



threads



ThreadPro useful when working with metallic threads, also helpful with any sewing thread when there's only a small amount left on a spool. This thread is more tightly wound and breaks less as it unwinds.

Consider the direction in which the thread winds off the spool as you sew for better stitching, cross-wound spools should feed off the top and straight-wound spools should feed off the side. Also, some threads behave better when they are pulled from the back of the spool, while others pull better from the front. If you're having difficulty, try removing the thread and turning it around.

about bobbin thread?

Threads especially designed for machine embroidery are strong enough to withstand the stress of dense stitching, yet fine enough to be used on densely embroidered designs. There are several types of bobbin threads, so I suggest keeping a variety of weights


and similar weight and fiber content.

Use the right needle

Fortunately, needle manufacturers have designed needles specifically for embroidery thread, some with specialized eyes that eliminate fraying or stripping the thread as it passes through them. Machine-embroidery needles by Schmetz or Madeira have slightly rounded points to avoid damage to rayon threads. Topstitching needles can also be used with most embroidery threads. And Sullivan's Metafil, Madeira's Metallic, and the Schmetz Metallica needles, for example, designed for metallic embroidery thread, have an elongated eye and a special shaft to reduce friction.

Choose the needle size according to the weight of your fabric. An improperly sized needle or an old or nicked needle can cause thread to fray and break. Remember to replace needles often (I change mine after every five hours of sewing time).

You may come across recom-



mendations to use a silicone- or Teflon-based thread lubricant, which coats the thread to make it smooth and flexible, reducing friction and fraying and helping the thread glide easily through the needle. These products can work well, but before using any of them, be sure to check your machine manual. Some manufacturers clearly state that lubricants should not be used with their machines.

Armed with these tips, you can be confident when using these wonderful specialty threads. And they're sure to add excitement to your machine embroidery. ♦

Sharee Dawn Roberts is the owner of Web of Thread in Paducah, Ky., and is an award-winning free-motion machine embroiderer.

Dragonflies to embroider: The design on p. 44, created by Threads' Art Director Karen Meyer and digitized by Oklahoma Designs (embroideryonline.com), can be downloaded from our Web site, threads magazine.com, for computerized embroidery, or download the artwork for free-motion embroidery, as the author has done above.