



# HAND SEWING

# Magic



**ESSENTIAL KNOW-HOW FOR HAND STITCHING**

- 10 Easy, Creative Projects
- Master Tension and Other Techniques
- With Pro Tips, Tricks, and Troubleshooting

**LYNN KRAWCZYK**



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- 10 Easy, Creative Projects

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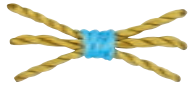
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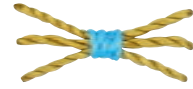
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*For my brother Ralph, my sister-in-law Jill, and my mother.  
Thank you for being my strength when I had none.*



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# Preface

## WHY STITCH BY HAND?

This question always comes up in conversation when I'm chatting with other textile artists. There is a mild sense of disbelief that someone would choose the time-consuming methods of hand stitching when other speedier options are available.

I understand, I really do. Sometimes, you just need to get stuff done. But when it comes to this particular topic, I stand firm in my love and admiration for the craft of hand stitching.

I didn't find art until I was in my mid-twenties, and one of the first things I learned was how to manipulate needle and thread to create pattern on fabric as well as for construction of projects. There is a kind of deep pride that comes with having a skill that can both build the basics and make things pretty.

I stitch by hand because when I do, I feel most connected to my artist soul. It's a direct line to the way I like to work in my creative world, feels more personal, and helps me slip into that zone of making where time doesn't exist.

Stitching by hand will always have imperfections when compared with stitching done by a machine. That's part of its charm for me. It's about the doing and loving what you are making—no matter what kind of little glitches might sneak their way in.

If you are new to hand stitching, I hope this book will help introduce you to this art form that has existed for centuries. If you are a seasoned stitcher, I hope the ideas you find here will help push your imagination toward things you hadn't considered before.

## SLOW STITCHING MANIFESTO

You may have heard the term “slow stitching.” If you don't know what it's about, let me explain. Slow stitching begins with the overall theme of working with more intention and enjoying the process. So often, we try to rush through our projects to get to the end. Slow stitching is about taking your time and allowing yourself to bond emotionally with your work.

As a maker of handmade things, it can be easy to be overly critical of your work. I wish I could say I never fall victim to that kind of thinking, but it's happened on more than one occasion and I expect it's just part of the process of making things.

## Pro Tip

LIZ KETTLE

Expression, not perfection! This is my guiding philosophy when it comes to hand stitching and life. A few years ago, I was handed an unheard-of and unpronounceable diagnosis with instructions to change everything in my life, starting with stress reduction.

I began a journey into meditation but always felt I was a complete failure at it. I knew I wasn't doing it right and I couldn't stick with it. Meditation was causing me more stress! Then one day, I created Stitch Meditation.

It is a daily creative and mindful practice where I stitch a 4-inch (10 cm) square textile collage. There are very few rules for these Stitch Meditations and the most important one is Don't take any stitches out! This rule allows me to focus on the beautiful whole rather than the imperfect one. As a result, my work has become much more free, experimental, and expressive.

Website: [www.textileevolution.com](http://www.textileevolution.com)



Early on in my stitching career, I decided that I needed to shift my mind-set to minimize that little voice that points out every flaw. I didn't want it to be the focus of my work or to steal my joy from the process. I wrote myself a little manifesto with all my declarations about my love for Slow Stitching and printed it out to hang on my wall. I share it here, should you need a little help silencing your inner critic.

*I love the feel of thread and fabric in my hands.*

*I love the fluidity of my creative mind, allowing it to control the direction of my stitching as the project evolves.*

*I believe that all handmade items bear the memories and emotions of their makers.*

*I believe that work made by hand has a preciousness that can be felt the moment it is held.*

*I see my work as an extension of my ideas and thoughts.*

*I see my work as a way to create a lasting connection between myself and future stitchers.*

*I promise not to rush through my work.*

*I promise to reserve judgment as I work, to understand that imperfection is part of the soul of handwork.*





# 1

## The Hand Stitcher's Toolkit

As with every activity, you will find the tools that suit your personal sensibilities. However, there are some basics that can't be avoided. This chapter will help you get a good foundation for the materials and supplies that make hand stitching a breeze.

# THREAD

Needless to say, thread is one of the main elements of hand stitching. Just as a painter can choose from acrylic, oil, or watercolor paints, stitchers have a wide variety of thread types to choose from as well. It's incredibly exciting to try them out, but it can also be overwhelming, so we are going to take a close look at exactly what embroidery thread is and what fibers can be used to make it.

## What Is Embroidery Thread?

Embroidery thread is simply defined as yarn that is spun specifically for the use of embroidery and needlework. When you hear the word *yarn* it may seem confusing, but all it means is that the fibers are made into embroidery thread using the same techniques that yarn is made from—spinning and plying.

The raw fiber is spun into a single thread. The threads are then twisted together with varying numbers of strands to create the desired weight. The thread will also be dyed and some threads may be treated with specific chemicals to acquire a unique characteristic.

## Types of Embroidery Thread

We are going to examine five different groups of threads and what makes them special.

*Disclaimer: The threads shown in the photos are from my personal stash. I've been collecting for a couple of decades. This is the long way of saying that I know the manufacturers of some threads and the labels of others have long gone to thread heaven. I will identify brands where I am sure of them to give you a reference should you like the looks of them.*

## COTTON

Cotton embroidery thread is one of the most commonly found types of thread. I use this thread a lot in my work because it's affordable and easy to find, and I like the dimension that the thicker sizes lend to my stitching.

This type of thread is often mercerized. This is accomplished by treating the thread with caustic alkali to increase its strength and give it a shiny appearance. The smoothness this process lends to the thread makes it especially nice to stitch with.



**Top row, left to right:** Weeks Dye Works hand-dyed perle cotton size 3, DMC perle cotton size 5, DMC perle cotton size 8, DMC perle cotton size 12

**Bottom row, left to right:** DMC 6-stranded floss in solid color, DMC 6-stranded floss in variegated, hand-dyed crochet thread size 10

When a size number appears next to the thread, it indicates the thickness. Size 3 is the largest thread and size 12 is the thinnest thread in the group shown. The higher the number, the thinner the thread.

Six-stranded floss is made up of six thin threads. This allows you to control how thick your stitching thread is. It is one of the least expensive threads, and being able to produce thick or thin stitches from a single skein makes it even more economical.

Crochet thread is used to crochet lace and other detailed home décor items, but it can also be used for embroidery. The thickness of this thread is similar to perle cotton weights, but not exact. Again, the higher the size number indicated on the tag, the thinner the thread.

## WOOL

Wool thread is another favorite of mine. I love the rawness of the fiber, and it's always a good addition to any project needing a punch of texture. It has a kind of primitive feel to it, but I find that cozy, like an invitation to come sit by the fire to chat.

This type of embroidery thread most closely resembles the yarn we use for knitting and crocheting. It's just made to a finer grade.

Typically, this kind of thread is not divisible. It's a single strand or multiple threads twisted into a single thread. How the thread is spun defines its strength. The tweed thread, for example, is fairly easy to tear if you use too much tension. Wool has a rougher texture and, even with simple stitches, it can really stand out in your stitched work.

## SILK

Silk is one of those threads that you love or hate. I've learned to love it over the years. One of my biggest issues with it is that it can snag easily. Anything from thick layers of fabric in your project to dry hands can catch on it. However, the beauty of it is worth the extra effort of making friends with it.

Silk thread is made from the cocoons of silkworms. The cocoons are pulled apart during a process called reeling.

There are two types of silk thread—spun silk and reeled silk. Spun silk is made from short silk fibers and waste silk. Waste silk ranges from the rough outside layers of the silk cocoon to small pieces of silk that have broken during the reeling process. Reeled silk is made from cocoons, as well, but the strands are long and are not twisted. It is also known as filament silk.

Silk threads all share the characteristics of softness and high shine. The thread is very strong but is easier to use in shorter lengths because of its tendency to snag. The thickness of the thread depends solely on how the silk is reeled and whether it's waste silk or long strands.

Silk adds an instant elegance and beauty to any stitching project.



**Top row, left to right:** Tweed wool, Needle Necessities overdyed wool, 2-stranded fine wool

**Bottom row, left to right:** 4-stranded wool, Aurifil Lana wool, DMC Medici wool



**Top row, left to right:** Treenway Silks Tranquility fine cord, Trebizond 3-ply Filament Twisted Silk, extra-fine silk

**Bottom row, left to right:** Filament silk, Kreinik Silk Mori, Vineyard Silk

## SPECIALTY THREAD

Each thread in this group has unique characteristics that make them niche threads. Either by their fiber content or dyeing methods, they stand out in the crowd as something that you just don't see every day.

**Linen thread**—This is made from the fibers inside the stalks of the flax plant. The thread is matte in appearance and has a somewhat compressed look as opposed to a visible twist.

**Nylon thread**—This is made from 100 percent nylon, which is a plastic-based material. The thread is incredibly strong and has a fantastic shine.

**Cotton/rayon blend thread**—Blending the fiber contents of thread allows the strength of each one to shine through. Adding rayon to cotton gives the thread incredible softness. The high shine of the rayon coupled with the cotton creates an almost sparkle effect.

**Rayon thread**—This thread is made from purified cellulose fibers such as wood pulp. The fiber is chemically treated, which makes it a semisynthetic fiber, meaning it starts out as an organic compound but undergoes a chemical reaction during processing. The result is incredibly shiny thread. It's very strong and is especially useful for dimensional embroidery.

**Wool/silk blend thread**—The combination of these two fibers results in a full, soft thread. The silk lends strength and shine to the wool. The wool maintains some of its original texture, giving it a distinct, fluffy appearance.

**Metallic thread**—These threads are often made up of several layers of different fibers. The outer layer bears the metallic thread. It can be coarse, which makes it harder to stitch with, but the depth and shine are incredible.

**Novelty yarns**—These yarns include anything out of the ordinary. They have high texture and are mixes of several different fibers. They are not meant to be threaded through a needle and stitched with. Instead, they can be laid on top of your project and secured with stitches of a different embroidery thread. This process is called couching.

**Persimmon-dyed thread**—This is a naturally dyed thread. The color comes from the persimmon fruit. After the thread is dyed, it is exposed to air and sunlight to create the rich color.

**Sashiko thread**—This thread is specifically made for the Japanese stitching art of *sashiko*. It is a simple, decorative form of embroidery that has its roots in mending. The thread used for this is tightly twisted cotton in a thicker weight. It has a matte appearance and its weight adds bold marks to your project.



*Top row, left to right: Linen thread, Wonder twist nylon thread, Needle Necessities Spring II cotton/rayon blend*  
*Bottom row, left to right: Lola rayon thread, silk and ivory silk/wool blend, DMC metallic*



*Top row, left to right: Various novelty yarns perfect for couching embroidery*  
*Bottom row, left to right: Novelty yarn for couching, Fujix Kakishibu persimmon-dyed sashiko thread, Olympus sashiko thread*

## Thread Storage Options

Collecting different kinds of threads can quickly become a tangled mess if you don't adopt some form of organization. Depending on your level of neatness needs, here are a few options to consider.

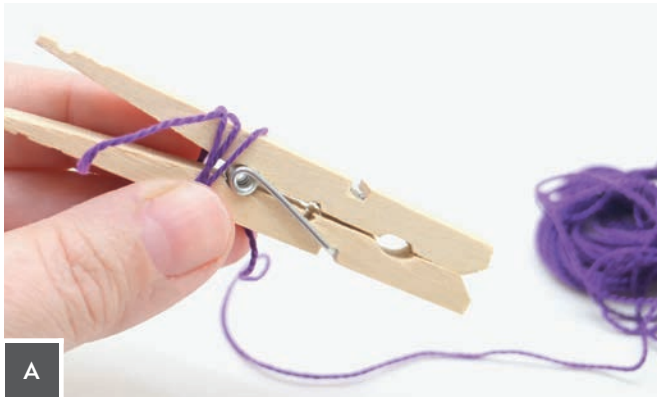
- **Thread boxes and paper bobbins.** These can be easily found in craft stores and are nice because everything is lined up in an orderly fashion. The paper bobbins that you wind the thread onto lend an extra opportunity for organization because you can write thread information on them, such as brand and color codes.
- **Glass jar.** If you are more free spirited and just want to make sure that your threads aren't roaming randomly about the house, a glass jar or little vase is a nice option. You can just wind them into little balls and toss them in there. Plus, it's fun to look at.
- **Clothespin board.** I am the kind of artist who needs to have my supplies in front of me or I tend to forget about them. But that leaves me with the dilemma of things getting extremely cluttered. My threads are no exception.

In response to not wanting my house to look like it belongs on the TV show *Hoarders*, I turned my supplies into a sort of art installation all its own. Here's how you can make one, too!

## SUPPLIES

- Embroidery thread
  - Wood clothespins
  - Craft magnets (the self-adhesive rectangular kind wound in a coil so that you can snip pieces to the size you want)
  - Magnetic board
1. Begin wrapping your thread around the clothespin behind the spring (A).
  2. Wrap the thread along the clothespin to just before the notch near the end that opens. Be careful to wrap the thread securely but not tightly. You should still be able to open the clothespin (B).
  3. Continue wrapping back and forth along the pin, keeping the thread thickness even. If you wrap too much thread on the pin, it won't lie flat on the board and the magnet won't be able to hold it (C).
  4. Cut a small piece of craft magnet and stick it to the upper back portion of the pin. Arrange them on the magnetic board (D).





## Tips and Tricks for Working with Thread

I wish I could say that thread will always behave when you work with it, but I'd be lying to you if I did. It has its quirks. Below are some of the more common ones and how to navigate your way through them.

### MY THREADS ARE FRAYING!

There are two possible culprits for this problem—the needle you are using is too small or the length of your thread is too long. If the needle is too small, it won't create a hole in the fabric that the thread can pass through easily. If you have to struggle to pull the thread and needle through the fabric, try a larger needle.

Keeping your threads at a shorter length also helps reduce the chance of fraying. This is because the thread passes through the fabric layers a fewer number of times so it's not exposed to more friction than necessary. I recommend a length no longer than 18 inches (45 cm).

### MY THREADS KEEP TANGLING!

If you're not using an overly long length of thread and are still having trouble with the thread curling back on itself or getting tangled easily, consider using a thread conditioner. Thread conditioner is wax that coats the thread, making it easier to stitch with. Simply lay the thread you want to use on the wax, lightly press your finger over the top of the thread, and pull the thread so the entire length is coated.

### IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SEPARATE STRANDED FLOSS!

Six-stranded floss can have an attitude when it comes to trying to pull one or two strands out. Cut the thread to no more than 18 inches (45 cm). Hold the thread lightly between your forefinger and thumb and pull *one* strand from the bunch.

The thread behind your fingers will quickly bunch up into a pile but continue to gently pull until the single strand is free. The rest of the thread will straighten out once it's free. Continue to pull single strands in the same way until you've removed the quantity you want to stitch with.

## I'M WORRIED MY THREADS WILL BLEED COLOR WHEN I WASH MY PROJECT!

Although thread companies and hand dyers do their best to make sure that a thread is colorfast, it's not always a guarantee. *Colorfast* means that the thread will not release any dye when it gets wet. If you are planning to wash a project, it's always a good idea to test if the thread will bleed before you begin stitching your project.

Dampen your thread and place it on white fabric or a paper towel.

Fold the fabric over and press firmly. If you see any color marks on the fabric after you're done, the thread is bleeding excess dye and can cause you grief in the future.

So what do you do? Is it possible to stop the thread from bleeding? Some particular colors are difficult to set no matter how hard you try. (I'm looking at *you*, Red.) Part of the reason is that to make some colors brilliant and bright you simply need more dye to make it happen.

If you have your heart set on using a particular thread that doesn't pass the bleed test, you can soak the thread in warm water and rinse until it no longer bleeds.

However, a word of caution. Washing the thread repeatedly to reduce bleeding means that you are removing dye. This will cause the color to fade and, depending on the fiber, could stress it and degrade its appearance.

A quick internet search will find advice on soaking thread in vinegar or other solutions said to "set" the color. I don't find this to be true at all. Dyes need to be set (meaning permanently fixed) to the thread during the dyeing process itself. Attempting to do so afterward is likely to damage the integrity of the thread, and I don't recommend it.



## Pro Tip

### MARY BYBERG

I am a huge fan of thread conditioner! Conditioning your thread helps avoid knots, and no matter how organized or diligent you are in planning and stitching, there will be knots or tangles. Conditioner also helps thread go through fabric like magic.

I usually use no longer than 18 inches (45 cm) of thread at a time. Just lightly drag it through your choice of conditioner and thread your needle.

I do tend to not use it on fabric with body or texture, such as faux fur, tinsel effects, and wool. The conditioner can weight those down and flatten them, causing the look of the intended fibers to be altered.

Blog: [www.cottageatturtlecreek.blogspot.com](http://www.cottageatturtlecreek.blogspot.com)



# EMBROIDERY HOOP 101

## What Is an Embroidery Hoop?

An embroidery hoop is a frame used to keep fabric taut during hand embroidery. It does this by creating tension on the fabric so it remains smooth and stable as you stitch.

Hoops can be round or oval and come in many materials, such as wood, metal, and plastic. We are going to learn how to use a round wood hoop because they are easily found at craft stores.

## How to Use an Embroidery Hoop

Using a hoop is fairly straightforward, but there are some things to keep in mind.

An embroidery hoop consists of an inner and an outer hoop that can be made larger or smaller in diameter. The hoop is adjusted via a screw attached to the outside of the outer hoop. When the screw is adjusted, the gap between the two hoops changes to accommodate the fabric being assembled into it.

How much you adjust that gap is the key to avoiding fabric distortion. Fabric distortion can create puckering and uneven stitches.

### OUTER HOOP TOO LOOSE DURING FABRIC ASSEMBLY

If the outer hoop is too loose when assembling the fabric, there will be no tension on the stitching surface. This means that in order to make the fabric lie flat, you will need to tighten down the screw on the outer hoop and tug on the fabric to make it taut. This is the easiest way to create permanent distortion on your fabric.

### OUTER HOOP TOO TIGHT DURING FABRIC ASSEMBLY



On the opposite end of the spectrum, if the outer hoop is too tight, it too can create permanent fabric distortion. This will happen when you press the two hoop pieces together—the outer hoop will “drag” the fabric against the inner hoop.

So how in the heck do we use this thing? Well, it’s kind of like Goldilocks and her bed—you have to find the “just right” amount of looseness of the outer hoop.





Here are some handy steps to creating the right amount of tension on the fabric with the hoop:

1. Using just the two pieces of the hoop, tighten the outer hoop until it just touches the inner hoop. You should still be able to easily remove the inner hoop, but it shouldn't freely fall out if you pick up the hoops as a unit (A).
2. Separate the two pieces and lay the inner hoop flat on a table.
3. Lay your fabric on top of the inner hoop (B).
4. Lay the outer hoop over the top of the fabric and press into place (C).



**TIP: If you are working with thicker fabric, you will need to loosen the screw a bit more. Practice assembly on a scrap piece of fabric so that you don't damage the piece you are using for your project.**



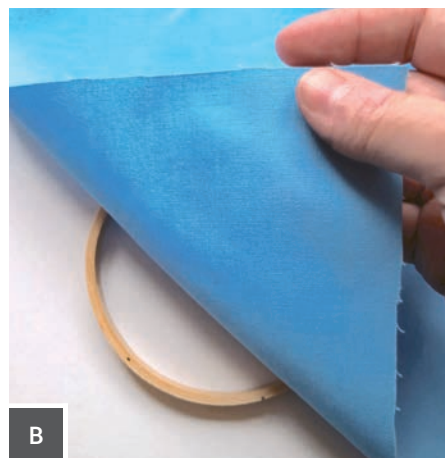
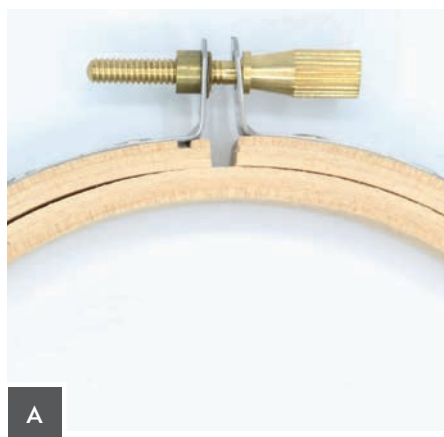
**TIP: As you add stitching to your project and relocate your hoop to different sections, you will also need to adjust the looseness of the outer hoop to avoid squashing the stitches.**

Even if you use the preceding steps, fabric distortion can still occur. There are two simple things you can do to help further decrease the odds of this happening.

The first trick is to wrap the inner hoop with bias tape used for quilt binding. You can also use scrap fabric strips, twill tape, or any other fabric you have that will lie flat. Bias tape is cut on the bias of the fabric so it has some stretch to it, and that helps wrap it tightly against the wood.

The reason I like to use bias tape is because you can purchase it very inexpensively at the craft store in many widths and colors. I use the ¼-inch (6 mm) single-fold tape. I tend to use smaller hoops and find that this size is easier to wrap around the wood. If you're using a larger hoop, try wider tape.

The goal of the wrapping is to create a lightly padded buffer between your project and the hoop.



## Wrapping Your Embroidery Hoop

1. You can wrap both the outer and the inner hoop, but usually just wrapping the inner hoop is sufficient. Separate the two pieces and set the outer hoop aside.

Begin by holding the tape on the inside of the hoop. This may be the lumpy spot on the wrapping, so placing it on the inside of the hoop will avoid creating an odd tight spot between the inner hoop and the outer hoop (A).

2. Wrap the tape around the entire hoop. Be sure to pull it snug; the goal is to avoid any big lumps. Applying tension close to the hoop helps control how it lies on the circle (B).
3. Once you've wrapped the entire hoop, stitch the bias tape into place so it doesn't unravel (C).



**TIP: If you choose to wrap your hoop, you'll need to reevaluate the looseness of the outer hoop because there is now more thickness. Follow the steps in the section on how to assemble the hoop and make any needed adjustments.**

The second trick you can use to avoid distorting the fabric and stitches of your project is to *never* leave the hoop attached to your project when you aren't working on it. You've seen those projects that have a permanent circle indentation around the stitching. This is likely from leaving the hoop assembled on the project for several days, even weeks. So when you are done stitching, remove the hoop and reassemble it at your next work session.

## How Big Should the Fabric Be Compared to the Hoop?

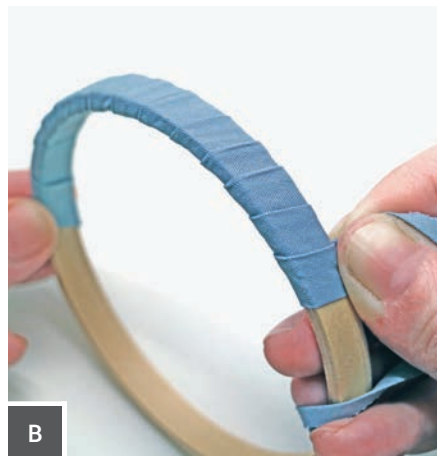
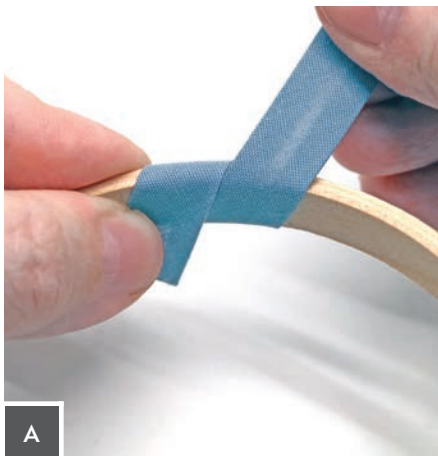
I like to leave a generous amount of fabric around the edges of the hoop: 2 to 4 inches (5 to 10 cm) larger than the hoop diameter is a good rule of thumb. For example, if you are using an 8-inch (20 cm) hoop, your fabric square should measure between 10 and 12 inches (25 to 30 cm).

I'm in the extra 4-inch (10 cm) camp. Why? Because I like to use the extra fabric as an assistant. When I first began working with a hoop, I found that I had trouble keeping the project clean. Constant handling and touching (even when you've washed your hands) can lead to unwanted smudge marks, especially if the project takes a long time to stitch. By leaving such a generous amount of extra fabric around my project once it's in the hoop, I can simply fold the fabric over the place I want to hold and it keeps dirt exposure to a minimum.

In between work sessions, place your project inside a zippered bag if it's small enough to fit. If it's a larger project, use a clear trash bag to store it so it will be safe from any spills.

## Moving the Screw to a Certain Side to Avoid Catching Your Embroidery Thread on It

It is extremely easy to catch your thread on the hoop-assembly screw while you work. There's actually an easy way to help prevent that from happening. If you are right-handed, move the assembly screw to the left side so the thread is always on the right side; for left-handed stitchers, position the assembly screw to the right side to get it out of the way of your working hand.



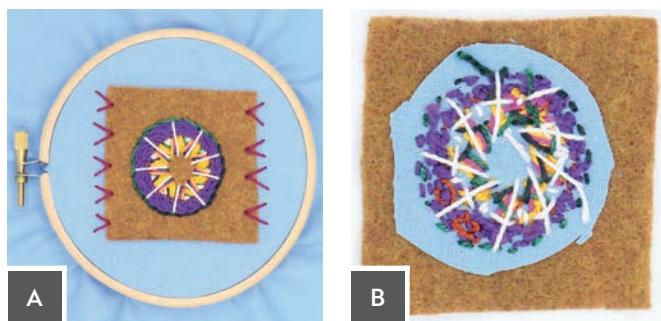
## Using “Fake” Fabric for a Small Project

If you are working on an extra-small project that doesn't fit in a hoop but still want the support of it, you can use “fake” fabric so it can be placed in a hoop.

