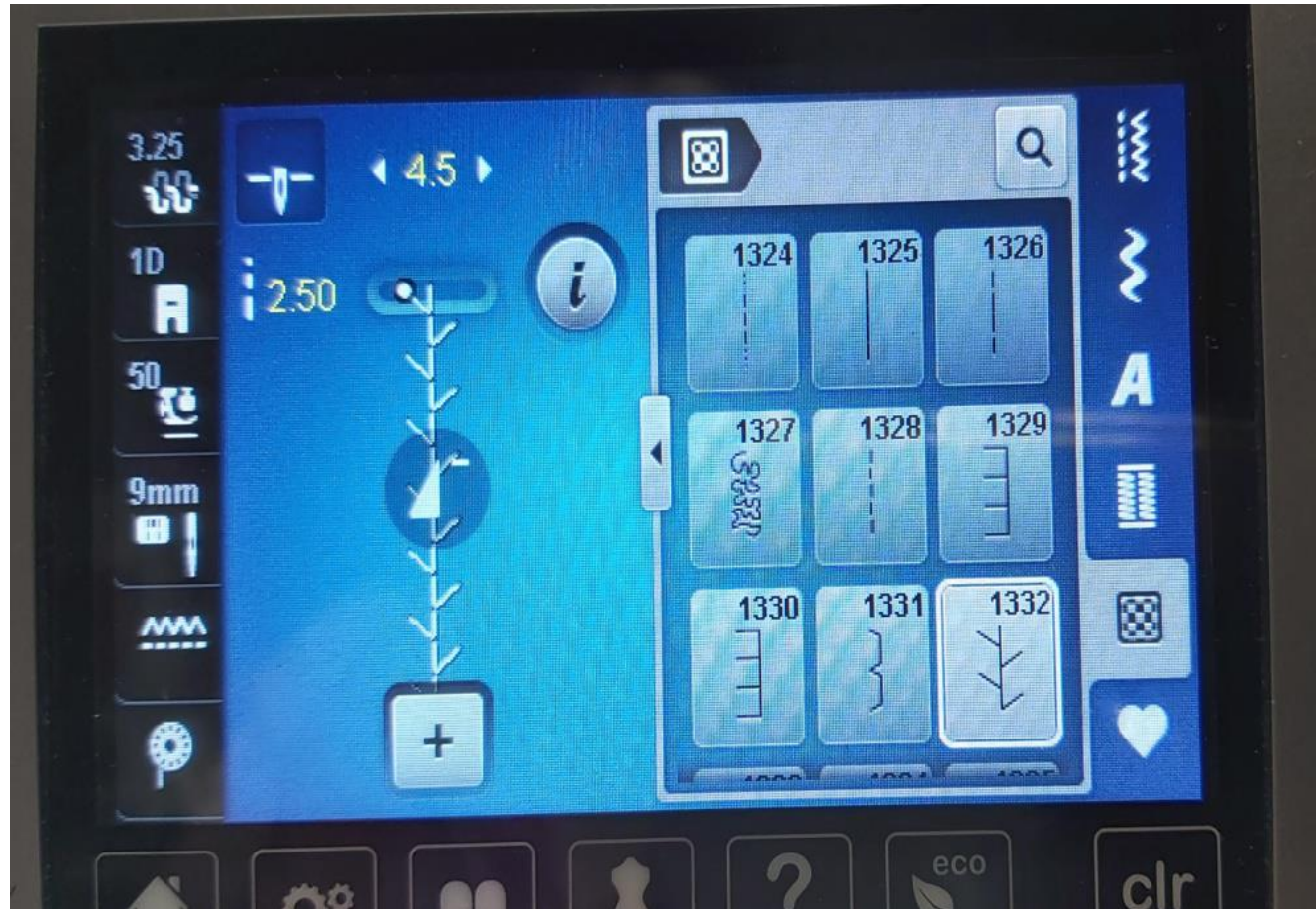


The herring bone stitch on the binding.

