

THREAD ROLLS

One of the best tricks I learned for keeping my working threads under control came from Betty Chen Louis, a truly remarkable teacher. In one of her workshops, Betty demonstrated how making a simple roll out of single, folded piece of Kleenex could keep our working threads neat and tangle free as we moved from one area of the design to another, learning a new stitch or technique. Going back to work on a previous stitch or technique was as simple as unwinding the thread from the roll, and since the workshop I have used this technique with almost all my pieces, especially when the technique I am using involves working with multiple threads.



The basic thread roll that I use today are made from pieces of 1" x 3" white felt that are rolled and blind stitched along the edge to hold the roll together. To enable me to tack the roll to the stretcher bars, I leave a small opening or flange in one corner large enough to accommodate a straight pin or a thumb tack.

Thread rolls are invaluable for shading, laid stitches and other techniques where multiple working threads are used. A thread roll will keep unused working threads temporarily anchored out of the way as well as maintaining the tension on the thread. They will also keep the working thread from the damage that sometimes occurs when temporarily anchoring a thread by winding it around a thumb tack.