For example, in the photo below, I'm making small stitched pieces to assemble into a collage later on. I can add it to a “fake” fabric in order to stabilize it in the hoop.

Assemble a cheaper fabric into the hoop which, in this case, is the blue fabric. Place the project fabric in the center of the hoop and baste it to the background fabric (A).

Stitch your motif and remove the fabric from the hoop when you're done. Remove the basting stitches from the project fabric and carefully cut away the background fabric to only what needs to be there (B).



## Fabrics to Avoid with Embroidery Hoops

In my experience, the only kinds of fabrics I've had limited success using in an embroidery hoop are ones that stretch easily. You can add stabilizer to delicate or stretch fabrics, but I personally don't care for the hassle of trying to make them behave. Additionally, very heavy fabrics such as denim or canvas can be harder to put into a hoop, mainly because they like to pucker when taking on a circle form.

## Pro Tip

### JOANNE SHARPE

Hand stitching, for me, is a mindful art form that provides a respite from stress and daily busyness. Most of my stitching pieces are colorful, textured expressions of random marks using traditional stitching techniques. I choose various weights of perle cotton like #3, #5, and #8, as well as some six-strand embroidery floss. A simple idea is to work in a small 5- or 6-inch (12.5 or 15 cm) hoop with cotton or linen fabric and a variety of threads. This smaller size is quite manageable and is easy to actually finish! I do not follow any written patterns or designs when I stitch in a hoop; rather, I let the threads guide me using assorted stitches like a running stitch, French knots, backstitch, chain stitch, and blanket stitch. I combine these into an embroidered stitch collage that becomes the focal image for wall art that can be displayed right in the hoop.



# NEEDLES

Hand-stitching needles come in a wide variety of shapes and lengths. Each one has basic components that are shaped differently, depending on what type of stitching they are intended for.

The **eye** of the needle is the opening at the top of the needle where the thread is passed through.

The **shank** of the needle is the smooth, uninterrupted surface of the needle between the eye and the point.

The **point** of the needle is at the opposite end of the eye and is what pierces the fabric as you stitch.

## Types of Needles

Choosing the right needle for your project depends largely on what kind of thread you are using. If the needle is too small for the thread, you will have a difficult time pulling it through the layers of fabric. Not only will this hurt your hands over time, but it will also stress the thread and cause it to fray. If the needle is larger than it needs to be for the thread being used, it will create a visible hole in the fabric—the thread will not be able to fill in the gap.



*From left to right: Chenille needle, tapestry needle, milliner needle, darning needle, embroidery needle*

Below are some common needles and the threads that they can be used for. Note that in the world of needles, the smaller the number, the thicker the shank and the longer the needle is.

**Chenille**—The characteristics that set this needle apart are a large eye and a very sharp point. They range in size from 13 to 24, with the most commonly available sizes 18, 20, 22, and 24. The large eye allows them to accommodate thicker threads and multiple strands of floss.

**Tapestry**—These needles are very similar to chenille needles in that they have large eyes but the point is blunt. This makes this type of needle very useful for needle weaving or other types of stitches that require passing the thread beneath existing stitches instead of through the fabric.

These needles come in both metal and plastic. The plastic ones are better for yarn projects instead of textile projects because they are much larger.

**Milliner**—Traditionally used in millinery work, these needles are very useful for decorative stitching. The eye is identical in size to that of sharps, or general hand-sewing needles, but the length of a milliner's shank is considerably longer.

**Darners**—These needles are a favorite of mine for hand stitching. They are designed for what they are named after—mending—but I use them for general embroidery, as well. Their eyes are longer than sharps and milliners but not as big as chenilles, so they will only accommodate thread to a certain size. Their length is quite long, which makes them much more comfortable to hold during long stitching sessions.

**Embroidery**—These needles are designed specifically for embroidery. They will work with stranded cotton but not for thicker threads like perle cotton. Their eyes are longer than sharps but their lengths and shank diameters are very similar to sharps.

**Easy threading needle**—For stitchers who find it difficult to thread a needle, there is help. Easy threading needles have a split in the needle above the eye. This allows the thread to be passed through that opening into the eye rather than threading the end through the hole.

## Needle Accessories

With so many needles available to do specific jobs, you will quickly find yourself needing a way to store them, not only to avoid losing them but also for safety. No one enjoys stepping on a needle that's been dropped on the floor. There are some very effective—and cute—ways to accomplish this.

**Needle book**—These little books are often handmade and contain fabric or felt pages that needles can easily be attached to. They are a fun way to incorporate your own personality and style into your stitching tools.

**Pincushion**—These come in all shapes and sizes, and the variety over the ages is incredibly impressive. They are stuffed shapes that allow you to poke pins and needles into it to keep them easily at hand.

**Storage tubes**—Needles can also be housed in small tubes. These robust containers protect them from bending and spilling.

**Magnetic pincushion**—This is the ultimate needle catcher. It mimics the shape of a regular pincushion but is magnetic, so even if you accidentally knock it off your sewing table, the pins and needles stay in place.

## *Pro Tip*

### JACKIE LAMS

As my love for hand embroidery has grown, so has my family. Keeping a basket next to the couch with tons of lovely thread options, numerous needles, and sharp little scissors has never been a safe option for the kids (or the threads).

Before I start any needlework project, I pull out a small video-game carrying case that I have repurposed as a little sewing kit and load it up with a handful of coordinating threads. I also keep a few needles and a small pair of scissors tucked in there as well.

When I find a moment to sit down and hand stitch my current project, I have everything I need ready to work. I also don't need to spend extra time picking thread colors because I've already narrowed down my options. I find that I can keep a project moving along smoothly without having to go back into my main thread stash.

Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/StudioLams](http://www.facebook.com/StudioLams)



# FABRIC FOR HAND STITCHING

The fabric you use for your hand stitching is not only the foundation for your work; it will also help drive the choices you make regarding what type of thread you will use and what style of design you want to create.

## Types of Fabric

While technically any kind of fabric can be used, I have found that several have become my go-to types. All of the fabrics listed below also come in blends. Because that would make this list infinitely long, I'm describing them as pure only—meaning 100 percent cotton, wool, linen, etc.

**Cotton**—Cotton fabric comes in many different weights, from superheavy canvas to lightweight cheesecloth. This range allows you to use thicker thread such as perle #3 down to sewing-weight thread. Some of the lighter weight cottons may require a stabilizer behind them to make them easier to stitch.

**Wool**—This fabric is fascinating because its content depends entirely on the type of sheep it comes from. It can be coarse or soft and can also be manufactured in various thicknesses. One of the things I like about wool is the way the stitches sink into it. They look more integrated (and cozy) with this often squishy fabric.

**Linen**—Linen has much more drape than cotton or wool does. Like the previous two fabrics described, it comes in various weights. It has a reputation for wrinkling, especially in a 100 percent content, but its natural look and earthiness have an allure that can't be beat.

**Silk**—Of the four fabrics described here, silk has the most drape. Some silks, such as habotai and charmeuse, are very smooth and have a beautiful sheen. They are also very lightweight and may work best when combined in a project with other fabrics to help stabilize it. Raw silk is absolutely fascinating to work with. It too has a lot of drape, but its texture is grittier. It has the feel of rough cotton with the drape of silk.

## Fabric Stabilizers

If you really want to work with fabric that has sheerness to it or a lot of drape, all hope is not lost. You have many options for stabilizing it to help make your stitching easier. In fact, these stabilization methods can be used with all kinds of fabric. Think of them like having an extra set of hands helping you while you work.

**Embroidery hoop**—These nifty little contraptions have been covered extensively in the “Embroidery Hoop 101” section. To summarize, they consist of two round pieces of wood that sandwich the stitching project between them. They hold the work taut and smooth.

**Lap stand**—This type of support allows you to freely use both hands to stitch instead of using one to hold a hoop or the work in progress. It can be placed on top of your lap or may have an extension that rests under your legs for stability.

**Stretcher frame**—These frames are matched to the size of the project. The fabric is tacked down directly onto the frame to provide tension. This also allows you to use both hands for stitching.

**Fusible interfacing**—Interfacing is used on the back of fabric (where it won't be seen) to make fabric stiffer. Fusible interfacing acts like a glue, allowing you to stick two pieces of fabric together without the fuss of pins. This is often my preferred method of stabilization.

# ESSENTIAL TOOLBOX

We all find our favorite tools the longer we work in a particular art form, but there are some basics that you simply can't do without. I keep these essentials in a craft box from the 1970s I found online. (I have a thing for burnt orange.) Here's what I keep inside it:

**Embroidery scissors**—Embroidery scissors have fine tips that allow you to cut threads close to the fabric. There is far less chance of accidentally cutting a hole in the fabric with these small scissors.

**Seam ripper**—While commonly used with machine stitching, a seam ripper can also be useful in hand stitching. The sharp blade can help you cut through damaged stitches without disturbing neighboring stitches.

**Thread ends catcher**—You will quickly start accumulating little pieces of thread from your work session. I keep a snack-size plastic zip baggie in my toolbox to put these in. It's a mini trash holder to keep work sessions tidy.

**Beeswax** (not shown)—Some threads do not have any kind of coating. In these cases, they can show wear from stitching much quicker. To minimize this, you can slide the thread over beeswax prior to stitching and it will condition it to easily pass through the layers of fabric.

**Quilting pins**—Quilting pins are longer than regular sewing pins, making them easier to use.

**Clips**—Mini spring-loaded clips are also used by quilters to hold binding in place while it's being sewn down to the quilt. They are very useful in holding layers of a project together instead of fusing or using straight pins.

**Pincushion**—This can be a decorative pincushion or something as simple as a piece of thick fabric. The goal is to keep the pins and needles from sliding around your toolbox and landing on the carpet.

**Marking pencil**—I always keep one in my toolbox to re-mark patterns or add new details as the project evolves.

**Needle threader**—These always come in handy during long work sessions.

**Thread**—No such thing as too many threads!

**Fabric glue stick**—This comes in handy for tacking down stray fabric or thread as you work.



## PATTERN TRANSFER TOOLS

When you have a design that is perfect on paper, you have to find a way to transfer it to the fabric for stitching. There are several ways to make that happen.

Always test the transfer tool you choose on a piece of scrap fabric. You want to be sure that you can remove any unnecessary marks when you are done stitching.

**Chalk**—This is often referred to as tailor's chalk. It is hardened chalk or soapstone that when rubbed on fabric leaves temporary marks. It is more suitable for guides than it is for fine detail work.

**Carbon transfer paper**—This very lightweight paper is coated on one side with wax or ink formulated for fabric. It is laid over the top of the fabric and then a blunt tool such as a stylus is drawn on the paper to create a temporary image on the fabric.

**Water-soluble marking pen**—Markers are a good choice on larger projects. The marks won't come out until they are washed out, so they can withstand handling. Oftentimes, chalk-based marking tools will fade significantly as you touch the lines during stitching.

**Water-soluble stabilizer**—This transfer tool resembles plastic wrap. It is a thin, clear material that you draw your design directly onto with a marker. Pin it to your project and stitch through the stabilizer and fabric as a single piece. Once you are done with the design, submerge the entire thing in water and the stabilizer dissolves, leaving you with your stitched design.

**Marking pencil**—Marking pencils are much like the chalk and carbon transfer paper. They often come in blue for lighter fabrics and white for darker fabrics.

### *Pro Tip*

#### CATHERINE REDFORD

I like to work my embroidery designs on colored backgrounds. A saturated color shows off my hand stitching to its best advantage and allows me to travel between stitches quickly and easily. This presents an issue when it comes to transferring my images.

I use an LED light box with a dimmable light source for the easiest and best results. Simply layer your design and fabric and trace away. Don't worry about being exact in your tracing. It's an art piece, not a science project.

I use a permanent pen for the most important lines and a mechanical chalk pencil to fill in as I stitch. Remember: any lines in permanent ink do need to be covered with stitching!

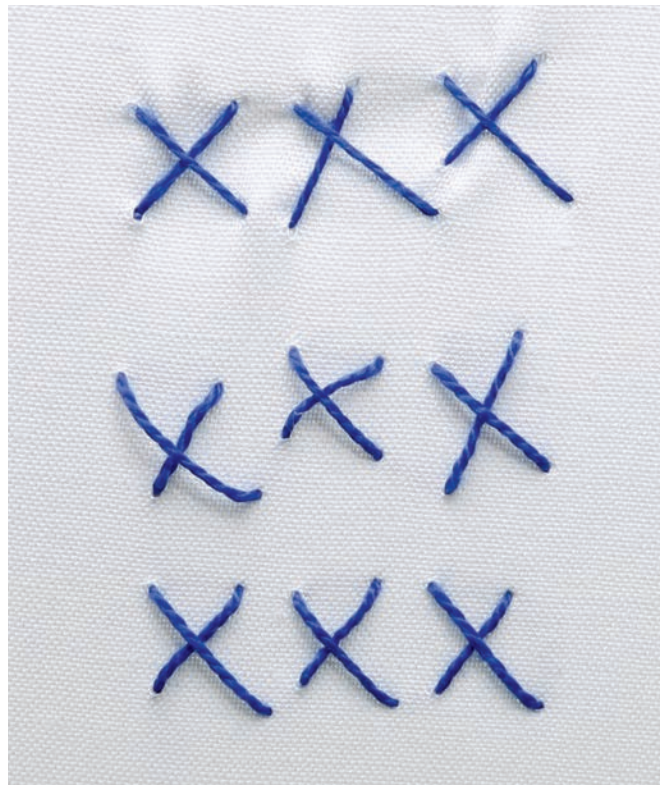
Website: [www.catherineredford.com](http://www.catherineredford.com)



## LET'S TALK TENSION

One of the trickiest skills for a hand stitcher to master is tension. This refers to how tightly you are pulling the thread while you stitch. Pull too hard and the fabric will pucker. If you don't pull enough, the thread will be loose and sloppy, ruining the look of your stitches.

The best way to learn good tension is practice, practice, and practice some more. Choose one of the stitch patterns from the projects in this book and stitch on it every day for ten days straight. Work slowly and take notice when your tension looks off. Then adjust how you work to become more consistent. You will see a marked improvement in your work by the end of that time.



*From top to bottom: Tight tension, loose tension, proper tension*



*The way I taught myself to control my stitching tension is by stitching on a piece of cotton fabric with sewing machine-weight thread and no stabilizer for the fabric. Sounds kind of weird, but you learn quickly how to stitch with the right tension.*



*From left to right: Tight tension, loose tension, proper tension*

# TROUBLESHOOTING

## Starting and Ending Thread

There are a few different way to start and end thread.

**Regular knot (starting thread)**—Many stitchers will argue that a regular knot should never be used in a stitching project. This is true for working on canvas or for projects in which any kind of bulk would detract from the finished project. However, this is the knot I use the most and have never had an issue with it coming loose or causing lumps. If your projects are like mine and tend to have several layers, then this type of knot is perfectly fine to use.

**Waste knot (starting thread)**—This is a temporary knot that is cut off when you are done stitching. Tie a regular knot and stitch so it is on the surface of your project instead of the back. Begin stitching 2 to 3 inches (5 to 7.5 cm) away from the knot, allowing the stitching of the project to overlap the tail on the back. Once the stitching is complete and you've covered the tail of the waste knot with several stitches, cut the knot on the front.

**Weaving (ending thread)**—When you have finished stitching, the easiest way to secure your thread to the back of the project is by weaving the thread under existing stitches.

**Tack stitch (ending thread)**—If your project has a couple of layers, you can also end your thread by taking a small tack stitch through the back layer. Just take care to not stitch through the front layer.

## Easy Ways to Thread a Needle

Threading a needle can sometimes present a challenge. There are tools and tricks to help you with this fussy task.

**Needle threader**—You can purchase a needle threader to assist with this task. It can be a thin piece of metal or a plastic loop. Insert the tool into the eye of the needle, hook the thread to it, and pull both through the needle eye.

**Looped thread**—Fold the end of the thread in half to form a loop. Pinch the loop between your thumb and forefinger and pass it through the eye of the needle.

Here are some other tips:

- If the end of your thread is frayed, snip a little bit off to create a clean cut. This makes it far easier to thread.
- If you find the ends of the thread separating while you try to thread it into the needle, get the thread slightly damp, pinch it between your fingers to flatten it a bit, and then pass it through the eye of the needle.
- Always use a needle appropriate to the size of the thread. If you are finding that the thread simply won't go through or it starts to bunch up when you try to pull it through, the eye of your needle is too small. This means the needle itself is the wrong size and you need to choose a different one.

## How to Iron Fabric without Flattening Your Stitching

No matter how careful you are while hand stitching, you will have wrinkles and creases to iron out when your project is finished. It can be a daunting task—taking an iron to a piece of work you've spent hours toiling over. But it's important to give your project its best finished appearance, and ironing helps you achieve that. Here are some dos and don'ts for ironing a finished hand-stitched project.

**DON'T** let the iron touch the stitches. It will instantly flatten them and ruin the dimension of your work.

**DO** iron your work from the back. Place a thick towel on your ironing surface and place your work face down on it. This provides extra padding for the stitches.

**DON'T** move the iron back and forth as if you are ironing a shirt. Lightly press an area, lift the iron, and move it to another section to press again.

**DO** be conscious of the fiber content of your thread and fabric. Set your iron to the appropriate heat setting to match.

## Pro Tip

### ALLISON ALLER

I love adding texture and detail to my quilts with embroidery, and I've experimented to combine machine and hand stitching. To keep the project cohesive, I use the same kind of thread in the machine as I do when I stitch by hand.

Use only the simple stitches on your machine to create the first set of stitching on your project. Then go back and add in your hand stitching. They complement each other well and allow even the most dedicated machine stitcher the opportunity to let their hand work shine.

Hand stitching allows you to combine multiple stitches and add tiny details here and there across your project to create pattern and color. The hand stitches I added to my piece include lazy daisy, fly stitch, straight stitch, French knot, chain stitch, and herringbone stitch.

Blog: [www.alliesinstitches.blogspot.com](http://www.alliesinstitches.blogspot.com)



## STITCHER SELF-CARE

Hand stitching can take its toll on your body. And not just your hands—your eyes and back could use some TLC as well. Here are some tips to help keep you in your best stitching shape.

**Lighting**—Lighting is one of those things that you simply can't skimp on when you are stitching. Not only does poor lighting have the potential to cause stitching mistakes but it also strains your eyesight, which can cause headaches.

Natural sunlight is an excellent lighting source. There are also daylight lamps specifically for crafting that simulate natural light; so no matter what time of the day it is, you can be sure to see easily.

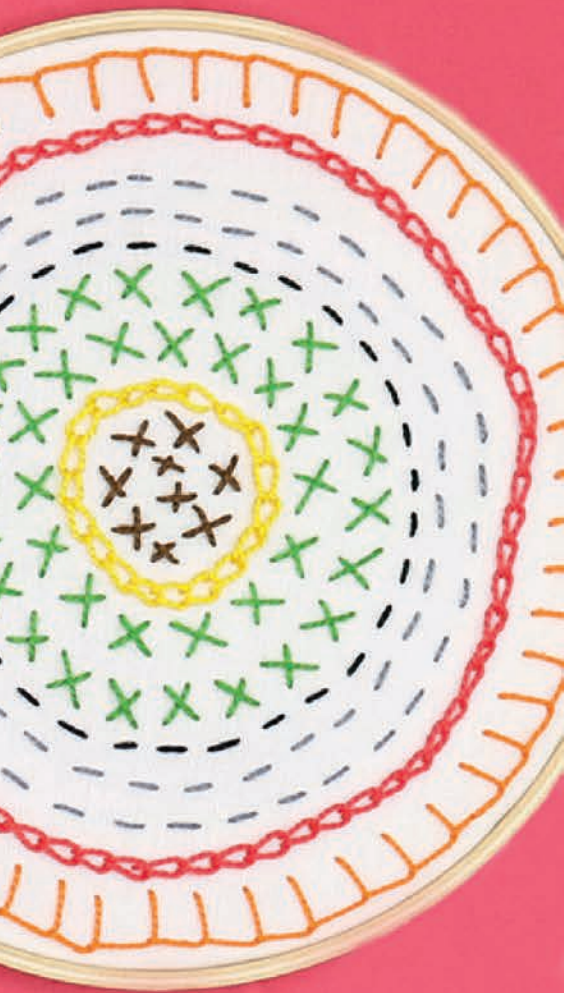
**Magnifying lens**—If you find yourself squinting while you work (and you have good lighting), consider using a magnifying glass. This can help you read the patterns and instructions for projects. It can also help enlarge your project for tiny detail work.

**Wrist supports**—I admit that my wrists need a little extra love when I stitch for more than 20 minutes at a time. They start to feel sore. To combat that, I wear an athletic wrist support. It creates gentle compression and I'm able to work more comfortably.

**Thimbles**—Thimbles offer protection to your fingertips. While stitching you use your fingers to push the needle through the fabric and if you aren't wearing a thimble, the pressure on your skin could feel uncomfortable. If you find you can't tolerate how it feels, wear a thimble on the finger that you use to push the needle.

**Stretching**—Hand stitching is certainly not the Olympics, but stiff shoulders, neck, and back are pretty common. It's important to put your work down every once in a while and stretch your body. I like to take a small walk when I'm spending a day stitching. It helps clear my mind and keeps my body from tightening up.





# 2

## Utilitarian Stitches

The stitches in this chapter remind us that working with thread and needle is not all fun and games. These basic stitches are the workhorses of the embroidery world. At the same time, they serve as the jumping-off point for many of the other stitches in the following chapters.

Don't dismiss them as boring, though. With a little extra effort, we can give them a twist that allows them to sparkle while they work.

All of the stitch instructions were done in size 5 perle cotton and size 3 embroidery thread.

# RUNNING STITCH

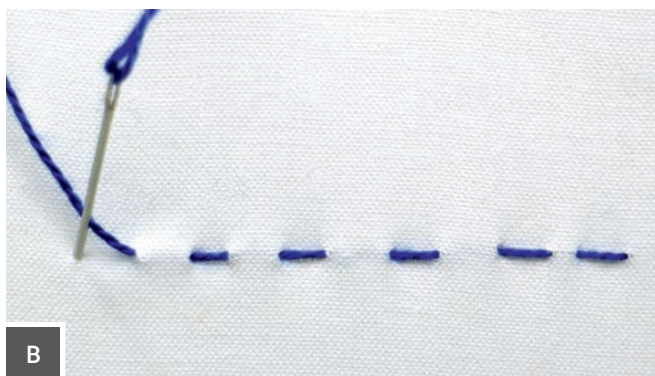
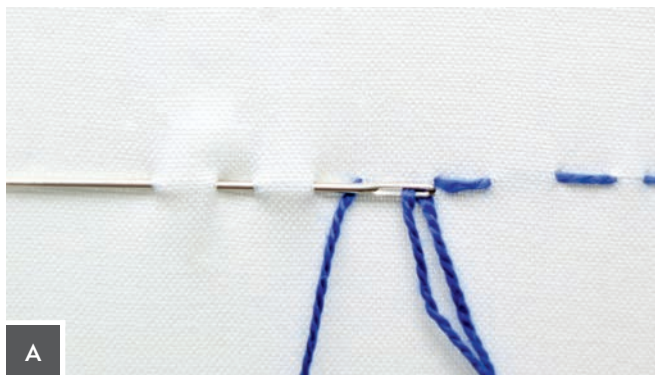
As far as utilitarian stitches go, this is one of the most widely used—and not only on its own but also in combination with other stitches. It is worked quickly by taking multiple stitches at one time. Its simplicity can be used to create a wide range of patterns.

1. Bring the needle up through the fabric. Take it down and up through the fabric so that the needle appears as shown.



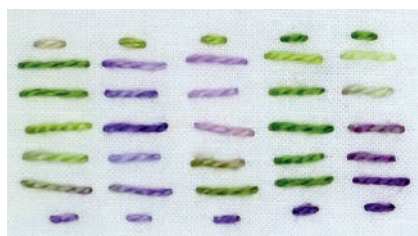
**TIP:** Take the needle up and down only as many times as is comfortable for the length of the needle you are using.

2. Pull the thread through and repeat step 1 for the desired length (A).
3. End the row of running stitch by taking the needle back down through the fabric to secure the thread (B).

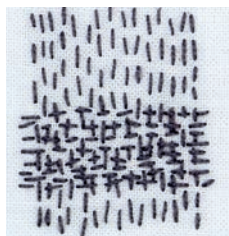


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## Running stitch variations



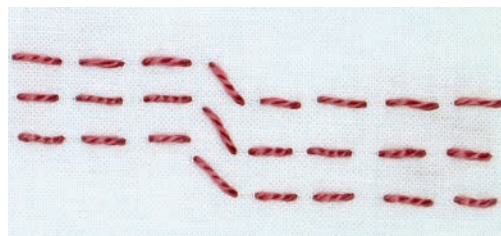
SEVERAL ROWS OF LONG RUNNING STITCH ARE FRAMED BY ROWS OF SMALL RUNNING STITCH.



THIN THREAD WORKED IN RELAXED ROWS OF RUNNING STITCH. THE HORIZONTAL ROWS CREATE A SECONDARY PATTERN RESEMBLING DARNING.



RUNNING STITCH CAN BE USED AS A LOOSE FILLER STITCH.

