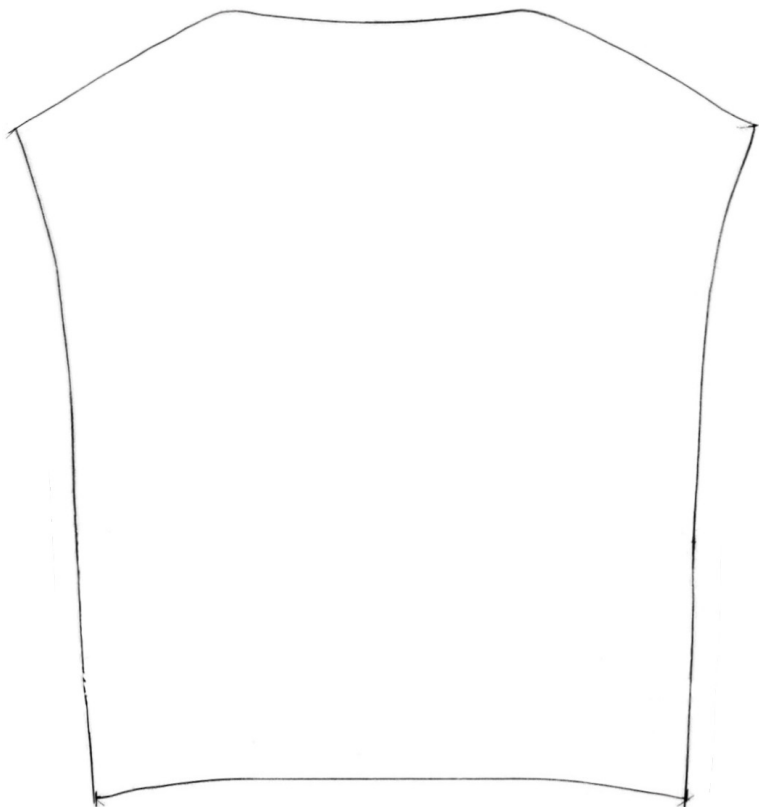




The School of Making



THE SQUARE TOP

For use with *Alabama Stitch Book*, *Alabama Studio Style*, *Alabama Studio Sewing + Design*,
Alabama Studio Sewing Patterns, and *The Geometry of Hand-Sewing*

theschoolofmaking.alabamachanin.com

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SQUARE TOP INSTRUCTIONS

1. ADD EMBROIDERY

Add embellishment as desired, and complete all embellishment before constructing your garment. Use one of The School of Making Book Series for inspiration. If you're adding beads, avoid beading in 1/4" seam allowance.

2. PREPARE FOR CONSTRUCTION

After completing any embellishment, align and pin the front and back of the shirt together at the shoulders, with right sides together (or, with wrong sides together if you want the seams visible on the outside of the garment).

3. SEW SHOULDER SEAMS

Thread your needle, love your thread, and knot off. Using a straight stitch, sew the pinned pieces together at the shoulder, starting at the edge of the armhole and stitching 1/4" from the fabric's cut edges across to the notch. Begin and end each seam by wrap-stitching its edges to secure them. Fell your seams towards the back of the garment by folding over the seam allowances to one side and topstitching them 1/8" (3mm) from the cut edges, down the center of the seam allowances, using a straight stitch and wrap-stitching the seam.

4. SEW SIDE SEAMS

Turn your shirt wrong side out and pin together the front and back pieces at the side seams. Wrap Stitch your seams. Start stitching at the bottom edge of the hem and sew side seams stopping at the notch. This will leave an opening for your armhole. After stitching the side seams, fold seam allowances toward the back, and fell the seam.

BASIC SEWING INSTRUCTIONS

Provided below are notes on our basic construction and sewing techniques. For more thorough instructions on stenciling, embellishment, and construction, reference one of our Alabama Studio books, shown on page 4.

LOVE YOUR THREAD

To love your thread, cut a piece twice as long as the distance from your fingertips to your elbow. Thread your needle, pulling the thread through the needle until the two ends of the thread are the same length.

Hold the doubled thread between your thumb and index finger, and run your fingers along it from the needle to the end of the loose tails. Repeat this several times to release the tension in the thread, and then double-knot your thread.

KNOTTING OFF

After bringing the needle up through the fabric, make a loop with the thread, then pull your needle through that loop, using your forefinger or thumb to nudge the knot in place, flush with the fabric. Then repeat this process to make a double knot. After making a second knot, cut the thread, leaving a 1/2" (12mm) tail.



In hand-sewing, your knot anchors and holds your entire seam. One important design decision we make when starting any project is how to handle the knots. There are two options: knots that show on the project's right side (outside) and knots that show on the wrong side (inside). Either of these knots can be used throughout an entire project.

STRETCH AND NON-STRETCH STITCHES

We use three categories of stitches in our work: stitches that do not stretch, for construction, reverse appliqué, and other embellishments; stitches that do stretch, for sewing necklines, armholes, and other areas in a project that require "give"; and stitches that are purely decorative, for embellishment. Following are examples of non-stretch and stretch:

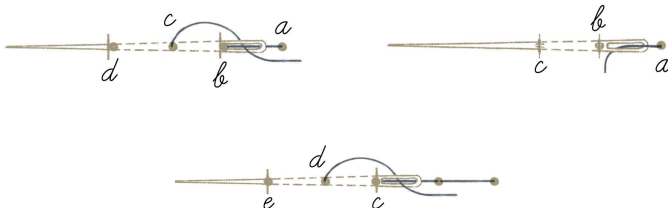
NON-STRETCH STITCH

Straight (Running) Stitch: Bring needle up at A, go back down at B, and come up at C, making stitches and spaces between them the same length (about 1/8" (3mm) to 1/4" (6mm) long).



