A woman with blonde hair and blue eyes is looking directly at the camera. She is wearing a black top and two long, ornate gloves. The gloves are made of brown suede with intricate red floral and leaf patterns. The left glove has a red tassel hanging from the wrist. The right glove is held up near her face.

Anyone who sews  
can make gloves

BY JOHN KOCH

# Gorgeous Gloves

*Bring back the high drama  
of gloves—simply elegant  
or flamboyantly fabulous.*

**T**ake a look at the gloves on these pages. Are they luxurious? Absolutely. Custom, hand-sewn gloves are one of the best ways to add drama and style to your wardrobe. They're romantic and theatrical; sliding your hand into one of these beauties is like stepping into the movie screen and taking part in the action. They also protect your hands and keep them warm. I spent three years unraveling the mysteries of a beautiful glove. And now, decades later, I've not only made discoveries but also invented shortcuts. In glove making, the number of pattern pieces are surprisingly few, and the equipment you need is quite basic.

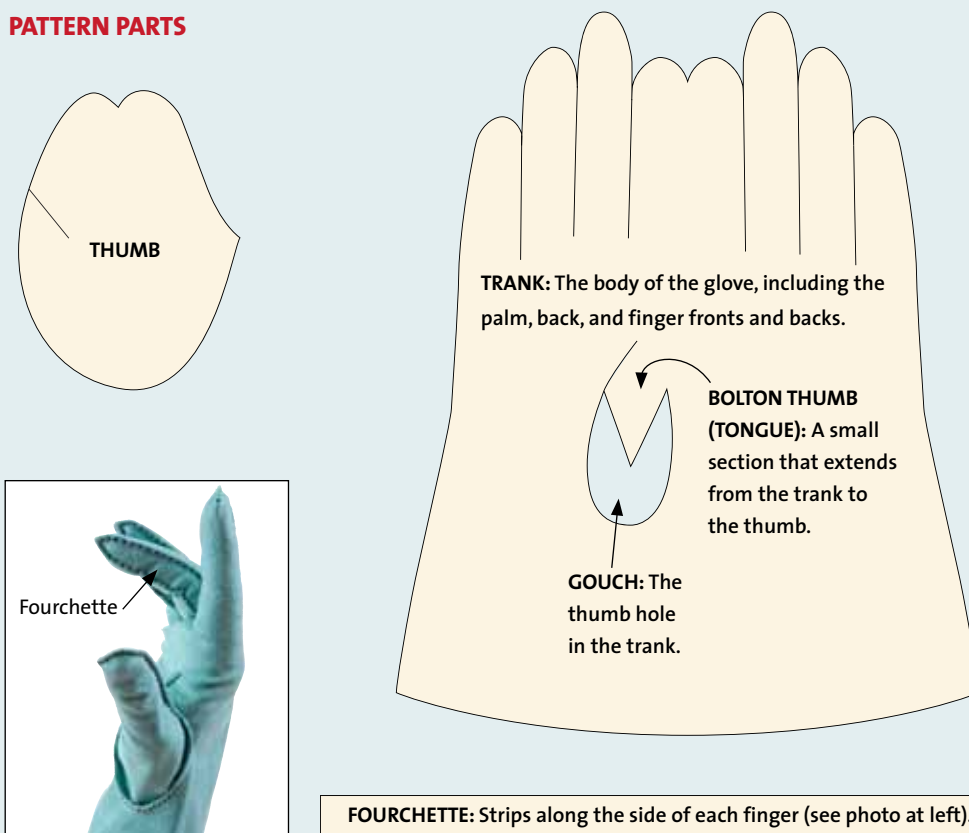
Start by downloading one of my glove patterns at [ThreadsMagazine.com](http://ThreadsMagazine.com). Then make a test glove to try the fit and experiment with sewing the different stitches and knots you'll find online with the pattern. I use a knit faux suede such as Doe Suede because it's easy to work with, wears well, and looks good. You can size the pattern up or down with a photocopier. Once you know how to sew them, gloves are incredibly simple to make. Follow my easy, step-by-step instructions, and you'll be calling yourself a "glover" in no time.