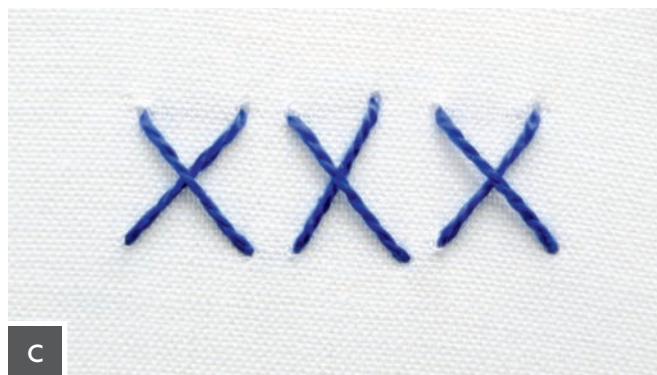
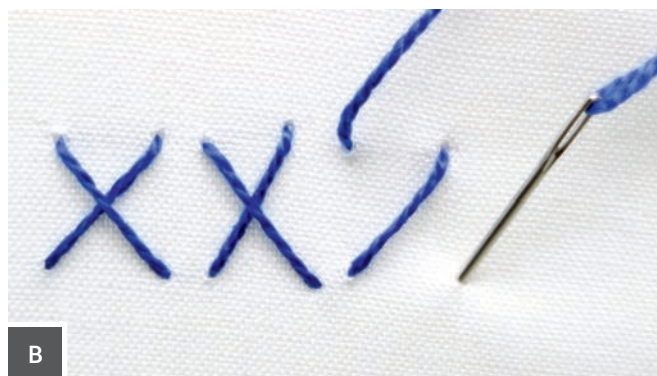
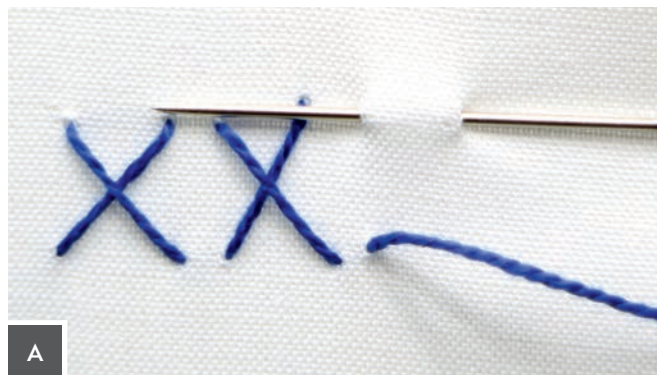


RUNNING STITCH ARRANGED IN STEPPED ROWS.

# X STITCH

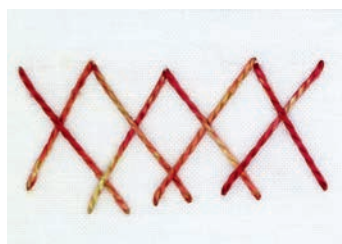
This stitch is the foundation of the ever popular cross-stitch style of handwork. It's one of the first stitches most of us learned when we began working with needle and thread. X stitch is useful for construction methods as well as doubling as decorative and filler stitches.

1. Begin by bringing the thread up through the fabric. Take the needle back down through the fabric on the upper diagonal and up through the fabric in line with where the needle originally came up, as shown (A).
2. Pull the thread flat and go back down through the fabric on the lower diagonal to the right of where you first came up in step 1. Repeat as many times as desired (B and C).

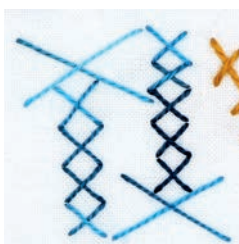


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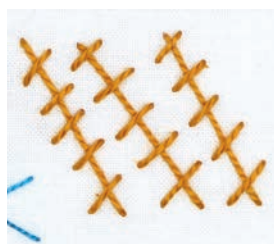
## *X stitch variations*



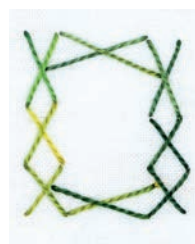
ELONGATED X STITCH WITH OVERLAP AT BOTTOM.



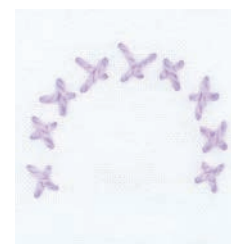
WIDE X STITCH COMBINED WITH SMALLER X STITCHES WORKED CLOSELY TOGETHER.



LONG SINGLE DIAGONAL STITCH WITH SMALLER DIAGONAL STITCHES TO CREATE A DIAGONAL ROW OF X STITCHES.



X STITCHES IN VARYING LENGTHS AND WIDTHS ARRANGED TO FORM A SHAPE.

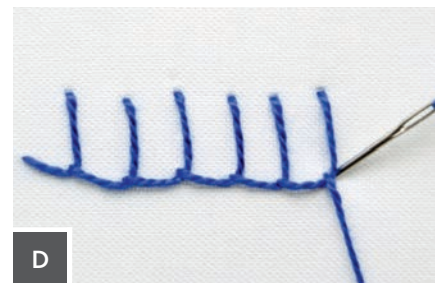
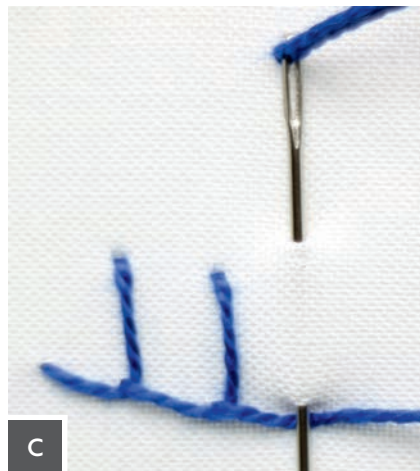
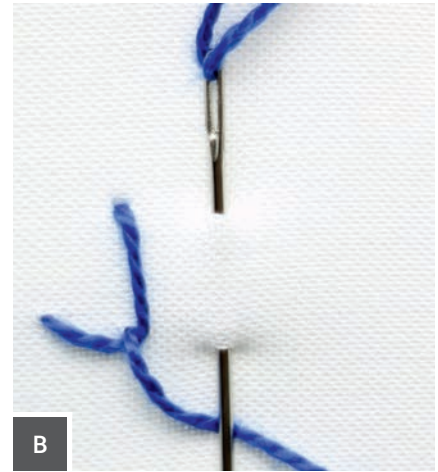
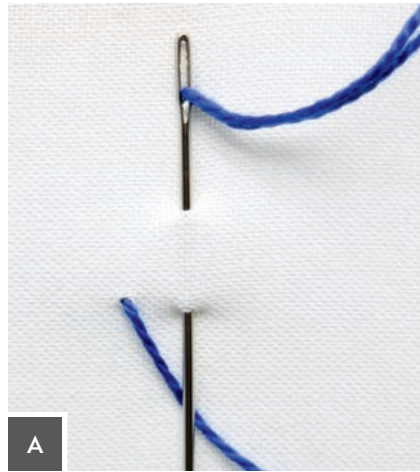


X STITCH USED AS A LOOSE OUTLINE STITCH AROUND A CURVED SHAPE.

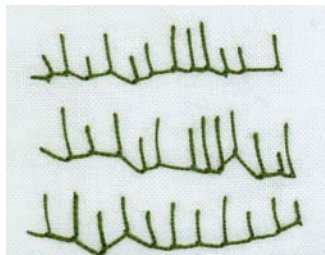
# BUTTONHOLE STITCH

Long before the advent of the sewing machine, the dense stitching placed around the hole cut for buttons in cloth was created. Aply named the button-hole stitch, its functionality is obvious. It can, however, also be used for other means in embroidery, lending it a modern twist.

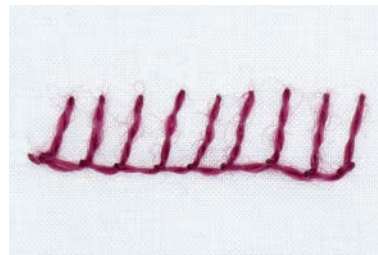
1. Bring the needle up through the fabric. Take the needle back down to the right and above where you came out and back out to the right as shown (A).
2. Pull the thread flat, forming a backward L shape. Repeat step 1 for the desired length (B and C).
3. When you've reached the end of the row, secure the last stitch by taking the thread back down through the fabric (D).



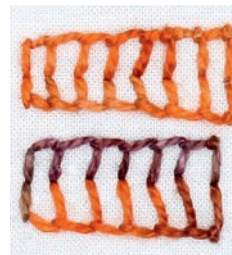
## Buttonhole stitch variations



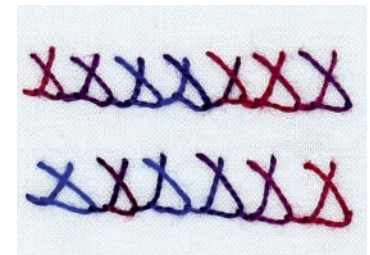
ROWS OF BUTTONHOLE STITCH ARE WORKED IN RANDOM LENGTHS AND AN UNEVEN LINE.



THE VERTICAL LEGS OF THE STITCH ARE SLANTED.



TWO ROWS OF BUTTONHOLE STITCH ARE WORKED IN A MIRROR ORIENTATION WITH THE VERTICAL BARS TOUCHING.

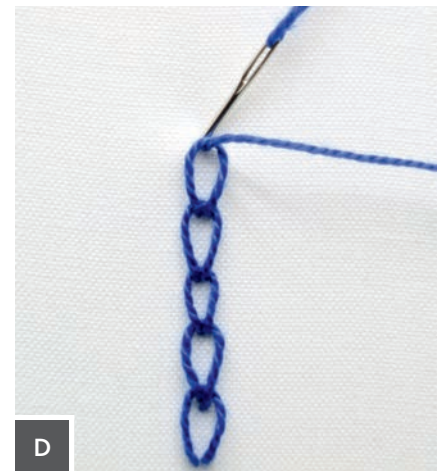
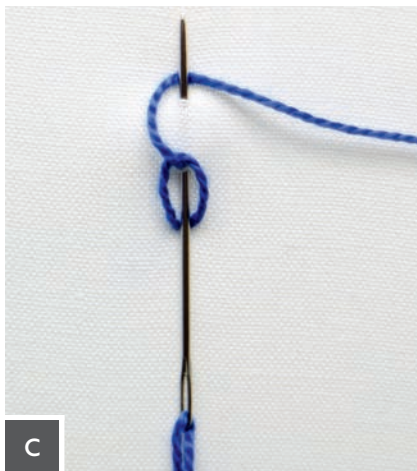
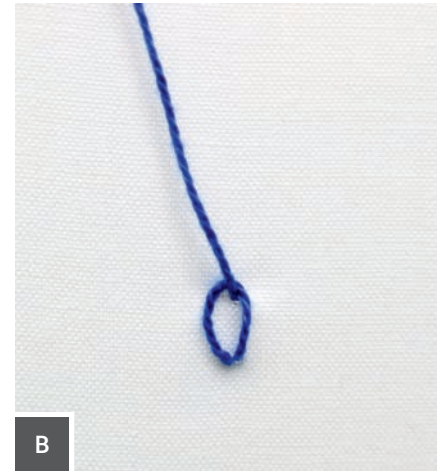
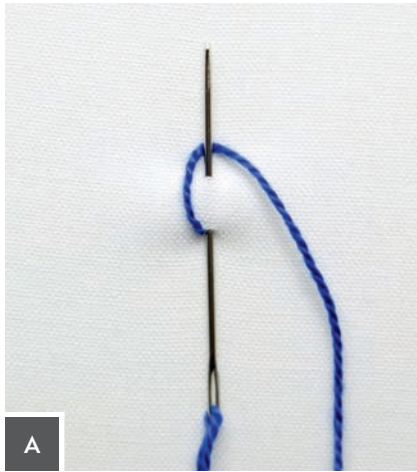


THE VERTICAL BARS ARE CROSSED TO CREATE AN X SHAPE.

# CHAIN STITCH

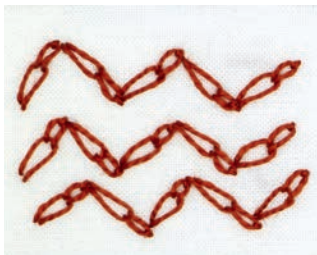
This stitch creates a neat row of anchored loops. It's firm construction means it can be utilized in needlework demanding more structure, but it also combines happily with other stitches. It is both useful and adorable.

1. Bring the thread up through the fabric. Take the needle down close to where you came up and back up a stitch length away as shown. Keep the working thread behind the needle (A).
2. Gently pull the thread through. Don't pull tightly or the loop will collapse. Be careful of your tension (B).
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 for the desired length of the chain (C).
4. When you reach the end of the row, take the thread back down through the fabric to secure the last loop (D).



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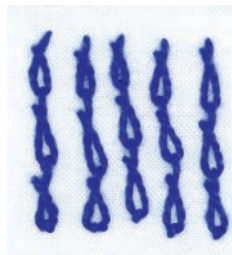
## Chain stitch variations



THE LOOP LENGTH VARIES BETWEEN LONG AND SHORT, AND EVERY TWO LOOPS CHANGES DIRECTION DIAGONALLY.



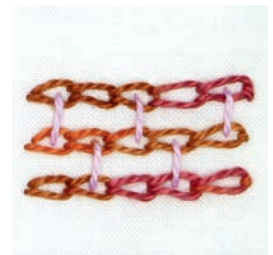
STRAIGHT STITCHES ARE ADDED TO THE OPENING OF THE LOOPS IN A CONTRASTING COLOR.



THE LEFT SIDE OF THE LOOP BASE IS STITCHED SLIGHTLY LOWER, CAUSING A TWIST EFFECT.



DETACHED CHAIN LOOPS IN RANDOM SIZES AND PLACEMENT.



STRAIGHT STITCHES CONNECT ROWS OF CHAIN STITCH.

# WHIPSTITCH

Perhaps one of the most functional stitches in this chapter, the whipstitch lives to secure the edges of fabric together. It's a stitch that you simply can't live without, but that doesn't mean you can't have a little fun with its styling.



**TIP:** I basted the three layers of felt shown in the instructions with long, straight stitches to keep them from shifting while I added the whipstitch. Whipstitch is the finishing work, when all other stitching is completed.

1. Hold the layers of fabric in your hand and pass the needle from one side of the project to the other side as shown (A).
2. Pull the thread flat (B).
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 for the length of the seam (C).



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## Whipstitch variations



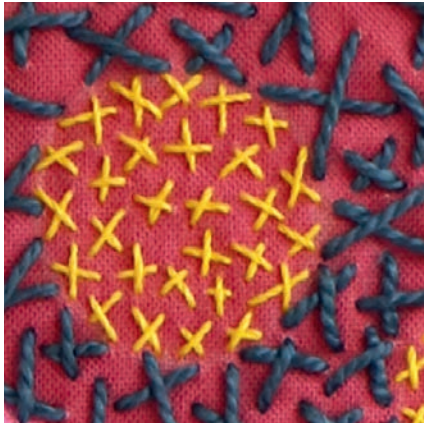
BASIC WHIPSTITCH IS WORKED ALONG THE ENTIRE SEAM. THE STITCH IS LACED WITH A CONTRASTING THREAD ON EACH SIDE.

ELONGATED X STITCH IS USED TO SECURE THE SEAM.

BASIC WHIPSTITCH IS WORKED IN RANDOM SPACING.

# CORNER BOOKMARK

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I'm a book junkie, so much so that I am often reading more than one book at a time. For many years, I simply folded the corner of a page down to hold my place for my next reading session, but over the years the creases don't feel right anymore.

This cute little bookmark simulates the folded page corner without damaging the book. Plus it makes a fun gift that work ups in a snap!

## MATERIALS

Corner Bookmark template and stitch guide (page 134)

3" × 3" (7.5 × 7.5 cm) piece fabric  
Color B (I used quilting cotton)

8" × 8" (20 × 20 cm) piece fabric  
Color A (I used quilting cotton)

Size 12 embroidery thread

Size 5 embroidery thread

Size 12 embroidery thread in color  
close to Color B fabric

## TOOLS

Scissors

Chalk fabric marking pencil

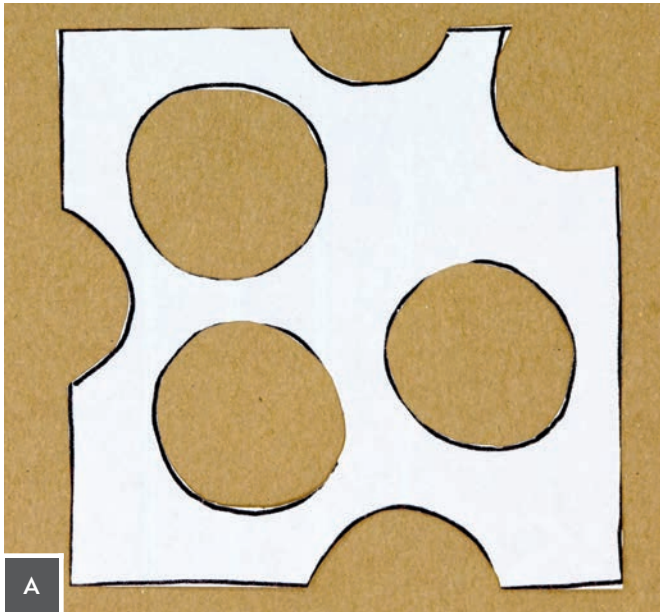
6" (15 cm) embroidery hoop

Size 5 embroidery needle

## FEATURED STITCHES

X stitch

Whipstitch



1. Trace or print out the Corner Bookmark stitch guide. Cut out along the edges and cut out the circles that are hatched (A).
2. Place the cut-out stitch guide over Color B fabric and mark the circle boundaries with a fabric marking pencil (B).

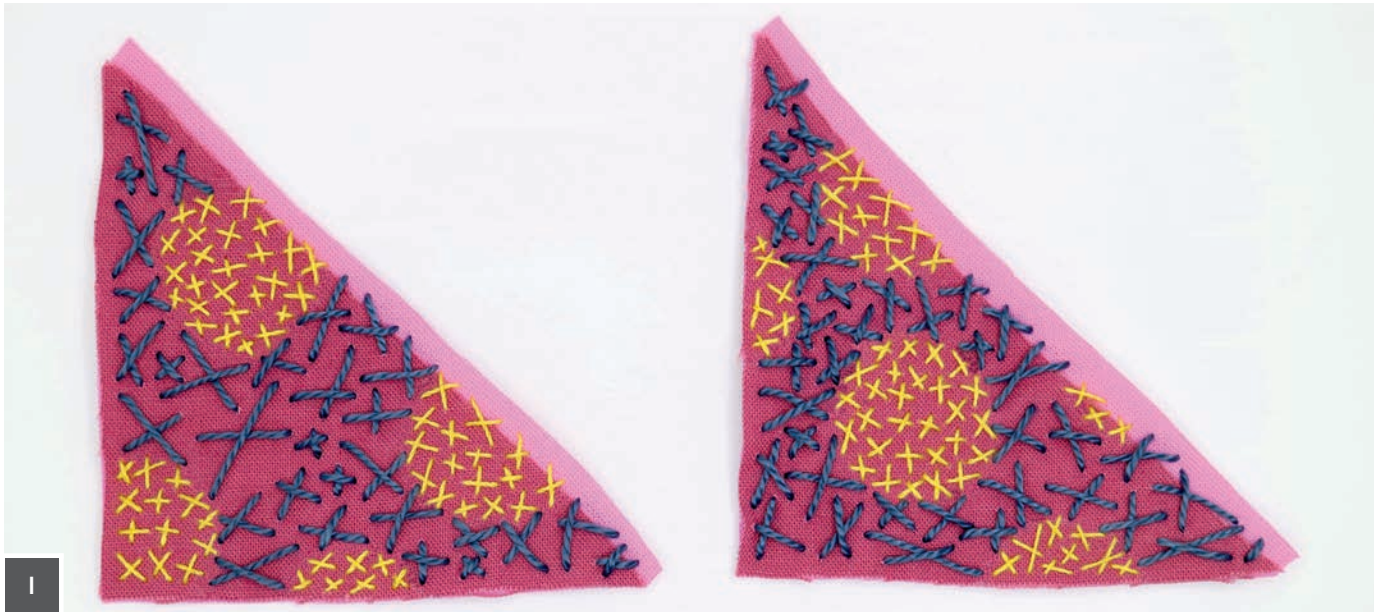
*Note:* We are not stitching the outlines of the circles, so make sure your fabric marking pencil is removable.

3. Cut the marked fabric square along the diagonal from corner to corner to form two triangles as shown. Set these aside (C).
4. Put the 8" (20 cm) piece of Color A fabric in the embroidery hoop (D).



5. Place the triangle pieces on top of the fabric in the hoop, leaving about a 1" (2.5 cm) gap between them. Baste into place (E and F).
6. Using size 12 thread, stitch the X stitch inside the circles. Don't stitch the chalk boundaries; just fill the circle with X stitch. When you get to the edges along the diagonal, let some of the stitch ends travel off Color B onto Color A as shown. Repeat this step on both triangles (G).

7. Using size 5 embroidery thread, stitch X stitch on Color B around the circles. Repeat this step on both triangles (H).



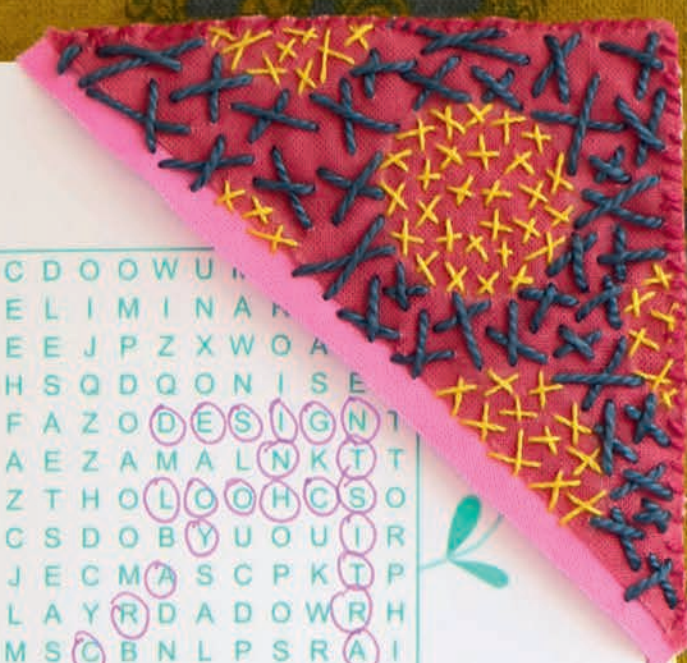
8. Remove any remaining chalk marks and remove the fabric from the hoop. Trim the stitched triangle away from the background fabric, leaving a small edge of Color A along the diagonal cut (I).
9. Lay the wrong sides of the triangles together. Using a size 12 thread similar in color to the Color B fabric, whipstitch two edges closed. Leave the edge with the Color A band open (J).



D H W S B  
O I S T  
L Y N I E  
L O D D K  
W Y O Y C  
O U W D A  
B D B O R  
Y B L R S  
R F I G I  
E E N N N  
H J D I N  
C W P H E  
R R H S T  
A N J I K  
A R Q F I



I C T U C D O O W U  
T Z P R E L I M I N A  
Q C D A E E J P Z X W O A  
T K Y Q H S Q D Q O N I S E  
E R V S F A Z O D E S I G N T  
M J A B A E Z A M A L N K T T  
P W H C Z T H O L O O H C S O  
E O C Y C S D O B Y U O U I R  
R R T A J E C M A S C P K T P  
A I E L L A Y R D A D O W R H  
W G K R M S C B N L P S R A I  
Z A S E U A R V B A I I V G S  
K M O V D G A X P L T N W Q M  
G I V O R S I E U D D G E X O  
M U I D E M R F G E Y E N S M





# BORO SKETCHBOOK COVER

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Boro is the Japanese art of mending fabric. Kantha is a form of Indian stitching featuring dense, simple stitching using the running stitch. This little fabric book cover celebrates both art forms of stitching.

I'm also a textile printer and I keep practically every scrap of fabric I've patterned. This cover puts them to good use by forming a collage-style composition.

## **MATERIALS**

Base fabric for cover

Rectangular fabric scraps in various lengths and widths

Fusible interfacing (optional)

Size 16 embroidery thread

Size 5 embroidery thread

## **TOOLS**

Scissors


Size 5 embroidery needle


Size 18 chenille needle

## **FEATURED STITCHES**

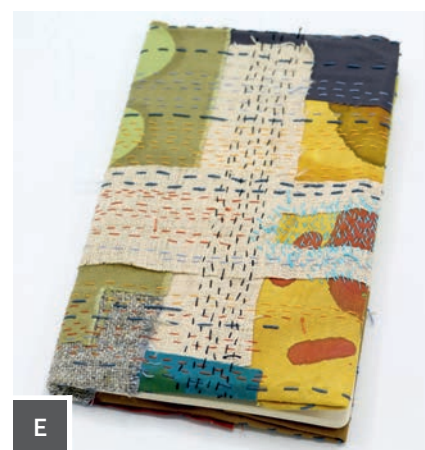
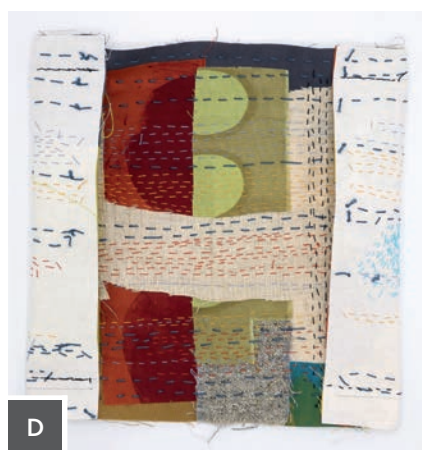
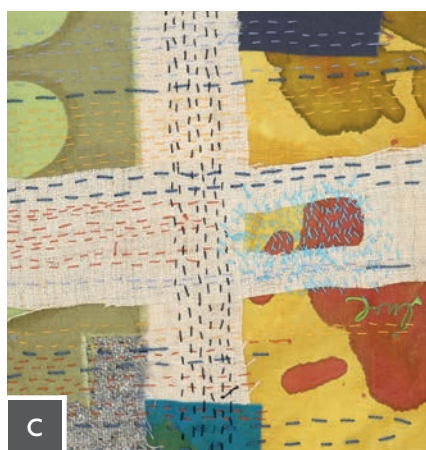
Running stitch

1. Cut the base fabric according to the size of your book, adding 4" (10 cm) to the length and 2" (5 cm) to the width. Arrange the fabric scraps on the base fabric to your liking (A).

