



Dear Sister Fabricaholics,

Top o' the morning to ya~~~ May your homes always be too small to hold all of your friends~~~  
May you live as long as you want and never want as long as you live ~~~ May the saddest day of  
your future be no worse than the happiest day of your past. ~~~ Erin Go Braugh~~~May your  
neighbors respect you, troubles neglect you, angels protect you and heaven accept you~~~

These are just a few of the old Irish sayings that may be dancing in your head during this  
transitional month. If so, why not embroider a few of them on a set of dish towels or a grocery  
tote? Embroidered items can be charming, personalized, comedic or decorative and with today's  
embroidery machines, your ability to customize almost anything is almost limitless!

Brother's PE-700II with USB stick port has SIX built in alphabets that are super simple to access  
with touch pad programmability. This embroidery only machine allows you to embroider without  
having to hook up to a computer and is a five-star customer pick! Check it out today☺

[http://crafts-sewing.hsn.com/brother-embroidery-machine-with-usb-port\\_p-5745342\\_xp.aspx?web\\_id=5745342&ocm=sekw](http://crafts-sewing.hsn.com/brother-embroidery-machine-with-usb-port_p-5745342_xp.aspx?web_id=5745342&ocm=sekw)

**HSN Item: #559-634**

Brother's PE-700II has six built in alphabets that are all easily accessible on the LCD touch screen. On  
the towel I used the bottom right font. You can stitch them in three sizes in both upper and lower  
case and even rotate them!



I couldn't let St. Patrick's Day go by without dressing Rocky but consider using this scalloped edge technique to add a feminine flair on the hemlines of blouses, skirts, dresses or sleeves.

### **To make this dog neckerchief**

#### **You will need:**

1/3 Yd. cotton

Sewing machine with Crescent decorative stitch

Iron on-tear away stabilizer (this is a paper that's shiny on one side.

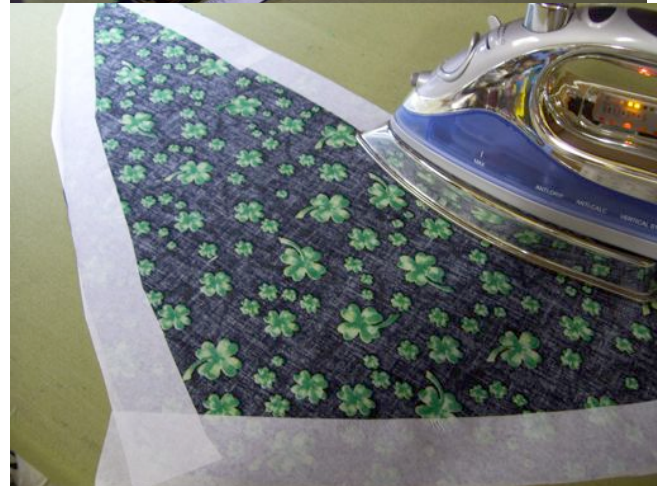
If you don't have any, try using freezer paper)

Spool of embroidery thread

Iron and ironing board

#### **Instructions:**

- 1) Cut an 11" x 21" by 23" triangle on the fold. The short side is the folded side and on the top edge make a shallow (2") scoop. Draw a slightly curved line from the bandana point on the bottom to the tip of the ties.
- 2) Cut stabilizer into 2"x1" strips
- 3) Press shiny side of stabilizer onto wrong side of fabric against the edge
- 4) Thread machine, program your crescent satin stitch to the widest width setting (6,7 or 9mm depending on which model machine you have) Here I used the elongation function 2X on Singer's new L-500 with a 9mm wide stitch width and .04mm stitch length.
- 5) With right side facing up, Stitch along item's edge through fabric and stabilizer paper.



- 6) Carefully cut around crescents with small, sharp embroidery scissors to remove excess fabric but be careful not to cut any threads.



- 7) Remove any residual paper and wear it in style!

## Questions Answered:

### **Q---I am so lost on what sewing machine to purchase... Do you have a recommendation of one over the other?**

**A-----**Susan, I wish that I could give you a definitive answer to your question but there are so many different machines and varying prices. You have already boiled it down to electronic/computerized so you have narrowed the playing field a bit. It is difficult to find an economical machine that has every single bell and whistle that you would dream of so it becomes a matter of what you HAVE to have and what you are willing to do without. You may want to ask the following questions:

