

## Managing Edges



I am taking some time now to talk about edges and the first step I take to secure them and prepare the surface for embellishment. It is important, as you play, to take the time to consider the end use of your piece, to look at your experiments in terms of their practicality, especially if you want them to be functional. Look at the surface you have created, determine what is needed to both secure all the elements and to preserve the ragged edges. A lot of people enjoy raggedy approach because it seems easier, I do too, but I also like the character the ragged edges impart. Still I take no shortcuts in securing them. I had mentioned that the smaller the weaving the more stitching it will take to secure it. These pieces come together extremely quickly because you eliminate the need to piece as in regular patchwork. But the end of the process becomes even more important to hold the cloth together. I am a hand stitcher, preferring the look and also the feel of a hand stitch in developing the character of the cloth. My work may appear to be raggedy, but a lot of the holding together is invisible. Believe me it is there.



There are a few steps to consider when securing and developing the base cloth. Since many of you have gone beyond the basic construction stage, I would like to encourage some thought about this part of the process. It has so much to do with the ultimate nature of the resulting cloth. Simple steps are often under emphasized and compromise the potential beauty of a piece. This class is meant to encourage experimentation, trial and error, to insure a learning experience . Many of you have come a long way in composing a piece already. You might want to try some of the stitching on a small basic block first, or if you have the confidence of experience, you might move ahead and work on a more meaningful piece. I leave that up to you.

The first step after basting (the amount of basting is dependent on how much you feel is necessary) is to stabilize your edges and ultimately your cloth. [View Video 1](#)

There are just some fabrics that don't work well with raw edges exposed, and some that work really well. You learn this with experience but many times it is quite obvious if you have a problem. In this lesson I am just talking about the options you might consider when dealing with the exposed edges in your weaving...from a functional as well as a design aspect. I often take extra time to work on the base a bit and wash it before embellishing. Even if you are making an art piece, you can enhance the surface of your woven base by washing. Even a hand wash will make the cloth bloom and sometimes even makes it easier to stitch. [View Video 2](#)

TIP- if you are going to experiment with washing, make sure you have determined that the fabrics you used will be color fast or stand up to the washing process, again, in the beginning it is good to try things in sample blocks first.