Sweater Mending with CBTV Live

Chapter 1 - Sweater Mending

Sweater Mending

(instrumental music) - Hi everybody, this is Faith from Creativebug, coming at you live like we do every Tuesday and Thursday at 4:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time. It's getting warmer here in the bay area, I think we're finally leaving winter behind. And so there is one thing at the forefront of my mind, that is spring cleaning. But because I'm a crafter and a knitter, I like the exciting crafty parts of spring cleaning, which has nothing to do with cleaning. It's about mending and preparing and recovering from the winter. So this probably involves resewing some buttons that were torn off, redoing some hems, and of course, most importantly since I'm a knitter and sweater fanatic, mending sweaters. I choose a couple of different methods depending on the effect I want to achieve. I've spent a lot of time with these methods, I think I'm the de facto sweater mender of my entire extended family, if not my friend group. And if you need a sweater mended and you live in the area, we can probably chat later. Or you can just pay attention to the next 10 minutes and I can show you how to do it yourself. The first technique I'm gonna show you is the most subtle, or it can be the most obvious, depending on the yarn you choose. And this is an effect that serves to reinforce a weakened area. You'll essentially be stitching a grid surrounding a hole, and you'll be weaving in the threads in the inside so that covers the hole you have made. Now, for purposes of demonstration, I am using this brightly colored thread and this big fat needle, but really you're gonna be wanting to use a thread that's the same thickness as the thread used in your sweater. So if you get a new, I know some of the fancier Cashmere sweater brands will have a pinch of thread attached to the tag, where you would have buttons if it was a cardigan, and I try to hoard those as much as possible. And I usually don't end up using them ever, and then it just is this superfluous amount of extra thread. But if it's gonna be a treasured heirloom for years to come, hang on to those threads because you'll need those when you're doing this exact technique for mending your sweater. So I'm starting with about an arms length of this thread. And this sweater is a acrylic wool blend. This is 100% wool yarn, so you'd want to match, like I said before, the kinds of fibers you're using, particularly if it's something like Cashmere or cotton, which are non-felting materials. And also, you can see that this is really a slick thread, it doesn't have a lot of fuzz to it. So the fuzz will help in blending it in better when you're actually trying to hide it. So I'm putting this notepad in between so that I can see, first of all, the hole, and also so that I don't accidentally stitch into the fabric behind it. And we're going to start. We're going to work approximately 3/4 of an inch from the left and the right and the top and the bottom of this hole. So I'm gonna begin here. I like to start on the top, but I'll end up sewing in the thread. And you'll just be making a series of running stitches. And then, you'll move to the left. And I like to do that underneath, so if you moved over the top, you get a series of stitches running this way as well, and I think that's a little less subtle. So I'm gonna do one more half stitch and move to the left. And I like to do this every other vertical row of stitches. It would be a lot closer together if I was using a smaller needle and a smaller thread, but for the purposes of this demonstration, I think you can get it. Also from my google research, this is one of Martha Stuart's favorite ways of mending sweaters. So once again, we're going to move to the left but instead of just jumping straight to the left and leaving this bar, we're going to go down and to the left. And here's the first instance in where we come upon the hole. And we're just gonna go straight across it. So we're gonna be going up and down through the fabric at essentially the same