*John Koch (MontroseStudio.com) is an artist and educator who makes fantasy gloves in his Chicago Studio.*

## GLOVE COMPARTMENTS

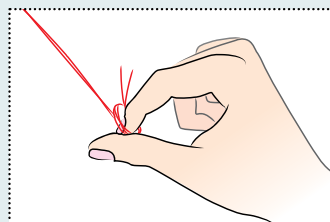
Before you begin, it's important to understand the fundamentals of glove making. Here are the names of the pattern pieces and their parts, the supplies you need, and good stitches to use.

### PATTERN PARTS



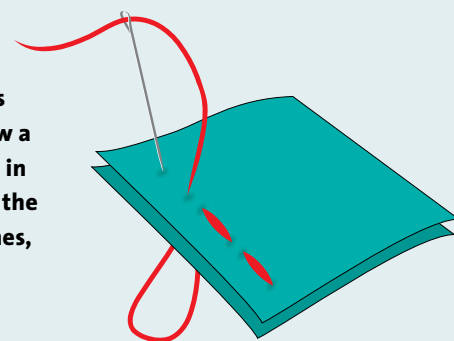
### STITCHES TO USE

Similar to a running stitch, stabstitches and saddle stitches allow more control and are made one stitch at a time. Draw a sharp needle straight through the fabric and back through in the opposite direction a short distance away. Always keep the needle perpendicular to the fabric edge. To see more stitches, visit [ThreadsMagazine.com](http://ThreadsMagazine.com).



### KNOW YOUR KNOTS

Hold the cut thread end between your thumb and forefinger. Wrap the thread around your forefinger, and pinch. Draw your finger back, gently rolling both threads. Lightly pull the thread to tighten the knot.



### USE THE RIGHT FABRIC AND THREAD

Choose a fabric with stretch. Typically, I opt for a knit velour, lock-knit, or stretchy faux suede. To test the stretch, hold the fabric in both hands about two inches apart and pull gently sideways. Ideally, it will stretch  $\frac{3}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch or more. To sew, I often use three strands of embroidery floss for added strength and decorative appeal, but you could also use button thread.



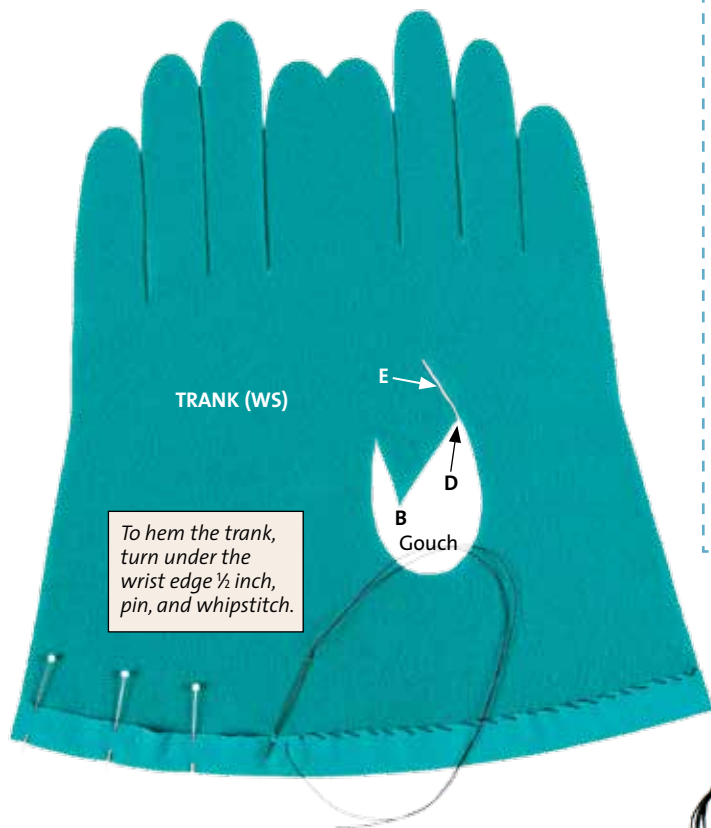
# Make a basic glove

For your first glove, make a sample to determine the fit. To save time and energy, sample gloves can be baste stitched.

