

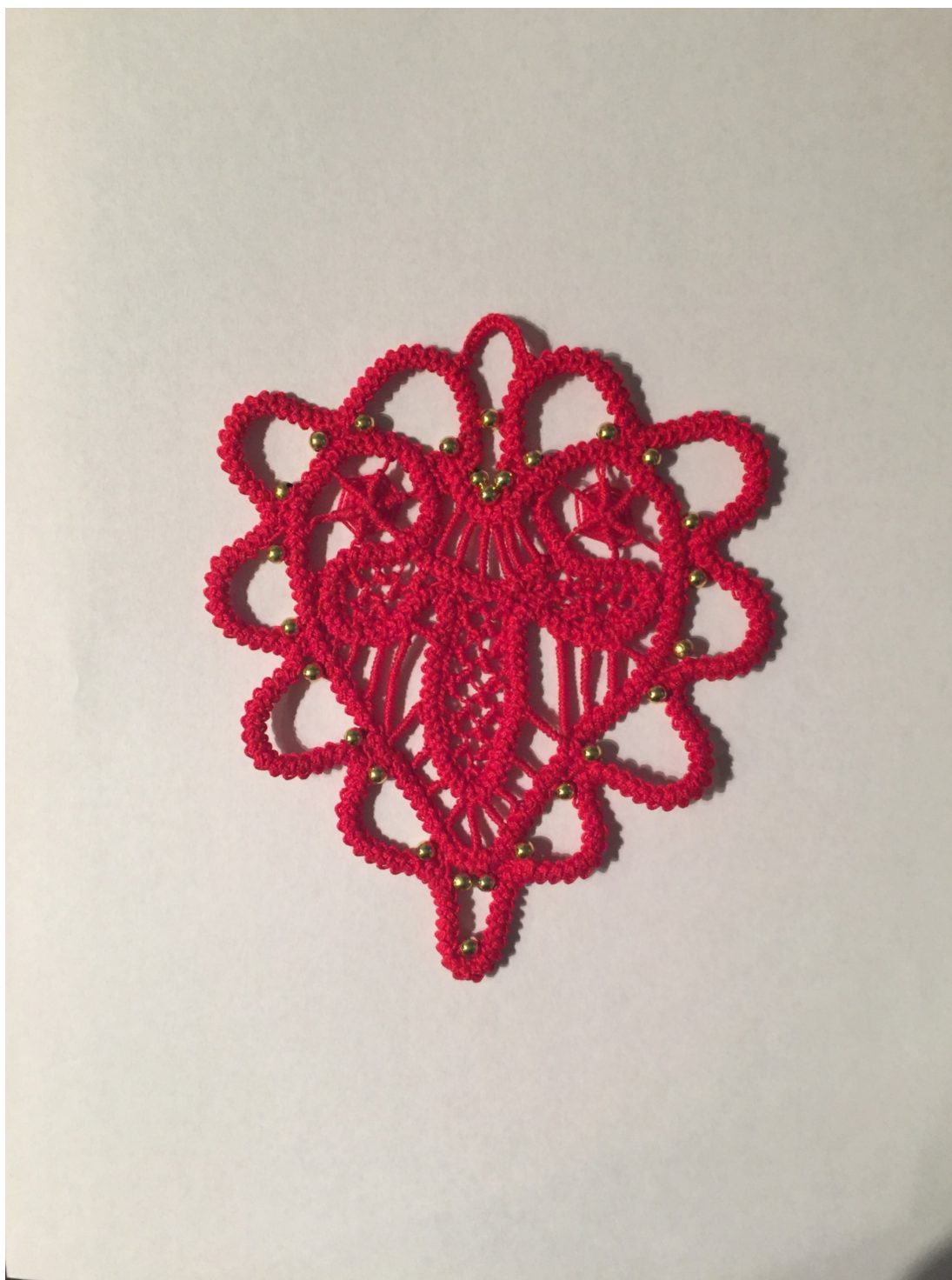
ROMANIAN POINT LACE ORNAMENT

Designed by Tamara Yohannes

For the

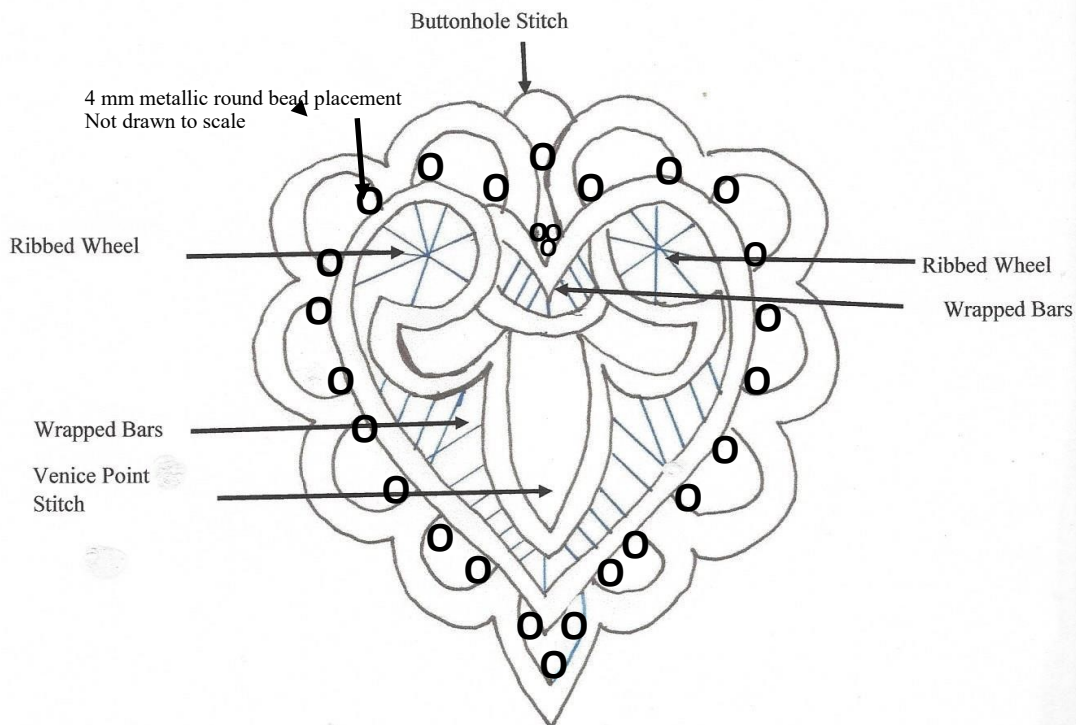
Embroiderers' Guild of America Stitch-A-Long

February 2019



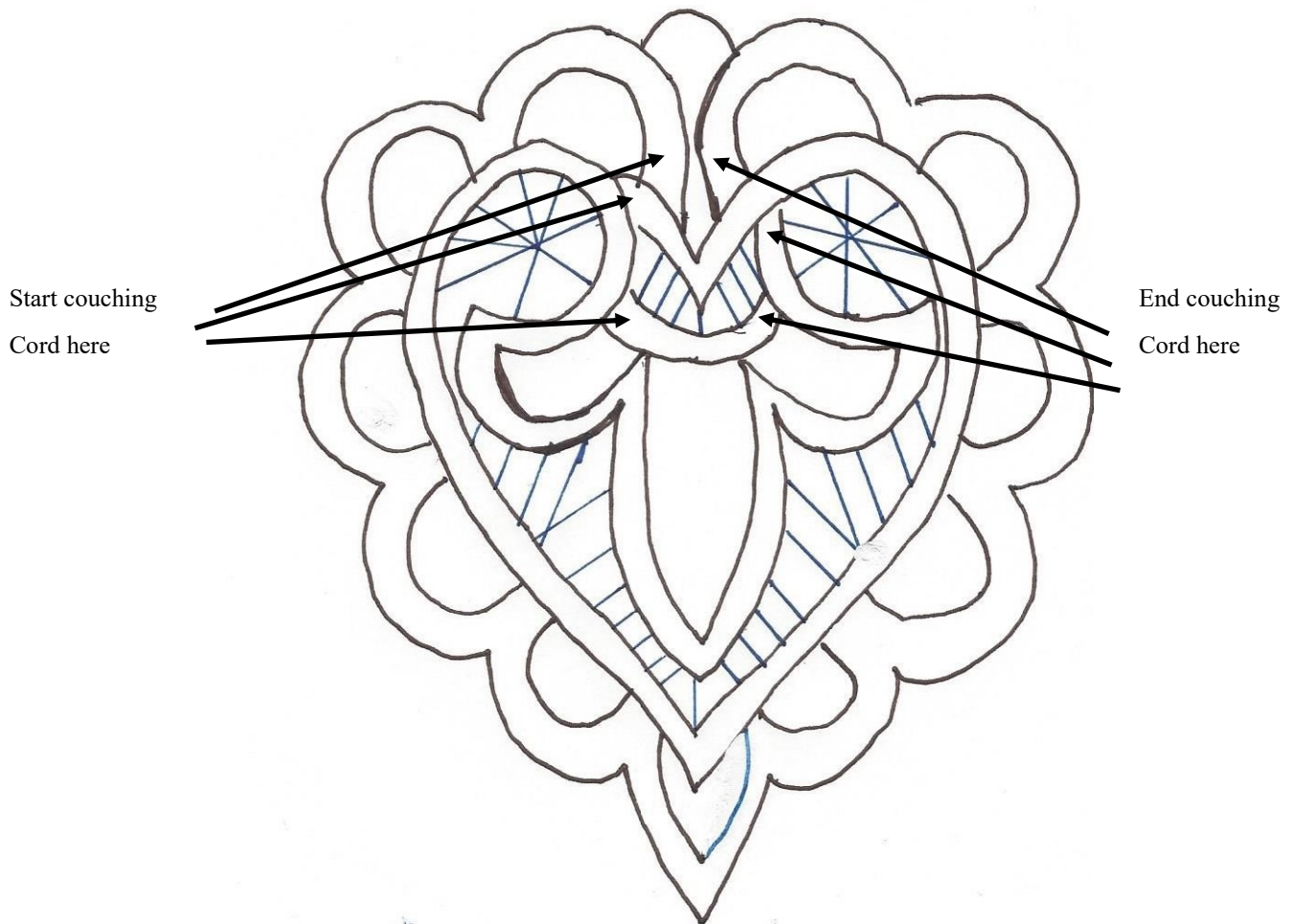
ROMANIAN POINT LACE HEART

5" X 4 1/4" — can be used as an ornament or adornment on a card, box, or garment



Romanian Point Lace is a form of the tape lace developed in 17th Century Europe. It creates the look of cutwork embroidery using crocheted cords filled in with needle-made lace stitches. It remains popular in Europe and is enjoying a surge of popularity in the United States, largely due to the efforts of the late Sylvia Murariu whose instructional books (listed in the bibliography of these instructions), provide sufficient background for the student to become proficient in the technique.

