

Finishing Finesse—Roll Forward and Whip

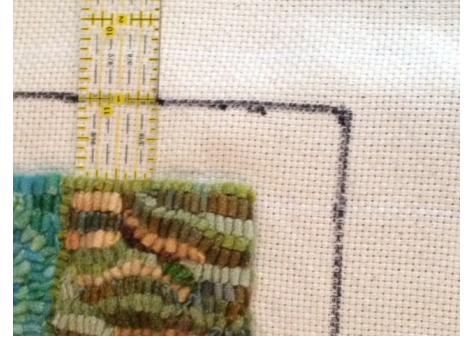
Nancy Lee Ross

The hooking is complete; you have steamed your rug, fixed any holidays and are now finally ready to finish the edge.

There are several ways to proceed; this is the method I use. Let's start the steps:

Measure

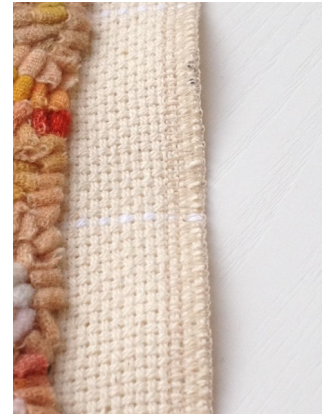
Using a ruler and a Sharpie, measure around the rug from the last row of stitching out. An inch and a half will generally make a good border, giving enough backing to roll forward. Join these markings into a solid line around the rug edge. This gives you a good line to follow.



Note: on a small piece you can measure 1" to make a smaller edge. Generally, on a larger rug you would want 1 1/2" or 2" for your roll.

Stay Stitching

My preferred method is using a serger. This technique isn't for the faint of heart. It requires you to insert your completely hooked rug into the serger, following the line you drew as you operate the serger, which overcasts the edge and cuts off the backing at the same time.



If you did not zigzag around the pattern before hooking, and do not have a serger, you need to do a double row of zigzag stitching along the line you measured onto the backing.

Trimming

Cut the excess backing away, just outside of the zigzag stitching if you didn't use the serger.

Rolling Forward

Roll edge forward around the rug. Hold this roll in place with straight pins, clothespins, bicycle clips or T pins. This is a temporary step and these items will be removed before the final whipping.



The size of the roll with the added whipping makes an even edge that prevents wear to the hooked rug edge.

Corners

Smaller rugs can easily have a square corner, which you miter. On larger rugs you can round the corners. It looks nice and it's easier to whip around a curve.



Basting

I know this is another step in an already long process, but it really pays off when whipping. Basting before whipping keeps your hands free to adjust the yarn. You can use regular sewing cotton, quilting thread, and even yarn to do your basting.

Once basting is completed, remove pins, etc. and you are finally ready to whip your rug.

Whipping

Yarn comes in different plies and weights. Use yarn that is appropriate for the hooking. For example, you wouldn't use a bulky 6-ply yarn on a smaller cut rug.

I very often separate the plies and use a single strand, or two different strands to get the color I want. You also can change the color of the yarn around the rug to blend with the hooking. A good example of this is with a landscape.

Using a bent tapestry needle makes the job easier. Thread the needle with the yarn you have chosen. Start along one edge, but not on a corner.

There are several methods for starting your yarn. One would be to come up into the roll an inch or so from your starting point. The end is then hidden in the roll. You can work from front to back or back to front; whichever is most comfortable for you. Coming out right next to the last row of hooking and around the roll and into the opposite side next to the edge of the hooking. Carefully lay each stitch making sure the yarn isn't twisted. To end a piece of yarn, run it in the opposite direction under the whipping for an inch or so. Then pull the yarn taught and cut close to the whipping. This will make the end disappear under the whipping.

Don't use yarn the length of a football field just so you don't have to join a new piece. Joining on is easy and the time you spend trying to untangle the longer piece will cost you more in frustration.

Whipping completed, you can look back at your work and know that you have "Finished with Finesse".

