



JOAN'S TATTING BASICS

JOAN THOMAS
22539 Abbeytown Rd
Springdale AR 72764
Cell: 918-283-3001

INSTRUCTIONS FROM AUNT ELLEN'S 1954 HOW-TO BOOK ON NEEDLEWORK

For a full version of Aunt Ellen's 1954 How To Book on Needlework workbook: www.skerinknittingandcrochet.com

How To Tat

Tatting, like knitting, is an ancient needlecraft practiced in Europe and the Far East for centuries. It is made with one or more shuttles, or a shuttle and a ball. The shuttle with a sharp, blade-like "pick" at one end is the most practical type. This pick is used to draw the thread through a picot when joinings are made. If you use a shuttle without a pick, it will be necessary to use a pin or crochet hook each time to pull the thread through in joining, thus slowing up your work. The ends of the shuttle should be tight enough that the thread will not unwind if the shuttle is dropped.

Winding the Bobbin

In the center of the shuttle, between the blades, is a bobbin. If the bobbin is removable and has a hole at one side, tie the thread and wind the bobbin until full. If bobbin is not removable tie thread into the bobbin hole and fill the bobbin by wrapping smoothly and evenly with thread until bobbin is filled. Do not fill it so full that the thread projects beyond the blades of the shuttle. For practice work, any coarse mercerized crochet cotton, number 20 or 30, may be used. This size thread would make tatting of a good weight for a linen guest towel. Finer thread is used for daintier work. Thread for tatting should be tightly twisted and without knots or rough places. Tatting consists of a series of "running knots," or stitches, which are usually drawn into rings, therefore the thread must be one which will slip easily through the knots.

Double Stitch

Unwind about 15 inches of thread from the shuttle. Hold flat sides of shuttle between thumb and forefinger of right hand, in a horizontal position, with thread coming from back of bobbin. Grasp thread about 3 or 4 inches from free end between thumb and forefinger of left hand; spread the middle, ring and little fingers and bring thread around to thumb and forefinger again, to make a circle, holding it securely between thumb and forefinger with the end of thread and crossing it. This forms the ring upon which the stitches are worked.

Each tatting stitch is really made up of two stitches, one purled to the right and one to the left. These two stitches form what is called the double stitch.

To make the first half of the double stitch, hold shuttle in your right hand, bring the shuttle thread across on palm side and above the little, ring and middle fingers of the right hand, thrust the shuttle toward the left (Fig. 1) through center of ring, allowing thread number 1 (which is the ring thread) to slip between shuttle and forefinger of right hand. Without releasing hold on shuttle, bring it back over same thread, letting the thread slip between thumb and shuttle. Fig. 2 shows position of threads as shuttle is withdrawn from ring. During this operation, thread number 2 is held up by fingers of right hand as shown in illustration.

Relax or ease the fingers of the left hand, allowing the ring to collapse slightly, withdraw fingers from right

BASIC TATTING KIT - 1 Tatting Shuttle, Lizbeth size 3 (thick) and size 10 tatting thread. Note the higher the size number, the finer the thread.

hand loop and pull shuttle thread taut to the right. **KEEP THE RIGHT HAND THREAD TAUT.** With fingers of left hand still relaxed, give a quick jerk to the right with right hand, let loop of ring thread slip on taut shuttle thread—thus the first half of st automatically jumps, looking somewhat like a blanket stitch. Spread the fingers of the left hand, expanding the ring. As you raise the middle finger of left hand, the slip knot slides easily to forefinger and thumb of left hand. Hold slip knot in place with forefinger and thumb of left hand.

The slip knot should slide along the top of the shuttle thread as shown in Fig. 3. Practice this part several times and test to see if it is a slip knot by pulling the shuttle; the shuttle thread should slide easily through the stitches. This step is very important for if you do it correctly you will have a slip knot or stitch, if not, a hard knot which will not slip on the ring will result.