ROMANIAN POINT LACE HEART PATTERN



Pattern dimensions should be approximately 5" X 4 1/4". Please check your printout to ensure your pattern is the correct size.

Materials

Plain white muslin, approximately 12 inches square

Permanent marker or photocopier or printer for transferring pattern

1 sheet Avery T-shirt transfer sheet and 12 x 12 piece of clear Con-Tact paper (if desired)

8" embroidery hoop or frame (if desired)

½ ball Lizbeth or Cebelia crochet cotton size 10 thread in color(s) desired

27 4-mm round beads in preferred colors

All-purpose sewing thread in contrasting color to size 10 cotton thread(s)

For the Avery T-shirt transfer-method for making the pattern, white all-purpose sewing thread

Size 1.5 mm crochet hook, or size to make a firm-but-flexible cord

Tapestry needles size 22 or 24 for use with size 10 thread

Sharp embroidery or sewing needle for sewing all-purpose thread

Seam ripper or sharp embroidery scissors

Step 1: Create the pattern:

- a. Print or photocopy the design onto an Avery T-Shirt Transfer Sheet. Following package directions, iron that transfer sheet onto a washed and ironed piece of white muslin, and then cover the design with clear Con-Tact paper. Using white thread, stitch around and over the design to secure the layers. This method provides a strong, reusable pattern that is firm enough to maintain tension but flexible enough to allow the easy working of the needle-made lace stitches without requiring an embroidery hoop or frame. I recommend this method. (Note that this method provides a pattern that is the mirror-image of the original. This ornament pattern is symmetrical, so that is not an issue. Besides, all Romanian Point Lace is nearly reversible, although it is worked with the "right side" facing the pattern.)

OR

- b. Copy the design with permanent marker directly onto a 12" x 12" washed and ironed piece of white muslin large enough to be used with an embroidery hoop or frame that is larger than the design itself. Some embroiderers, who are quite comfortable working with a hoop or frame, find this method preferable. Be absolutely certain any permanent marker you use is indeed colorfast and will not rub off on the lace as you work.

Step 2: Make the cord using size 10 crochet thread, preferably Lizbeth or Cebelia brand as they are tightly twisted and create a firm, beautiful lace, but any size 10 thread will work. Make 47 inches* of the cord (either in one length or in two 21" sections for the center heart and for the scallop and one 2 1/2" section for the very center). The 47 inches includes extra length for cutting the sections. Use a 1.5 mm crochet hook (or size that creates a firm-but-flexible cord). Every stitcher's tension varies, but these lengths should be enough cord to complete the project. KNOT the end of the thread and leave at least a 10-inch tail before beginning to make the cord. Always start couching from the knotted end of the cord.

*

- **Let's be honest about the crocheted cord.** It is the rare stitcher who finds making the cord the most exciting part of their Romanian Point Lace projects (although once you get the hang of it, you might find the rather mindless rhythm of it relaxing, as I do). As it really is not that difficult, I recommend that you make your own cord even though, as you can see from the following diagrams, it is possible to use pre-purchased cord in Romanian Point Lace. Please be aware, however, that true Romanian Point Lace is made with hand-crocheted cord.
- This pattern requires about 45-47 inches of cord (see above), although that can vary according to how loosely or tightly you couch the cord to the pattern. The question is — would you rather crochet one long cord and cut it into the needed lengths as you couch, or would you rather make three separate sections of cord and couch each separately? Doing the first requires you to unravel cord at the cut starting-end of the crochet for the second and third sections you couch. It's easy to unravel the ending-end of the cord as all you need to do is pull the thread so the cord fits nicely onto the pattern. But unraveling the starting-end of the cord takes a bit of patience. I provide pictures of how to do that in the directions. If you choose to make three sections of cord, you run the risk of not making it long enough, so I recommend that you leave about 18 inches of thread at the ends of the longer sections so you have some thread to possibly crochet a bit more if you end up needing some extra length.
- If you end up enjoying making the cord, please post on our SAL Facebook page to encourage our fellow stitchers! And if you have any questions, please post those, too. Someone in our group will have answers, and I am always checking-in.

The following images and instructions for making the cord were created by Cheryl Christian, editor of *Needle Arts*, the journal of the Embroiderers' Guild of America, where the images originally appeared in Volume 41, Number 3 (September 2010) issue on pages 38-39. These images and instructions are used here by permission.

MAKING THE CORD

For those who prefer not to crochet the cord, substitute premade 1/8 - 1/4 -inch trim or cord. For these diagrams we have used a thicker thread.

