

# Stitch Stacking

*By Carol Harvey*

Stitch stacking is multiple rows of decorative stitches used for embellishment. It can be as little as two rows or many rows stitched relatively close together forming a band. Best results are achieved on woven fabrics but it can also be used on knits if properly and heavily stabilized.

Begin with a machine needle and stabilizer appropriate for the fabric being embellished. Use a machine embroidery thread on top and regular sewing thread in the bobbin that either matches your fabric or any regular sewing thread to your liking. This thread should not poke through to the embellished side of the project so it is not necessary to use the same machine embroidery thread in the bobbin. Use the presser foot recommended for the decorative stitch you will be sewing.

Mark the placement of the first line of stitches using an air soluble or water soluble pen. If you are doing this on a dark colored fabric, you can use tailor's chalk or a sliver of bar soap which can be brushed or washed away afterward. If the first row of stitches will be near an edge of the fabric, you can avoid marking this line and use the edge of the fabric aligned with a line on the throat plate to achieve a straight line of stitches. Next mark a clean sharp line where each row of stitches will start. This is very helpful if you want a design to line up with another row of stitches below it such as scallops. Mirror the scallops and be sure to start stitching right on the starting line. This will create a sort of ribbon look when other decorative stitches are put between the scallops.

Begin stitching the first row of stitches on the starting line and stitch across. The next row of stitches can be stitched using the presser foot or a quilting bar as a guide. This way you do not need to mark each row of stitches. Continue until the rows of stitching are as wide as desired.

This technique can be used on sleeves, pockets, near hems, pillows, purses, anywhere you want a decorative band. You can also start with a piece of fabric, stitch the rows of decorative stitches, then cut the fabric. This is a way to make embellished quilt squares. Let your creative imagination take over.

