

Design Resource

## Hand Embroidery - Ahmedabad

Traditional Embroidery

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S.,

Abhishek G. and Lija M. G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/hand-embroidery-ahmedabad>



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## Introduction

Hand embroidery is one of the well-known Handicraft of Gujarat. Hand embroidery is basically embellishing the cloth with colorful threads and beautiful beads. It is an art that is made with help of needles and thread creating beautiful patterns of design on the fabric. The embroidery designs are delicate and influenced by Mughal designs. The designs and motifs are immensely illustrated by using subtle shades of colors.

The embroidery was traditionally made on household objects such as toran and chakla and on the long skirts worn by the women of the region. The handwork is done carefully using colored threads. Each embroidery styles and motifs depend on the artisan's creativity. The colorful threads and beading work gives an aesthetic look to the cloth.

Aari Embroidery is a minute chain stitch done by a hook which is an adaptation of the cobbler's awl. It is also one of the basic sources of income for many communities in Gujarat. The technique's origin lies in the mocha community tradition of embellishing leather footwear with intricate patterns executed in chain stitch. Although today the embroidery is chiefly done on textiles. While male artisans undertake the stitching of the objects, the women embroidered them with a variety of floral forms accompanied by animal and human figures. The beautifully hand-stitched fabric design is mainly done by women.



Embroidery made on the fabric separately then cut and attached to the wear.



Embroidery done on the netted cloth which can be attached anywhere.

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The outline of the design is marked using piercing pen.



Artisans involved in embroidery making on the fabric spread on the frame.



The outline of the design is embroidered with golden wire and the designs are filled with cotton embroidery threads.

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Beautifully embellished bridal attire.



Different types of stitches are embroidered which makes the design look beautiful.

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## Tools and Raw Materials

The good quality needle tools are available in different sizes and are used in embroidery work. Colorful threads are used according to the motif, which varies in size.

### Basic tools and raw materials used are:

- **Scissors:** Scissors help to cut the threads whenever required.
- **Aari:** A needle with a hook, in the end, is known as 'Aari' and is used to embroider the design on the fabrics.
- **Beads and Stones:** Beads and stones are used to embellish the cloth.
- **Fabric Gum:** Fabric gum is used to fix stones and beads on the fabric.
- **Threads:** Thread is the basic raw material to stitch designs. Types of Embroidery Threads used are:
  - Millitary Wire: A two-part thread, consisting of a central core wire, with a coiled wire around it.
  - Pearl Purl: Pearl Purl is a wire that is wound into a tight coil that looks like a strand of gold pearls.
  - Bullion Thread: Wire Bullions are very fine wire threads wound into a tubular shape, similar to purl threads but tend to stretch.
  - Twists or Torsade Thread:  
Twists or Torsade thread is made of multiple strands of metal twisted together.
  - Matte Embroidery Cotton:  
The thickness of matte embroidery cotton comes from a tight twisting of 5-ply thread, which makes this floss eminently suitable for embroidering on heavy fabrics.

