

## How to Darn Pointe Shoes

Darning pointe shoes will help your feet look more arched, break in the shoe exactly right, and provide a lot more traction so you don't slip, especially in pirouettes. It will also considerably extend the life of your pointe shoes.

Tips before you start....

The thread to sew your pointe shoes can be purchased from most dancewear shops. It is especially for pointe shoes and is quite thick and very strong. Never use the thin cotton thread used for clothes. You will also need a needle with a big 'eye' preferably a bent upholstery needle.

Don't make your stitches too big or too far apart. Small and close makes a stronger platform.

If the needle is taking enormous efforts to push through, take it out and try again, this time not so deep, you will however have to push a little. A thimble will really come in handy! Good Luck!

1. Take a length of thread and knot the end.
2. Under the toe box (the part of the shoe you will stand on), there is a pleated section. Start by pushing the needle through the satin on the pleats towards the toe box and pull through. The needle should poke through at the very edge of the toe box. Pull the thread all the way through. (It may help if you make a pencil or chalk line around the edge of the box as a guideline for your first row of stitches.)
3. Repeat the same thing no more than one half centimeter over to the right, this time by inserting the needle from the top of the box towards the edge. Before pulling the needle through all the way, this time leave it halfway. Take the thread that hangs out of the previous stitch you made and wrap it clockwise around the needle that is poking out. Hold the thread down with your left thumb as you pull the needle through. This makes a loop around the stitch you've just sewn. Continue to insert the needle from the centre of the box towards the outer edge and repeat this stitch all around the edge of the toe box.
4. By doing the outside edge first this gives you a guideline. That's the hard part done! Continue your next row immediately inside the circle you have just sewn. Keep going around in circles until your toe box is completely filled in. By stitching over the pleated section as well this will also help to make your shoes last longer.