

TemariKai Photo Essay Tutorial - Working the Uwagake Chidori Stitch Arrangement

A very common technique used to create Kiku (Chrysanthemum) Design Temari Patterns

One of the most common - though by no means the only - application of the Uwagake Chidori Stitch Arrangement (called a "stitch arrangement" since it's not simply a stitch, but an outcome built up of multiple stitches over multiple rows) is in the creation of a [Kiku](#) (Chrysanthemum) design. The Chrysanthemum is a traditional favorite flower of Japan, the flower of the Royal Court and Emperor, and designs inspired from it are very popular in all forms of Japanese culture, and Temari is no exception. While Uwagake Chidori is used here, the Kiku design can be worked by any number of stitches, stitch arrangements and variations.

Uwagake Chidori is formed by rows of an elongated zig zag stitch (one row of it being similar, but not technically exactly the same, as what is commonly called a herringbone stitch), where the top row is worked around and under the previous rows to create the signature inverted widening "V" of interwoven threads. The bottom of the rows are placed to create a downward point.

A hint from Sue H. of the discussion group... be sure that you have a sufficient base prepped on your mari.... if it is not thick enough your stitches will melt into it and not be well defined. Personally I use batting, yarn and thread for mine, and it creates a base so that you can take a several mm stitch and then with normal tension it pulls to a nice tight stitch.



1. Wrap and divide a mari into vertical sections. The most common to being working is either eight or ten - whatever you prefer. Many designs can be made using this stitch on more and thus smaller divisions, but until you get the hang of it, try eight or ten. Mark the vertical line and the obi. Place a mark pin halfway from obi to pole on each marking line.

2. Enter a thread of the first color (this happens to be variegated green) close to the pole, tight to the left of one marking line. You will be repeating this distance from pole to stitch on each line so measure its distance or in some other way record it so that you can repeat it, and you want to repeat it accurately for the best results. Then, move one line to the right and take a stitch just below the mark pin. Pull the thread snug but not tight enough to put tension on the lines and pull them out of orientation. Note - all stitches are taken from right to left. But, you are working the pattern from left to right - so the thread will cross over itself in order to keep this orientation going. The cross over will take place on the polar stitches as you make the next move - keep the cross overs lined up on the marking line. They will not really become apparent until you begin working the second round.



3. Move one thread to the right again and take a stitch at the pole - the same distance from the pole as where you entered on the first thread. Note that as make the stitches, your needle should be horizontal, and perpendicular to the marking thread. Paying attention to this will help you have even stitches and and even pattern outcome.



4. Move one line to the right and take a stitch at the mark pin. As you take the stitches at the mark pins you can remove them.



5. Continue around the ball in this manner until you have reached where you began - end the thread at the starting point. (Note - as you get comfortable with working this stitch, you can just carry the thread till it is used again, but to learn it is less confusing to end it off).



6. Enter a new thread of the second color on one of the lines that does not have a pole stitch. Place it the same distance from the pole as all of the others on the previous round, and again just to the left of the marking line.



7. Take a stitch one line to the right - it will be at the mark pin below a line that has a polar stitch on it from the previous round



8. Repeat the alternating long zigzag from pole to pin as on the previous round as you work around the ball. Remove the mark pins as you go.



9. Finish off back at the point where you began this round. The white pin is a marking pin for the white round for demonstration purposes.



10. Enter a green thread to begin the second round. This is where people seem to have the most problem - getting the polar stitches placed properly. As I was stitching this ball keeping in mind that I was going to try to prepare this page I contemplated as how to best describe this as it is the most common question/complaint. Try to place each ensuing polar stitch one thread width outward and downward (ultimately that make a diagonal) from the previous stitch place. As you work the pole stitches, your stitches will gradually become wider since you are working around all of the previous ones, but they should be just below in a rather tight (that is, no extra space allowed) formation of the round before it. Place enough tension to keep it smooth, but not strangling the previous rows.



11. Take the thread down and take a stitch just below the previous stitch that was made at the mark pin on that line. The green pin along with the white is just indicating the green and white line rounds for demonstration. The stitch should be about 1/16th on an inch below the prior one in order to get smooth points on the petals. If you lay the thread in the direction it should go, it will guide you where to place the stitch.



12. Go back up and take a polar stitch, below the previous one, from right to left, just below and outside of the last one as described above.



13. The thread will cross over itself as you take it down to make the lower stitch, again about 1/16th of an inch below the previous one. The cross over should occur on top of the marking line.



14. This photo it will give you a good idea of how far below to place the lower stitches.



15. Continue back up to the pole - again, enlarge this photo for a clearer view of stitch placement.



16. Continue until you are back home to the beginning and end off the thread.



17. Enter a new thread - this time back to the first color and on the white round. Continue with the stitch placement, allowing the polar stitches to widen around the previous threads. Notice how the threads are "weaving" themselves now in the middle of the lines.



18. Continue to work this thread around as has been described using the same type of stitch placement as has been shown.



19. Note the growing width of the polar stitches



20. Keep alternating threads to maintain the pattern



21. Continue in this manner until the desired depth of pattern is achieved.

Once you have mastered the technique it can be applied in countless variations for both kiku-inspired designs as well as a multitude of others designs. While you will always alternate the sets of threads - working them up and down half at a time, the colors, color placement, number of divisions, depth of pattern, and pattern shape (square, circle, pentagon or numerous others) can all be varied according to the desired outcome that you see in many photos throughout the site and in both English and Japanese books. The number of threads worked around and under at the pole positions can also be varied for different outcomes. You can also work a single star-type design by working only one set of threads.