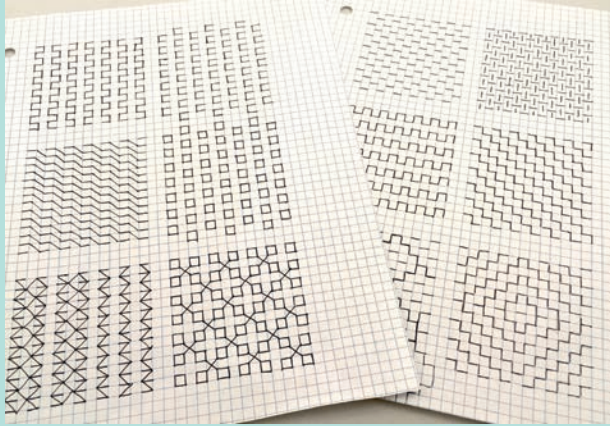
 **TIP: If you are using fusible interfacing to secure your fabric strips to the base fabric, lay that down on the base fabric prior to creating the collaged composition.**

 **TIP: An easy way to build a simple collage is by placing fabric on the outer edges first and then filling in the center with different lengths of fabric to create a random appearance.**

2. Add running stitch along the length and width of the fabric in different weights of thread. You don't need to have perfectly even rows of all the same length. The beauty of this type of stitching is in the celebration of the imperfection (B and C).
3. When you are done stitching, mark the corners on the back 1" (2.5 cm) up from the long side and 2" (5 cm) from the short side. Fold the short edge over to the 2" (5 cm) line and stitch as shown (D).
4. Turn the corners right side out and press the edges. Slip the book inside the book cover (E).



*Pro Tip*  
JULIE BOOTH

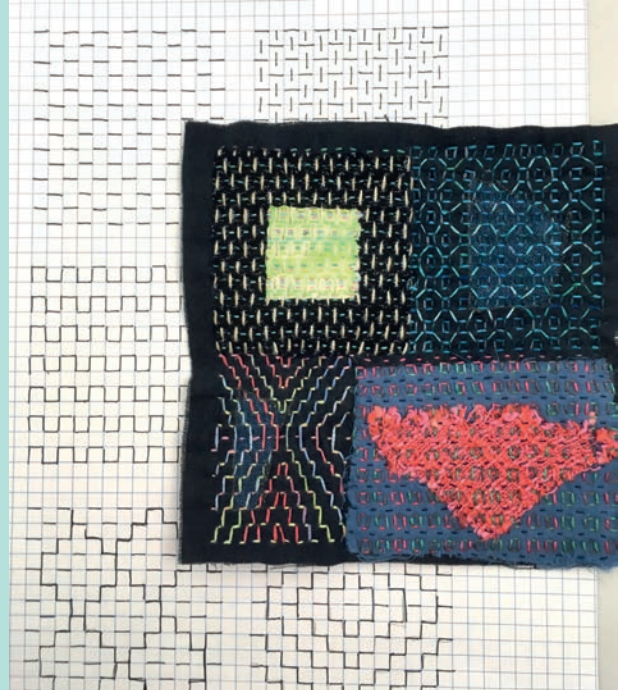


In traditional boro, the running stitch is used to mend holes by melding together many layers of fabric. Sashiko patterns are basically intersecting lines of running stitch; they add to the rustic beauty of this utilitarian stitching.

I like to use graph paper to create stitching patterns. I find drawing patterns can be almost as meditative as the actual stitching!

You will need graph paper (I prefer five squares per inch [2.5 cm] or smaller) and a pen or pencil. Start by drawing a number of rows of dashed lines to represent running stitches. You can arrange the rows so that all the dashed lines are parallel to each other or have the rows line up in an alternating brick fashion. Add perpendicular or diagonal dashed lines to create interesting patterns and shapes. Use these patterns as inspiration for your boro stitching!

Blog: [www.threadbornblog.com](http://www.threadbornblog.com)





# SMARTPHONE HOLDER

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I love my smartphone. It's my connection to friends and what's happening online (I belong to an embarrassing number of stitching and plant groups on Facebook), and it's not unusual to find me hypnotized by my favorite jigsaw puzzle app.

I admit that I'm not a big fan of enormous safety cases. I find them clunky and ugly, but I still want my phone to be protected. This holder is superquirky and fun while offering a soft place for your phone to hang out in when it's not in use.

## MATERIALS

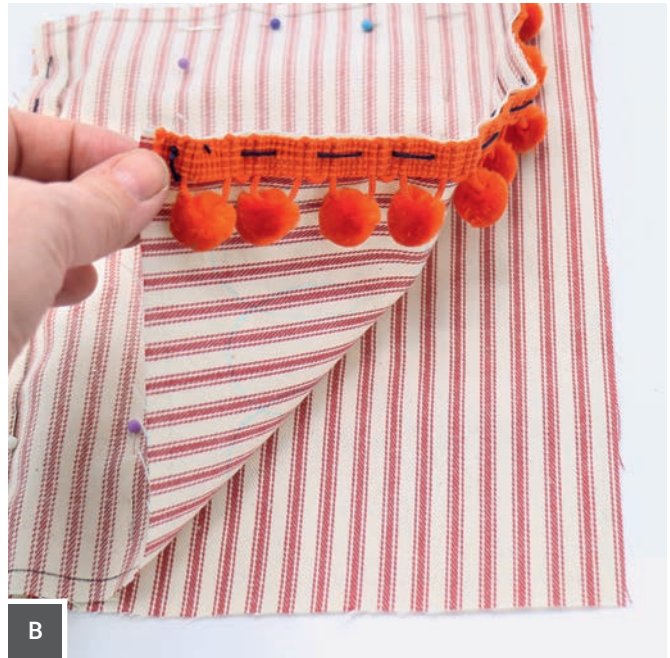
(2) 7¼" wide × 9¼" long  
(18.5 × 23.5 cm) pieces fabric  
Size 5 perle cotton  
(2) pieces 8½" (21.5 cm) long  
pom-pom fringe with ½" (1.3 cm)  
attachment ribbon  
Polyfill stuffing  
Various small buttons

## TOOLS

Scissors  
Water-soluble marking pen  
Size 20 chenille needle  
Pins  
Clips

## FEATURED STITCHES

Backstitch  
Buttonhole stitch  
Running stitch  
Whipstitch



1. Cut two pieces of fabric to the dimensions specified in the materials list. On the piece of fabric without the pom-pom trim, use a water-soluble pen to draw freehand a doodle stitch in a later step. (I did a simple loop design.) On the right side of the marked fabric, with perle cotton, baste the pom-pom trim along the long edges with the puffballs facing in (A).
2. Lay the second piece of fabric right sides together with the basted pom-pom piece and pin in place. Using the backstitch, sew the two long sides together using a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3 cm) seam allowance so you will stitch the pom-pom trim into place. Stitch one of the short ends closed as well, leaving the second one open for the next step. (B and C).





3. Turn the pouch right side out and lightly stuff with polyfill. Fold in the edges of the open end and secure with clips (D).



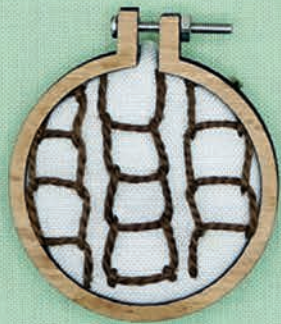
**TIP: Don't add too much stuffing. The goal is just to create some cushion, not stiffness.**



**TIP: I intentionally clipped off one pom-pom near the top of each side. This is because of the button embellishments added in step 5. I didn't want the button and the trim to compete with each other.**

4. Stitch both short seams with buttonhole stitch. Use running stitch to create the loop design. Tug a little tighter than normal on the thread so that it creates depressions in the stuffing (E).
5. Stitch around the loop design a second time with a darker thread to define it further. Add running stitch between the two loop spaces to even out the stuffing. I followed the shape of the bases of the loops in a bright yellow thread. Add a row of buttons along the top edge (F).
6. Fold the fabric in half (stitched side out) and whipstitch the two short ends together to complete the pouch.





# 3

## Outline and Filler Stitches

Outline and filler stitches are used to create and fill in the framework of a stitched piece. They are good at defining boundaries as well as taking up space in large areas to create interest and texture.

Although many of them are similar to each other, each one has a unique characteristic that makes it special. The twelve stitches shown in this section range from quick and easy to dense and a bit more complicated. Whatever your project is, these stitches will help you create detail and drama—the best of both worlds!

All of the stitch instructions were done in size 5 perle cotton and size 3 embroidery thread.



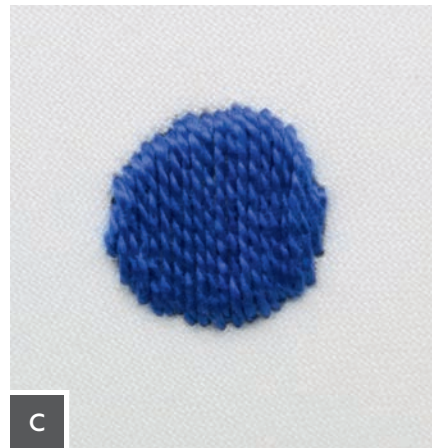
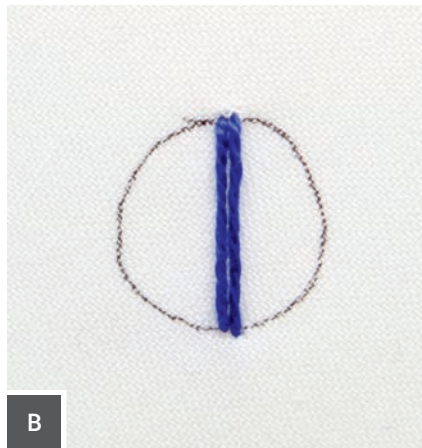
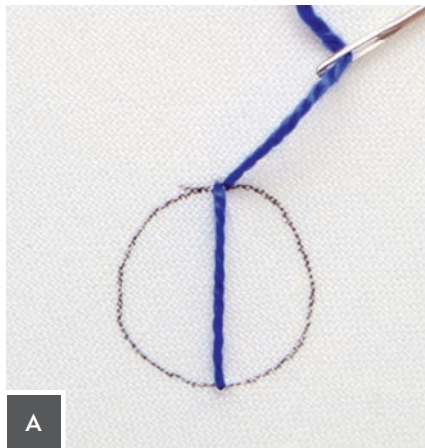
# SATIN STITCH

Satin stitch is used to cover areas of designs completely. It creates a densely stitched area where the base fabric is not visible at all. Many times, when this stitch is used, the design can be drawn directly onto the fabric without worrying about washing the marks out later. Satin stitch will cover the marked outlines.



**TIP: I like to begin stitching in the middle of the shape where the stitch is the longest. I find it easier to keep the shape of the outline by working from longer stitches to smaller stitches.**

1. Bring your thread up through the fabric and back down directly above it.
2. Come up through the fabric, close to where you went down in step 1 but not in the same hole (A).
3. Go down through the fabric, close to the end of the first stitch on the opposite side (B).
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until you've filled the outline to its edge, adjusting the stitch length as needed to keep the shape of the marked area being stitched.
5. Repeat steps 2 to 4 for the left side of the shape (C).



## Satin stitch variations



SATIN STITCH IN TWO DIFFERENT COLORS TO FORM A REPEATING PATTERN.



DENSE SATIN STITCH TO FORM A SHAPE IN ORANGE THREAD AND RANDOM SATIN STITCH IN YELLOW OVER THE TOP TO CREATE AN ABSTRACT-STYLE FILL.



SATIN STITCH FILLS IN A DESIGN WITH A LOT OF MOVEMENT, AND DETACHED CHAIN STITCH IS COMBINED WITH IT ALONG THE EDGES.



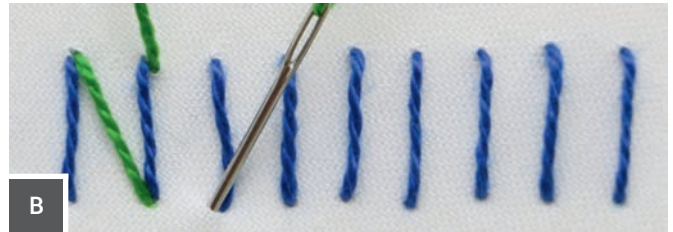
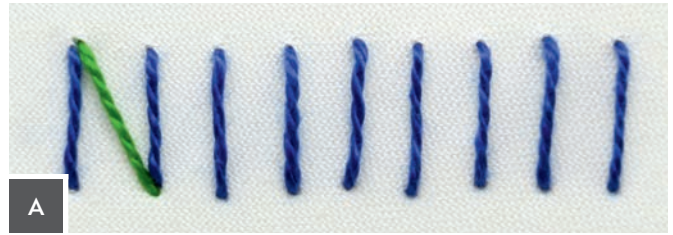
SATIN STITCH COMBINES WELL WITH OTHER STITCHES TO CREATE PATTERN. HERE, SATIN STITCH IS USED TO CREATE A SECONDARY PATTERN BETWEEN ERMINE STITCH SPOKES.

# BOSNIAN STITCH

The charm of this stitch lies in its ability to create a simple yet very effective rhythm. The arrangement of the stitches gives the sense of movement.

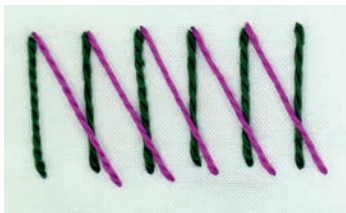
*Note:* The instructions show the stitch worked in two different color threads for clarity. It can be worked in one or multiple colors.

1. Create a line of vertical stitches with even spacing for the desired length.
2. Bring your needle up close to, but not in, the same hole, to the top right of the first stitch, and then take your needle back down close to, but not in, the same hole, to the bottom left of the second stitch. Pull the thread flat (A).
3. Repeat step 2 along the length of the vertical stitches (B and C).



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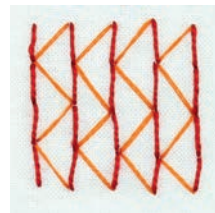
## Bosnian stitch variations



THE DIAGONAL STITCHES ARE EXTENDED LOWER THAN THE VERTICAL STITCHES.



THE VERTICAL STITCHES ARE PLACED AT RANDOM LENGTHS AND LOCATIONS. THIS VARIATION WORKS VERY WELL TO SHOW OFF THE COLORS OF VARIEGATED THREAD.



THREE ROWS OF BOSNIAN STITCH ARE WORKED VERY CLOSE TOGETHER TO FORM A CLOSED PATTERN.



THE VERTICAL STITCHES ARE PLACED IN A PATTERN THAT CAUSES THEM TO NEST BETWEEN ROWS.

# BURDEN STITCH

This stitch has been around since medieval times. It is also a slightly dimensional stitch. It creates a weaving appearance but is completely stitched down to the fabric, unlike with needle weaving.

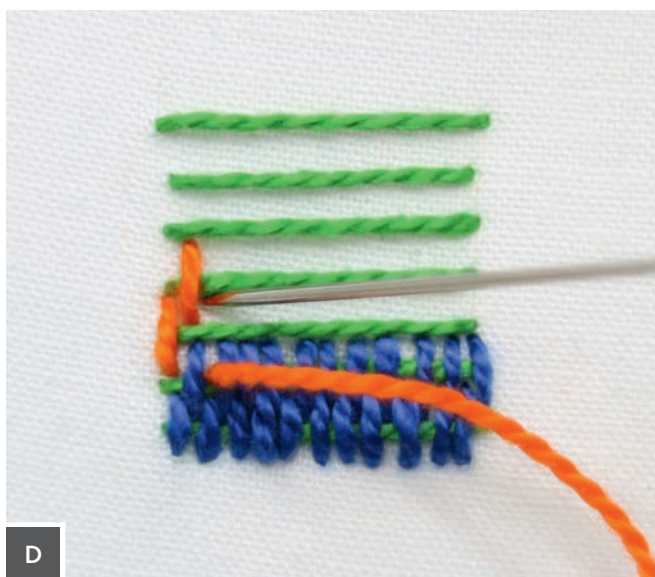
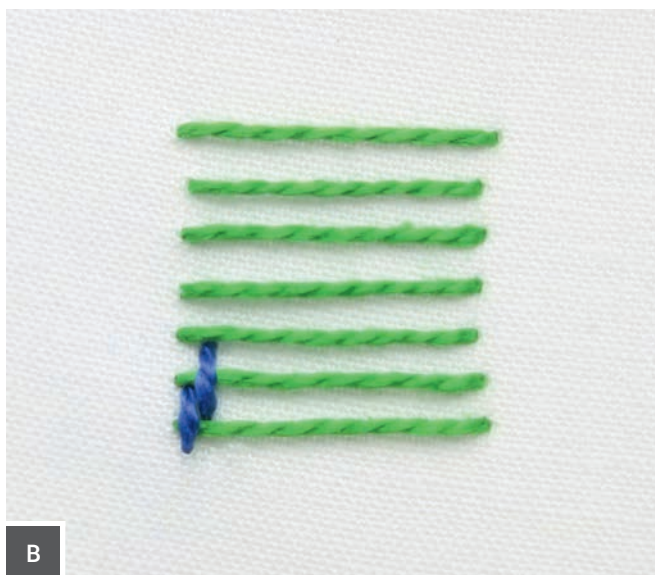
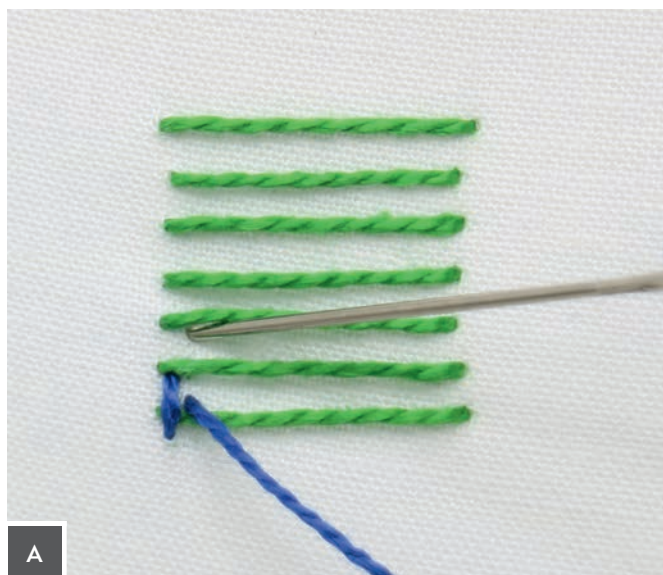
*Note:* The instructions show the stitch worked in three different color threads for clarity. It can be worked in one or multiple colors.

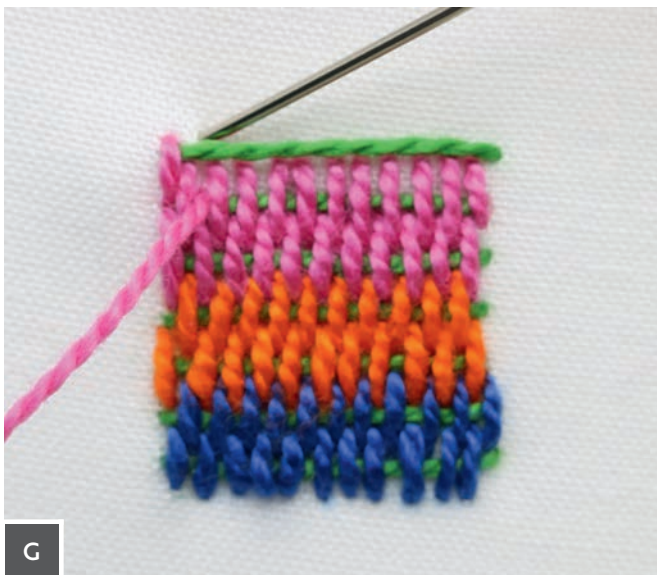
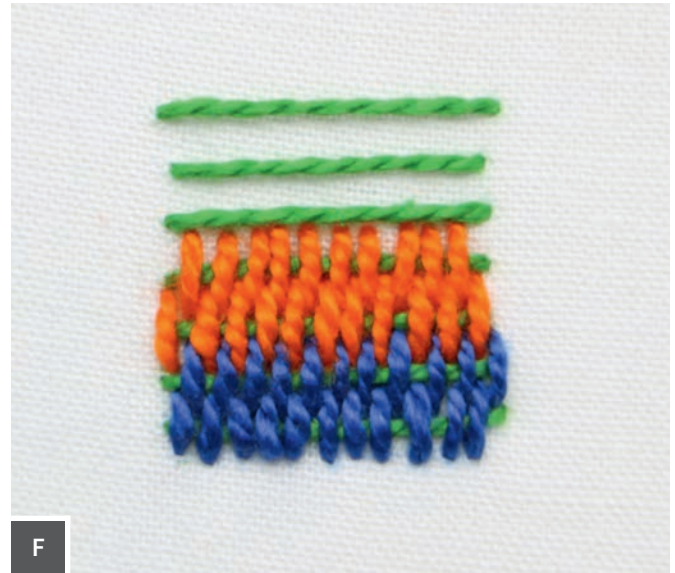
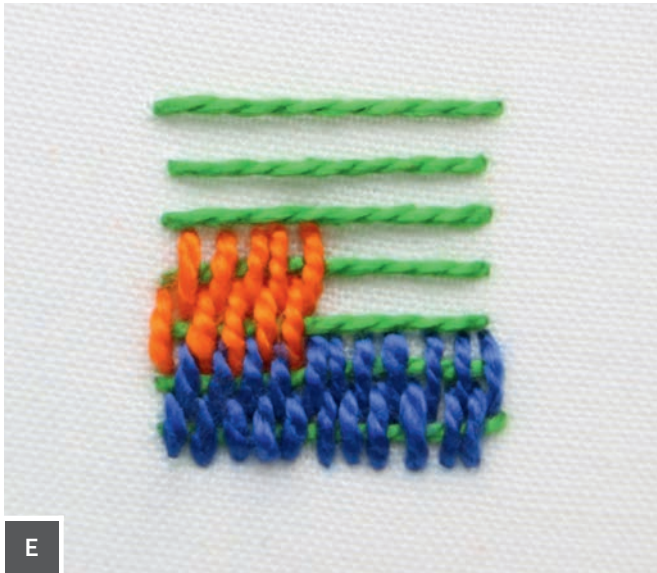
1. Begin by stitching horizontal straight stitches for the desired width of the area to be filled.



**TIP:** While a burden stitch creates a fairly dense pattern, it's still possible to see the horizontal straight stitches. Use matching thread to make them less visible if you want to hide them.

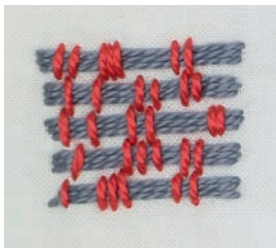
2. Create a straight stitch that begins just below the bottom horizontal stitch and ends just beneath the horizontal stitch above it (A).



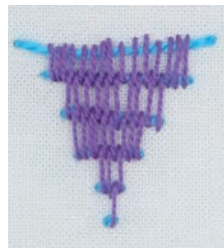


3. Take a second straight stitch beginning just above the bottom horizontal stitch and ending just beneath the third horizontal stitch (B).
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 across the width of the horizontal stitches (C).
5. Repeat the same stitch pattern to the top of the horizontal stitch frame. You will have one visible horizontal stitch left exposed (D, E, and F).
6. Continue using the same stitch pattern, but use a shorter stitch to cover the last horizontal stitch (G).

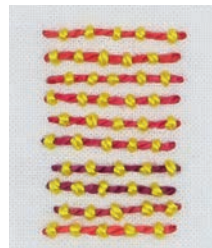
### Burden stitch variations



EACH ROW OF HORIZONTAL BARS CONSISTS OF THREE STITCHES; VERTICAL STITCHES ARE ADDED IN A RANDOM ORDER.



VARYING LENGTHS OF HORIZONTAL STITCHES AND VERTICAL STITCHES ARE WORKED IN THE USUAL PATTERN BUT WITH THINNER THREAD THAN THE HORIZONTAL STITCHES.



VERTICAL STITCHES ARE EXTREMELY SHORT BUT SPACED IN THE USUAL PATTERN.



THE BASE IS VERTICAL STITCHES INSTEAD OF HORIZONTAL STITCHES. PATTERN STITCHES ARE HORIZONTAL WITH KNOTS ON ONE END.

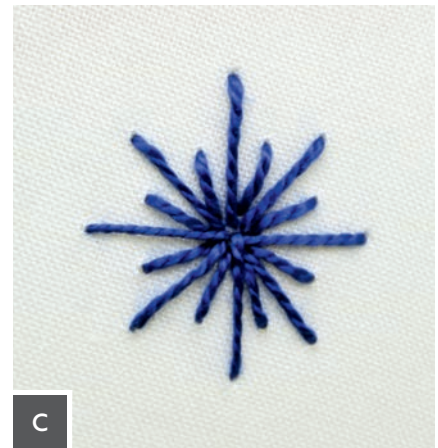
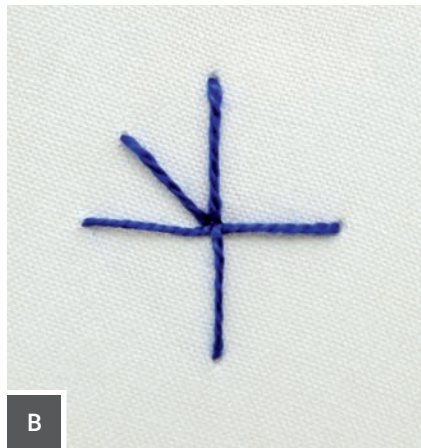
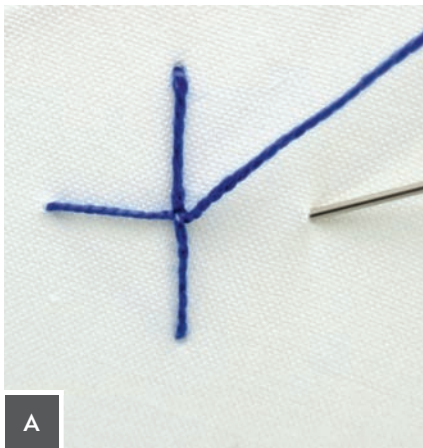


PATTERN STITCHES ARE WORKED ON A HORIZONTAL IN TWO DIFFERENT COLORS AND TIGHTLY STITCHED.