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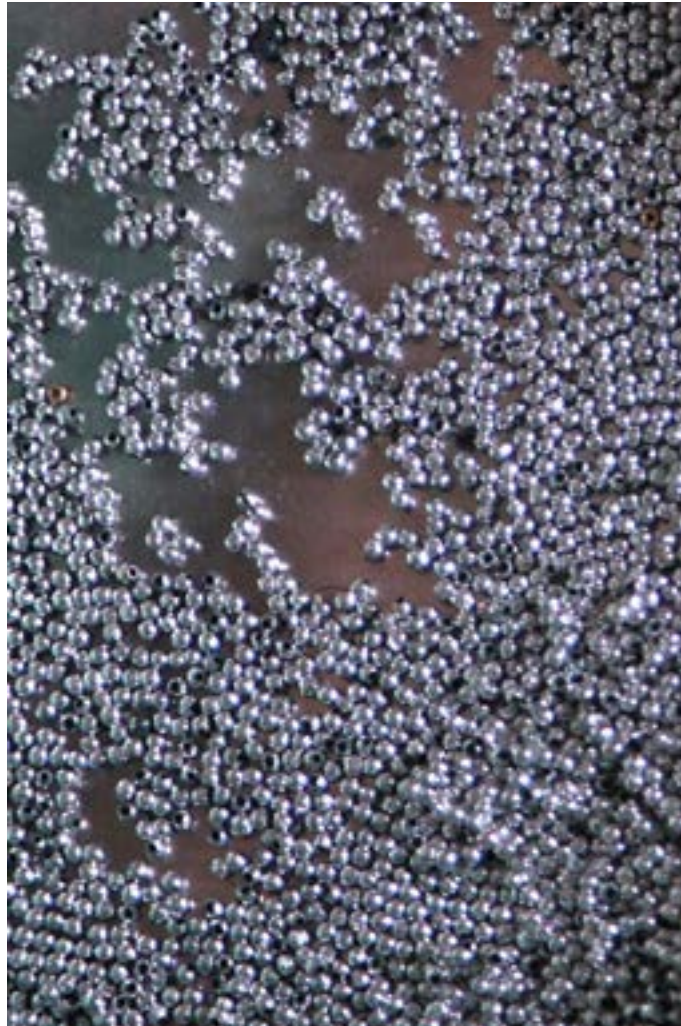
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Beads- used to embellish on the cloth.



Golden wire used in embroidery to give the fabric sparkle effect.

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Threads-basic raw material to stitch designs.



Design stencil is used for fabric measurement.



Golden beads are used to give the fabric royal look.

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White pencil is used to draw the design on the fabric.



Golden Threads are used to embroider the borders of the design.



Embroidered design is hammered to strengthen the stitches.



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Needle (ari) shaped like a hook in the end used to embroider.



The zinc oxide paste is rubbed on the design sheet to trace the design on the fabric.



Type of golden wire used in embroidery.

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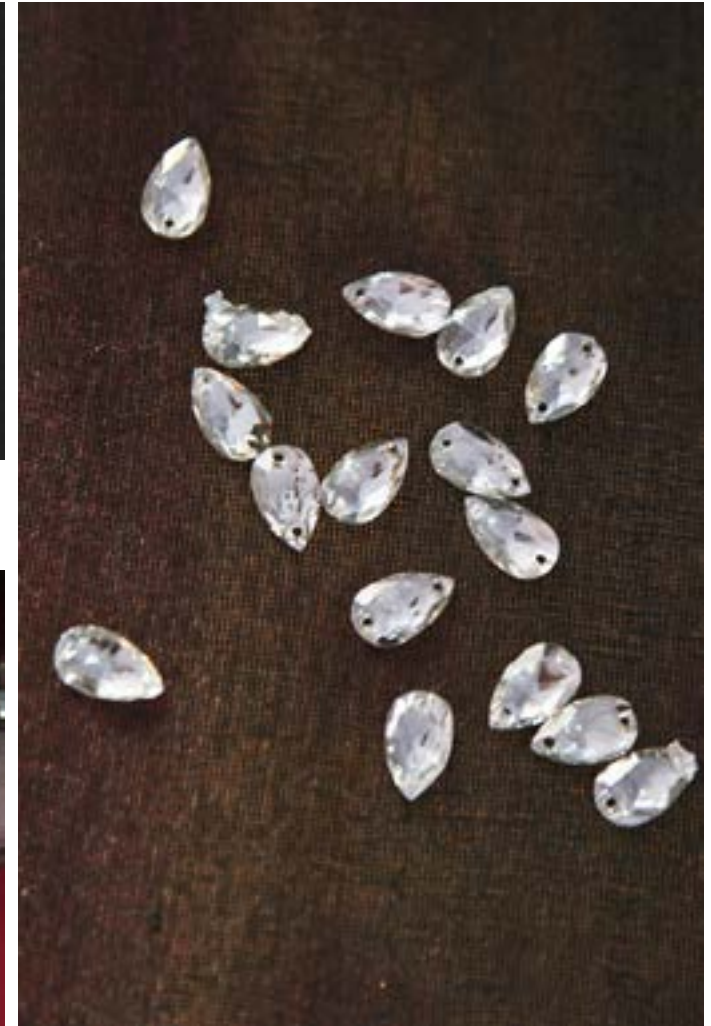
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Glass stone is used to give royal look to the fabric.



