



Darning Foot

In this video you will learn to use the Usha Janome Darning Foot. This foot has a dual purpose – one can use it for mending as well as free motion embroidery



The darning foot ensures proper stitch formation and minimizes skipped stitches while protecting your fingers as you move the fabric freely under the needle.

For this lesson you will need: the Usha Janome Darning Foot, one square piece of fabric to practice the free motion darning that can be used to create embroidery designs, one piece of torn fabric to learn mending, one patch of cloth that matches the torn fabric and covers the torn bit, an embroidery hoop, marker, measuring scale, thread and a pair of scissors.



Lets begin by learning how to mend a torn piece of fabric using the darning foot. Replace the normal presser foot with the darning foot. Watch the next step carefully....see how I do this -- You need to attach the white portion of the darning foot by screwing it on to the machine like this...with the long arm of the darning foot resting on the needle clamp screw.



After attaching the foot, remove the feed dog from the needle plate. To do so, open the front section of the machine and pull the feed dog out and close the front section.

Then set your machine -- set the Thread Tension between 3 and 4, set the pattern dial to select stitch A, and you can set the stitch length as desired.

Let's take the torn piece of fabric and place the extra patch of matching fabric that we have below the tear.

Place these aligned pieces of the fabric under the darning foot. Set the needle down and begin stitching.

First, stitch along the length of the tear that goes up and down in rows, so that the small piece of fabric gets attached.

Once the vertical lines are done, do a set of horizontal line stitches to make it firmer. For this, lift the presser foot and turn the fabric by 90 degrees. Lower the presser foot and start sewing horizontal lines across the hole. After the hole is nicely covered with stitches, cut the extra bits of thread and you are done. Once you get over the excitement of what you have just learnt – take a deep breath because there is one more use of this foot that you must definitely learn to do.

Free motion embroidery

Start by drawing a 6 cm square on the center of the practice fabric.

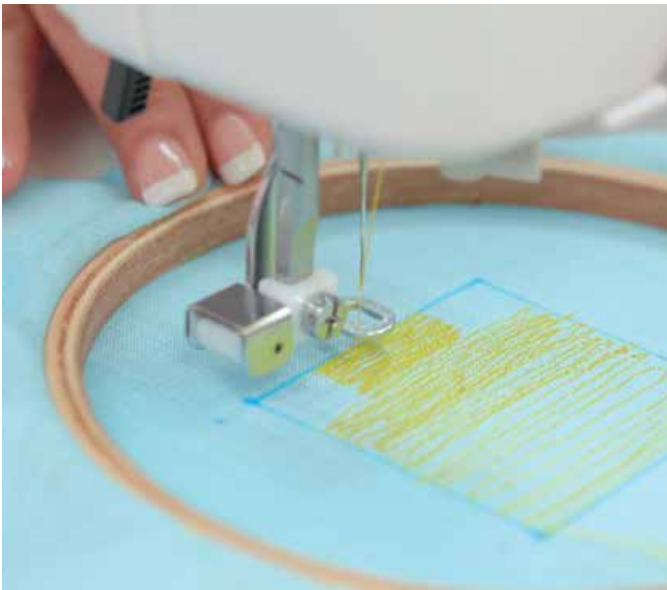
After drawing the square, hoop up the fabric. Unscrew the two rings of the hoop. Place the outer ring (the one with the screw mechanism) first, lay the fabric piece on it, and place the smaller inner ring on top, catching the fabric between the two frames. Tighten the screw to hold the fabric firmly in place.

We are now set to practice using the darning foot inside the square. Place the hoop under the machine and position the needle at the top of the square. Ensure that the needle is down before you begin sewing.





Aim to stitch in a straight line inside the square, but don't worry if you can't...you will soon get a hang of it. The fun part about this foot is the flexibility that it gives to move the frame, and along with it, the ability to stitch in any direction you please. Once you reach the end of the square, just move the frame in the opposite direction, and you have the stitch running backwards...



Keep sewing lines up and down, and try to increase your speed, as you get comfortable with the straight lines. Moving faster will make your stitch length bigger. Once you get a hang of it, stitch the lines closer...and once you have mastered straight lines, try out curves, by moving the hoop. Isn't this interesting...even the chaos of lines you have just sewn can look like a piece of art, no?



Now that you have learnt how to make free motion embroidery using both straight lines and curved lines, try following pre-drawn patterns. You can use this technique for any type of free motion embroidery. Get creative and make your own art pieces. Have fun with the versatility of the darning foot.

So, go wild – draw freehand designs, abstracts, or geometrical and test your darning skills. Let me assure you, this foot can be used to add that bit of funk you need to upcycle your old denims or anything that's become boring in your closet. You can also use darning as a texture to create fabric art.