Smocked Bib
By Karen Austin
Supplies and Preparation Work:
- 10"X6" Kona cotton or broadcloth (I’m using white but, you can use a light color that goes with your “baby fabric”
- 1/3 yd. “baby” fabric (This can be solid or print. Dakota Pique or quilted fabric work well. Lighter fabrics or knits will also work and we will interface them if necessary)
- Floss – 2-3 colors that coordinate with your baby fabric

Directions
1. Pleat cotton rectangle (14 rows).
2. Unpick the first three pleats on both side and tie off threads to the back (the width should be 3” – 3.5”).
3. Mark the center pleats.

Part 1:
We will be doing/learning basic smocking stitches. Please read all information carefully.
- Rows 1 and 14 are holding rows. There will be no smocking on them.
- You will be using three strands of your floss on all of your smocking. You need to strip your floss. To do that you need to cut a workable length of floss (approx. 15”). Hold the end of your floss and tap the end to separate the strands. Continue to hold the end of the floss and firmly grab one strand and pull it upward from the cut length. Lay those three strands side by side in the same direction. Select three threads, thread your needle and knot thread. A crewel 7 will work well.
- We will start with the Outline Stitch. The Outline stitch is made with the needle passing horizontally through the pleat and with the thread always above the needle. Gently tug the thread downward as each stitch is finished.

Outline Stitch

- Work the Outline Stitch one needle width above (slightly above) Row 2 (See Picture below). **Hint:** at half time we will learn another stitch that will be worked right under this Outline Stitch. You will also work the Outline Stitch one needle width above Row 13.
Now depending on your color choices if you have two threads that are for example dark and light blue you may want to put the darker color on Row 2 and the lighter on Row 13 (see picture below). If you are using 3 different colors you choose which to start with.

Part 2:

The next stitch we will do is the Stem Stitch. Stem stitch is made with the needle passing horizontally through the pleat and with the thread always under the needle. Give the thread a gentle upward tug as you finish the stitch.

![Stem Stitch](image)

**Step 1**

**Step 2**
Work the Stem Stitch below the Outline stitch on Rows 2 and 13. If you are using the lighter and darker colors you now want to use the light color on Row 2 and darker color on Row 13. (See picture below. If you are using 3 different colors you can choose to use the same color you use for Outline Stitch or you can change it up.

By combining the Outline Stitch and Stem Stitch you have created the Wheat Stitch. So pat yourself on the back for learning three stitches.

Part 3:
Start by finding your two center pleats above row 3 and mark (I used a piece of thread single knot for easy removal). Please don’t worry if you have one more pleat on one side than the other. PLEASE READ ALL THE DIRECTIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN.

- You choose your next color. You can tell we are working toward the center so plan accordingly if you are using 3 colors.
- Cut a length of floss about 20” long. Strip the floss, separate 3 strands and thread needle. DO NOT KNOT.
- On row 3 insert your needle into the center pleat on the left and pull about half of the thread through (Pic 1 and 2 below). Keep the loose end (the end that would normally be knotted) over to the left).
- Keeping the other floss below the needle insert your needle into the center pleat on the right. This will form a down cable (Pic 3 and 4 below). In your next stitch you will keep the floss above the needle forming the up cable. This combination creates the Cable Stitch.
**Cable Stitch:** Start by bringing the needle up to the left of the first pleat. With thread under needle, pick up the second pleat, inserting the needle from right to left. This is called and down cable. Give a gentle tug upward as you finish the stitch. The third pleat is picked up in the same manner but with the thread above the needle (an up cable). Gently pull the thread down as you finish the stitch.

- Once you have worked all the way across to the right hand side tie off.
- You are halfway done with the row. You need to thread the needle with the loose end that is at the center of row 3.
- Turn your work over and work a down cable and then continue on across the row. (Pic 5 and 6)

**NOW MOVE DOWN TO ROW 12.**
- Again mark the center two pleats.
- Prepare your floss the same way.
- On row 12 insert your needle into the center pleat on the left and pull about half of the thread through. Keep the loose end (the end that would normally be knotted) over to the left).
- Keeping the other floss **ABOVE** the needle insert your needle into the center pleat on the right. This will form a **UP** cable. In your next stitch you will keep the floss below the needle forming the down cable.
SO, the difference, from the top, is your first stitch will be an UP CABLE instead of a down. And when you turn your work over to complete your first stitch will be and up cable. (Pics 7 and 8)

Part 4 – Three Step Wave
Start again to by finding your two center pleats on row 4 and mark (I used a piece of thread single knot for easy removal). PLEASE READ ALL THE DIRECTIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN.