Stones are glued on the fabric using fabric adhesive.



Design stones used in embroidery to create designs.

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## Making Process

Initially, designs are drawn on a plastic sheet or tracing sheet. Plastic sheets are mainly used for tracing because it is durable for a long time. Using piercing tools small holes are made on the outlines of the drawn design. The fabric to be embroidered is stretched from the four sides for stiffness and tied to a metal frame. Stencils of costume design are placed on the fabric and the outline of the measurement is marked by stitching the borderlines with needle and thread at the required areas to be embroidered.

A designed plastic sheet is placed on the fabric to trace the design. A thin paste of zinc oxide powder and kerosene is prepared through which the design is traced. The paste is rubbed on the plastic sheet. The zinc oxide paste when rubbed on the designed plastic sheet passes through the pores made and the design is traced on the fabric. Artisan starts to do embroidery work on the traced design with colorful embroidery threads. The thread is held with a finger at the reverse of the fabric and the ari, an awl-like needle with a sharp point shaped like a hook, is held on the top. The ari is pierced through the cloth and the thread is brought to the upper side and locked with the previous stitch. This process is repeated until the desired form is created on the surface of the fabric.

After embroidering a few areas the stitches are hammered. A wooden piece is kept beneath the fabric for support and on the top, the embroidered design is hammered with a wooden mallet to strengthen the stitches. The designs are also embroidered with beads, and golden and silver threads to make the design look more elegant. Sparkling and colorful stones are also glued on the fabric using fabric adhesive, giving the wearer a royal look. After completion of the embroidery work, the fabric is removed from the frame, is reversed to the other side and tied again. Fabric glue is applied to the threads behind the embroidered design so that the threads don't come out. The fabric is cut and stitched to complete the wear and then packed for sale.

Hand embroidered costumes are made in fewer numbers as it requires more time and labour. The embroidery is mostly done on bridal and traditional wear.

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Plastic sheets are pierced according to the designs drawn.



Ends of the fabric are tied to the metal frame.



Fabric is spread on all sides and tied firmly to the frame.



Stencil is spread along the fabric for measurement.

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Thread is stitched along the sides of the stencil to mark the measurement.



Ends are stitched by the artisan by firmly holding to the fabric.



Thin paste of zinc powder and kerosene is made for tracing.



The paste is applied on the design sheet that is pinned to the fabric to trace the design.

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Artisan applies the paste evenly on the plastic sheet by spreading with hands.



Bullion threads are stitched along the border of the design.



Stone wire is embroidered on the traced design.



Designs are traced on the fabric from the plastic sheet.

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The designs are filled with thick embroidery cotton thread.



Flower designs are made with red silk thread.



Different types of stitches are made to make the design look elegant.



After embroidering the stitches areas are hammered.

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Golden pipe beads picked up by using hook needle.



Golden embroidery wire is cut in required size.



Artisan stitching the golden pipe beads on the fabric using needle.



Artisan embroidering a bird design with golden wire.



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Artisan involved in embroidering a bridal wear.



Some designs are drawn on the fabric instead tracing the design.



Sparkling stones are glued on the fabric using fabric adhesive.



Different size and shapes of stones are glued to give the wear a royal look.

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Fabric glue is applied on the threads behind embroidered design for stiffness and to avoid the threads from coming off.



