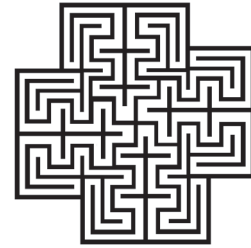


## FELT-QUILTING CRAFTS

### ORNAMENTING FELT

The patterns are made with ochre. The interlocking pattern starts from the middle portion of the drawn pattern, and then lines are drawn in horizontal and vertical directions. There can be many dots among the circular and square signs.



### FELT-STITCHING

Felt serves other purposes than as a covering for the *ger*. It is also embroidered ornately with a technique called *shirekh*, using thread made from camel wool, to make *olbog* or cushions and *üüd* or the felt door for a *ger*. These in turn are used as gifts or mats for guests. In this way, Mongolian art has an aesthetic as much as a practical function.

The stitched-felt flooring for the Mongol *ger* is called *du-galuur* (circle) or *toiruulga* (circumference). Stitches have to start from the centre of the ornament, so that the felt doesn't move. The stitching thread is not tied in a knot, but is instead quilted into the felt. Stitching distances must be equal and also close to each other. When stitching, the needle must be pricked perpendicularly to the felt, and the thread must be pulled with even strength. Usually, *nevtgelzekh* or "sewing with a forward stitch" is used for felt stitching. When using this stitch, the end of the thread is twisted, so that thread knots do not appear on the felt. When the stitches are made appropriately and meticulously, the top and bottom sides of the felt look the same.

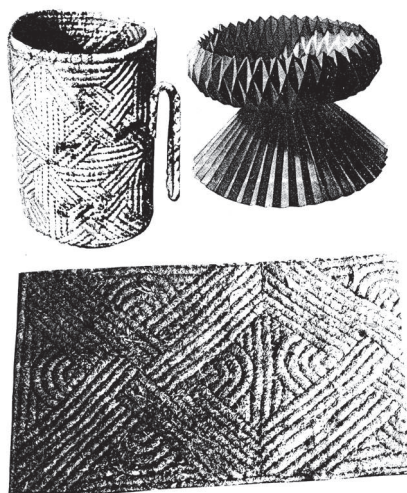
Camel wool hemming is sewn along the border of the *olbog* to reinforce it as well as to embroider it. Nowadays, the number of traditional sewing patterns or *esgii shirmel* are increasing, some of which include the *toonoljin*, *ölzii*, *shurguulga*, *alkh* and *tümennasan khee* signs, to name but a few.

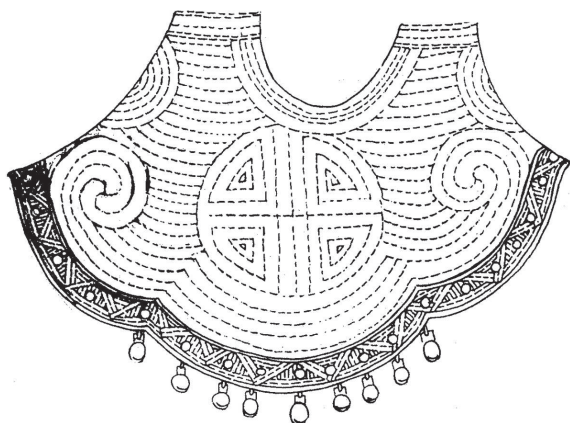
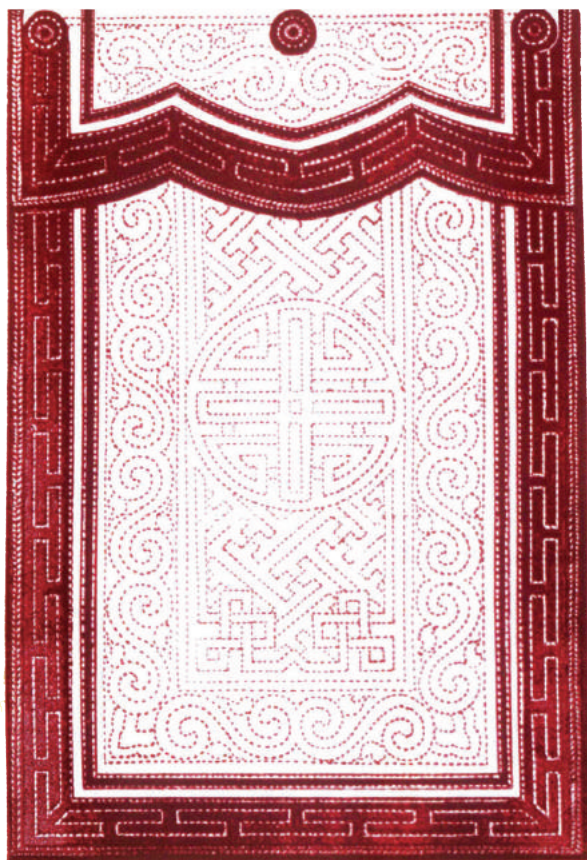
There are two main techniques to stitch the felt: stitch directly on the felt or stitch on a textile background that is attached to the felt.

As for the stitched-felt door, it is framed with blue, red, and brown textiles together with ornaments symbolizing protection and solidness, such as *alkhan khee*. The centre, in contrast, is decorated with cultural symbols or other types of ornaments, including *ölzii* and *tümennasan*. Moreover, ornaments depicting animals, such as dragon, gazelle, deer and other legendary animal figures are widely used in ger decoration. They typically use woolen-thread felt stitches as well as coloured woolen stitches.

Felt-stitching has different styles according to the practices of the many ethnic groups of Mongolia. For example, the central *Khalkh*, *Kazakh*, *Torguud*, *Zakhchin* and *Myangad esgii shirmel* are very commonly found.

Interestingly, some *esgii shirmel* has a spiritual meaning for the Mongolians. For instance, *tolog*, a small felt rug with special patterns, is used for easing the pain of a mother delivering a baby.





## INTERLACING

**D**ees is a rope twisted in the shape of an “S” or “Z.” This rope is made from the wool and tail hairs of large livestock animals. Dees is used for making ropes that are interlaced or attached to one other. The interlacing is classified as single, double, black, variegated, and so on. Various types of interlacing, such as *khoshlon* (doubling), *guramsan* (thrice-doubling), and *dörömsön* (fourth-doubling), serve both artistic and practical functions. Mongolians have even invented a mechanic spinner for interlacing.

The traditional art of creating images with dyed wool has almost been forgotten, but luckily this tradition has been rejuvenated by several contemporary artists. Among the new works are “White Fog” and “Flower” by *B.Bayandüüren* and “Blossoms” by *S.Saran*. One felt-maker and artist, *Ts.Tsend-Ayush* creates her own dyes from different plants and has been awarded the UNESCO Award of Excellence for Handicrafts of Asia for her work.



## STUFFED-OBJECT-MAKING CRAFT

**C**hikhmel urlal is also used for appliqué, costume-making, toy-making as well as for making spiritual items. Objects made of felt, leather, and other various materials are stuffed with pieces of wool, threads, yarns, and textile rags.