



TUTORIAL – CREATING TASSELS

Tassels can add so much to a project! Use them on pillows, wall hangings, ornaments....anywhere you want a little *class*. They are also super easy to make. You can make them from any kind of thread – a good way to use up those bits left on the spool, colors you never use, or those metallic threads that you just couldn't get to work. You can also use any kind of fibers – yarn, cords, embellishment fibers, regular hand embroidery thread - even narrow ribbon or lace! You can make tassels all one color, or mix several colors and types of materials. Variegated thread makes great tassels! The colors in them blend in a totally different way than when using them to stitch. There is a picture of some tassels at the end of this document with info on what I used.

STEP 1: Make or find a template

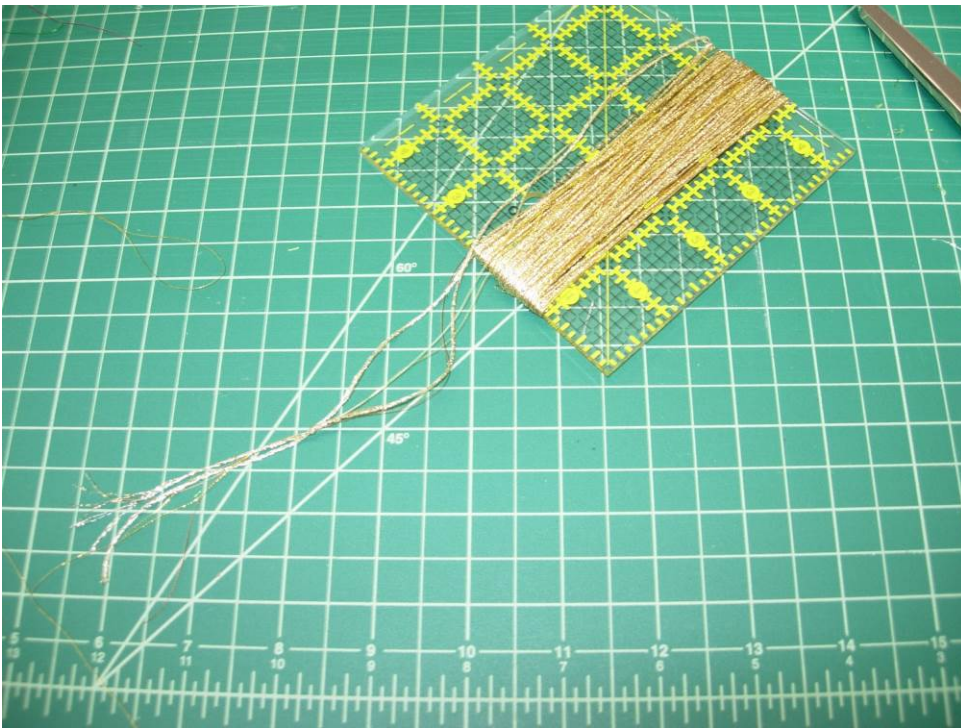
Decide how long you want your tassel and find something to wind the material on that is at least ½ inch longer than you want your finished tassel. I used credit cards for several of the ones in the picture (better than using them to buy things LOL). I also used a small quilting ruler. You can cut pieces of cardboard and even make yourself a set of templates so you will always have the right size available.

STEP 2: Choose your material.

Think of the size tassel you are going to make before choosing your materials. If you have thick fluffy tassels it's best not to try to make too small a tassel – it will be hard to maneuver. After doing a few other types, it is possible to make short fluffy tassels. If you want to make a tassel of embroidery or other types of thread, don't shoot for a big long tassel. (Lots of winding LOL But – winding is great exercise for our upper arms. Hmm... I probably should make a lot more tassels). Don't be afraid to combine types of material for one tassel! In fact I like this type of tassel the best. For example if you have some of the thick metallic thread used for couching or hand embroidery, you can combine it with several threads and not need that much as it is expensive. If you are using embroidery thread, try using several colors or shades.

STEP 3: Wind your material

You can wind several of your materials at the same time. Start by leaving a tail a few inches long – you can hold this with your thumb of one hand and start winding with the other. How much you wind is totally up to you. For example, for the red/yellow/green variegated tassel I only used one strand at a time and had to wind it 250 times around my credit card. On the other hand, for the large fluffy tassels of fibers, I used several together and only had to wind them 4 times around my cardboard. Feel the material you have wound as you wind and remember the tassel will be twice what you feel. When you have enough, cut the material leaving a tail of several inches. To keep them out of your way, knot the two ends together. Or put a small piece of tape around them.



