

# Ultimate Borders Design Book

by~

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2020 Updates: This book was revisited in February. All the instruction and designs are the same. I added photos of new class samples. I've added a gold star to the top right corner of each page that has a new photo.

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# Introduction

When I teach my design classes one of the biggest obstacles has always been borders. There are always issues making repetitive designs fit. There are complaints about corners and the perfect design is either too big or too small. Sound familiar???

When I created my “Ultimates” stencil collection my goal was to create tools that encouraged you to create your own designs using provided guides from the stencils. The Ultimate Stencils provide angles, circles and squares so you can easily create beautiful medallions. The Ultimate Backgrounds have six different designs in three different sizes to allow you to create beautiful heirloom style backgrounds. The Ultimate Shape is a great tool for overall designs in a pieced or wholecloth quilt setting. The final part of this set, The Ultimate Borders, takes the frustration out of designing and marking borders.

The accompanying handbook, Making Your Borders Fit, takes you step by step on marking guidelines on your quilt to center your border and how to do the math to make repetitive designs fit.

I’ve chosen to keep these border designs as simple as possible. I’ve found that if I make designs more complicated I may “lose” you...if I keep things on the easy side you can make things as complicated as you wish! Let my ideas and suggestions inspire you and I challenge you to make these your own and add your own special touches.



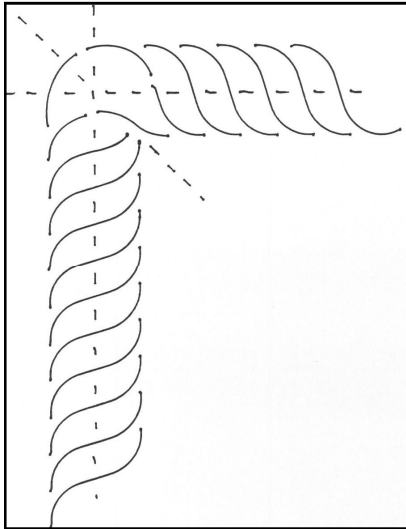
I have special Pinterest pages devoted to all of my Ultimate Stencils. Visit my website and scroll down to the bottom of the home page. The link to my Pinterest page is there.

Thank you! Cindy

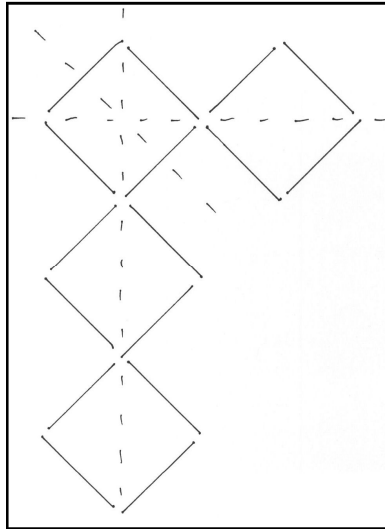
Email: [linenqltr@comcast.net](mailto:linenqltr@comcast.net)  
Website: [www.cindyneedham.com](http://www.cindyneedham.com)

# Border Designs

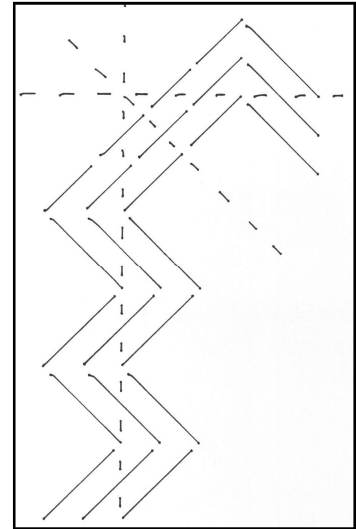
The Ultimate Borders set includes six different border designs in various sizes. Each stencil has the halfway point cut, has each corner's 45 degree angle cut and has dotted registration marks to help you line up and repeat.



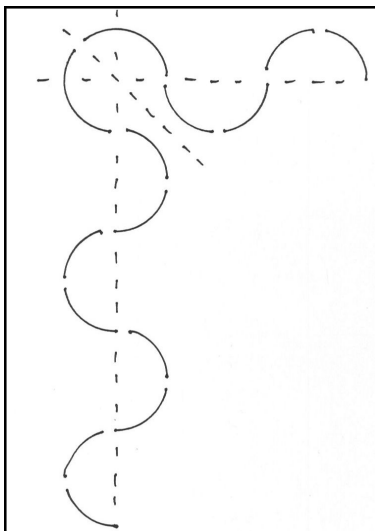
Rope Cable



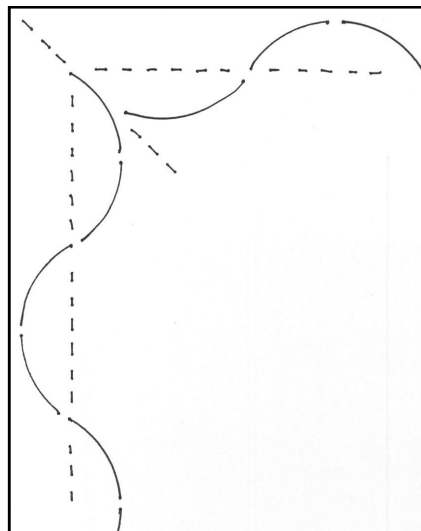
Repetitive Squares



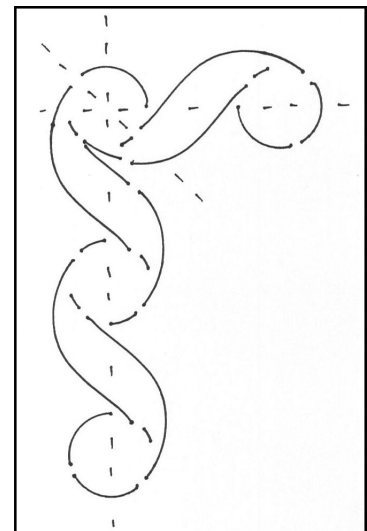
Zig Zag



High Tide



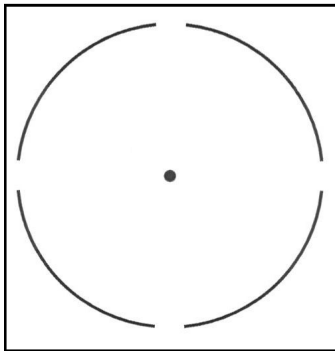
Low Tide



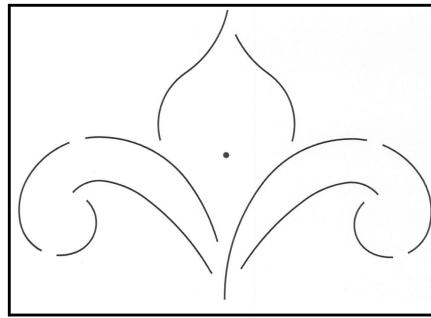
Pearls & Swirls

# Motifs

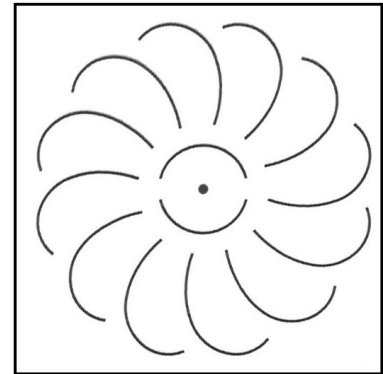
The Ultimate Borders set also includes 12 different motifs in three sizes each. These can be used as embellishments for the borders and many of them can be used alone for custom border designs. Many of these motifs have registration dots to help you consistently line them up. These may also be used in small blocks!



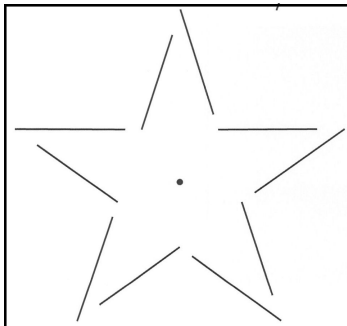
circle



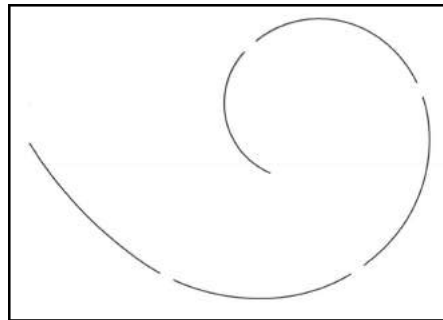
fleur de lis



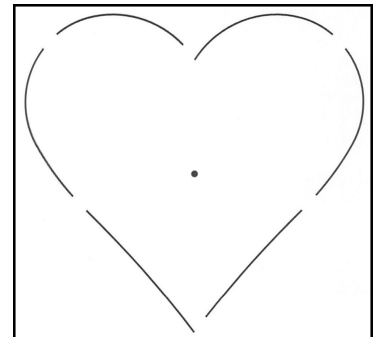
flower



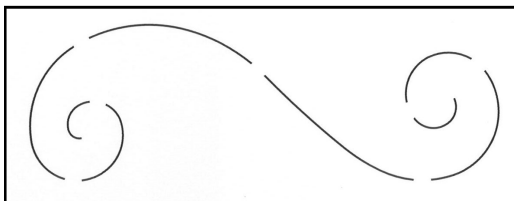
star



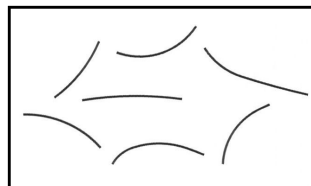
single swirl



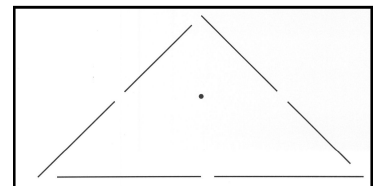
heart



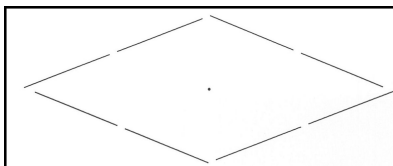
double swirl



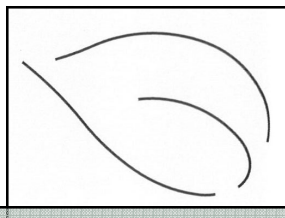
holly leaf



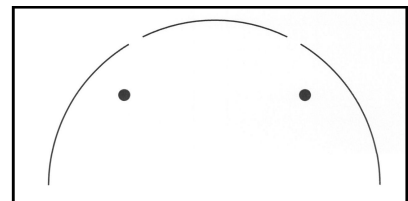
triangle



diamond



leaf



alien

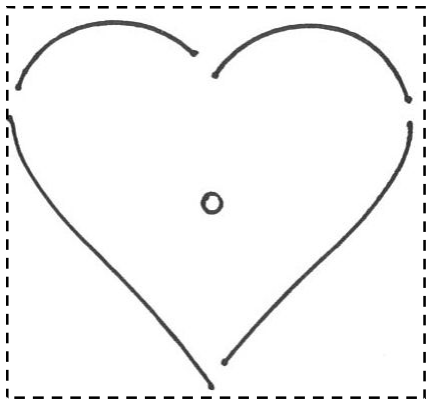
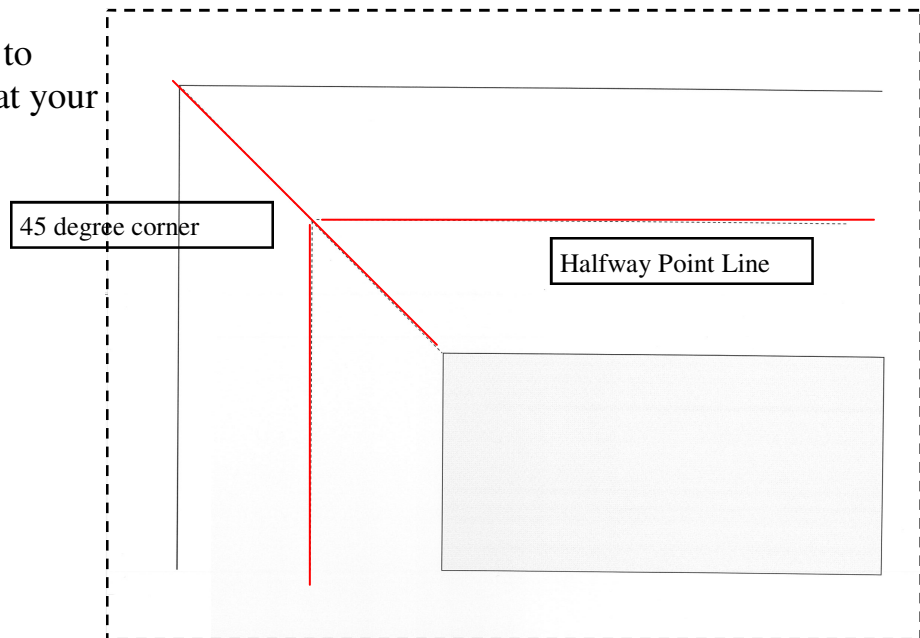
# Making Your Borders Fit

You received a separate handout, *Making Borders Fit*, that will give you the guidelines to make nearly any border design work.

I highly recommend that you mark your “halfway point” on your quilt border and also mark your 45 degree diagonal lines in the corners. This ensures that your border design will always be centered and your corners will be perfect.

Each Ultimate Border stencil has the halfway point already cut. They also have the 45 degree line cut into the corner. When you place the stencil on your quilt, line up the halfway point line on your stencil with the marked lines on your quilt.

When you move the stencil to repeat the design be sure that your halfway lines are always matching.



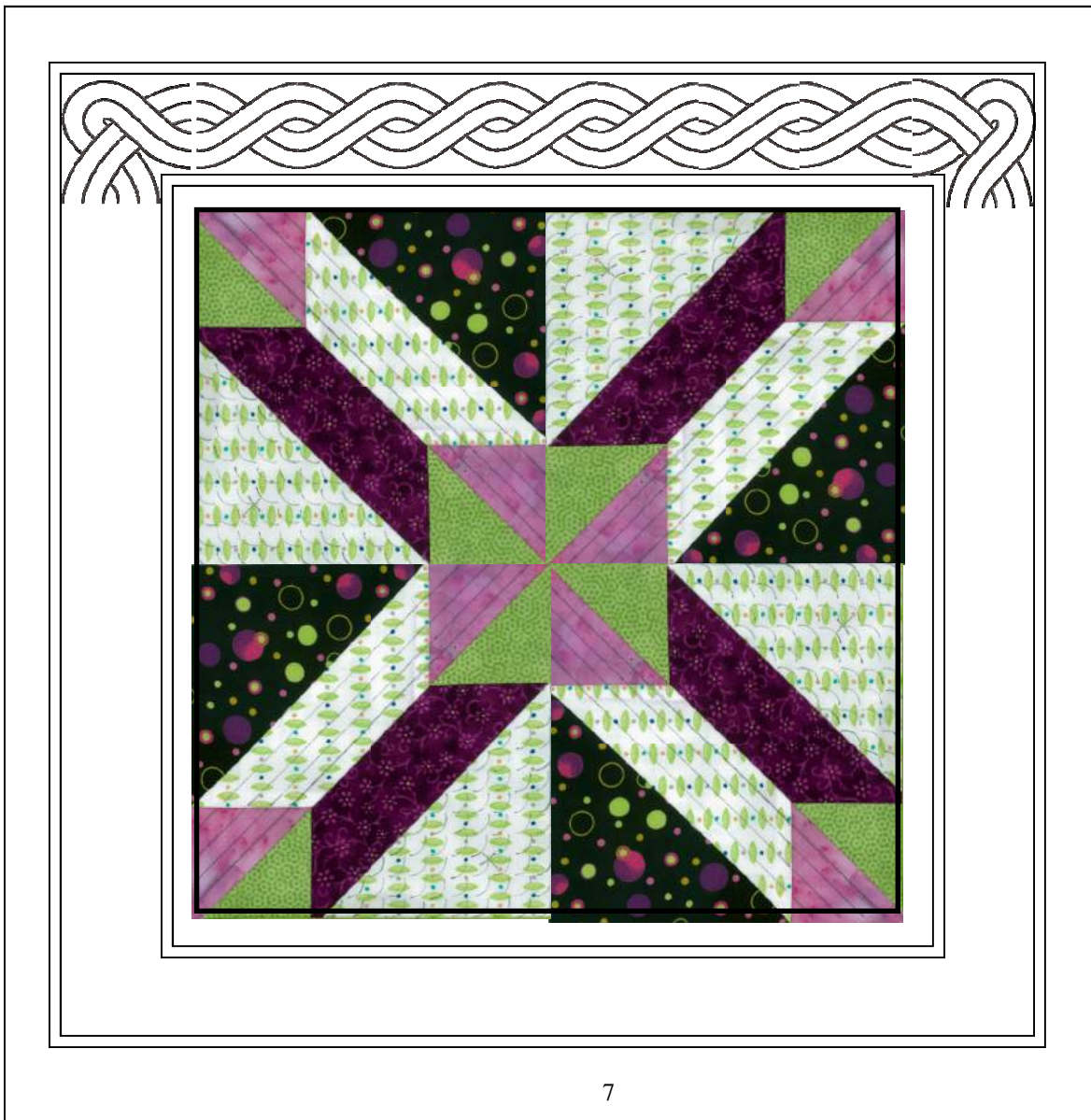
Most of the motifs have a center dot already cut for you. If you place the dot on the marked halfway point line on your quilt you can consistently keep a repetitive design centered.



## “Matt Lines”

When I look at a quilt I often consider the border to be the beautiful framework you see around a painting in an art gallery. Many of these paintings are surrounded by a series of matts...these provide a resting place for your eyes between the frame and the art as well as a beautiful detail.

In the quilting world you can easily accomplish this same type of detail...I call these “matt lines”. You can have as many lines or as few lines as you wish and you can space them as far apart or as close together as you wish. My favorite spacing is 1/4” and 1/2” apart. I usually mark these lines just above the border seam and then add the border design above those lines. This is also a fabulous way to “eat up space” if you have a little border design in a wide border. You can add matt lines both above and below the border design.





Another fun tip...if you want to add a layering effect you can add your matt lines “underneath” your border design. In other words, quilt your border design first. Then go back and quilt the lines that go underneath.

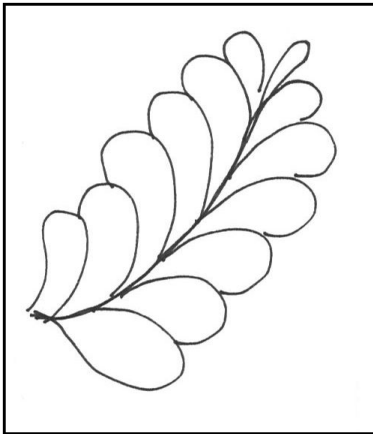
Your thread choice is very important here. I recommend a heavier thread for the border design and then use a thinner, complimentary thread for the matt lines. By doing this you will be able to travel with your matt lines right on the quilted border design. The thinner complimentary thread will blend and you won’t have to stop and start!



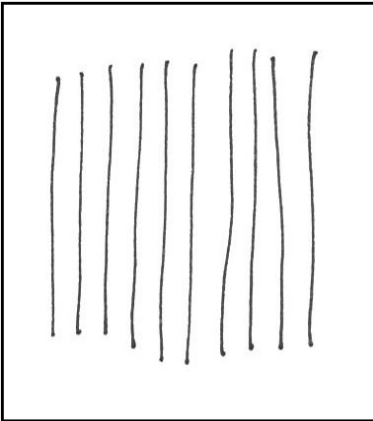
## The Basic Three

I have three basic fillers that I use constantly to turn ordinary quilt blocks into heirloom pieces. You will see these in nearly every quilt I do. The Basic Three consists of free form feathers, repetitive lines and pebbles/bubbles.

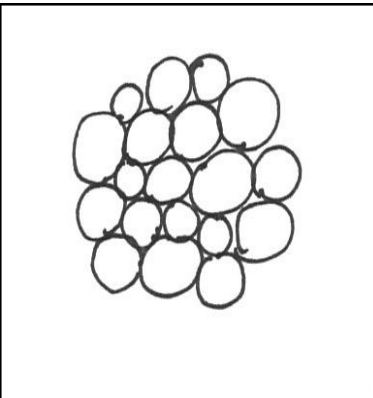
You can use these three fillers to “up your game” on borders too. Take some of the open spaces and start filling them with one, two or all three of these! I will give you some examples of these fillers in the instructions that follow to inspire you.



Free form feathers are a wonderful way to fill many areas. If you have a quilt block/border that has strong geometrics such as lots of straight, strong lines try adding something soft like feathers in some of the spaces to soften it up.



I use repetitive lines in nearly every single quilt I do. The secret to doing “good ones” is don’t make them straight...make them “straight-ish”. I will mark a straight line every so often to keep me on track and then I free motion quilt the repetitive lines making sure they’re consistently inconsistent.



Pebbles or bubbles are a great way to add an interesting texture to small space. I usually do mine in a thin thread and go around each one twice. I like to add occasional swirls and such inside the bubbles to add additional details.

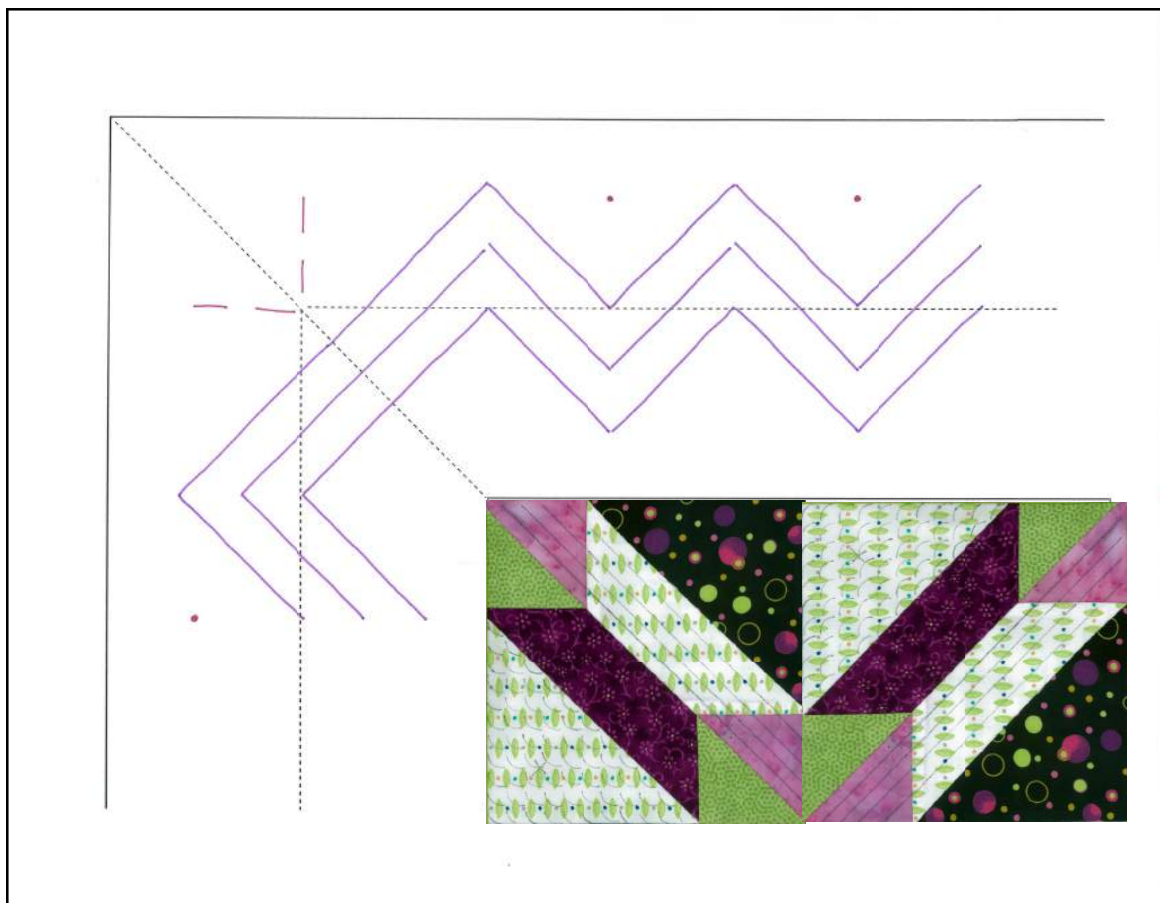
You can also fill long, straight areas with “strings of pearls”.

