

Deck The Walls Christmas Panel - Suggested Sewing on this panel:

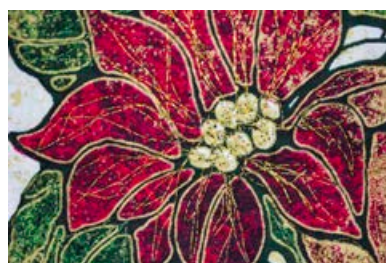
For this panel, we made a quilt sandwich with the panel, batting and backing fabric and used Sulky KK 2000™ Temporary Spray Adhesive to baste all three layers together. We used Sulky Holoshimmer™ Metallic Threads to quilt the three layers together. We went around the outline of the flower pot, the bow (1), the poinsettias and the leaves in Gold #6007. We used free motion in gold for the flowers (2) and free motion in Pine Green #6056 for the leaves (3). We used straight line quilting on the inside of the pot (4).

We stitched along the lines of all the 'borders' and did decorative stitches in several of them (5 & 6). We outlined each triangle in Gold #6007 (7).

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is your panel, it belongs to you - you get to quilt it however you want! Have fun with it - try sometime new! Enjoy this fun project.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6



Picture 7

Using Metallic Threads for Quilting a Panel

Metallic threads are an amazing way to add just the right amount of glitz to a project, but many people are afraid to even try them. Sometimes the best way to 'get your feet wet' with a new thread or technique is to use it on a simple project, like this Christmas Panel! I have a little secret for you: you really can't mess this up. Sew as little or as much as you want, use 12 different techniques and threads or just one, and it will still look great among your Christmas Décor. So go ahead, take the plunge. Let's play with metallic threads!

Some General Tips:

Vertical spool pin – Because metallic threads do have metal in them, they act a little different than other threads. Sulky Sliver™ and Sulky Holoshimmer™ Threads are made from a thin, flat, ribbon-like polyester film that is metalized with aluminum or a holographic foil to make them brilliantly reflective. But since they are flat and should remain flat (untwisted), putting them on the vertical spool pin and having them come off the front of the spool and then through the machine is your best bet. This ensures that they don't fold over on themselves or twist which can cause breakage. With Sulky Original Metallic threads, we suggest you use the vertical spool pin also, but you may need to put the thread on a separate thread holder a little further away from the machine to give the thread more time to relax before it goes through the tension disks of the machine. Give yourself some time to test it out on your machine and see what works best for you.

Adjust your tension – The kind of Metallic Thread you are using and how you are sewing with it will help you determine where your top thread tension should be. When doing regular sewing with Sulky Sliver or Sulky Holoshimmer (the flat metallic thread), adjust the tension down to about a 2 or 3. For free motion, you may need to take the tension down to a 0. For Sulky Original Metallic, setting the tension at a 3 or 4 for regular sewing and a 1 or 2 for free-motion is a good place to start. The key is to figure out what will work for you on your machine and the best way to do that is to take a practice piece of fabric and try the different tensions. Be sure to take the time to check the back and the front at the different tensions. Also, most machines will perform better with a spring-loaded free-motion foot.

Needle – For Metallic Threads, you can use a 90/14 Metallic needle, a 90/14 or 100/16 Topstitch needle.

Sewer's Aid – We love Sewer's Aid! Put a dot of it on your finger and rub along the needle. This little bit of lubricant allows that thread to flow through the needle without any issues. You can also run a bead of Sewer's Aid on the spool of metallic thread itself. Sewer's Aid is great stuff. It doesn't leave any residue on your fabric or the thread,

but check with your machine dealer to see if this type of lubricant is okay to use on your machine.

Sew Slowly! – This one took me years to learn and it's true about most sewing. If you want something to look better or perform better, more often than not, sewing slower is the key. Believe it or not, going slower often means finishing faster, because you are not stopping to deal with breakage caused by excessive speed.

Have the right bobbin thread – Our first suggestion is Sulky Bobbin Thread, but if you want the bobbin thread to match more closely, then use Sulky 60 wt. PolyLite in the bobbin. You can use Sulky Invisible thread as well, but be SURE to wind it very slowly onto the bobbin, and only about 1/2 full.

Thread quality matters -When it comes to any decorative thread, the quality matters. Let's face it. If you can see the thread, then you want it to look great; it should be able to handle normal wear and tear; and be easy to work with. This is especially true when using metallic threads. Have you ever started using a metallic thread and suddenly, you look down and the thread is showing through a little bit of white? That is the core thread showing through. Most metallic threads are foil-wrapped thread around a core thread. Often that core thread is white. Not Sulky Metallic thread. Sulky matches the core thread as closely as possible to the color of the metallic. That way if for some reason the core does peek through, it doesn't ruin your project. Sulky metallic threads are also machine washable, dryable and can be ironed with low heat.

Longer stitch length – Metallic Threads don't like abrasion and they are really meant to be seen. A longer stitch length is a great way to lessen the abrasion and allow more of the beauty of the thread to shine through.

Using Decorative Stitches with Metallic Threads:

Test the stitch with the thread you plan to use – Pick the thread for the top, the bobbin thread and the stitch and stitch it out on a piece of test fabric. If you plan to stitch through a quilt sandwich (top fabric, batting and backing fabric) then be sure to test it on top fabric, batting and backing fabric.

Try widening and lengthening the stitch – Metallic thread is meant to be seen so increasing the stitch length and width will allow the glorious thread to shine through. For a panel, you may also want to adjust the width and length based on the space you are trying to fill.

Take notes – Don't trust your memory as to which stitches look best with which metallic threads. You may find that one particular stitch looks amazing with Holoshimmer but

lackluster with Original Metallic Thread. Whether you stitch out a sample and write the thread and stitch on the fabric, take a photo and make notes in a digital photo album, make notes next to the stitch description in your sewing machine manual, or even if you just write it on an index card that tucks into your sewing machine manual, you will thank yourself for taking those few extra seconds the next time you want to use metallic threads.

Free Motion with Metallic Threads:

Set up your machine for free-motion - lower the feed dogs, put on the free-motion foot and lower the top tension

Stabilizer - You may want a stabilizer or make a quilt sandwich when doing free motion with metallic threads. If you don't want this stitching to be the quilting that holds the three layers of a quilt sandwich together, then use a stabilizer like Sulky Soft n Sheer, Tear Easy or Totally Stable. If this is going to be the quilting (and yes, the metallic threads are a great option for quilting), then baste the three layers together with Sulky KK 2000 Temporary Spray adhesive.

Using a Hoop – You may find that free-motion is easier with a hoop. A wooden hoop that is specifically made for free-motion sewing is great and gives you something to hold on to when you are sewing. You can hoop the fabric and the stabilizer or the quilt sandwich.

Slow and Steady - Once again, slow and steady wins the race. You may also find that listening to music helps when you are doing free-motion because it helps you stay in a steady rhythm.