

# SASHIKO (Japanese Hand Stitching)

Supply list (2 pages) (revised 02/04/26)

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**Sashiko** is a classic form of Japanese needlework dating back to antiquity. Superficially, it resembles quilting, but the thread is coarser and the stitches larger. The resulting work is rustic and often utilitarian, and so it is considered more of a country or folk art in Japan than a formal one. There is a wide variety of classical Sashiko designs, but the stitching method can be applied to patterns and designs far beyond the traditional Japanese patterns. In the class, students will learn the fascinating history, uses, and basics of Sashiko while stitching a small coaster or mug rug. The Sashiko motifs can also be incorporated into a small quilt or stitched onto a garment if desired.

**Please be courteous to others by arriving for class with the correct supplies. Contact me at 503-888-9784 or [helene.m.knott@gmail.com](mailto:helene.m.knott@gmail.com) if you have any questions.**

**A Note to Students:** Many students do not realize that once the teacher is paid, the shop offering a class makes little if any income on the class itself. The shop is relying on product sales to continue offering quality classes to you. Therefore, I urge you to patronize this shop when buying your supplies for this class as much as possible and remind you that big chain stores do not offer the variety of classes that the smaller shops do. Keep quilt classes alive by supporting this shop.

Thank you, Helene

## TOOLS/MATERIALS:

- **Fabric:** a Fat Quarter of fabric will be enough for several stitched motifs or mug rugs. Indigo is the traditional color for Sashiko but you can choose whatever color you like. Traditional Sashiko fabric is the best choice but if you can't find that, other options are even-weave linen or embroidery cloth, Kona Cotton solids, and some yarn-dyes that aren't too nubby will work as well. If possible, the fabric should be a little looser weave than quilter's cotton. You can apply Sashiko stitching to any fabric but tighter weaves will be harder to get the needle and thread through. Subtle prints or textures are OK, but avoid any print or texture or design that is bold enough to compete with your stitching. **ALTERNATE IDEA:** you may also bring an article of clothing you would like to embellish with Sashiko if you wish.
- **Light-weight non-woven fusible interfacing or Form Flex™:** This will be used to help stabilize the fabric for stitching and prevent your work from rumpling. Some fabrics may be stable enough without it but many will benefit from using it. I'm a purist and prefer Form Flex® or Shape Flex® because they are 100% woven cotton, but either type of product will work
- **Sashiko thread:** in a contrasting color to the fabric (white or cream color is traditional). I have found DMC pearl cotton in size 8 or a comparable weight in crochet cotton are adequate substitutes though the authentic Sashiko thread looks better. In a pinch, you can use 6-strand cotton embroider floss but it's more challenging to work with.
- **Scissors:** fine pointed embroidery scissors are best for the sewing, but you may also want to bring a pair of shears you don't mind cutting paper with as well.
- **Sashiko needles:** Clover® and Tulip® make sets in assorted sizes. If you cannot find authentic Sashiko needles, a package of large-eye crewel embroidery needles or Candle-wicking needles in a variety of sizes is recommended as that allows you to choose the size best suited to the particular fabric and thread you selected. The needles need to be sharp (not blunt like tapestry needles), and with eyes large enough to thread the Sashiko or Perle Cotton thread.

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- **A good basic book on Sashiko:** optional but useful for future projects or if you want to explore the technique after the class. There is an excellent Handy Pocket Guide to Sashiko by Sylvia Pippen, and one by Pepper Cory that give a variety of patterns, and also some more thorough books by Susan Briscoe.
- **Rotary cutter, cutting mat and ruler.**
- **Saral Paper (optional):** This transfer paper available at art supply and craft stores will be helpful to transfer stitching designs to a garment if you brought one to embellish. Clover Chacopy Transfer Paper is a similar product. Choose a color that will show up on the fabric color you are using.
- **Light box:** I will bring a couple but if you have one then you won't have to wait for a turn.
- **Freezer Paper (optional):** I will have some prepared templates students can borrow that will need to be returned at the end of the class. Bring freezer paper if you would like to make your own templates
- **'Sharpie' brand black marking pen (optional):** This is only needed if you want to make your own templates. It is absolutely critical that you get the regular point NOT the ultra-fine.
- **White or yellow quilters' pencil and/or a graphite mechanical pencil:** I recommend the new mechanical style quilters pencil with white leads (there are several brands available, ask at the shop). A mechanical pencil for light fabrics. Don't use chalk; it will not withstand the amount of handling Sashiko stitching entails.
- **Quilters' ruler:** will help when transferring pattern onto fabric. A 1" x 6" or 6" square one will do.
- **Patterns:** Each student will get a sheet with some small coaster designs with the handout. You can also use the teacher's templates that must be returned at the end of the class. Those wishing to have copies of a particular pattern are encouraged to bring freezer paper to trace them onto.