# Ultimate Borders Designs

The following pages contain oodles of ways to create beautiful border designs using the six border stencils and the motifs. Remember, these are here to inspire you...use what I've provided and then take off and do your own thing!

I will show you how to center each design, provide tips on fudging to fit and how to add some of The Basic Three fillers to provide an heirloom effect.

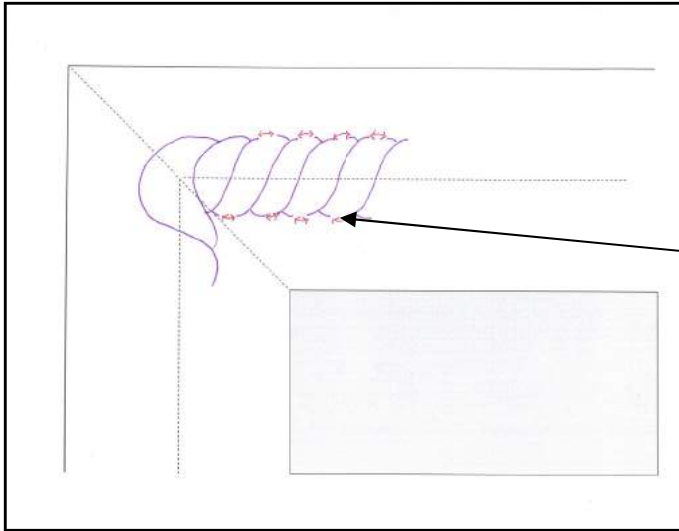
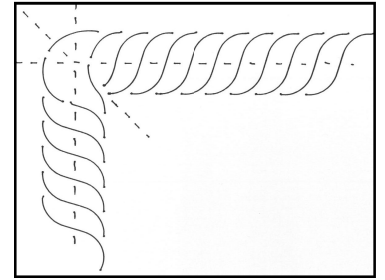
Each border design will be shown on a border "Mock Up" as shown below.



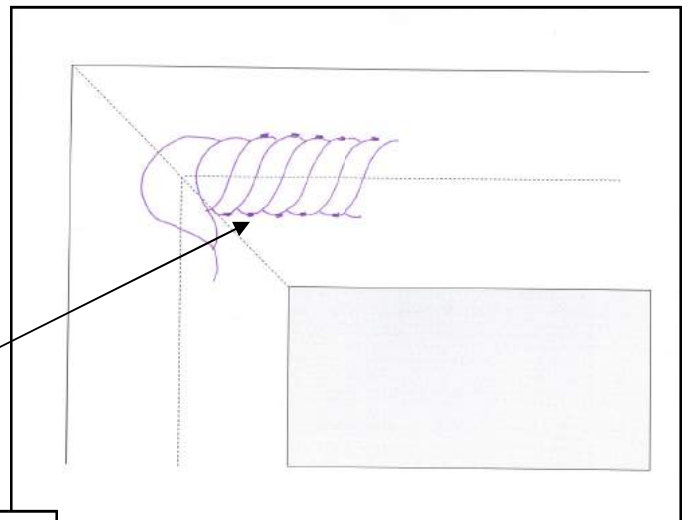
I've marked the stencil dot and dashed registration lines in red. Use the dashed registration lines to line up the stencil on the marked halfway line on your quilt. You line up the dots when you want to repeat the design. This will provide you with perfect repeats.

# Rope Cable

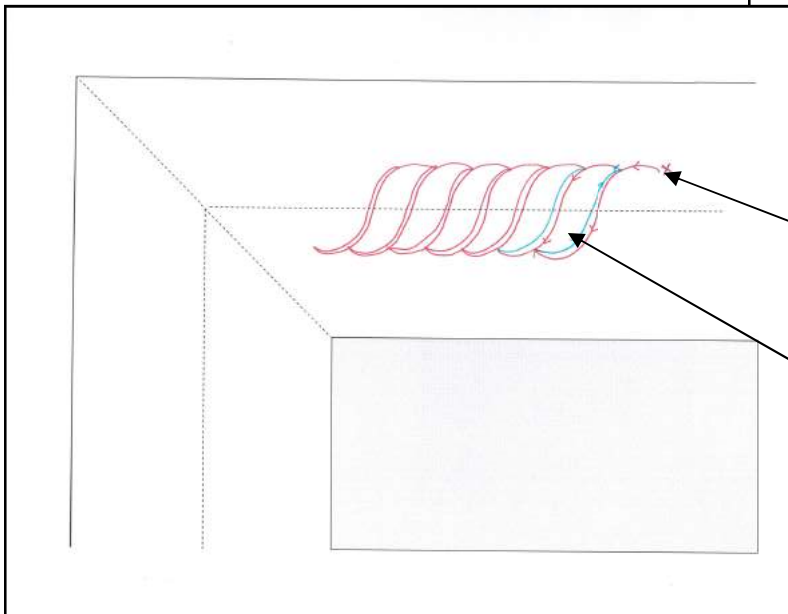
There are some wonderful variations with the rope cable. I love to use this as a detail filler to other borders and love to use it in my sashings.



If you need to stretch the cable to fit, stretch it at the top/bottom of each "unit" and fill in to fit.



If you need to shrink the cable to fit, scunch it at the top/bottom of each "unit".

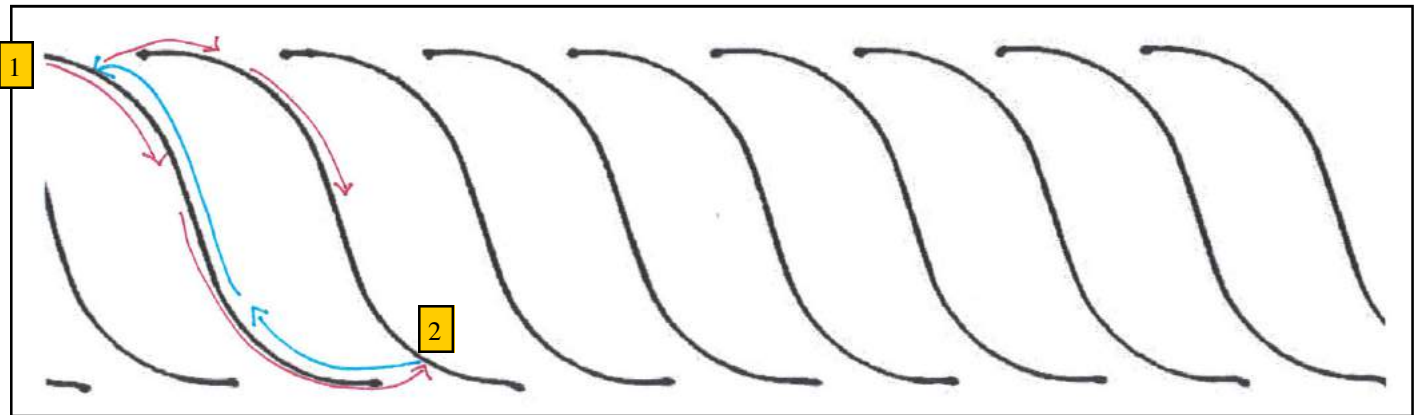


I like to add a pretty echo detail to my rope cable units to keep it continuous line with no backtracking.

Start at the top of the hump and quilt all the way down.

Now kick back up from here (shown in blue) and echo the line you just quilted.

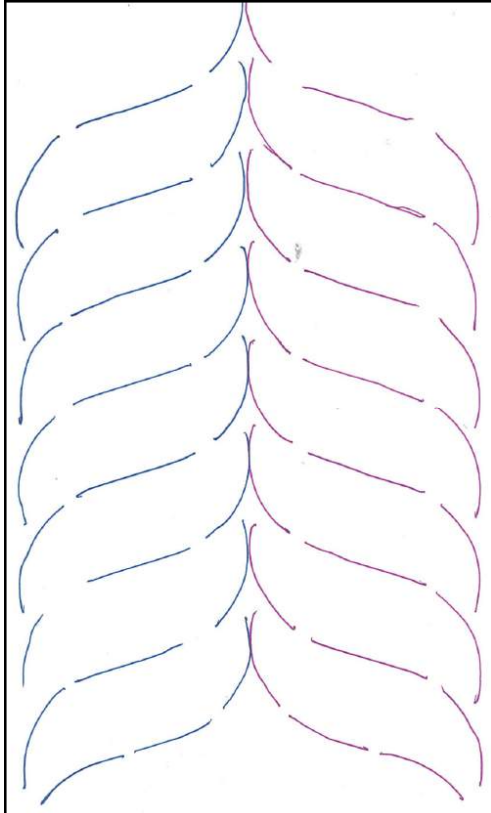
Keep repeating. Love how this looks!



Here's a larger photo of the rhythm I use to quilt the rope cable border.

1. Start at the top of the hump and quilt all the way down (shown in red).
2. Now kick back up from here and echo the line you just quilted (shown in blue).

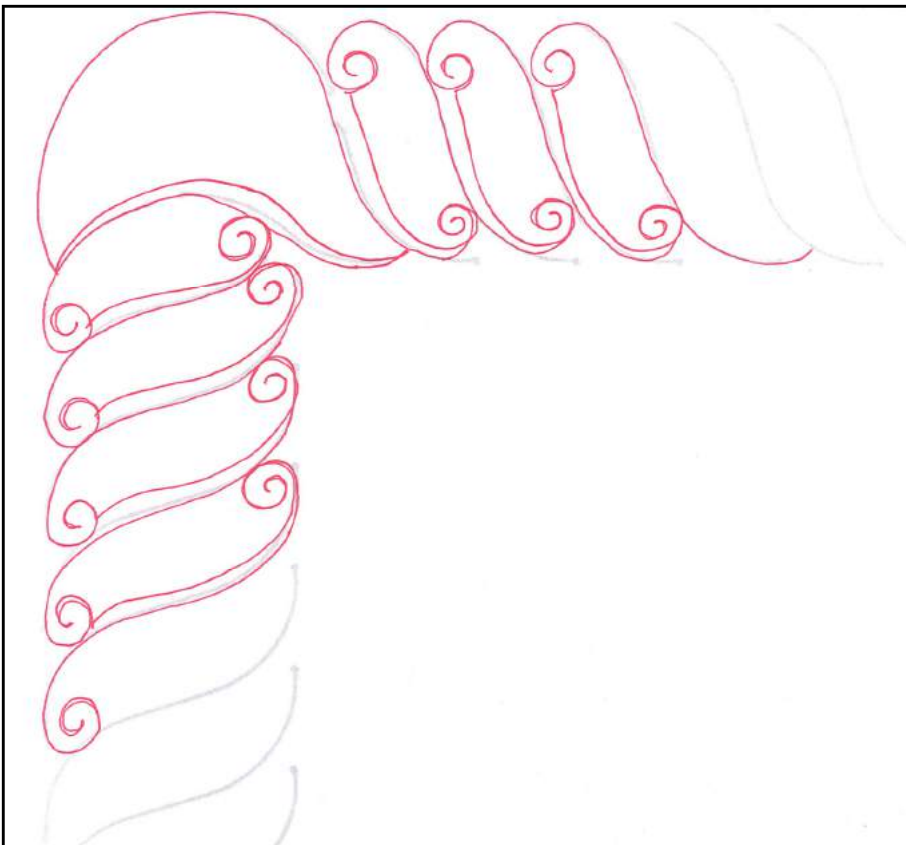
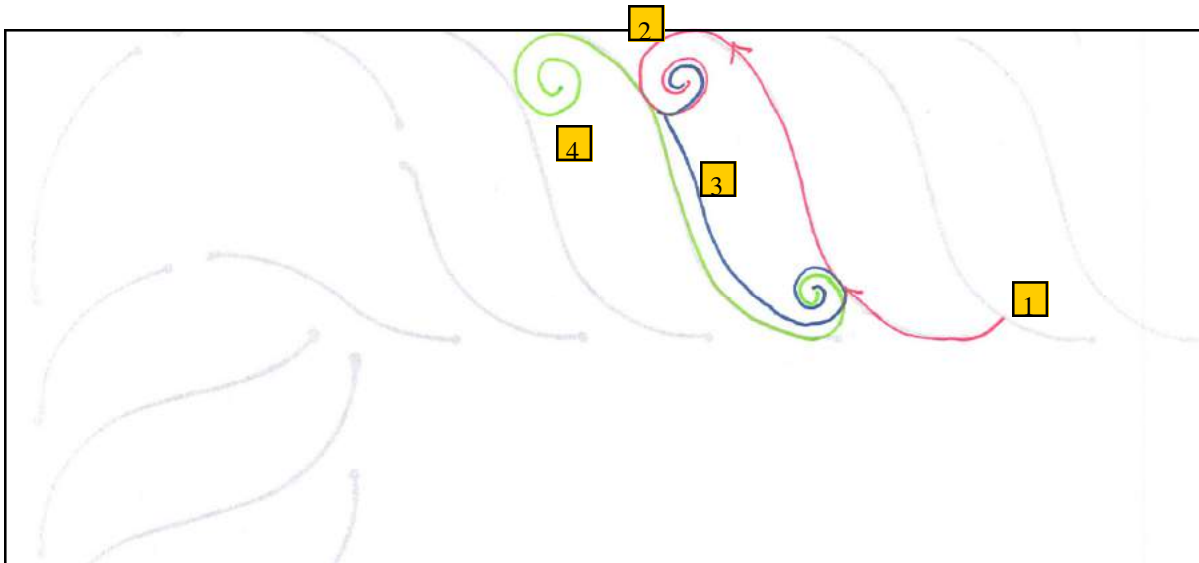
Keep repeating. Love how this looks!



The rope can also make a great background filler. I simply marked the border vertically on the left. Then I flipped the stencil over and ran another vertical column next to it.

Quilt it the same way that you do the standard border.

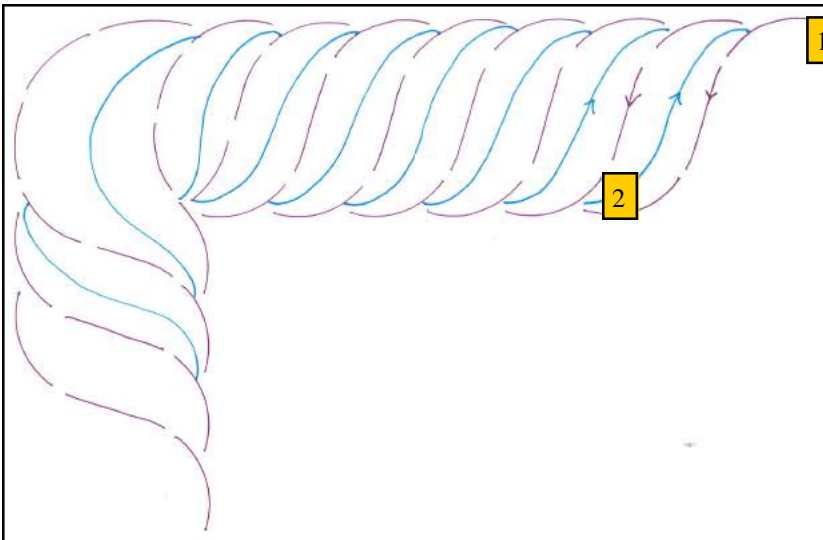
Here are a few more ideas on how to embellish the rope cable border.



1. Start at the bottom and quilt the main cable line.
2. End this line with a swirl.
3. Backtrack out of the swirl and “echo” the next line and end with another swirl.
4. Kick back up and quilt the next line.

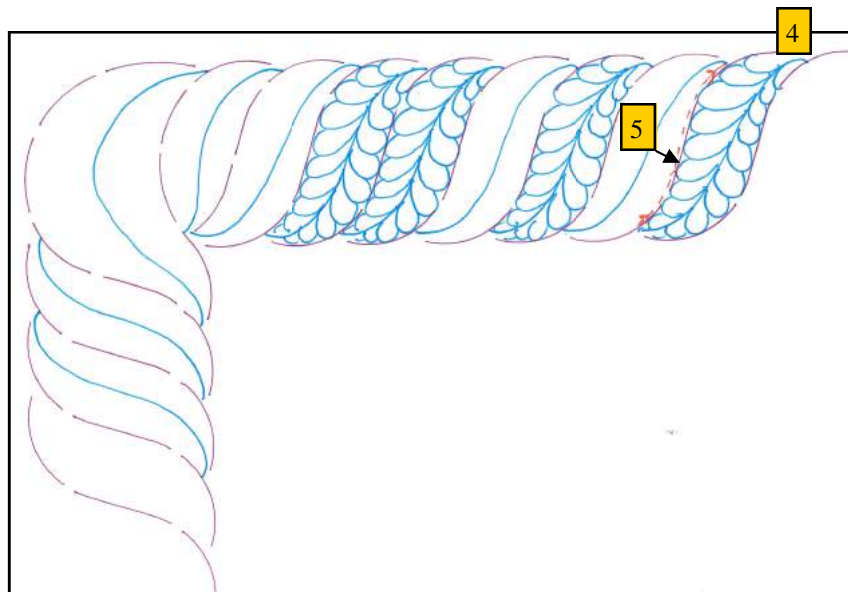
You don't have to add swirls to both ends...you can do one on one end or the other!

Here's another fun idea...let's add some feathers to the rope!



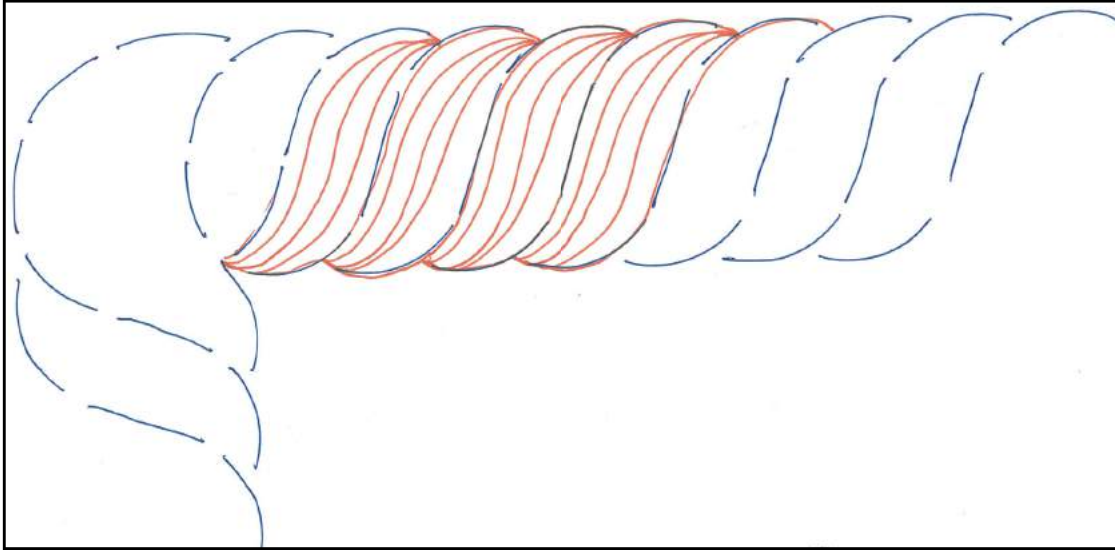
1. Quilt the main rope line all the way down.
2. Now kick back up and add a line going up the middle.
3. Keep repeating until you have finished quilting the double lines.

*Just a note...I usually quilt the main rope with a 40 wt. thread so it shows.*

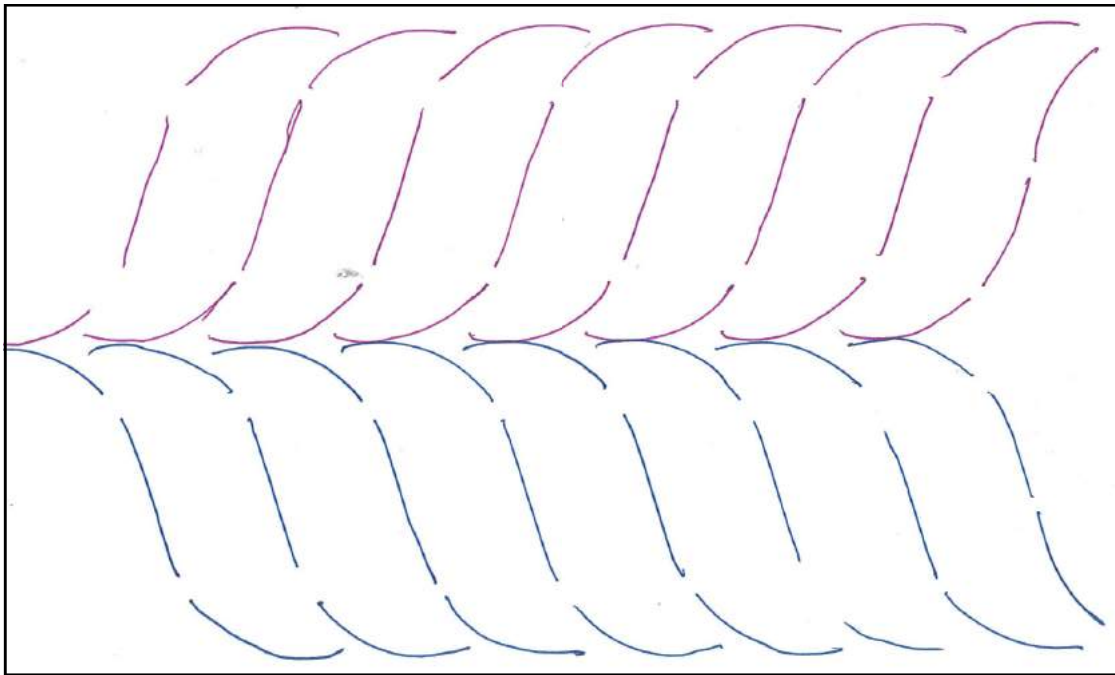


*I like to change to a thinner thread, such as Kimono Silk, in a blending color to quilt the feathers.*

4. Start at the top of the extra line in the middle and quilt the feathers on both sides.
5. If you are using a blending thread trace right back up on the next rope line to start the next set of feathers. Your thin thread will blend right into the thicker thread and not show. You don't have to quilt feathers in every single rope section...you can do every other one...leave an extra line in-between. You are the boss of your rope!



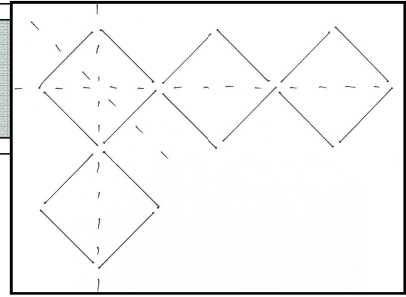
Instead of adding feathers in-between the rope sections why not try just extra lines? You can add as many or as few as you wish...they can be centered or off to one side. They can use the same thread or a thinner contrast/blending.



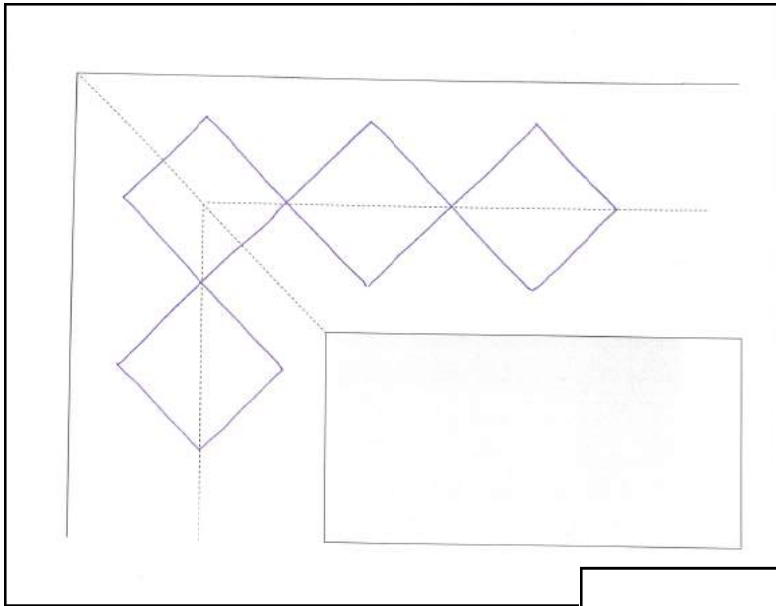
If you have a wide border stacking the rope cables on top of each other, each set in a different direction would be a great way to fill space and add movement. You can't turn a corner with this though...it would have to be a straight run from one end to the other.



