Metallic Threads

Metallic threads can add sparkle and interest to your bobbin lace, and here are some tips to help you use it.

Metallic threads may be real metal, or may be plastic that looks like metal. To be on the safe side, always use scissors to cut it that you don’t use on regular thread; or else always cut metallics on a different part of the blade, such as near the hinge, as metal can dull your scissors or put a nick in them.

Metallic threads come in thin and thick, smooth and not-so-smooth, firm and stretchy, and in many colors. But all of them are slippery on the bobbin! To secure them, first wind a layer or two of cotton thread, any size. This makes a soft “bed” for the metallic to seat itself into.

Some metallics will allow you to make a hitch, but others just won’t. In either case, you can use a tiny spring-loaded hair-clip to hold the thread on the bobbin and to act as a brake (as the hitch would normally act). You may want to buy several sizes and/or brands to insure a good grip.

If your thread will allow you to put a hitch in, you may still want some extra help to keep it from slipping. A short (about 1/2” long) piece of elastic (1/4” or 3/8” wide) with a tiny slit in it can be placed over the head of the bobbin once the hitch is in place to help hold it.

If you determine that the metallic thread is really plastic, be aware that it might be stretchy, and be gentle with your tensioning.

Enjoy your new sparkly lacemaking!