The second half of the double stitch is made in the opposite way. Hold the first half of the double in place between thumb and forefinger. With shuttle in horizontal position (do not wind thread around right hand as for first half of double), keep thread to the front, allowing it to fall slack (Fig. 4). Let top portion of ring between forefinger and middle finger of left hand slip gently between thumb and shuttle as it moves over the thread, away from you. Bring shuttle immediately forward, under the same portion of ring thread—that is, slip ring thread between forefinger and shuttle, without releasing shuttle. Throw a slip knot in the same way as before; relax the fingers of the left hand, allowing the ring to collapse slightly, draw the shuttle to the right until the thread is taut, give a quick jerk away from you with right hand, then spread the fingers of the left hand (Fig. 5), thus

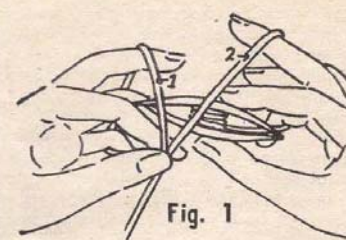


Fig. 1

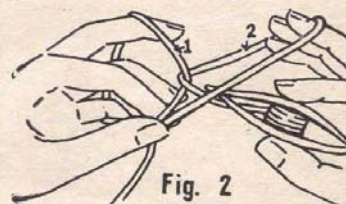


Fig. 2

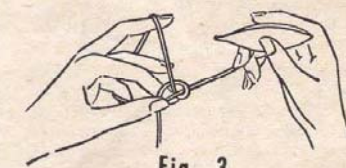


Fig. 3



Fig. 4

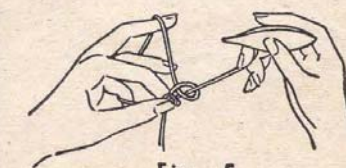


Fig. 5

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expanding the ring and throwing the slip knot or second half of double in place beside the first half.

This completes a double stitch. By pulling the shuttle thread, the stitch slips back and forth. If it does not, the stitch has been locked by a wrong motion and must be taken out and made over.

Practice making the doubles, until they can be done without looking at

instructions; draw each stitch against the previous one. When you can make doubles easily, experiment by making 10 or 12 doubles, then pull the shuttle thread tight to form a ring, while holding the stitches gently together.

Rings and Picots

The dainty effect of tatting depends on the lacy loops called picots (ps). A picot is the first half of a double, but instead of being drawn close up against the preceding stitch (Fig. 6); it is held by the thumb on the shuttle thread at a distance of about a quarter inch from the preceding stitch; complete the double and draw shuttle thread, thus the doubles will meet and a picot loop is formed on the ring (Fig. 7). The double made in forming the picot is considered part of the next group of doubles.

Practice doubles and picots until you can make them readily. Then make a ring. Remember to keep thread on the back of shuttle for ease in working. Work 3 ds, p, 3 ds, p, 3 ds, p, 3 ds. Hold stitches firmly in the left hand under thumb and forefinger, after last double is completed, draw the shuttle thread gently until ring is completely closed and the last double made touches the first double of ring (Fig. 8). For larger picots, leave a larger space (sp) between doubles.

Joining Rings

*About 1/4-inch from ring just made, begin a new ring. Make 3 ds, then join this ring to the preceding ring. Hold work close to picot and with the "pick" of shuttle (pin or crochet hook), draw ring thread up through last picot of preceding ring (Fig. 9), making a loop large enough to insert shuttle; slip the shuttle through the loop and pull shuttle thread taut to the right, draw ring back out of picot with fingers on left hand, make second half of double. Be sure to hold shuttle thread taut or a square knot will develop when

second half is made and it will not slip. Now work 3 more ds, p, 3 ds, p, 3 ds and draw up to form a second ring. Continue from * for desired length.

To reverse work, turn your work so that the base of ring just made is at the top and work next ring as usual.

TO JOIN THREADS—Always join new thread at the base of last ring or chain by making a square knot and leaving the ends until work is finished as the strain may loosen the knot. Cut ends later leaving them long enough so that they will not pull loose. Never join a new thread in ring as the knots will not pass through the double stitch.

