



# Rick Rack

Dating back to the 1800s, rick rack trim (also spelled rickrack, ricrac, ric-rack and ric rac), was sometimes referred to as waved braid, snake braid or corrugated braid. Its zigzaggy appearance has long made it a favorite of home sewers looking for creative trimming options.

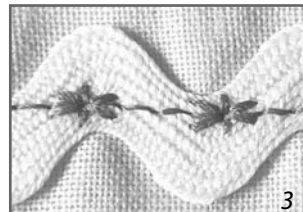
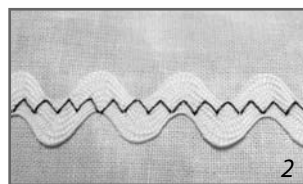
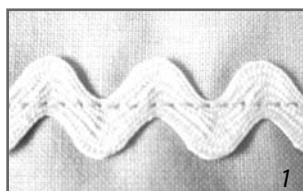


Photo courtesy of sew4home.com

Rick rack is available in many sizes, from very tiny (called baby rick rack) to very large sizes, often used for home decorating projects or to make a bold fashion statement. Rick rack can be purchased by the package or by the yard, and is usually made of polyester or polyester/cotton blends. It's available in solid colors, prints, color gradations, metallic and chenille textures.

## Application

Rick rack is easily applied flat to the base fabric and machine sewn in place down the center (1). Use contrast, matching or invisible thread, depending on the desired look. It can also be attached with a zigzag (2) or decorative stitch (3).



For an invisible application, hand stitch it in place, catching the center ever so slightly from the fabric wrong side.

If you're creating borders with multiple rows of rick rack, draw lines on the fabric for placement to keep the rows even while stitching.

In addition to applying rick rack to flat fabric, it can also go over gathers or pleats to create a trim for a mock-smocked look.

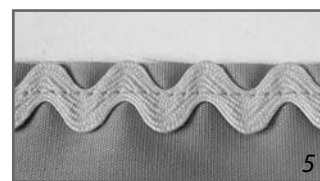
## Insertion

Rick rack is a perfect trim to insert into a seam, as the points create interest between the adjacent fabrics (4). To



Photo courtesy of sew4home.com

insert it, pin the rick rack to the base fabric so that one half of it is inside the seamline and the other half of it is outside. Baste it in place on the seamline (5).



With the wrong side up, pin the adjacent fabric to the seam, right sides together and matching the seamlines. Sew on the seamline. Open out the fabric and press the seam allowances to one side.

## On the Edge

To apply rick rack to the edge of a garment, pin it to the right side spanning the seamline, then stitch in place down the center along the seamline. If the garment has only a hem, turn it under and finish the edges to prevent raveling. If the garment has a facing, follow the directions above for

insertion, then press the facing to the underside exposing the points of the rick rack.

Another method for applying rick rack to a garment edge is to finish the hem first, then lay the rick rack under the folded edge and sew close to the fold with one or two rows of stitching.

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*Tip: Use a fabric glue stick instead of pins to hold the rick rack in place for stitching.*

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### Fuse New

Rick rack can be applied quickly and easily by sewing through the center using fusible thread in the bobbin. Once the stitching is complete, simply fuse the rick rack in place. Add another row of stitching for added security if desired.

### End Results

If the ends of the rick rack will show on the finished project, simply turn them under as you stitch the rick rack center in place. If you run out of length for a project, turn under the end of the new piece to match the first section and hand tack together for an almost invisible joining (6).

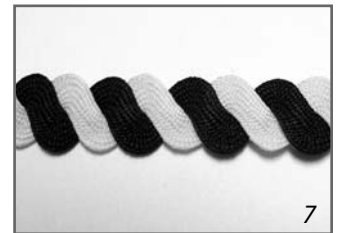


If you're turning corners with rick rack, just fold the corner at the proper angle and hold in place with a pin or stiletto, then stitch. Most rick racks have no right or wrong side, so even flipping the corner over to show the opposite side is alright.

Rick rack can be shaped around curved seams with a steam iron. If your shaping is tight, pre-steam it into shape before attaching to the fabric. On outside corners, ease the points slightly together; on inside curves, push the points together slightly as you sew.

### Double Fun

Weave together two colors of rick rack for even more fun, or weave together two of the same color to make a wider braid-like trim (7).



Stack smaller rick rack over larger rick rack for a fun twist.

### Craft Concerns

Rick rack can be glued to things other than fabrics if you're working on craft projects. Select a glue that doesn't penetrate fabric to avoid damaging the look. Turn under the ends at the joining or tuck them to the underside of the project. 🖱️