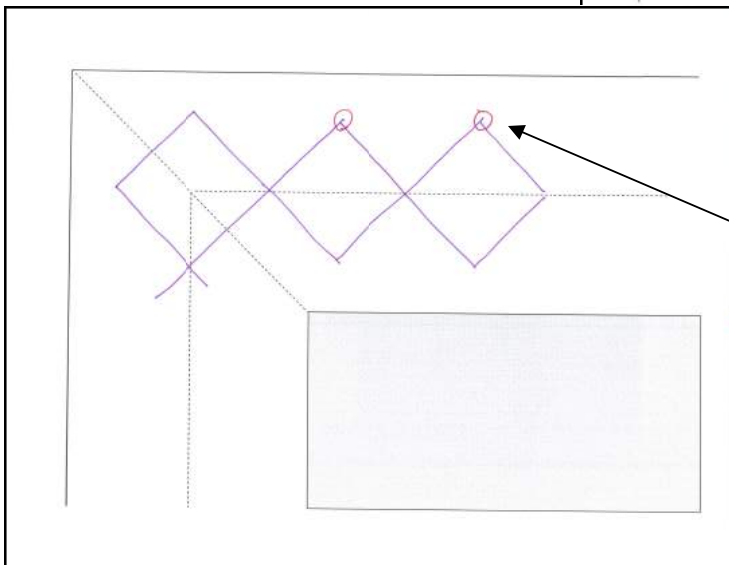
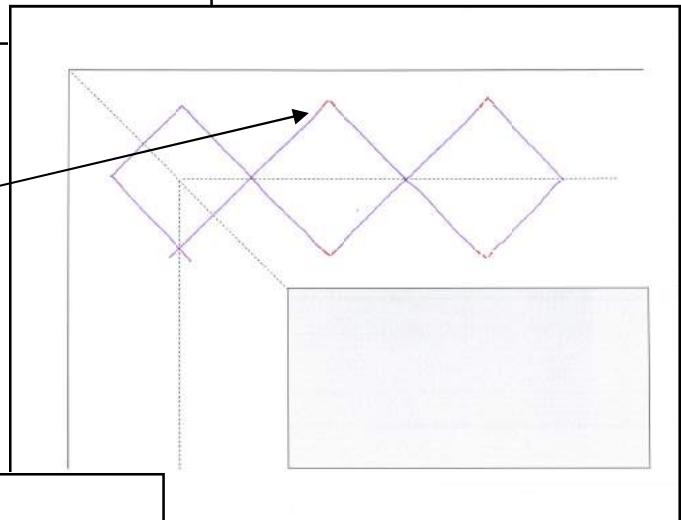
# Repetitive Squares



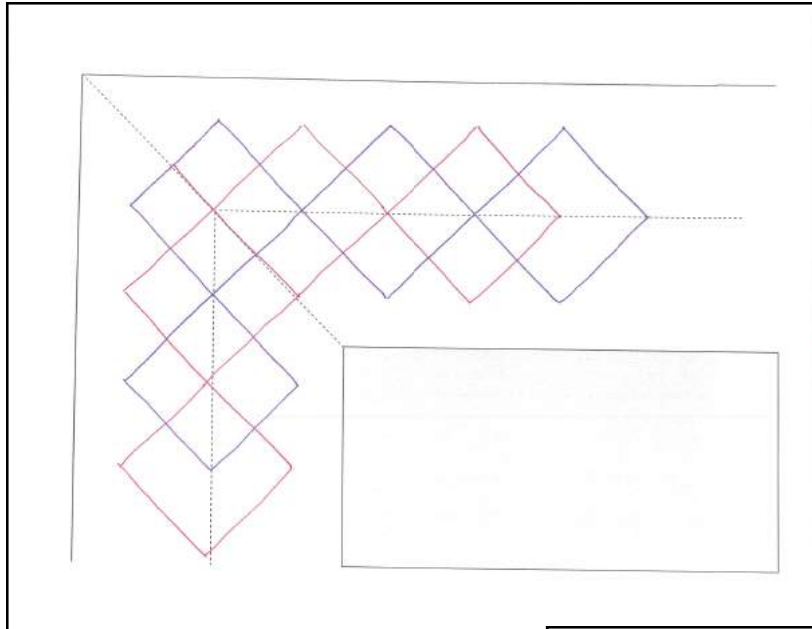
Basic Repetitive Squares border. Oodles of designs to make with this one!!!



If you need to stretch this design to make it fit, add space at the points and then extend the lines to fill the space (red).

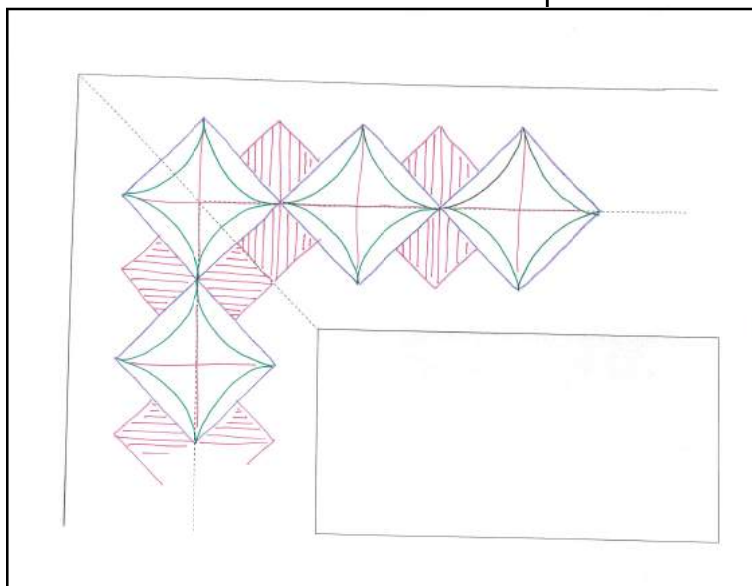
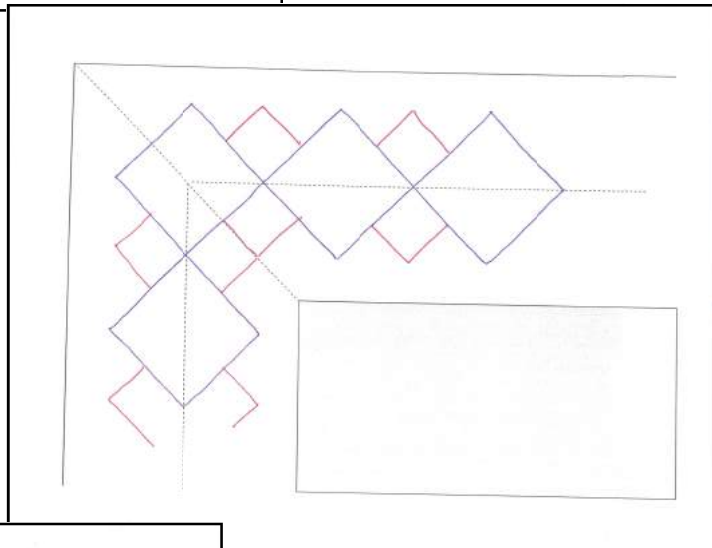


If you need to shrink this design to make it fit, mark the left side of the square. When you mark the right side of the square, crunch it up a little. Don't quilt the extra little line you may end up with shown by the red circle.



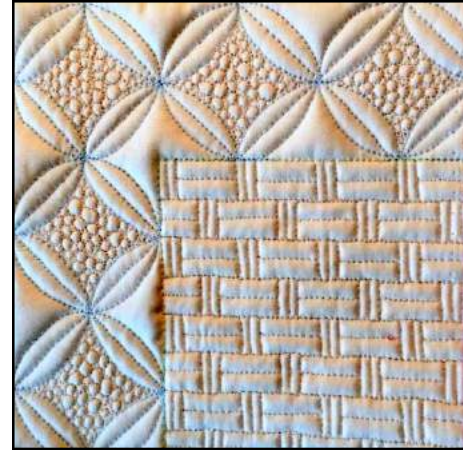
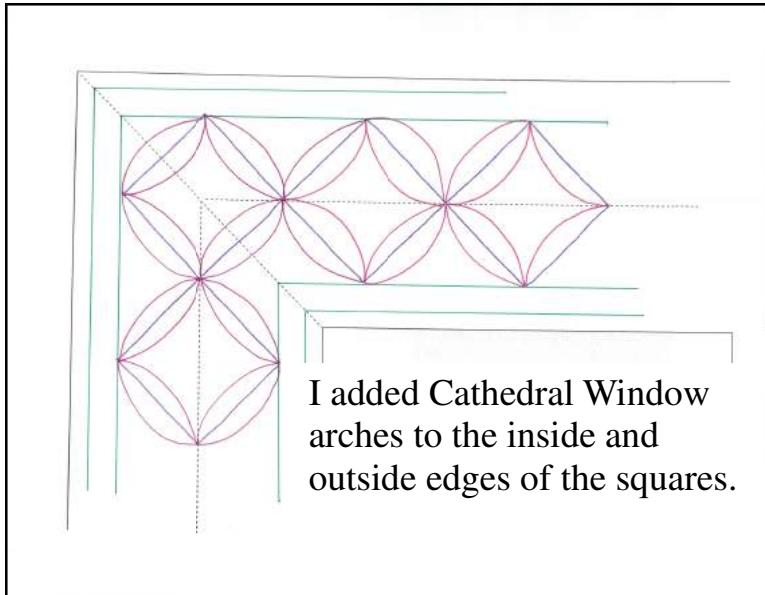
To create a double squared border, simply mark one set of repetitive squares (in purple). Then shift the stencil over, center it in-between two purple squares, and then mark again (in red).

This border was created exactly the same as the above design except I didn't mark thru the original squares, just up to them.



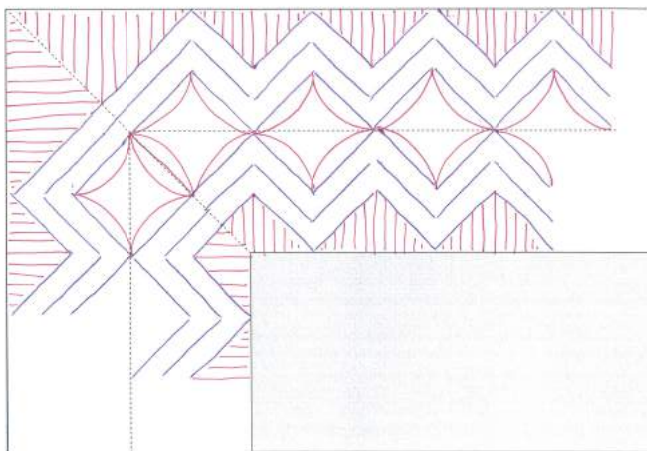
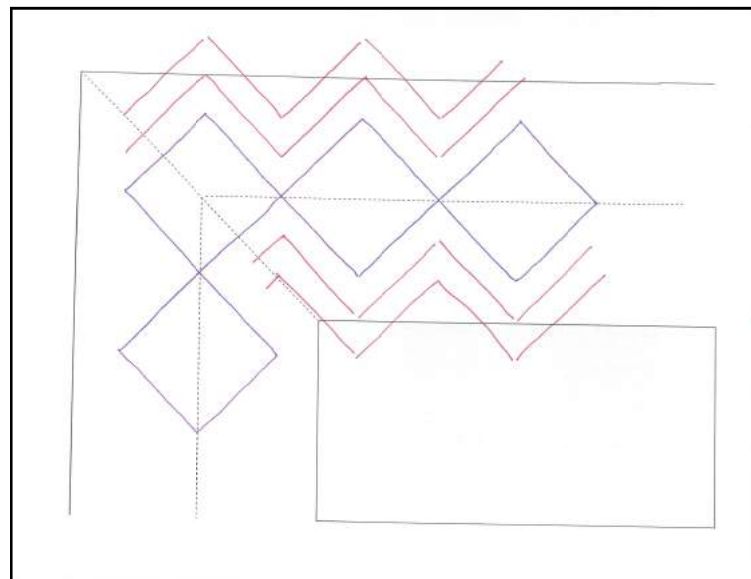
Now look what happens when I add some repetitive lines and cathedral windows!

You can add as much or as little detail as you wish.

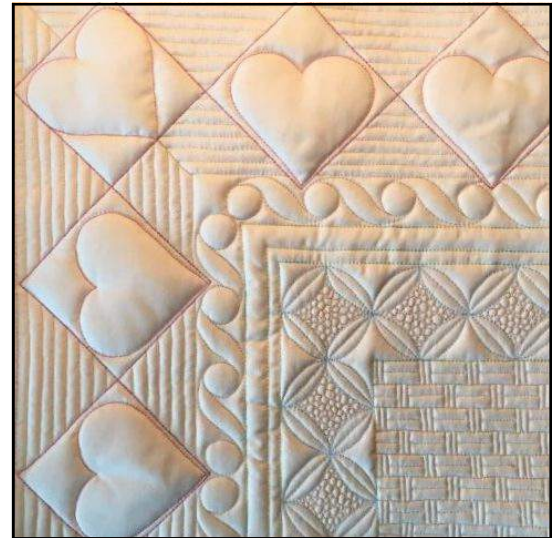
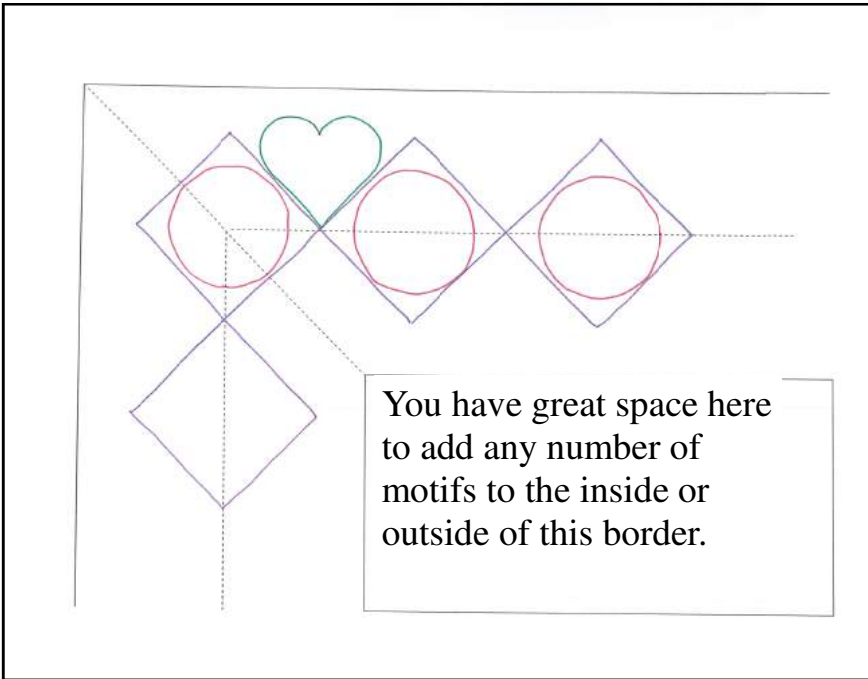


I added the Zig Zag border to the top and bottoms of the squares.

Repeat as many times as necessary to fill your space.

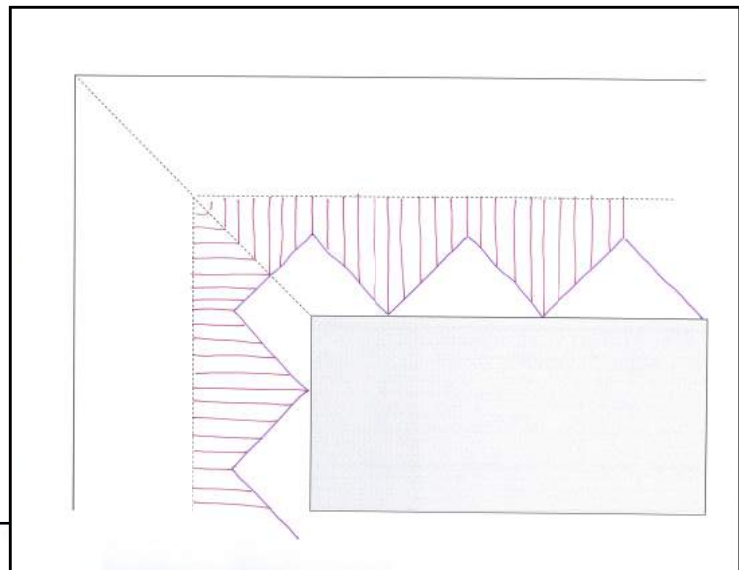


If you want to add some more detail you can add some repetitive lines around the outside and some cathedral windows to the inside of the squares.



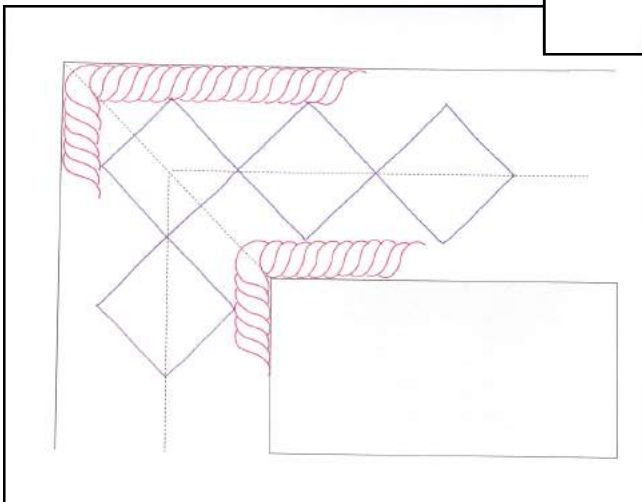
I only used half of the square...lined it up to the inside border and created a prairie point border.

Repetitive lines were added. You can make the lines as long as you wish to fill your space.

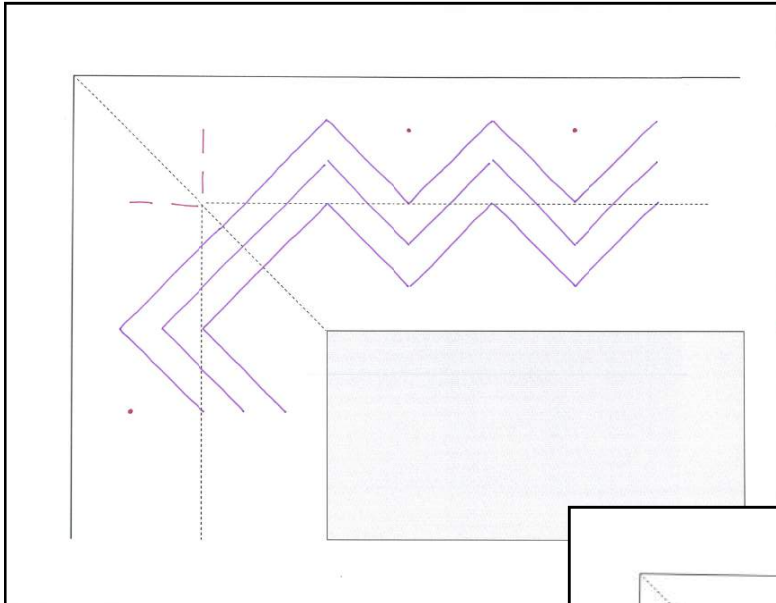
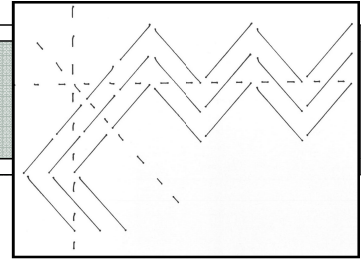


You can also add a smaller border such as the rope to the top and/or bottom of the squares.

Leave the squares blank or fill with details as I've shown in other designs.

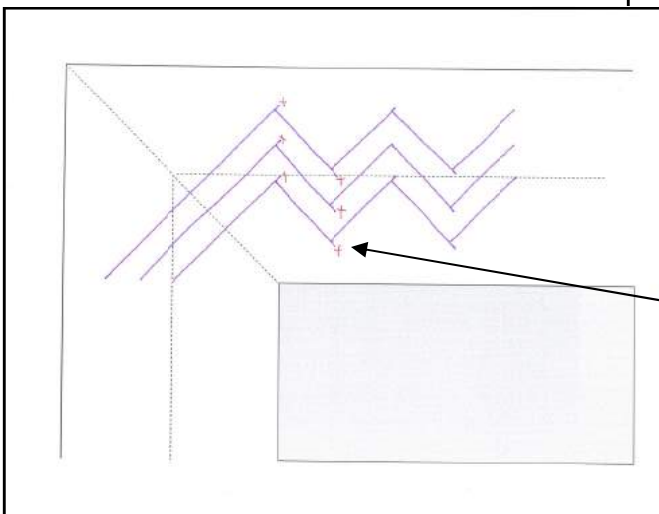
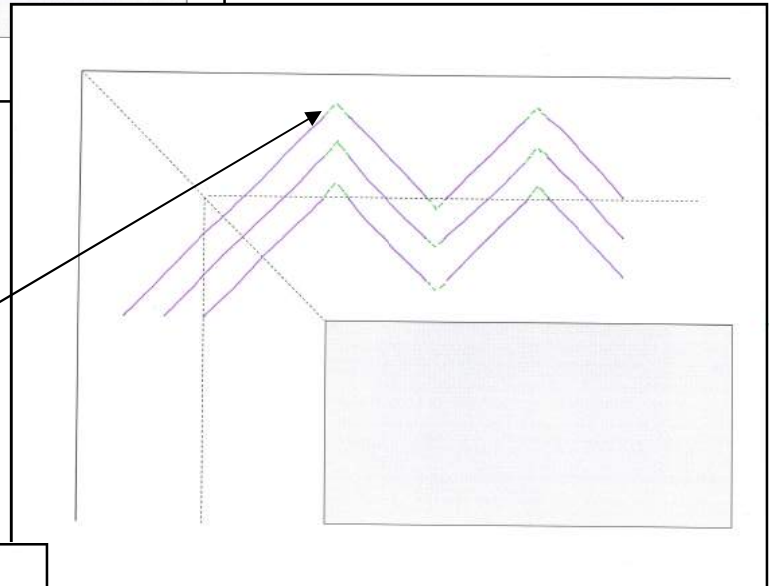


# Zig Zag

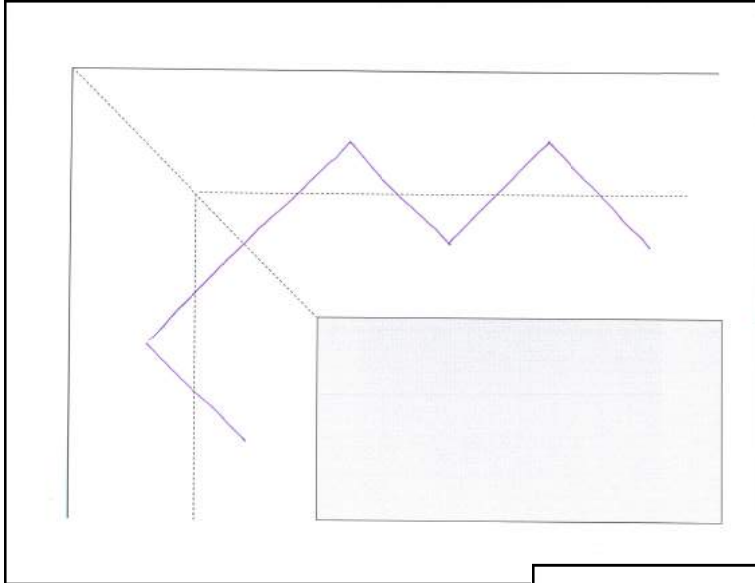


Basic Zig Zag border.  
Very cute all by itself  
without adding anything  
else!

If you need to stretch this design  
to make it fit, add space at the  
points and then extend the lines to  
fill the space (shown in green).