- 1) What type of sewing will I mostly do?  
~~~~Although every machine is equipped with multiple functionality, there are preferred machines for Quilting, Home Décor, Apparel, etc..... Does it have an extension table? Is it fast and heavy duty? Will I use the built-in alphabet?
- 2) Would I like to have endless creativity?  
~~~~Specialty feet and built-in stitch patterns multiply your creative and functional options. Machines that offer both will serve you well in the long run. Most packages at HSN have extra feet that will not be included anywhere else.
- 3) Do I want to embroider?  
~~~~Surface embellishments look professional and are relatively easy to accomplish. There are combination machines from Singer and Brother that can convert from sewing to embroidery. They are still portable and convert easily. Endless designs can be acquired from the internet and entry level models will less likely break your bank account.
- 4) Will I make a designated area to sew ( extra room) or do I have to set up every time (dining room) ?  
~~~~ If you plan to take your machine to a friend's house or a sewing class or if you have to pull it out and set it up every time you want to hem a pair of slacks, you may have to start lifting weights to lug your investment around☺ BUT there are some machines that offer lighter weight and easier portability than others. Brother computerized is very light and fits in a tote!
- 5) Will I want lessons or am I self taught and motivated?  
~~~~ Education is always a consideration and you often receive classes at a dealer store that you do not have from buying a machine in a box from a shelf. It may have a higher price tag initially but many people prefer/need the one on one attention they can receive from a dealer. Many sewers find that an included instructional DVD is sufficient. Some models of Singer machines come with multiple DVDs.

This is a start when considering which machine to purchase. After you answer these questions, take a look on HSN.com and study and compare the specs. We sell Brother and Singer machines at HSN but there are also other fine brands to choose from that offer a wide variety of machines for sewers at every level. When you purchase your machine from HSN you will be getting customer service, 30-day money back returns, extra accessories and flex pay.

If you know that you're going to be working on large items such as comforters, overcoats or quilts, you may be interested in knowing how much room there is to the right of the needle as well as the height on a particular model of machine.

**Q-----Dawn asked for the exact measurement of the space where the fabric goes through** on the Singer Heavy Duty. With tape measure and scrap paper in hand I went out to my sewing studio. I measured the width----(needle to side of trunk) and the height----(flatbed to under the arm) of the neck on the models below. If that feature is important to you, then this will help you when you're comparing apples to apples.

**HEAVY DUTY**

Width----6 ½”

Height----4 ½”

**QUANTUM L-500**

Width----8 ½”

Height----5”

**STYLIST**

Width----5 ½”

Height----3 ½”

**COMPUTERIZED 7430/7470**

Width----6 ½”

Height----4 5/8”

**FUTURA**

Width----6”

Height----3 ½”

**PROFESSIONAL 2010**

Width----6 ¼”

Height----4 ½”

**Q-----Susan asked, “Why does one need a serger?”** Another good question. The truth is, we don't NEED a serger but when you start using one, you'll wonder why you ever waited.

- **Will a serger make your sewing finishes more professional looking? YES!** Better looking longer lasting than pinked and less bulky and faster to make than bound edges.
- **Will it help to cut down your sewing time? YES!** Sergers sew, cut and finish the edge all in one step at a whopping 1100-1300 stitches per minute!
- **Will it enable you to use interesting threads that you wouldn't be able to use on your conventional machine? YES!** From monofilament to Pearl cotton, Wooly Nylon to Heavy Rayon, Metallics and more!

- **Can I use it to construct? YES!** Sergers work beautifully on both wovens or stretch fabrics so you can piece together everything from blue jeans to bathing suits!
- **Will I be able to make anything special? YES!** Sergers give you decorative edging options with a variety of over casting stitch finishes. You can sew wire, fishing line or strings of tiny pearls into the edges of fabrics to fashion your own dance dresses and costumes, ribbons and bridal veils.
- **Do sergers come with extra feet? YES!** Some models come with as many as six feet so check all the specs and decide which options, features and accessories are important to you. Feet may include, Blind Hem, Pearls and sequins, Elastic attachment, Gathering or Piping. Some models also include an instructional DVD☺

### **Q-----What if my serger doesn't work?**

A brand new serger out of the box *should* work. It should be threaded, tested and ready to plug and play..... Now you WILL have to lift up the telescoping thread holder, make sure that the threads haven't tangled in shipping and replace the tiny spools of thread with regular serger spools. The tiny spools were placed on to test, not to sew and last.

**TO DO THIS:** When you first receive your serger and want to use cone threads to replace the temporary threads, Remember to work from the outside spools inward. Below are a few tips to help you expedite the threading.

- 1) Snip the thread close to the small spool and remove small spools from the pins. (this leaves a nice long thread tail)
- 2) Insert the large spool on the spool pin.
- 3) Tie the two thread tails together in a safety knot. (The old three-finger Wrap, Roll and Tighten trick)
- 4) Repeat on all spools.
- 5) With the presser foot lever in the "UP" position, pull all the threads along their respective 'paths' through the thread guides to the stitching area.  
This should work for both looper threads and stop just in front of the eye of the needle on the two needle threads. Pull more of the needle thread toward you and snip off the knot from both sides so you can easily pull the old thread through the eyes of the needles to discard.
- 6) Rethread the needle eyes front to back with the new thread.
- 7) Place the fabric under the presser foot and bring the presser foot lever to the "DOWN" position. Begin to slowly sew. You may pick up speed as you see that everything has cleared and is stitching properly.

### **Q- The Fabric won't pull through...what am I doing wrong?**

**A-** Check these two things:

- 1) the presser foot not being let down before you sew or

- 2) the feed dog (little metal finger grippers that peek up through the needle plate to pull the fabric through) are not in their upright position.

### **Q- My bobbin keeps bunching....What's wrong?**

**A-**Check these two things:

- 1) Bobbin is threaded correctly and thread is engaged in the tiny bobbin thread guide that runs along the housing track.
- 2) Upper take up lever must be definitely threaded. This area is often unseen and if it is not threaded, you cannot sew without bunching in the bobbin.

### **Q- Can I do "Reverse Bobbin Stitching with the Athena?"**

**A-** Absolutely. Reverse bobbin decorative stitching works best on 'forward moving stitches' and could run you into a few potential problems by bunching up on tight, overlapping or reverse patterns. It's best to **Keep It Simple Sweetie!**

- 1) Wind bobbin and thread machine and bobbin with one exception. DO NOT pull thick threads such as pearl cotton or 2mm wide silk ribbon through bobbin tension. Simply by-pass the last built-in bobbin thread guide and pull thread tail to surface.
- 2) Stitch with the right side of your project facing down with feed dogs engaged and your satin stitch presser foot.

### **WHEN TO WATCH**

**March 1<sup>st</sup> Singer** 6am, 11am, 5pm, 11pm

**March 28<sup>th</sup> Brother**

**April 27<sup>th</sup> Today's Special**

May you get all your wishes but one, so you'll always have something to strive for~~~

Sew Your Dreams,

*Darlene*