

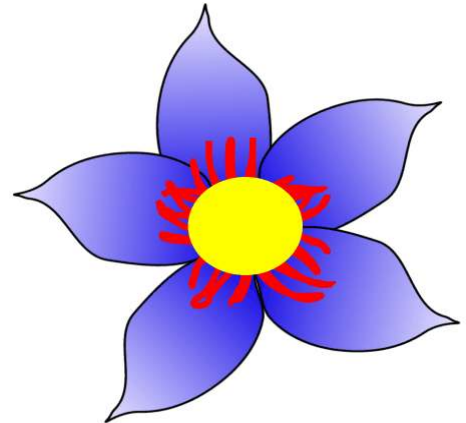
autodigitizing

Thread Blending and Manual Punch

part 1 of 3

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In this first part, we're going to create the basic flower design.



Open autodigitizing



Click the Insert Image icon, and find the graphic named “Blended Flower” which you downloaded with this lesson. Click on the graphic’s name, and click the Insert button at the bottom of the Insert Image window.

- In the Shape Depiction window, leave all things as they are, but click in the box next to Punch manually, then click okay. *There are two reasons we're going to choose manual punch – first, the shading in this graphic would make AUTO digitizing this design less than fun, second, and more important – the lesson is all about using the manual punching features of the program!!!*
- The Resize window will come up. Change the width to 98, unless you have a smaller hoop limitation. Make sure that Ratio Proportions is checked, and click OK. *We're making this flower kind of big, which is helpful as we learn!*
- In the View menu, click on Navigator Window to put a check next to it, and bring this handy tool up on your screen!



Click the **Film** icon to open the Film strip – another handy tool! (It will be empty for now)

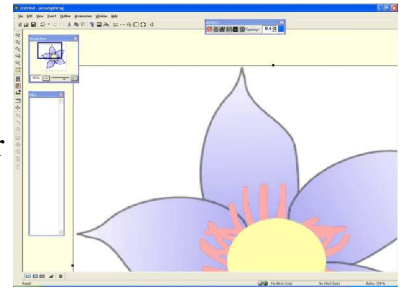
Click to open the Default toolbar



- Click the color chip in the Default/Quick Change bar and change the color to light blue



- Zoom in on the “top” petal so it nearly fills your screen. Your screen will look something like this:



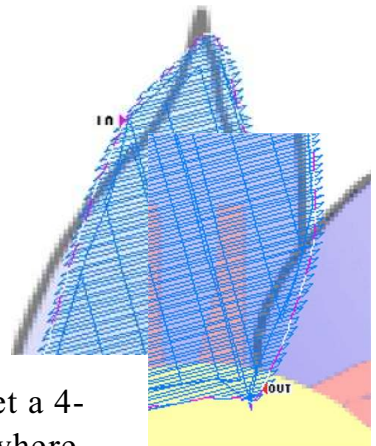
- Choose the Fill tool. Trace & click around that top petal - right click to make curves, left click to make corners. The shape does not have to be exact, since the picture won't be with the stitch out later... The point at the tip of the petal will stitch better if it's squared off some. *(Neat to know: you can hold your mouse button down and trace all the way around the petal rather than tracing and clicking every now and again. You need to be careful doing this, though, so that you don't make your line cross itself)*

- Press the Enter key on your keyboard to close the “circle” of the petal.
- Press the ESC key on your keyboard to deactivate the fill tool. *Cool recently learned shortcut: pressing the Enter key a second time instead of the ESC key also deactivates the tool!*

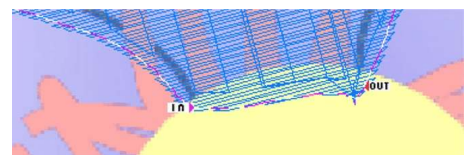


- Click the Zoom All icon to see the entire graphic again.

- Right click on your newly digitized petal. See the little in and out flags? That's where the stitching will start and end.



- If you put your cursor over the IN or OUT flag, you'll get a 4-pointed arrow that means that you can move the flag to where you want it. Move the In and Out points for this petal to where you see in this picture:



Moving these will eliminate jump stitches that would need clipping. This makes more efficient stitching – the mark of a good digitizer!

EDIT

Let's talk about if you didn't like the shape of your petal very well! You can change it, and very easily.

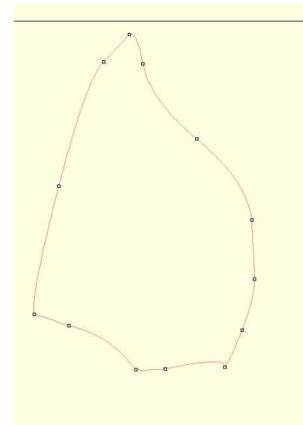
- You can see the “marching ants” highlighting mark around your petal. *It's not really ants, that's just an amusing description someone I know used for that line, and it's really stuck in my head! It's really red and blue alternating dashes*



In the lower left corner of the screen, you'll find this Outline Mode icon. Click it, and your petal will change its appearance. It will become marked with a gray cross hatching.