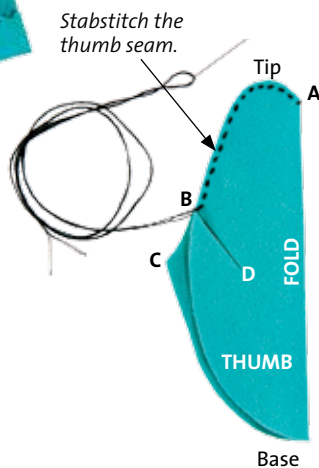
## PREP THE GLOVE AND SEW THE THUMB

**1 First, trace the pattern onto your fabric, wrong-side up.** As you trace, use firm pressure so the fabric isn't dragged by the pencil point because that distorts the tracing. For a pair of gloves, you'll need two tranks, two thumbs, and six fourchettes. When tracing the pattern, note that the lengths of the slashes between the fingers are not the same on each side of the trunk.

**2 Rough-cut the 10 glove pieces individually.** Then with more precision, cut along the traced lines, especially when defining the slashes between the fingers and thumbs and on the edges of the fourchettes. Make sure that you've got the right trunk/thumb combination; the slash in the thumb and the slash in the gouch should point in opposite directions.



**3 Hem the trank.** For a basic hem, fold the wrist edge under 1/2 inch, and whipstitch the edge to the trank. The scalloped hem shown above has a faced hem.

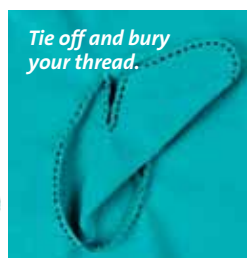
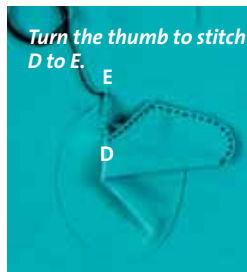
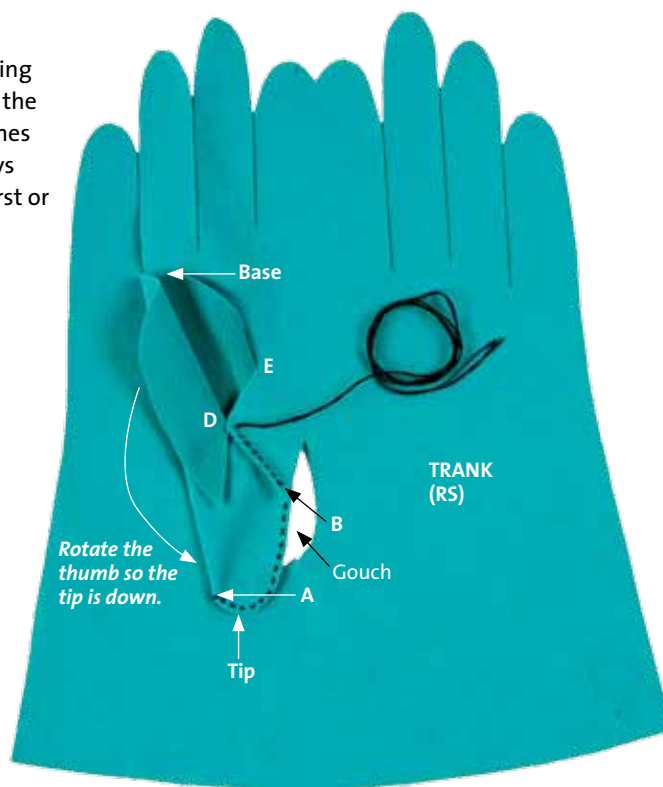


**4 Sew the inside thumb seam.** Tie a small knot at the end of a 24-inch length of thread. Fold the thumb material in half, wrong sides together. Push the needle from inside the middle of the fold 1/16 inch from the cut edge at the thumb tip. Draw the thread until the knot is flush against the inside fold, and then make a small double-guard stitch perpendicular to the edge of the fold. Stabstitch around the tip to the slash (from point A to B at left), stopping 1/16 inch from the slash edge to leave a seam allowance. Take a closer look at these stitches at [ThreadsMagazine.com](http://ThreadsMagazine.com).

## Tip

**INSIDE TRACK.** When beginning or ending any seam, don't sew to the edge. Each edge ultimately becomes another seam allowance so always leave that distance before your first or last stitch.