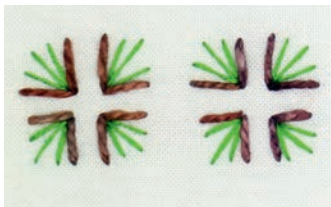
# EYELET STITCH

This stitch is often worked around a hole in the fabric as decoration, but you can also work it without one to create a burst of stitching.

1. Begin by working two long vertical stitches. Stitch them close together but not through the same hole.
2. Work two long horizontal stitches in the same manner as step 1 to create a plus sign shape (A).
3. Stitch a diagonal stitch in between a horizontal and vertical stitch as shown. The stitch should be slightly shorter than the stitches made in steps 1 and 2. Add this stitch all around the plus sign shape as shown (B).
4. Add another diagonal stitch in the gap created by the previous round of stitches. This stitch should be visibly shorter than the other stitches. Add this stitch all around as shown (C).



## Eyelet stitch variations



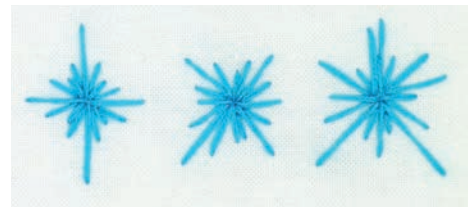
THE VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL LEGS OF THE PLUS SIGN ARE SPACED APART TO FORM A VISIBLE GAP.



THIS VARIATION IS CALLED THE CELESTIAL EYELET STITCH. BEGIN AS USUAL TO CREATE THE PLUS SIGN BASE. THEN DIAGONAL STITCHES ARE ADDED AND TACKED DOWN AT THE CENTER OF THE PLUS SIGN. FLY STITCH IS ADDED TO THE CORNERS AS A SECONDARY STITCH COMBINATION.



ROWS OF STRAIGHT STITCH ARE WORKED FIRST. THE VERTICAL AND DIAGONAL STITCHES OF THE EYELET STITCH ARE WORKED ON THE TOP AND BOTTOM OF THEM WITH THE GAP BETWEEN.

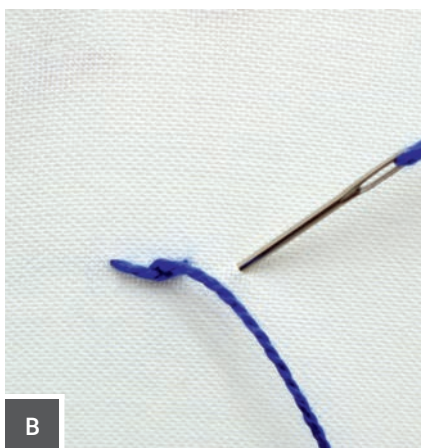
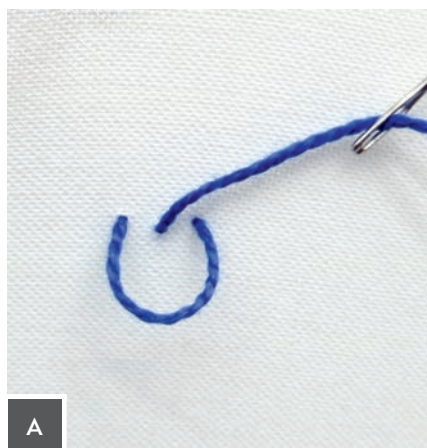


ALTERING THE LENGTHS OF THE STITCHES USED TO CREATE EYELET STITCH.

# STEM STITCH

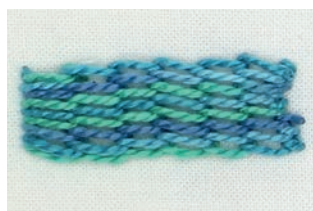
While this stitch works brilliantly to create the thing it is named after—stems on flowers and leaves—it's also a killer outline stitch. It's tidy and has an attractive ropelike feel to it.

1. Bring the thread up and down a stitch length. Do not pull the thread flat. Come up again in the middle of the stitch length with the working thread beneath the needle (A).
2. Pull the thread flat.
3. Go down through the fabric a stitch length in line with the end of the last stitch. Do not pull the thread flat (B).
4. Come up again at the end of the last stitch. Pull the thread flat (C).
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 for the desired length.

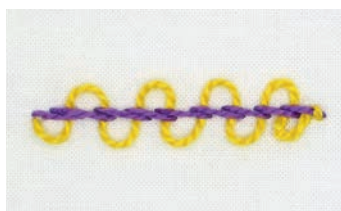


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## Stem stitch variations



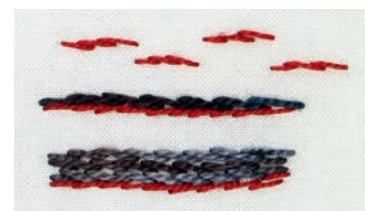
RAISED STEM STITCH. A BASE OF VERTICAL STITCHES IS LAID DOWN AND THEN THE THREAD IS WOVEN AROUND THEM TO CREATE THE LOOK OF STEM STITCH.



LACED STEM STITCH. THE YELLOW LOOPS ARE DETACHED FROM THE FABRIC.



STEM STITCH WITH KNOTS AT THE END OF EACH STITCH.



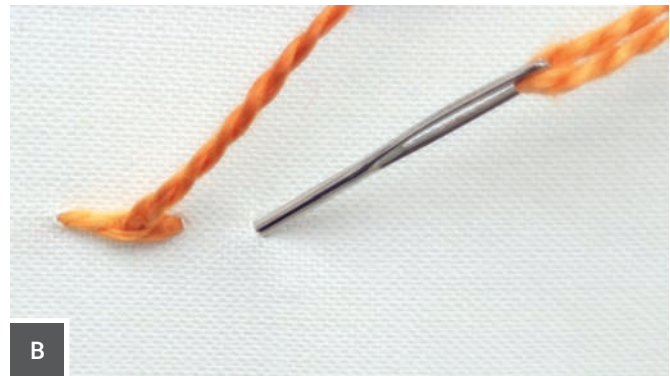
STEM STITCH SHOWN AS SMALL DETACHED SECTIONS, DOUBLE ROW WITH TWO DIFFERENT COLORS OF THREAD, AND SEVERAL ROWS WITH VARIEGATED DARK THREAD AND A CONTRASTING THREAD.

# SPLIT BACKSTITCH

While we work really hard not to catch the thread with our needle in other stitches, this one is all about splitting the thread. It creates a very nice raised outline effect, with lots of dimension.

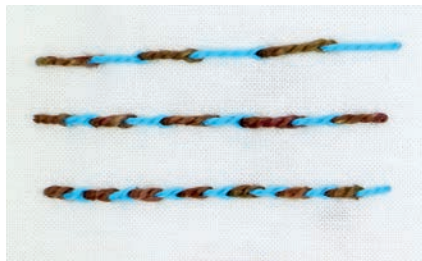
*Note:* I used size 3 perle cotton thread in order to show the detail of the split better. This stitch is not effective below size 8 perle cotton.

1. Begin by taking a straight stitch.
2. Come back up through the fabric, intentionally piercing the thread of the first stitch in the middle (A).
3. Create the next stitch by moving over to the right in line with the last stitch and pull the thread flat (B).
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for the desired length (C).



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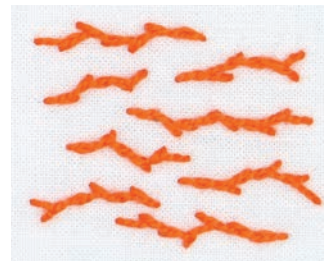
## Split backstitch variations



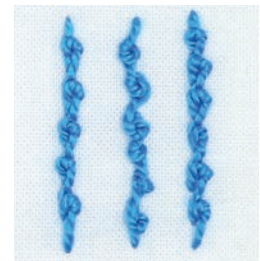
SPLIT BACKSTITCH IS WORKED IN TWO DIFFERENT COLOR THREADS WITH VARYING STITCH LENGTHS.



THIS IS AN EXCELLENT STITCH TO USE WITH VARIEGATED THREAD BECAUSE IT CREATES A SOFTER TRANSITION BETWEEN THE COLORS.



EACH STRAIGHT STITCH IS TAKEN AT A DIFFERENT ANGLE TO CREATE A ZIGZAG MOTION.

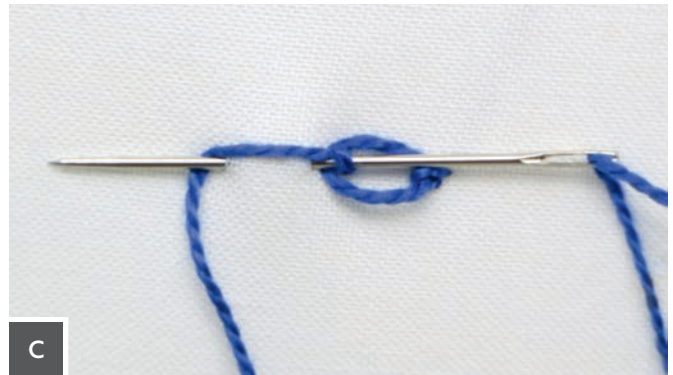
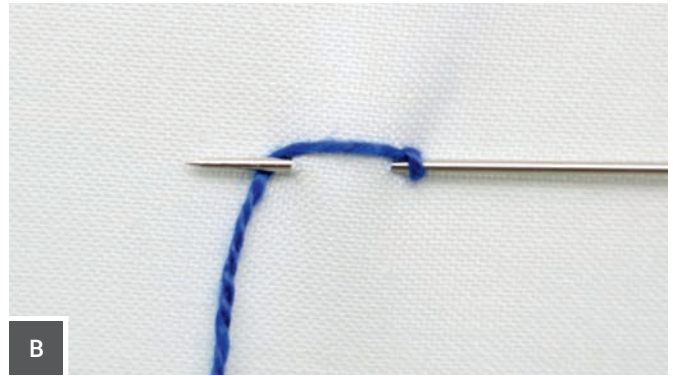
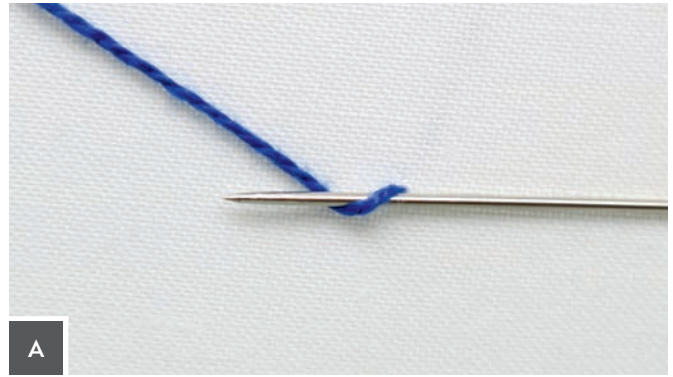


A KNOT IS ADDED IN STEP 2 OF THE STITCH.

# CABLE STITCH

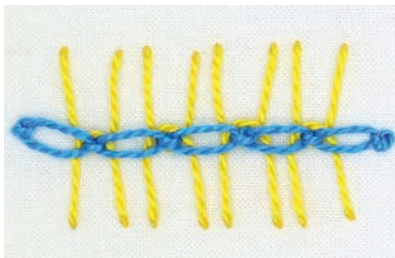
Technically, this stitch is a variation of the chain stitch. However, I included it in this section because the bulkiness of the knot makes it a good stitch for filling in areas of your design.

1. Bring your needle up through the fabric. Wrap the thread over and under the needle as shown (A).
2. Go down through your fabric and up again in one stitch. Pass the working thread under the needle (B).
3. Pull the thread through to form a loop with a knot at one end.
4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 for the desired length of the chain (C).

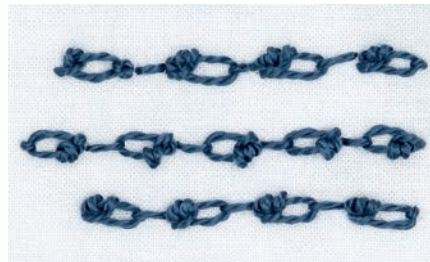


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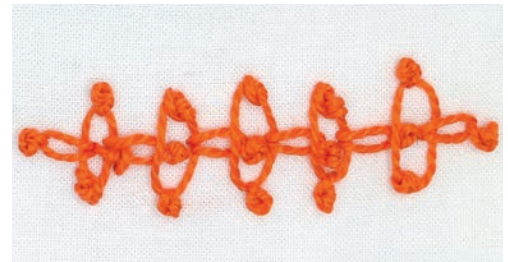
## Cable stitch variations



CABLE STITCH WORKED AS USUAL IN BLUE THREAD, COMBINED WITH ELONGATED WAVE STITCH IN YELLOW THREAD.



DOUBLE KNOTS AT THE END OF EACH LOOP.

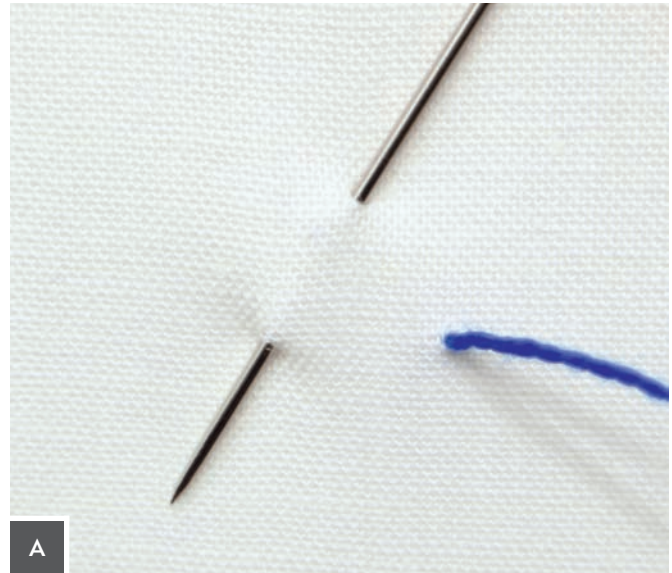


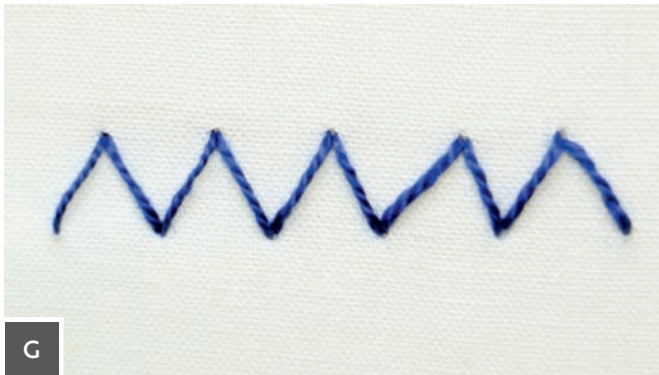
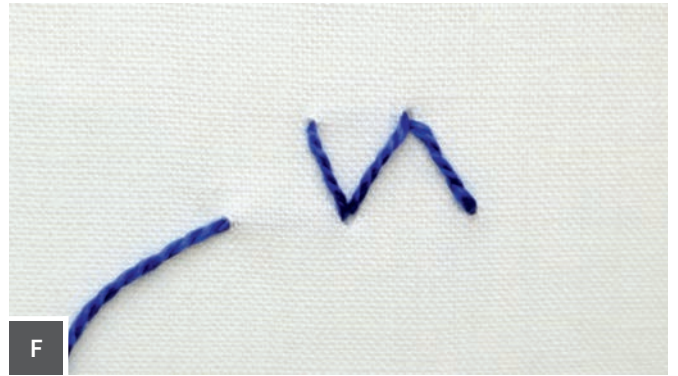
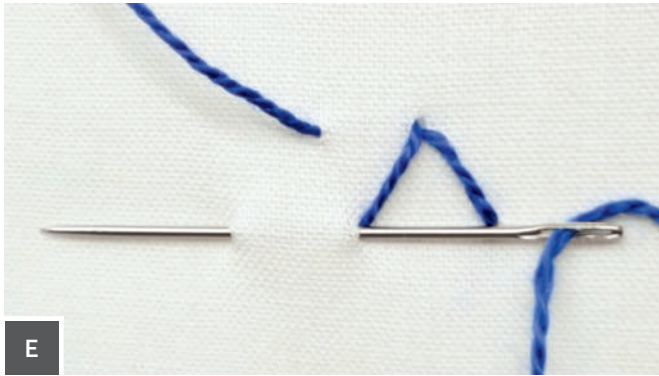
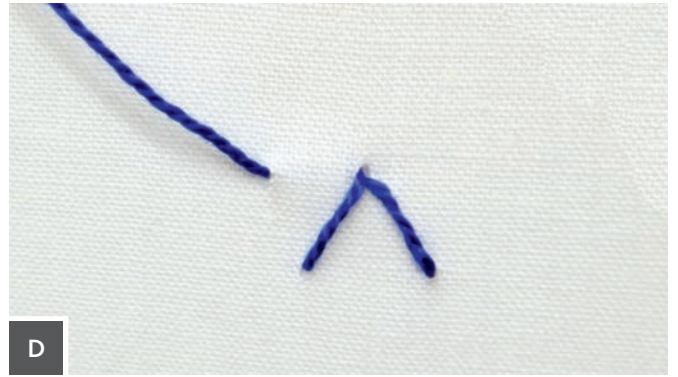
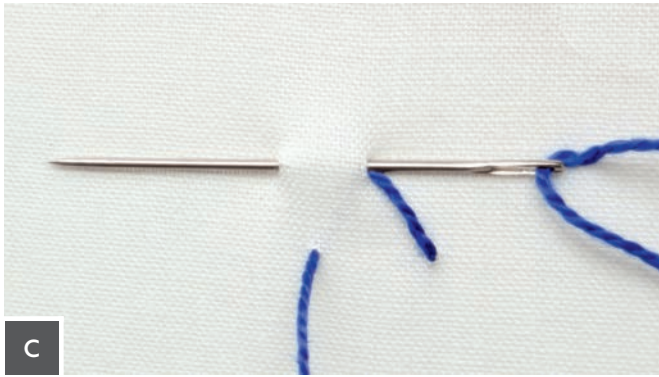
SINGLE DETACHED LOOPS, WITH DOUBLE KNOTS ON BOTH ENDS OF THE LOOP AND OVERLAPPING TO FORM A PATTERN.

# ZIGZAG STITCH

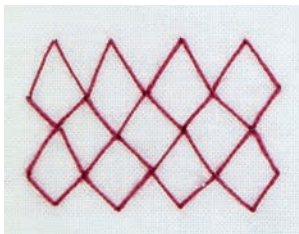
Although primarily used for construction in machine stitching, this stitch has great potential as a filler stitch in handwork. It can effortlessly create patterns that look complex but are easy to create.

1. Bring your thread up through the fabric. Take your needle back down and up again in a diagonal motion as shown. Pull the thread flat (A and B).
2. Take your needle down at the top of the vertical stitch and back up to the left of the working thread as shown. Pull the thread flat to complete one peak (C and D).
3. Repeat step 2 but at the bottom of the last diagonal stitch (E and F).
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for the desired length (G).

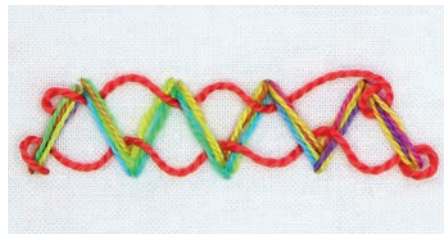




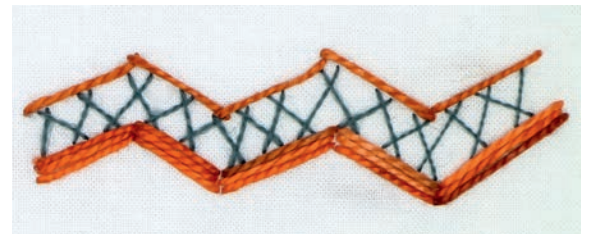
Zigzag stitch variations



ZIGZAG WORKED IN UNEVEN SPACING ON PEAK HEIGHTS AND VERY CLOSELY TOGETHER TO FORM AN ALLOVER PATTERN.



ZIGZAG WORKED FOUR TIMES IN THE SAME PATTERN WITH VARIEGATED THREAD AND LOOSELY LACED WITH A SOLID THREAD AT THE PEAKS.



ZIGZAG WORKED IN VERY SHALLOW PEAKS WITH HERRINGBONE STITCH IN BETWEEN.

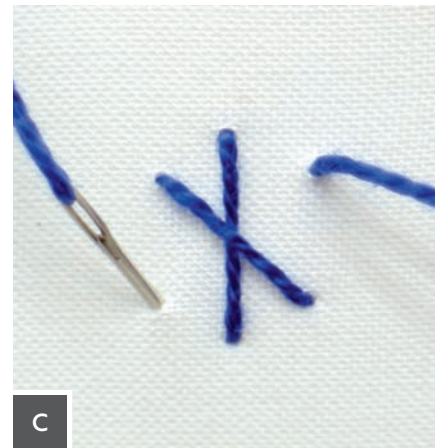
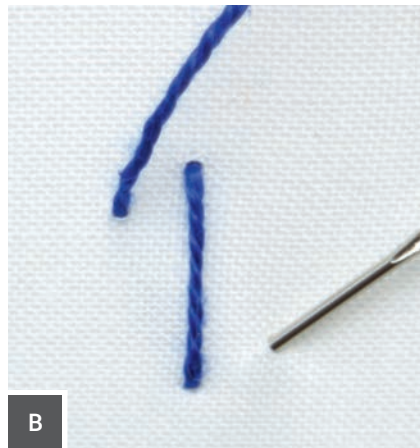
# ERMINE STITCH

This stitch is also known as the star stitch. Don't let its simple nature deceive you: it's very effective as a filler stitch. Because it allows the background fabric to show through, it's easily used to create bright pops of color.

1. Begin by taking a vertical straight stitch (A).

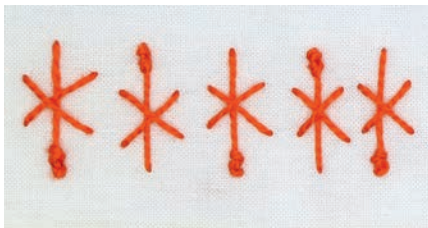
2. Come up through the fabric to the top left and slightly below the vertical stitch. Go back down through the fabric to the bottom right and slightly below the vertical stitch. Pull the thread flat (B).

3. Repeat step 2 but on opposite sides of the vertical stitch (C).

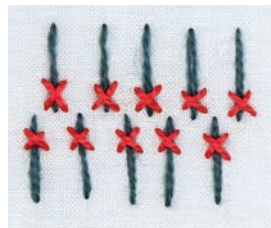


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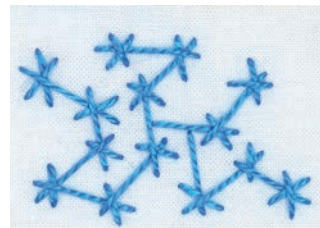
## Ermine stitch variations



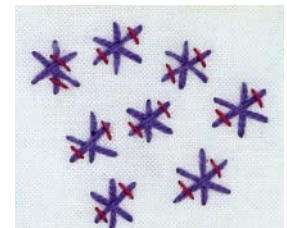
ELONGATED VERTICAL STITCH WITH DOUBLE KNOTS ON ONE END.



ELONGATED VERTICAL STITCH WITH VERY SHORT DIAGONAL STITCHES PLACED AT THE END OF THE VERTICAL STITCH.



THE SECOND DIAGONAL STITCH IS ELONGATED OUT TO SERVE AS THE VERTICAL STITCH FOR THE NEXT COMPLETE ERMINE STITCH.

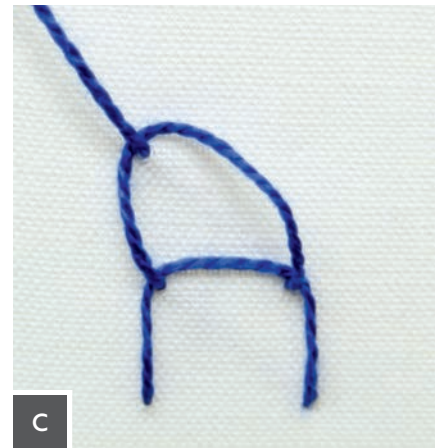
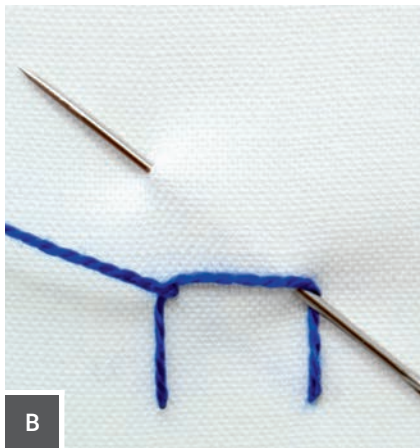
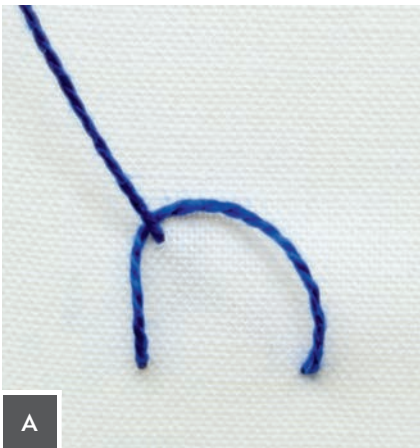


SMALL STRAIGHT STITCHES PLACED OVER COMPLETED ERMINE STITCHES WITH A THINNER THREAD IN A CONTRASTING COLOR.

