

# KANTHA

**Origin-** Kantha, one of the oldest forms of embroidery from India and a craft practiced today by millions of South Asian women, originated from the ***rural villages of Bengal***. Also known as “Woman’s Art”, this craft was passed on from mother to daughter.

While the word kantha has no certain etymological root, it is believed to be derived from the Sanskrit word ***kontha***, meaning rags.

**History-** One of the oldest forms of embroidery originating from India, its origins can be traced back to the ***pre-Vedic age*** (prior to 1500 BCE). Though the earliest written record is found dating 500 years. This art form all but disappeared in the early 19th century before being revived in the 1940s.

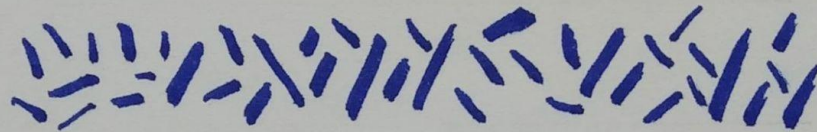
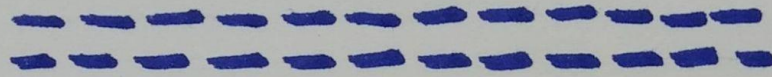
**Stitches-** ***Running stitch*** is a straight running stitch, an original and earliest form of Kantha. *Darning, herringbone, and cross stitch* are some of the commonly used stitches. ***Stem stitch*** is used to outline the motifs.

**Materials Used-** Traditionally, *old cotton saris, lungis and dhotis*, which had turned incredibly soft through wear, were used to make kanthas, with the thread for the stitching drawn out from the fabric itself.

**Motifs-** Motifs used in Kantha embroidery are *human and animal figures, floral symbols* which cover the surface from the corner. Different patterns like fishes, birds, kalka, mandala, mythological stories are also used.

**Colours-** The colours prevalent in this type of embroidery are those commonly found in daily life-yellow, red, green, black and blue. Natural substances were used for making the dyes of Kantha fabric.

13 RUNNING STITCH



VAS PATTA



CHATAI



TIRCHI



## KANTHA SAMPLE



# KASHIDAKARI

**Origin-** Kashida is an embroidery style from Kashmir that is practiced by men folk of the region. The intricate needlework is inspired from the charming natural surroundings of Kashmir. The crafts began languishing due to the decreased demand. ***Kash*** comes from Kashmir and ***kari*** means embroidery work.

**History-** There was a mention of the magnificence of kashmiri shawls in Ain-i-Akbari during reign of King Akbar. During the eighteenth century, the shawls were exported to the European countries and were all the rage. Owning a kashmiri shawl was a symbol of economic wealth for the Europeans.

**Stitches-** Single stitch style is considered to be the signature style of Kashida Embroidery. Other stitches like ***satin stitch, herringbone, stem stitch, chain stitch, knot stitch*** and many more are also creatively implemented. These stitches are however not executed more than twice.

**Materials Used-**Traditionally, the ground fabric on which embroidery was done was composed of various types of wool like ***Pashmina, Shahtoosh, Aslitus***. Nowadays embroidery is also done on chinon, varieties of silk and linen.

**Motifs-** The motifs used in Kashida depict the natural elements. Includes the rich **flora** and **fauna** of the region of Kashmir. A popular motif seen on embroidered shawls is derived from the ***cypress cone*** and ***kahwa kettle***.

**Colours-** The embroidery has a **large range of colours**. Crimson and yellow were used marking the beginning of the season for apple picking. Hand dyed shawls are made in different hues of ***orange, green and blue***. The colours used on the shawls depict the lively, glorious mountain valley of Kashmir.



KASHIDAKARI



KASHIDAKARI SAMPLE



# PHULKARI

**Origin-** Phulkari, a rural tradition of handmade embroidery done by the women of Punjab (North-west India & Pakistan) and parts of Haryana during the **19<sup>th</sup> century and till the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**. Phulkari is a type of embroidery traditionally done only by hand.

Phulkari is analysed as ***phul*** meaning flower and ***kari*** meaning work, i.e, floral work.

