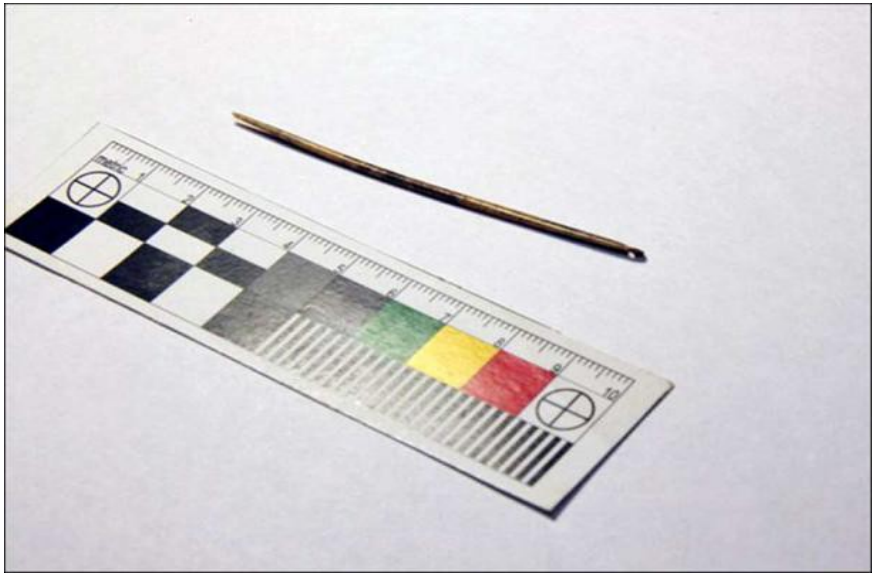
Hand Sewing

Soft Fabrication Skills

- low tech
- fast prototyping
  - connecting pieces various materials
- fastening different materials
  - soft to hard
  - weird shapes
- details and embellishments
  - final touches
  - fragile delicate materials
- repair work

bone needles, Cave of Courbet in France, ~13,000 years old



50,000 years old, Denisova Cave, Russia

- evidence from Paleolithic Age (up to 60,000 years ago): sewn hide, skin, fur, bark
- sewing needles: bone, wood → metal
- thread: catgut (animal intestines), sinew (tendon that connects muscle to bone), veins, animal fiber/plant fiber → chemical fibers (polyester,
- synthetic silk, viscose)

Agave thread and needle

Parka coat of seal intestine
North America, USA, Alaska, Yup’ik or Inupiat, 1820s

Kayak, Nunivak, Alaska, 1930

made from driftwood, seal skin and seal sinew

Oglala Lakota tipi, 1891

Sami lavvu, around 1900

Embroidery

- decorating fabric/material with needle and thread or yarn
- originally used for reinforcing cloth

Horse cover with metal silver thread, Morocco
18th - 19th century

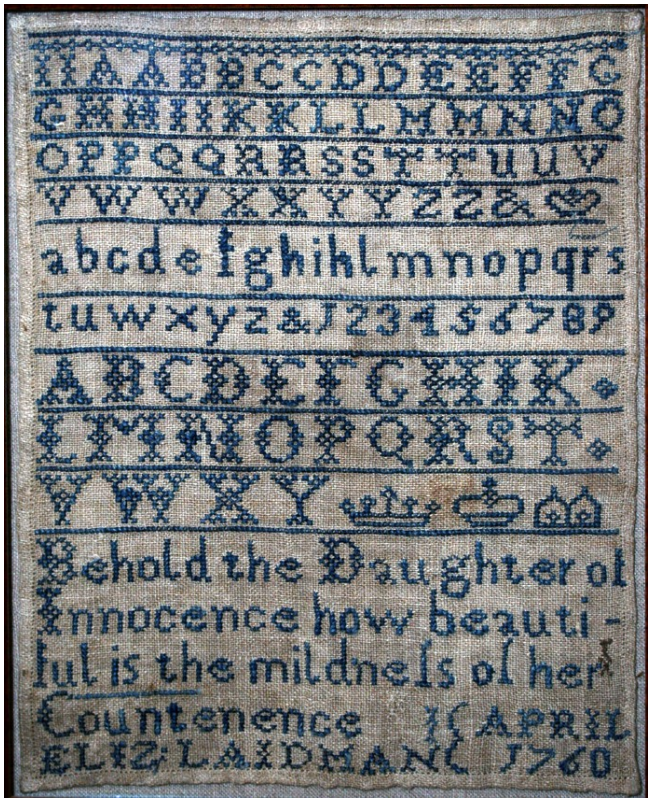
Sashiko stitches for reinforcement or repair