**5 Attach the thumb.** Lay the trunk flat, right-side up. Place the thumb next to the gouch with the tip pointing down. Align the thumb's slash edge (B to D) with the tongue, and pin it in place. Sew the BD segment. Pivot the thumb and sew the next segments from D to E. Pin the outer thumb to the gouch edge. Set the corner of the thumb piece (C) into the "V" created by the tongue and gouch edge. Pin it in place. If the pieces are cut accurately, only a tiny amount of easing will be required. With the thumb seated, pivot and continue to sew around the thumb base. Pull your thread to the inside, and tie off with a glover's knot or a small stitch knot. Bury the tail, and trim the excess.



## PREPARE THE FOURCHETTES

**1 Prepare the fourchettes.** Tie a small knot at the end of a 12-inch length of ordinary sewing thread. Fold a fourchette in half right sides together and begin sewing  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch from the fold. With small stitches, sew a diagonal line across the fourchette, ending on the fold, a seam-allowance width from the edge. Tie off the thread with a closing stitch, and trim the fold close to the stitching. Repeat the process with the two remaining fourchettes, and set aside.



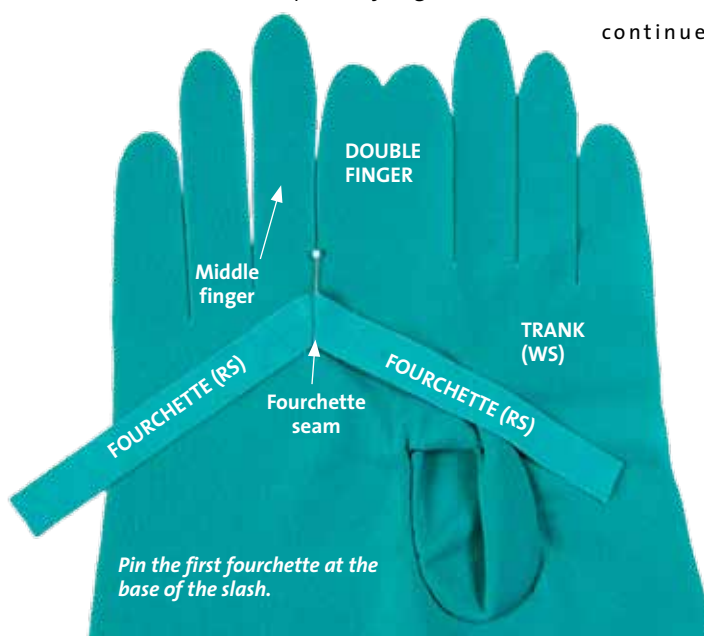
*Fold the fourchette right sides together, stitch diagonally across the fold to form a seam in the center.*



*Then, trim close to the stitching.*

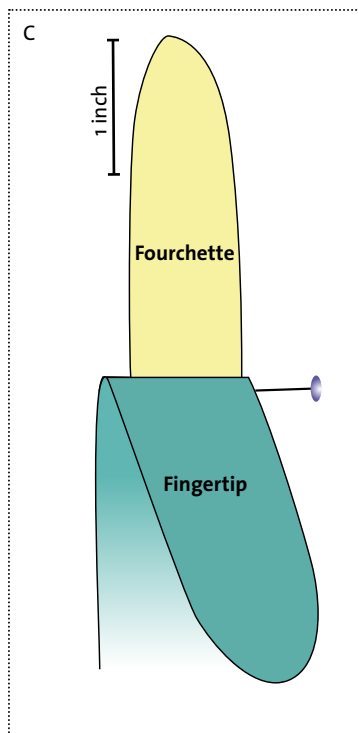
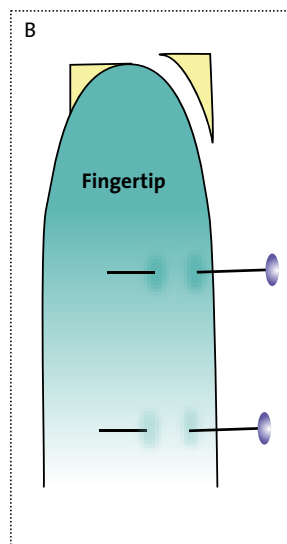
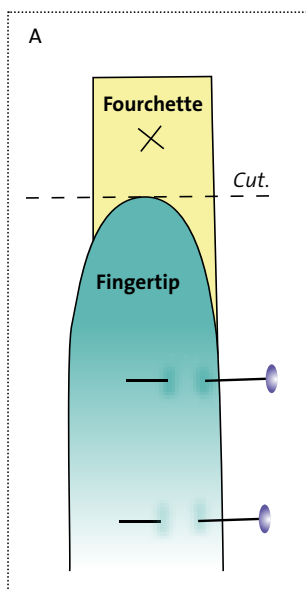
**2 Position a fourchette.** Lay the trunk wrong-side up. Starting at the slash between the double finger and the middle finger, place the first fourchette right-side up with its center directly at the base of the first finger slash, as shown below. Secure with a pin through the fourchette's center seam a short distance down. Make sure the pin, the seam, and the slash are perfectly aligned.