1. Make a slip knot with the end of the # 10 cotton thread (Diagrams 1 and 2). As you draw up the slip knot, place the crochet hook in the middle, tighten it, and chain two stitches, with the thread over the hook (Diagram 3). Be careful not to use the 10-inch tail end of the thread.



Diagram 1



Diagram 2



Diagram 3

2 Skipping the first chain, insert the hook into the second chain from the hook (Diagram 4), take thread under the hook (Diagram 5) and draw up a loop (Diagram 6). With two loops on the crochet hook, thread over the hook (Diagram 7) and pull through the two loops (Diagram 8). Turn the worked chain to the left (Diagram 9). Left handed stitchers should turn the work to the right.



Diagram 4



Diagram 5



Diagram 6



Diagram 7

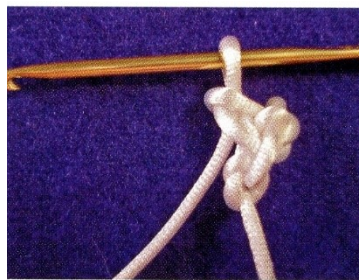


Diagram 8



Diagram 9

3. Insert the crochet hook into the first loop on the edge (Diagrams 10 and 11), pass the thread under the hook (Diagram 12), and pull the thread through the loop (Diagram 13). Pass the thread over the hook (Diagram 14), and pull through both loops on the hook (Diagram 15). Turn the cord again (Diagram 16), and run the hook under the pair of edge loops. From this stitch forward, the hook will always be inserted into two edge loops. Repeat this procedure from Diagram 11.



Diagram 10



Diagram 11

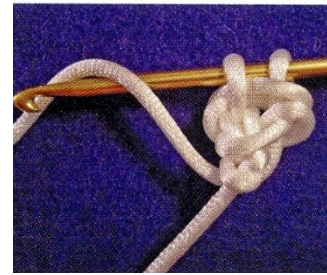


Diagram 12



Diagram 13



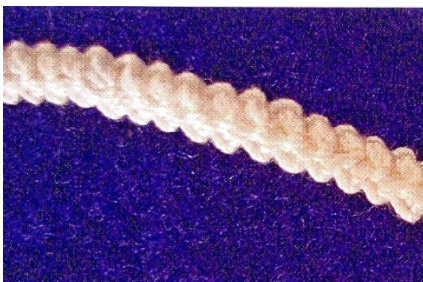
Diagram 14



Diagram 15



Diagram 16



Finished cord

End quoted material

Step 3: Begin couching the cord. Using contrasting pastel all-purpose thread, couch the cord (i.e., baste using 1/2" long stitches behind the pattern coming up to the top of the pattern and crossing over the cord before returning your needle to the back of the pattern.) Begin couching with the knotted end of the cord at the starting point on the pattern, doing the actual heart design first. Be careful not to stretch the cord while couching. Couch the points as sharply as reasonable since the cord tends not to completely bend at a sharp angle.

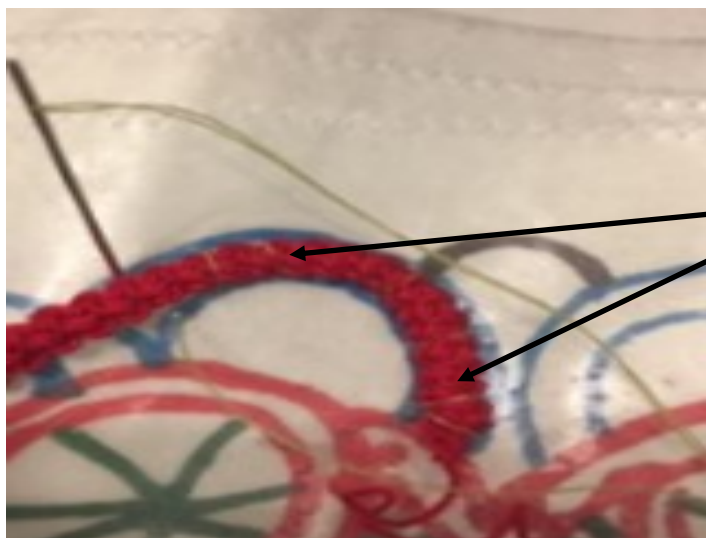


Photo A: Note how the couching stitches are laid so that the thread sits between the picots (the little loops formed on the edge of the crocheted cord).

When you finish couching the heart design, cut the cord about 1 inch beyond the point where you want the cord to end. Tease out the thread end (photo B), discarding any snippets of thread that fall away. Then pull that end — it should easily unravel to the point on the pattern where you want the cord to end.

