



Museum Textile Services

Making and Attaching a Velcro Header

- Velcro is used to hang textiles that are stable enough to be suspended under their own weight. The loop side is always attached to the textile and the hook side is always attached to a slat. Velcro should not be sewn directly to a textile and must be machine stitched to either a strip of fabric or cotton twill tape.
- Measure the width of the top edge of your textile. Cut the Velcro and strip of fabric or twill tape a bit longer than the width of the textile. This will allow for take-up as the Velcro is sewn to the textile.
- With a sewing machine, stitch the Velcro 1/2 inch from the top of the twill tape. If you are using a strip of fabric, sew the Velcro about 1 inch from the top. Stitch only at the very edges of the Velcro where there is no nap.
- Lay the textile flat on a table with the back of the top edge accessible. Place the Velcro header across the textile along its true horizontal axis. This is often not parallel to the top edge. Pin the Velcro header to the textile in several points across its length.
- Choose a thick thread such as Button & Craft for heavy textiles and a medium-weight cotton thread for lighter textiles. The color should blend with the front of the textile but need not match perfectly. Often a single color such as beige or brown will blend across the whole textile. The best needle for this is a size 26 or 24 tapestry needle, which will push the textile aside and not rip it as you are stitching.
- The Velcro header is attached to the back top edge of the textile in two lines of stitching that correspond to the machine stitches that hold the Velcro to the fabric. The use of these machine-made holes makes an otherwise very tough material easier to stitch through.
- Knot the end of your thread. Starting at the center, come up through the back of the Velcro header in a hole left by the sewing machine, leaving the knot at the back. Take a running stitch approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long and stitch straight through the Velcro header to the front of the textile. Flip the top of the textile up and make sure your needle is not piercing any threads before making the stitch. Every three stitches knot your thread at the back.
- Take a small stitch (approximately $\frac{1}{8}$ inch) on the front of the textile that blends with the direction of the threads. Come all the way through the Velcro header to the back. Check that your stitch is lying nicely on the front before moving on. Often you can line your stitching up with a natural feature of the textile such as a seam or color change, which will provide camouflage. Avoid areas of weakness.
- Continue in a running stitch from the center to the edge. Return to the center and stitch outward to the opposite edge. When finished, start at the second row of stitching at the center and work out to each edge. Trim the sides of the Velcro header to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch shorter than the width of the textile. Stitch the edges down.
- Hang the textile from a Velcro slat and adjust as necessary to allow it to hang flat.

