

## Lesson 4 – It's The Knots

### **Appliqué Thread Preparation**

Next we will prepare our appliqué needle and thread. Cut a 18” – 20” length of 100 wt. silk thread in a color that blends with your appliqué fabric. Be sure to use a fine needle – sizes 10, 11 or 12 will work well.

I'm often asked if it's all right to use a thread that matches our background fabric. I have actually done this a couple of times in my career when I wasn't able to find a thread that would work with my appliqué fabric. It is much harder to use a thread that matches the background fabric. There will be at least two situations that have the potential of leaving stitches on the top of our appliqué fabric where they might be seen. The first is when making an outer point, the second is when making an inner point. To prevent our stitches from showing, our appliqué thread should blend with the appliqué fabric. In these situations you will find that you really need thread that matches your appliqué fabric.

I'm also often asked why we cut such a short length of thread. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, silk thread has a tendency to tangle up. The longer your thread the more likely this will happen. Secondly, the more often the thread is pulled through the background fabric and appliqué fabric, the more likely it is to fray.

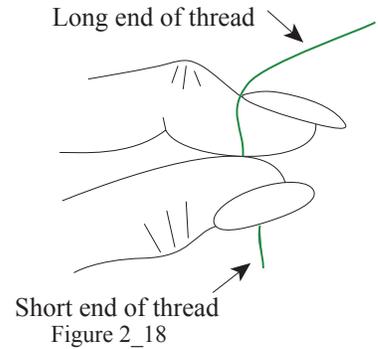
It is easier to just cut the thread shorter to begin with than to spend our appliqué time fighting with unruly thread.

Thread your needle with an 18” – 20” length of silk thread.

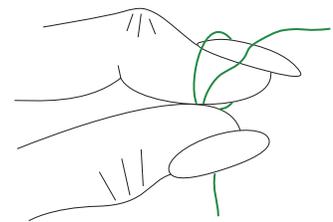
## Appliquer's Knot

Silk thread is also notorious for slipping out of the eye of the needle. To avoid this frustration, we will place a knot at the base of the needle.

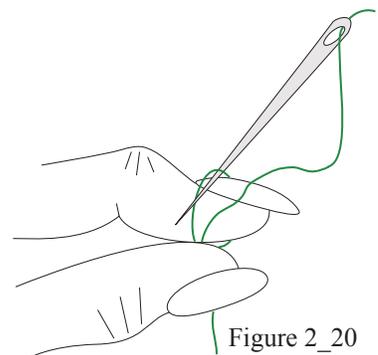
1. Grasp the short end of the thread between your thumb and first finger with the short end pointed down and the long length of the thread going up over your first finger. (Figure 2\_18)



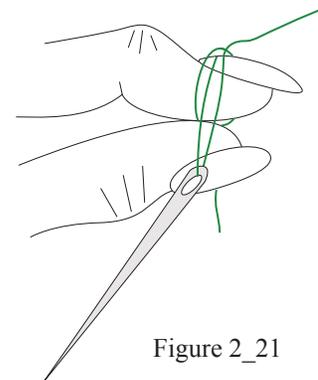
2. Wrap the thread around your first finger and grasp it again between your thumb and first finger.



3. Take the appliqué needle and slip it under the wrapped thread, going from behind the wrapped thread, under the loop that is around your finger and coming out towards you.



4. Pull the thread through the loop.



5. Gentle ease the loop off your finger.

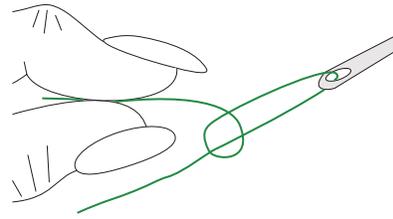
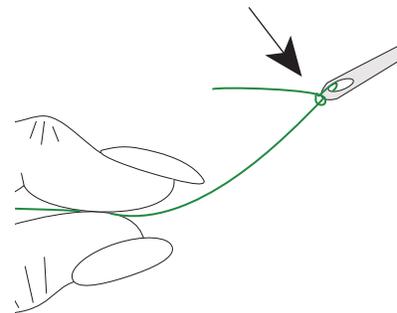


Figure 2\_22

6. Holding the short end of the thread, gentle pull the loop up until it is snug against the long end.

Knot at base of needle.



7. Drop the short end and grasp the long end. Gently pull on the long end until the knot slides up into position at the end of the needle.

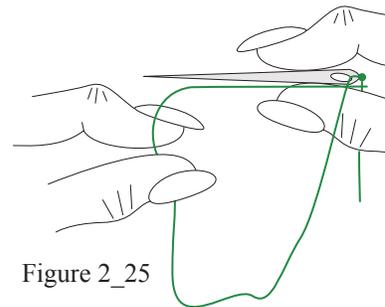


Figure 2\_25

## Quilter's Knot

## Top Tip 5

A picture truly is worth a thousand words and a video is even more valuable. Check the internet for videos of how to make this knot. My website has a link to a video that I have made. Check for the “Videos” button under the logo. You will find a link to this video.

With our silk thread securely attached to our needle, it is time to put a quilter’s knot at the end of the thread.

1. Grasp the eye end of the needle with one hand. Place the long end of the thread parallel with the needle. Grasp the end of the thread with the same hand as the needle.
2. Wrap the long end of the thread up and over the needle. Repeat 6 more times. Silk thread is very fine. 7 loops will make a knot that doesn’t slip through the appliqué and background fabrics.

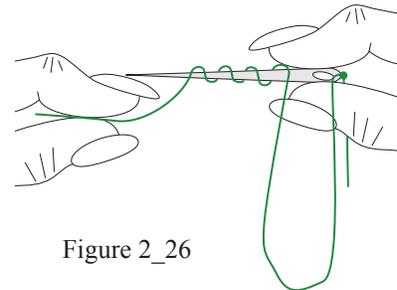


Figure 2\_26

3. As you drop the long end of the thread, move those fingers so that they grasp the loops of thread on the needle. Then move the other hand so that those fingers gently grasp the point of the needle.

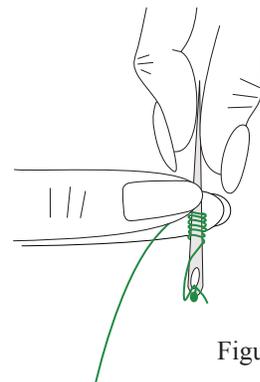


Figure 2\_27

4. Gently pull all of the loops along the length of the long end of the thread until they form a knot at the end of the needle.

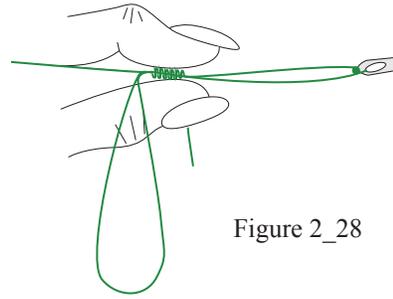


Figure 2\_28

5. Where the knot forms at the end, a tail of thread will be left. Take your scissors and snip that tail short.