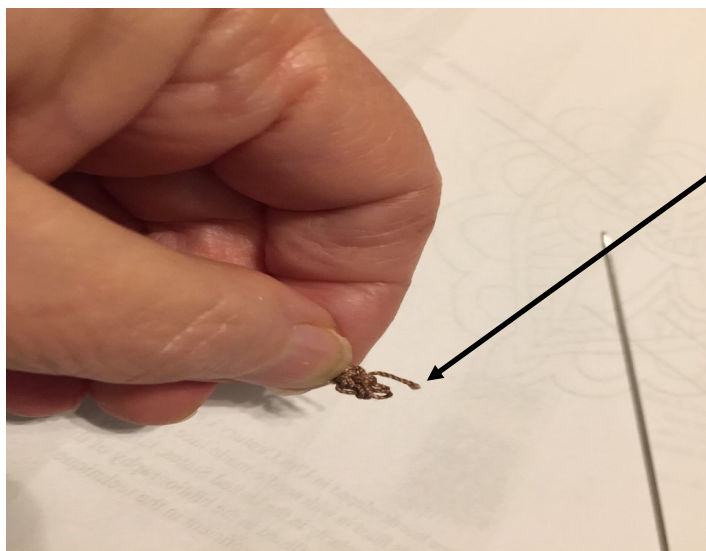
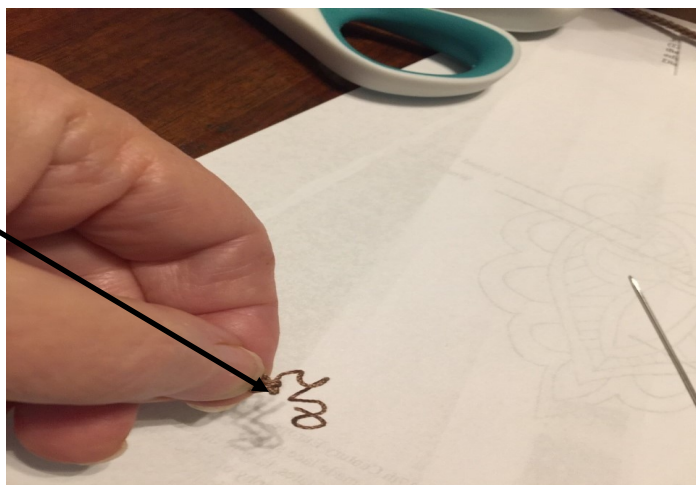


Photo B— Here you see the thread ready to be pulled in order to unravel the cord to the ending-point for this cord on the design.

Photo C— When you have unraveled the cord to the point you want the cord to end, find the little loop at the end of the cord and pull the length of cord through that loop to keep the cord from any further unraveling.



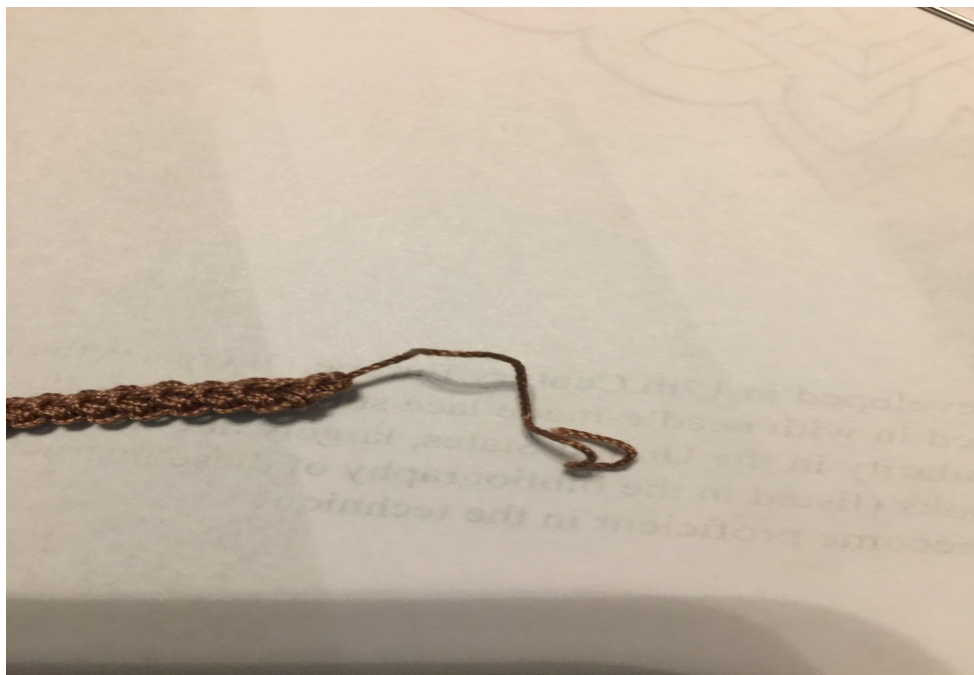


Photo D— Finish couching the cord and tie-off your basting thread. You will use the size 10 thread at the cord-end either to begin the needle-made lace or, if it seems too short for that, just thread it to your tapestry needle and glide the end through the middle of the cord for an inch or more before cutting off the thread.