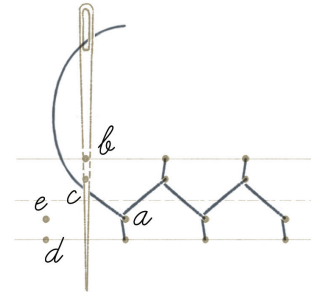
BACKSTITCH

Bring needle up to A, go back down at B, and come up at C. Then insert needle just ahead of B, and come up at D. Next insert needle just ahead of C, and come up at E. Continue this overall pattern.

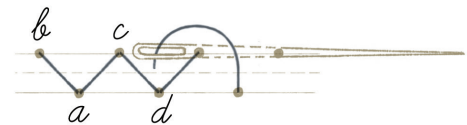


STRETCH STITCH

CRETAN STITCH: Bring needle up at A, go down at B, and come back up at C, making a downward vertical stitch while bringing needle over thread. Insert needle again at D, and come back up at E, making an upward vertical stitch while bringing needle over thread. Continue to repeat stitch pattern.



ZIGZAG STITCH: Bring needles up at A, go down at B, and come back up at C. Insert needle again at A, and come back up at D. Insert needle again at C, and come back up at E. Continue to repeat stitch pattern.

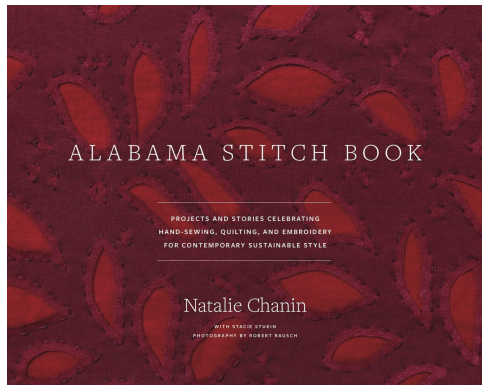


SEAMS

To start a seam, make a double knot, and insert the needle at point A. Wrap your thread around side of the fabric to the front, insert the needle back in at B, then come up at C, and stitch the seam. Also wrap-stitch the end of your seam before knotting off.

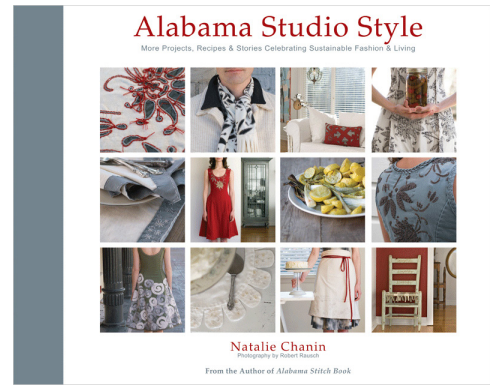


THE SCHOOL OF MAKING BOOK SERIES AT A GLANCE



Alabama Stitch Book

Alabama Stitch Book is a collection of stitching, beading, and embroidery instructions, stories, and projects from Alabama Chanin. Projects include our best-selling Corset, Swing Skirt, “boa” scarf, bandana, and more.



*Alabama Studio Style**

Alabama Studio Style expands upon the stitching, stenciling, and beading techniques introduced in *Alabama Stitch Book* and introduces twenty new clothing and home decor projects. This book also includes recipes and stories.



Alabama Studio Sewing + Design

An encyclopedic compilation of techniques used to create the Alabama Chanin line of organic cotton clothing. Included are dresses, skirts, tops, and accessories.



Alabama Studio Sewing Patterns

Alabama Studio Sewing Patterns explores fit, patternmaking, and how to create a garment to fit your unique shape. It includes three new patterns with several variations as well as previous open-sourced patterns on a disc at the back of the book.



The Geometry of Hand-Sewing

The Geometry of Hand-Sewing: A Romance in Stitches and Embroidery from Alabama Chanin and The School of Making by Natalie Chanin is a comprehensive guide to hand-stitching and embroidery. This book focuses solely on the stitches themselves taking embroidery stitches and breaking them down into different geometric grid systems that make learning even seemingly elaborate stitches as easy as child's play.



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ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF MAKING

Alabama Chanin as a concept and a company began as a DIY enterprise. Workshop programming was a natural outgrowth of the emerging DIY initiative growing around us. Our experiences showed us that face-to-face and hand-to-hand contact helped our customers better understand the what, why, and how of our making processes and the importance of an organic supply chain. And our business continued to grow. DIY offerings expanded, our workshop offerings became more diverse, and our Journal content added additional DIY instruction, stories, and ideas.

Educational programming is one of the fastest growing and most exciting aspects of our business model. So, as the opportunities to educate our team and our customers began to multiply, we realized that we should create a specific home for this knowledge.

To fully embrace our growing model, we have developed an overseeing body that will direct and innovate learning initiatives and educational programs: The School of Making. All of our current and developing educational and training initiatives fall under the umbrella of The School of Making. This arm of the Alabama Chanin Family of Businesses oversees DIY and workshop programming, format, and content; it acts as a researching body for new subjects and new ways of disseminating information. Our hope is that The School of Making can be an active voice in our local community, our state, and the making community, at large.

VISIT THE SCHOOL OF MAKING:

theschoolofmaking.alabamachanin.com

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