

# Functional and Fancy Fabrics

## Fabrics

A fabric is a material made from intertwining yarns or threads. Fabrics can be natural, such as cotton, silk, linen and wool, or synthetic, such as Lycra, polyester and nylon. A fabric's properties depend on its fibres and how it is made.

**Cotton** is light and soft. It is used to make all types of clothing.



**Wool** can keep you warm in the winter and cool in the summer. It is used to make jumpers and hats.



**Lace** can be made from silk, linen, cotton or synthetic fabrics. It is used as an embellishment.



**Nylon** is a synthetic fabric. It is strong, flexible and durable. It is used to make jackets and parkas.



**Polyester** is a synthetic fabric. It is strong, durable and stain resistant. It is used to make sportswear.



## Design features

Design features are the aspects of a product's design that make it functional, look good and last a long time. For example, a winter coat should be made of waterproof fabric and have warm padding, a strong zip and a large hood.

## Techniques for decorating fabric

### Block printing

Block printing uses a block with a pattern or motif carved into its surface. Ink or dye is applied to the carved surface, which is pressed onto fabric or paper repeatedly to make a pattern.



Use a roller to spread ink onto a printing tray.



Cover the printing block with ink using a sponge or brush.



Press the block onto a piece of paper or fabric.



Repeat with other blocks and colours until the pattern is complete.

### Hemming

A hem runs along the edge of a piece of cloth or clothing. It is made by turning under a raw edge and then sewing to give a neat finish to the fabric and to stop it from fraying.



Trim the edge of the fabric with pinking shears.



Turn the edge of the fabric over to make a 1.5cm hem. Pin it in place.



Use a needle and thread to sew running stitches along the hem.

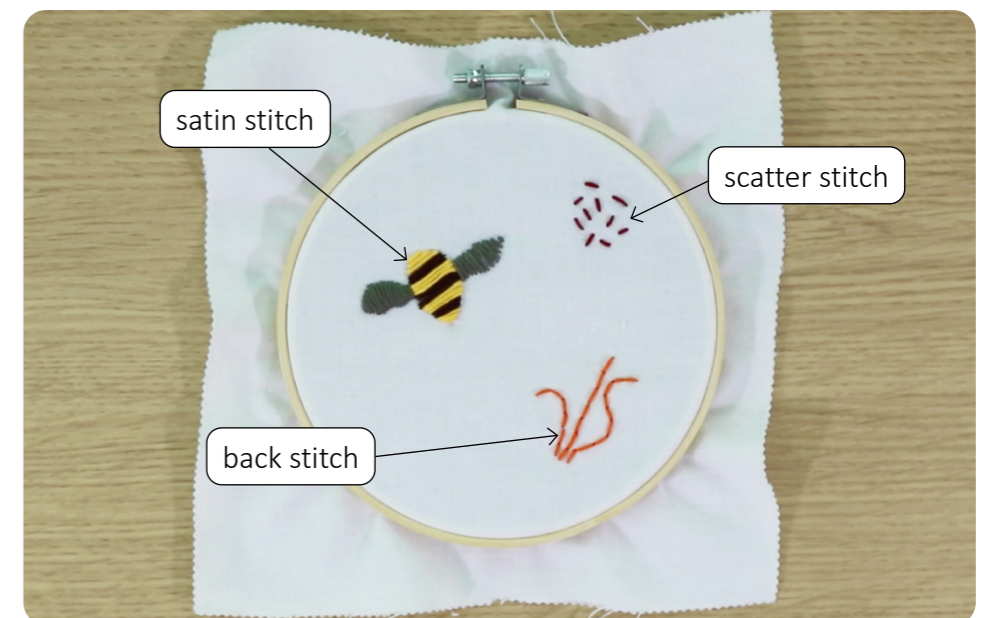


Tie a knot at the end of the hem and cut the thread. Iron along the crease to flatten the hem.

### Embellishments

Embellishments are things that can be added to fabric for decoration. They include sequins, appliqué and buttons. Patterns and motifs can also be printed or drawn onto fabric. Embroidery is another type of fabric embellishment that uses stitches and colourful thread to add patterns and pictures.

- **Scatter stitch** is used to make random stitches facing in different directions.
- **Satin stitch** is used to fill a shape with thread.
- **Back stitch** is used to give a continuous line of stitching.





## William Morris

William Morris was a British artist, designer, poet and campaigner. He was born in 1834. He and other artists and designers started the Arts and Crafts movement in the 1860s, which encouraged craftspeople to use traditional techniques.



William Morris and his friends started a business called Morris & Co, producing home furnishings, including wallpaper, stained glass windows, furniture and carpets. The wallpapers and fabrics were block printed using wooden blocks and natural dyes.



## Features of William Morris designs

William Morris designed repeating patterns with these three features:

### Form

He liked to show simple forms of animals and plants.



### Symmetry

His designs were often symmetrical.



### Colour

He only used a few colours for each pattern.



## William Morris pattern structure

William Morris built his designs on a pattern structure. He used three main patterns:

### Diamond

A pattern based on rhombus shapes.



### Wey

A pattern based on diagonal lines.



### Trellis

A pattern based on horizontal and vertical lines.



## William Morris motifs

William Morris was inspired by nature and the British countryside. His designs feature wild gardens, birds and animals. He used simple motifs of leaves, flowers, fruits and birds. These are some of William Morris' most famous designs.



*Strawberry Thief*



*Daisy*



*Willow Bough*

## Glossary

### appliqué

Decorative needlework where small pieces of fabric are sewn or stuck onto a larger piece to form a pattern.

### motif

An image or design that can be repeated to create a pattern.

### synthetic

Made from artificial substances rather than natural ones.