

autodigitizing

Thread Blending and Manual Punch

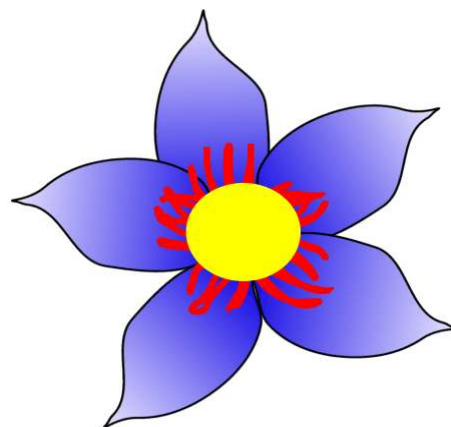
part 2 of 3

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In this part, we're going to do the shading for the flower petals. You'll play with radial stitching, densities, and feathered stitches!



Open autodigitizing



In the File menu, choose Open, and find your previously saved file "Blended Flower 2" – you should be able to see the picture of it if you have thumbnails enabled in windows. *I have mine stored in c:\autodigitizing\stitch file, and I mentioned that to you in part one, when we first saved the file. You may have made a note somewhere about where you put yours!*

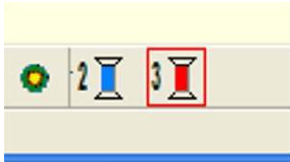
First Shading

Notice that the graphic has a nice chunk of white space below the flower. This is going to be helpful for the next step!

- Drag a box around all five petals to select them all with black corner boxes keep this box that you're dragging smaller than the graphic, so the graphic isn't part of the selection. This is done by leaving some of that white area at the bottom out of your selection area.
- Press the Ctrl-key and G-key on your keyboard together in order to group all this stuff together so that it's one piece. You can also find this Group command on the Edit menu.
- Copy this selected flower, and Paste a new copy on top of the original.



In the Film strip, find the puzzle piece icon between frames 5 & 6. It's the color change marker, and will open a color selection window. Choose red and click OK. *You probably won't sew with red, but for now, we want to be able to see what we're doing!*



Click the red spool in the lower left corner of the screen. This will select all of the red elements in the design.



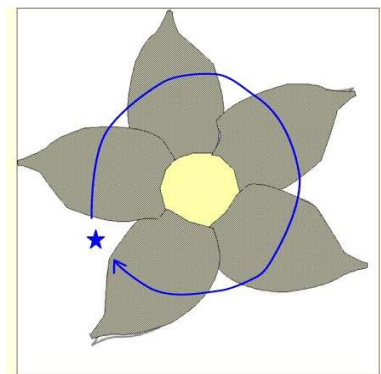
Click on the Outline mode icon to make all your petals look gray and cross-hatched.



Choose the Divide with Curve icon. Your mouse cursor will change to something like this:

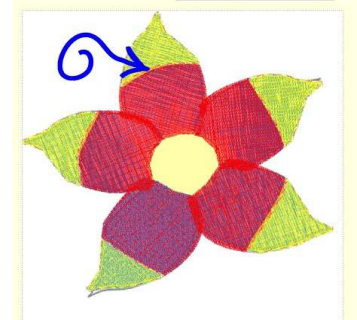


- Place that cursor somewhere in the neighborhood of where you see the little star in this picture at right. Hold your mouse button down, and drag it around the flower to draw a rough circle around the flower, as shown by the blue line I've drawn over this screen shot. Press the Enter key to finish the line just outside the last petal (you have to be sure to cross the line!) Then press the ESC-key to deactivate the Divide with Curve tool.



- Generate Stitches.
- In the Film strip, scroll through and the first red flower petal tip. Left click on it. You'll see the "marching ants highlight around it on the main screen. Continue scrolling, and hold the Ctrl-key while you left click on each red flower petal tip. All five should be selected. *You can tell them from the bases because they're pointier!*
- Right click on one of the highlighted film strip frames and choose Move to Bottom
- Click on the puzzle piece/Color Change icon between frames 10 & 11 and choose yellow.

- ❑ Generate Stitches.
- ❑ Click on the Save icon to save your design again. Let's name this one Blended Flower 3.