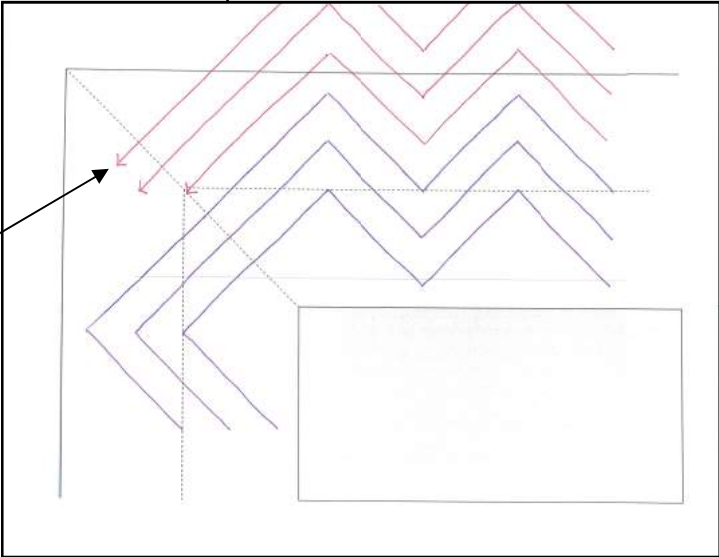


If you need to shrink this design  
to make it fit, mark the left side “zig”...when you  
add the right side “zag” crunch it up a  
little. Don’t quilt the extra little line you  
may end up with shown by the red “x”.

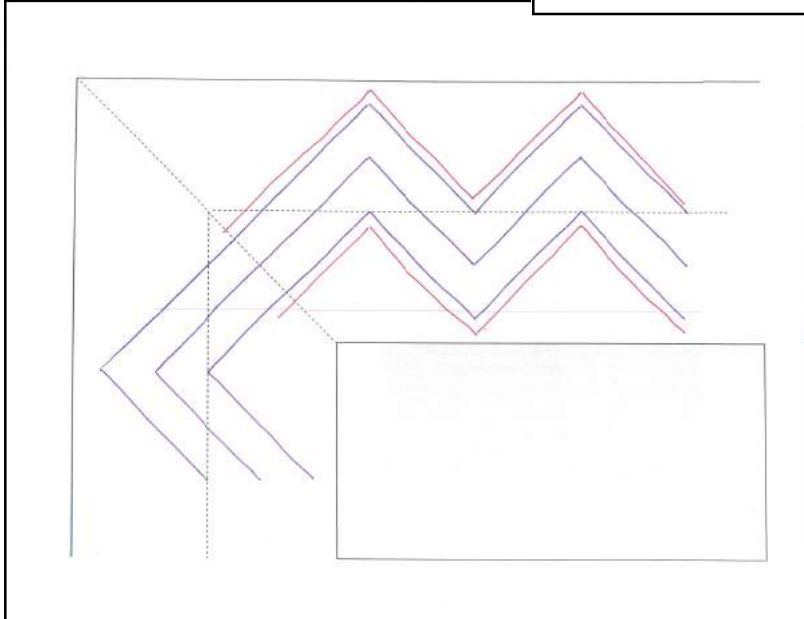


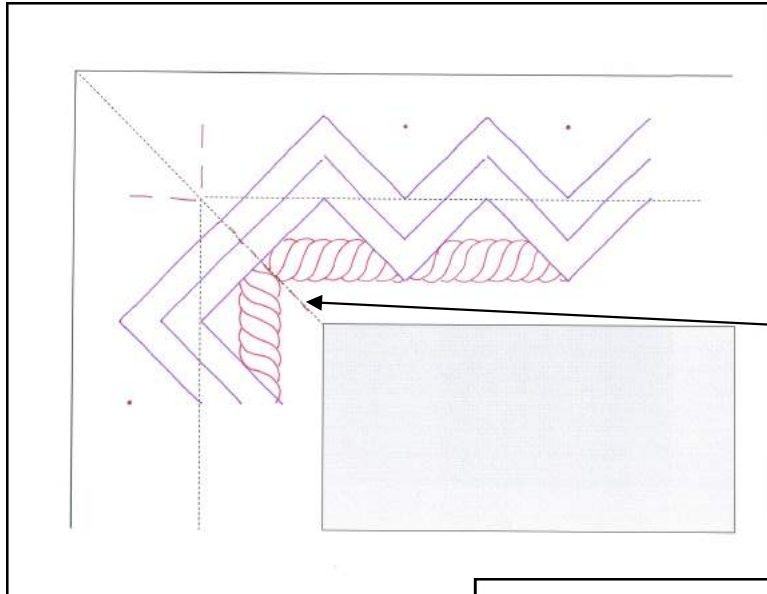
You don't have to use all three lines...you can use as few as one...

...or you can keep repeating making this as wide as you wish. You will have to extend the corner lines to make this fit though.



You can also repeat with thinner lines on either side. Sky is the limit here!!!





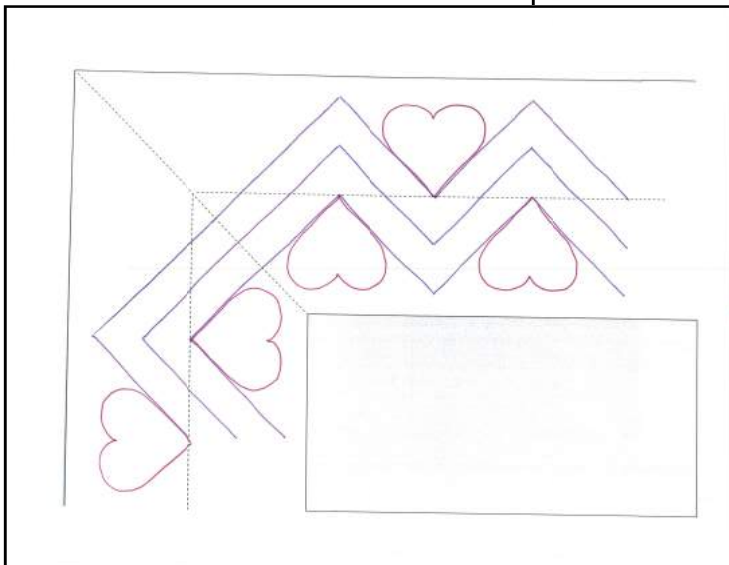
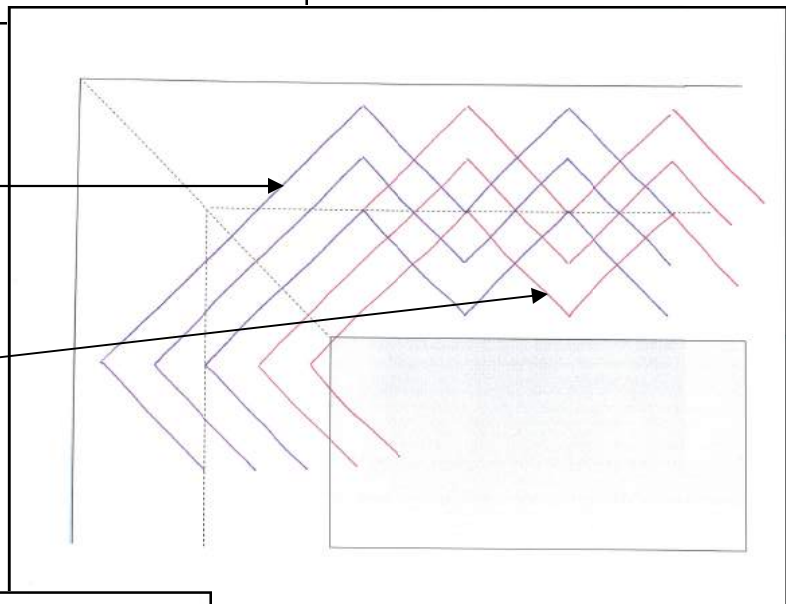
Consider running a smaller border such as the rope cable “underneath” the zigzag. You can do this on just one side or both.

I was careful to line up my 45 degree line in the corner so it would corner perfectly.

Try doubling up the border!

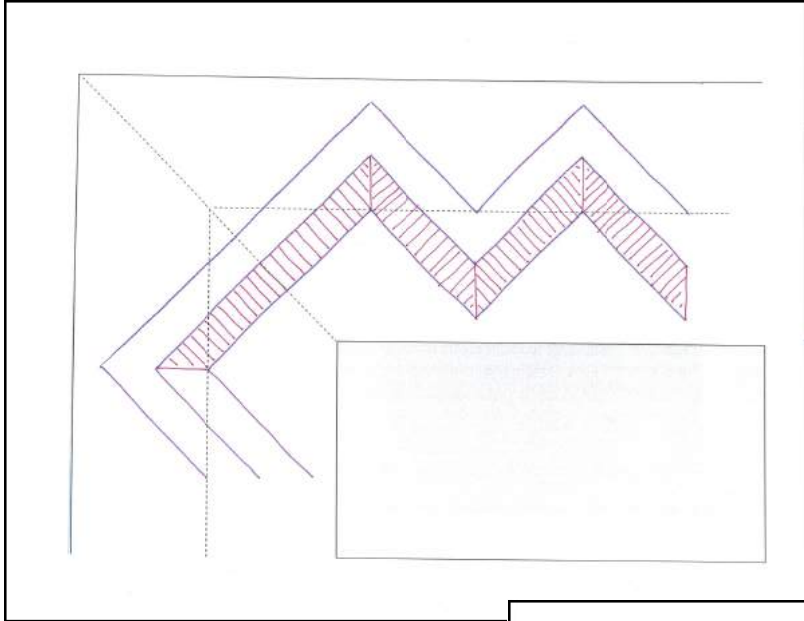
I marked one run of the border first (in purple).

Then I placed the stencil down again, shifted it over a bit, and then marked again (in red).



For an extra special touch try adding any number of motifs.

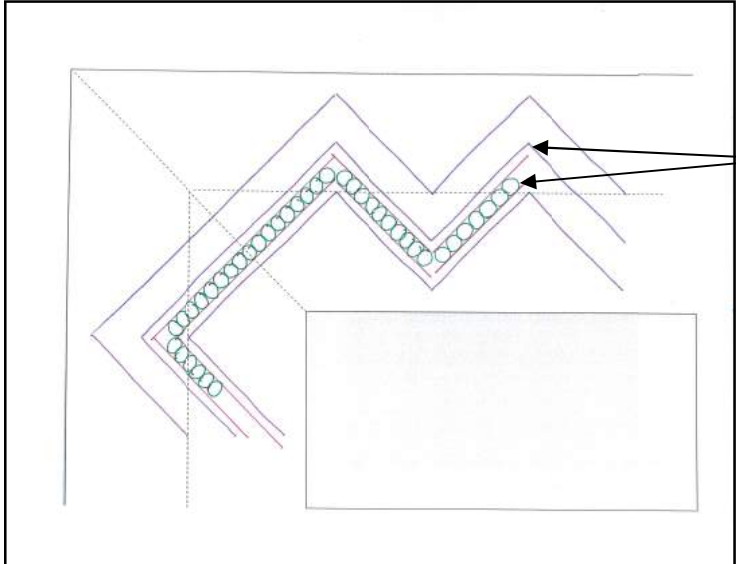
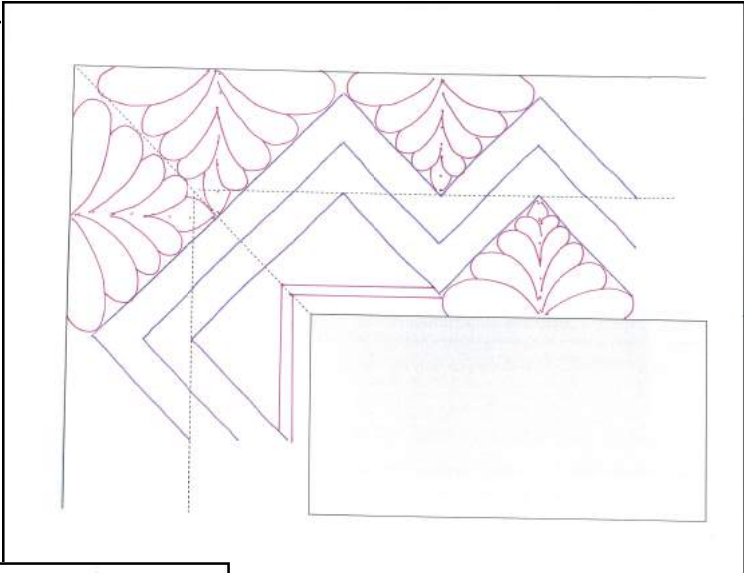
LOVE how the heart looks!



Consider adding some repetitive lines in one of the channels

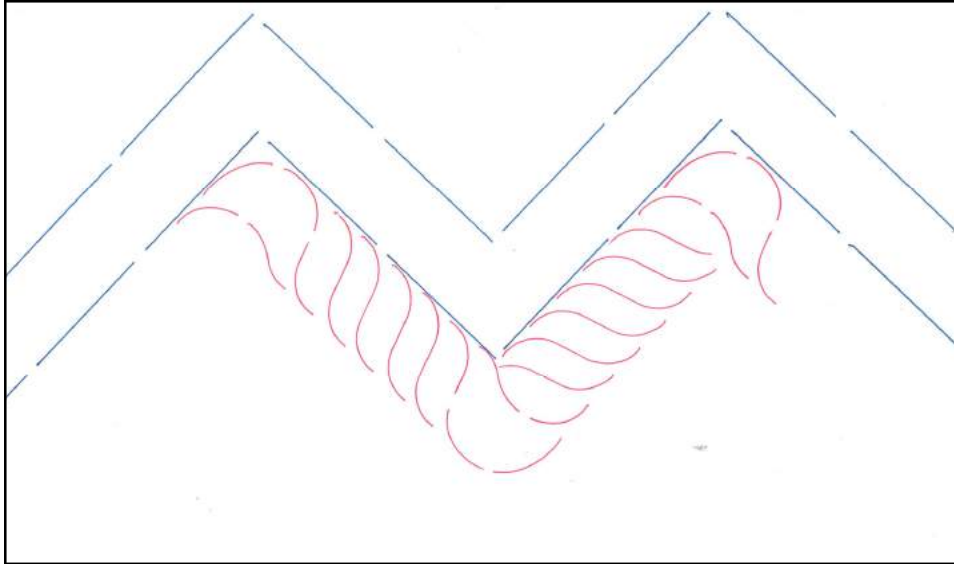
I filled the outside triangular spaces with free form feathers.

I found the corner was a bit awkward so decided to add a set of pretty matt lines to help fill and add some detail.

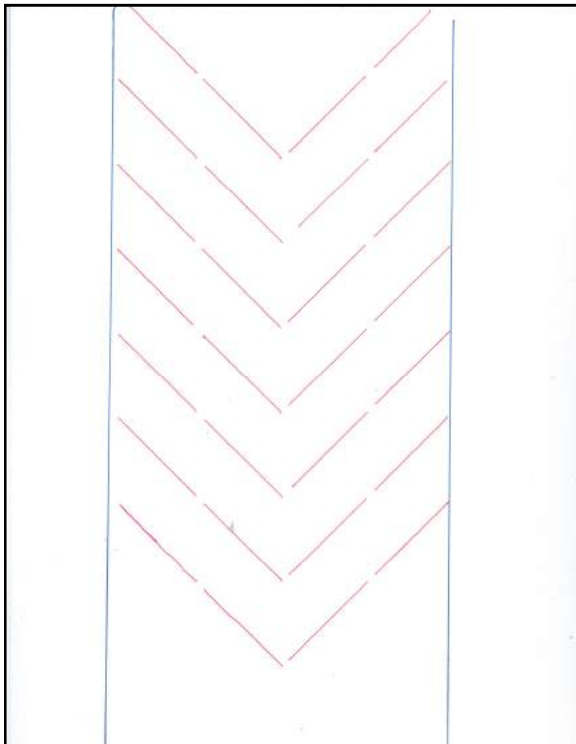


I thought the band was a bit wide for pearls so I added two small additional lines in the channel and then filled with a string of pearls.

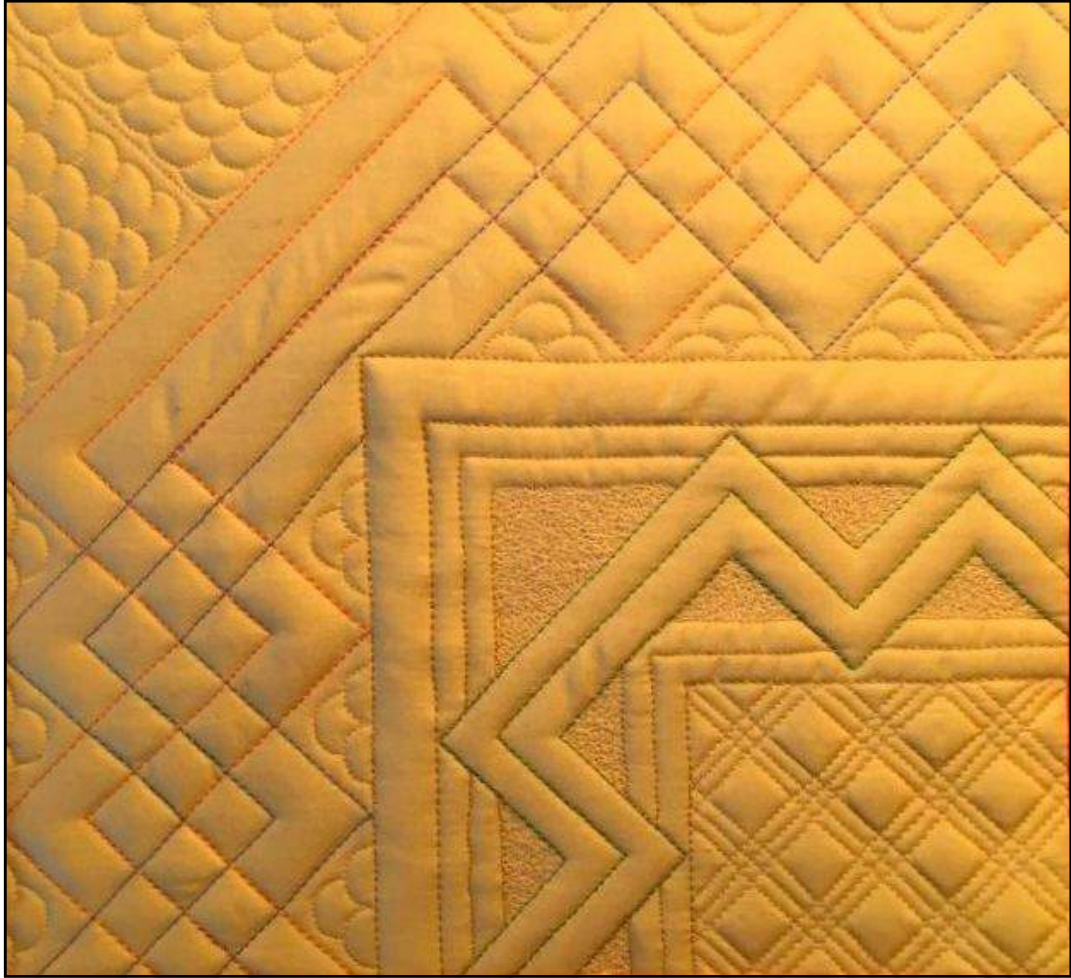




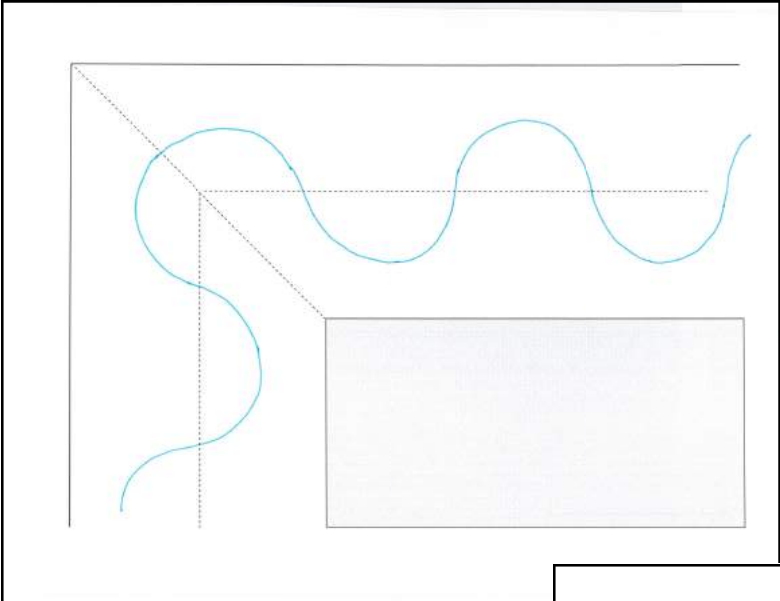
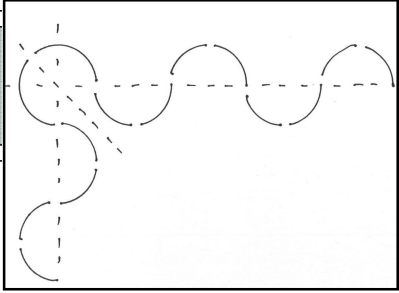
In this case, I marked two lines of the zig-zag border. I took my small rope cable border and marked JUST the corner of the rope at each point of the zig-zag. Then I filled in the long runs with a straight rope. I had to fudge-to-fit just a little.



I've only used one section of the zig-zag border to create a chevron design. You can space the lines as close together or as far apart as you wish.

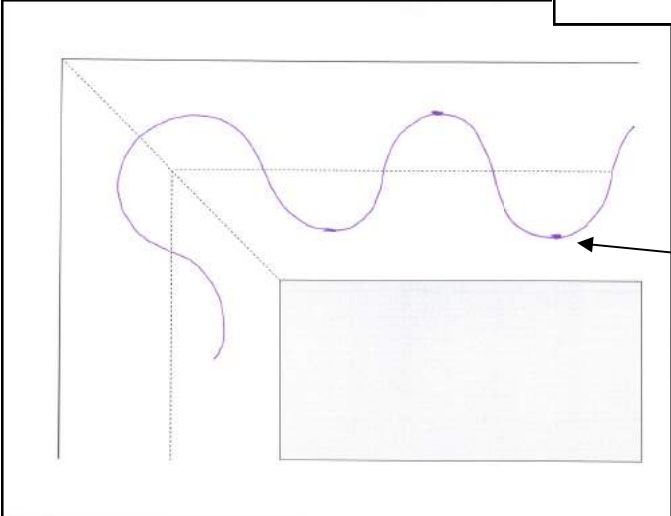
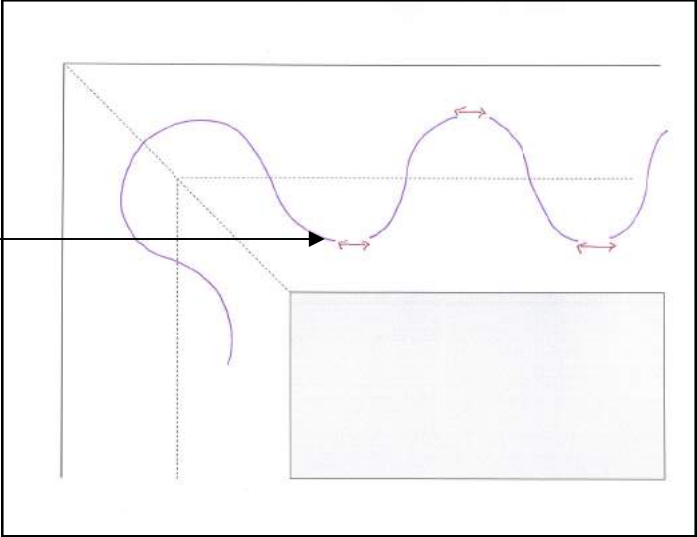


# High Tide

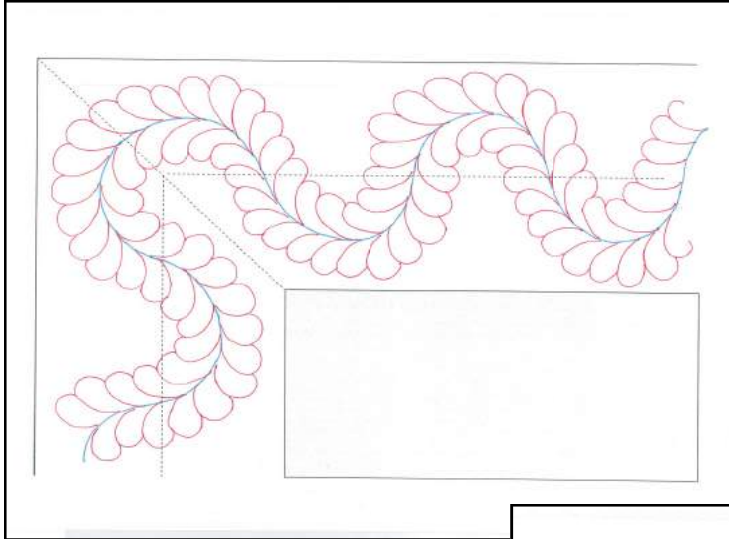


Possibilities are ENDLESS with this one!!!

