

EMBELLISHING WITH BEADS

Artful Bead Embroidery

By Marcia Acker-Missall

We are seeing a great deal of attention and focus on many exciting techniques being used today in surface embellishing. Here are some easy and very effective ways to bring visual excitement and textural interest to the costuming of your cloth dolls, quilts, personal wardrobe and other projects through use of beads and bead embroidery.

We will use the Japanese or Czech made round shape seed beads, size 11 or even the smaller size 13 to 15 size. Use a size 11 Quilting Between or size 13 Sharp type needle. The size of needle to use will coordinate with the size of bead and bead hole. See my HINTS section. You can use, smooth beads, two cut and 3 cut faceted beads. I love using the small Czech Charlotte beads in combination with round size 11's and use them often in combination. Options are many.

Project: Beading around the edge of a sleeve, jacket, vest, skirt, or hat is done most effectively using the Three Bead Picot stitch.

Here's How to Begin- Thread your needle with about 1 1/2 yards single length of a color co-coordinating Nymo thread size B or Silamide size A and make a quilter's knot at one end. On the inside edge of sleeve or similar edge elsewhere secure thread neatly by "popping the knot", a quilter's technique, between the fabric lining and outer fabric of the sleeve. If no lining... secure thread neatly with a tiny securing knot to wrong side of fabric.

Set Up for the 3-Bead Picot Stitch - thread on 3 beads. You will use three beads to set up this pattern just this one time. Suggestion: thread on 1 gold, 1 silver, 1 gold bead. The Silver bead will sit up above the 2 gold beads on either side of it creating a gorgeous visual pattern looking like antique gold lace along the contour of the very edge of the sleeve.

The 3-Bead Picot Stitch Pattern - To start the Three Bead Picot stitches which will edge your fabric follow the "Set Up" above. Now follow this beading pattern .

- 1- Bring needle through fabric from inside sleeve exiting out at side seam on the very bottom edge of the sleeve.
- 2- Thread on 3 seed beads, size and color of your choosing.
- 3- Let beads fall to the bottom of thread and rest on sleeve edge. Move needle over one bead width of a size 11 seed bead and pass needle from the very back inside edge of sleeve, a whisper in from the edge and through to the front edge. Pull thread taught which will make the 3 seed beads sit on sleeve edge with the middle bead sitting on top of the bottom two beads.
- 4- Now, pass the needle up through the last bead from its bottom hole through bead to top (do not go into fabric with needle) and tug your thread to set the 3 beads firmly into position. This is the final stitch in making the full 3-bead picot.
- 5- From now on you will only thread on 2 beads each time you create a bead picot. You will simply thread on 2 size 11 beads (or one Charlotte and 1

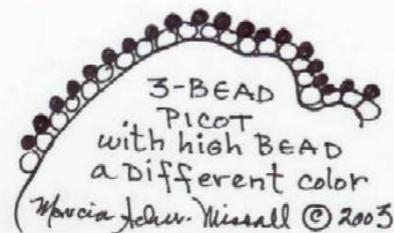
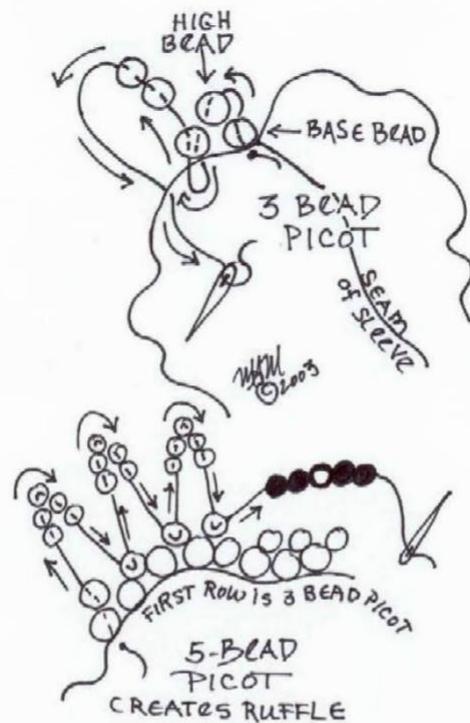
size 11 bead) and make another small stitch that is one bead width away, bringing needle through from back to front edge. Now bring needle up through the last bead and tug thread to set beads into position. Continue this Picot stitch pattern until you have beaded the entire edge of the sleeve. To end, pass needle inside sleeve and neatly secure thread and knot. Cut thread end or knot and pop the knot (bury the knot) between the lining and outer fabric.