STEP 4: Tie Tassel

Before taking your tassel off its template you need to tie the strands together. If you are using thread, use several strands for strength. Heavy duty sewing thread is good if you have a complementary color. Very little will show, so it doesn't have to match. Thin cords are also good. Cut a length about 4 times the length of your tassel. Slip the tie under the strands and tie tightly. If you can't get the tie under the strands, a yarn or tapestry needle makes it easy.

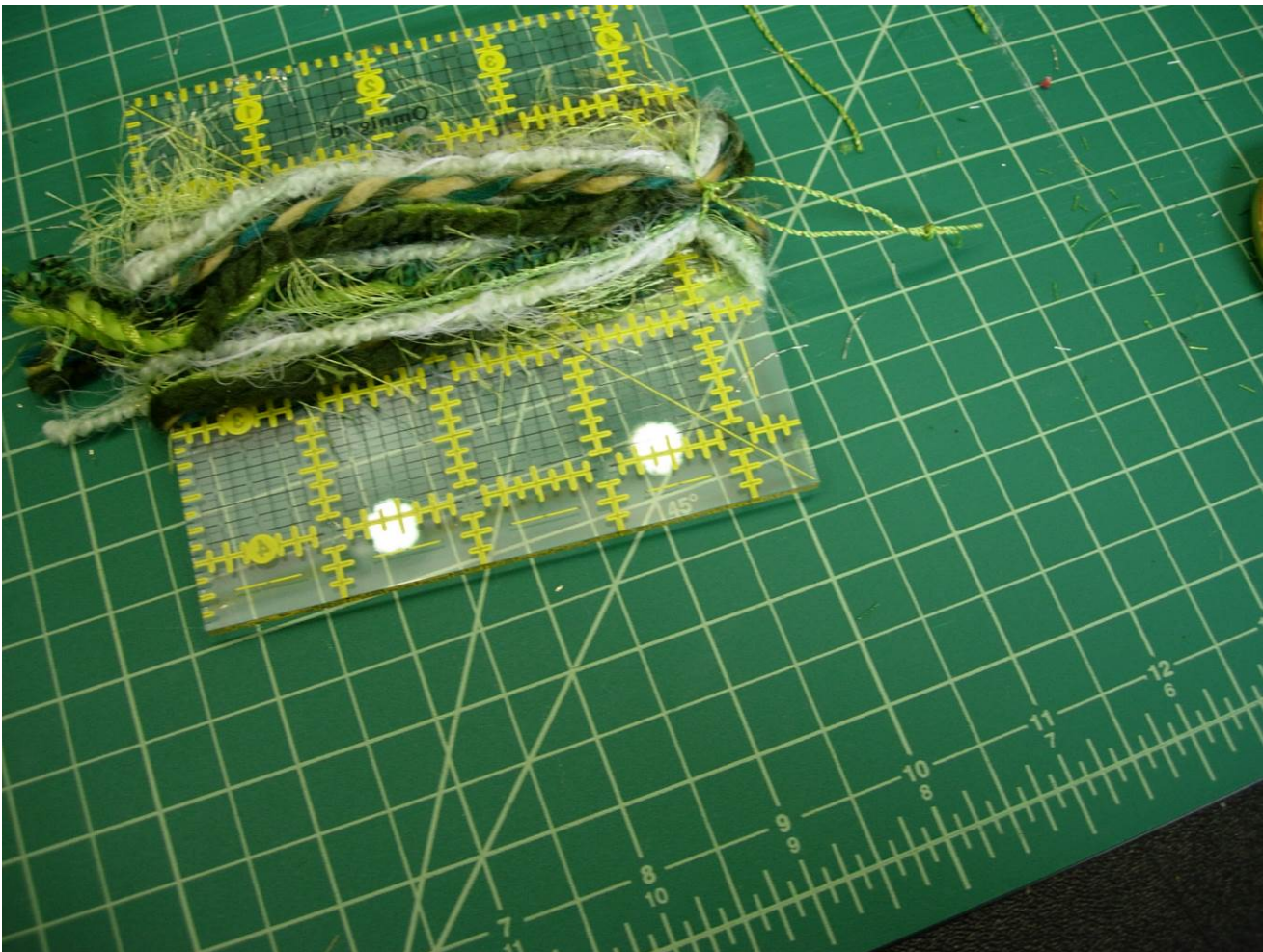
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STEP 5: Hanging Loop