# LADDER STITCH

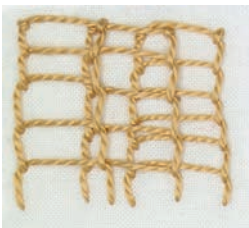
This is an open filler stitch. It presents the opportunity for other stitches to nest inside its gaps. It's also very easy to manipulate to create variations that are related to but quite different from the original stitch.

1. Bring the thread up through the fabric. Take the needle back down into the fabric to the right and in line with where you came up. Bring the needle up through the fabric above where the thread came up.
2. Loosely pull the thread to create a loop but don't pull it completely flat (A).
3. Take the needle back down through the fabric at the right corner of the loop, pulling the loop flat. Bring the needle up through the fabric above the left "corner" of the loop (B).
4. Pull the thread through, leaving the loop slack. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for the desired length (C).

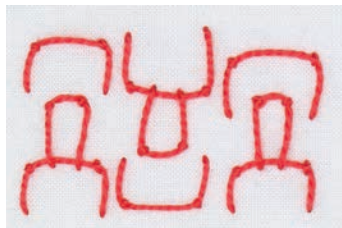


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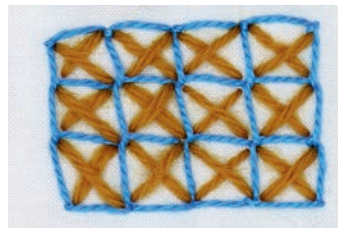
## Ladder stitch variations



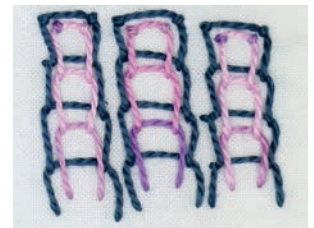
LADDER STITCH DONE IN VARIOUS WIDTHS WITH RANDOM OVERLAPPING.



DETACHED LADDER STITCH TACKED AT EACH CORNER.



FOUR ROWS OF LADDER STITCH WITH STRAIGHT STITCH TO CLOSE THE OPEN END, FILLED WITH X STITCH.



A NARROW LADDER STITCH OVERLAPPING A WIDE LADDER STITCH.

# FISHBONE STITCH

Similar to satin stitch, this is a solid coverage stitch. However, fishbone stitch creates a neat woven effect while keeping the stitches flat against the fabric.



**TIP: I find it much easier to do this stitch by drawing the shape I want to stitch and adding a line to indicate the center. It's a good visual aid to keep the stitches in the order they need to be. You will be completely covering the outline with the stitching.**

1. Bring your needle up at the very tip of the design. Pull the thread through and take a straight stitch along the centerline of the design (A).
2. Bring the thread up at the top left of the straight stitch and go back down to the bottom right of the straight stitch and slightly lower as shown. Pull the thread flat (B).
3. Repeat step 2 on the opposite side of the straight stitch (C).
4. Continue to repeat steps 1 to 3, following the outer edge of the drawn outline. Work all the way down to the end of the centerline (D).
5. There will be some unstitched portions of the design when you get to the end of the centerline. Continue stitching from the outer edge of the outline but stitch the overlapping portion along the bottom edge of the outline (E and F).

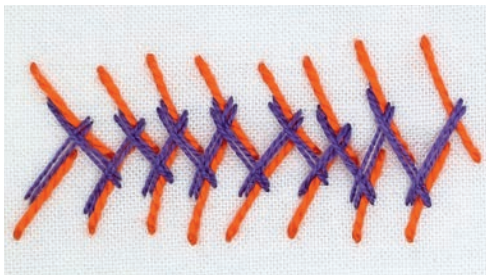


**TIP: If you have to add a couple of straight stitches to fill in any gaps, feel free to do so.**





*Fishbone stitch variations*



VERY OPEN FORMAT WITH OVERLAPPING VERSION IN A THINNER THREAD.



FISHBONE STITCH USED AS A WAY TO COUCH DOWN THICKER SECTIONS OF THREAD.



FISHBONE STITCH FILLING HALF OF A TEARDROP SHAPE OUTLINED IN SPLIT BACKSTITCH.

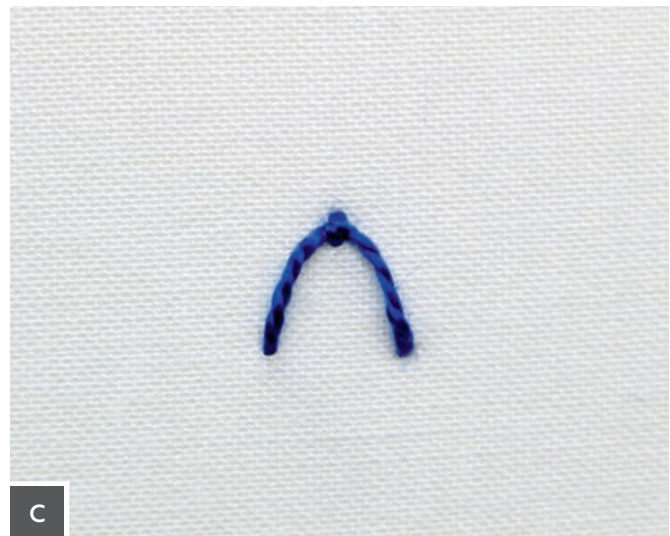
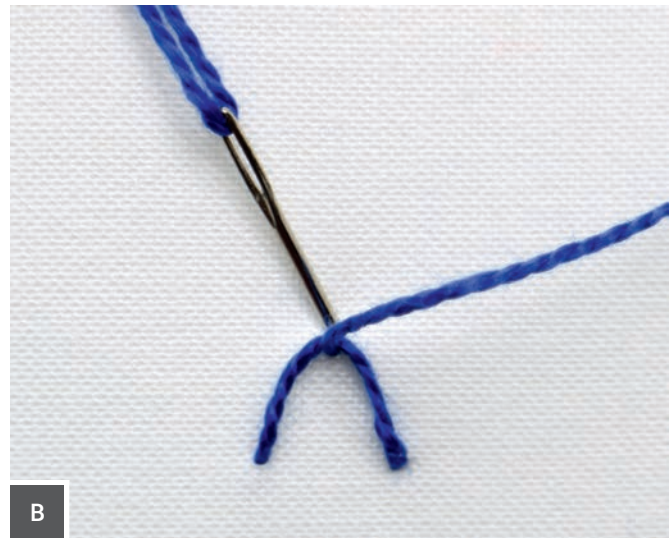
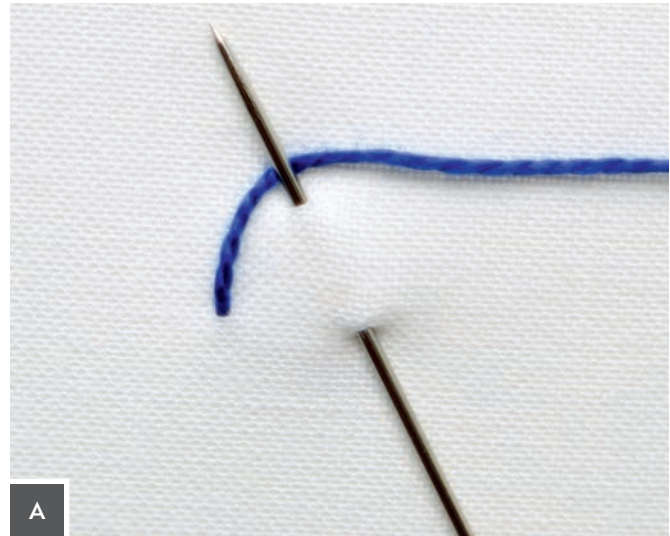
# WAVE STITCH

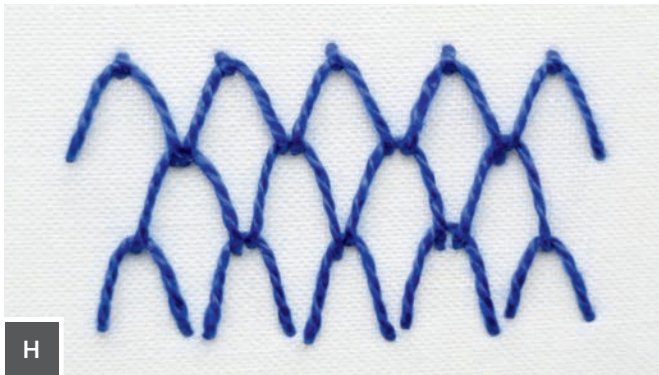
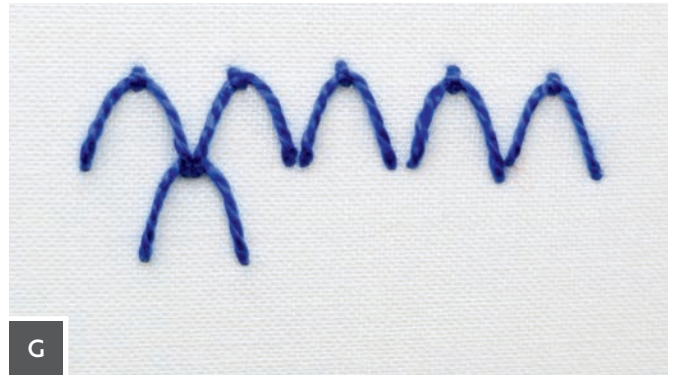
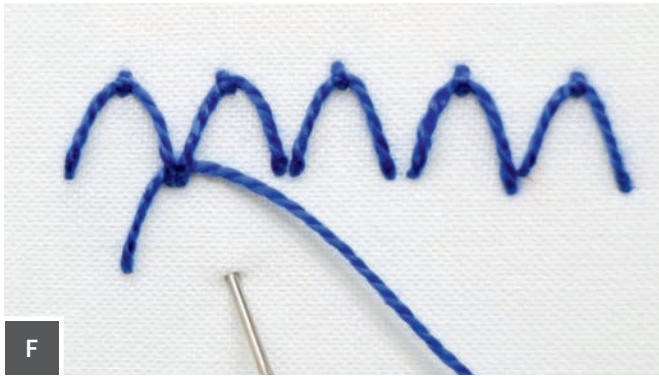
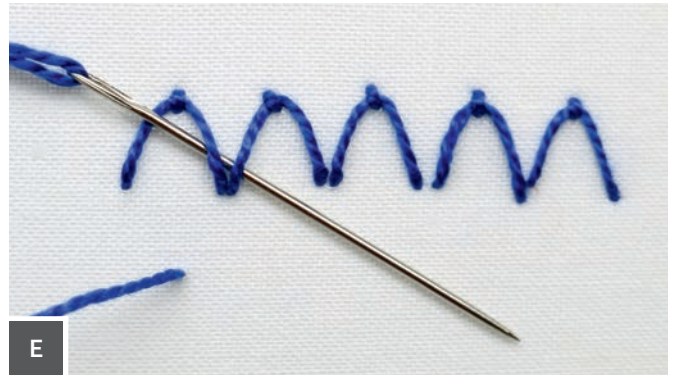
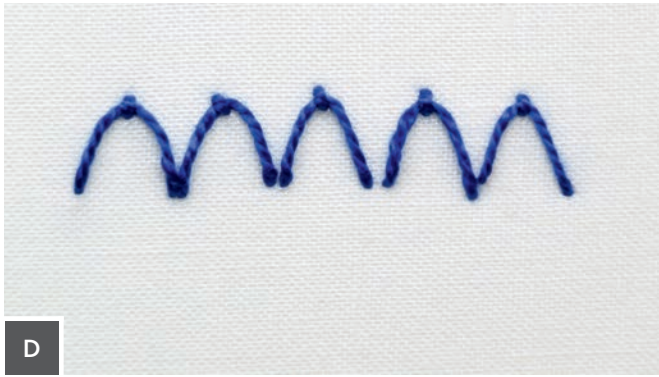
This is a wonderful stitch for filling in designs when you don't want to add a lot of weight. Because of its open structure, it will allow the background fabric to continue to peek through. However, you can easily adjust its density for more coverage that doesn't completely close down.

1. Bring your thread up through the fabric. Take your needle down to the right of where you came up and back up in a diagonal motion as shown (A).
2. Pull the thread flat and go back down into the fabric at the very tip of the loop. Pull the thread through to secure the loop with a small straight stitch. Repeat this stitch for the desired length (B, C, and D).
3. Begin a second row by bringing the thread up in line with the tack stitch of the loop above. Pass your needle underneath the two ends of the loops above as shown (E).

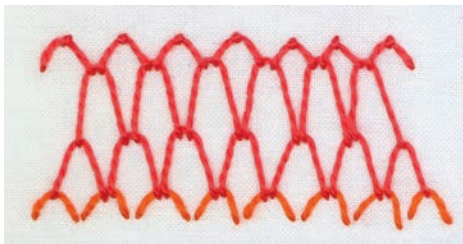
*NOTE:* You are anchoring the next row of stitching by weaving it beneath the stitches above it. Be careful not to snag the thread with your needle.

4. Gently pull the thread through and go back down through the fabric in line with the tack stitch of the loop above. Pull the thread flat. Continue this stitching pattern until you've filled the desired area (F, G, and H).

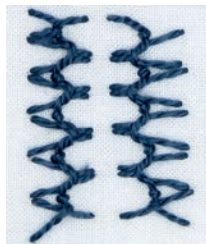




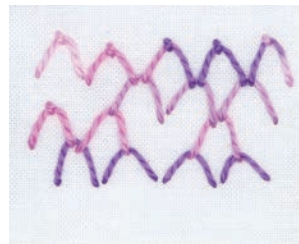
Wave stitch variations



VARYING LENGTHS OF LOOPS.



VERTICAL ORIENTATION OF FIRST ROW AND WOVEN FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE.



BROKEN WAVE STITCH—INTENTIONAL GAPS INCORPORATED INTO THE STITCHING.



HEAVILY STITCHED SECOND ROW WITH FIVE DIFFERENT COLORS OF THREAD.



# STUFFED TOY BUNNY

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I have a great fondness for antique stuffed toys, especially ones that are hand sewn and embellished with stitching. It's so much more than a cuddle love for a child; it's an expression of how much the maker loved the recipient.

Featuring simpler shapes and stitching that has a more primitive feel to it, this bunny is the right size for a cherished one in your life.

## MATERIALS

Carbon transfer paper

Stuffed Toy Bunny template (page 135)

8" wide × 10" tall (20 × 25 cm) piece fabric in one of each: cotton fabric, felt or batting, and backing fabric

Size 16 perle cotton thread

Fabric yo-yo or other embellishments (optional)

Polyfill stuffing

## TOOLS

Stylus

Size 5 embroidery needle

Scissors

Pins

## FEATURED STITCHES

Stem stitch

Ermine stitch

Satin stitch

Bosnian stitch

Whipstitch

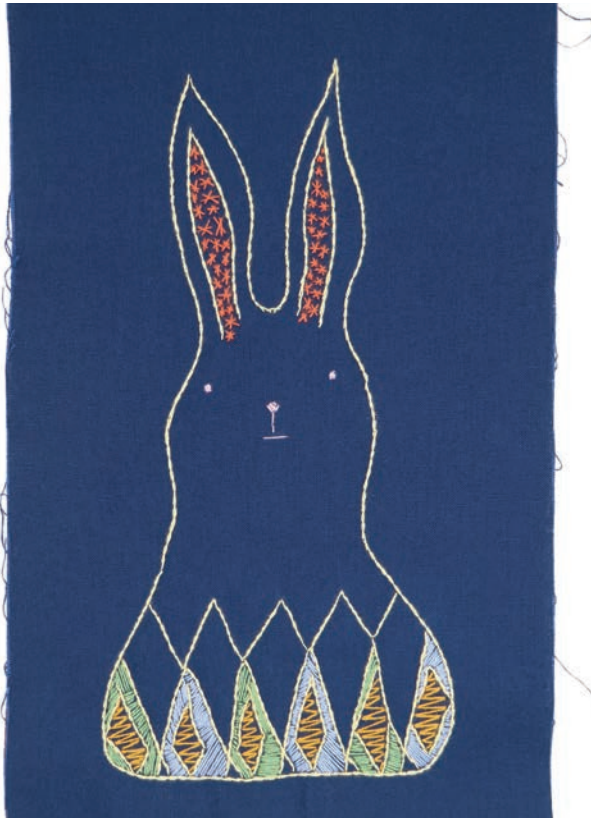


1. Using the carbon transfer paper and a stylus, transfer the Stuffed Toy Bunny template onto the cotton fabric (A).
2. Using stem stitch and perle cotton thread, stitch the entire outline of the bunny design except for the eyes, nose, and mouth (B).
3. Inside the ears, add ermine stitch. In the outer portion of the bottom row of diamonds on the bunny's body, loosely stitch satin stitch (C).



**TIP:** Keeping the stitches spaced apart a bit more lends a more vintage look.

If you prefer a more solid appearance, add more stitches for a denser look.



D



E

4. Add Bosnian stitch to the inside of the bottom row of diamonds on the bunny's body. Use satin stitch to stitch the eyes, nose, and mouth (D).
5. Fill the top row of diamonds on the bunny's body with ermine stitch (E).
6. Add yo-yo or other embellishments above the stitched diamonds, if desired. Trim the cotton fabric to a 1/4" (6 mm) allowance around the outline of the body. Pin the stitched bunny body to the back fabric. Attach the stitched body to the backing fabric using whipstitch, leaving the bottom of the bunny body open for stuffing (F).
7. Stuff the bunny with polyfill to the desired poofiness and stitch the opening closed. Trim the backing fabric close to the whipstitched edge, being careful not to snip any of the stitches.



F



# NEGATIVE EMBROIDERY TOTE BAG

---



It's completely unreasonable how many tote bags I have. Yet I can't stop collecting them. I'm helpless when faced with their cuteness and usefulness. Plus, they are the perfect way to carry around stitching projects. This little tote bag is a fun way to honor your handmade artist pride!

I view scissors as a kind of universal symbol for making handmade items. No matter what you are creating, odds are that you'll need a pair of scissors at some point.

The term "negative embroidery" means the background of the project is stitched to create the outline of the central motif. By doing this on your tote bag, you add a fun, unexpected twist!

## MATERIALS

Tote bag measuring 13" wide x 14" long (33 x 35.5 cm) in 100% cotton

RIT dye (optional)

Negative Embroidery Tote Bag template (page 136)

Carbon transfer paper

Pentel gel roller pen for fabric (optional)

Lightweight fabric or felt measuring 8½" x 11" (21.5 x 28 cm)

Size 12 perle cotton thread in two colors

## TOOLS

Stylus

Pins (optional)

Size 5 chenille needle

Scissors

*Notes:* I decided to dye my tote bag before I began stitching. Prior to dyeing, it was a natural canvas color. I followed the directions for using RIT dye. This is completely optional but an easy way to create a custom tote color.

## FEATURED STITCHES

Satin stitch





1. Trace the Negative Embroidery Tote Bag template onto the center of the front of the bag using carbon transfer paper and a stylus (A).



**TIP:** I initially transferred the pattern onto the fabric using carbon paper. It worked fine, but my intention with this project was to put it in my purse and work on it here and there. I was concerned that the chalk would completely rub off with too much handling.

I used a Pentel gel roller pen and traced right over the chalk marks. These pen marks are permanent—they will *not* come out. But the dense stitching on this project will allow us to stitch right over the marks so that we won't see them when we are done (B).

2. If you are using a light- to medium-weight cotton bag, add a fabric panel to the inside of the bag where the design will be stitched. I used a piece of acrylic felt but you can use regular cotton fabric as well. To add the piece of felt, turn the bag inside out. Attach it to the bag using long basting stitches that will be removed later. (C and D).





D



E



**TIP:** I attached my support felt with large basting stitches that I will remove later. You can also use pins if you prefer.

3. Satin stitch in every square. I like to start by stitching the central row to further anchor the support felt on the back and then randomly choose squares to stitch after that. Remember: do *not* stitch the scissors (E)!

*Note:* I refer to this kind of project as a marathon project. It takes a long time but it comprises simple stitching, so it's a great take-along project to work on in those odd free moments.

4. Once you are done stitching, carefully remove the basting stitches from the felt and trim away any excess from outside the stitching area (F).



F





# 4

## Decorative Stitches

I learned hand stitching as a means to embellish crazy quilts. Those wonders of beautiful chaos were my first foray into making magic with needle and thread. So I have a sentimental attachment to the stitches in this chapter.

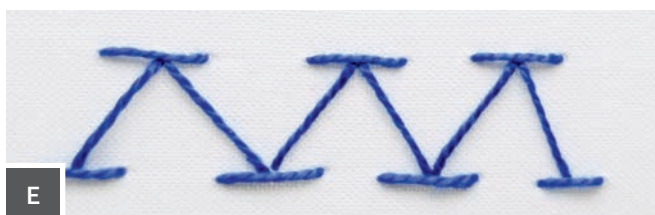
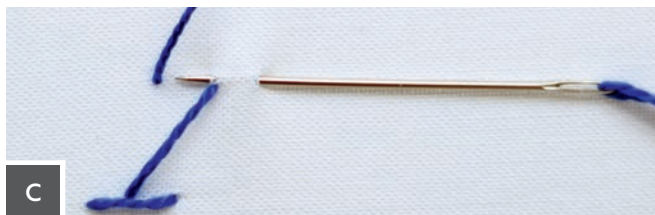
They work well as foundations for stitch combinations or to add a small detail in a project area that would otherwise be bare. These stitches are a mix of more formal stitches as well as functional ones that you wouldn't expect to be considered decorative, but their pattern-making ability warrants admiration, so I grouped them all together here.

All of the stitch instructions were done in size 5 perle cotton and size 3 embroidery thread.

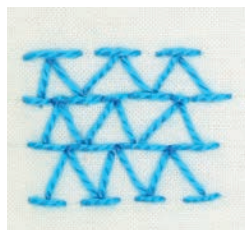
# CHEVRON STITCH

This is a stitch that I think crosses the line between functional and decorative. The straight stitch bars at the top are great for joining seams, while the diagonal connecting stitches give it a bit of flair.

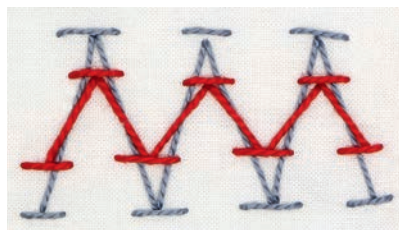
1. Bring the thread up through the fabric. Go back down through the fabric to the right and up in the middle of the stitch length (A).
2. Pull the thread flat. Go back down through the fabric at a diagonal distance as shown. Pull the thread flat (B).
3. Come up to the left of the diagonal stitch. Go back down into the fabric to the right of the diagonal stitch and up at the top of the vertical stitch as shown. Pull the thread flat (C).
4. Repeat step 3 but at the bottom of the newest diagonal stitch. Repeat for desired length (D and E).



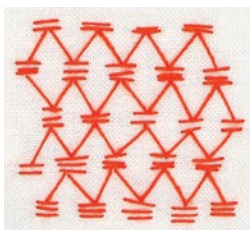
## Chevron stitch variations



STACKED CHEVRON STITCH WITH THE ROWS SHARING THE HORIZONTAL BARS.



EXTRA-TALL CHEVRON STITCH WITH SHORTER BOLD ROW OF CHEVRON OVER THE TOP.



ROWS OF CHEVRON STITCH SEPARATED BY EXTRA DETACHED HORIZONTAL STITCHES.

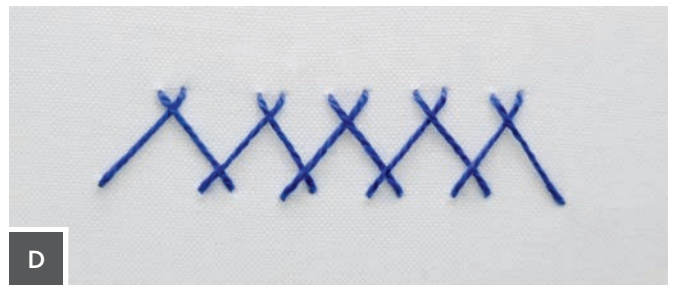
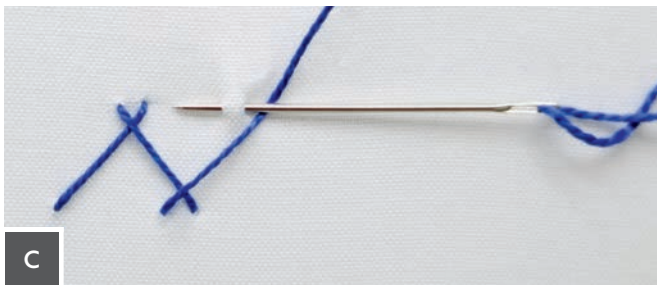
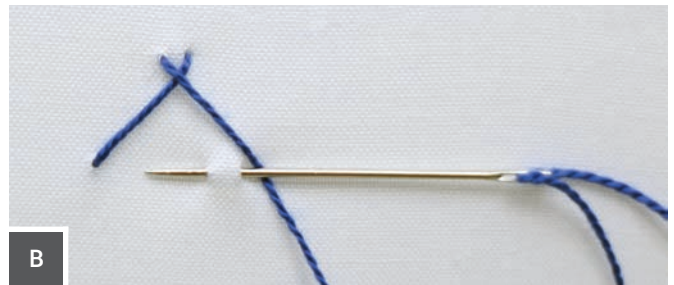
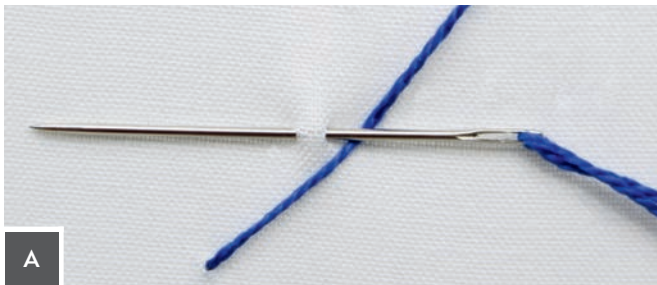


RANDOM PLACEMENT OF THE HORIZONTAL BARS.