The embroidered designs are cut out from the fabric.



Soldering process is used to heat and cut the embroidered design, to retain the tension of threads.



The cut designs are stitched together to make one costume.

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## Products

Hand embroidery is a well-known craft in Gujarat state. Hand embroidery making is one of the most beautiful artworks made, which decorates the fabrics with beads and threads. The products made have an elegant and traditional look. The artisans use vibrant contrast colors with colorful stones and beads to enhance the beauty of the fabrics. All the embroidery work is done by skilled and experienced craft persons.

The embroidery made in Gujarat has unique in its style with its different motifs, patterns and identity. The themes mainly involved in making are inspired by creepers, flowers, bushes, animals and birds figures. Hand embroidery is also done on various products like handbags, cushion covers, wallets, table covers etc. According to the new trends, designs are made to fit the market demand. The traditional embroidery made in Gujarat varies from place to place.



Embroidered bridal lehanga with stone, beads and elegant thread work, gives a gorgeous look to bridal attire.

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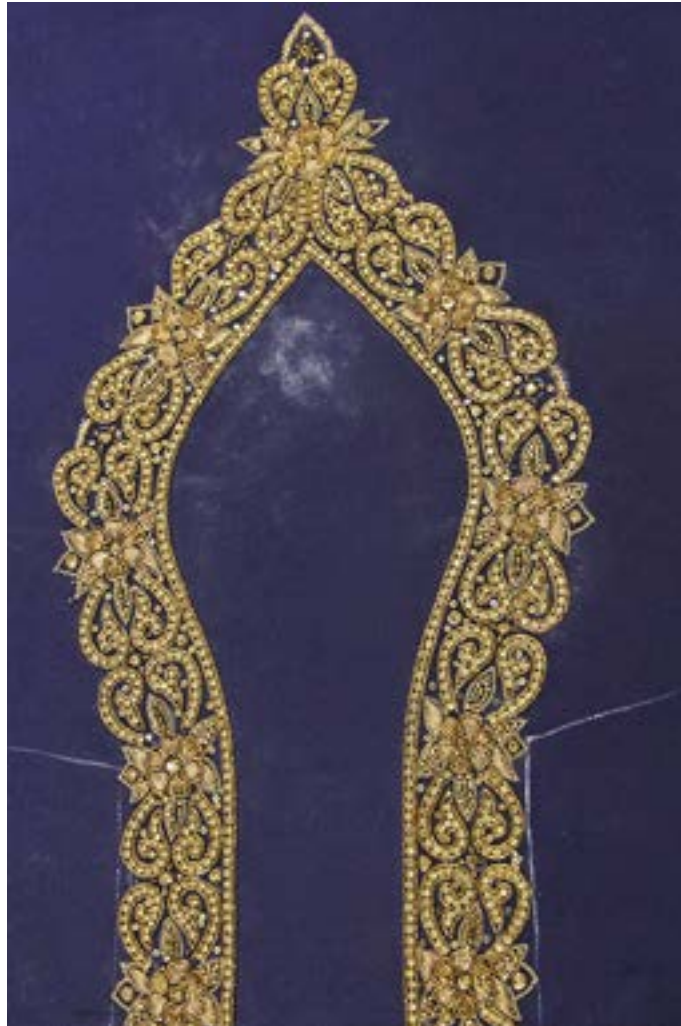
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Golden thread embroidery work is given a classy look to the neck design or pattern.



A beautiful combination of thread and fabric is presented gracefully.

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Bold and colorful motifs blend with each other in harmony, which gives a heavy look to the fabric.



Arrangement of different types of stone and threads enhances hand embroidery.

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The motifs are made of flora and bird figures.



Artisan takes inspiration from the surroundings and captures the view in his embroidery work.

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White pearls, stone and thread work are creatively placed and appeared.

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## Video



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## Contact Details

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