

# Fun Fringe Technique Adds Dimension To Embroidery

## Use This Simple Looping Technique To Give Designs Texture

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A great way to add pizzazz to your embroidered designs is with a technique called looping or fringing. It's simple to do and can be used in a variety of ways. On flowers, you can create fuzzy centers; on a lion, create a bushy mane; a hula dancer can have a realistic-looking grass skirt; or a man's face can have an actual mustache.

Whether you've been stitching for years or you're a newcomer, this easy-to-use technique allows anyone to achieve professional-quality results. For the purposes of the demonstration, I am using a flower design to show how this is done.

### Step 1.

First, stitch the design onto the desired item. When choosing something on which to apply the technique, it's important that the object to be fringed has satin stitches or zigzag stitches, and they must be tacked down along the edges by an overlapping stitch. This overlapping stitch is what holds the fringed stitches in place and keeps them from unraveling. The density of the satin stitch will determine the look.

### Step 2.

Turn the design over so that you can see the bottom side of the design; in other words, the design's underside should now be facing up.

*Sew out your chosen design. To achieve the looped or fringed look, the stitches must be zigzag or satin stitches. In this example, the center of the yellow flower will be fringed while the pedals of the red flower will be looped.*



*Turn the design over so the backside of the embroidered motif is facing up.*

### Step 3.

Using small scissors, a seam ripper or nippers, cut the bobbin threads on the backside of the design. This will loosen the embroidery thread. It's not hard to identify the bobbin thread, because it's normally white, but make sure not to cut anything except this bobbin thread!



*Using a seam ripper or small scissors, select a small group of bobbin threads and gently cut them. Work your way around until you've snipped each bobbin thread in the designated area.*

### Step 4.

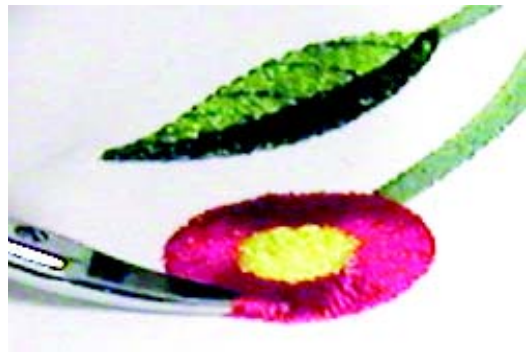
Turn the design over to the front, so that its topside is facing you again.



*Turn the design back over to the front.*

### Step 5.

Now you're ready to pull the loosened bobbin thread back through the topside of the design. Using your seam ripper or scissors, select a small portion of thread loops—about a quarter of an inch—and pull gently. Don't use too much force. You only want to pull up the loop, not rip it. Work your way around the design, one small section at a time.



*Using scissors, gently pull on the cut threads from the top of the fabric. The threads will come up as loops.*

### Step 6.

At this point, you can either stop, and you have a great-looking design with a looped effect. Or, you can cut the tops of the loops and trim them for a fringed effect. As you cut the threads, you may have a few loose threads that are longer than others. If that happens, just trim the longer ones to match the shorter ones.



*You can leave the loops as is or cut them with scissors to create a fringe. Trim threads to equal size.*

When you're sewing your design, you may find you have to adjust the density of the satin or zigzag stitch to get the look you want. In most cases, you will use a thicker density than normal. This technique works with rayon and polyester threads, and you can switch them out to achieve a variety of dimensional effects. ❖



**James Raymer** has been in the textile industry for more than 25 years. As managing director of Dalco Home Sew, he has spent the past three years creating appliqué design collections for a dealer network. The company offers easy-to-use appliqué kits in more than 50 motifs. For more information, you may contact him at 1-972-494-1455, extension 214; e-mail: [jraymer@dalcoathletic.com](mailto:jraymer@dalcoathletic.com) or visit [www.dalcohomesew.com](http://www.dalcohomesew.com).