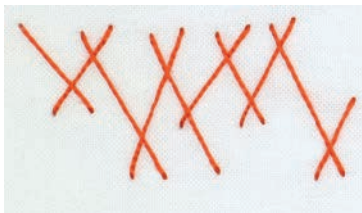
# HERRINGBONE STITCH

This stitch is a combination of simplicity with a little added sass. All the detail lies in the crossover at the bottom and top of the stitch band, inviting viewers for a closer look.

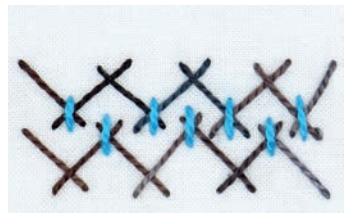
1. Bring the thread up to the front of the fabric. Moving diagonally to the right, take the needle down and up a short distance as shown. Leave the working thread underneath the needle (A).
2. Pull the thread through and flat. Move to the right of the lower leg of the previous diagonal stitch and take the needle up and down a short distance as shown. Leave the working thread underneath the needle (B).
3. Pull the thread through and flat. Move to the right of the upper leg of the previous diagonal stitch and take the needle up and down a short distance as shown. Leave the working thread underneath the needle (C).
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for the desired length (D).



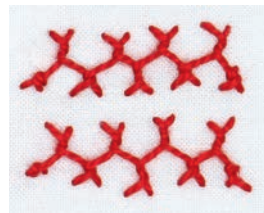
## Herringbone stitch variations



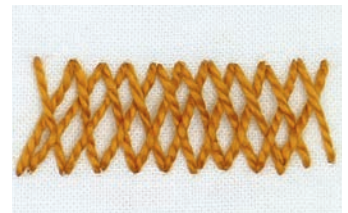
VARYING HEIGHTS OF THE CROSSOVER POINTS.



TWO ROWS OF HERRINGBONE STITCH WITH SHORT STRAIGHT STITCHES IN A CONTRASTING COLOR ALONG ONE EDGE OF THE CROSSOVER POINTS.



THE THREAD IS LOOPED OVER BENEATH THE CROSSOVER POINT BEFORE STARTING THE NEXT STITCH.

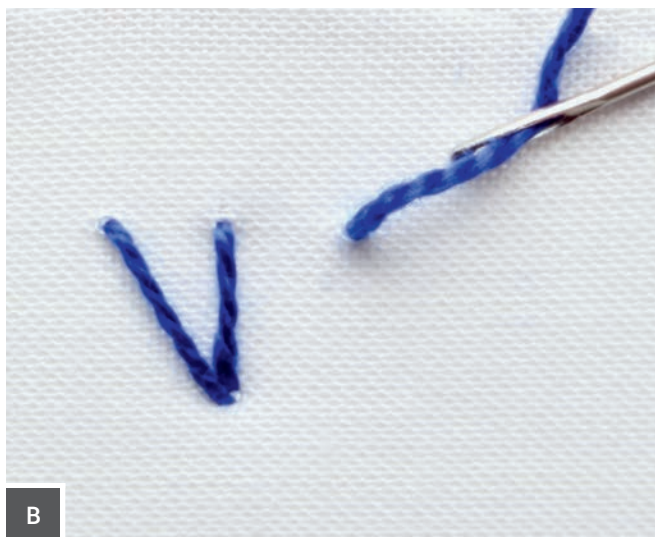


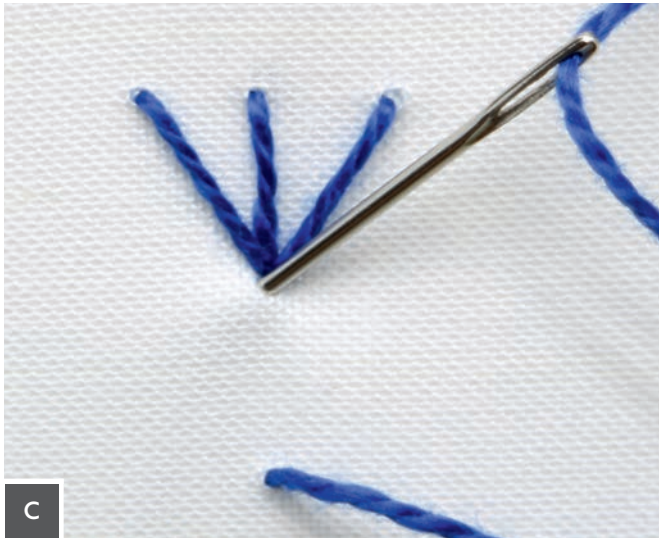
ELONGATED STITCH WORKED CLOSELY TOGETHER.

# FERN STITCH

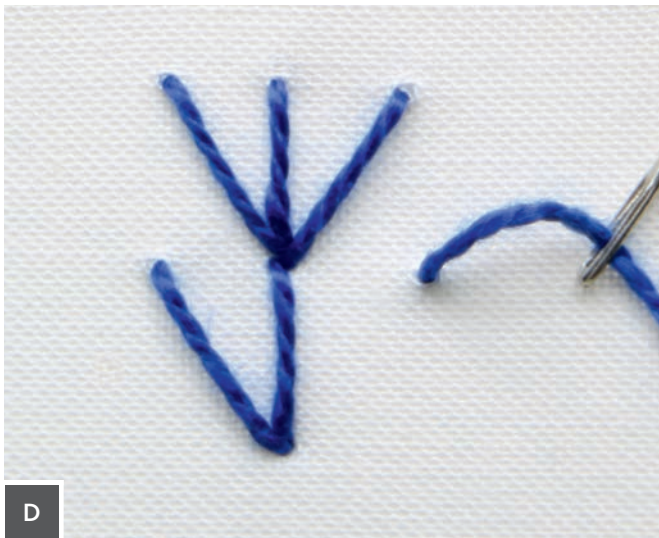
This stitch mimics its namesake in a simplified manner. It works beautifully in botanical-themed stitching but also holds its own as a clean, decorative stitch.

1. Begin by taking a single vertical stitch. Come up to the left of the vertical stitch in line with the top of it as shown (A).
2. Go back down through the fabric at the bottom of the vertical stitch and pull flat. Come up to the right of the vertical stitch and go back down at the base of the vertical stitch, pulling the thread flat (B).
3. Continue by taking a second long vertical stitch directly beneath the first one (C).
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 to create the diagonal stitches to the sides of the vertical stitch. Continue for the desired length (D and E).

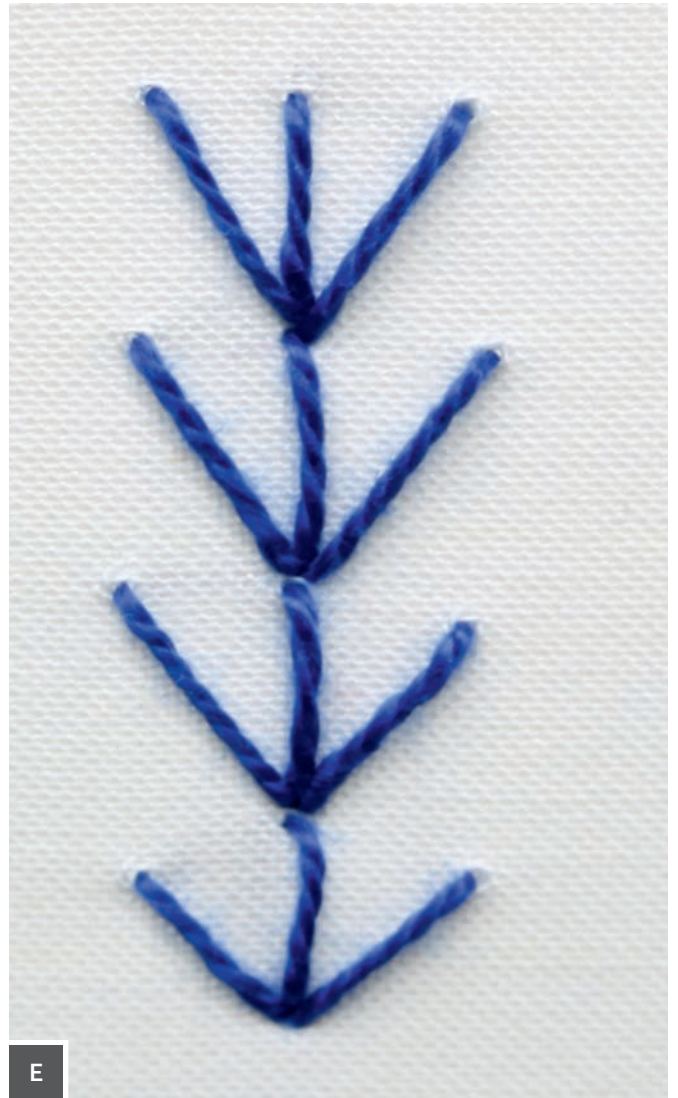




C

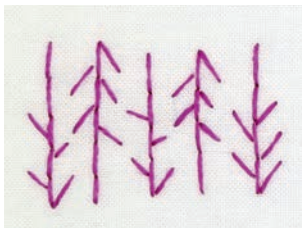


D

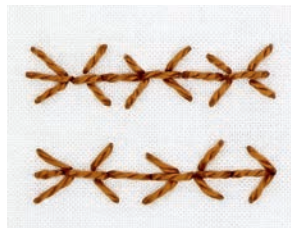


E

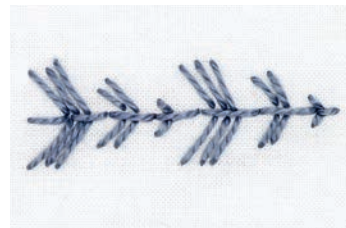
*Fern stitch variations*



THE DIAGONAL STITCHES ALTERNATE SIDES AND GO ONLY PARTIALLY DOWN THE VERTICAL STITCHES.



THE DIAGONAL STITCHES ALTERNATE DIRECTIONS IN THIS HORIZONTAL FORMAT.



DIFFERING NUMBERS OF DIAGONAL STITCHES IN VARIOUS LENGTHS ALONG A HORIZONTAL FORMAT.



ALTERNATING FULL DIAGONAL STITCHES WITH SINGLE ONES IN A HORIZONTAL FORMAT.

# JAPANESE DARNING STITCH

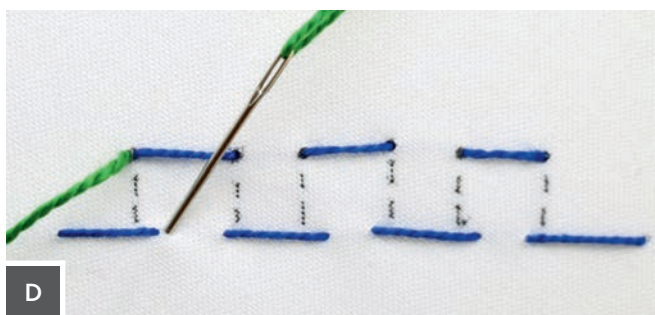
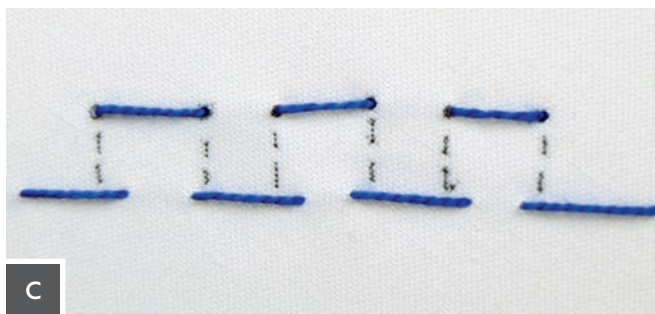
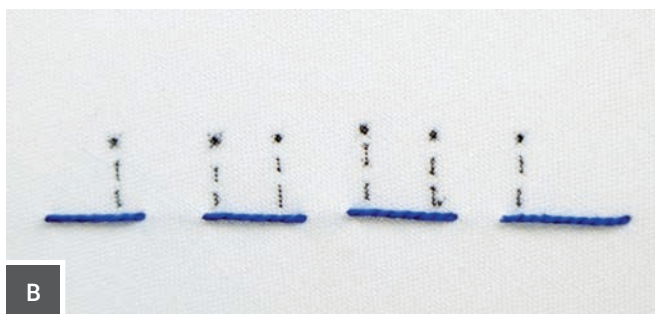
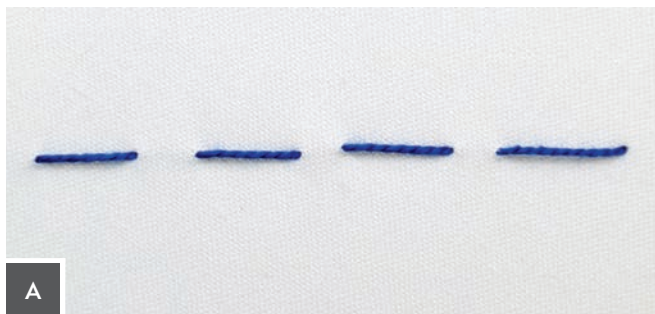
Although used for mending, the pattern created by this stitch is addictive and very decorative. The placement of the horizontal stitch lines is critical to its success, so some patience is needed during the initial setup.

*Note:* I worked this thread in two colors for clarity. I also marked the stitch placement points for the second row of horizontal stitches in pen to help better explain their spacing.

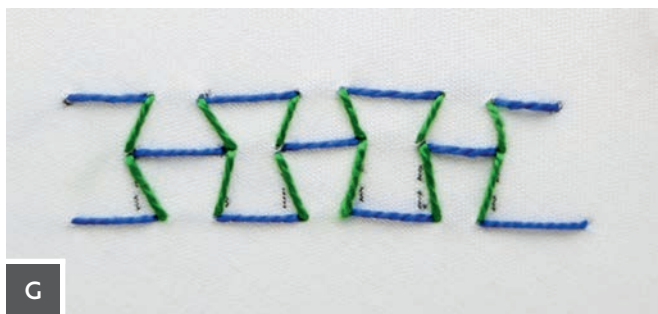
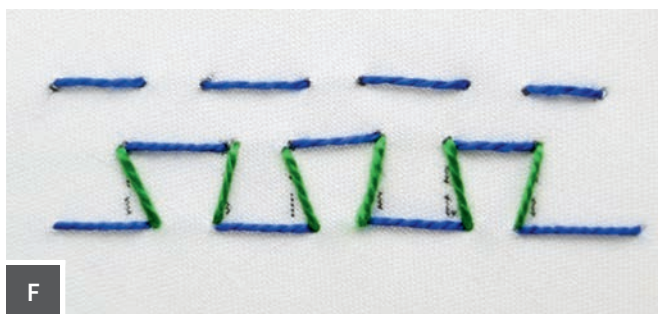
1. Begin by stitching a horizontal line of straight stitches (A).
2. The second row is stitched in a brick pattern, relative to the first row.

The drawn dashed vertical lines leading up to drawn dots indicate where the stitches of the second row should end and begin (B and C).

3. Bring the thread up to the left of the first stitch in the second row and down on the right side of the first stitch of the first row as shown (D).

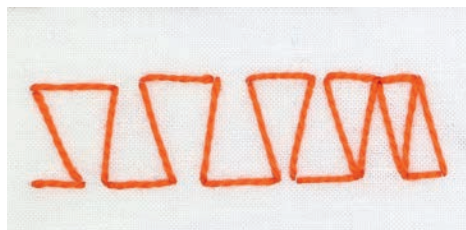


4. Add diagonal stitches at the ends of the horizontal stitches between each row across the entire length as shown (E).
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until the desired area is filled (F and G).




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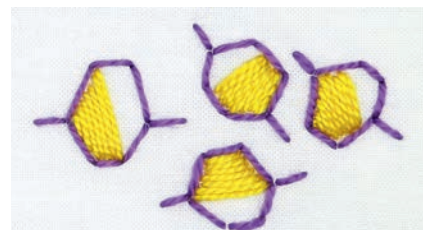
*Japanese darning stitch variations*



SINGLE ROW DETACHED WITH VARYING WIDTHS, STARTING OPEN AND ENDING CLOSED.



SINGLE ROWS WITH ERMINE STITCHES IN THE NEGATIVE SPACE.



CLOSED DETACHED SHAPE CREATED BY THE STITCH PATTERN. PORTIONS FILLED WITH SATIN STITCHES IN A CONTRASTING COLOR.

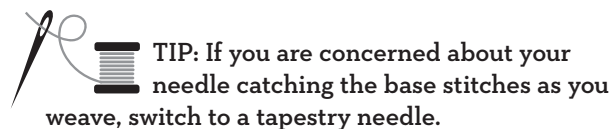
# NEEDLE WEAVING

This is the densest of the stitches in this chapter. The reason it's included in the decorative stitch category is because of its ability to create a wide range of patterns. It can be tightly woven or left light and airy.

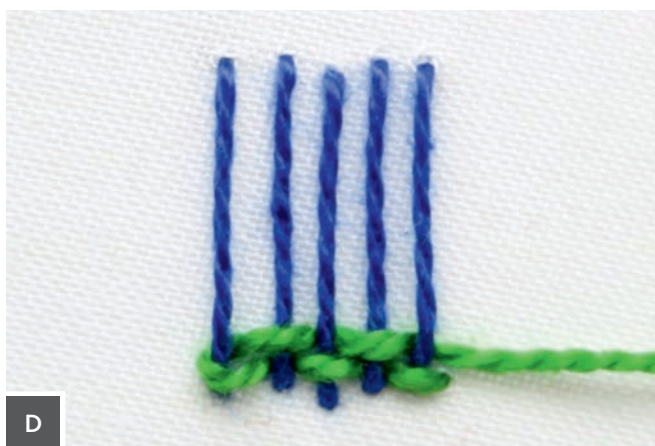
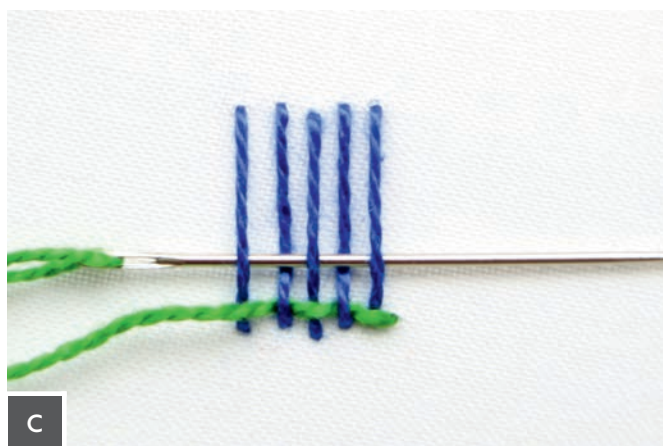
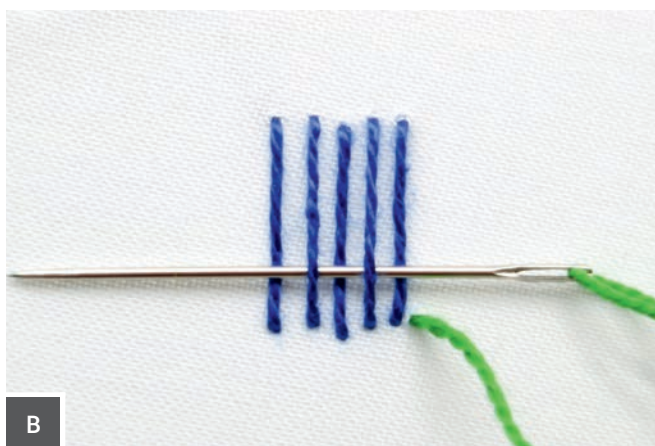
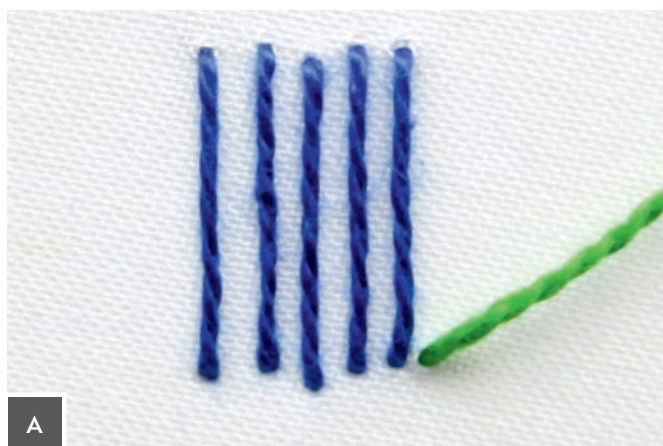
*Note:* The instructions show the stitch worked in two different color threads for clarity. It can be worked in one or multiple colors.

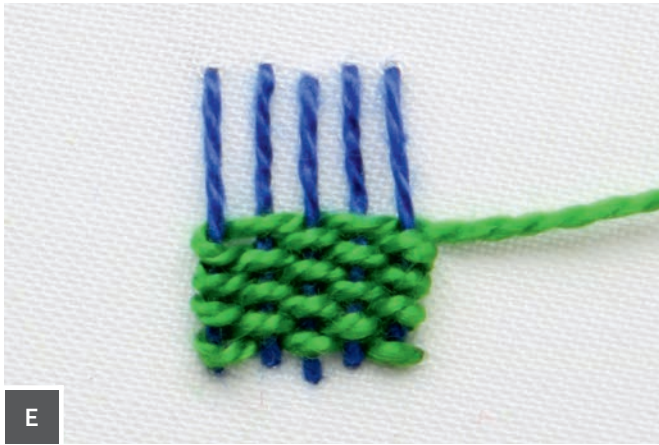
1. Begin by stitching long vertical stitches that will act as the base for the weaving.
2. Bring the thread that will be used for weaving up through the fabric at the bottom right of the vertical stitches (A).

3. Pass the needle to the left, under the second and fourth vertical stitches from the right. Gently pull the thread through the vertical stitches (B).

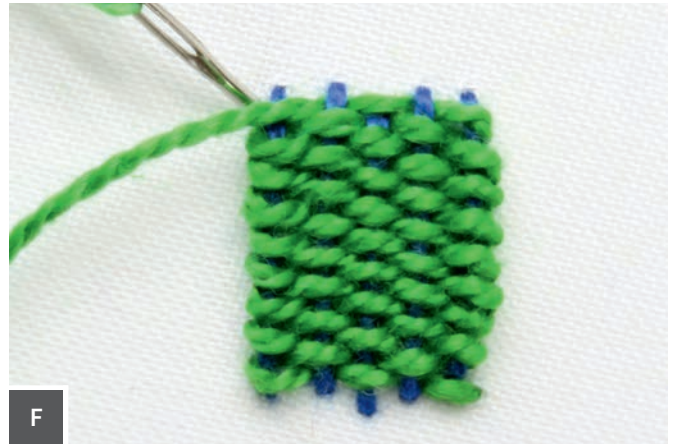


4. Pass the needle under the first, third, and fifth vertical stitches from the left. Gently pull the thread through the vertical stitches (C and D).

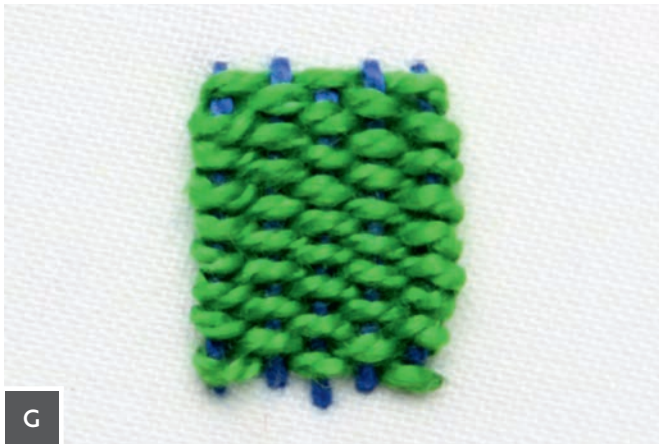




E



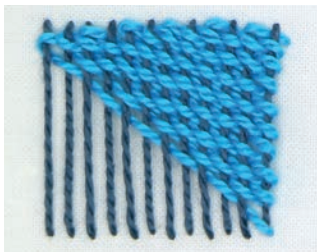
F



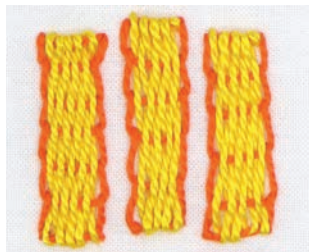
G

5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 all the way up the vertical stitches. Snug the woven rows close together using either your needle or your fingers (E).
6. Once you reach the top of the vertical stitches, go down through the fabric to secure the weaving thread (F and G).

