

Embroidery

101:

Candlewicking

Candlewicking began as a hand embroidery style that used thick cotton thread and elaborate knots. By using 30 weight cotton thread and smooth, satin stitch dots, the style can be beautifully echoed in contemporary machine embroidery.

Project Needs & Notes:

- Candlewicking design
- Fabric / garment
- Medium-weight (2.5 ounce) cutaway stabilizer
- 30 weight cotton thread



Design featured in this tutorial include:

[M4568, Flutterby Flourish](#)
(Candlewicking)
[G2410, Rose Blossom](#) (Candlewicking)

This project was featured in the following:

[12 Top-Trending Embroidery Styles Lookbook](#)

Steps To Complete



Traditional candlewicking was done centuries ago with thick, cotton thread on white muslin.

The same cotton thread was used to make hand-dipped candles, which is how the needle art got its name.



Today's embroidery machines can't accommodate that type of thread, and the knot types used can't be done by machine either.

However, there are beautiful machine embroidery designs that are inspired by, and echo, the traditional candlewicking style.



This is a machine embroidery design of a candlewicking butterfly. The elaborate knots that you see in handwork are instead represented by satin stitch dots.



When using your embroidery machine to stitch candelwicking designs, the primary difference is the thread choice.

You can see the technique in this example, where the butterfly is embroidered onto a towel.

A template is a printout of a design, and it's an excellent tool to plan where to stitch.



Print a template of the design from your embroidery software. If you do not have embroidery software, [Wilcom's TrueSizer](#) is a free program to use.

Arrange the template on the item, then mark the center points, as well as the vertical and horizontal axis lines.



Hoop the fabric with one piece of cutaway stabilizer, lining up the marks on the fabric with the marks on the hoop.



The color change sheet for the design shows that 30 weight cotton thread should be used.



Thread your machine with the appropriate thread.

No special thread in the bobbin is necessary -- just 30 weight cotton thread in the top.



Embroider the design.



After embroidering, trim the excess stabilizer away from the back.



It's as easy as that!

You can use 40 weight rayon or polyester thread also, but 30 weight cotton thread will give the most texture in the areas with the dots.



Some designs, like this one of a rose, use a mixture of 30 weight cotton thread, and 40 weight.

Color Change Sheet

Name: Rose Blossom (Candlewicking) **Product ID:** [G2409](#)

Size: 6.98"(w) x 11.77"(h) (177.3 x 299 mm) **Color Changes:** 16

Stitches: 67439 **Colors Used:** 13

Product Comments:
 In this design you can use a heavier thread (like 30 weight Madeira Cotona) for the candlewicking elements. Thread numbers below refer to Madeira rayon 40 weight thread. Use the free [Thread Exchange](#) to find equivalents from Madeira to other brands of thread.

For information on embroidering with Candlewicking designs, click [here](#).

Show me: ☒ Color Changes ☒ Color Swatches ☐ Unique Colors ☒ Design Image(s) ☐ Reduced-size image

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Color / Thread Changes	
CC1: Guacamole #1106 Leaves	CC9: English Rose #1119 Rose
CC2: Dark Camo Green #1357 Leaf shading	CC10: Light Coral #1053 Rose detail
CC3: Weeping Willow #1105 Leaf highlights	CC11: Conch Shell #1220 Rose
CC4: Camellia #1344 Branch	CC12: Watermelon #1354 Rose detail
CC5: Bark #1144 Branch shading	CC13: English Rose #1119 Rose detail
CC6: Root Beer #1230 Branch shading, branch	CC14: Pink Petal #1114 Rose detail
CC7: Golden Retriever #1272 Branch highlight	CC15: Conch Shell #1220 Rose detail
CC8: Watermelon #1354 Rose	CC16: Madeira Cotona Med Peach #585 Candlewicking border

The color change sheet for each design shows the type of thread used.



Use this embroidery technique as a way to add the beauty of hand embroidery to your machine embroidery projects.