If you need to stretch this design to make it fit, separate at the bottoms and tops of the wave and then fill in.

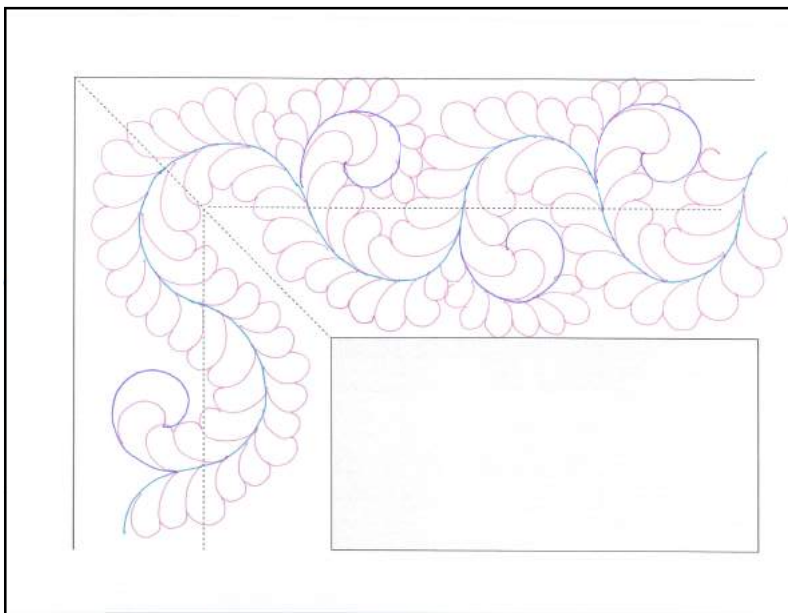
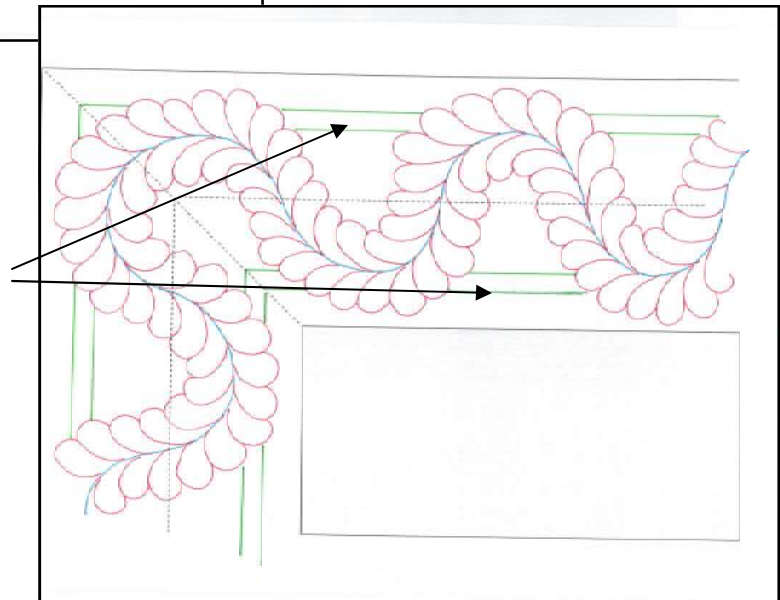


If you need to shrink this design to make it fit, scrunch it up at the bottoms and tops of the waves.

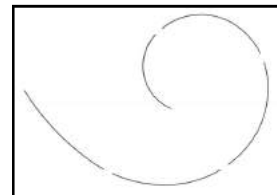


One of the more obvious borders would be a feathered border.

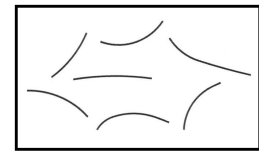
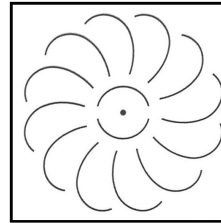
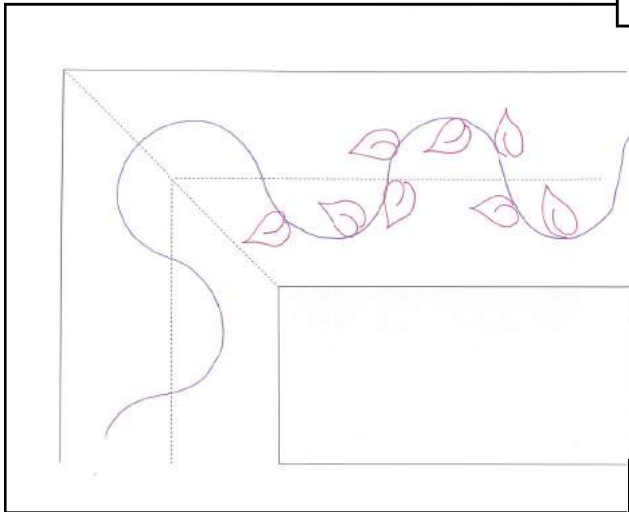
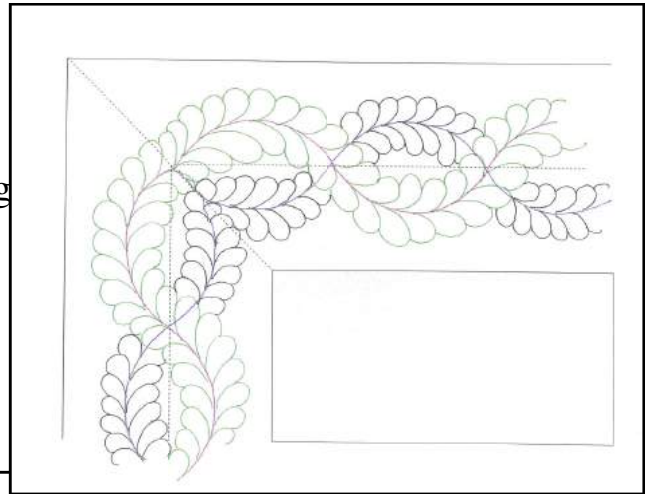
Look at the dimension that is created when matt lines are added. You can add these to the top and/or bottom.



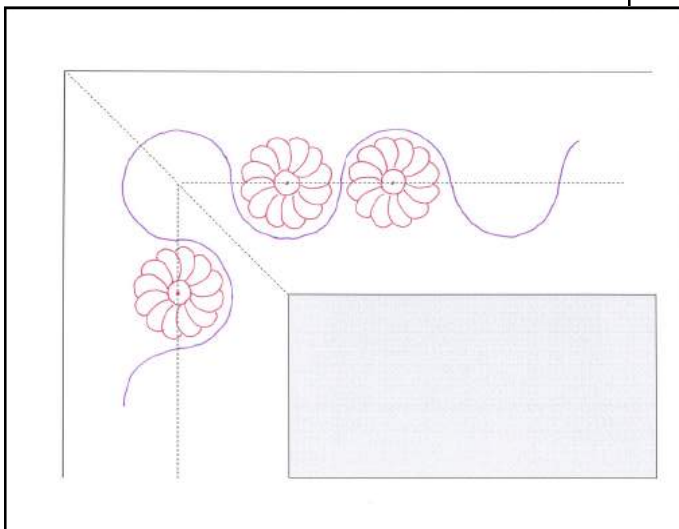
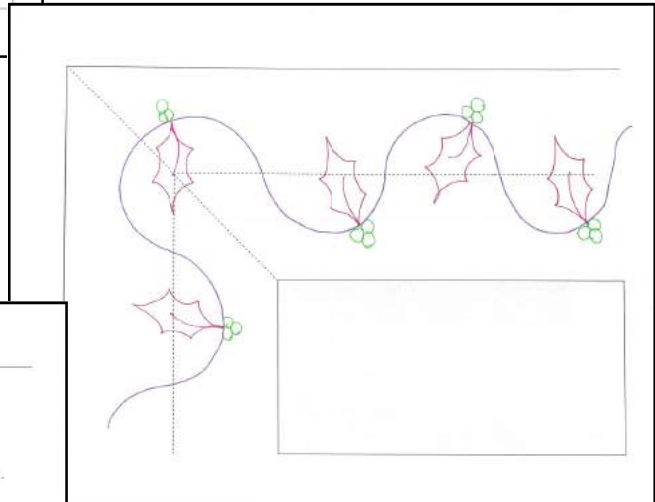
Add one of the swirl motifs to add yet another beautiful detail to this border.

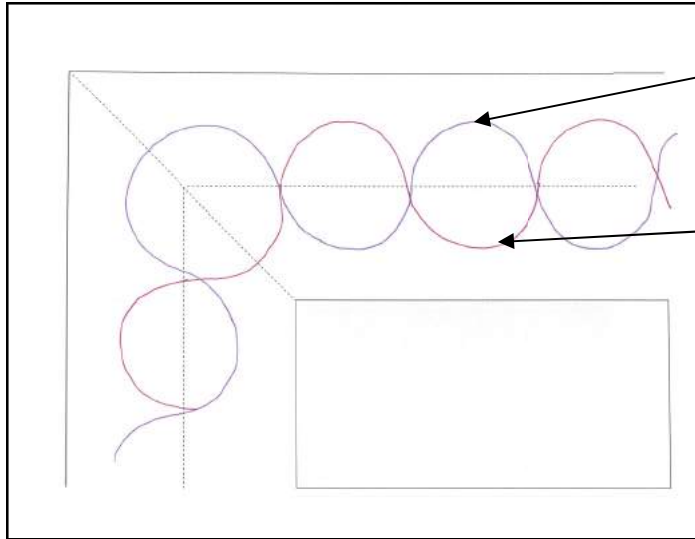


I marked the border twice over lapping and then filled with feathers.



Have fun adding a variety of motifs to fit the personality of any quilt!

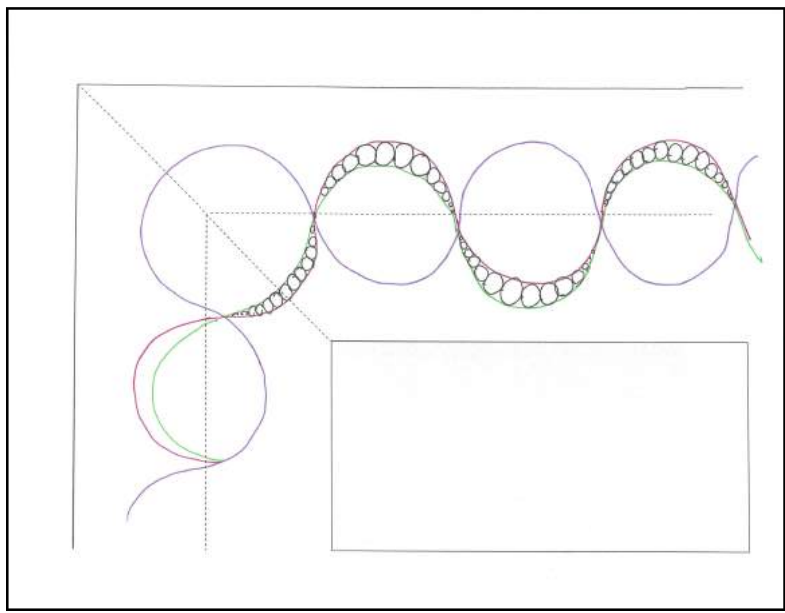
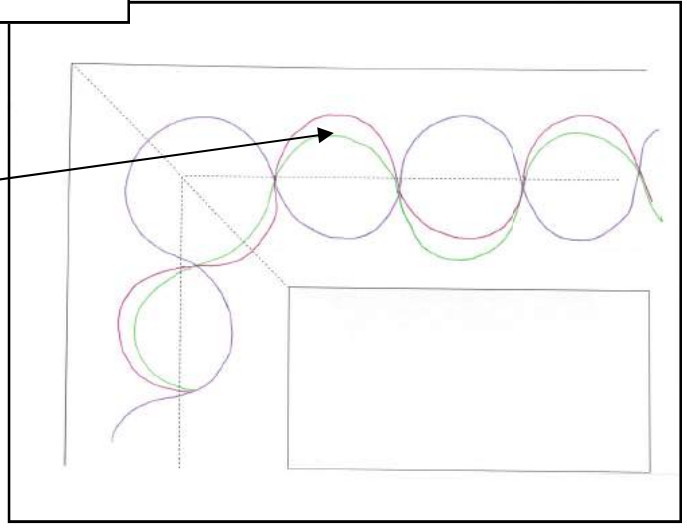




I drew one repeat of the stencil (shown in purple).

Then I scooted the stencil over and repeated it again to form circles. (shown in red)

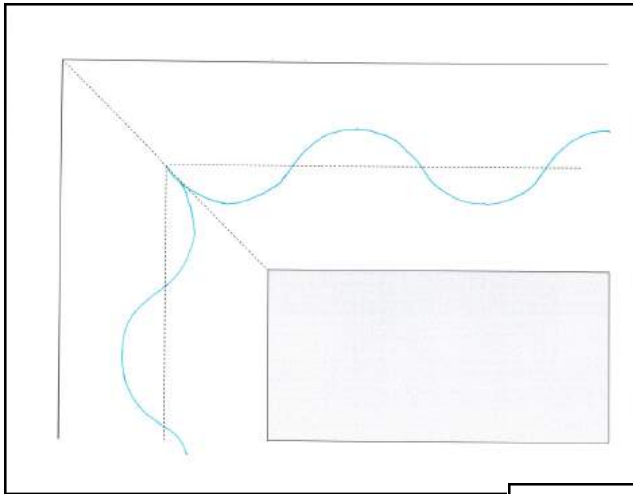
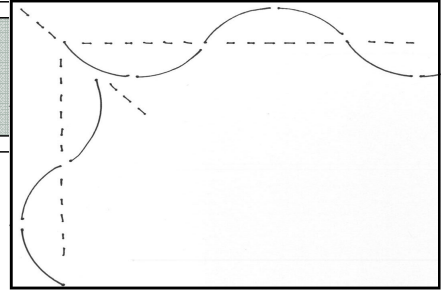
You can leave the circles as they are OR you can scoot it over again, offset it, and you end up with a ribbony line that travels thru the circles. (shown in green)



You can leave the ribbons as they are OR you can add some pearls to the ribbon for a beautiful detail.

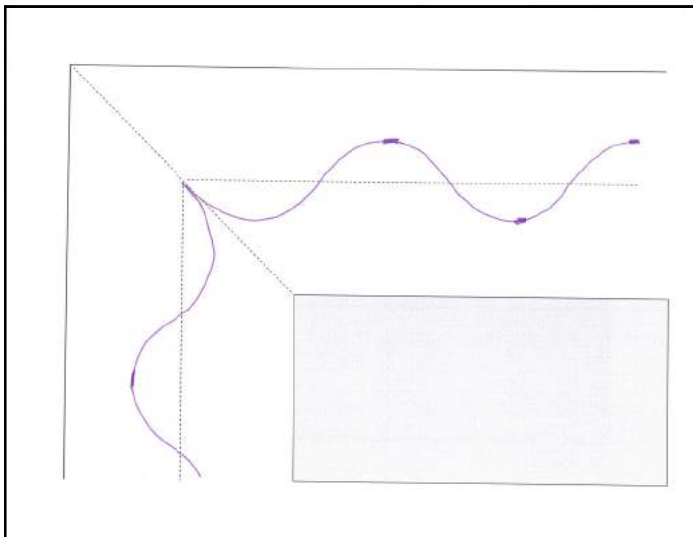
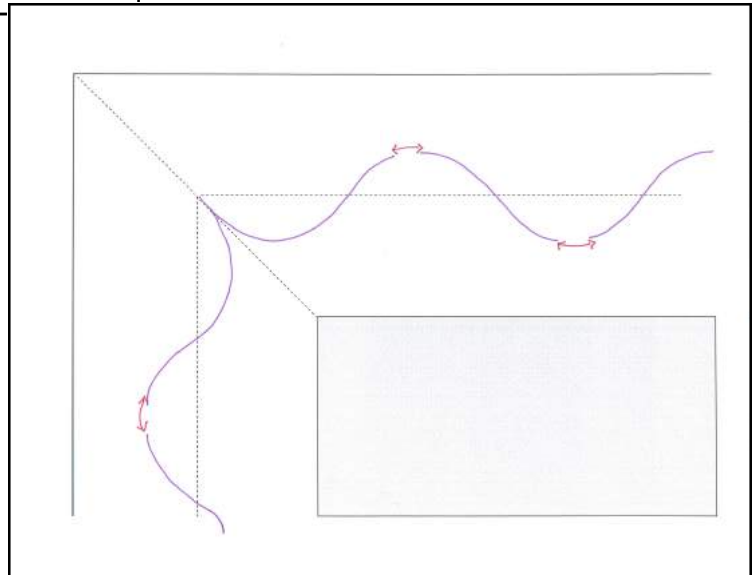


# Low Tide

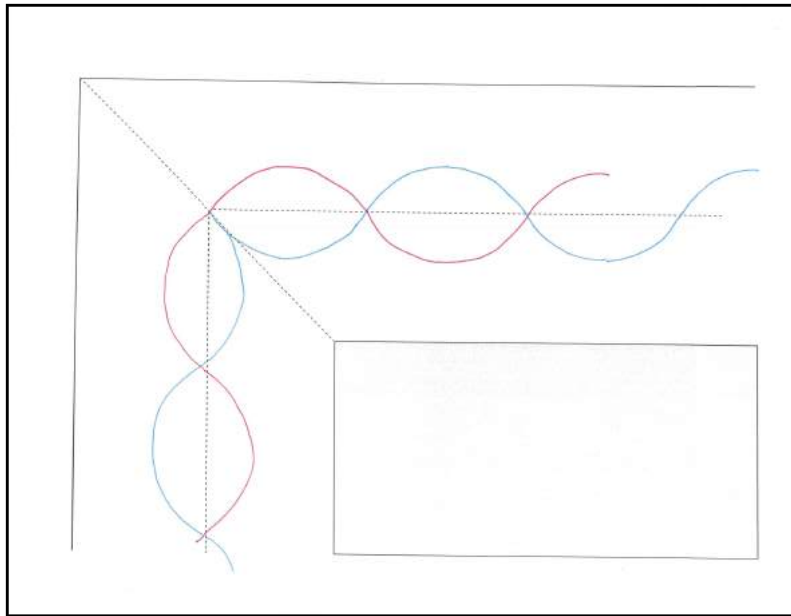


You can do all the same things with the low-tide wave that you can do with the high-tide wave but I will be adding some new ones!

You will extend and shrink the wave the same as you did on the high tide...extend and shrink to fit at the top and bottoms of the wave.







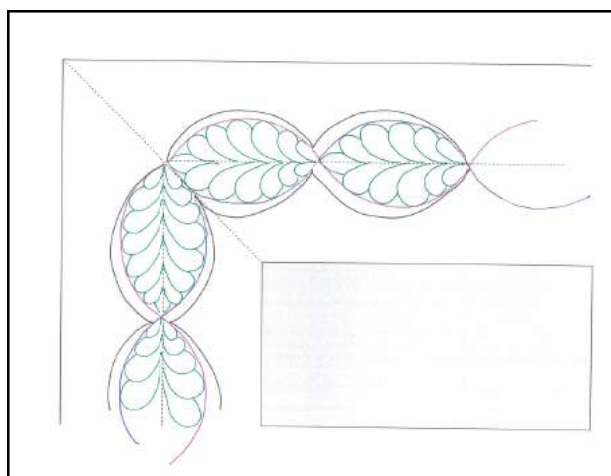
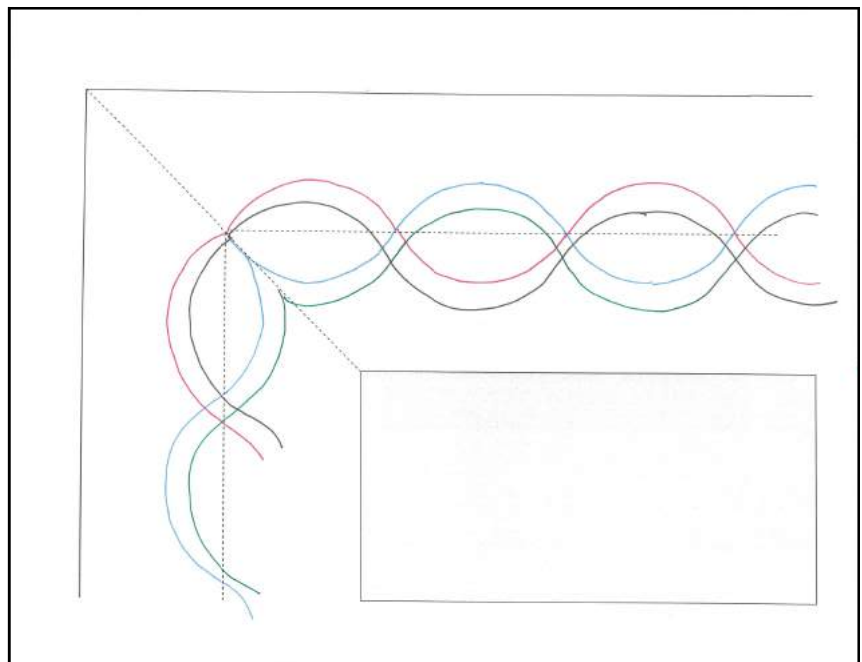
You can shift the wave over a bit to create ovals...much like you created circles with the high tide wave.



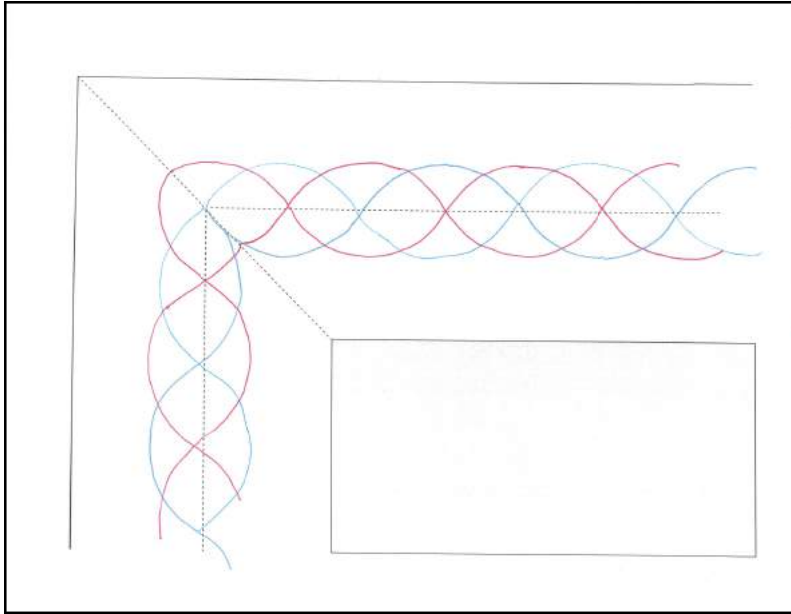
Look at this cool ribbon border! Much easier than it looks. It just requires four passes instead of two.

First pass in blue.  
 Second pass in red.  
 Third pass in black.  
 Fourth pass in dark green.

Keep your lines uneven-ish to create a ribbony effect.



Try adding some feathers to the inside for another pretty detail.