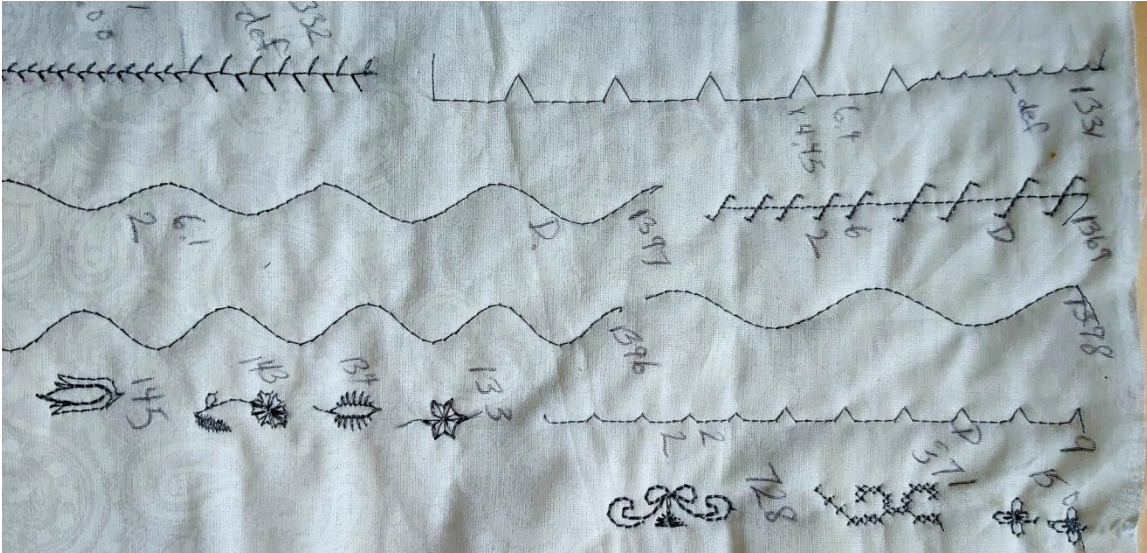


BEFORE YOU START

Explore your stitches. Each manufacturer and model will have different stitches and different ways to access them and modify the width and the length. You may have a screen showing your options or you may have cards or a manual. ***Take some time to check it out.***



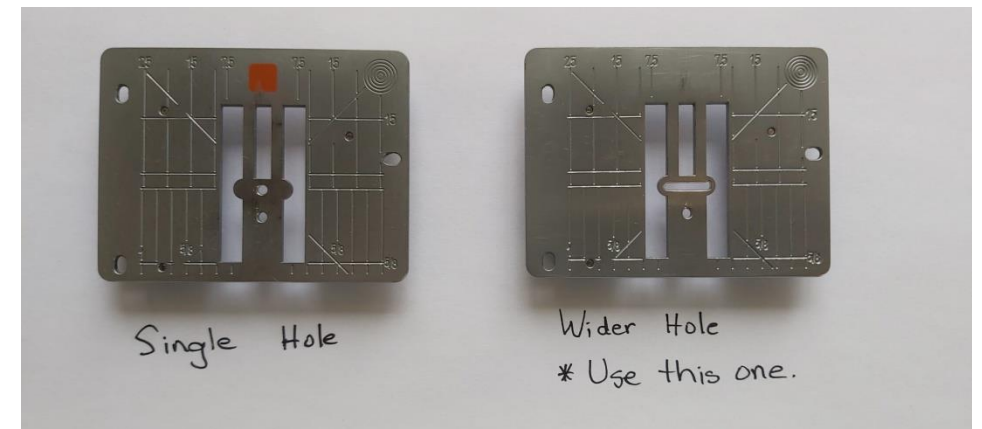
Stitch out your favourites on a quilt sandwich. (If you're really organized, you might even like to make a binder showing all the stitches. Play with the length and width changes to see what size you would like to use.



It's helpful to mark the stitch number and any changes you made right on your fabric.

You can use all of these stitches with your walking foot or if you have the dual feed feet on your machine, you can use that. A clear foot is great for better visibility, and I find my clear foot with the red line down the centre works very well. (Bernina 34D)

If you normally use a single hole throat plate, **you need to change it out for one with a wider hole so you don't break your needle.**



Resources

- For more ideas, search for Decorative Stitches in Quilting and you will see lots of great videos to help you. Links to a few are below:
- Jacquie Goering- Quilting with your Walking Foot-
- <https://www.google.com/search?q=using+decorative+stitches+for+quilting&oq=using+decorative+stitches+&aqs=chrome.2.69i57j0i13i512l2j0i22i30l4.12188j1j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:2b0137b1,vid:Pf9LgT9lrBE>
- Elizabeth De Croos- Epida Studios
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHs0kB0xPR0&ab_channel=EpidaStudio
- Jenny Doan- Missouri Star
- <https://www.google.com/search?q=using+decorative+stitches+for+quilting&oq=using+decorative+stitches+&aqs=chrome.2.69i57j0i13i512l2j0i22i30l4.12188j1j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:4526e312,vid:hcwz1gYXLFg>
- Hope you will have some fun, play around with your machine, and bring your final results to our March meeting to share.