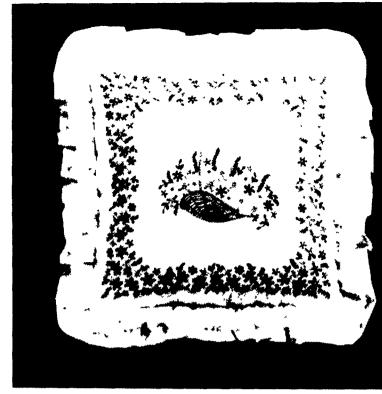
# CRAFT CORNE

### Fast ribbon stitching

With a few simple techniques and the right ribbons, ribbon stitching can be faster, fresher and far more colorful than classic floss embroidery. By couching ribbons, for example, a basket design like the one shown here works up surprisingly quickly and easily.

The "Ribbon Basket" shown is made from a kit by Charmin. The kit contains ribbons for stitching, cotton floss, needle, lace, in-structions and pillow fabric with silk-screened design. Along with the couched basket, the pillow design includes straight-stitch, french knot and lazy daisy flowers.

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The couching stitch, as used in the basket, is a classic embroidery technique that adapts beautifully to ribbon stitching. As long as you work with ribbons that are soft enough to be flexible and skinny enough to fit through a needle, you'll learn the technique in no

Shapes such as the flower basket are ideal for couching. The woven look of the basket lends to long ribbon lines that are couched, or tacked down, with more ribbon stitches. Not only do the tacking stitches shape the design, but they also add beautiful texture.

Here are directions for ribbon stitching and, especially, the couching technique:

MATERIALS: Soft, skinny ribbons, fabric, needle, scissors, embroidery hoop. (Note: Supplies are not necessary if you're working with a kit.)

PREPARATION: 1. Draw design lightly on fabric. 2. Position fabric in hoop.

RIBBON STITCHING DIRECTIONS: 1. Knot end of ribbon tightly. 2. Stitch ribbons over design lines, using stitch techniques as desired. 3. Anchor ribbon firmly in back. 4. Never pull ribbon tightly; the fabric will pucker. 5. Do not take ribbon long distances between design areas. Instead, end off and begin again. 6. End off by running end of ribbon under several stitches in back.

COUCHING: 1. To start a couched stitch, stitch your ribbon from one end of your design line to the other. Lay ribbon along line to be covered. 2. With a separate strand of ribbon, come up beside your ribbon line. Take a tiny tacking stitch over ribbon. 3. Repeat step two at intervals along the ribbon line. Space couching stitches as evenly as possible. 4. Be sure to cover all design lines completely.

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