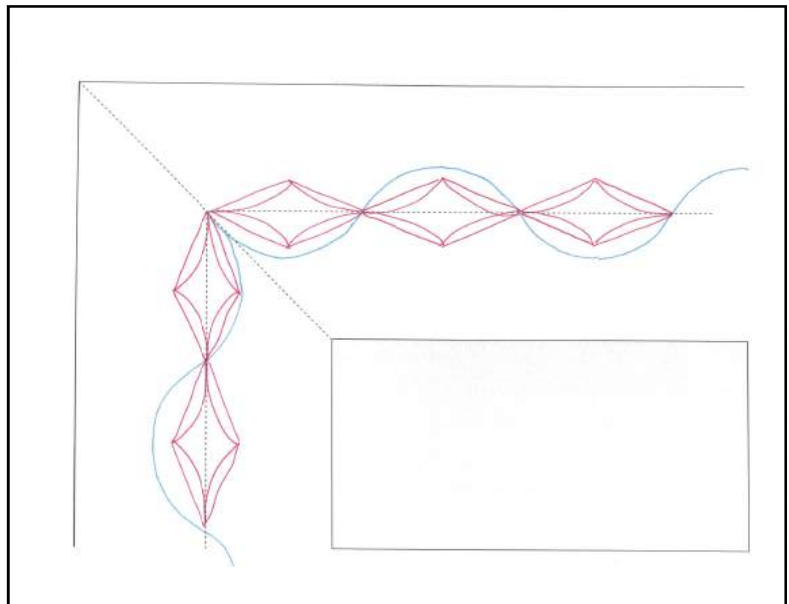
This isn't as complicated as it looks.

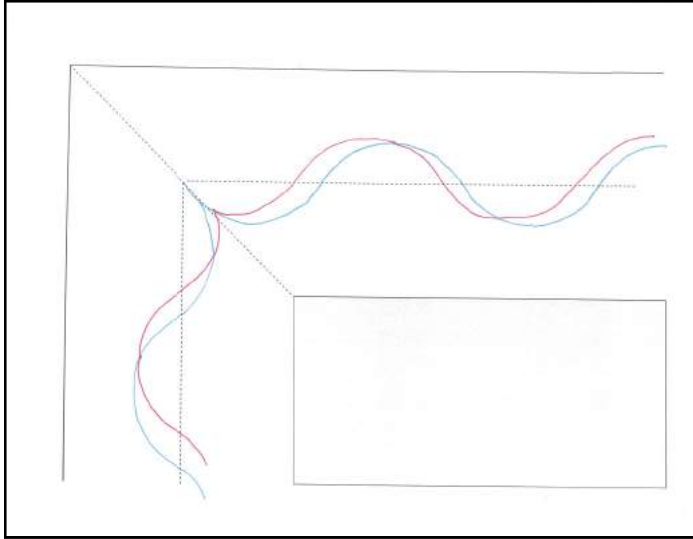
You are going to recreate the first design on the previous page (shown in blue).

Now shift the stencil over and stagger it in between the waves and mark that design again. (shown in red)

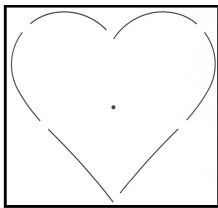
You can add any motif to the low tide wave...just like the high tide.

I decided to be different and added one of the diamond motifs and then added cathedral windows to dress it up a bit.



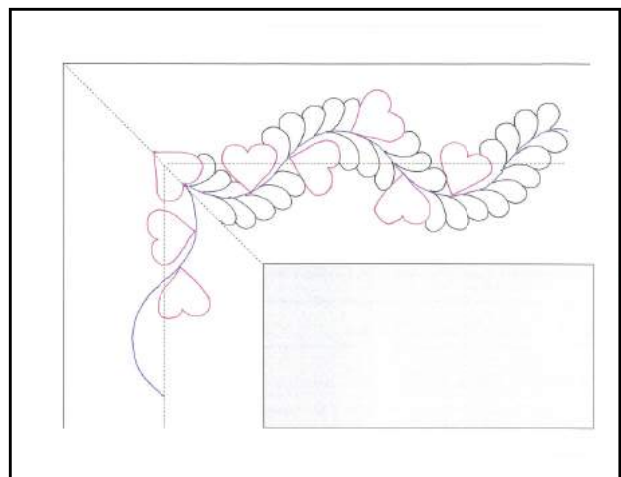
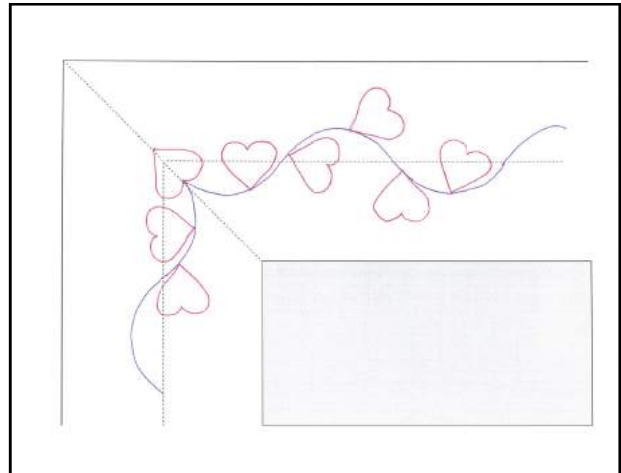


If you want a very simple, elegant ribbon simply mark one set of the wave and then just scooch it over a bit until you get the effect you want. You can add as many layers of ribbons as you wish.



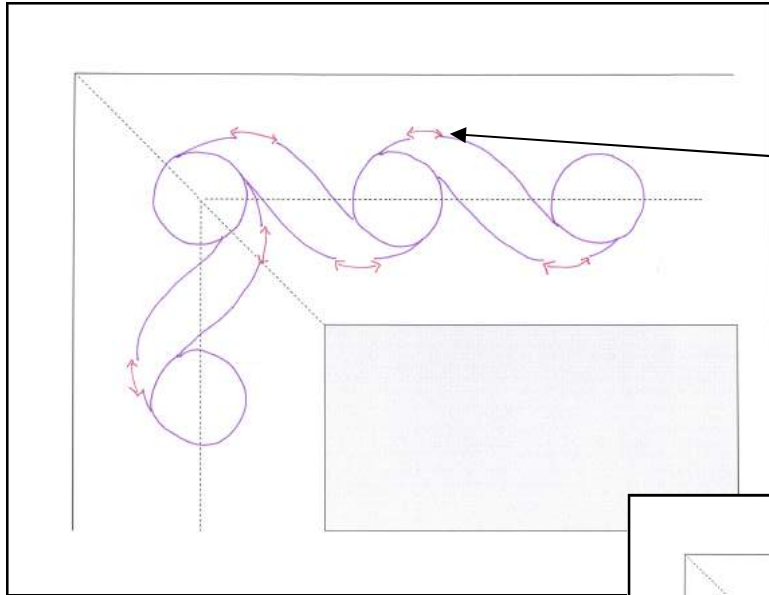
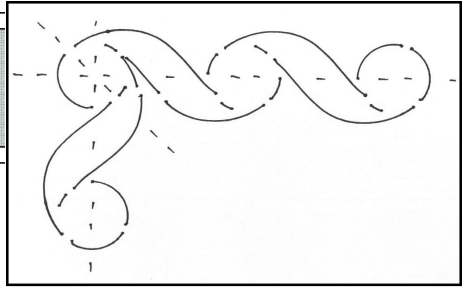
You can add any motif to the border such as the hearts.

If you want to fill it further try adding some feathers.

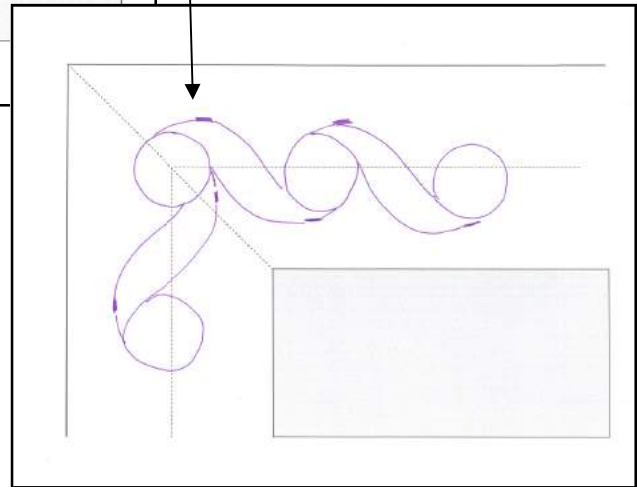




# Pearls & Swirls



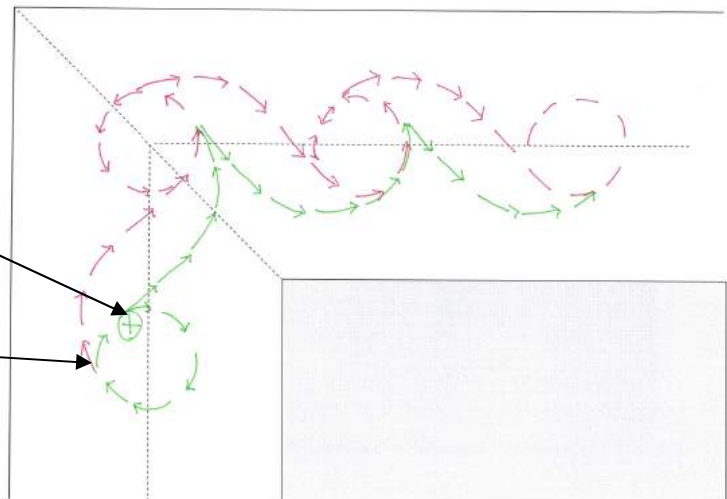
If you want to stretch or shrink this design to fit, you will do this at the top of the arch.



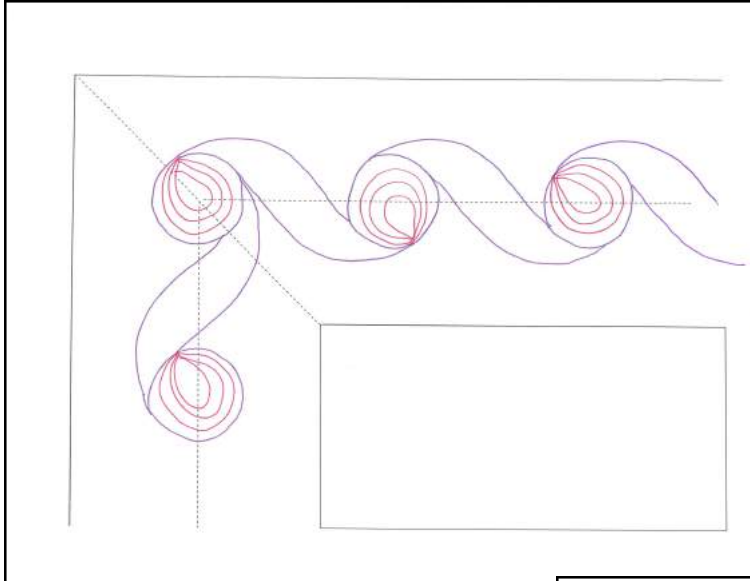
Here's a tip on one way to quilt this continuous line fashion:

1. Start Here  
Quilt the bottom half of the units (shown in green).

2. Now start here and quilt the top half of the units. (shown in red).

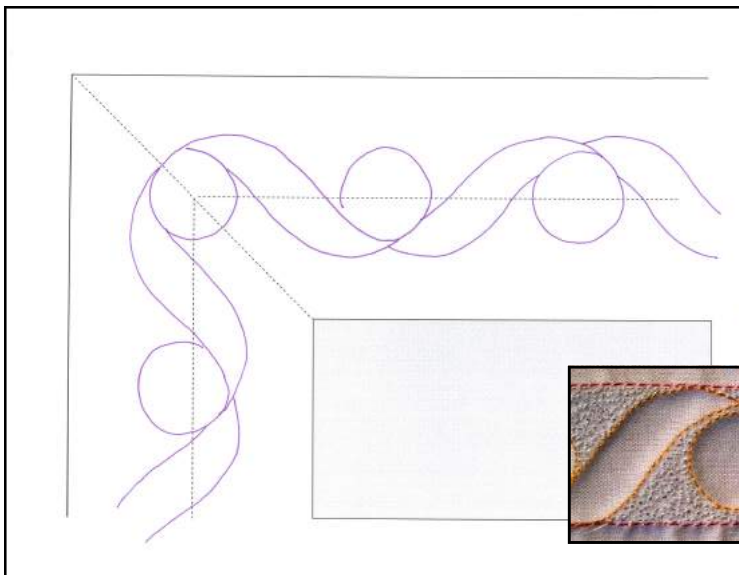
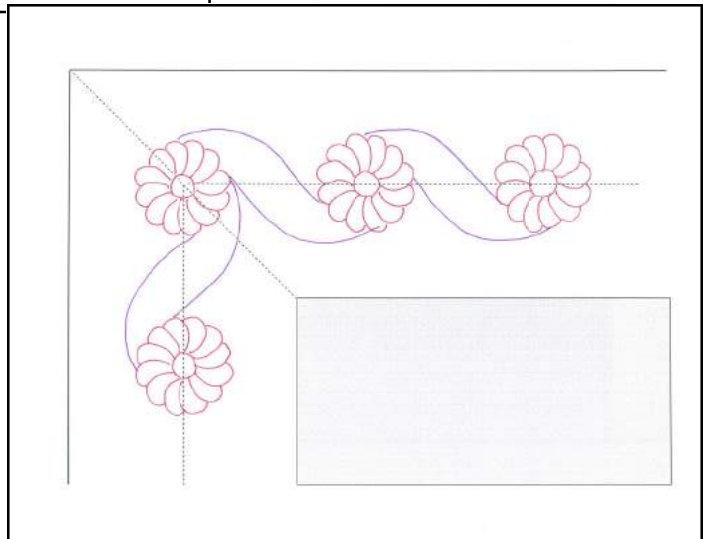


You will have to backtrack through the "pearls" to keep it continuous line.



When you are swirling around to make the circle, go inside the circle and add more!

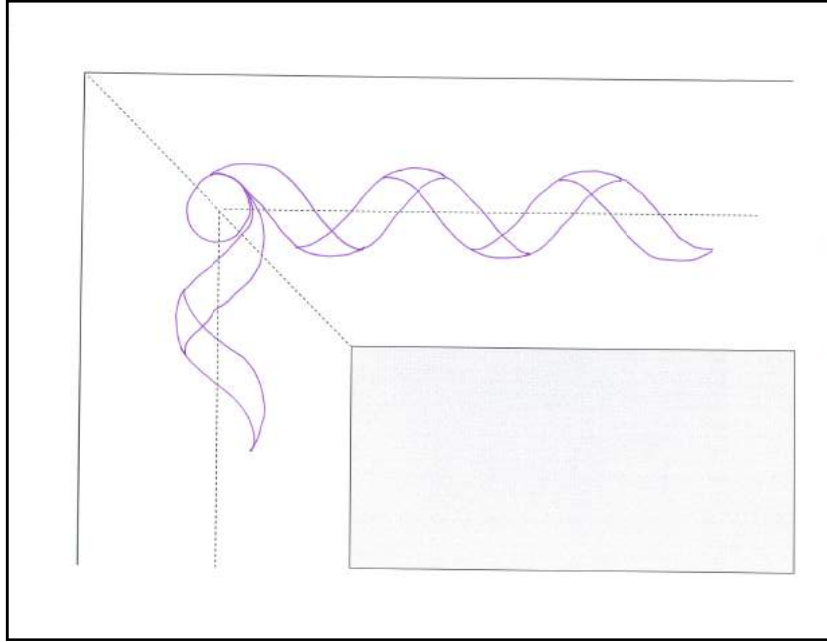
Remember you can add any motif of your choice here! The sky is the limit.



You can take the “swirl” part of this design and flip it around...here’s just one of many possibilities.

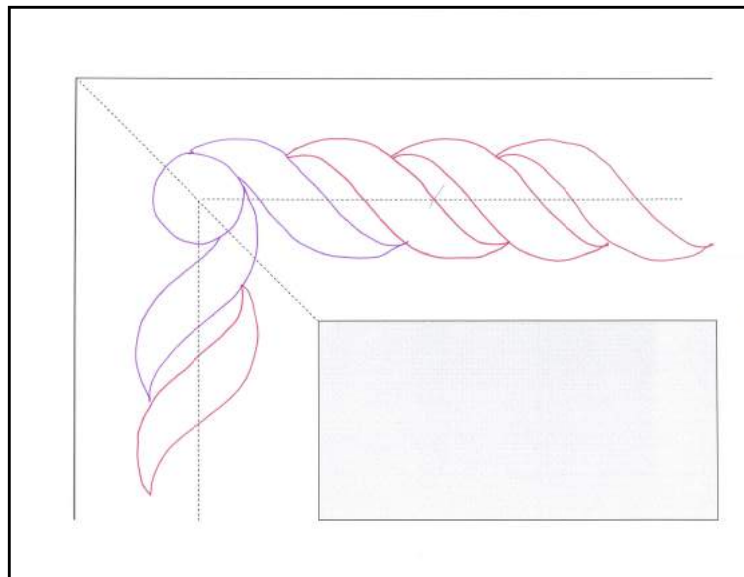
Again, try substituting another motif for the circle.

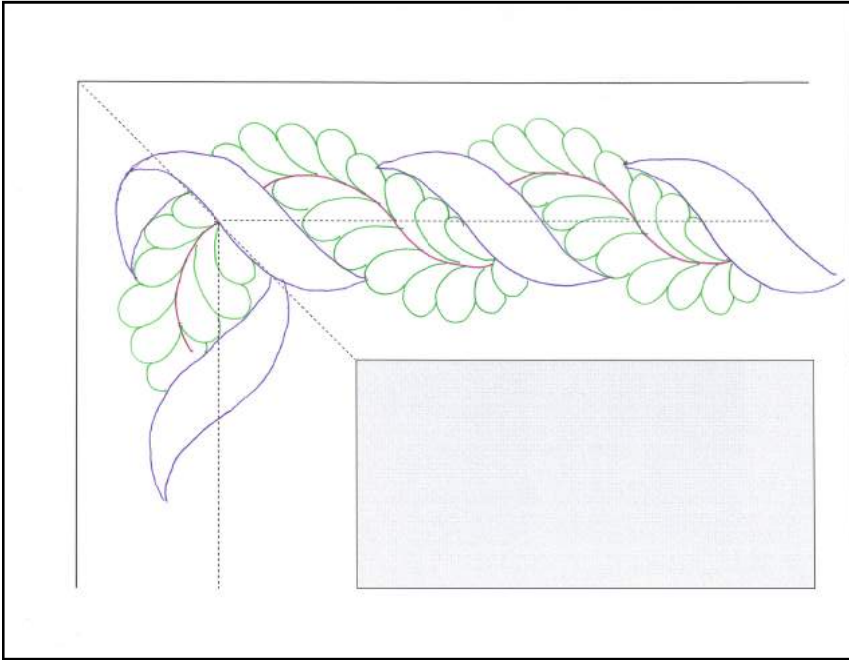




Here are two more examples of how to take the swirl part of the stencil and flip it around to make more designs. Love these!

If you do this be sure to line up the cut halfway line on your stencil with your marked halfway line on your quilt. This keeps everything straight.





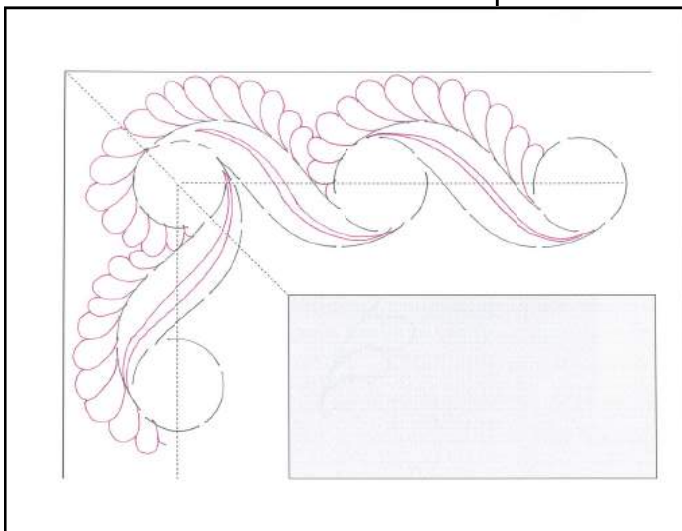
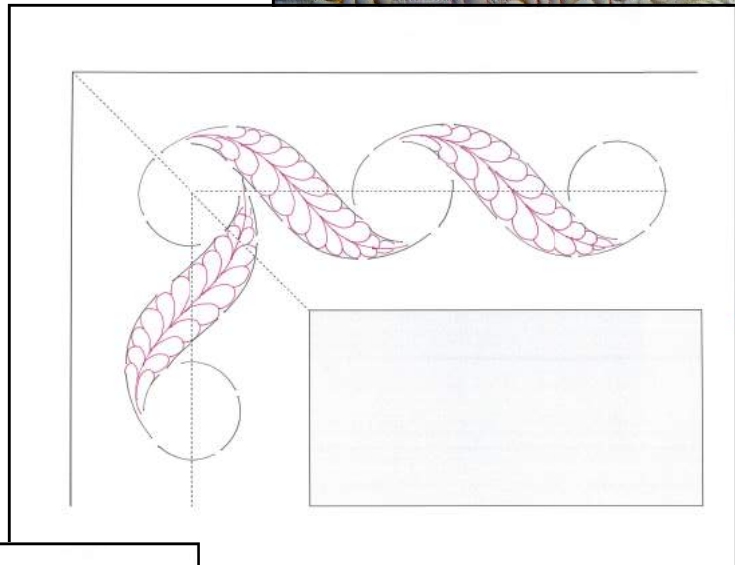
I used the “swirl” part of the border to create the ribbon and then used the “low tide” border for the feathers.

LOVE this one!



Try filling with feathers on the inside and/or the outside.

This inspiration came from Pinterest!

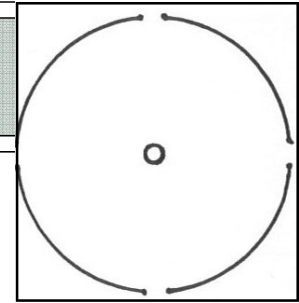




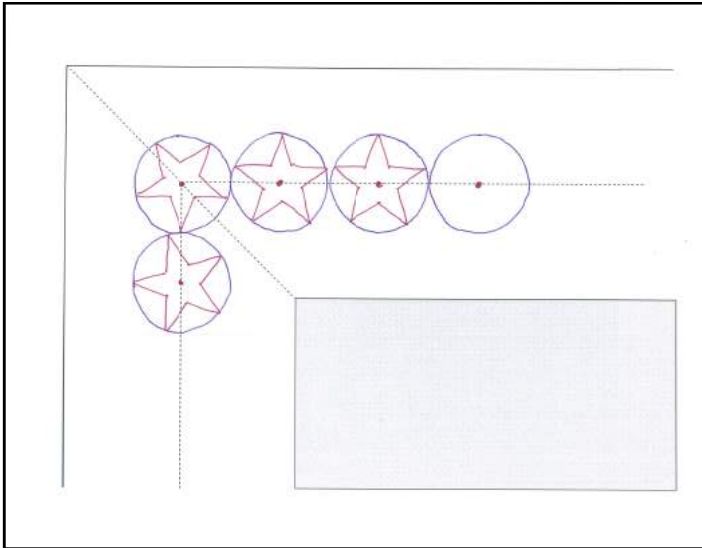


# Motifs

In addition to being able to add motifs to any of the border designs, many of these can be repeated to make beautiful borders themselves. Mark the corners first!

