

Blanket Stitch

by Susan Beck, BERNINA USA

Blanket Stitch Appliqué is a common technique used for machine appliqué methods, this instruction was written by Susan Beck from BERNINA USA.

Most sewing machines have a blanket stitch (sometimes called the buttonhole stitch) and it is a favourite choice for appliqué, especially if you want a hand-stitched or primitive look. It's faster than other types of appliqué because of the openness of the stitch.

With the help of the right presser foot, it's easy to place the stitch exactly on the edge of the appliqué shape. So, I want to show you the ins and outs of blanket stitch appliqué with Open Embroidery Foot #20 / 20C / 20D.

The presser foot I use for blanket stitching is Open Embroidery Foot #20 / 20C / 20D. The open area between the toes lets you see exactly what the needle is doing. When you add an adjusted needle position, you can use the foot as a guide for perfect stitch placement.

When the needle is adjusted to the far right, you can guide the edge you're following along the inside edge of the right toe and the stitch is perfectly placed. If you adjust the needle to the far left, you guide along the inside edge of the left toe.

#20



#20 C



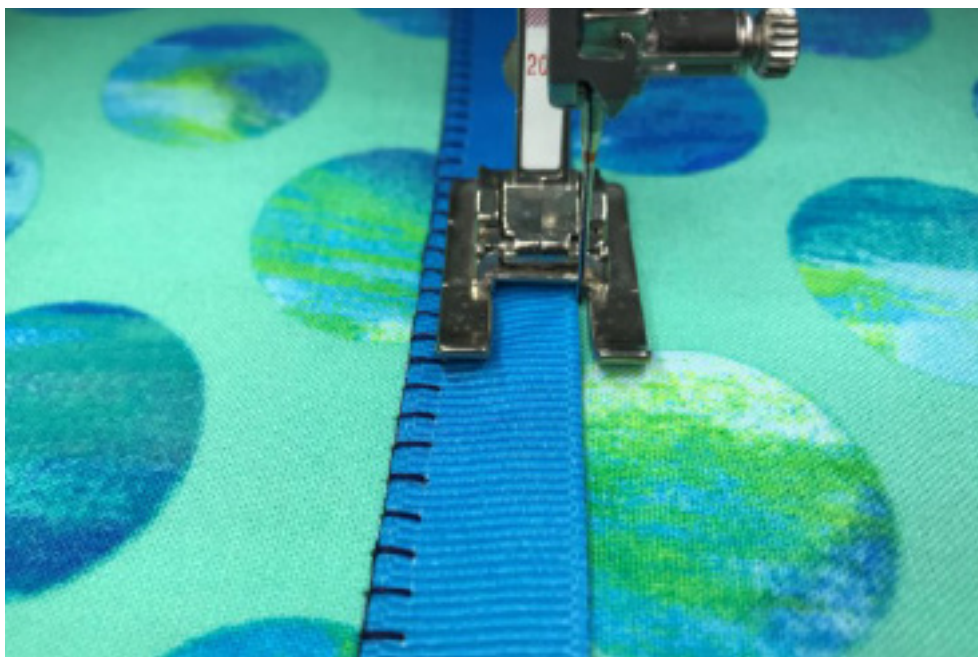
#20 D



Machine Set Up

Use the same color thread in the needle and bobbin. Select the blanket stitch from the Quilting menu on your machine and engage the Needle Down feature. I sew blanket stitch appliqué on my B 790 but this technique can be stitched on any model that has the blanket stitch.

Fuse appliqué shapes to a background fabric and use stabilizer behind the fabric for the best stitching results. Place the fabric under the foot and align the edge of the appliqué or ribbon with the inside of the toe.



Blanket Stitch

The Power of Pivoting

When stitching with the blanket stitch, you are usually following an edge – stitching around an appliqué shape, along the edge of a ribbon, or securing binding. You want the vertical part of the blanket stitch to be just outside of the edge while the horizontal part of the stitch falls on the appliqué, ribbon or binding. Pivoting is important for both corners and curves.

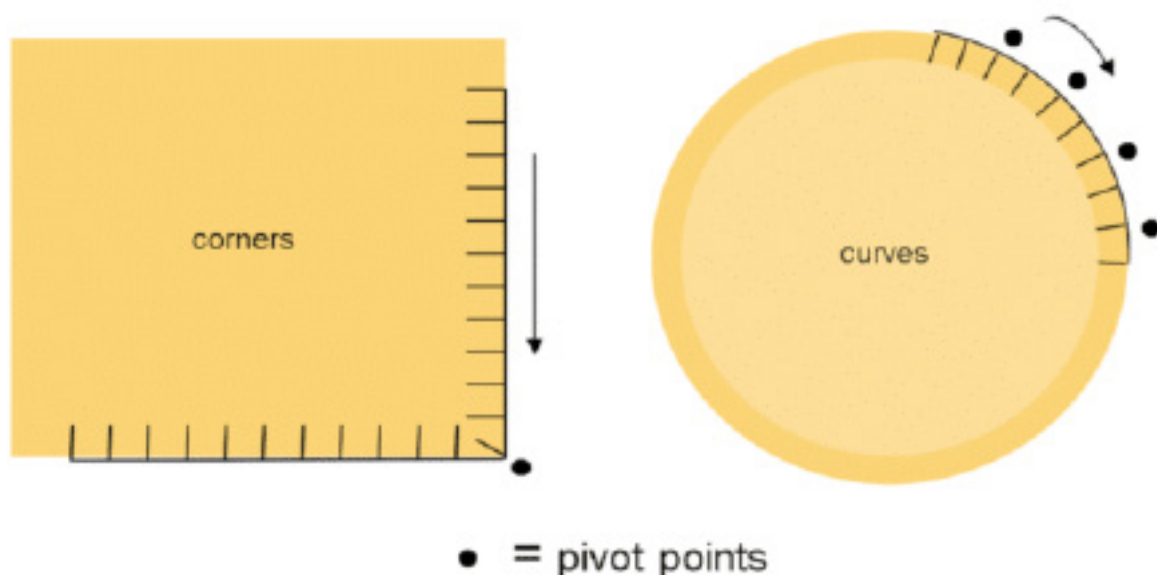
Corners

Stitching a corner with the blanket stitch is a lot like pivoting with a straight stitch, but it takes two pivots to get a 90° turn. Stop with needle in the fabric at the corner; pivot 45° and sew the first part of the stitch. Turn another 45° and continue stitching along the edge of the appliqué or ribbon. For out-side corners, pivot with needle in the outside edge and for inside corners, pivot with the needle in the inside edge.

Curves

It may sound counter-intuitive to pivot on curves because we associate pivoting with 90° turns that form corners. But, the best way to stitch a smooth curve is to stop and pivot slightly on a frequent basis.

Pivots should be made with the needle in the fabric at the outside edge of the curve. Use the Freehand System (knee lift) to barely lift the foot and micro-pivot as needed to follow the curve.



Tip

One of the best ways to practice blanket stitch appliqué is to cut a heart from fabric and fuse it to a background fabric.

Hearts have a combination of curved and straight edges as well as inside and out-side points that are similar to corners.