**History-** The exact history of Phulkari is not known due to a lack of documentation. It is said that the earliest mention of phulkari was made in the story of Heer-Ranjha written by Waris Shah (**1725-1790**)

**Stitches-** The ***darning stitch*** is the basic unit of Phulkari and the workmanship of both Bagh and Phulkari are graded according to its length and density of the stitches. ***Running, buttonhole and cluster*** stitch were also used.

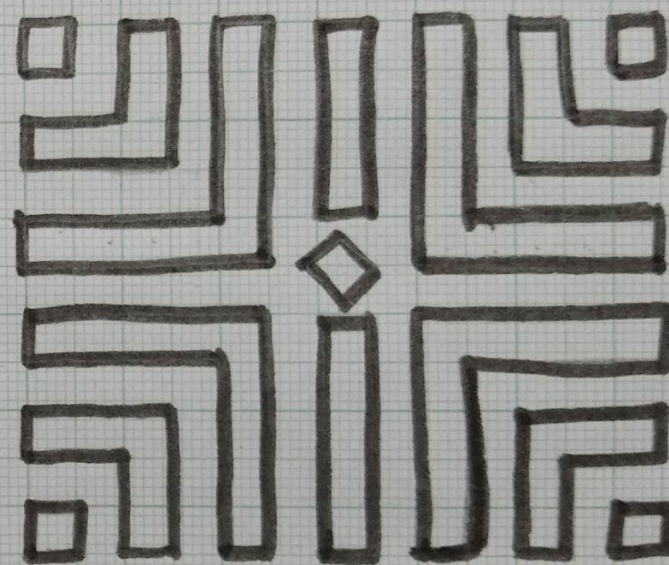
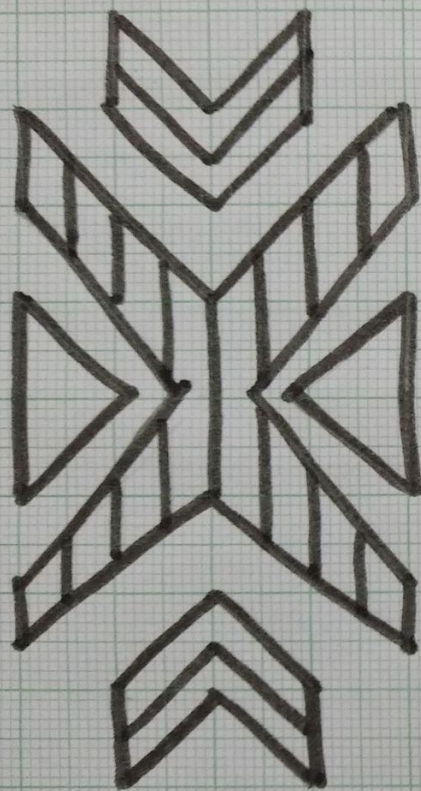
**Materials used-** Hand spun and hand woven ***khaddar*** is the base material for phulkari. Soft, glossy, untwisted silk thread known as ***Pat*** is employed for the embroidery, which is mainly supplied from Kashmir, Afghanistan and Bengal.

**Motifs-** The motifs comprise of things used in day to day life, articles precious to the women, objects that are considered valuable, sacred and aspired but all had geometrical base.

**Colours-** Red-coloured pat was used to symbolize passion, white for purity, golden or yellow for desire and abundance, green for nature and fertility, blue for serenity, purple for a symbiosis between red's energy and blue's calm, orange for a mix of desire and divine energy.



PHULKARI





PHULKARI SAMPLE



# GUJARATI

**Origin-** The Gujarat Embroidery is a handicraft and textile signature art tradition of the tribal community of Kutch District in Gujarat, India. This embroidery with its rich designs has made a notable contribution to the Indian embroidery traditions. The inspiration behind the embroideries revolves mostly around the ***daily lives of the village folk.***

**History-** History of the Gujarati Embroidery is traced to the ***16th and 17th centuries*** when people migrated from the countries such as Afghanistan, Greece, Germany, Iran and Iraq to Gujarat. The art form became a ***generational art*** with the skills taught from mother to daughter. They embroidered clothes for ***festive occasions*** and to decorate deities and to create a source of income.

