

Embroidery Threads

For most embroidery applications it is best to use embroidery thread through the needle and a lightweight bobbin thread in the bobbin. The only exception would be the occasion where the embroidery needs to be reversible such as on quilts, towels, lace designs or other projects where the design will be visible on both sides.

Rayon exhibits several qualities that make it an excellent embroidery thread. It is available in hundreds of colors, has a very high sheen, has excellent strength for high-speed sewing, and is soft enough to sew in the finest detail. Most rayon embroidery threads are available in a 40-weight size to accommodate professionally produced digital designs. A size 75/11 embroidery needle or size 80/12 universal needle is recommended for best results. Robison-Anton and Sulky produce quality 40-weight rayon embroidery threads.

Rayon embroidery thread is also available in a slightly heavier 35-weight size. This is preferred for red work or any design where the desired appearance of the thread needs to be more dramatic. These threads can be either solid color or mixed colors. Robison-Anton's Twister Tweed is composed of two colors of rayon twisted together. Sulky also produces Ultra Twist rayon thread in several colors. A size 90/14 embroidery needle or size 90/14 universal needle is recommended for best results.

Qualities inherent in trilobal polyester make it an excellent embroidery thread. This relatively new fiber is both soft and flexible to conform to the most detailed designs yet strong enough to perform well in the most challenging embroidery applications. Legendary colorfast qualities and a surprising resistance to abrasion make it a natural for any sewn item that will be worn, laundered often or subjected to any demanding use. The trilobal shape of the individual composing fibers ensures an enduring sheen. Most trilobal embroidery threads are 40-weight. A size 75/11 embroidery needle or size 80/12 universal needle is recommended for best results. Mettler, Robison-Anton and Sulky produce trilobal polyester embroidery thread.

On the occasion when a matte finish is preferred over the sheen of rayon or polyester, cotton is the natural alternative. Characteristics inherent in its construction make it one of the best "stitching" threads available. Embroidery with cotton possesses a subtle beauty that is hard to match. Several weights of cotton are available for embroidery. Most cotton embroidery is accomplished with either 40 or 50-weight thread. This accommodates professionally digitized designs. A size 75/11 embroidery needle or size 80/12 universal needle is recommended for best results. Mettler, Signature and Robison-Anton produce quality cotton 40 and 50-weight threads.

When a heavier weight thread is required for redwork, blanket stitch appliqué or any outline type design where the thread appearance needs a more dramatic appearance 20, 25 and 30-weight cotton threads are available and should be used. A size 90/14 embroidery needle or size 90/14-100/16 universal needles are recommended for best results. Heavier weight cotton threads are available from Mettler, Robison-Anton, Signature and Sulky.

For the most dramatic appearance, Sulky produces a 12-weight cotton thread. It is a natural in redwork, straight stitch designs or designs digitized for heavier threads. For successful embroidery use a spring foot. A size 100/16 Topstitch needle is recommended by Sulky for best results. Sulky's 12 wt. cotton comes in both solid and "Blendables" colors.