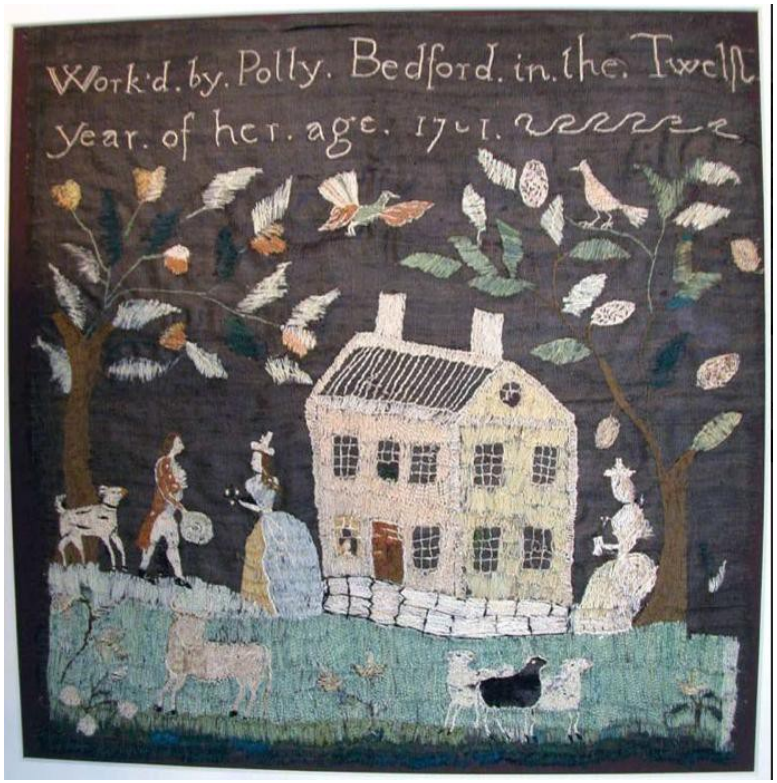
Sashiko stitched fireman’s coat, Japan
19th century

Bayeux Tapestry/Bayeux Embroidery, ~1077

- 230 feet by 20 inches
- embroidered rather than woven with woolen yarns on linen
- depicts events leading to Norman conquest of England
- first British comic strip?

Samplers: demonstration of skill or technique





Nasca Samplers, Peru, 2nd century BC.

Appliqué

- applying one material to another surface
- surface patterning technique

heraldic flags,
Knights of Thistle

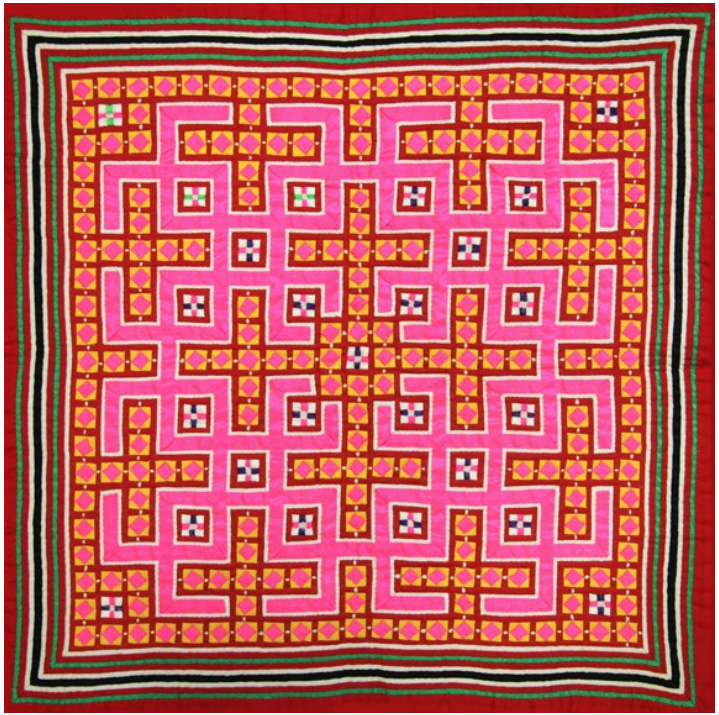
Asafo flag, 20th c., Ghana

Thongdrel in silk unrolled at the Gomkora Tsechu, Bhutan 2013

Reverse Appliqué

sewn layers that are cut away and then stitched down

Mola, Kuna people, Panama/Colombia
150 - 170 years old



Examples of Hmong applique and reverse applique
mountainous regions of Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Southern China

Beading

Attaching beads to a surface by stringing them together using thread.