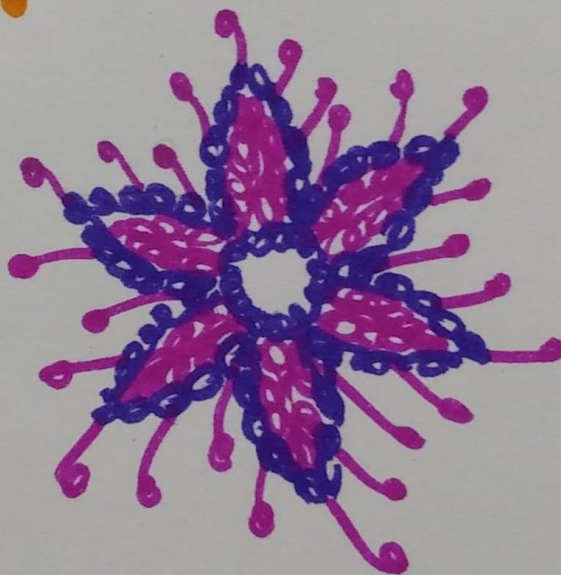
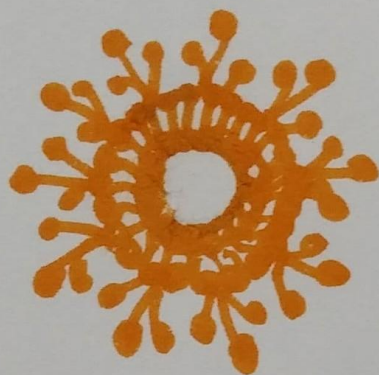
**Stitches-** In certain patterns, it is also crafted over silk and satin. The types of stitches adopted are ***square chain, buttonhole, pattern darning, running stitch, satin and straight stitches.***

**Materials used-** The embroidery, practiced normally by women is generally done on ***fabrics of cotton, sometimes satin***, using ***cotton or silk threads.***

**Motifs-** The signature effect of the colorful embroidery sparkles when small mirrors called ***abhla*** are sewn over the geometrically shaped designs. Peacocks, flowers, animals, men and women—all ignited the imaginations behind the works. So, beautiful motifs resembling these elements are widely found in these.

**Colours-** The colours used are mainly ***green, indigo, deep red, black, yellow and ivory.*** The embroidery is further embellished with its use of mirrors, shells and beads, which are placed strategically in between or around the patterns.

GUTARATI





GUJARATI SAMPLE



# CHIKANKARI

**Origin-** *Chikankari* is an intricate, **iconic embroidery** work from **Lucknow** done with a needle and thread on cotton fabric such as muslin. This style of embroidery was patronized by the royals for summer clothing.

