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# And So To Sew

## Embroidery Section

### 6b

***For yourself—  
a waistcoat  
or bolero  
trimmed with  
buttonhole  
stitches***



***For your chair—  
needleweaving  
and zig-zag  
hemstitch  
decorate a  
chair seat***

**Buttonhole or Blanket Stitch :** Of the stitches belonging to the looped family, Buttonhole Stitch is probably the best known. It was much used for leaf fillings in the famous Elizabethan dress embroideries which are exquisite in design, shading and stitchery. In the less elaborate embroidery of to-day Buttonhole Stitch can still be used most effectively in many varieties, some of which are illustrated on the little bolero and the two waistcoats in this bulletin. Our aim is to show how the stitch can be used by the beginner as well as by the more experienced needlewoman, both for straight border lines and for curved designs.

As the basic principle is the same in all varieties of Buttonhole Stitch we call those illustrated in this bulletin Open, Closed, Spaced and Double Buttonhole Stitch. Blanket Stitch is a common alternative name for Open Buttonhole Stitch.

**Buttonhole Stitch :** Apart from being used as a decorative stitch for floral forms, borders, etc., Buttonhole Stitch is often used for Cut Work or for binding raw edges as in Needleweaving. It is also used for scalloping and for working Buttonhole bars in Richelieu work. **WARNING :** Do not forget that Tailor's Buttonhole Stitch (see diagram No. 9) should be used for every

cut edge where additional strength is required and ALWAYS for actual buttonholes.

Buttonhole Stitch is worked closely from left to right (see diagram No. 1). The thread emerges on the lower line and the needle is inserted and brought out again as shown in the diagram. It is then pulled through OVER the working thread thus forming a straight vertical stitch with a loop on the lower line. When Buttonhole Stitch is used for Richelieu and Cut Work the looped edge must always outline the part which is to be cut away, because the tight close row of loops will prevent the material from fraying.

Open Buttonhole Stitch (Blanket Stitch), Spaced Buttonhole Stitch and Double Buttonhole Stitch are all worked basically in the same way the only difference being in the spacing. (See diagrams Nos. 2, 3, 4).

Closed or Vandyke Buttonhole Stitch is also basically the same except that the needle is inserted into the material at the same point for each pair of stitches as shown in diagram No. 5. Diagram No. 6 is another variety of this stitch.

# \* Motifs \* Edging

Suitable for the skill of the young



A smart green waistcoat with motifs on shoulders and waist embroidered in white, using varieties of Buttonhole Stitches.

**Needleweaving :** The origin of this technique cannot be attributed to any particular country, as Needleweaving has been used for centuries in the traditional embroidery of many countries. Examples still exist to show that it was used in ancient Egyptian embroidery.

Needleweaving owes its popularity to the fact that it can make gay, colourful borders, which are an effective decoration for tray cloths, table runners, guest towels and other household articles. It is worked usually in bold colours on coarse fabric as illustrated in our chair seat and cushion but Needleweaving is equally effective for finer embroidery as shown in our little mat. Linens, crash and many types of canvas are suitable materials for Needleweaving provided they are not too loosely woven. At the same time, however, the threads should be easy to pull out. If a border is to be worked all round a mat or a cushion an evenly woven material must be selected to ensure regularity of design.

The threads are withdrawn parallel to the border to be worked and the vertical undrawn threads are then decorated with Needleweaving as shown in diagram No. 10.

The nature of the work limits the designs to geometrical shapes. Colour contrasts play an important part but one single colour can also be most effective.

This yellow waistcoat with its "Horse-Shoe" neckline is decorated with Buttonhole Stitches used in a well designed border.

**Spaced Buttonhole Filling :** This is an easy type of buttonhole filling. Each stitch passes through the material in parallel lines to build up a regular pattern. Our diagram No. 7 shows the stitches worked in pairs, but an equally effective filling is formed by working three or four stitches in a group, or even each stitch singly. The first row is worked from left to right and the second from right to left and so on. It is also possible to run the thread from right to left through the stitches on the back of the fabric, so that all rows may be worked from left to right.

**Detached Buttonhole Filling :** This can be used to fill a cut space or as a detached filling on the surface of the material. A little practice may be required to get an even tension in the stitches.

The needle emerges at the spot marked *A* on the diagram (No. 8) and then makes a row of loose detached loops along the top of the outline to *B*, taking the top of the stitch only through the material. The thread when returning from *C* to *D*, and in subsequent rows, is worked into the loops of the previous row, as shown by the needle in the diagram, making an ordinary buttonhole stitch in each case, but reversing it when working from right to left.