12th c., Egyptian

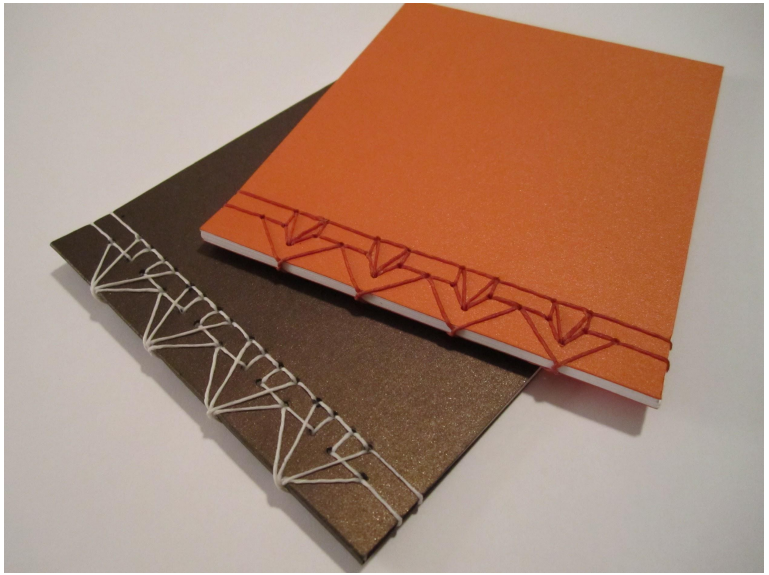
Ethiopian beaded basket

Styles change among tribes on East Coast, Great Lakes, Plateau and Southwest.