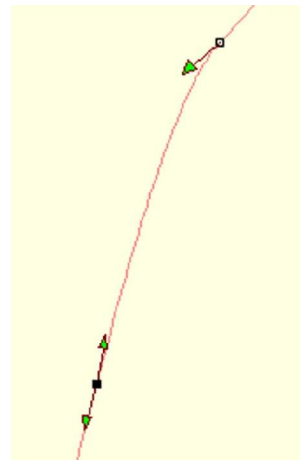
This little scissors button is next – it toggles the Edit mode. Your petal will change appearance again, and you'll see an outline like this one:



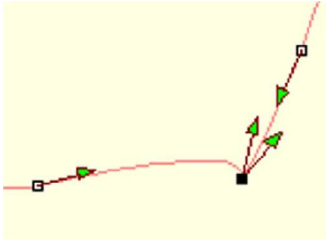
note: I've used the View Background Image icon (on the left side of the screen, about midway down the screen) to hide the picture so that you can see this outline better in my picture.

You can probably see it just fine on your screen with the picture there, and it's easier to work on the shape of your petal with the picture on the screen!

Click on one of the little boxes where you want to adjust the red outline and these little green arrows will come up on the screen. *I know they're kind of hard to see in this picture – they'll be easier on your screen. The lines on the autodigitizing screen are pretty fine, and screen captures like this one are a bit of a challenge!*



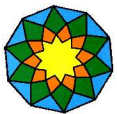
Now, to change the shape of your line, you have options. Click on the little black box in the middle, and you can drag it in or out to reshape your line. You will see the line moving to its new position. If the arc isn't quite right, you can click on the arrow point (little green part) and move it – it rotates around the black box.



See this picture? See how the arrows point pretty much the same way, and the line is kind of funky? On my petal, in this case, it's not a big deal, but sometimes, **when you make your line by holding the mouse down and tracing the outline of the object**, this happens, and sometimes, it's where you really want to be able to fix the line. When you start moving the green arrows, things get pretty wild (you'll know what I mean when you see it!)

It's okay, though, there are things you can do about it. One of the things you can do is to always trace and click – that seems to pretty much ensure that these “funkies” don't happen in the first place, but it doesn't fix when they're already there (except if you delete the object and start again)

You can right click on that funky guy, and choose “delete point” – this will get rid of him. Then you can click somewhere on the line and that will add a new point, which will have new arrows that you can adjust to make the line much better!



Generate stitches by clicking on the “Generate Stitches” icon at the bottom of your screen.



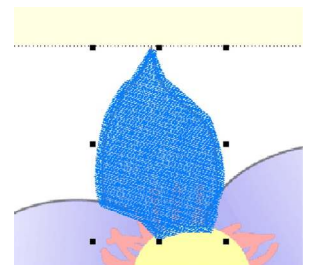
Click the Save icon to save your design for first time – name it blended flower 1, and make a note of where you're storing it. I keep mine in the c:\autodigitizing\stitch file folder. *You might want to make a note of where you put yours!*

Now we'll make four more petals that circle clockwise around the flower.

Remember: it's not necessary for petals to be EXACTLY like the picture – picture will NOT be seen with design later.

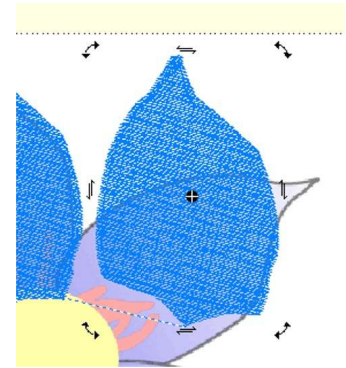
For the second petal:

- Left click the petal. You'll see black cornered selection box like this around petal.
- In the EDIT menu, click Copy (*or, you can use the CTRL-C keyboard command that's standard to Windows*)



- In the EDIT menu, click Paste (*or, you can use the CTRL-V keyboard command that's standard to Windows*)
- The new copy will now have the black boxes, and will be exactly on top of the original. Left click inside the block area, hold the button down, and drag the copy off original petal to your right.
- Left click a second time. The black corner boxes will change, and there will be a center marking.