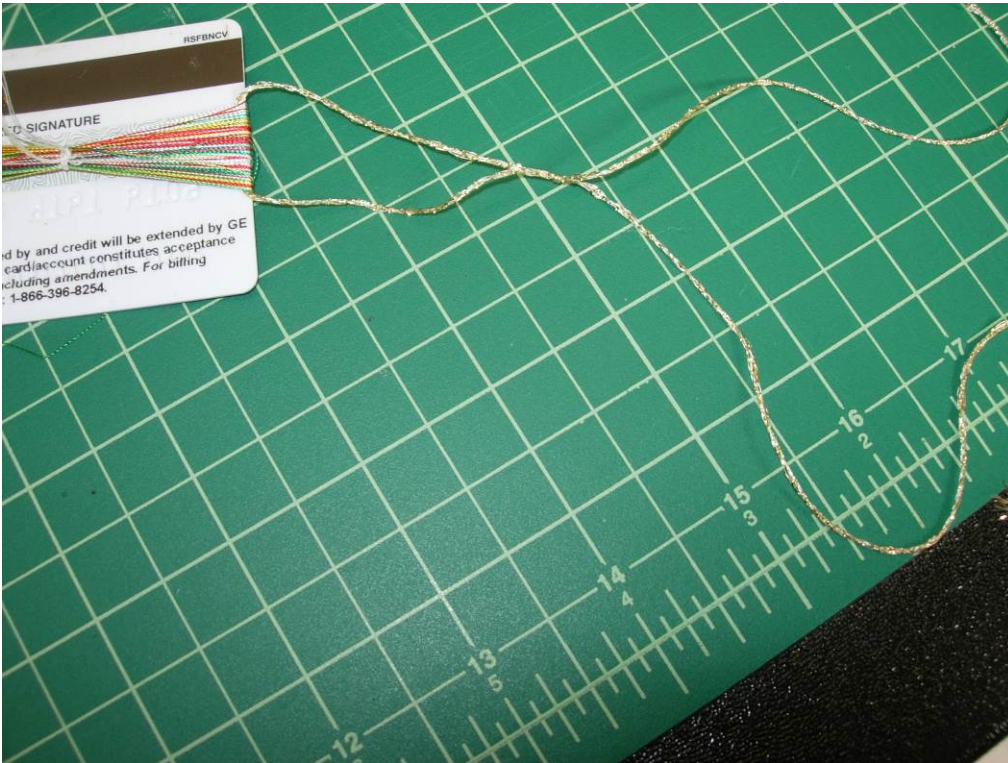
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This is optional – you can always glue or sew the tassel on without it. There are two ways you can do this. One is take the ends of your tying thread above and knot them an inch or two away from the knot around the tassel to create a loop. Clip the ends fairly close to this knot, but leave enough ends so it won't come free.



A second way to make a loop so it won't have a knot at the end starts with cutting length of material about 4 times as long as your tassel. Slip this under the strands of your tassel. Decide how long you want the loop and knot the material. Do not trim the ends.

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STEP 6: Wrap your Tassel

Carefully slide your tassel off its template. If you did your hanging loop using the second method, put the knot of the loop under the threads of the tassel.