continued >>>



**3 Attach the fourchette to the fingers.** Fold one finger down, and align it with one edge of the fourchette. Place a pin about ½ inch from the first pin, perpendicular to the edge of the fourchette, as shown at right. Then fold the adjoining finger down to align with the other edge of the fourchette. Place a third pin on the side opposite the second pin, as shown at right. Continue pinning each side of the fourchette moving toward the tips, as shown at right. The fourchette should lie comfortably against the fingers without any stretching or buckling.

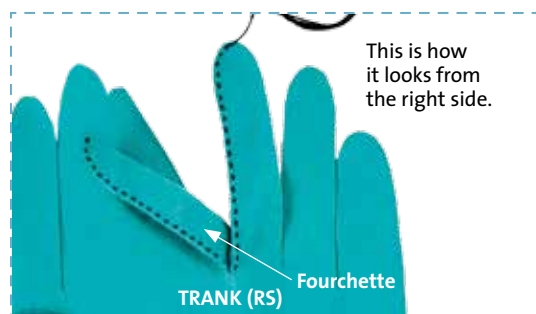
**4 Before sewing, neaten up the fingers.** Cut across the fourchette at the tip of the finger (A). Then, cut the side of the fourchette with the pins to the contour of the finger (B). Cut the opposite side in a gentle slope starting from about 1 inch down and curving up to the center of the tip (C).



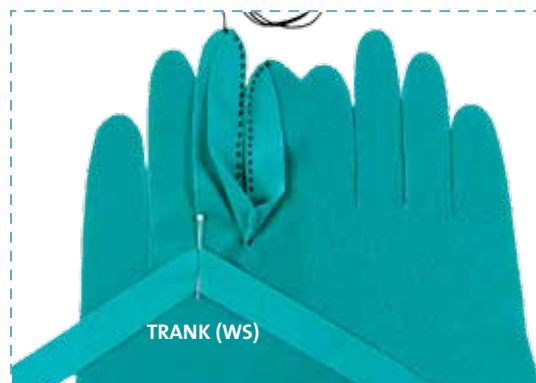
*Add decorative seams for sophisticated inserts.*



**5 Sew the fourchettes to the fingers.** Knot a 4-foot length of thread. Starting at the tip of the double finger, stabstitch along the edge of the fourchette until you reach the base (see A at far right on this page). Cross over the fourchette's center pin, and continue to sew up the side of the middle finger toward the tip. Stop just short of the cut edge.



Pin the second fourchette to the slash between the middle finger and the ring finger as described in step 3. Neaten it as described in step 4, and then sew down the other side of the middle finger. Cross over the center pin and sew up the side of the ring finger.



Attach the third and final fourchette at the slash between the ring finger and the pinkie.



Repeat the process to attach the third fourchette between the ring finger and the pinkie, and tie off the thread.

## CLOSE THE GLOVE

**1 Align the front and back.** Starting at the double finger, fold the glove so the index fingertips align, and secure them with a pin. Then pin the middle finger, making sure the fourchette and finger lengths are aligned, as shown below. Align the fourchette's center seam with the base of the slash between the fingers, and secure it with a pin. Then align the edges and secure with additional pins along each side.

**2 Close the fingers.** Cut a 6-foot length of thread. Then, starting at the double finger (A), make a small double-guard stitch, and sew over the tip and down to the fourchette's center seam. Cross over the middle pin, and continue up to the tip of the middle finger. Continue pinning and sewing each of the other fingers one at a time.