**Tailor's Buttonhole Stitch :** This variety of the basic Buttonhole Stitch is the one used for working actual buttonholes but it is also useful for decorative embroidery. Tailor's Buttonhole Stitch has an extra twist which produces the firm knotted edge necessary for buttonholes.

The working of the stitch is shown in diagram No. 9. Lay the thread from the eye under the point of the needle from left to right. Pull up the loop to form a knot on the edge, and continue. When using Tailor's Buttonhole Stitch for buttonholes or edgings on material that frays readily it is advisable first to overcast the edge.



# \* Borders \*

broideress.

To prepare the work for Needleweaving, mark off the exact area of the border, then snip through the horizontal threads in the centre of the area, or at intervals in the case of a long border. Draw the threads out carefully to the right and left hand edges of the border, then thread them into a needle one at a time and darn on the wrong side of the material as shown in diagram No. 11. If the fabric is too fine for such darning, the threads can be turned back and the edge so formed buttonholed to prevent fraying. The surplus ends can then be snipped off close to the buttonhole stitching.

Wherever possible one should avoid having too large an expanse of loose vertical threads waiting to be woven. If the border is to be a deep one, one quarter or one third of the depth should be drawn and woven at a time. The use of a frame is recommended for finer work. Blunt needles must be used for working Needleweaving as the threads of the fabric should not be pierced.

Before starting the actual weaving, the vertical threads should be tied into groups by hemstitching along the top and bottom edges of the border, thus binding them together in groups of three or four strands—depending on the thickness of the material. The Hemstitch should be worked in thread matching the fabric, otherwise the colour will conflict with the planned design. Use graph paper to plan the design, ensuring that you have the correct number of groups in the border.

The weaving itself is simply a darning movement under and over groups of two, three, four or more threads to join them into blocks.

In diagram No. 10 the movements are shown for weaving round groups of threads. As each row is completed it should be pressed close to the previous one so that there are no gaps between the rows and a smooth basket-weave effect is obtained.

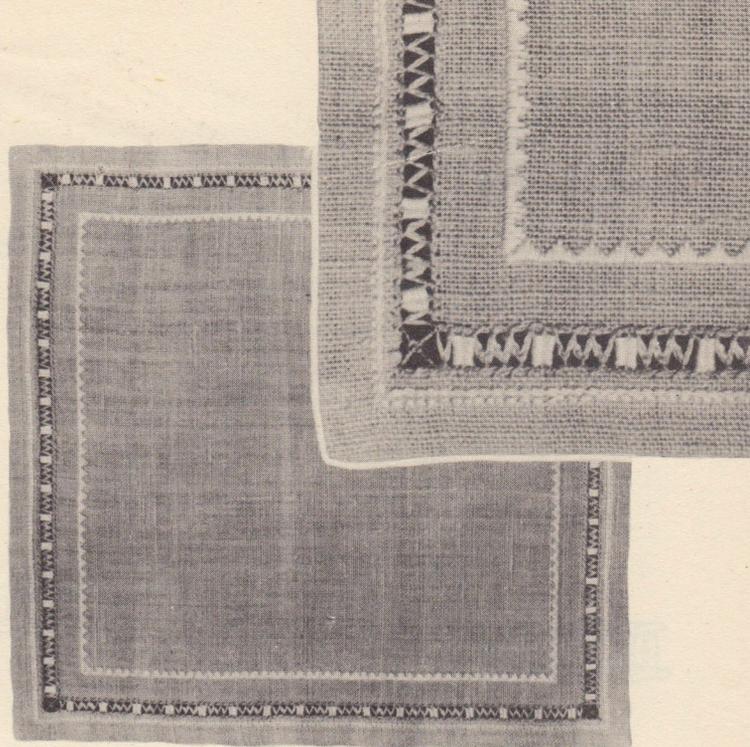
Where only one colour is used throughout, the weaving for each block is worked from bottom to top. The needle is then passed through the completed block on the wrong side to the top, ready for working again. For a multi-coloured border a separate needle for each colour can be used and much re-threading avoided.

Should a more open effect be desired, the groups within each block can be drawn together to emphasise the open spaces between the solid blocks. This method is often used in one colour work. Single bars can also be used to achieve the open work effect. The single group is overcast into one cord-like strand.