Chains

A shuttle and a ball thread are used to make a chain (ch). It is necessary to use both working threads (a shuttle thread and a ball thread) when rs and chs appear in the same design. To make a ch after a r, reverse work (rw); to do this turn ring over so point where the shuttle thread comes out of ring is at top between thumb and forefinger. Tie end of ball thread in square knot to shuttle thread very close to base of

ring. Hold the ball thread across back of fingers of left hand, wind it twice around little finger to control tension (Fig. 10), and hold free end of ball thread between forefinger and thumb of left hand. Make a series of ds with shuttle on ball thread. When ch is completed, draw sts close together and drop ball thread. R w and pick up shuttle thread to make another r.

Abbreviations Used in Tatting

R (ring); st (stitch); ch (chain)—a series of sts worked on the ball thread and are not drawn into a ring; ds (double stitch); p (picot); cl r (close ring)—draw shuttle thread until last st made touches first st, thus forming a r; rw (reverse work)—turn work over so that the lower edge of work lies at the top; sp (space); sm p (small picot); lg p (long picot); sm r (small ring); lg r (large ring); sep (separated)—the number of picots in a ring is sometimes given, together with the number of doubles by which they are separated; * (asterisk)—repeat the directions following the asterisk as many times as specified, in addition to the original.

Petal Tatting

This new adventure with your shuttle is a somewhat different manipulation of tatting thread and shuttle, resulting in entirely delightful designs with clover leaves and petaled flowers. It also is known as Cluny tatting because in portions it resembles Cluny lace. Regular tatting thread, strongly spun, is best to use and makes the daintiest lace. But for practicing a crochet thread about size 20 is easier to keep in line.

The work is done with shuttle and ball. The ends may be knotted together to begin, and for practice make a small ring of 4 or 5 doubles to help hold the threads. You will need to use

all the fingers of the left hand and to avoid confusion in numbering, they will be referred to as fore or index, middle, ring and little fingers.

Holding the knotted ends and ring between thumb and forefinger of left hand (Figure 1), carry the ball thread



Fig. 1

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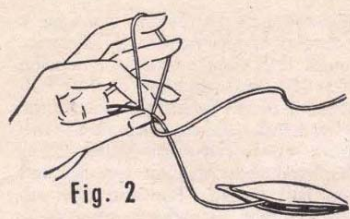


Fig. 2

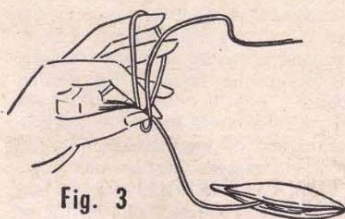


Fig. 3

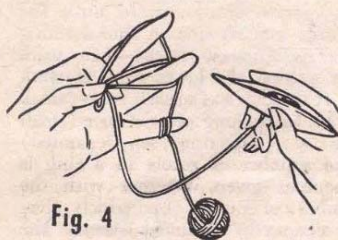


Fig. 4

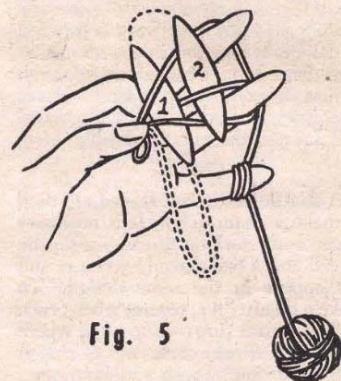


Fig. 5

over the middle and ring fingers and back between thumb and forefinger again (Figure 2); around the shuttle thread, to prevent pulling out, and draw a small loop back toward you to make it easier to hold all the threads (Figure 3). Bring ball thread over ring finger again (Figure 4); this will run it between the two threads already held; wind thread tightly around little finger, letting ball fall to lap or table. Continue pressure on thumb and index finger and hold other fingers out far enough to give tension.

Make a double stitch over the first or left strand. This acts as a guide in keeping threads loose, and also ties in with previous portions of work. Begin petal by weaving with shuttle under, over, under (Figure 5) the three

threads; bring shuttle back over, under, over the same three threads, thus completing one stitch in weaving a 12-stitch petal. Be careful and do not weave the first two or three stitches too tight. Begin to narrow on the 10th stitch upward to form tip of petal, by pulling the weaving thread firmly and gently. As you repeat this motion, it will be easier.

