

Pleat-as-you-Smock

Introduction from Diane Bruce

As much as I enjoy smocking, I often wonder if I would have ever learned this needleart had it not been for a friend who was willing to pleat for me. Even if the pleater had been in my budget, I doubt that I would have made that investment, without knowing of the pleasure and relaxation smocking was going to provide me.

So that anyone who wishes to learn to smock (including those that may not have access to a pleater), I would like to provide instructions for learning to smock without the need of a pleater. These *Pleat-as-you-Smock* (i.e. pleaterless) smocking directions were created for that purpose. (The lessons also include helpful info for beginners who want to learn to create the stitches on machine-pleated fabric.)

Even for experienced smockers, there are many advantages to learning the pleaterless method of smocking:

1. It can help provides a comprehensive understanding of the smocking stitches that are most often used in smocking designs.
2. It demonstrates how the knowledge of only a few stitches can work together to create a variety of smocking designs.
3. It provides tips for easily locating and correcting mistakes. This “mistake locating” skill will become very helpful as you progress to more advanced designs.
4. On certain fabrics (especially stripes & checks) this method creates more attractive pleats than those created on the pleater. For example, the designs below could not have been created with the effect shown if fabric had been pleated on the pleater.

These design were created entirely from one stitch (the cable). The different effects between the stitched rows were created by thread position at the beginning of each row of stitching. This is explained in detail in Lesson #1.



Specific information concerning designs on these particular fabrics is included in **ADDITIONAL DESIGN IDEAS** (the section following Lesson #1, The Cable Stitch).

5. Projects can be completed more quickly and typically do not require as much fabric as “pleater pleated” fabric.
6. Perhaps the greatest advantage, as mentioned previously, this method offers an opportunity to experiment with the stitches before deciding to invest in a pleating machine.

There are many variations (fabric selections, row spacing, etc.) that can incorporate this method of smocking. Additional design ideas are included in the section, **ADDITIONAL DESIGN IDEAS**, following each stitch lesson.

With these complimentary instructions, I wish you many hours of “happy smocking!” Please visit www.creativekeepsake.com often to check for new products and free design and instructional information.

Diane Bruce

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