

**Spindle Centers at Poles - Technique  
with thanks to Kiyoko Tibbets and Milly Koh**



There is a pattern/design element in Fun with Temari (ISBN4-8377-0103-5) that has been intriguing us, and several have worked on deciphering it. Versions of working it have been posted here and on other temari sites - though, according to the Japanese translations that have been read to me/us (once by Kiyoko and also here by Milly at the Temari NY StitchIn) - the actual stitching process was still eluding us. According to the Japanese translation it is very simple and straightforward, with no additional pinning, or other "extras" needed in working it. It was still seeming that it was a lot more simple that anyone that has tried it so far was making it. The attempts on it so far are indeed great - but some of us were sure it still wasn't "it".

In trying to break things down to more simple steps, it seemed that there were several things going on in the book pattern - first of all the examples in Fun with Temari use a specialized division that certainly adds to the effect of the pattern shown in the book but is not a requisite for the "spindle" effect at the poles (thus the name variations) - and what we were trying to figure out. The book calls for a 22 simple divide, and the stitching is worked in between the lines, thus creating a cycle that requires four transitions around the ball to return home. This adds a great "spirograph" effect - which can be applied to any polar design (such as a standard kiku) - but is not a requisite for the spindles appearing at the pole. Both ladies translating for us gave the same readings - it's a simple backstitch worked toward the pole rather than away from it.

It does have the best outcome with a "higher" divide - for example a simple 16, as the outcome I think is dependent upon the spindles closing in toward each other at the sides as well as the angle going down to the bottom stitch needs to be minimized. The book calls for working it in 6 strand floss - which at first we thought might be needed to achieve the outcome but then again, was it? So, I tried and worked it on a three inch mari, with a simple 16 divide and in pearl cotton. I think this works in a manner that the technique can be taken and applied as desired, and in terms of the process in the book as translated to us, I think it matches:



Begin with a regular herringbone, 1 cm from the pole and 2 cm from the obi. Start at the obi and go up to the pole.



Note that the stitch at the pole is a TINY one, IN BETWEEN the marking threads. Complete the round.



Begin a second round, stretching points going towards the obi but, at the pole continue with a TINY stitch, about 2mm above the previous round. Use your thumb to finger press the placement of the threads, as shown.



Close up of pole stitch



Keep the threads in place as shown, finger-press them in place. Finish the round.



Repeat with the next round - keeping threads in place as shown, again placing the stitch about 2mm closer to the pole



Closeup, round 3. Notice the spindle forming and closing in.



Use the eye of your needle to groom the threads into place, tucking them in along the sides of the spindles that are forming.



See how the spindles have formed, and are tucked against each other to hold their shape. Threads are also beginning to layer over one another helping to create the effect.



Continue for Round 4 in the same manner - again moving in about 2mm to the center to place this round of stitches.



Keep the threads in place as you go, tucking and aligning them with the eye of your needles and finger-pressing them in place. The design will hold its shape.



This shows four rounds completed. The center can now be embellished to fill in and finish....

Obviously the initial placement can be altered to give a tighter center - by starting in closer than the original 1cm... and the number of divides can be modified as well. This is meant to show the technique rather than an isolated pattern. I also worked it using the traditional method of stitching ON the marking lines - and while it's a nice outcome the effect is not as snug or defined. It also created a looser petal pattern coming out from the poles, since the petal multiple is altered as compare to working in between the lines.

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