Now we're going to blend these layers!

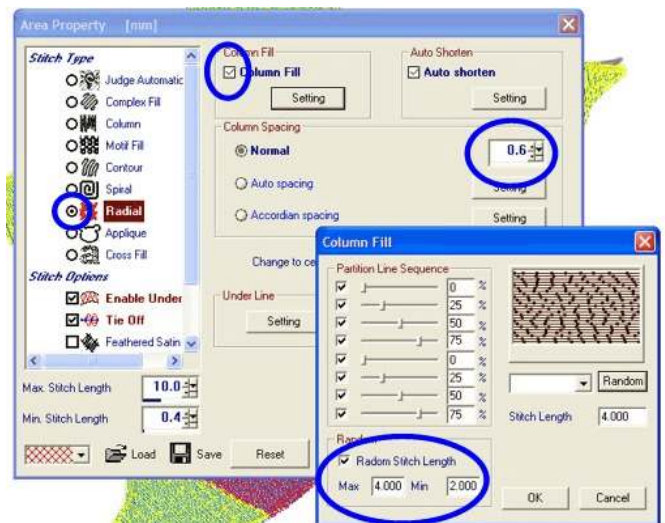
Your flower looks something like this right now:

Let's start with that "top" petal that I've marked with an arrow.

- ❑ Right click on the upper part of the petal, in the yellow area – You'll see a cool little window with pop up that I can't make a screen shot of. It will show a thumbnail of the yellow area and the blue area underneath it. Choose the yellow area by clicking on the yellow area thumbnail.
- ❑ Now, hold the Ctrl-key down and right click upper left petal in the yellow area again. This time, when the thumbnails come up, choose the blue area. *The Ctrl-key lets you select more than one element at a time.*

- ❑ One more time, hold the Ctrl key down and this time, right click in the red area of the petal. You'll get thumbnails of the red area and the blue area – click the red one!

- ❑ Now you've got one entire petal selected, and we're going to make them "match." Press the space bar and this Area Property window opens:



- ❑ Click the dot next to Radial to select it.
- ❑ Click in the box by Column fill to choose that and click on the Settings button in the Column Fill box.
- ❑ In the Column Fill Properties window, put a check in the box by Random Stitch Length and set the Max at 4, and the Min at 2. Click OK to confirm this choice.

Column Fill is satin stitching with stitch points in the area – it works like a “complex fill” area, but it can do things like radiating, which the complex fill can’t do.

In the Column Spacing area, choose Normal, and set the spacing to 0.6

Click on the words Enable Underlay – clicking in the box would remove the check mark that was there by default.

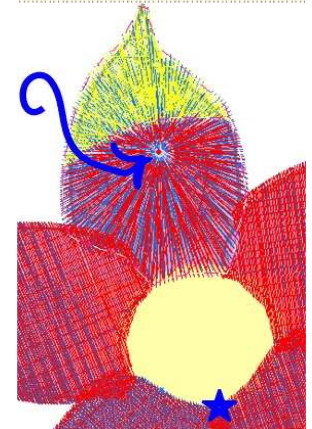
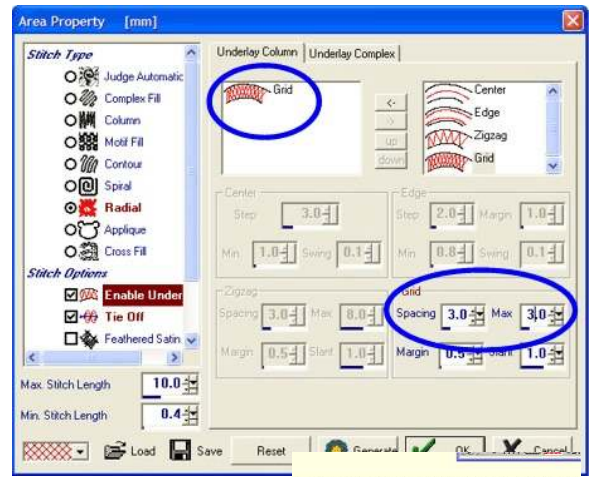
Choose the Underlay Column tab. Click on the little picture with zigzag, hold the mouse button down, and drag it over to the right hand column. Click on Grid, and drag it to the left side.