Let's talk about the changes. See the corners? They're now curved double-headed arrows. They're called "rotation handles" and they're for rotating the selected area. Go ahead and put your mouse on one of them, see the cursor change, hold the left mouse button down, and move the mouse around. See the petal rotate! (You can click UNDO on the top toolbar to make this never have happened)



The goofy looking double lines in the middle of each side are for skewing the selected area. I don't know for sure, but I bet they're called "skewing handles." (Not to be confused with cooking skewers!) When you put the cursor over that widget, your cursor changes again. It will look like that mark. Click, hold the mouse button down, and move your mouse around – See the shape of your object change! (Again, you can use the UNDO command to make this change go away!)

- The mark in the middle of the selected area is the "Center of Rotation." Move it to the base of the flower petal.
- Now use any one of the rotation handles on the corners to rotate the petal so that it sits neatly in the same direction as the nearest petal on the graphic. You can move the petal more on top of the petal in the picture by left clicking somewhere inside the petal and holding the mouse button down. Drag it into place.

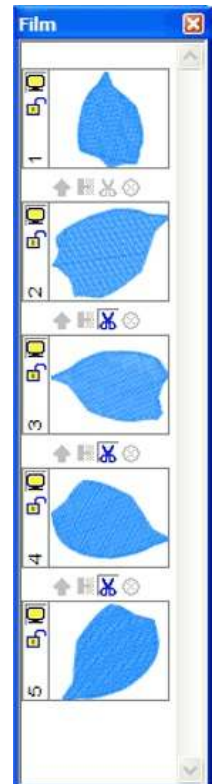
I left-clicked again to get the original corner boxes back. I used them to resize the petal a bit, to make it more exactly the size and shape that matched the graphic in the petal. You can do this too by left-clicking on a box and holding the mouse button

down and dragging. If you don't like a change, the UNDO button is handy!

- Click on the Save icon to save your design again. You can replace the one you've already saved.
- While the new petal is highlighted, copy it.
- Paste a copy of the new petal. As before, drag the new copy off the old. Drag this one toward the petal to the left of the one we just made.
- In the Edit menu, choose Flip, then Flip Horizontal.
- Move and rotate the new petal as needed to position on top of the other upper petal.

You'll have the three top petals digitized now. You may see that there needs to be a bit of reshaping of the outlines to make the two newer ones look more like the petals in the graphic.

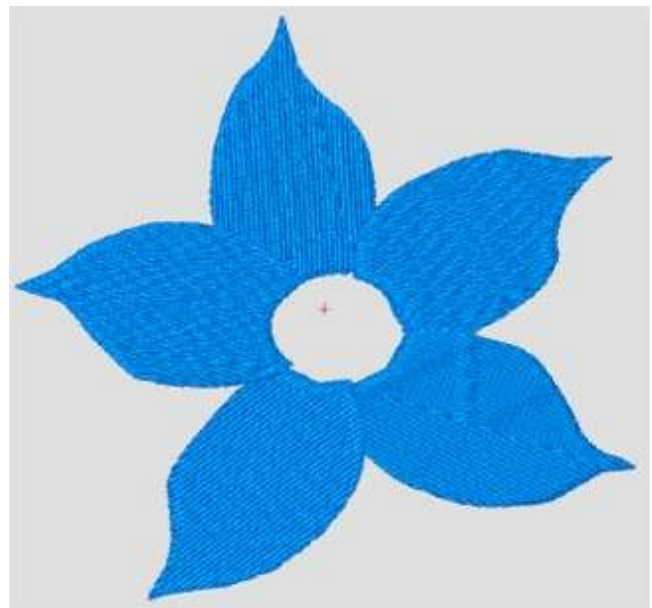
- Generate Stitches
- Click on the Save icon to save your design again. You can replace the one you've already saved.
- Paste and position two more petals, so that you have a total of five petals. Reshape them if you feel the need.
- Generate Stitches
- Click on the Save icon to save your design again. You can replace the one you've already saved.
- Let's look at the film strip now. You'll see that there are five frames. They're showing the five petals in the order we created them. We want them to stitch in a clockwise order, rather than in this "hodgepodge" that we created.



- Frames 1 & 2 are in the “right” order. Frames 4 & 5 are okay too, at least the way I put the petals in. Frame three is the one that messes things up for my flower. To fix this, I’ll right click on frame three. A menu pops up. Since I want this petal to stitch last, I’ll choose “Move to Bottom.”

To check that your flower now stitches in a clockwise order, you can left click on the first frame of the film, then use the arrow keys on your keyboard to step through each frame and see where in the design – the main part of the screen – the element in the frame is positioned. Repeat the above for any frames you might have in the wrong order.

- Generate Stitches
- Click on the Save icon to save your design again. Let’s name this one Blended Flower 2.



Now 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. Made smaller, this could be a great little design for all kinds of things!

See you in Part Two!