

Hello everyone!

## Happy Easter!

It is hard to believe that it is already March and Easter is a few short weeks away! Spring always puts me in the mood to sew, so I thought I would send along some interesting tidbits about (hand) sewing needles!

I also have a wonderful new thread from DMC, a 100% linen floss. It is a 6 stranded floss and comes in a skein just like their regular embroidery floss, but it is linen! It is brand new, available in 12 colors that range from dusty pink, light blue, and yellow to browns, bone, and ecru. The colors correspond with the DMC colors:



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778 779 822 3013 3790 Ecrú

It retails for \$1.29 per skein, but as an introductory offer, we have a set of all 12 colors for only **12.00!**

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Call (805) 529-9423 or email me ([vaune@vaune.com](mailto:vaune@vaune.com)) today and order yours!

Now on to needles!

Needles are made from a drawn wire that is cut to a length equal to two needles (the needles are made two at a time). The points are then formed on each end and the needles are ground to make the points fine and sharp. Next, the eyes are marked and stamped. Any metal scraps are removed. The needles are then hardened and tempered, to prevent the needles from being brittle. They are scoured, to remove any burrs, and then polished. Once this is complete, the needles are nickel plated, which helps prevent rust.

**\*\*\*Tip\*\*\*** If you are having a hard time threading a needle, try turning it around and putting the thread through the other side! Because the eyes are stamped in the needle, it is going to be easier to put the needle through on one side than the other, especially if the eye is small!

Needles come in many different sizes. The size of the needle used depends on the fabric that it is going to be used on, and the size of the thread it is going to be used with! Typically, the lighter the fabric, the finer the thread, the smaller the needle.

**\*\*\*Tip\*\*\*** For needles, the **LARGER** the number, the **SMALLER** the needle!

There are several different types of needles, each with a different purpose. While I will be the first one to admit that sometimes, I just use whichever needle is the most handy, there is a purpose to the different types of needles! A sharp, for example, is a much better choice to hem a sweet little voile baby dress than a darning needle would be. Here is a list of the most

commonly used needles (at least in heirloom sewing) and what they are generally used for.

**Sharps** – This is considered the standard sewing needle. It is a medium length needle with a round eye.

**Embroidery** (also called Crewel) – These needles are the same length and width as Sharp needles, but with a longer, oval eye. These needles are often used for embroidery and smocking!

**Milliner** (also called Straw) -These needles are long, with a round eye. Often used for millinery, basting, and decorative sewing. These needles are wonderful to use when making bullions! The shaft of the barrel of the needle is straight, not graduated, so when the thread is wrapped around the needle, all of the wraps are the same size!

**Between**s – A short needle with a round eye. This needle is often called a quilting or a quilter's needle.

**Darner** – These are long needles with an oval eye, used for darning and basting. Also used for picture smocking and smocking with Ribbon Floss.

**Tapestry** – These needles have a large eye and a blunt point, often used for needlepoint. The blunt point allows the needle to go through fabric without tearing it, which is helpful when working with a loose weave fabric, such as linen.

**Chenille** – These needles are the same as Tapestry needles, except with a sharp point.

When choosing your needle, keep in mind what you are going to be sewing on! Needles make holes in your fabric, and you want the smallest hole possible, but the needle has to be large enough to accommodate your thread!

Some of my favorite needles are:

**Milliner** needles – for bullions! I use 7,8,9 and 10 milliners for bullions, depending on how big I want my bullions to be.

**10 Sharp** – for hems. This is a small needle and makes it easy to pick up a thread or two when hemming a garment.

**7 Between** – for working basic embroidery with floche. The round eye is not as wearing on floche as an oval eye. Floche is a 2 ply, soft twist thread and is not as 'sturdy' as floss, so a round eye helps.

**8 Embroidery** – I use this for smocking.

**7 Darner** – I use this for picture smocking.

**5 Darner** – This needle is a bit heavier and the eye is a bit larger, which makes it wonderful for using with Ribbon Floss!

Hope you have enjoyed this information! Next month I will talk about sewing machine needles!

Have a wonderful Easter!

Vaune