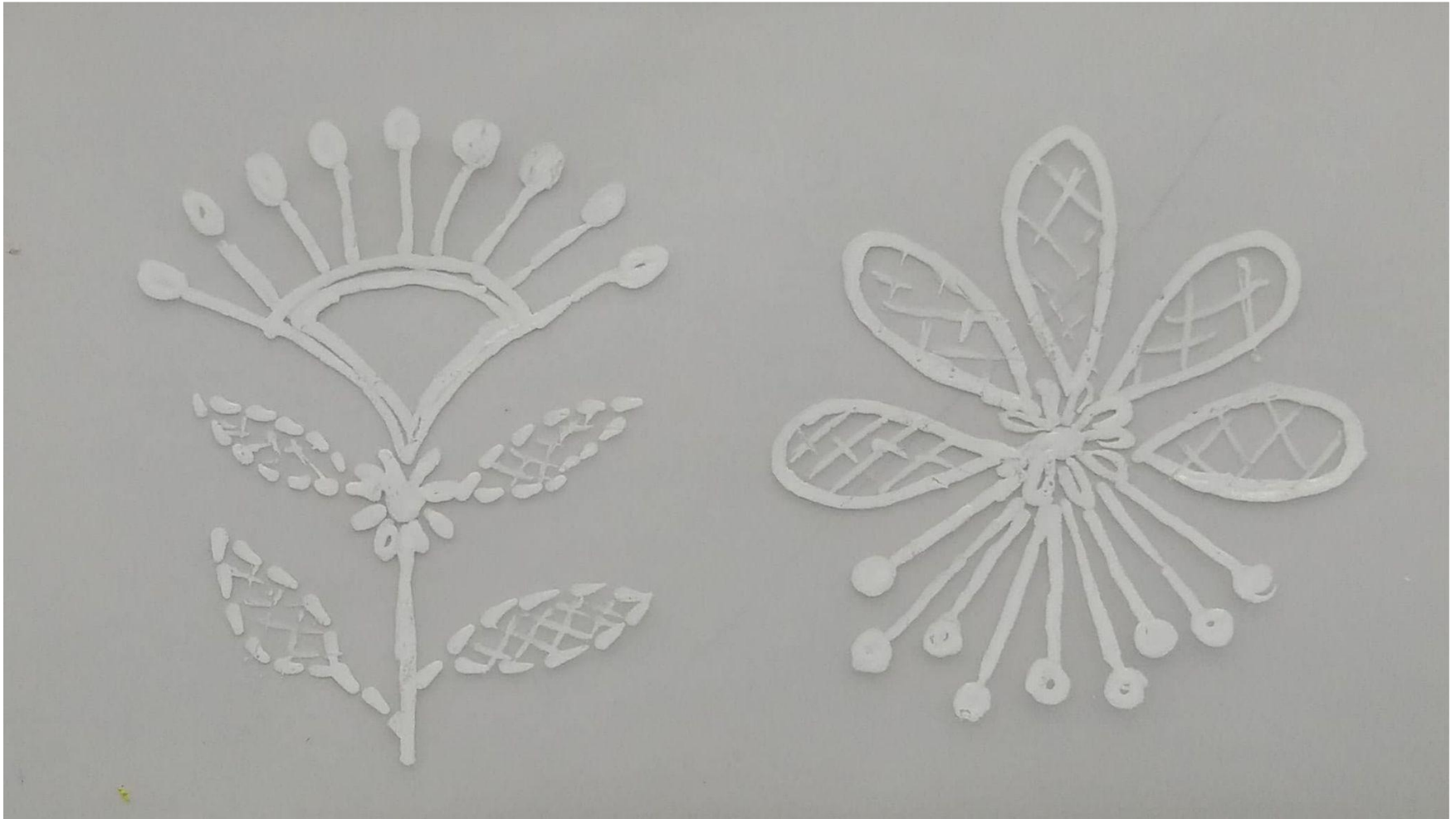
**History-** There are different versions as to the origin of Chikankari embroidery work in India. It is said that a traveler taught a peasant in Lucknow the art of Chikankari, in return for his hospitality. Another explanation credits Noor Jehan, the beautiful queen of emperor Jahangir, who brought this art to India from Persia.

**Stitches-** **Flat/embossed stitches, jali work, *bukhia*** are some of the commonly used stitches. Some other stitches include ***Murri, Phanda, Ghas patta*** and *back stitch*.

**Materials used-** Traditionally, it was done using **white cotton thread** on very fine white fabric like ***muslin***. Today due to commercialisation, it is done on a variety of fabrics like *georgette, chiffon, organdy and other sheer fabric*. Various types of threads such as cotton, silk or polyester may be used for embroidering.

**Motifs-** Designs are mainly of scrolling ***floral or leafy patterns***, flowering plants, creepers, etc. *Minute and intricate designs* creating a ***shadow like effect*** is common. Paisley was commonly used.

**Colours-** Traditionally the embroidery was done using ***white thread on a white fabric***, but with time the use of white on white was slowly replaced by the use of ***pastel shades*** for the base fabric. Now, due to commercialisation, the embroidery has been done on ***all kinds of colours*** including white.





## CHIKANKARI SAMPLE



# KASUTI

**Origin-** Kasuti is a form of counted thread embroidery that originated in southern and central India. Among other art forms, Kasuti was also a quick means of expressions and self representation.

The word ***kasuti*** is derived from *kai* meaning **hand** and *suti* meaning **cotton**, i.e. handwork done on cotton

**History-** This embroidery style ***originated between 8th CE*** in the state of Karnataka as we know today. This art was patronized in the royal courts and even today has a domineering existence in and around Dharwad.