Unwind the ball thread from little finger, holding petal between thumb and forefinger, grasp ball thread in other hand and gently pull it tight, loop and all to form the petal. If the ball thread twists in pulling, put a pin in the loop, pull tight, then remove pin. Some people may experience the same difficulty as when they first began—a knot! But keep trying—it will eventually come out right.

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Edge in Petal Tatting

Here is a pointed edge in cluny or petal tatting. It measures about one inch in width.



Abbreviations: R (ring); ds (double stitch); p (picot); cl r (close ring).

To begin, make a r of (4 ds, p) 3 times, 4 ds, cl r. * Now make a petal of 10 sts each, r of 6 ds, p, 6 ds, cl r, make another petal of 10 sts, r of 4 ds, join p of previous r, (4 ds, p) twice, 4 ds, cl r. A petal of 10 sts, r of 4 ds, join to p of adjacent r, (4 ds, p) twice, 4 ds, cl r. Make another petal, r of 4 ds, join to p of adjacent r, p, 6 ds, cl r, make a petal, r of 4 ds, join to p of adjacent r, (4 ds, p) twice, 4 ds, cl r. Repeat from *.

Tatted Edging with Narrow Rick Rack

Be sure and use the very narrow or baby rick rack and size 30 thread to make this dainty edge. The finished width is less than one inch wide.



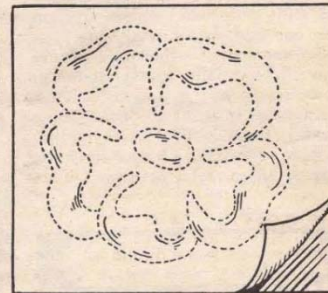
Abbreviations: Ch (chain); p (picot); ds (double stitch); sk (skip); cl r (close ring); rw (reverse work); sep (separate).

Join thread in a point of rick rack, * ch 6 ds, p, 6 ds, sk 1 point of rick rack, join in the next, repeat from * across. Join and fasten off.

Now work edge on other side of rick rack: * make a r of 4 ds, join in point of rick rack, 4 ds, cl r. Make another r of 4 ds, join in next point of rick rack, 4 ds, cl r, rw. Ch 4 ds, 2 ps sep by 1 ds, 4 ds. Repeat from * across.

Trapunto Quilting

This is often referred to as Italian or stuffed quilting. Two layers of material are basted together. Draw or stamp design on wrong side. Go over design with simple running stitches, being sure to work through both layers of material. Pad design working from



TRAPUNTO QUILTING

the back, with heavy yarn threaded in needle. Cut off ends of yarn as each design is finished. Cotton or cord may be used to stuff design using scissors points, bodkin or the handle of a crochet hook to work cotton into place.

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PRACTICE SHEET FOR NEWBIES ~ SINGLE SHUTTLE TATTING

Use these simple tatting patterns to practice rings and make tatted lace you can use for bookmarks, insertions, and edgings. *My thanks go to Pat Marshall for her tatting inspirations & being my tatting friend! ☺ joan 8/2007*

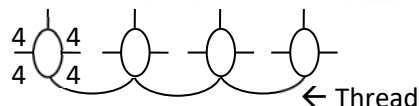
READ PATTERNS

There are several ways to read a pattern:

- Visually, using a diagram (scanned photo or illustration):

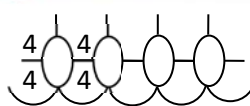


Edging B with beads tacked to the collar edge of a plain knit shirt.



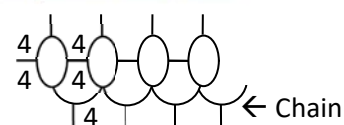
A: SIMPLE EDGING

Tatted rings with no joined picots; 4 double-stitches between each picot



B: SIMPLE EDGING

Tatted rings with a 3rd picot join; 4 double-stitches between each picot



C: SIMPLE EDGING with CHAINS

Tatted rings with no joined picots; 4 double-stitches between each picot; rw after each ring; for chains, use two shuttles or a shuttle & ball

- Written, using "long" hand notation:

Ring 1: 4 dbl. stitches, picot, 4 dbl. stitches, picot, 4 dbl. stitches, picot 4 dbl. stitches Close ring.