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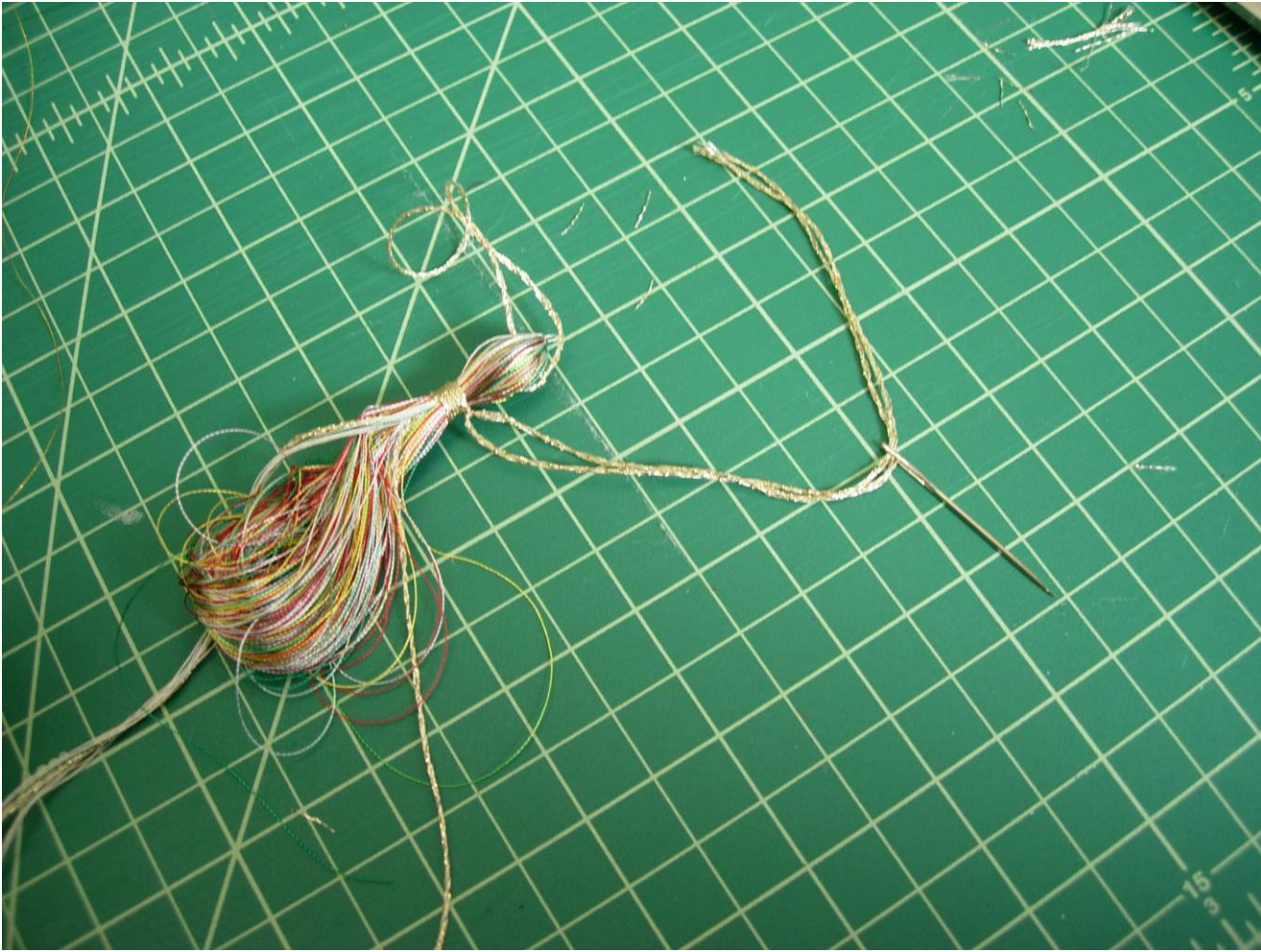
Be sure to hold the tassel securely. Don't cut the tassel ends yet!!!!

Choose a wrapping material. This can be the same as what you used for the tassel or something completely different. I love the thicker metallic threads for this. You don't need much so even though this kind of thread is more expensive, one small spool will do a lot of tassels. Leaving a long tail, hold the wrapping material under your thumb and begin wrapping around the tassel where desired.



Now using a large eyed needle, thread the ends of your hanging material.