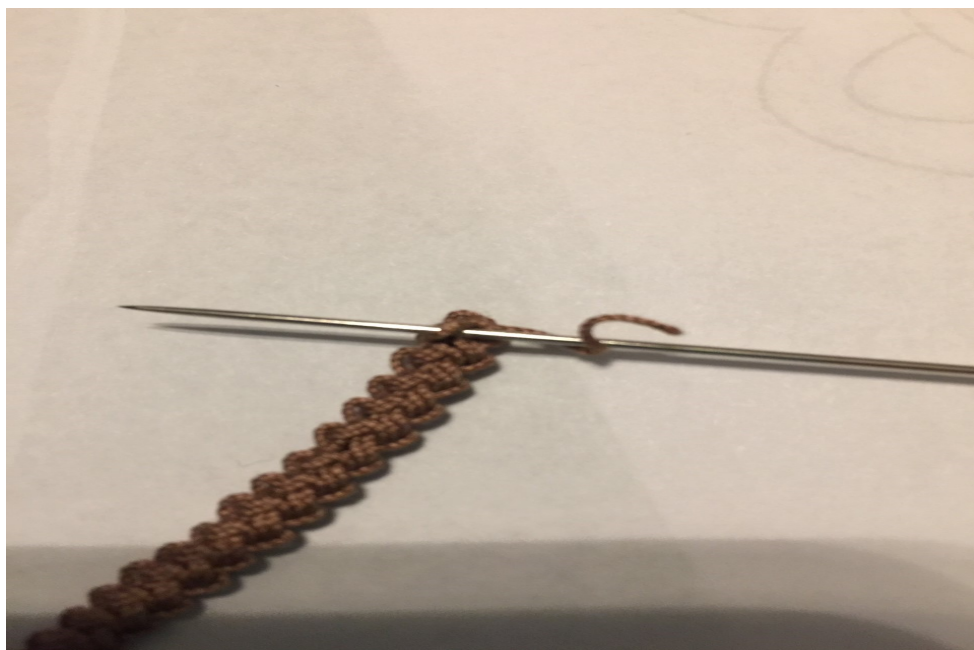


Photo E — If you have crocheted one long cord, tease out the thread from the cut edge of the remaining cord.

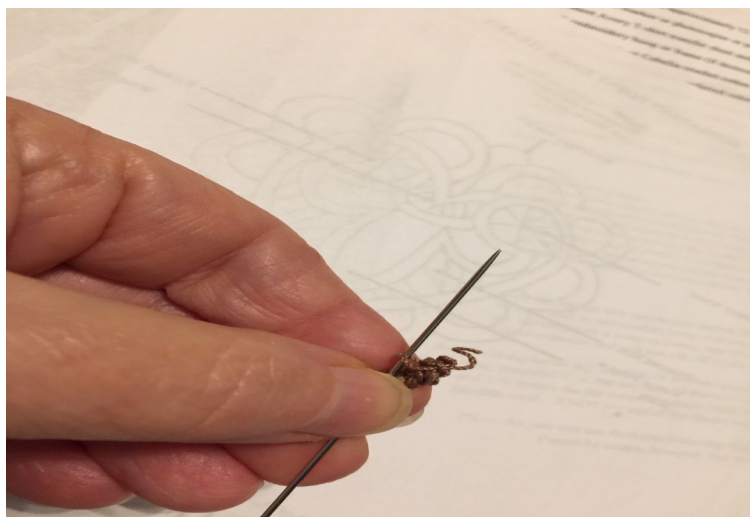


Photo F — This end of the cord unravels less automatically, but if you tug on the thread you will see which thread in the cord tightens. Use a tapestry needle to pull on that thread until it comes loose. In this way, you will relatively readily unravel this end of the cord until you have about 1 or 1 1/2 inches of thread. At that point, you can usually just pull on the thread to tighten and it will automatically form a knot. Again, you can use the end of thread to attach to another cord or, more likely since this thread will be quite short, you can glide the thread inside the cord for an inch or so before snipping off any remaining thread.

Remember that there are three sections of cord. If you have enough cord to couch all three sections, you are ready to begin the needle-made lace. However, you might need to make more cord for the short section in the middle of the design.

Step 4 : Attaching the cords where they touch or cross — In either case, when you have finished couching all the cord, begin the needle-made lace by threading a comfortable length of the size 10 thread into a tapestry needle.



Photo G — Start a new thread by gliding the threaded needle about an inch inside the cord and then exiting at the top of the cord in the picot (the little half-circle at the edge of the cord) where you want to start stitching.



Photo H — Tack the thread into that picot by running your needle through the picot from underside to top. With the size 10 thread, one tack should be enough. You will tack each new thread throughout the project and every time you end a thread anywhere in the project. When you end a thread, be sure to run the thread about an inch inside the cord before cutting it off.

In order to save thread and to keep your lace looking neat and smooth, it is a good idea to attach cords where they meet or cross as you work your needle-made lace. The directions for attaching the cords follow here, but you probably will be doing this step at the same time as you move through the design with the needle-made stitches. So let's look at how you might attach the scallop while simultaneously attaching the beads:



Photo I — Attaching cords picot-to-picot. Here you see how you can insert your threaded needle into the picot of the cord that has the thread and then into the neighboring picot of the cord that touches. Just pull the thread through both picots and then tack them together in the same way you would tack a single picot. If the two cords touch next to more than one picot, just tack as many picots as needed before gliding the thread through the inside of the cord to the next spot where it is needed (if that's within an inch or so). Otherwise glide the thread inside the cord for an inch or so and cut it off close to the cord.



Photo J — It is possible to attach a bead at the spot where you are also attaching two cords, as here. Or you can work other stitches in between areas where you are attaching cords to each other, as here, where the buttonhole “hanger” to the left has been worked, the thread glided through the cord to the spot where the two cords meet and the bead added.

