



GIFTS TO INSPIRE

HANDPICKED ITEMS TO
NURTURE CREATIVITY

Each year, the holiday season presents a chance to splurge on the pastimes we enjoy. The editorial staff and contributors consider the superb materials, practical tools, advanced machines, and interesting new books we came across during the year. We share our favorites to make a collective list of useful and exciting options.

This year's gift guide selections share a theme, the promise of inspiration. There are items and opportunities to learn something new or complete aspirational projects. The selection is available at a range of costs for different spending levels.

Enjoy the season and the gift guide, and indulge your creative side this year.

Compiled by Threads editors and contributors.

*The Naito bucket bag
can be made from a
kit by Klum House.*

Kits to Make

Let the professionals put together the supplies you need to complete worthwhile and beautiful finished projects.

BAGS BY KLUM HOUSE WORKSHOP

Create a durable, chic bag from leather and waxed cotton. Kits include precut materials, high-quality hardware, and access to a PDF pattern; extended straps are available to fit a range of body sizes. Choose from many styles including backpacks, totes, and bucket bags (Naito full maker kit shown). All bags can be made with a home sewing machine, so there's no need for special equipment.

KlumHouse.com; from \$70.00 to \$225.00



CLASSIC PAJAMAS

Assemble your own kit to sew a pair of traditional pj's, based on the Closet Core Carolyn Pajamas pattern. The pattern is available up to size 32, and includes shorts and long pants, and short or long sleeves. The print version is packaged nicely to give as a gift. Pair the pattern with separately purchased crisp cotton poplin and piping, flannel, or silk charmeuse, depending on the recipient's lounging preferences.

ClosetCorePatterns.com; \$16.00



STITCH YOUR CLIMATE MEMORIES

Tempestry knit and crochet kits are custom-made to depict the daily high temperatures for the year and place of your choice. They include all the yarns and a guide for creating a wall hanging. Extra accessories available include needles, needle wranglers, and decorative beads.

TempestryProject.com; \$90.00 for the Original Knit Kit



NATURE-THEMED EMBROIDERY

Jessica Long's embroidery kits offer options for beginning to advanced stitchers, and focus on charming scenes of flora and fauna. Her double-hoop styles (Year of Birds shown) are especially fun. Kits include floss, needles, fabric, hoop, instructions, and a stitch guide.

JessicaLongEmbroidery.com; kits from \$21.50 to \$60.00



Books to Inspire

Sustain your making habits with new references and journals.

STORIES OF CREATION

Melanie Falick's *Making a Life: Working by Hand and Discovering the Life You Are Meant to Live* (Artisan, 2019), connects the reader with makers around the world, involved in different types of handwork. Explore their unique environments, habits, and perspectives along with the author, a well-known writer and editor in the world of crafts. Melanie traveled extensively to build this collection of thoughtful profiles. Each artisan's story, accompanied by stunning photographs, draws out facets of our human fascination with creating by hand. Buy a copy for yourself, or for someone else. Here is inspiration to rediscover and bolster the inherent joy found in making.

Workman.com; \$35.00



STITCH BY STITCH

Make, Sew and Mend: Traditional Techniques to Sustainably Maintain and Refashion Your Clothes (Page Street Publishing, 2022) by dress historian Bernadette Banner combines practical sewing information and exploration of how and why we make garments. To a large YouTube audience, Bernadette is known for hand-sewing historically authentic garments. Yet her book not only includes step-by-step tutorials for her favorite hand-sewing and mending techniques, it offers advice for finding your personal style, and encourages enthusiasm for creating a more sustainable wardrobe.

MacMillan.com; \$21.99



SEWING THROUGH THE SEASONS

For a touch of beauty and wardrobe inspiration, look to *A Year of Sewing with Nani Iro* (Zakka Workshop, 2022) by Naomi Ito. A best-selling Japanese sewing book now available in an expanded layout and English translation, this title includes 18 full-size patterns plus instructions. Though the sizing is limited (S through XL, for busts 32 to 43 inches), the designs have generous design ease and may equate to larger sizes. The simple silhouettes are also potentially easy to grade up. The clean and elegant garments creatively deploy volume and ease, and they work together in cohesive groupings.

ZakkaWorkshop.com; \$26.99



PATCHWORK POSTCARDS

Curated Quilts, a journal that focuses on modern quilting, has brought together a selection of 12 postcards representing patchwork quilts featured in recent issues. The cards make a beautiful array to decorate your sewing space, or the ideal stationery for sending words of inspiration to your friends. If you're not a quilter, these cards may convert you—and if they do, consider a subscription to the magazine or a membership to the site. CuratedQuilts.com; postcards, \$12.00; single issues, \$18.00



Learning Opportunities

Classes and experiences abound, offering chances to develop or refresh skills and make new friends. Find an experience that explores your interests or gift a class to a maker you care about.

ENCHANTING FRANCE

The ultimate gift of inspiration is a trip to an artisan village in the French countryside, to explore embellishment techniques. Rae Cumbie and Carrie Emerson of Fit for Art Patterns invite a maximum of 10 students to join them at La Cascade, August 2 through 9, 2023. The weeklong workshop includes studio classes in the mornings, followed by tours of the area in the afternoons. Rae, a frequent *Threads* author, shares many creative techniques, for stitchers of all skill levels.

FitForArtPatterns.com;
estimated price \$2,950.00

Travel to France and learn decorative techniques with other makers in a weeklong experience.



VIRTUAL MEMBERSHIPS

Indulge your favorite stitcher in expert instruction they can enjoy at home. Online memberships and classes vary: Some offer interaction over video conference; others provide anytime access to tutorials, patterns, and discounts. These are just a few of the options.