***If you find that you need more thread while Picot edge beading... just weave old thread back through several beads you already beaded following the thread path used to create the Picot stitch. Add the new thread by weaving it on in the same way going forward. When you have completed edge beading end your thread by weaving it through several beads. You may now choose to drop a tiny dab of bead glue on the thread ends and let them dry thoroughly. I do not recommend using clear nail polish due to its chemical properties which may destroy thread and fabric fibers over time.

Embellishing with the 5-Bead Picot Stitch

- 1- thread needle with about 1 1/2 yds of single Nymo or Silamide thread. Make Quilter's knot at one end.
- 2- Secure thread on inside of fabric and pass needle through fabric exiting at the side seam next to the edge where you had beaded the 3-bead Picot edge row.

- 3- Pass needle through the first two beads of the picot edge you had created in the preceding directions for 3-bead Picot.
- 4- Thread on 5 size 11 seed beads. Pass needle through the high bead of the already existing 3-bead picot group at edge of the sleeve. Tug thread to get the 5 beads into position. Repeat this 5-bead Picot stitch along the edge of the sleeve to the end. You are creating a beaded ruffle. When finished, weave thread back into beads to secure it.



HINTS FOR BEADERS

Japanese size 11 seed beads or Delica Beads- Please obtain only these when specified on a supply list. They are high quality glass beads made in Japan. The bead size is consistent throughout and is perfectly suited to the Peyote Bead stitch. The Czech made seed beads are more irregular in size, shape and bead hole and will not work as well when weaving the Peyote pattern stitch.

Charlotte beads- Are marvelous tiny glass beads and have one flat side cut onto each bead... also called a facet. They are Czech made and come in a vast array of colors. These are often used for embellishing. They add beautiful visual texture and glitter.

Decorative shape beads add a unique and personal touch. They are often called presses glass beads. Select a variety of colors and shapes to enhance the seed beads and Charlottes or other beads that you have chosen.

Threads- Select colors that will blend with the colors of your beads. Darker rather than lighter thread color is best. Ask your bead shop for assistance in recommending best colors for the beads you have selected.

Resources and bibliography

There are many outstanding beading books on the market with new ones being published constantly. These are just a few very worthwhile books to study and consider owning.

Creative Bead Weaving by Carol Wilcox Wells

Creative Bead Jewelry by Carol Taylor

Beading with Peyote Stitch by Jeannette Cook Vicki

Bead Embroidery by Valerie Campbell-Harding

Art & Elegance of Bead Weaving, Carol Wilcox Wells

Art of Seed Beading by Elizabeth Gourley,

Having Trouble Threading Your Needle?

The following is reprinted with the permission of Universal Synergetics Beadcats

This is an excerpt from www.beadcats.com - a wonderful source for beads and information.

You should always do this. Make sure the end of your thread is cut cleanly. Then, flatten the end carefully by mashing it between your front teeth. No matter what technique you use for threading, this is a good first step. Carol's secret "fool-proof" technique: Squeeze the cut and flattened end of the thread between the thumb and index finger of your left hand. You should barely be able to see the end of the thread down between your fingers. With your right hand, slide the eye of the needle down onto the end of the thread. The needle should lie in the little valley between your fingers with the eye positioned over the thread end. Then, slowly roll your left thumb and index finger apart. As you roll your fingers apart, the thread will be forced upward and through the eye. Just be sure you hold the eye right atop the exposed tip of the thread, and be sure that the flattened end of the thread is aligned in the same plane as the elongated hole in the eye. Pull the protruding tip of thread the rest of the way through the eye and *Voilà!* You're done.

Carol threads needles for people in class using this technique, and she says she doesn't even have to look to get it right every time. It *might* be necessary for you to watch (at least the first time) while you do this, but it's pretty easy to get the hang of, and it sure seems to work. Our students swear by it (at least the ones that used to swear at their thread!)

A thought for the future - I do hope that you will experiment with these two bead embroidery stitches and show off your creations at the next general meeting for all to see and admire.