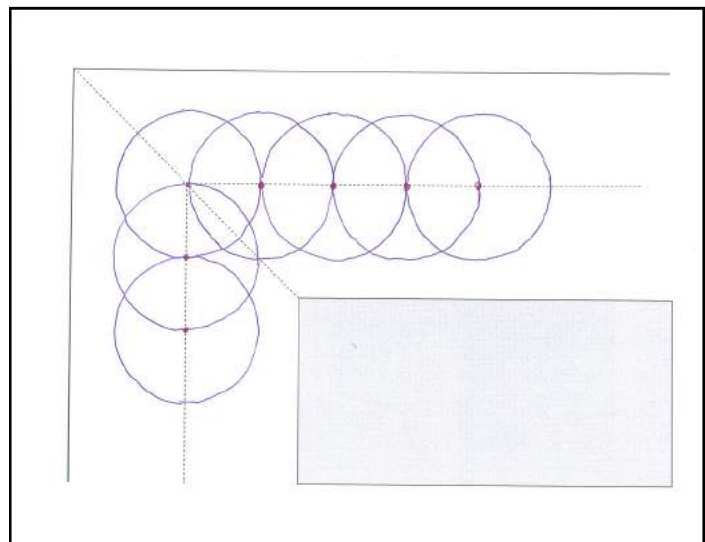


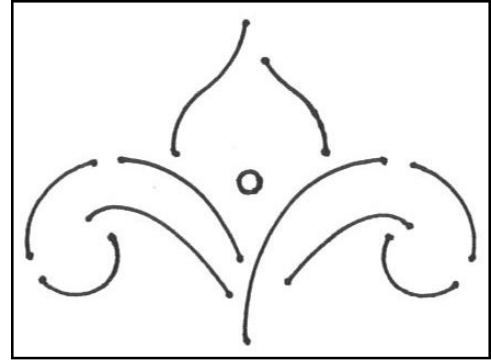
circle



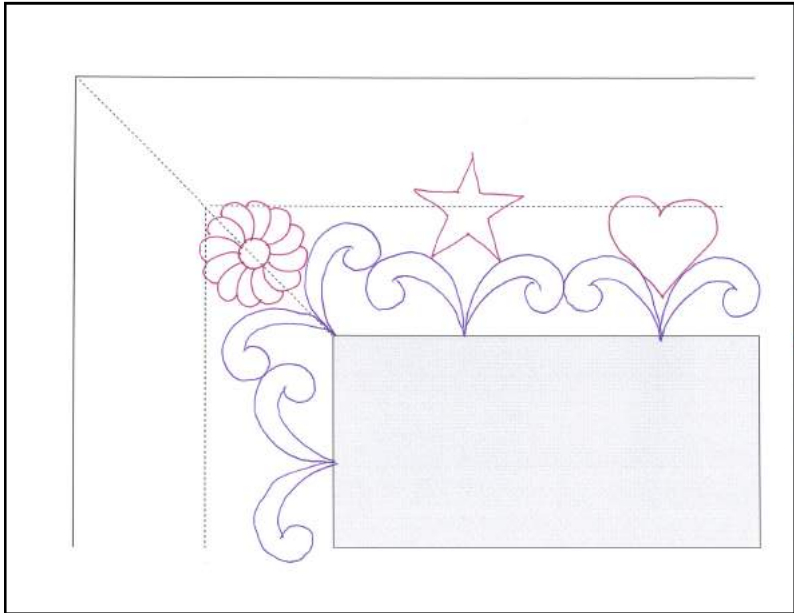
I lined up the center dot in the circle with the halfway line. You can fill with any motif of your choice.

You can overlap your circles to create a really fun design!  
Again, use your centered dots to keep your design  
Consistent and centered.



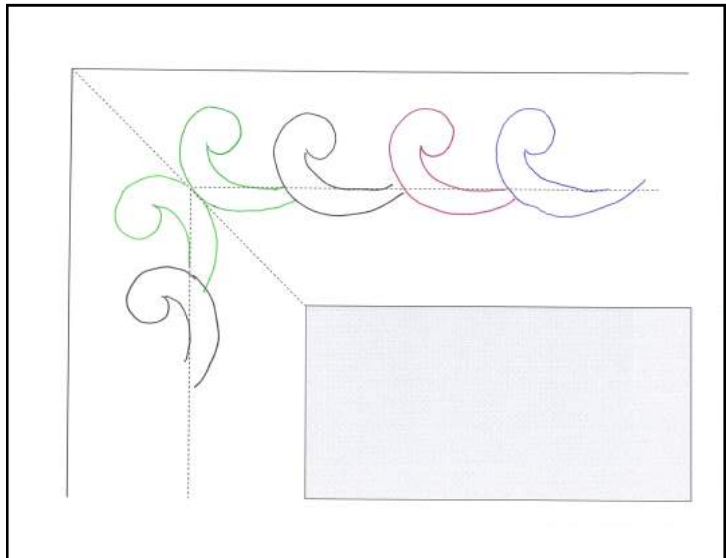


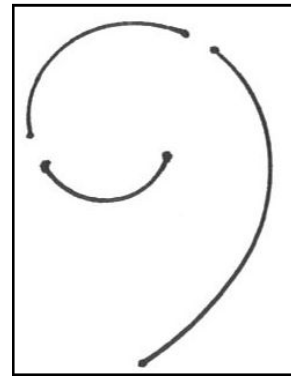
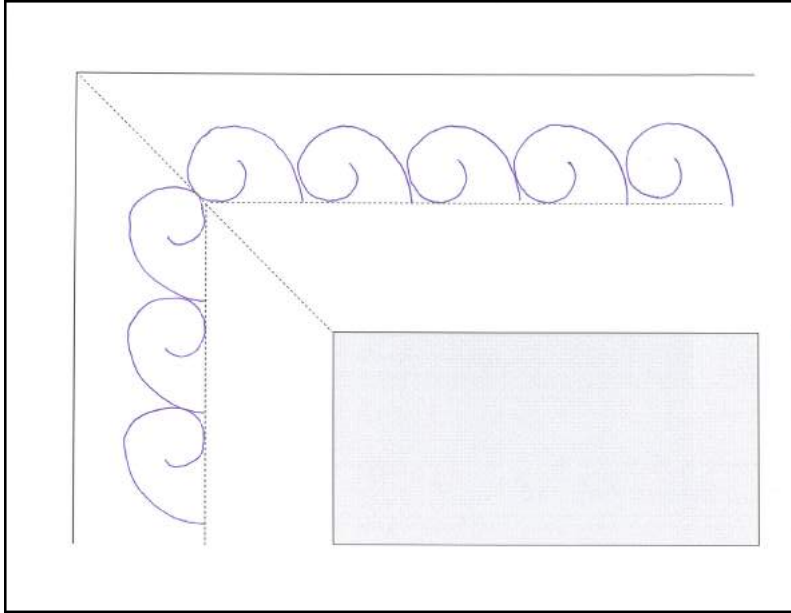
Fleur de lis



I used the bottom half of the Fleur de Lis and then added any motif of my choice in the top.

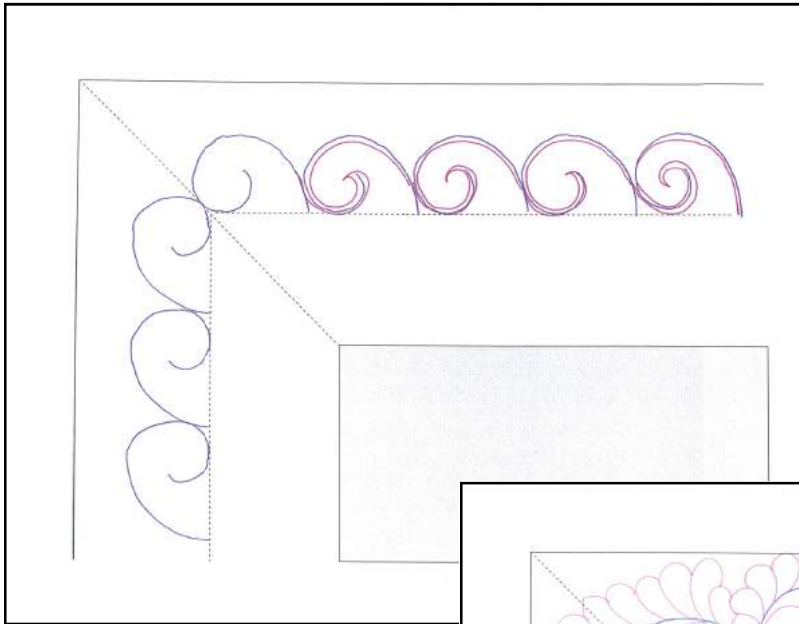
I took one part of the bottom and repeated it to make this wave border.





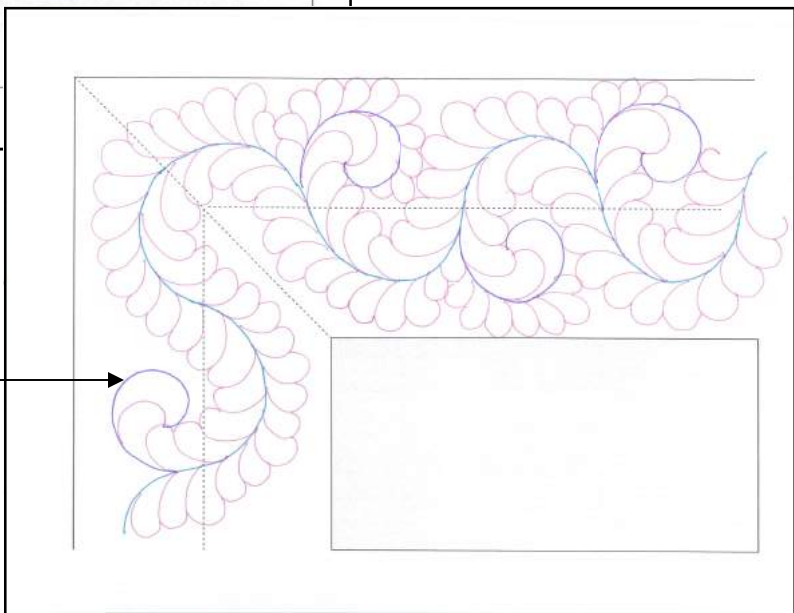
Single swirl

I marked a repetitive single swirl first (shown in purple).

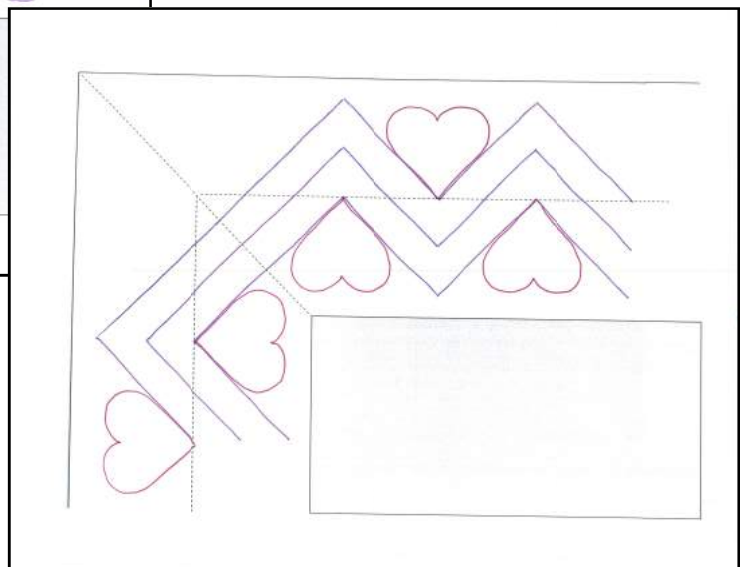
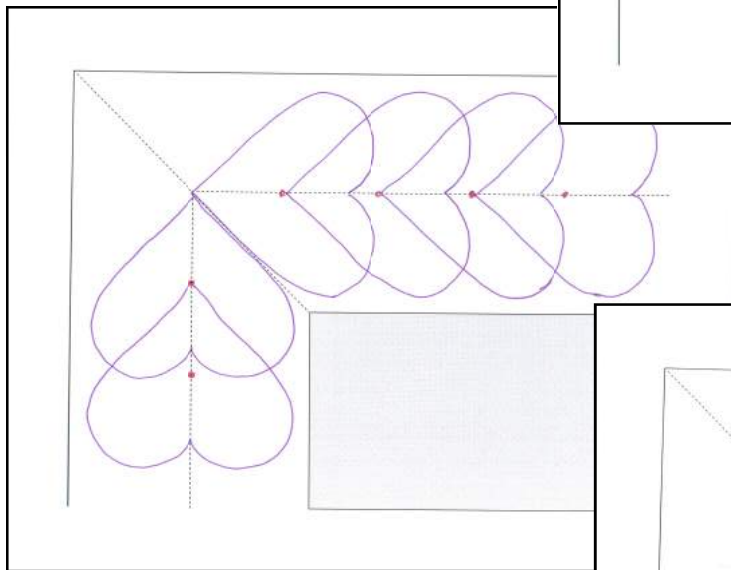
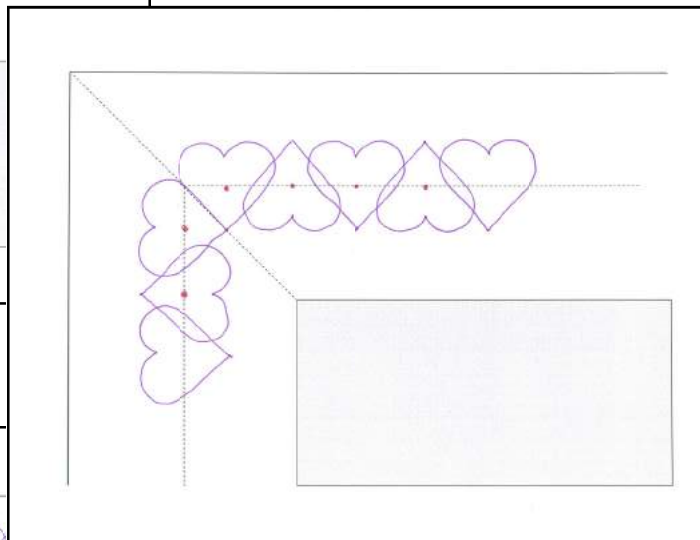
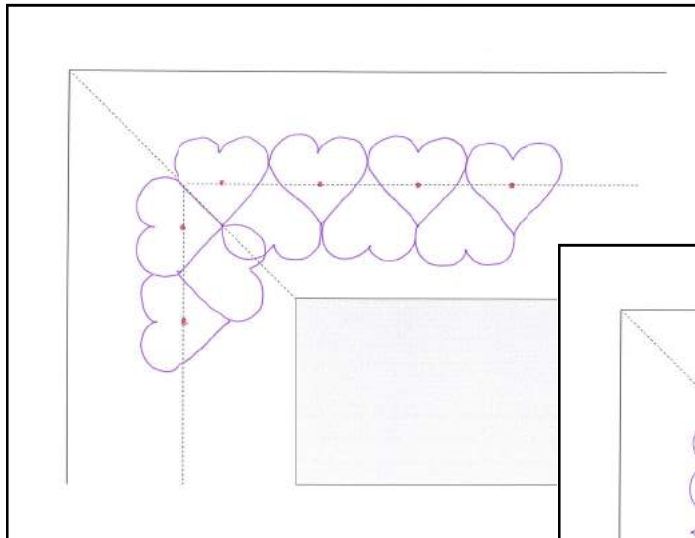
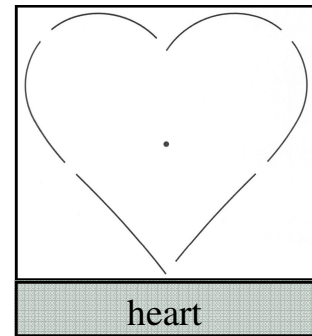


When it's time to quilt this be loose! Work from right to left, swirl inside and miss your lines to create a ribbon!

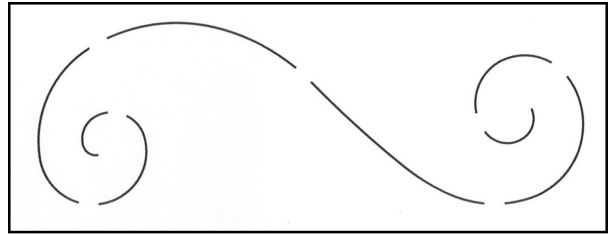
Remember you can add this swirl to any vine to create a beautiful feathered border.



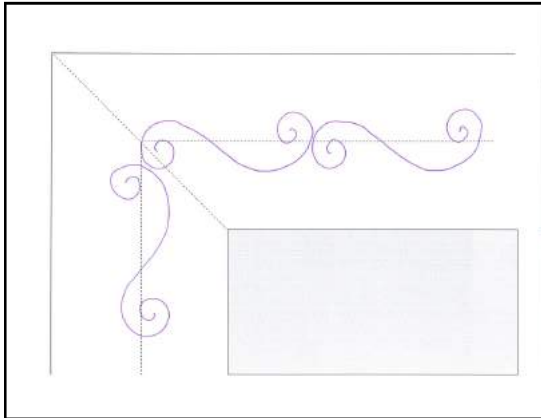
Use the center dot of the heart to line up your repeats.  
I will mark those on these designs so you can see how they work. I highly recommend that you mark the corners first so everything lines up!



Remember you can add this to any of the borders for a beautiful detail.

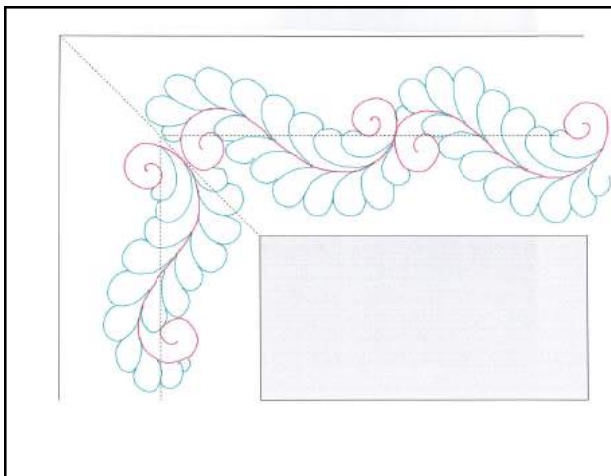
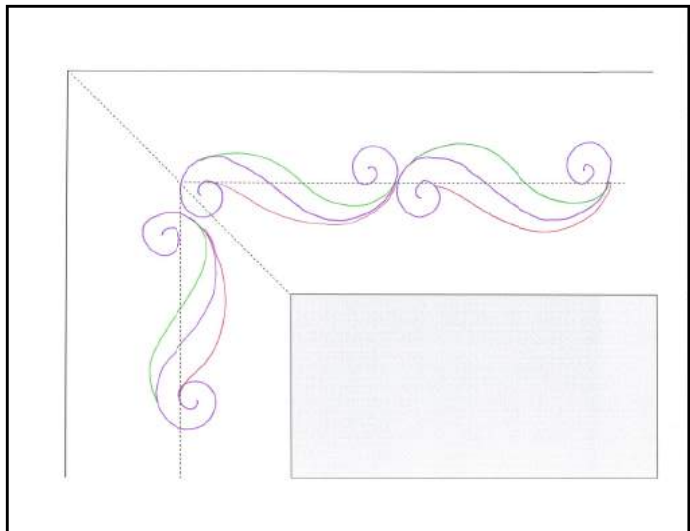


double swirl

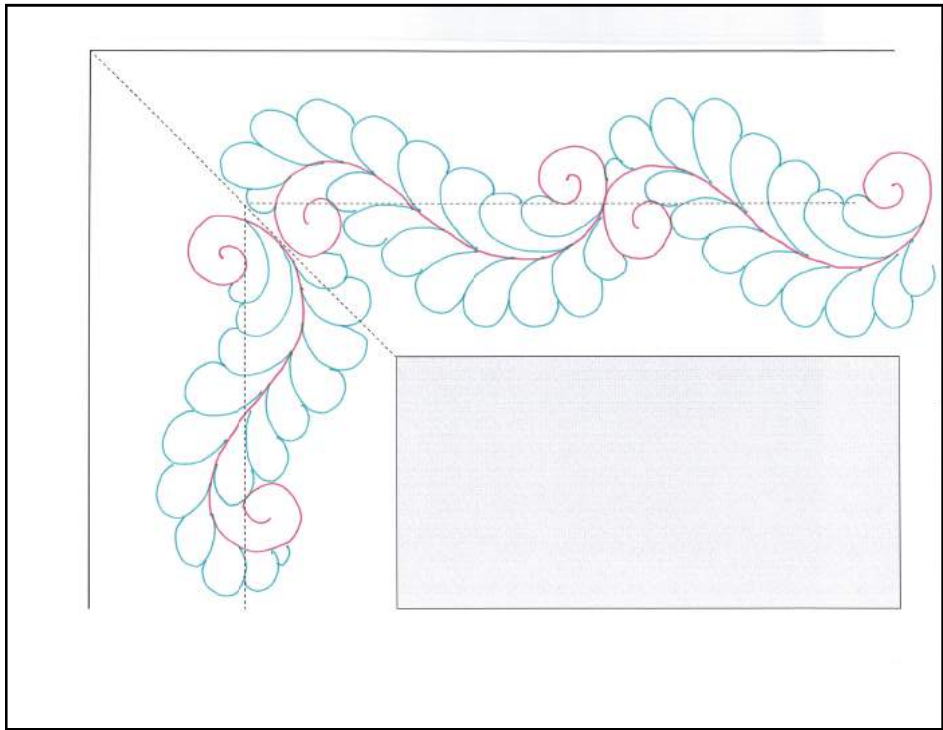


LOVE the double swirl motif. If you repeat this horizontally, be mindful of where your marked halfway line hits the swirls and keep it consistent for each repeat. This will keep things straight.

I took the single lined swirls and just added an extra line on top and bottom. You can add as many as you wish.

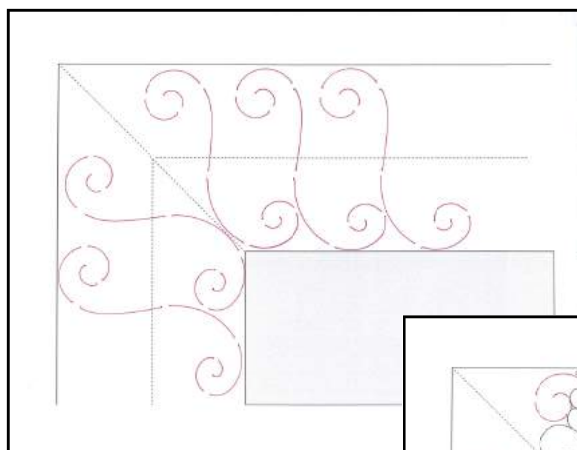
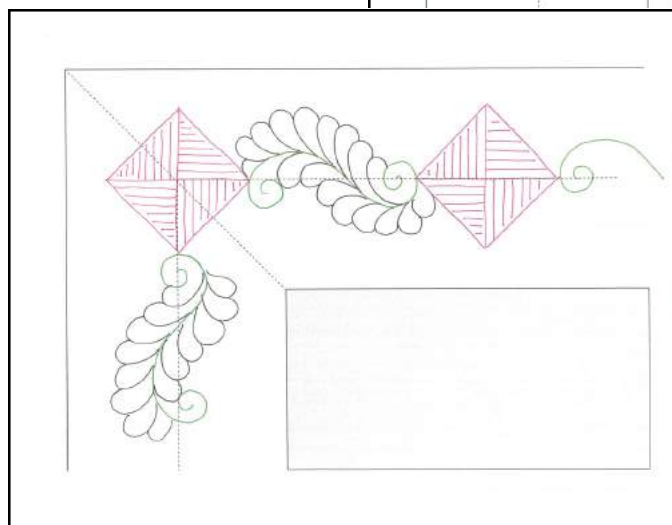
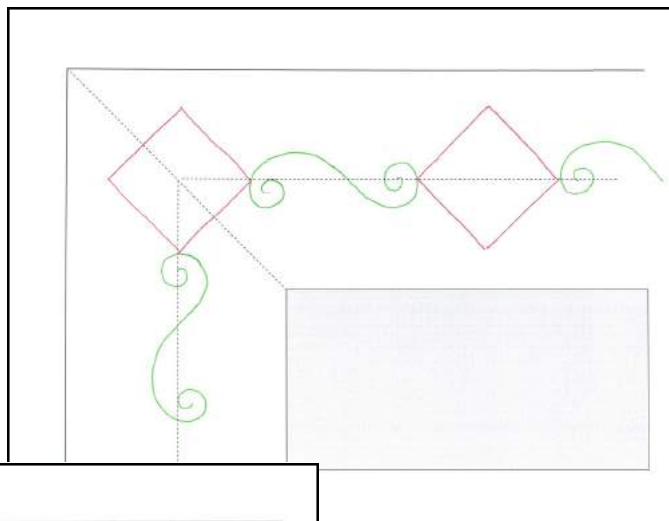


Single line swirls with feathers added. This one is a favorite!