Cashmerette Club: Inclusive sizing for stylish, contemporary apparel. Base membership includes a new pattern every month, plus access to an online forum. Higher levels offer master classes, live events, and discounts. Cashmerette.com; from \$9.00 to \$12/month.

Sew It! Academy: Mimi G's online school has a continually growing curriculum of video lessons, for all skill levels. Choose from a women's wear or menswear focus, or both. [Sew-It-Academy](https://Sew-It-Academy.com). Thinkific.com; from \$11.97 to \$17.97/month.

Looking Good Together: Image coach Nancy Nix-Rice guides you in creating a personalized, versatile wardrobe via ongoing virtual training, support, and community. NancyNixRice.com. Price \$299.00/one-year membership.

Charm Artist Collective: Vintage designer Gretchen Hirsch shares projects, live events, an exclusive online hub, discounts, fitting videos, and more in her three-tiered Patreon subscription. CharmPatterns.com/Patreon; \$7.00 to \$16.00/month.

Modern Machines

The latest sewing machine and serger models have features that are sure to boost your creative options.

BABY LOCK ALLEGRO

If you're getting serious about quilting, or even just getting started, Baby Lock's Allegro model can enhance your experience. It offers a 12-inch bed space for handling large projects, 200 built-in stitches for maximum creativity, and a sewing speed of 1,000 stitches per minute. A hands-free, presser-foot lifter means you can maintain control of your work as you stop to pivot the fabric. The two alphanumeric fonts make it easy to sign your projects, too. You'll find the built-in needle threader and six LED lights reduce eye strain for comfortable sewing.

For garment sewers, the machine includes 11 one-step buttonhole options, 10 presser feet, and a free arm for sewing small items.

BabyLock.com; MSRP \$1,599

BERNINA 770 QE PLUS KAFFE EDITION

Fans of Kaffe Fassett's fabric and quilt designs will adore this combination sewing/embroidery machine, and not just because of its pretty face. You'll find hundreds of decorative stitches, as well as exclusive Kaffe embroidery designs. The Bernina Stitch Regulator ensures consistent stitch length in free-motion stitching to give your quilts a professional look. The machine is available with or without the embroidery module, so you can invest in what matters most to you.

Art-to-wear and home décor creators can indulge just about any stitching idea with this machine—even mending will feel special.

Bernina.com; \$7,999.00; \$10,499 with embroidery module

BROTHER AIRFLOW 3000 AIR SERGER

Serger threading frustration is history with a modern air-threading model. The Brother Airflow 3000 Air Serger uses small blasts of air to guide thread through the loopers for fast and easy thread changes. Additional ease-of-use features plus a range of creative functions make this 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -thread machine a prudent choice for a first serger or an upgrade. Use it to trim and overlock edges, and explore the functional and decorative flatlock, overlock, rolled hem, and lettuce-edge finishes. The differential feed ensures the desired stitch quality on stretch fabrics, and the accessories kit includes a trap to collect trimmings, a gathering foot, a blind-stitch foot, and a piping foot.

Brother.com; price on request from dealers



Photos: (p. 70; p. 71, left; p. 73, center, left, bottom left and right, top right) Mike Yamin; (p. 71, top and bottom right) Rae Cumbie, Fit for Art Patterns; all others, courtesy of the product brand or manufacturer.

Tools and Notions

These helpful items bring fun and function to any sewing space.

JOYFUL LABELS

Share an important message of unconditional love and support with the Going Places label collection, designed for children by digital artist Brook Gossen for Kylie and The Machine. The 18 embroidered cloth labels feature colorful art and affirmations chosen by children, including “You Are My Sunshine,” “Be Yourself,” and the classic “I Love You.” Kids know how to say things simply, don’t they? KylieAndTheMachine.com; \$25.00 AUD



MINI SCISSORS

A tiny pair of snips—barely 1½ inches long—can accomplish big things in your textile practice. They’re made by Hasegawa Cutlery in Seki, Japan, and come with a leather sheath and silk tassel. Keep them in your hand-sewing kit or knitting bag for clipping threads and yarn ends. They are packaged in an elegant box from Cohana, ideal for gift-giving. Cohana.style/en; Etsy.com, \$20.00 and up



PERSONALIZED CLAPPER

For your favorite tailor, seamstress, or quilter, there’s a handmade maple clapper laser-engraved with their name or initials. Choose a length from 6 inches to 12 inches. Smooth and hefty, this pressing aid is a joy to use. Etsy.com, OSSQuiltWorks; \$27.50 to \$40.00



CUSTOMIZABLE ORGANIZER

Corral small sewing and crafting supplies with the Poke-A-Dot Organizer. The plastic storage container, in black or clear, comes with eight movable dividers to create custom compartments. Each divider’s pegged bottom fits securely into the container’s rows of holes. More dividers can be purchased separately. A tight-fitting lid keeps everything in place if you need to take your notions on the road—or into the next room. PokeADotOrganizer.com; \$19.95



TEXTILES RECYCLING SERVICE

Scraps from your projects could be broken down and used to create new textiles or other useful materials such as insulation, through Retold Recycling’s convenient service. For a fee, the company mails you a bag, which you stuff with scrap fabrics or old clothes and mail back. They separate the textiles into donatable, recyclable, and scrappable categories and send them to the right entities. Try out the service with the 5-pound capacity Solo Bag and go from there. RetoldRecycling.com; \$14.50 per bag, subscriptions start at \$24.75

