

A free project, compliments of...

*Sue Bleiweiss*

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## **Twisted Silk Journal**

I used some leftover hand painted silk fabric to make this journal with. Cotton, organza and even strips of linen would also work very nicely and create a lovely textural surface with this technique.



## SUPPLIES NEEDED

For making the machine cord:

- Fabric
- Sewing machine
- Thread

For making the journal:

- Timtex
- Fabric to line the inside of your journal
- Mistifuse
- Parchment paper
- Button cover kit
- Paper for the inside pages of the journal
- 4" elastic cording
- Textile paints, optional

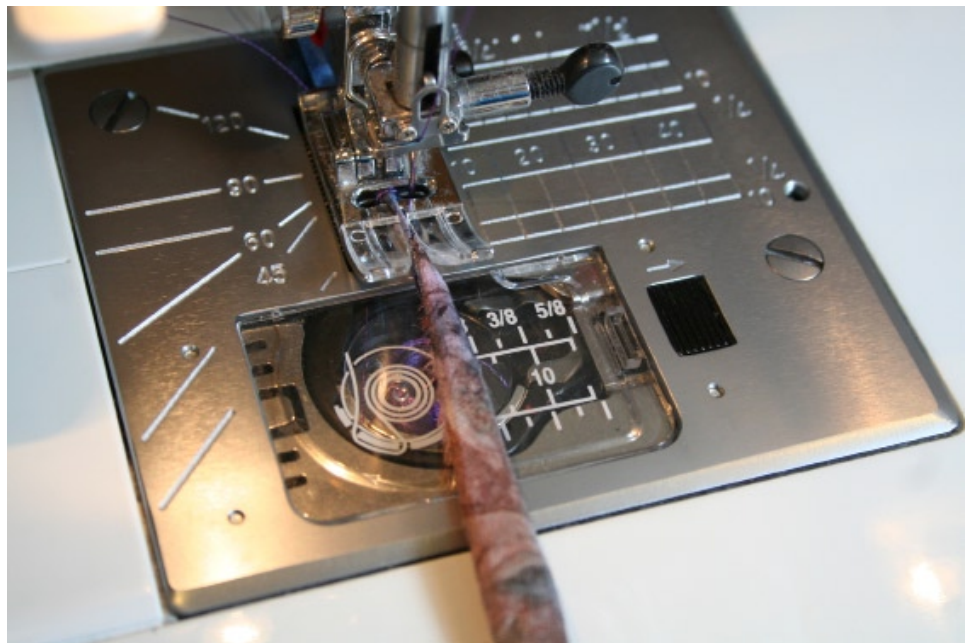
It's a good idea to make a test cord first before you tear all of your fabric into strips. I found that a 1" strip worked perfectly for silk fabric but you may want to use a larger strip if you're working with cotton or linen.

**STEP 1:** Tear your fabric into the desired strip sizes and then set your machine up with a wide zigzag stitch.



**STEP 2:** Working with one strip of fabric at a time, loosely twist it and place one end under the needle on the sewing machine a few inches in from the end of the fabric. You'll need to leave that extra few inches free so that you have something to hold onto when you start stitching.

I like to use a shiny rayon thread when I make machine cord, but cotton will work fine and metallics will add a bit of bling to your finished cord.



**Tip:** You'll need to make a generous amount of machine cord depending on the journal size you want to make and be sure to make more than you think you need so you don't come up short!

Make sure you choose a coordinating thread for the bobbin since it will show on the finished cord.



Start stitching! As you stitch you will need to continue to twist the fabric and pull it through the machine since the feed dogs may not be much help.

How fast or slow you pull the fabric through will determine what kind of thread coverage you get. It's not necessary to completely cover the cord and it's not important to make your stitches even and neat!



When you have a nice pile of machine cording done you can start creating the surface for your journal. Cut a piece of Timtex to measure 6" x 12". You can paint the Timtex with textile paints if you like. I've painted mine with some black textile paint so that if I'm not exact when I stitch down my machine cord the white surface of the Timtex won't show through.

**STEP 3:** Place a length of machine cord on the Timtex leaving about 2" of the cord hanging off the short edge to use as fringe in the finished journal. Use a zigzag stitch to sew the cording in place.



Continue sewing strips of cording to the Timtex until you've completely covered the surface. If your strips are not long enough to go all the way across the surface just overlap the ends a bit and keep stitching.

If you have some cord left over, you can use it to add some additional visual interest to the surface of the journal by stitching a swirl pattern over the top.



**STEP 4:** Once your cording is all stitched to the surface use Mistyfuse to fuse a piece of fabric to the other side of the Timtex. This is the lining of your journal.

**STEP 5:** Prepare three signatures for the inside of your journal using paper measuring 5½" x 10½" and folded in half to make signatures measuring 5½" x 5¼".

Use a sharp awl to punch the holes in your signatures. For paper signatures this size, the recommended hole placement is: ½" from the top, then 2" from the top, 3½" from the top and 5" from the top.



Open up the journal cover and with the lining side up, place one of the pages from the signatures about 5¾" in from the left edge and use it as a guide to punch three sets of holes in the journal cover by centering it between the top and bottom edges of the journal guide. Make each set of holes ¼" apart from each other.

Thread a tapestry needle with an 18" length of embroidery floss, linen twine or other sturdy thread and sew the signatures into the journal cover one at a time.

Line one signature up with a set of holes in the journal cover and starting from the inside sew through the second hole from the top of the signature to the outside of the journal leaving a 6" tail on the inside. Then sew through the top hole back to the inside. Sew through the bottom hole back out to the outside of the journal and then finally sew through the third hole from the top back through to the inside of the journal and tie a knot with the thread you left hanging.

**STEP 6:** To create the fringe along the edges of the journal use a seam ripper to remove any excess stitching along the cording that extends beyond the edge of journal.

**STEP 7:** Add a button to the outside of your journal by using a button cover kit to create a coordinating button for the outside. Punch a small hole ¾" in from the edge of the back cover of the journal. Center the hole between the top and bottom edge. Fold the elastic in half and tie the ends together. Push the loop through the hole from the inside to the outside and then loop the elastic around the button on the front of the journal.