- Choose your color. Cut a length of floss about 20” long. Strip the floss, separate 3 strands and thread needle. DO NOT KNOT.
- On row 4 insert your needle into the center pleat on the left and pull about half of the thread through. Keep the loose end (the end that would normally be knotted) over to the left). Form an up cable.
- Keep the thread above the needle and horizontal. Move over to the next pleat and move down 1/3 of a space and go through the pleat right to left (Pic 1). Pull thread through.
- Keep the thread above the needle and horizontal. Move over to the next pleat and move down 1/3 of a space and go through the pleat right to left (Pic 2). Pull thread through.
- Keep the thread above and needle horizontal. Move over to the next pleat and down to row 5 and go through the pleat right to left (Pic 3). Pull the thread.
- With the thread now BELOW the needle work a down cable on row 5 pleating row. (Pic 4).
- Keep the thread below the needle and horizontal. Move over to the next pleat and move up 1/3 of a space and go through the pleat right to left (Pic 5). Pull the thread.
- Keep the thread below the needle and horizontal. Move over to the next pleat and move up 1/3 of a space and go through the pleat right to left (Pic 6). Pull the thread.
- Keep the thread above and needle horizontal. Move over to the next pleat and up to row 4 and go through the pleat right to left (Pic 7). Pull the thread.
- With the thread ABOVE the needle work a up cable on row 4 pleating row.
- Complete the row and turn and continue across the row.
- Then work mirror image on row 6 forming a diamond (Pic 8).
TURN YOUR PIECE OVER SO ROW 14 IS AT THE TOP. Work the same diamond pattern starting on row 11 and working through row 9.

If this is for a girl you can do a floweret in the center of each diamond.

- In the center of the diamond there are two center pleats. You are going to put your needle into the pleat to the left of the two center pleats. On the pleating row (5 in the top row of diamonds and 10 in the bottom row of diamonds) bring your needle up into the valley and work a down cable (Pic 9 and 10).
- The work an up cable on the two center pleats (Pic 11).
- Then work another up cable but push your needle through pleats 4, 3 and 2. Emerge just below the first stitch (Pic 12). And pull the thread through.
- Then with the thread below do a down pleat ((Pic 13).
- Take the needle back through the center and tie off on the back.
- Complete the row (Pic 14)
PART 5 – Baby Wave

Start again by finding your two center pleats on row 7 and mark (I used a piece of thread single knot for easy removal). PLEASE READ ALL THE DIRECTIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN.

- Choose your color. Cut a length of floss about 20” long. Strip the floss, separate 3 strands and thread needle. DO NOT KNOT.
- On row 7 insert your needle into the center pleat on the left and pull about half of the thread through. Keep the loose end (the end that would normally be knotted) over to the left. Form an up cable.
- Keep the thread above and the needle horizontal and move over one pleat and half way before row 7 and 8 and take the needle from right to left through the pleat. Pull the thread through.
- Keep the thread below and do a down cable. Pull the thread through.
- Keep the thread below the needle and move to the next pleat and back up to row 7 and do an up cable. Continue across and then turn over and complete this row (Pic 1).
- Work the mirror image on row 8 (Pic 2)

You have completed all of your smocking. Next will be construction.
PART 6 – Construction

- Begin by back smocking rows 1 and 14 with cable stitch. This is done on the backside of your smocked piece (Pic. 1) Block and steam your smocking. (Pic 2)

- Trace the pattern on the back of your fabric (Pic 3). Be sure your pattern prints out to the correct measurements. If not please adjust the pattern to match the measurements.

- Sew the two sides to your smocked piece using 1/4” seam allowance. The top edge should be at row 1 and bottom at row 14 (Pic 4). Remove Pleating threads at this point EXCEPT for Row 1 and 14. Zig Zag Edges (Pic 5) trim close to zig zag (Pic 6) Trim bottom of smocking to be even with the bottom of the Bib (Pic 7). Press.

- Take the bib front and place it face down on the fabric for the back of the bib (Pic 8). With a washable marker or Frixion pen draw the top sewing line of the bib. BE SURE THAT IT DOES NOT COVER YOUR FIRST LINE OF SMOKING (Pic 9). Stitch the front of the bib to the back before cutting out. BE SURE TO LEAVE A 2” – 2 1/2” OPENING TO TURN YOU BIB RIGHT SIDE OUT (Pic 10).
Trim your bib leaving a little extra fabric at the opening (Pic 11). Turn your bib right side out and press. If you have a 1/4" seam foot you can topstitch stitch around the outside (NOT OVER SMOCKING). Put a button hole on the left sit and button on the right side. (Pic 12)