

## Mignonette

The tatted mignonette stitch is not a stitch at all. It is called that for convenience only. It is actually a lace ground, or background. The tatted ground work is comprised of all rings, no chains. The distance between rings must be carefully measured. The rings of each following row will join to the bare thread between two rings in a previous row.

Increases may be made by joining two rings in one space. Decreases may be created by stopping short. Smaller increases or decreases may be worked into the ground by simply shortening or lengthening the distance of the bare thread space between rings.

Mignonette groundwork may also be tatted without cutting the thread if the initial ring leaves a very long tail. This tail may be over to use after the last ring of the row is closed. The work changes directions and the new drawn ring from the next row is started. The tail is then used to make that ring a split ring thus climbing out into the next row.

This is a creative way of measuring the bare thread space between the rings, a hair clip! A piece of cardboard would work also as would a plastic page clip that you can hang over the thread.

You might also wrap the bare thread around a picot gauge or needle one or two turns. Please be consistent in the measurements.



This tutorial on mignonette tatting is from *"The Dictionary of Needlework, An Encyclopaedia of Artistic, Plain and Fancy Needlework"* ©1882 by Sophia Frances Anne Caulfield and Blanche C. Saward, page 484. Many terms we deem old-fashioned are used in this explanation. Please note that DOUBLE = double stitch; PURL = picot; loop, oval = ring; draw up = close ring. The suggested thread size is 100! Suitable for bridal veils but you may use any size thread.

**Tatted Groundwork or Mignonette Basics**

*Ground Work.*—The design shown in Fig. 770 is intended to be used when Tatting in large pieces, such as veils, caps, scarves, and other articles where a ground resembling net is required. The design, if used for a veil, should be worked either in cotton No. 100, or in the finest black machine silk; if for large articles, in stouter silk or thread. To work: Cut out upon a sheet of paper, the shape of the article to be made, and Tat backwards and forwards in rows, regulating the length of the rows by the paper pattern. Commence at the widest part of the material.

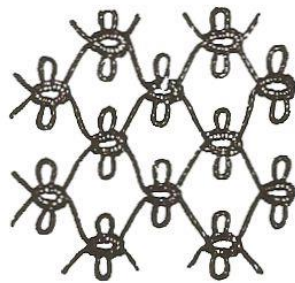


FIG. 770. TATTING—GROUND WORK.

First row, first oval—Make a loop, work 3 DOUBLE, 1 PURL, 3 Double, 1 Purl, 3 Double, 1 Purl, 3 Double, draw up, leave half an inch of cotton, then repeat the oval; work to the end of the row in this manner, being careful always to leave the same length of thread between each oval. Second row—Make a loop and commence an oval, join the second Purl of the oval in progress to the centre of the half inch of cotton left between the ovals in the first row, and finish the oval. Continue these rows of ovals until the article is finished, and where any extra breadth is required, make the threads between the ovals longer; where a slight contracting is needed, make the threads between them shorter.

This original diagram may well throw off the new tatter. It is positioned at odds with the direction in which the mignonette will be tatted.



FIG. 770. TATTING—GROUND WORK.

The actual direction of mignonette tatting (for right-handed tatters) is left to right as shown in the same diagram rotated 90 degrees.

## Notes on the Mignonette Stitch

The Mignonette stitch is little used and not often listed in books but it is a great design element. See "Tatting Techniques" - Elgiva Nicholls Charles Schribner's Sons 1975/6 also. Although the mignonette stitch is not exactly a "stitch" but rather the result of a special type of joining pattern, it is described in her book (page 90) as:

"An arrangement of one or more rings joined to a single thread upon which they are free to move." She attributes it to Mlle Riego.

### **To practice this stitch:**

Make a center ring with 11 picots (small).

Close the ring leaving a very long tail which you can use to climb out by means of a split ring of 2/2 (use the long tail for one side of the split ring).

Continue with the shuttle only and measure the spaces between the rings so that they are all exact.

Go around the center ring joining into each picot with a 2 + 2 ring. When you reach the starting point, again pull over the long tail from the original ring and use it to form another split ring to climb out, this time a 3 / 3 split ring.

Continue around again this time joining to the measured shuttle thread which is between each of the small rings.

When you reach the starting point, again pull over the long tail from the original ring and use it to form the split ring to climb out doing either another 3 / 3 split ring or increase to 4 / 4.

As you continue outwards you will have to increase both the size of the rings and the length of the shuttle thread left between rings

If you do not know the split ring technique then it may be that each round will have to be cut and tied with the last tail used as the shuttle thread between the rings so be careful when you hide the tail in the starter ring that you don't pull it up too much etc.