



Smocked Bonnet

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Materials needed for Preemie Size Bonnet:

- Quilting thread for pleater, thread to match fabric, embroidery floss or #8 pearl cotton for smocking.
- Fabric- 61/2" by 22 inches
- Lace- 22 inches long, width from 1/2 to 1 inch as desired
- Ribbon- 40 inches long, 1/4 (or 1/8) inch wide (casing 12-18 inches and ties 12" each)

Put fabric on grain by tearing or by pulling a thread and clip across. Pleat in manner desired. (Hand pleating or machine pleating may be used.) First row of pleating should be 1-11/2 inches below edge of fabric width. Four rows of pleats are sufficient. Serge or clean finish all raw edges before pleating.

The following must be completed before beginning smocking design.

- Flatten fabric by sliding pleats flat in first one direction and then the other while finishing the raw edges.
- Apply lace across width of fabric.
- Remove pleating thread for 2 or 3 pleats on each side. Re-knot threads. Turn under narrow hem along both narrow ends and stitch.
- Casing depth may vary depending upon width of ribbon being used. Turn under 1/8 or 1/4 inch and then 1/4 or 1/2 inch along back of width of bonnet to form casing. Stitch.
- Draw up pleats to measure approximately 6 to 8 inches. This makes a 3 to 1 ratio.

Smock in desired pattern.

Run ribbon through back casing.

Remove pleating threads.

Attach ribbon to both sides of bonnet, centering over smocking rows. Ribbon or lace rosettes may be added.

Heirloom lace application:

- Place lace on top of fabric, right sides together with a lace edge 1/8 to 1/4 inch away from raw edge.
- Sew lace to fabric with a small zigzag stitch with one stitch going into lace heading and one going off the edge of the lace. Press lace out and fabric to wrong side. Topstitch with a zigzag stitch, one stitch going into lace heading and one just off lace heading. Trim excess fabric away from seam on the wrong side.

Rosettes: Rosettes may also be an extension of the ribbon tie, made in one piece. Use a 22 inch length of ribbon.

Measure 10 inches for tying. Mark the remainder at 2-inch intervals. Using needle and thread, gather at marks to form 1-inch loops. Arrange loops and attach to sides of bonnet with ties toward the front.

Smocking Directions:

English Smocking is simple embroidery stitches worked on the tops of pleats. These pleats give elasticity to the garment.

Pleats are made by running the preshrunk fabric through a pleating machine.

Traditional pleating may also be used. It involves marking rows of equally spaced dots on the wrong side of the fabric. Then gather each dot across the dotted line, leaving it flat. Once all the gathering lines have been completed, pull all pleats up as tightly as possible. Place the fabric on an ironing board or other flat surface. Straighten all pleats so they are straight and even. Steam by holding a steam iron several inches above the pleated area. Allow fabric to dry before moving. Adjust pleats to measurement as needed.

Needles- personal preference; Crewels #8 or 9 for 3 strands of floss or pearl cotton. A smaller needle may be used with less strands or a finer thread. Milliner's needles or #7 darning needles are also an option. A straight needle, rather than a tapered one works best for bullion roses.

To begin Smocking:

Make a slip-snail knot (on the backside of the fabric) in the end of a fifteen to eighteen inch length of embroidery floss. Floss should be stripped or separated for greater coverage.

Bring needle from the backside through a pleat, hiding the knot in the pleat.

I try to have enough thread to complete a row. I sometimes run short and find it necessary to change thread in the middle of a row. I try very diligently to make the change of threads occur in an over or under cable. I take my thread to the back by inserting the needle between pleats and finishing off with a slip-snail knot. I then bring my new thread to the front by coming up as close as possible in the same stitch. This makes the design flow without a break in the stitching.

Stitches are worked from left to right. Your needle should be kept parallel to the pleats at all times. The Pleating threads act as guides for your smocking stitches. The design is formed by where a stitch is placed. The space between the pleating threads may be divided into thirds or quarters depending on pattern desired.

It is important to take a consistent stitch depth across all pleats, 1/3 down from top of pleat. A deeper stitch makes a tighter smocking stitch. It is equally important to keep your floss straight within each stitch. If the floss becomes twisted, use the eye end of your needle to smooth it.

1. **Cable Stitch:** The cable stitch is the most basic. I use the cable stitch on my first row as a stabilizing row. It has less elasticity than a baby wave or a trellis stitch. It is worked in a straight line.
2. **Under (Up) Cable Stitch:** The thread is below the pleating thread. Insert needle into pleat from right to left, below the pleating thread but above the floss. Keeping the floss below the needle, pull needle through pleat. The floss is now above the stitch.
3. **Over (Down) Cable Stitch:** Keeping the floss above the needle, insert needle into next pleat, right to left, above the pleating thread but below the floss. Pull needle through pleat. The floss is now below the stitch.
4. **Baby Wave Stitch:** This stitch may be worked above the pleating thread or reversed below the pleating thread. A baby wave stitch is worked over five pleats. To make the baby wave stitch above the pleating thread, Begin with an under cable. The floss is now above the stitch. Insert needle into next pleat 1/2 of the distance between the pleating threads, floss is still below needle. Pull needle through pleat. Floss is still below needle. Make an over cable stitch in the next pleat. The floss is now below the stitch. Insert needle into next pleat just below the pleating thread and pull through pleat. Floss is still above the needle. Make an under cable stitch.
5. **Trellis Stitch:** This stitch makes a diagonal line. Its length varies depending on the design. It may be combined with baby waves to make a heart design by working down from the same pleating row. Reversing the trellis on a

lower row may form a diamond design. A three stitch trellis would be worked in thirds over three pleats. A four stitch trellis would be worked in fourths over four pleats.

*NOTE: thirds and fourths refer to the single 1/2 inch space between pleating thread row.