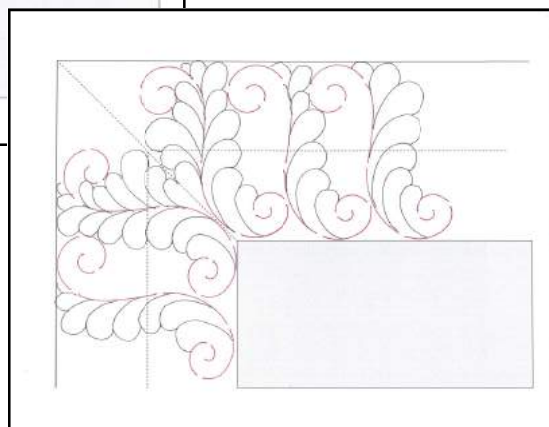


Use the double swirl and add any motif at the beginning and end.

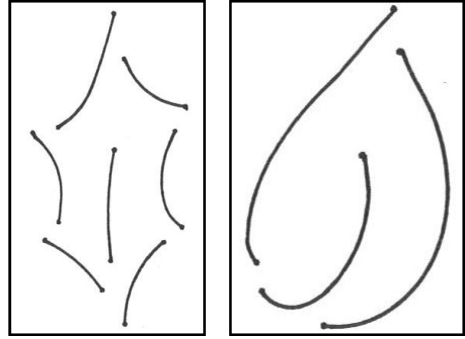
I used one of the squares from the Repetitive Square border, filled that with repetitive lines and then added feathers to the swirl.



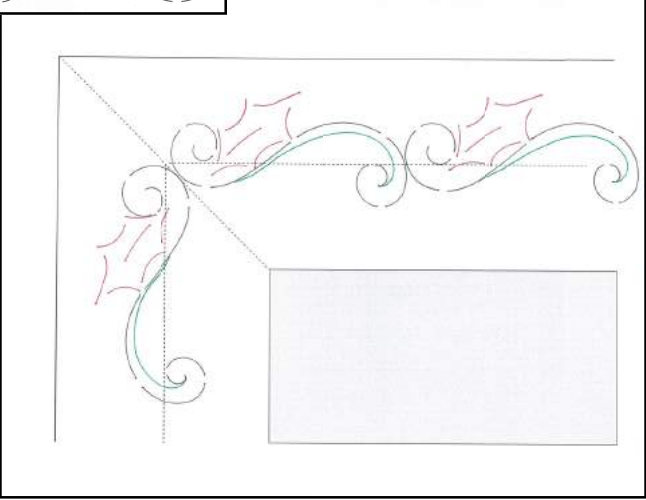
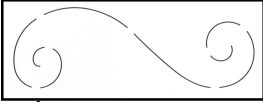
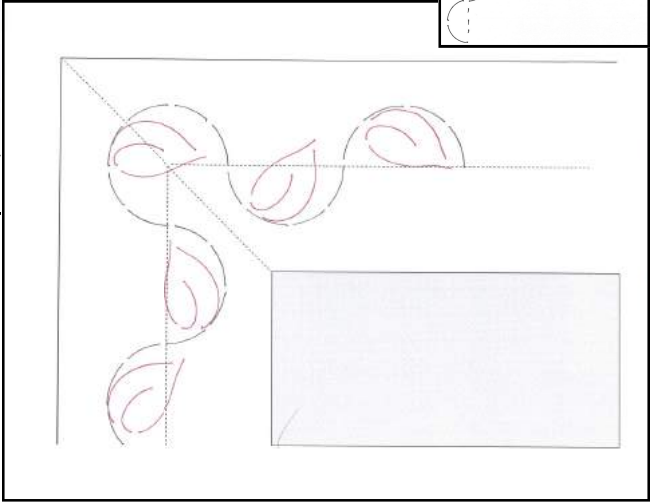
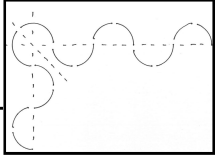
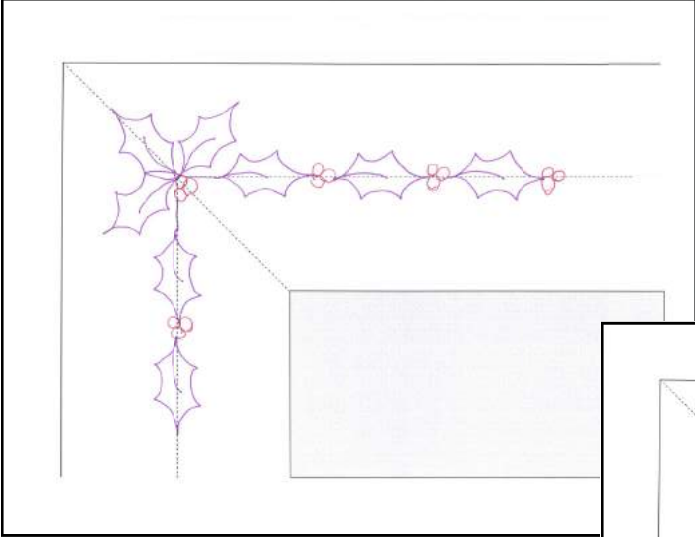
I repeated this vertically...love it without any fillers and also love it filled with feathers!





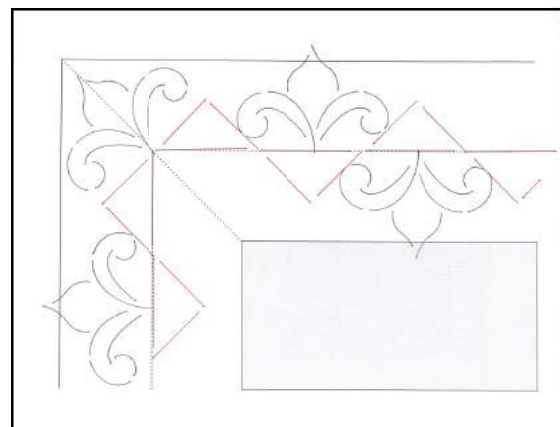
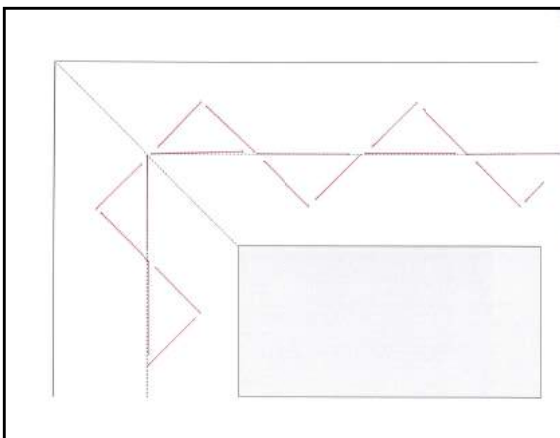
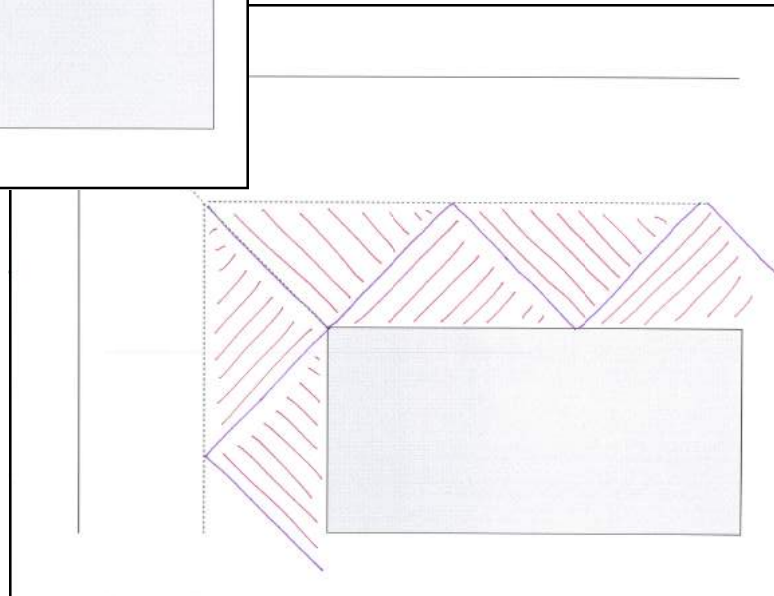
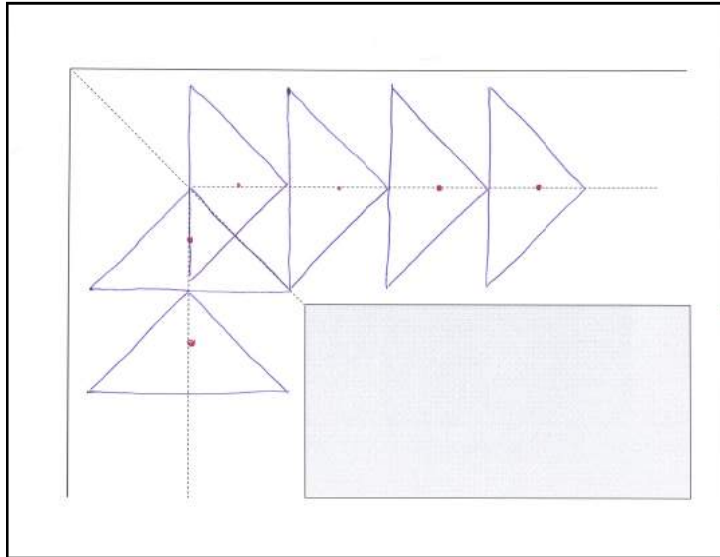
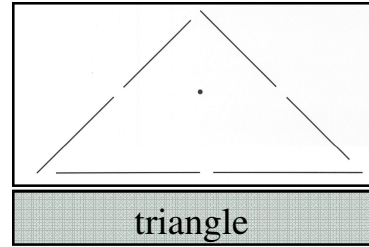


leaves



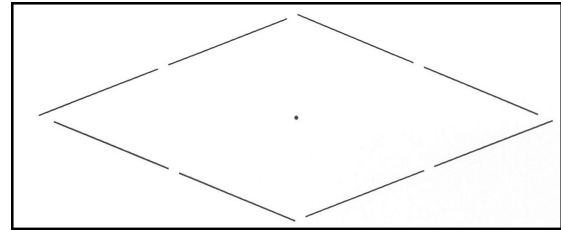
The leaf motifs are **VERY** versatile and can be added to nearly any border or another motif.

Use the center dot of the triangle to line up your repeats. I will mark those on these designs so you can see how they work. I highly recommend that you mark the corners first so everything lines up!

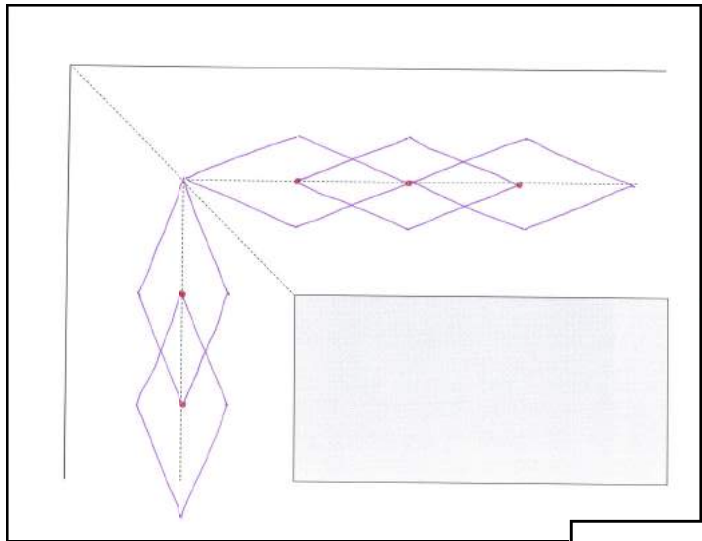


Alternately repeat the triangle....and add a motif in the middle if you wish!

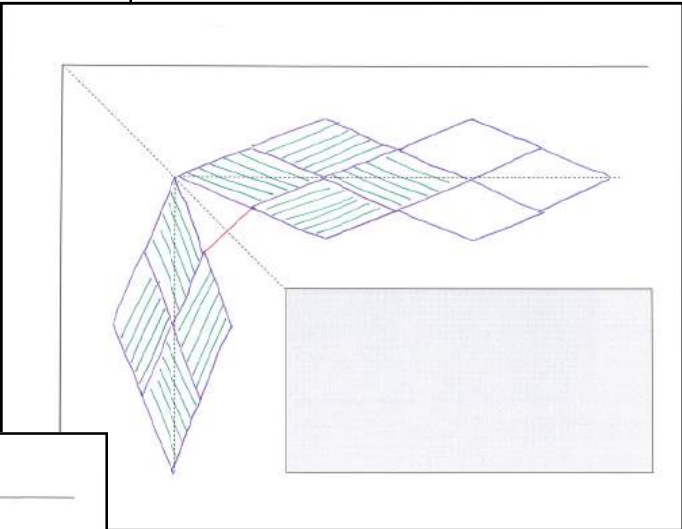
Use the center dot of the diamond to line up your repeats. I will mark those on these designs so you can see how they work. I highly recommend that you mark the corners first so everything lines up!



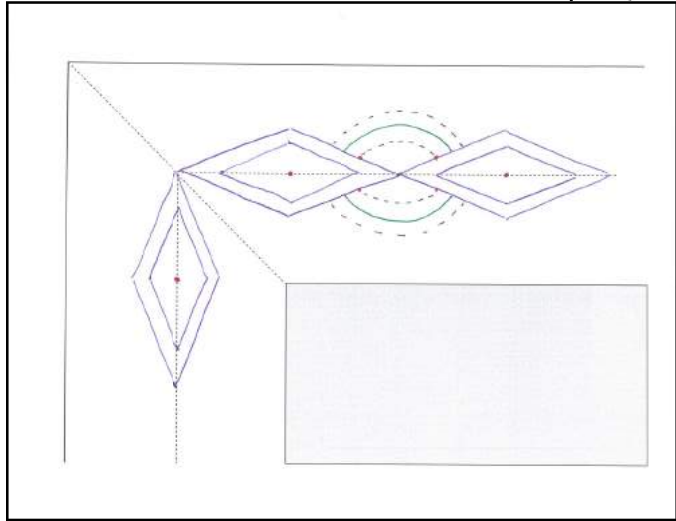
diamond

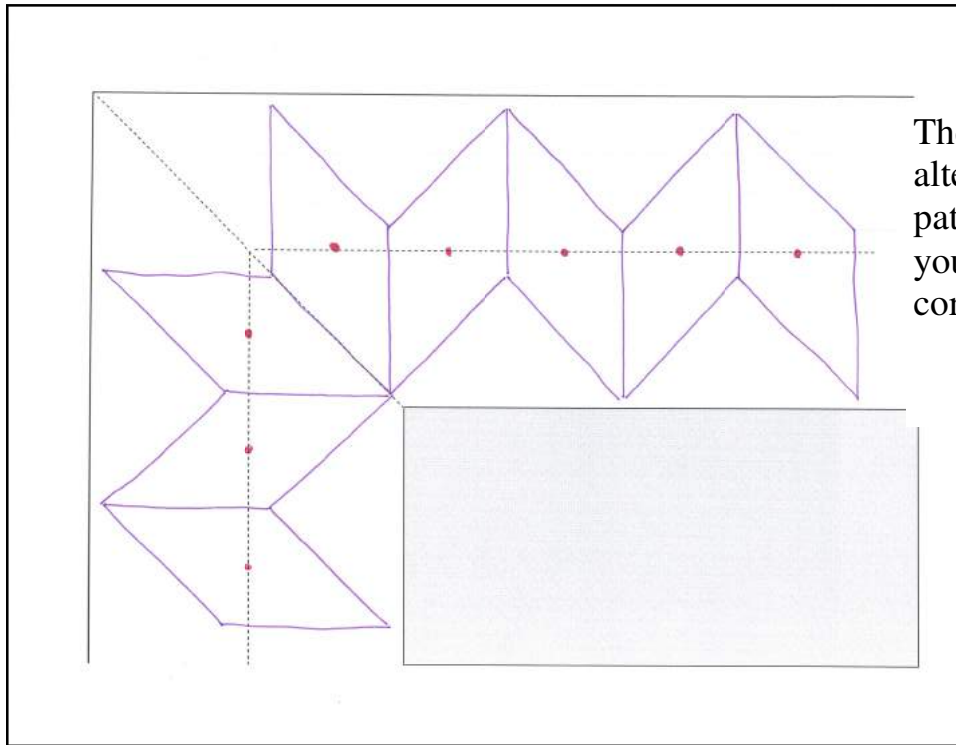


Love this diamond border. This looks good overlapping just the way it is but look what happens when you add some repetitive alternating lines!



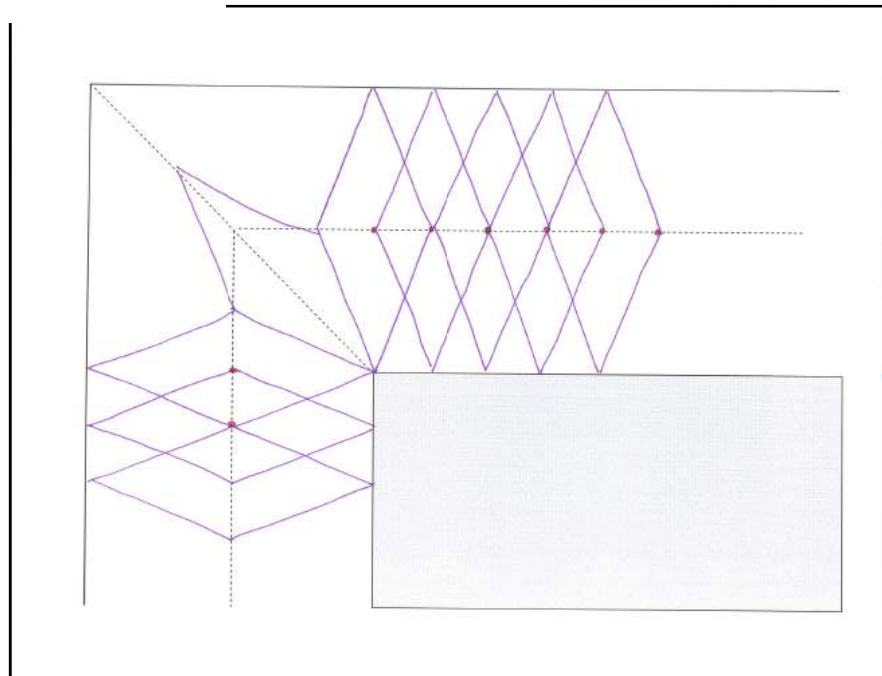
These diamonds were repeated end to end. I added aliens in-between to add a bit more detail.



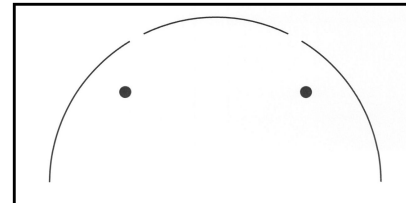


These diamonds were alternated to create a chevron pattern and if you look close you can see a star in the corner!

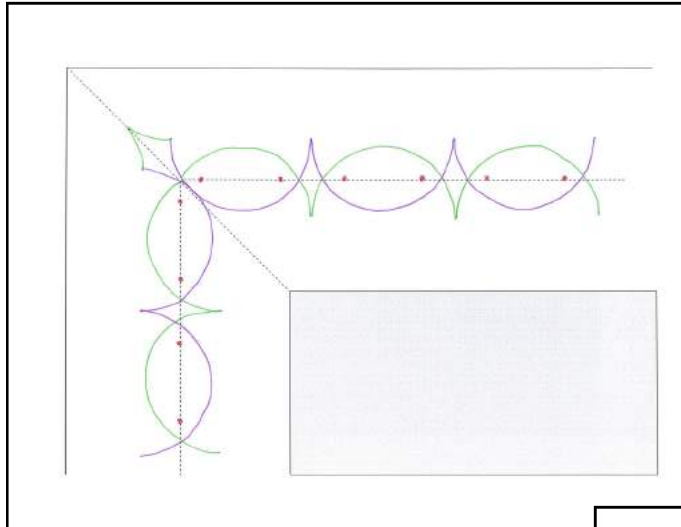
These diamonds were repeated vertically and overlapped.



The little alien eyeballs are here as a reference point for lining up repeats. I'll be marking the eyeballs in the designs so you can see how they work. Mark the corners first!



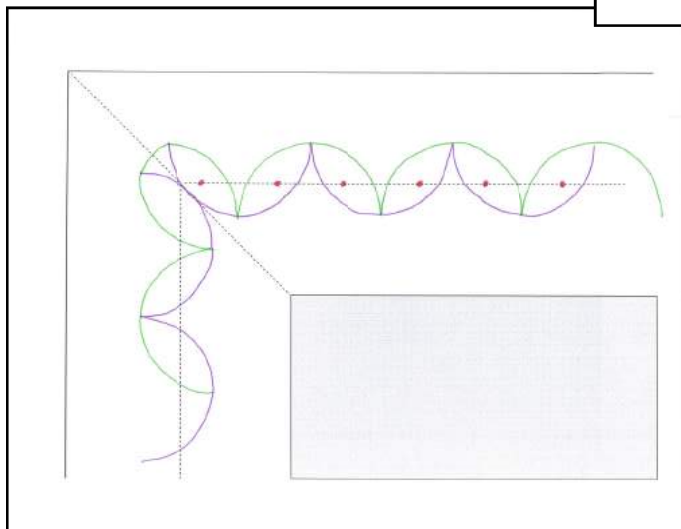
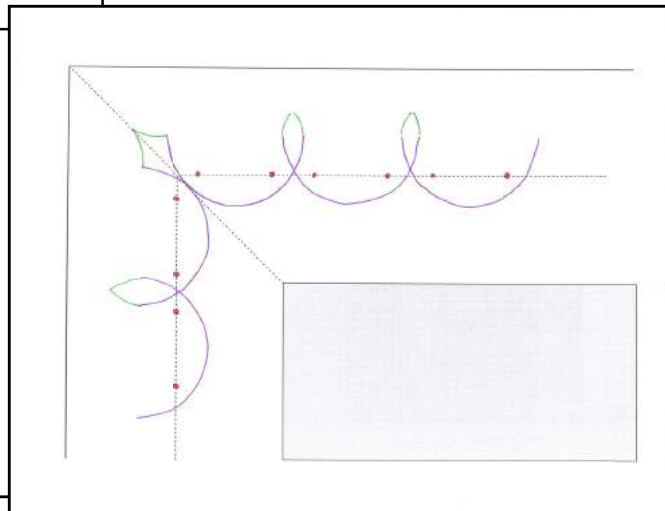
alien

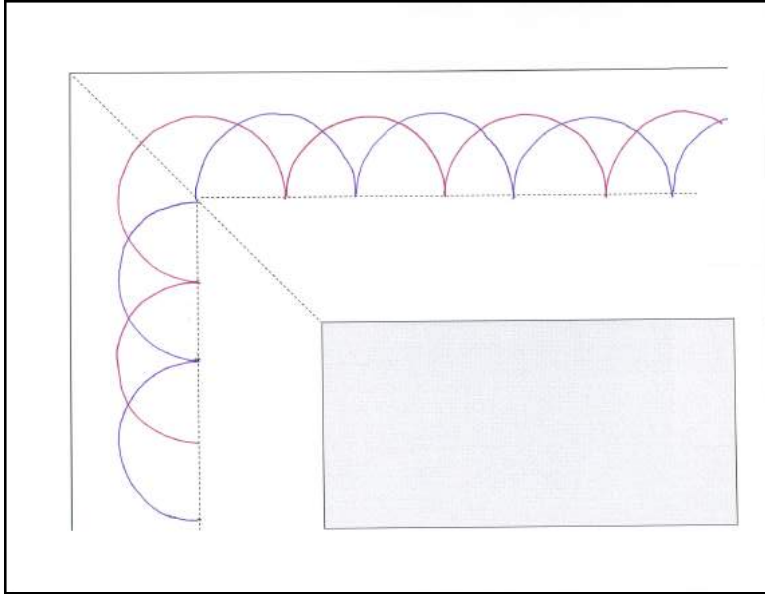


In each of these designs I marked the first half of the design in purple. The red dots are the alien eyes lined up on the marked halfway line.

The second pass to complete the design is shown in green.

The bottom two designs would be nice to have another motif added.





First pass with the aliens is shown in purple.

The second pass, in red, overlaps the first pass.

The aliens make great clams too! Start with your corners first...first pass is shown in black, second pass is shown in red.