At the bottom of the Area Property window, click on the Generate button to confirm your choices and make them happen.

Your petal will look something like this:

See the red dot in the middle of the petal? On this picture, I’ve marked it with an arrow.

Put your mouse cursor over the red dot, and the cursor will change to a 4-way arrow. Left click and hold the mouse button so you can drag the red dot down to where I’ve marked with a blue star.



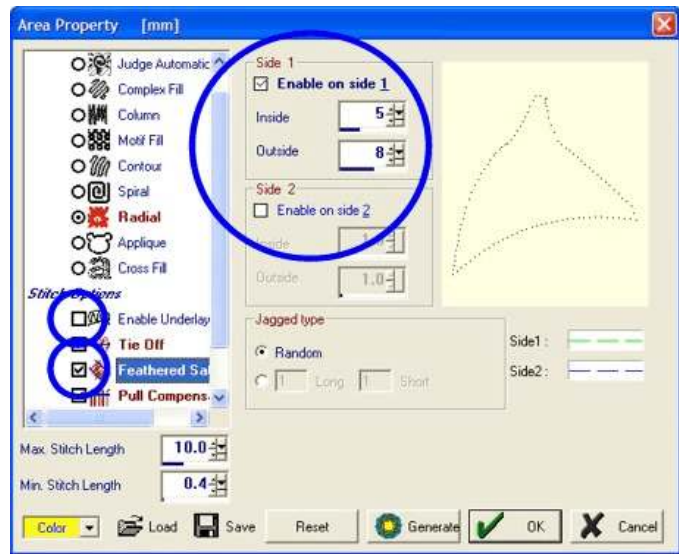
Setting the radiation point for all three colors to the exact same spot is important when we’re blending threads. This way, the angle will be the same, and thread colors will sort of fall between each other, rather than criss-crossing each other. If we were using plain old fills, or plain satin stitching, it would be important to remember this little detail too!

Generate stitches.

Right click anywhere on your work area but the selected petal. This deselects everything.

Right click on the yellow part of the petal. When the thumbnails come up, choose yellow.

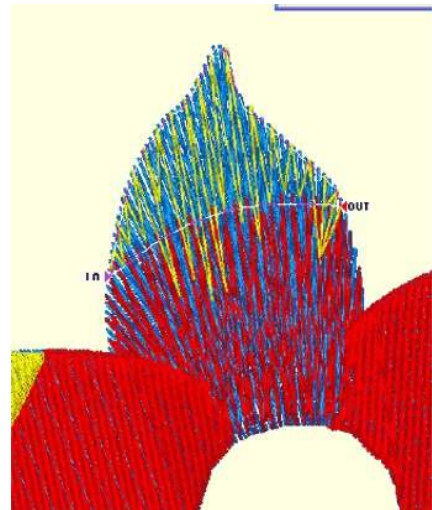
- Press the space bar to bring up the Area Property window.
- The Column Fill setting will show first. Change the spacing to 1.8, Click in the box next to Enable Underlay to disable it, and click on the box next to Feathered Satin to select it.



This lighter density lets the base color show through!

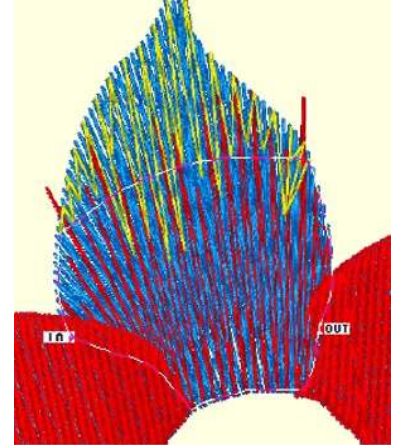
- Choose the following: in the Side 1 box, make sure Enable on Side 1 is checked, set inside to 5 and outside to 8 – *you can either type in the number, or you can use the arrows to take you to that number, or roughly that number!*
- Make sure that “Enable on Side 2” is unchecked.

note: I knew which side you should choose because I practiced before writing it down – here’s how I found out for sure: trial and error! You may also note blue and green lines on two of the sides of your object in that little preview window in the upper right corner of this window!