Teri Greeves

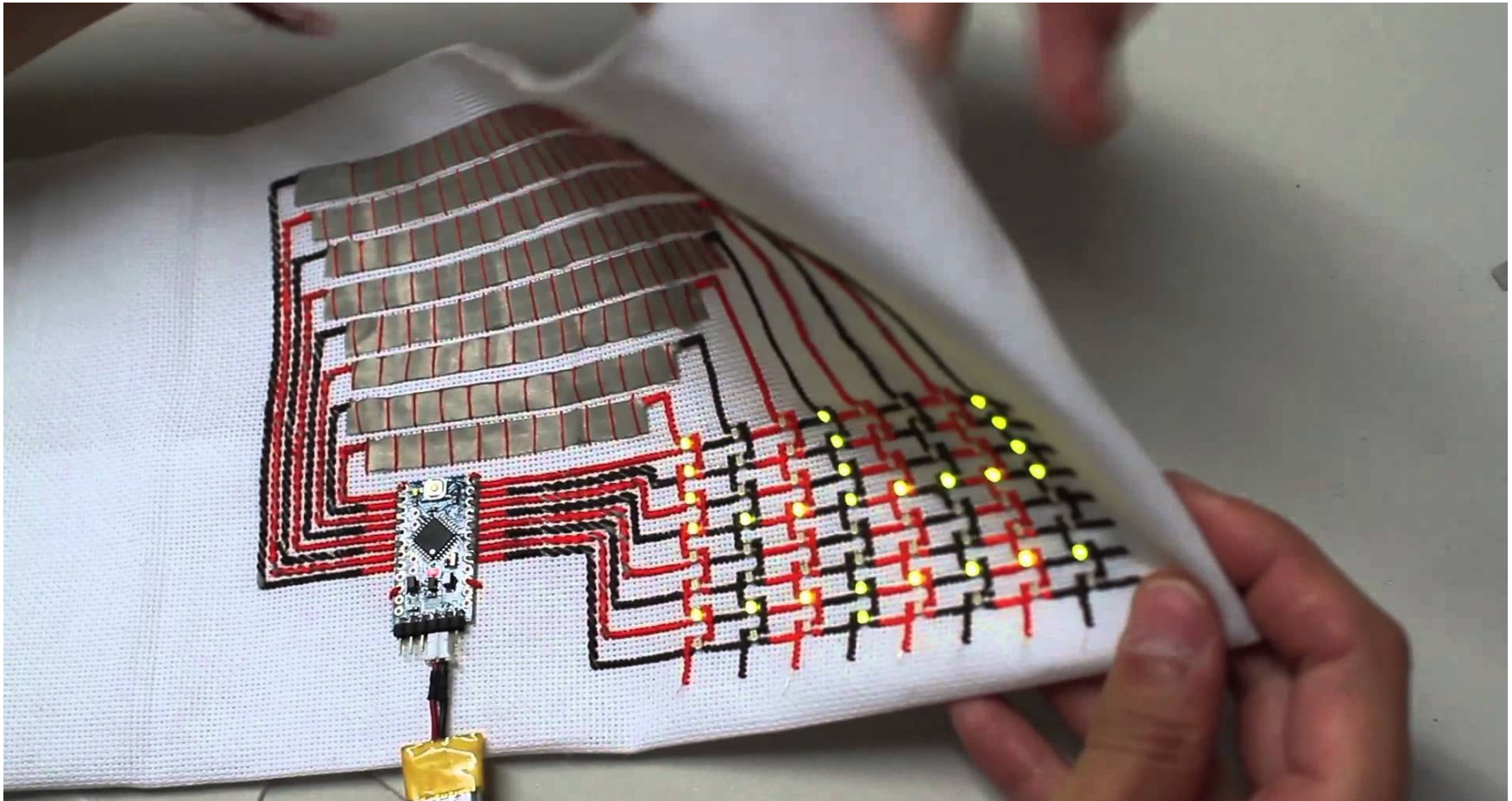
Bookbinding

in process



variation on Japanese stab binding

Sewing with Conductive Materials



Overview of Tools + Materials

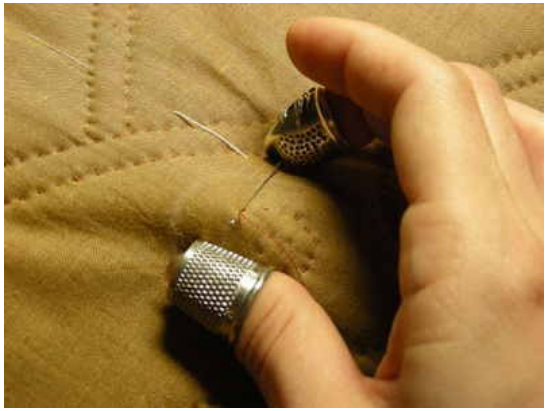
sewing needles

thread

\+ whatever material you are going to sew!

Other Tools

embroidery hoop



thimble

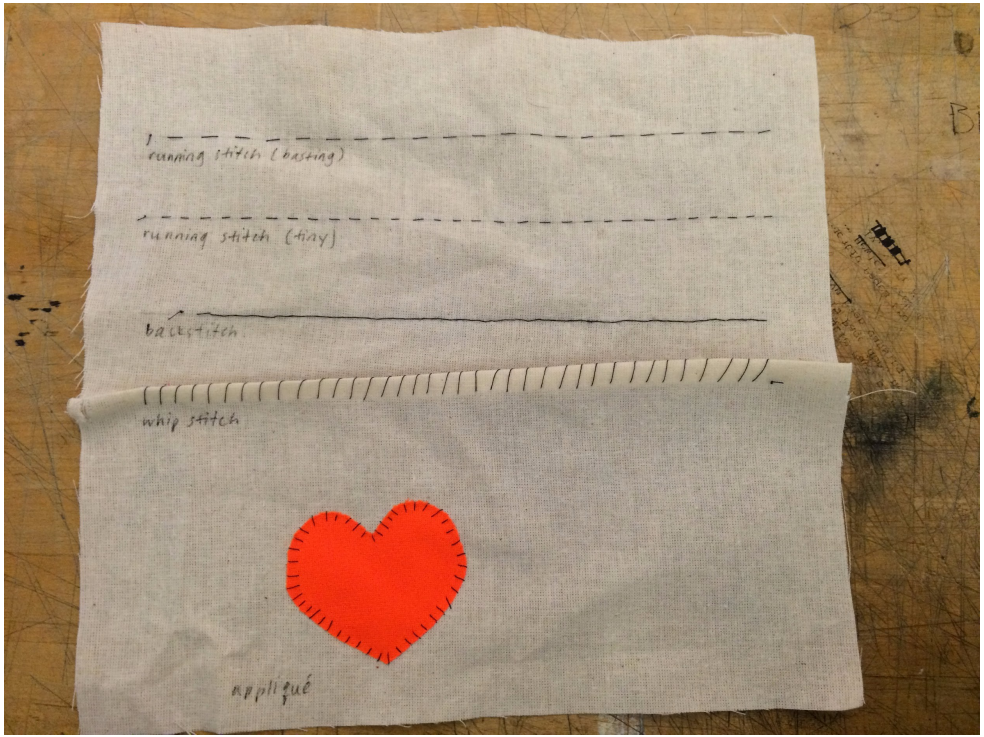
needle threader

fancy little scissors

DEMO:

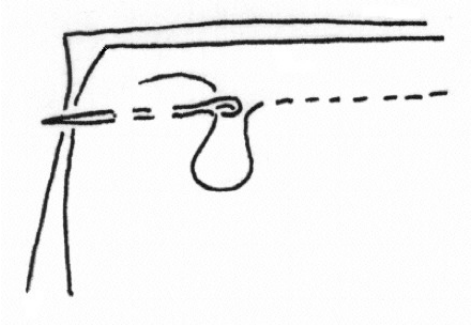
hand sewing sampler

DEMO + Lab: Hand Sewing Sampler



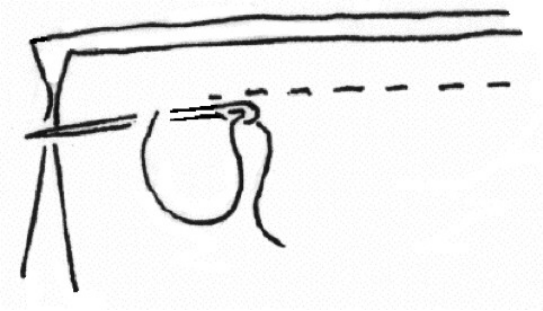
- Running stitch (basting)
- Running stitch (tiny)
- Back stitch
- Overcast stitch
- Blanket stitch
- Applique (overcast and blanket stitch)
- Hem whip stitch
- Slip stitch

Stitches for Sampler:

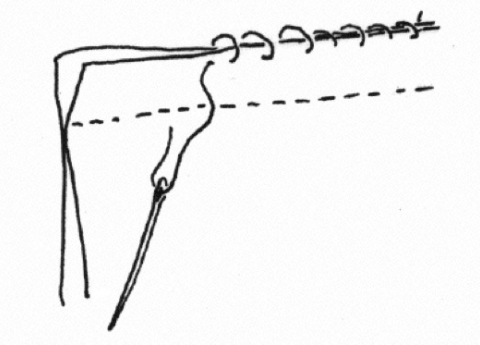


Running Stitch:
The thread runs through the fabric without doubling on itself.

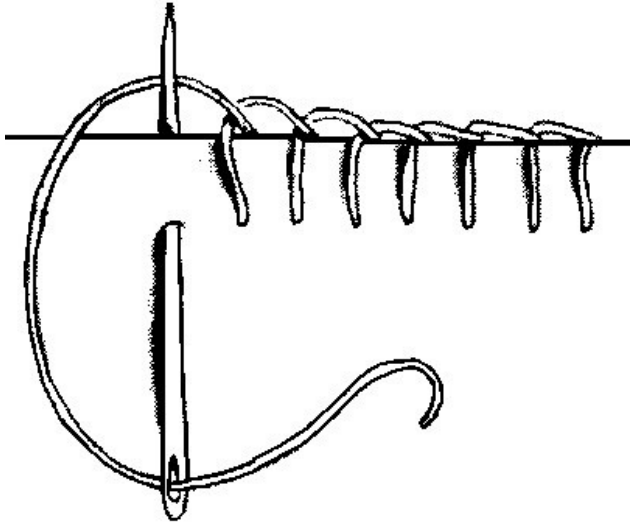
Basting: stitches are about ¼" apart
Tiny: stitches are about ⅛" apart



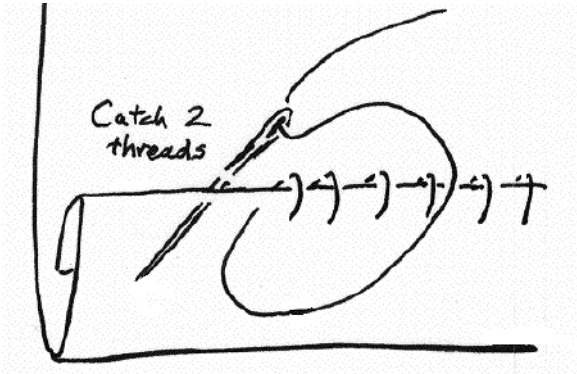
Back Stitch:
The stitch is formed by doubling back on itself. The needle emerges ahead of the stitch just made, and goes back to where the previous stitch ended.



Overcast Stitch:
This stitch goes "over and over" the edge of the fabric. It is used to sew two pieces of fabric together.



Blanket stitch
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9zegUYdPmg



Hem whip stitch
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INcjixkx66o&t=17s

and

Slip stitch
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWlE_-mS1-M