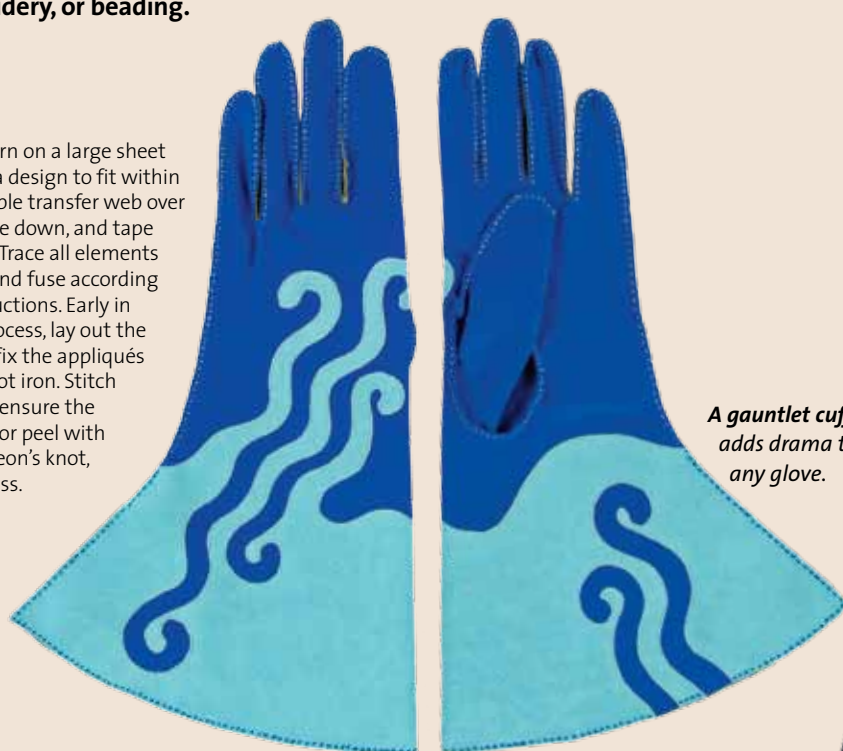
**3 Close the trank.** Align the outside seam allowances, secure them with pins, and stabstitch as you did before, stopping at the hem. Pull the thread to the inside, and tie with a Glover's knot. Then, bury the tail, and trim any excess thread.

# Dress-up your gloves

Once you've mastered making basic gloves, it's time to get creative with embellishment techniques such as appliqué, embroidery, or beading.

## Appliqué

Trace the glove pattern on a large sheet of paper, and create a design to fit within its outline. Place fusible transfer web over the drawing glue-side down, and tape or weight it in place. Trace all elements one color at a time, and fuse according to the package instructions. Early in the glove-making process, lay out the entire design, and affix the appliques to the trunk with a hot iron. Stitch around the edges to ensure the appliqué will not lift or peel with wear. Tie with a surgeon's knot, and trim off the excess.



*A gauntlet cuff adds drama to any glove.*

*A hand is constantly rotating so carry the embellishment to both sides.*



## Long & sleek

An understated glove is sometimes more elegant. Add extra length to the pattern.



*Subtle detailing created with a contrasting thread is a chic touch.*



## Beading

Any glove embellishment will shine with the addition of beads, sequins, or rhinestones. It can be as simple as a line of beads on the wrist edge, an encrusted button, or a spray of glass and color to punctuate another pattern or design in the glove.



*Foil appliqué, glass beads, and metal embroidery threads are a cool combo.*

## Embroidery

Embroider gloves early in the glove-making process to allow sufficient border fabric for stretching the fabric in a hoop. Before stretching the fabric, baste directly over the traced cutting lines so they show through and to give you a removable image of the glove on the right side of the fabric. Next, embroider inside the baste lines, leaving room for seam allowances. Once the embroidery is complete, remove the fabric from the hoop, press each embroidered panel, remove the basting, and then cut out the glove, using the tracing that remains on the back.

## Inserts & extensions

It's best to add fabric manipulations with contrasting inserts, pleats, ruching, wraps, or straps—buckled, buttoned, or tied—before the glove is assembled.



*Add fabric inserts that match the contrasting fourchettes for another touch of style.*



*When you discover how simple glove making can be, you'll dive right into exploring the many possibilities of embellishing them.*

**Log On**

For your own glove pattern, directions for more glove stitches and knots, and an expanded gallery of John Koch's gloves, visit [ThreadsMagazine.com](http://ThreadsMagazine.com).