- Click the Generate button to confirm and make your changes happen.
- See the In and Out flags on my picture here? Make sure yours are in that same place. This will help avoid “traveling stitches” in the middle of the area that would show and look nasty. (Move them elsewhere, and see what happens. You can always UNDO)
- Generate Stitches.
- Right click on the red section of the petal. Choose the red area from the thumbnail list.
- Press the space bar to bring up the Area Property window.

- This area is sort of like the yellow one, but this time, set the Spacing to 1.5, click to uncheck the “Enable Underlay” option, and click in the Feathered Satin box.
- On the Feathered Satin properties, first disable side 1 by unchecking the box next to “Enable on Side 1.”
- Click in the box by “Enable on Side 2.” Set Inside to 5, and Outside to 8
- Click the Generate button to confirm and make your changes happen.
- As we did with the yellow section, check the In/Out flags for this red area. See where I put them? Generate stitches again.



Some stitches may stick out. This is OK, we’ll take care of it later!

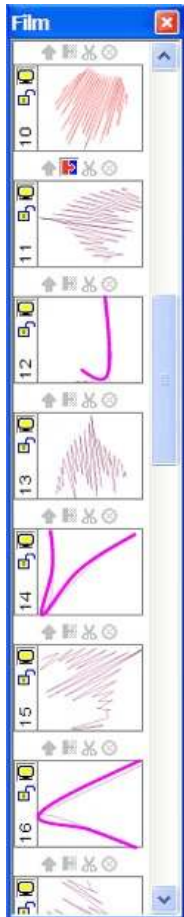
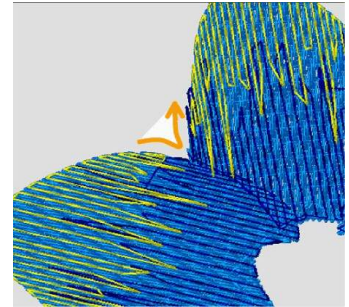
note – sometimes, radiating will be a bit off from direction of blue layer – it should be pretty doggone close!, so find red dot, and move it a bit and generate again (repeat if needed) to make radiating all match. you may need/want to move it way far out of flower – wherever works! Blending works best if angle is the same on each layer.

- Click on the Save icon to save your design again. Let’s name this one Blended Flower 4.
- REPEAT from “**Now we’re going to blend these layers!**” FOR ALL PETALS (replace or rename each save, your option, but if you rename, add a letter at the end, rather than changing the number, please – it saves me confusion if you do!)

Making Stitching a Little Cleaner



- Choose the Insert Line tool and draw a line between each yellow area, like you see in this picture at the right.



- These new lines are at the end of the film strip. Highlight each one and move it to the spot between the yellow petal segments that it connects. I know I've told you yellow, but I changed the picture in this capture of the film at left, so you could see it better!
- Most likely, the lines you added had their own color, and now you have a color stop between each of these segments and lines. Click the Puzzle pieces to remove the color stops, so that the lines and petal segments are all one color.

These lines we've made are "traveling stitches," so there aren't jumps to clip when we sew! (Remember? It's the mark of a good digitizer!)

- Click on the Save icon to save this as – blended flower5

Removing Stray Stitches

- You may have some red feather stitches sticking out beyond the boundaries of the petals. If so, you need to delete individual stitches – click on the 3D View icon and also on the Zoom to Fit icon.



- In the lower left corner, by the view mode icons and the Generate Stitches icon, you'll find the "Edit mode" icon. It looks like a scissors. Click on it, and you'll be in the "edit stitches" mode.
- Left click on a protruding stitch to select it.
- Press the delete key, to get rid of the bad stitch,
- Pick another stitch, repeat – until your strays are taken care of. When the screen starts looking icky, press the F5 key on the top row of keys on your keyboard, and the screen will be redrawn so that you'll be able to see better what needs to be fixed yet, if anything. (There's also a place to do this in the View menu)
- Click on the Save icon and replace the old version.

*We're about here now, and it's time for a break!
You could stitch this flower now, if you wanted to, after inserting a center, which would be most easily done using the insert circle tool.*

See you in Part Three!