If it seems more sensible to you to work one step at a time, you can do that; of course, be sure that you carefully glide the thread through the cord and tack it to a picot each time you begin or cut a thread.

Step 5 — Buttonhole Stitch. Loosely-worked buttonhole stitch, called “net stitch” in Needle-made lace, is the cornerstone of many of the needle-made laces in Romanian Point Lace technique. We will get to that as the first half of the Venice Point described in in Step 6, but first, let’s make the stitch in the closely laid format commonly only called “buttonhole stitch.” If you eventually want to hang the ornament, you will want to make a hanger with this stitch. To do so, make a loop between the top two scallops (placement is shown on the pattern) by tacking the thread in a picot, carrying the thread over to the point where you want the loop to end, tacking it to a picot there, and returning to the beginning point. Tack the thread in the original picot and begin buttonhole stitching the loop, laying the stitches smoothly touching each other while being careful to keep the ridge even on the outside edge. Tack the thread at the end-picot, slip the thread through the cord for about an inch and either cut the thread or continue to use that thread for other stitches. For more information about “net stitch” see p. 17 of the Priscilla Handbook available at:

https://www2.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/books/archive_003.pdf

If you don’t intend to hang the piece as an ornament, you will still want to review the directions for buttonhole stitch below before moving on to the Venice-point filling stitch, which in Step 6.

Buttonhole stitch can be worked from either left or right. It is formed by allowing the thread to fall in a loop, then inserting the needle into the loop and then over the thread forming the loop before drawing it up to the tension desired (Photo K). For the ornament hanger, the stitches are created with a very close, firm tension (Photos L and M). After the loop is filled with buttonhole stitches, tack the thread to the cord to a neighboring picot in order to end the loop (Photo N).



L—Photo K



R — Photo L



L—Photo M



R — Photo N

Step 6 — Venice Point (also called Pointe de Venice Stitch). [In Lacemaking, “Point” or “Pointe” actually means “Stitch” — Thus “Romanian Point Lace,” for example, means “Romanian Stitched Lace.”] Venice Point is a marvelous stitch — it looks complicated, but it is just two rows (the first with a loose tension, the second with a tight, closely-laid tension) of buttonhole stitch made inside each “Point.” It can fill areas of any shape because, the stitches in alternating rows point in opposite directions. As a result, the rows can curve and the stitches hug each other in a nicely, maybe sometimes chaotic, filling that can look quite lush. For additional description of this stitch, see page 18-19 of the Priscilla Handbook available on line at:

https://www2.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/books/archive_003.pdf

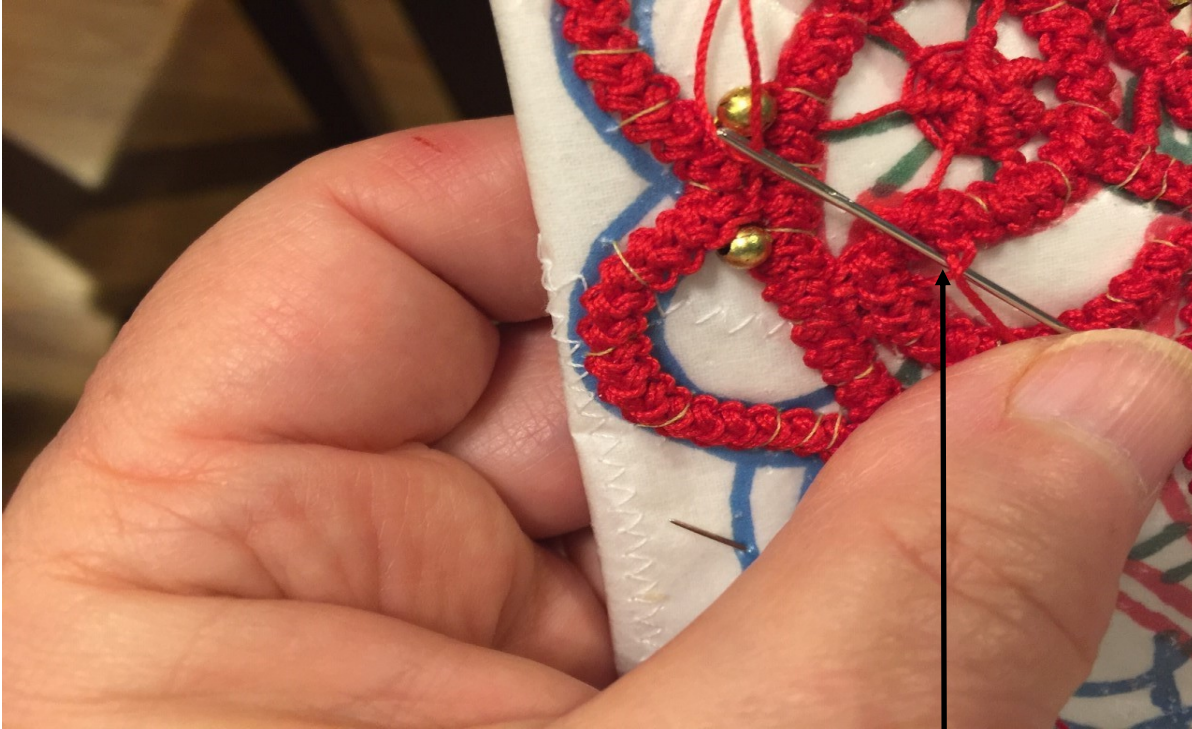


Photo 0 —

In Venice Point, the first half of the Point is a Buttonhole or net stitch with loose tension that forms an evenly spaced, rounded opening.