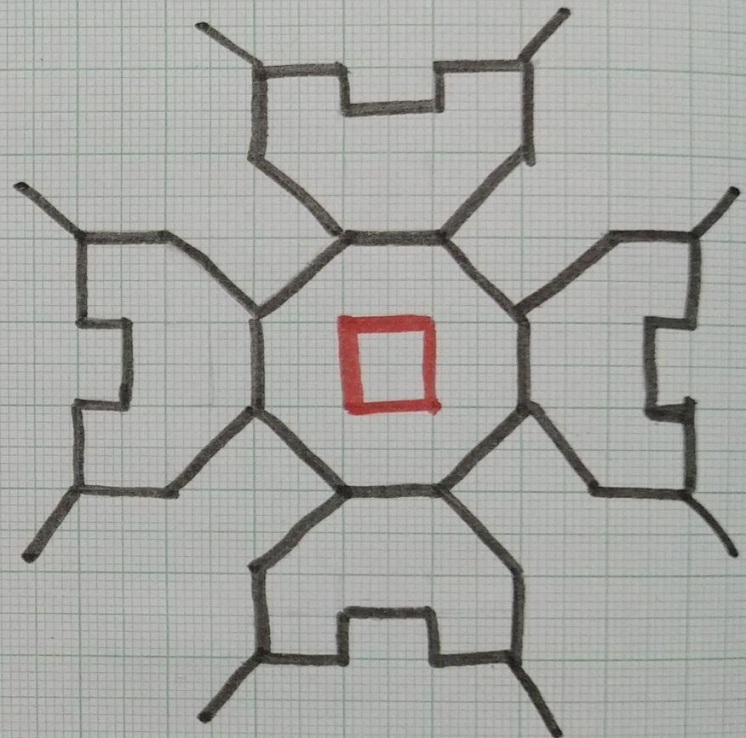
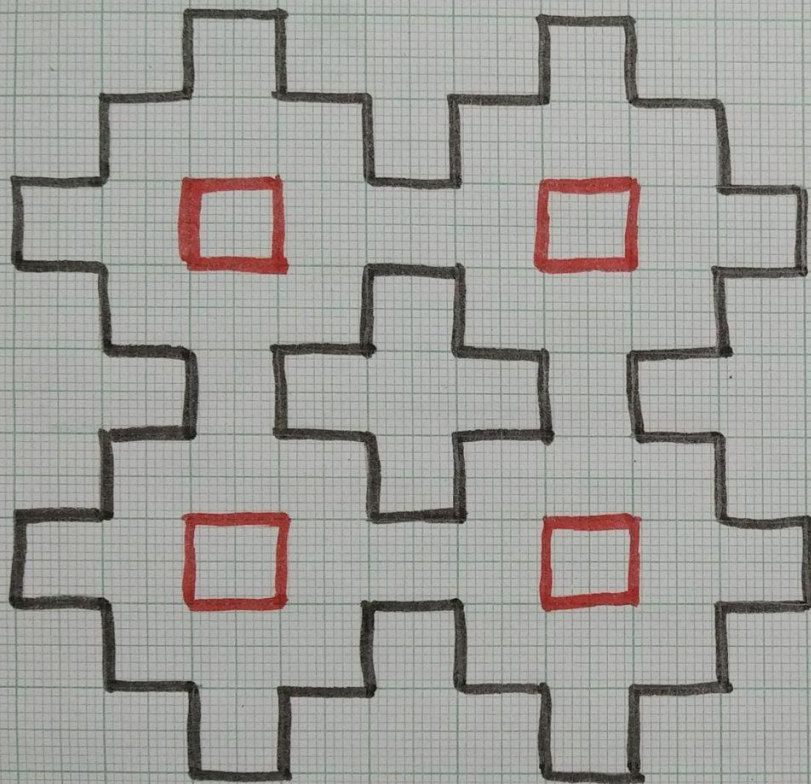
**Stitches-** Four kinds of stitches are commonly used in Kasuti are Gavanti, Murgai, Negi, Menthi.

**Materials used- Cotton** cloth has been the fabric of choice for both garments and household objects. ***Dasuti*** fabric is used for Kasuti. In India, this traditional work is done on silk as well. using light colored cotton threads.

**Motifs-** The impact of the religious revival led to the adoption of architectural designs of temples and structures in the vicinity such as *Gopur, Pushkarinee, Deep Malas, Tulsi Vrindavans*, Chariots, Palanquins, etc. Other motifs are inspired from daily life.

**Colours-** White is predominant on black sarees. Fast colours including shades of green, red, blue, marigold, yellow and black are used.

KASUTI





## KASUTI SAMPLE