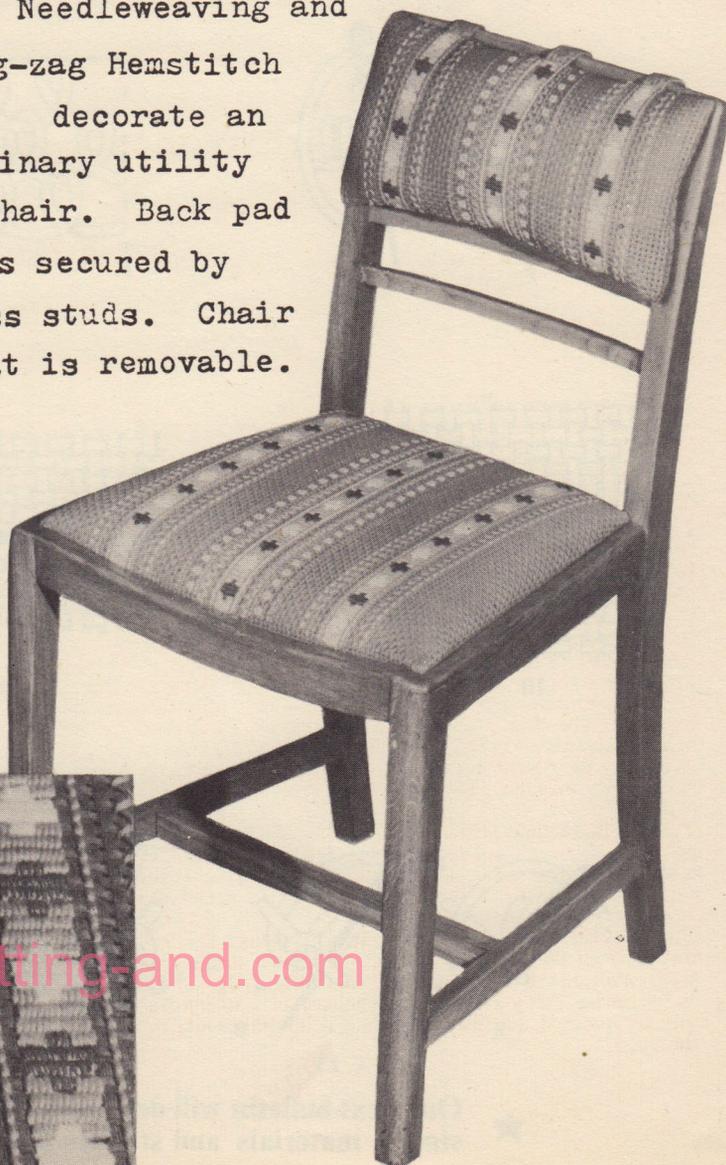
Neatness is essential for good Needleweaving. There must be no loose ends, and back and front of the work must be alike. When finishing off the working thread it should be passed through a neighbouring group at the back. See diagram No. 12.

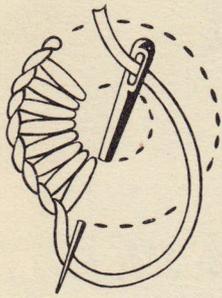
**Corners:** In making a rectangular border in Needleweaving or any other type of drawn thread work, the removal of both warp and weft threads leaves an open square in the corner and this is usually filled with a cross or a wheel shape. A simple cross filling is shown in our diagram No. 13.

**Zig Zag Hemstitch:** This attractive variation of Ladder Hemstitch (see Bulletin 4B) is combined with Needleweaving in the little mat illustrated in this bulletin. The groups of threads are bound along the lower edge by Hemstitch as used for Hemming. When the upper edge is being Hemstitched, these are divided so that each group is composed of two threads from one group and two from the next of the lower row. See diagram No. 14. This forms a zig zag line which is most effective. It is essential that the groups should always contain an even number of threads.

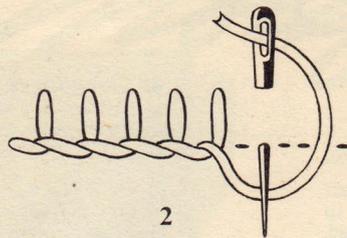


Cleverly used  
Needleweaving and  
Zig-zag Hemstitch  
decorate an  
ordinary utility  
chair. Back pad  
is secured by  
press studs. Chair  
seat is removable.