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rate as before. Not necessarily making an effort to bridge the gap, we're just kind of pretending that the hole isn't even there. See that that's parallel with this one. I'm also realizing now I camouflaged my own fingers. I hope that doesn't make it too tricky to see. It's the spring theme, that's why they're green. Here we're moving to the left again. And we're going back down. And some people like to do a mending and a contrasting shade intentionally, this visible mending trend comes from, I've read some people say it's influenced by this Japanese art of repair where ceramicists use gold to repair cracks. And it's supposed to indicate how, even if something has been broken, there's still a beauty to it. Also, it just looks pretty rad. Okay, so we still have our hole, we have these two going across it. I'm gonna try to make sure that I get as close as possible to this hole on this last pass. And then the next two passes won't be touching the hole at all. Also we are live, so if you have any questions please let me know. Also, if you are a sweater mender yourself, please tell me what methods you use. - [Interviewer] No questions yet but a lot of very riveted people. - [Faith] Oh, good. I hope you're as excited as I am because this is turning out great. (laughs) - [Interviewer] You're not alone. - [Faith] (laughs) I'm glad to hear that. Not mending into the void. Also, one thing that got me really excited about mending sweaters, is when I called it, in my head, mending and not fixing. Right, because you have a whole bag of things you need to fix and that's daunting. But if you have a bag of sweaters you need to mend, then suddenly you're from Jane Austen. And then maybe find a fire to do it by and then you get real deep into one of those novels. Okay, so we have done our vertical stitches. And you can see it's already kind of helped this from falling open. And now we're going to do it horizontally. And so, we'll be taking a quick to the left, and now we'll be stitching across. Now, we're going to be doing our best to weave over and under the strands, but it's not so precise as to be counting... Oh, I went over, so then I have to go under the next one. It's just making sure that you're going over and under the sweater, as well as the threads. So, see, I'm going over here, even though I'm not going over a stitch. The stitch is underneath the sweater. You'll also be using a smaller needle, but don't go too small. If you use a cotton... Oh, see, we're gonna go up at this point in time. If you use a cotton thread or you have a sewing kit, and I know I've been in vacation situations before where suddenly someone will have a mending emergency and they'll need something wool fixed, and then you just have that packet of threads from the bathroom. Please don't use those on your wool sweaters, they will just cut through the fibers you're doing more harm than good. If you're gonna do that, use staples. Okay, I've gotten to the end again. So, here, this is the point where we'll start actually going over the threads that are the only things going over the hole. Here we go. This is a technique that can be really effective for covering larger areas if you have the patience to... If you have the patience to make it finely gritted. So if you just want to make it kind of loosey-goosey, It looks fine for these smaller holes, but it's not as structurally sound. This is also, if you're darning the heel of a sock, you can use this technique, but you'll want a darning egg. It is a wooden egg on a stick, and you can still buy them today, even though I feel like they're probably more common at antique sales and flee markets. Okay, so we're coming across a point where we have this one as our main bridge going across the hole, and we just went under it. So now we're going to be sure to go over it and to go under these buffering on either side. So, over, under, over. If you've ever used a pocket loom, that's something that will be set up in a inch by inch, or two by inch, two by two inch grid. And that will give you a similar mechanism for how to make this stitching. So, we can do one or two more rows if we want. We're kind of out of the danger zone, but see I'm going under here, cause we went over it last time. Over here, cause we went under it last time. And I think that I'll do one more row just to anchor it down. - [Interviewer] We do have a question for you. - [Faith] Thank you so much. Please. - [Interviewer] All right, Noreen

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wants to know, what are the best kind of thread to use for different sweater materials. - [Faith] Use the material that is the sweater. So if it's a cotton sweater, use a cotton thread. If it's a wool sweater, use a wool thread. I think that the number one, absolute best thing to use is the exact material that the sweater is. So I had seen, I think it was published in 1890, but it was a vintage How To Be a Homemaker type book that said that you should remove a thread from the hem of the garment. And that can work if you're mending sweaters, or if you're mending just any kind of shirt. Though I can't imagine actually trying that out if it was a really thin shirt or sweater. But same on same is the best for sweater mending. And we have gotten to the very end. So, I'm going to bring my yarn to the back. And you'll be weaving in the ends like you would for any other sweater. Also, I didn't leave myself a particularly long tail in the front so I'm gonna stab it back in, thread it while it's in the sweater. Pull that through. Well, we'll give that a little more finessing later. But now we're gonna move on to my second favorite, no, that's not true, this is my second favorite technique. The next technique is my third favorite technique, and then we'll finish with my number one favorite technique. And this is super simple, it's using patches to cover a hole. Now this can look really effective if you have one little hole, but then you decide to do a whole bunch of patches, you do a motif. I saw a really cute version online that had tiny heart patches, and there must have been a dozen of them on the surface of the sweater. So we're gonna do just one. This cute little vintage patch Courtney and I found. We went to Britex the other day. And it was really exciting is we had gone in looking for patches to fix things, and the woman had these two really cute butterfly patches on her shoes, and I had to ask her, "Are these functional or decorative?" And she said, "Both, of course." Which is a perfect answer, I would've said the same thing. They were covering up holes in her canvas shoes, but they looked fantastic, you could barely even tell that it was in service of fixing something. So, this one came with adhesive prepared. And this one is more of an embroidery patch, but I put stitch witchery on the back using some fabric glue, and then the stitch witchery, and then I carefully cut around it. You could also use iron on adhesive, fusabile interfacing, and so for this, I'm gonna put back my notepad just for stability. And also here we have, you could use of course your ironing board. But this is an ironing mat that protects your surface, and so I'm gonna stick it in, and we will... Where is our hole? We're gonna cover the hole. And we're going to have this on a wool setting. And we're gonna hold it on for a minute. So also you can use a tacking iron for this, which looks like a tiny shovel. I really wanna avoid pushing down the nap of the wool as much as possible. So, we'll see. Also, if you're watching, feel free to comment on what you think this is. We've had different votes in the office of peach versus orange. And also, I probably would, if this was something I was gonna wear a lot, I probably would stitch over it afterwards, just to be safe. Sometimes the adhesive can pop off if it's a high traffic area. I wouldn't recommend just doing an iron on patch on say the elbow. But I'll show you. The elbow one is the one I'm most excited about. Okay, so we've... Let's see, that is on pretty good. I would definitely use this for only a teeny-tiny area, like a moth hole or something. Especially if you wanted to do a motif. And now we're ready for the one I'm most excited about. I know I've shared with you my love for needle felting, but I got a new tool that has just revved up my enthusiasm into hard drive. This is from Clover, and it is a five prong needle felter. So, previously I had been using the single needle, and now I have have five times the speed, five times the power. It's great, and it seems a lot safer because, where as this one, I had been covering with stirring... What are these even called? Not bar straws. Coffee stirrers? - [Interviewer] Oh, yeah. - Tiny straws. - That's the word. - This one comes with it's own locking mechanism so you don't accidentally stab yourself five times simultaneously. So this, if you have even a passing interest in needle felting, is an essential for your tool kit. So we move it from locked