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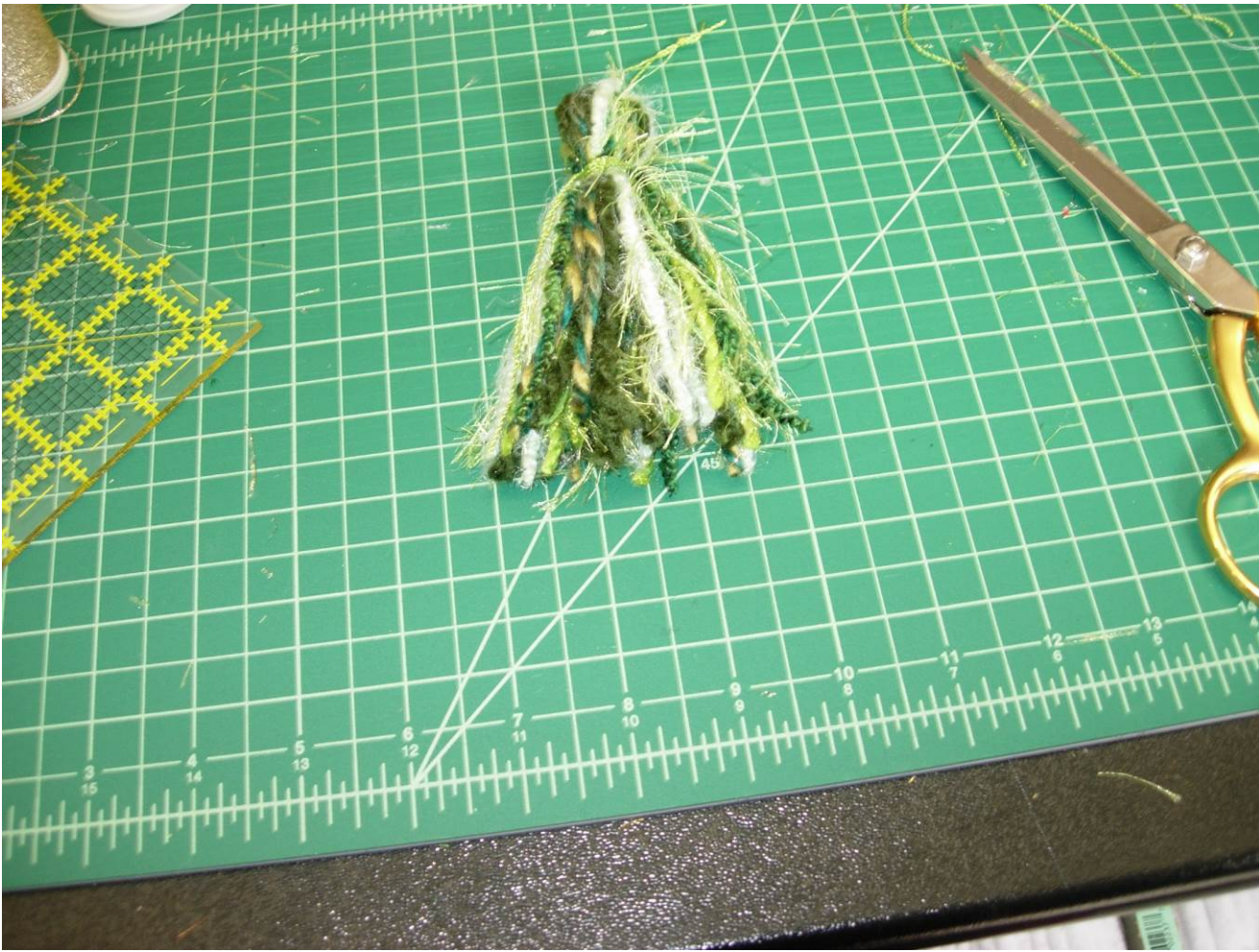


Stick the needle down the middle of your tassel above the wrapping. They will disappear into the tassel.

STEP 7: TRIM YOUR TASSEL

Cutting is optional! You can make some very pretty tassels of loops rather than cut strands. But the more traditional method is to cut the ends. Using sharp scissors slide them into the loop and cut. The edge of your tassel will probably be quite uneven. You need to grasp the strands together and cut straight across the bottom.

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Trim any stray strands.

Sometimes, especially when using the thread, the tassel doesn't lay flat, or if you leave it on the template too long as I did below it will have creases in it.

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It is very easy to straighten it out. Just run it under water, Run your fingers down the tassel to smooth it and let dry. Shake it when it's totally dry and it will lie nice and straight. For the tassel below because it was so unruly, I didn't trim the bottom until it was dry.

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Materials Used:

Tassel 1 – Fiber Start Pack 01 from <http://www.bfc-stash.com/>

Tassel 2 – Gold metallic thread with gold and brown Poly Embroidery Thread

Tassel 3 – BFC Rayon Variegated 2074 with two shades of green Poly Embroidery Thread

Tassel 4 – BFC Rayon Variegated 2028 with BFC 2235 and 2241 Poly

Tassel 5 – BFC Rayon Variegated 2053

Tassel 6 - Fiber Start Pack 02 from <http://www.bfc-stash.com/>

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