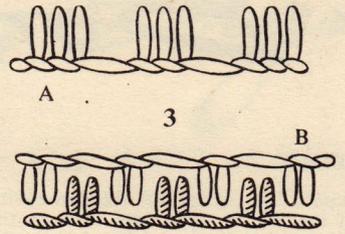




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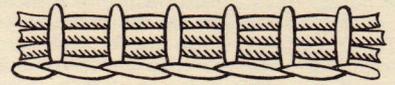
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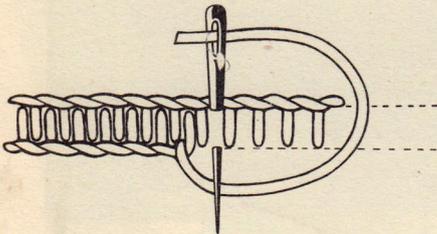
A

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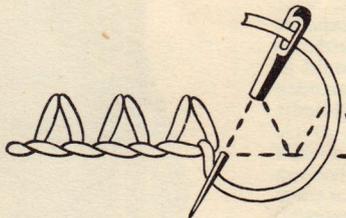
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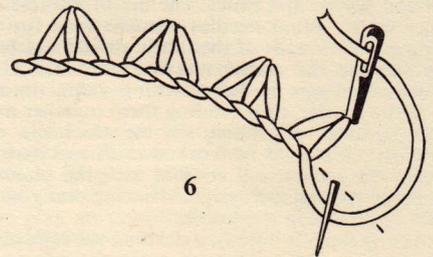
Open Buttonhole Stitch used for Couching.



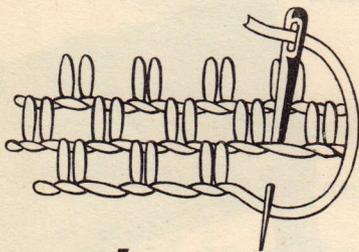
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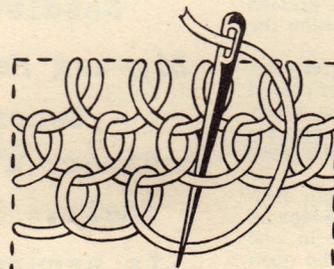
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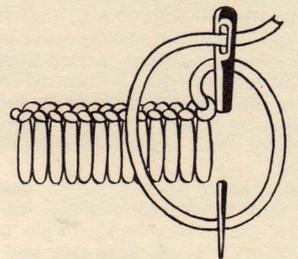
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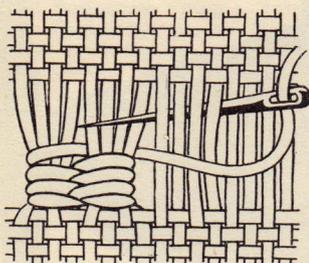
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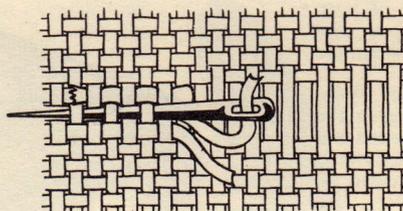
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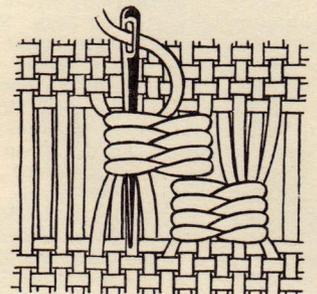
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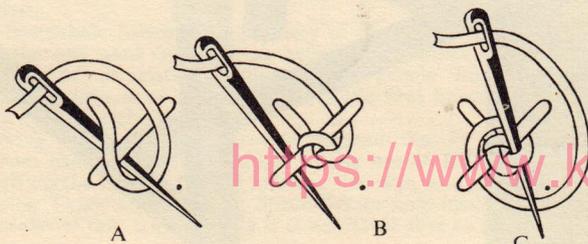
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11



12

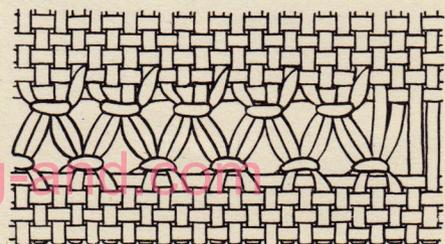


A

13

B

C



14



Our next bulletin will deal with suggestions for making articles using simple materials and stitches already shown in the earlier bulletins.