Venice Point is done in rows, from side-to-side in alternating rows. Start at the top on either side of the space to be filled and tack a length of thread into a side-picot one picot down from the top cord and work one loosely-laid buttonhole stitch. Then allow the thread to fall smoothly over the side of the buttonhole stitch and work three tightly-laid, firmly-tensioned buttonhole stitches over the threads on the side of the initial buttonhole stitch (Photo P).



Photo P — Work along the top cord (for ease of stitching, you might turn the piece), stitching into every-other picot with a loose buttonhole stitch and then three tightly-made buttonhole stitches inside the first buttonhole. When you come to the end of the row, tack your thread into the second-picot-from-the-top, then tack the thread one picot lower (Photo Q) and work back across the row in the opposite direction from the first row.



L—Photo Q



R — Photo R

Tack the end of the first row into a picot in the side cord and move down one picot and tack the thread there (Photo Q). Then work the Venice Point in the other direction back to the first side of the space. When your stitches reach the bottom of the space, tack the stitch to a picot of the bottom of the cord and continue working across the space (Photo R).



Photo S -- Here you see the spaces filled with the Venice Point, with the stitches in alternating rows pointing in opposite directions.

Step 7: Make the Wrapped Bars. To make the wrapped bars, tack your Size 10 thread into a picot in the place you want to begin, draw your thread to the point where you want the bar to end, tack it into a picot and then tack the thread back in the original picot. Wrap the thread closely and with even tension over these two threads (Photo S). Be careful not to overfill the bars (see Photo T) as overfilling can cause the bars to curl once the lace is removed from the pattern.



L—Photo S



R—Photo T

Step 8—Make the Ribbed Wheels (also called Spinning Wheel Rosettes). Lay foundation spokes (odd or even number, it doesn't matter) across the space to be filled, drawing the threads so that they lie flat on the pattern and cross each other at the mid-point (Photo U). Carefully begin wrapping each spoke of the wheel once individually before moving to the next spoke slipping the needle under that spoke before wrapping once around that bar. Then move on to the next spoke (Photo V). Continue in this way until you have filled the space to your satisfaction. Then slip the thread up the spoke with the shortest remaining space to the cord and tack the thread to a picot (Photo W) before gliding the thread into the braid and thus ending the wheel.



L—Photo U



R—Photo V



L—Photo W

For more information about these wheels, see pp 10-12 of the Priscilla Handbook available at:

https://www2.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/books/archive_003.pdf

NOTE: The underside of the ribbed wheels presents as flat woven stitches which are also beautiful. Remember that although technically the side against the pattern is considered the “right side” of the lace, the distinction is more important when using multiple colors in your piece because the attachments of two colors can seem somewhat “rough.” In this case, though, we are using one color. Since Romanian Point Lace is considered reversible, if you prefer the ribbed wheels, just use the working side of the lace as the “right side” of your piece.

Step 9: Double check that all the places where your cords meet or cross-over are attached. If you find that you've missed an attachment or the placement of any beads, simply add them by carefully hiding your thread for an inch or so, tacking it to a picot, and then doing whatever stitching you missed before tacking the thread again and finally hiding it in the cord and cutting the thread. Be sure that everything looks as you want it to before taking the lace from the pattern.

Step 10: Remove the lace from the pattern by cutting the basting threads FROM THE BACK OF THE PATTERN using a seam ripper or sharp points of a small scissors. Carefully remove the cut threads and lift the lace from the pattern.

Step 11: Turn the lace over to see the right side of your ornament! Although Romanian Point Lace is nearly completely reversible, the side touching the pattern is technically the right side. Your lace is likely ready to exhibit. (With this design, I have pictured the so-called “wrong” side, i.e., the side on which the stitches have been worked, because I like the look of the ribbed wheels. The other side of the wheels is also attractive, of course, and you can consider either side of the piece as your “right” side.)

If you want a stiffer, flatter lace, you can block the lace by immersing it in cold water and spreading it out on several layers of terry cloth towel, smoothing it carefully, and letting it dry. If you want an even stiffer lace, you can add Stiffy to the immersing water, but be careful not to over-stiffen the lace.

ENJOY YOUR LACE!

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Priscilla Battenberg and Point Lace Book. Boston: The Priscilla Publishing Co. 1912.

<https://www2.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/books/archive/003>

This downloadable book provides excellent directions to many needle-made lace stitches, including directions and graphics for creating the ribbed wheel, buttonhole stitch, and Venice Point (or Pointe de Venice) stitches. The book is out-of-copyright and can be freely copied and shared. If the link doesn't work, the book can be found through an on-line search as **Priscilla Point Lace Arizona** — and the link should come right up.

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