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to unlock. This, the last time I had been using a foam, but I like this even better because it provides less resistance. And I think that it probably wears down the needle less. So you're gonna put this underneath here. And you see, this is kind of a big vertical hole. And here is another thing that has aided in my pursuit of the essential sweater patching, is these tiny cookie cutters. So instead of just blobbing it on and hoping it works out for the best, you can use the cookie cutter to have some semblance of a form. Also, these can be found in the decorating section of a craft store. Like in cakes, where you find cake supplies. But this is more for cutting fondants and not cookies. Also, you might find them in the clay section because they're just teeny-tiny. So I'm gonna use the almost largest one. And just like when we did the cross hatching, you wanna make sure you get a decent portion of either side, so that should be enough. And then I'm going to, let's do, is this green overkill? I'll do some pink. So here is our wool roving. Another pro tip from experience is keep it in this little thing if you can. This has been out of the package for 10 seconds, and look, it's already grown monstrously. And then, please keep it away from cats because, I don't even want to talk about that. It looks like a murder scene, though, in my house. So, you're gonna pull off a small amount of roving. And you're going to place it in the cookie cutter. And I'm going to use this tool to tap it down a couple times. And then I'm going to use the single needle to get it along the edges, so it just has a nice shape to it. Be mindful that you're not poking it down too hard because you don't want to be jamming the end into the bottom of your brush pad. And of course, we don't wanna waste all this fun on the single needle. We wanna get that mega needle in there. But I just wanna make sure everything's flat. Oh (laughs) so funny. Okay, and now we go to town. This is also great because you don't have the opportunity of pushing it too far. So you're not going to bang the needle against the end. It makes it a lot safer, and I think it'll last. You know, it's a bit more expensive than a single needle, of course, but I think it is certainly worth more than five single needles. What's that expression? The sum is worth more than all of the super sharp needles? So you're gonna keep doing this until it's flattened out. And you'll notice, on the back side, some will be poking through. This is perfect, this is exactly what you want. This helps hold it in place. So I'm gonna give it one more go over. This, to me, is like the sound of saving time. I love it. And there you have it. This patch is perfect for, you can use it on elbows. I've seen it done with using a heart shaped cookie cutter, and doing little red hearts on the back of the elbows. It's so darling. You can see here, I layered a couple of them in this corner. I tried some of the triangular ones, and that was much less successful. Please don't look at those, they're shameful. But the layering I think looks absolutely adorable. And to recap back to the first one, see what a big difference it is between a contrasting color and a color that's a lot more comparable. I would say, the blue I used, if mixed with my nail polish color, would've been exactly the shade of the sweater. Thank you so much for joining us. We'll be here next week. (instrumental music)

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