

Ombre Fruit Basket

By Kelly Crawford

Materials List:

- One package of cotton clotheslines rope: 5mm x 25m
- Thread in a similar color to the clothesline
- Two bobbins (possibly more)
- Fray check
- Scissors
- Pins
- Thread in coordinating colors for the ombre effect. This project takes a lot of thread. Be prepared with several bobbins already prepped to make the process quicker and less frustrating.



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“On the bottom of my basket, I didn’t want to waste the more expensive and prettier thread so I purchased an inexpensive cone of beige thread. I made sure I had three bobbins prepped in this color as they will run out often. If you do not have beige, you can use any other color.

Unravel a meter of the rope. Remove the tape that is on the very end of the rope (unless you don’t mind having tape on the bottom center of your basket, in which case you can always just leave it) and use a good amount of fray check on the tip.

Pull out a few arm lengths of rope to work with. Start at the end and measure to 18cm. When you reach 18 cm, loop the rope around back on itself and then pin in place with several pins.

Set your sewing machine to a zig zag stitch that is wide and somewhat loose. The smaller the zig zag, the more solid your stitch line will be and the more thread you will burn through. My settings were as seen below:

- Starting at the looped end, align the needle with the center between the two pieces of rope. Complete a lock stitch and then stitch all the way down to the other end. As you approach the end, you are going to again bring the rope back around itself. Pull the “tail” to either the right or left depending on your dominant hand. This will be tricky for the first 2-3 rounds, but it gets easier as you have more of a surface to work with. I would suggest slowing your stitch speed down to the mid-range, just for this beginning part so that you can be sure to catch both sections of the rope.
- If you notice that you didn’t catch a piece of the rope, be sure to stop, unpick and fit it. I learned the hard way that if you fix it later on it is usually quite noticeable. What is nice about it is that if you miss little bits here and there, it is not a big deal. The basket has so much stitching. Unless you miss heaps, it will remain pretty sturdy.
- The rope will really take any shape you force on it so be careful not to accidentally push or pull too much.

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- Once you have reached 14 loops around, you are going to start lifting and pushing up the main piece of the basket base as you stitch. The more extreme the angle you push it, the more the basket will raise vertically. If you want a wide basket, do not push as vertically as you would if you would like a narrow and deep basket.
- At round 15, switch over to your first thread color. Be sure to change your bobbin as this will be the more visible of the two. Continue to lift the basket bottom up towards your presser foot as you stitch.
- You will need to stitch 24 rounds to get to the height of the fruit basket. I changed my thread every eight loops to get the ombre effect I was going for.
- It does get a bit awkward pushing the sides up as you sew. Keep in mind that if you pull the basket farther away from the sewing machines as you go up, this will widen the top. I wanted mine fairly narrow to keep all of the fruit in. This is also important to note for other possible projects.
- When you are done, trim off the excess rope (I used all of mine). Again, using your fray check, seal the raw end.
- Once dry, tuck the end back into the basket and hand stitch into place.

You are now all done. Just add fresh fruit, set on the counter and enjoy! This method is also great for making cup holders (simply stitch in a tight circle) or even toy baskets if you have enough rope. I was really happy with how well my Skyline S7 handled sewing through the rope.” - Kelly Crawford of Sewing in No Mans Land

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