Ring 2: 4 dbl. stitches, join to last picot of previous ring, 4 dbl. stitches, picot, 4 dbl. stitches, picot 4 dbl. stitches. Close ring.

- Written using "short" hand notation. For example: R=ring; P=picot; + = a join, clr=close ring. For edging A (above), repeat R1; For edging B, tat R1, R2 and repeat R2 for desired length.

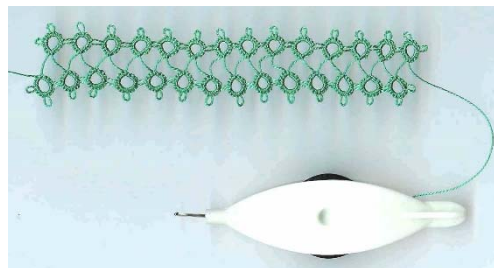
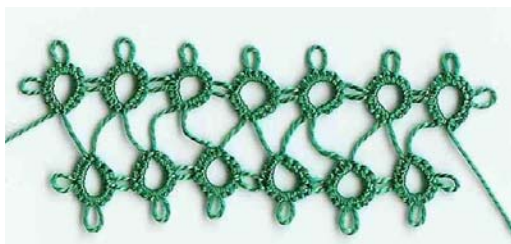
R1: 4-4-4-4 clr **R2:** 4+4-4-4 clr



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A SIMPLE TATTED LACE INSERTION OR BOOKMARK PATTERN

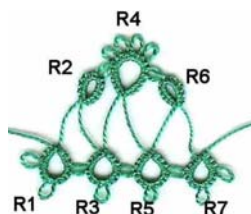


R1, rw (reverse work, i.e., flip ring upside down); repeat once.
R2, rw for entire length. Leave about $\frac{1}{4}$ " or less between rows.

HEN & CHICKS PATTERN

The first motif has errors...can you see them?

Hints: picot size, tension, stitch count, gage, blocking.



R1: 4-4-4-4 clr and rw; leave approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " or a little less between all rings.
R2: 6-6, clr and rw.
R3: 4+4-4-4 clr and rw; the join (+) is to picot of **R1**.
R4: 6 join to picot on 2nd ring, 2-2-2-2-6; clr and rw.
R5: 4+4-4-4 clr and rw; the join (+) is to picot of **R3**.
R6: 6 join to last picot on **R4**, 6, clr and rw; the join (+) is to the last picot of **R2**.
R7: 4+4-4-4 clr and rw; the join (+) is to picot of **R5**.
Repeat **R2** to **R7** for desired length.

Thread used in the above samples is pearl cotton size 12 (Anchor color 0216)

TAKE THE NEXT STEP!

- *Join the Dogwood Lace Guild!* 1st Sat of month at the Shiloh Meeting Hall. On FB: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1478154875774329>
- *In Springdale?* I can teach you! Check out my website: <http://www.bebpublishing.com/tatting.html>
- *Check out YouTube & your local library*
- *Search youtube: beginner shuttle tatting Fayetteville's library has ebooks! (Hoopla)*
Check out Learn to Tat by Janette Baker



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Simple Tatted Button Ornament – 2020

This ornament was created by Esther Meyers Moehrke in 2013. I saw it on the Tatted Button Ornament Facebook site:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/375400783520676>

Esther did not write down the pattern, so I figured most out from her picture. Thanks for sharing Esther!

Size 20 Lizbeth thread

4 hole, 0.5" button

All picots are same size (6mm)

2 shuttles

Ring: 2ds, P, 5ds, P, 2ds, join to button, 2ds, P, 5ds, P, 2ds, clr and RW.

Chain: 8ds.

Outer ring: 3ds 3P, 2ds, P, ds, P, 2ds, 3P, 3ds clr.

Chain: 8ds.

Repeat 7 times, joining to the second picot of the previous ring.

For the last ring, join to left and right rings.