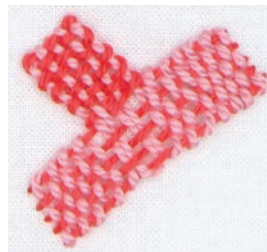
### Needle weaving variations



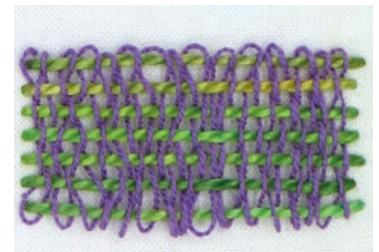
THE WEAVING THREAD IS PLACED AT AN ANGLE, LEAVING THE WEAVING BARS EXPOSED AT THE BOTTOM.



LADDER STITCH IS USED AS THE BASE FOR THE WEAVING.



THE PINK WEAVING THREAD IS EXTENDED AT THE CENTER OF THE RED BASE TO PRODUCE A SECOND BASE FOR WEAVING THE PERPENDICULAR BLOCK. THE SECOND BASE USES RED THREAD AS THE WEAVING THREAD.



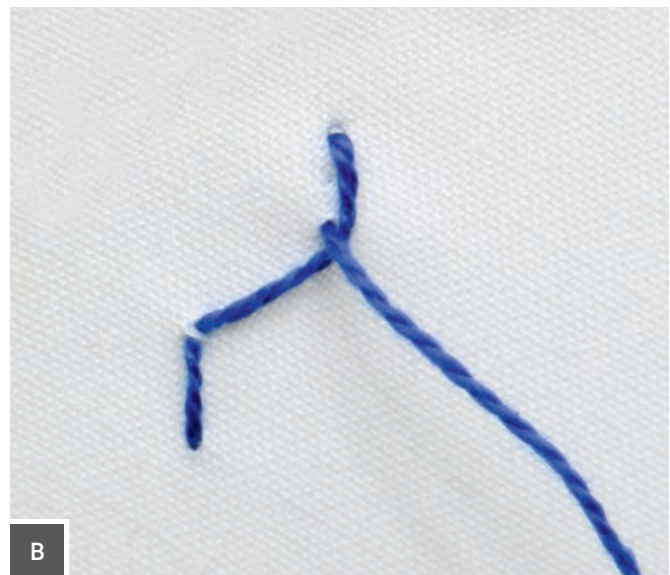
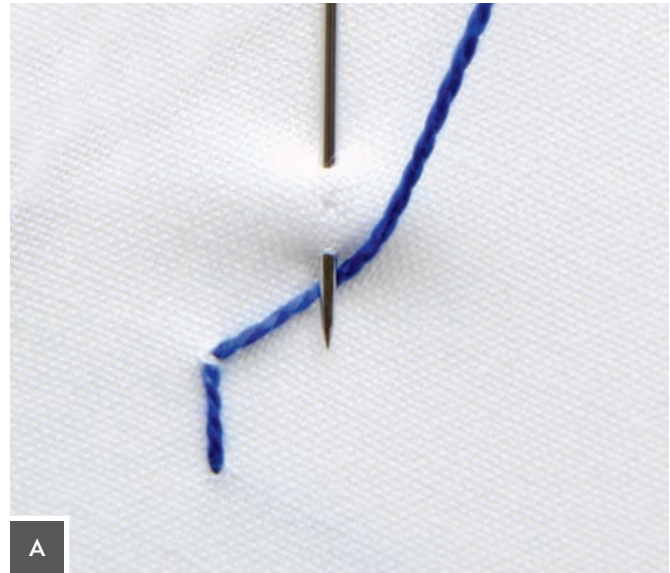
A HEAVY THREAD IS USED FOR THE BASE AND A LIGHT THREAD IS VERY LOOSELY WOVEN THROUGH IT.

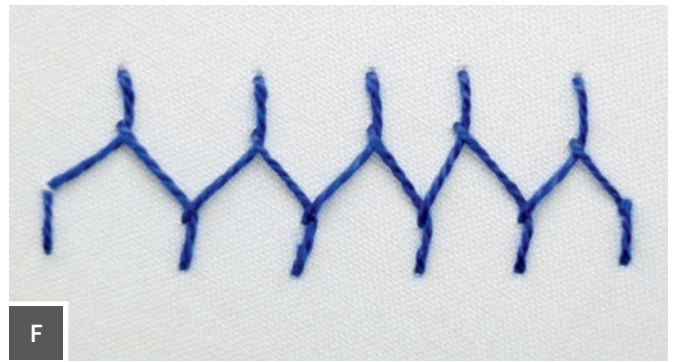
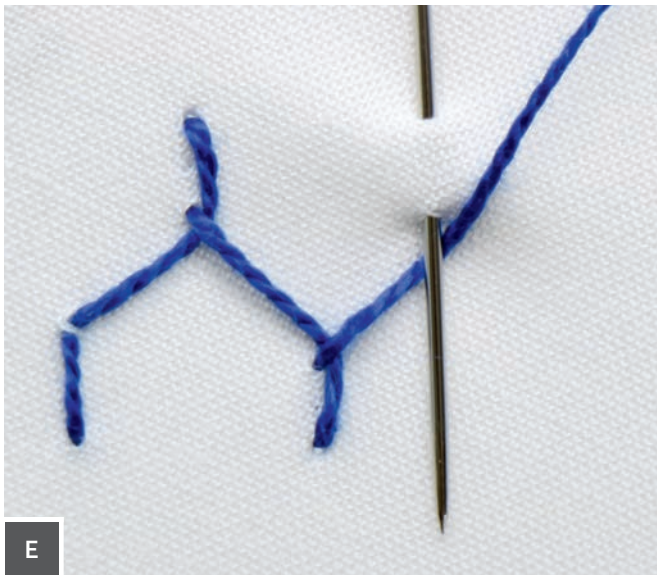
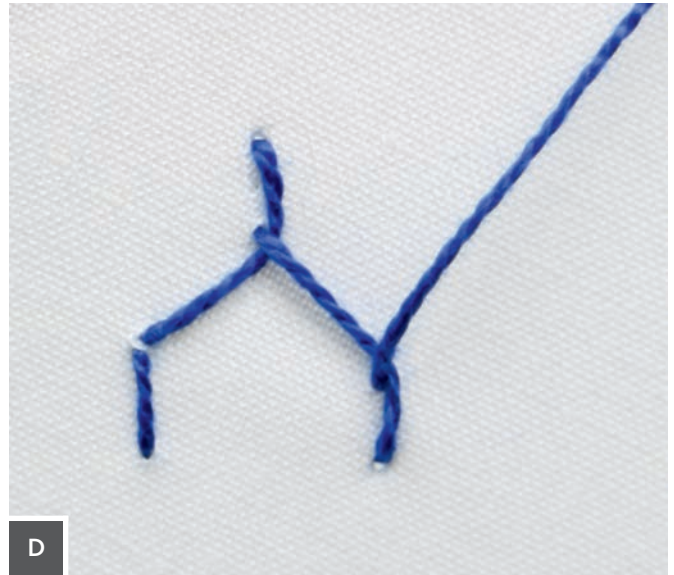
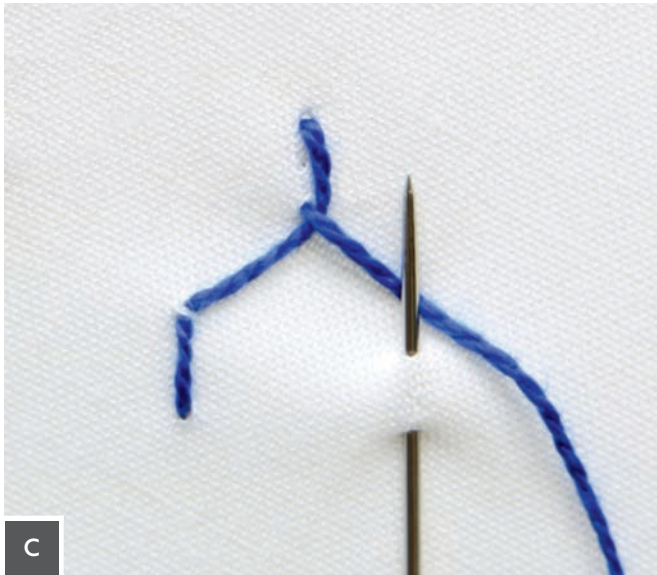
# CRETAN STITCH

This stitch shares similarities to the herringbone stitch. The main difference is the curve at the points of the stitches. This softens the stitch, making it feel a bit more delicate than its companions in this chapter. Its open frame also provides an opportunity for combining stitches.

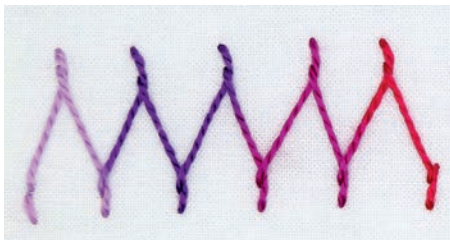
1. Take a small vertical stitch. Bring the thread back up through the fabric just above this stitch. Move up and diagonally, taking the needle down and up through the fabric as shown. Keep the working thread beneath the needle. Pull the thread through (A and B).
2. Move down and diagonally to the right of the straight stitch. Bring the needle down and up through the fabric as shown, keeping the working thread beneath the needle. Pull the thread through (C and D).
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 for the desired length (E and F).

*Note:* The small vertical stitch in step 1 is done only at the very beginning. Do not repeat this as the row progresses.

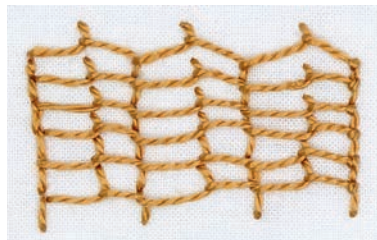




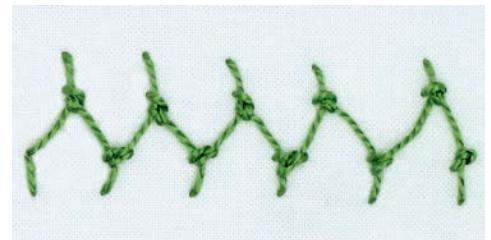
*Cretan stitch variations*



ELONGATED STITCHES SHOW OFF THE COLOR PROGRESSION OF VARIEGATED THREAD.



CRETAN STITCH IS WORKED WITH WIDE, SHORT SPACING. ROWS ARE STACKED CLOSELY ON TOP OF EACH OTHER TO CREATE THE APPEARANCE OF A SOLID PATTERN.



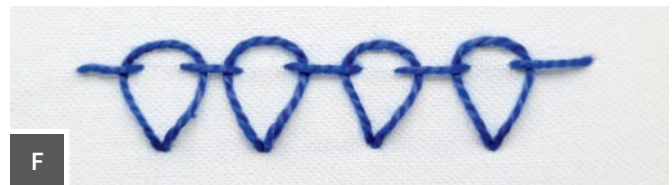
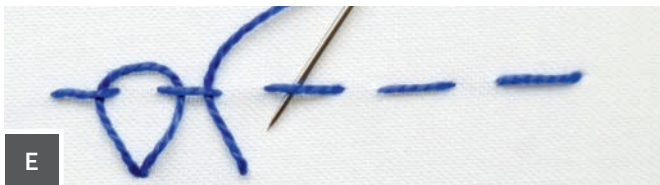
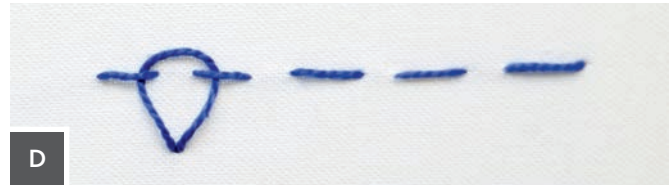
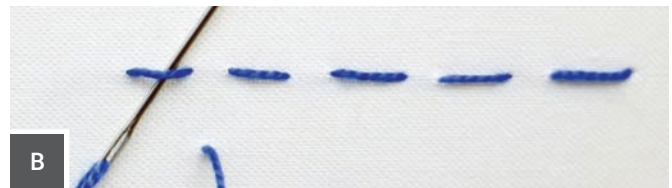
KNOTS ARE ADDED AT THE TWIST POINT OF THE STITCHES FOR EXTRA DRAMA.

# ESKIMO LACED EDGING

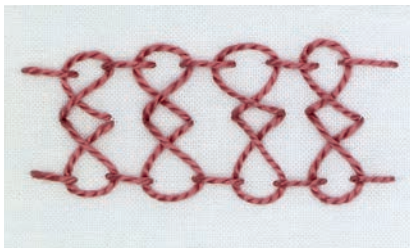
The only way to describe this stitch is charming. There's a cuteness about it that is appealing for a wide range of projects. Teardrop-shaped loops are neatly created along lines of straight stitching, making it a wonderful decorative addition.

1. Begin by creating a horizontal line of straight stitches (A).
2. Bring the thread up through the fabric below the line of straight stitches and in line with the gap between the stitches. Pass the needle underneath a straight stitch as shown (B).

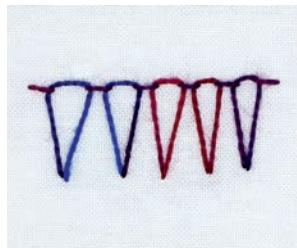
3. Pass the needle under the next straight stitch and take the needle back down through the fabric close to where the thread came up in step 2 (C and D).
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for the desired length (E and F).



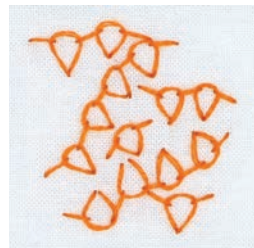
## Eskimo laced edging variations



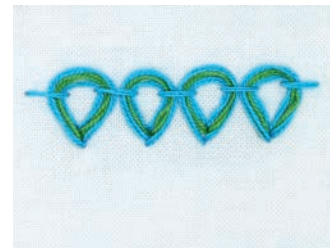
INSTEAD OF THE BOTTOM STITCHES FORMING A POINT, THEY ARE CROSSED. TWO ROWS OF EDGING ARE WORKED, STACKED IN OPPOSITE ORIENTATIONS.



ELONGATED STITCHES PULLED TIGHTLY DURING WEAVING TO CREATE A FLAT TOP.



DETACHED EDGING ARRANGED TO APPEAR RANDOMLY CONTINUOUS.



SEVERAL STRANDS OF TWO COLORS ARE WOVEN ALONG THE SAME ROW OF STRAIGHT STITCHES.

# WABI SABI NECK SCARF

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I'm pretty sure that scarves belong with every single outfit ever worn. They are by far my favorite accessory. I dress fairly plain—but with a unique scarf, I can jazz things up in a snap.

I'm partial to scarves that are quite short with ends that meet at the base of your neck. They are definitely more about fanciness than function, but they offer the chance to show off an interesting design or material.

In our scarf, we will be using very delicate fabric combined with unexpected stitching to create a work of art you can wear around your neck!

## MATERIALS

30" long × 9" wide (76 × 23 cm) piece  
neutral-colored linen

(2) 30" long × 9" wide (76 × 23 cm)  
piece dyed cheesecloth or similar  
loose-weave fabric

Paper

Sewing-weight thread

Size 5 embroidery thread

## TOOLS

Scissors

Pins

Sewing needle

Size 18 chenille needles

## FEATURED STITCHES

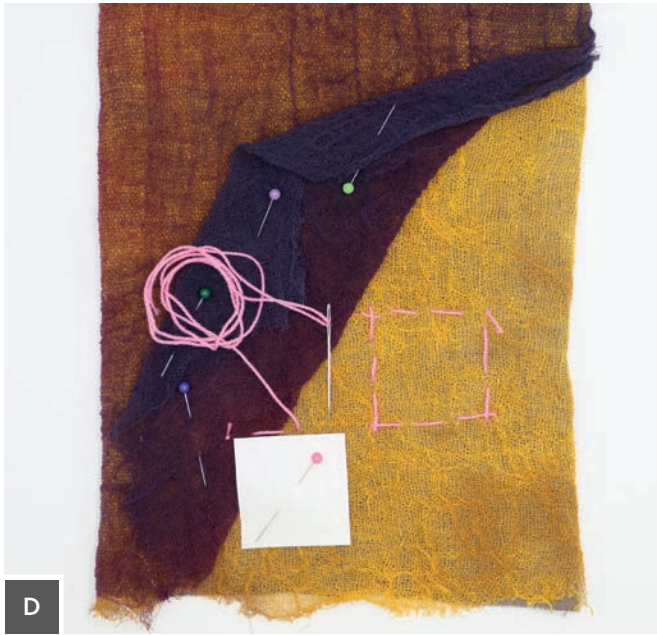
Needle weaving

Straight stitch



1. Cut the linen and two pieces of cheesecloth to the dimensions specified in the materials list (A).
2. Lay the linen fabric down with the two pieces of cheesecloth on top. Arrange the edges of the cheesecloth according to how you find pleasing. This area of the scarf is an opportunity to add some texture to the project. Fold back the top layer of cheesecloth to expose the cheesecloth beneath it. On the bottom edge of the photo shown, the length from the edge of the scarf to the point where the top layer folds back is  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " (19 cm) (B).
3. Using a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6 mm) seam allowance, fold the long edges under twice (using up a total of  $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3 cm] seam) and stitch down with small tack stitches to secure (C).





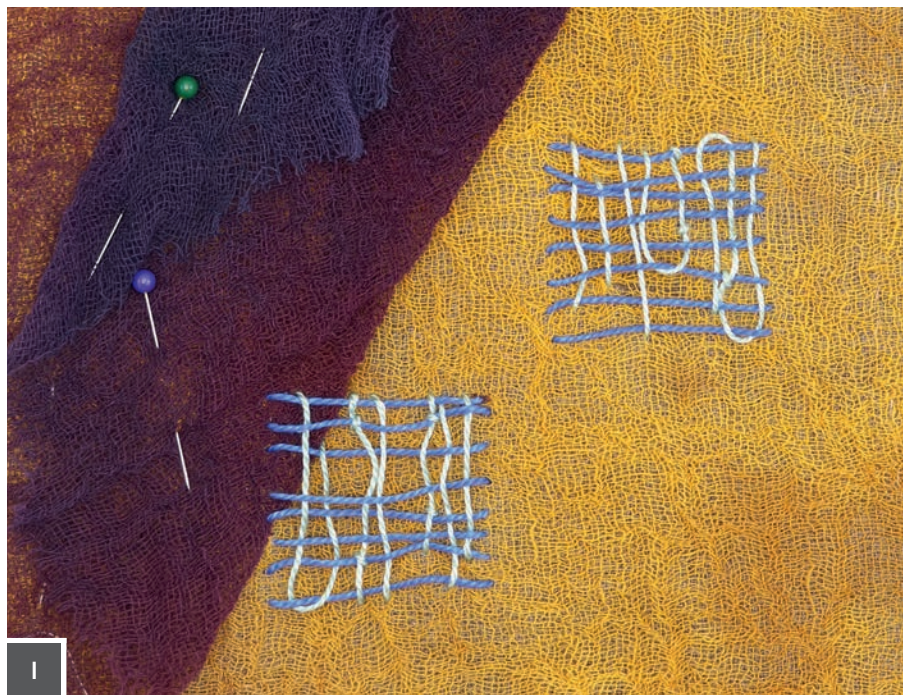
4. Cut a 1½" (3.8 cm) square from a piece of paper and pin it to the scarf. These are the design spaces for the needle weaving—you can use as many as you like to create the pattern. Stitch around the square using a contrasting color and long straight stitches (D and E).



**TIP:** This transfer method works best for this project. Tracing on top of the cheesecloth is not an option because of its open weave.

5. Stitch the horizontal bars of the needle weaving inside the marked square. Carefully remove the border stitches once you are done (F and G).

6. Begin the vertical weaving. Keep this very sparse, the goal is to mimic the open weave of the cheesecloth. In order to secure the loose threads of the weaving, take a tiny tack stitch in random places while doing the vertical weaving (H).
7. Repeat step 6 until you've completed the weaving for each square. Secure the folded area of the cheesecloth by stitching small straight stitches in a random pattern (I).







# UPCYCLED PINCUSHION

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Technically, the arm of a sofa or a pillow can be used as a pincushion. But trust me when I say that no one will thank you for that when they sit down to relax and find a needle poking into them. Making a proper pincushion is easy, and you can customize the size and stitching to your own style.

This oversized pincushion features fabric scraps from other projects and a bit of upcycled lace. It demonstrates how easily decorative stitches add the perfect finishing touch.

## MATERIALS

6½" × 6½" (16.5 × 16.5 cm) piece heavy fabric, such as cotton duck cloth

RIT dye (optional)

3½" (9 cm)-diameter embellishment, such as lace or a favorite piece of fabric cut to size

Size 16 perle cotton thread

Size 5 embroidery thread

6½" × 6½" (16.5 × 16.5 cm) piece backing fabric

Polyfill stuffing

## TOOLS

Scissors

Size 5 embroidery needle

Size 18 chenille needle


## FEATURED STITCHES

Herringbone stitch

Fern stitch

Backstitch

1. Cut the cotton duck to the size specified in the materials list.

 **TIP: I dyed the cotton duck cloth using RIT dye to achieve the color I wanted. If you can find heavy cotton fabric in only natural or white colors, consider dyeing it to spruce it up.**

2. Position the lace in the center of the cotton square and tack it down with small straight stitches in a color that matches the lace. Add herringbone stitch in size 16 perle cotton around the outer edge (A).
3. Add a second row of herringbone stitch in a high-contrast size 16 thread over the top of the first row in step 1 (B).

4. Add a third row of herringbone stitch in size 16 thread between the center of the lace and the outer perimeter (C).

 **TIP: Use a thread color close to the color of the cotton duck cloth to help visually tie the embellishment and base fabric together.**

5. Switch to a size 5 perle cotton in a bold color and add fern stitch between the other rows of stitches (D).
6. Place the stitched cotton right sides against the backing fabric and, using backstitch, stitch the two together, leaving a 2" (5 cm) opening for turning and stuffing.
7. Turn the pincushion right side out and stuff to the desired firmness. Stitch the opening closed.



## Pro Tip

WENDY RICHARDSON



Vintage lace pieces, whether hand dyed or in their original color, are an inspirational tool for my embroidery. They can serve as the focus or a starting point for a new piece. It's a perfect way to start stitching without a pattern, avoiding blank-page panic!

I also love that they are being preserved in this manner and built upon. It's like collaborating with an ancestor. Lace can easily provide inspiration for your embroidery stitches, lending your work a modern or an antique look—or something in between.

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/qtstudio](http://www.instagram.com/qtstudio)





# EMBELLISHED COAT

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I have a thing for coats—maybe because I live in Michigan, where the weather requires one for better than half the year. I'm always on the lookout for ones that have special touches. Since we have awesome stitching skills, we can take a basic coat picked up at a store or resale shop and do something unique in a short amount of time.

## MATERIALS

Long-sleeve coat with lining

Size 12 embroidery thread in four colors

Flat circle beads

Beading thread

*Note:* There is no stitching pattern to transfer for this project. The design is based on the idea of stacking rows of stitching closely together to form the look of a complicated cuff pattern. But you'll see from the stitch progression that each step is very easy.

## TOOLS

Scissors

Size 5 embroidery needle

Beading needle small enough to fit through the holes of the beads

## FEATURED STITCHES

Chevron stitch

Rice stitch

Fern stitch

1. Add a row of chevron stitch close to the hem of the sleeve. Stitch through both the lining and the top layer of fabric when you begin the row but as you work your way around, take stitches only through the top layer to hide the thread in between the layers (A).
2. Even though the rice stitch is not part of the decorative stitches chapter, we are going to borrow it for this project and give it a small twist. Create a row of closely stitched X stitches above the row created in step 1. Align the bottom legs of the X stitches to the midpoint of the straight bar of the chevron stitch beneath it (B).
3. Stitch the tack stitches that are used in rice stitch over the row created in step 2. Stitch them only on the top of the Xs (C).
4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 one more time for a total of four rows. Add a row of randomly placed flat circle beads above the last row (D).
5. Add vertical lines of fern stitch between two beads. Create them in various lengths and at every other bead space. Make sure they touch the last row stitched around the cuff to keep them cohesive with the design (E).
6. Repeat steps 1 to 5 on the second sleeve cuff.



## Pro Tip

SUSAN BRUBAKER KNAPP

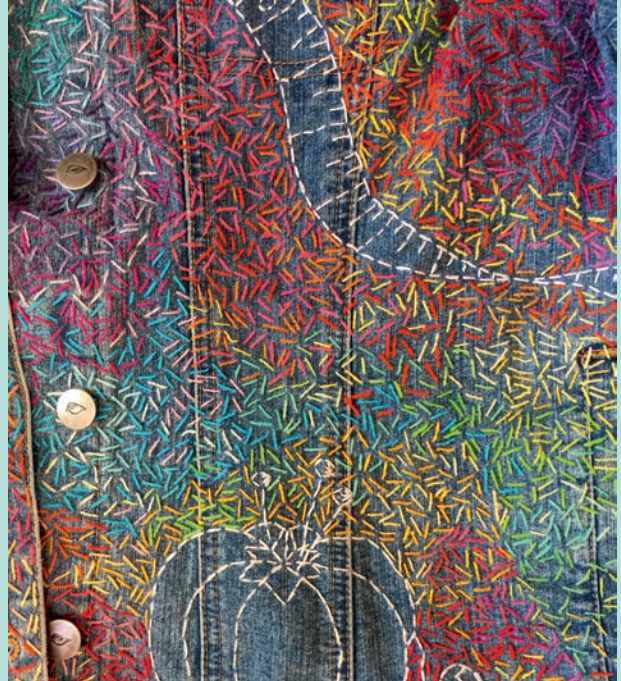


Consider thrift shops as a great, cheap source of garments. Or shop your closet for pieces you never wear because they are too boring.

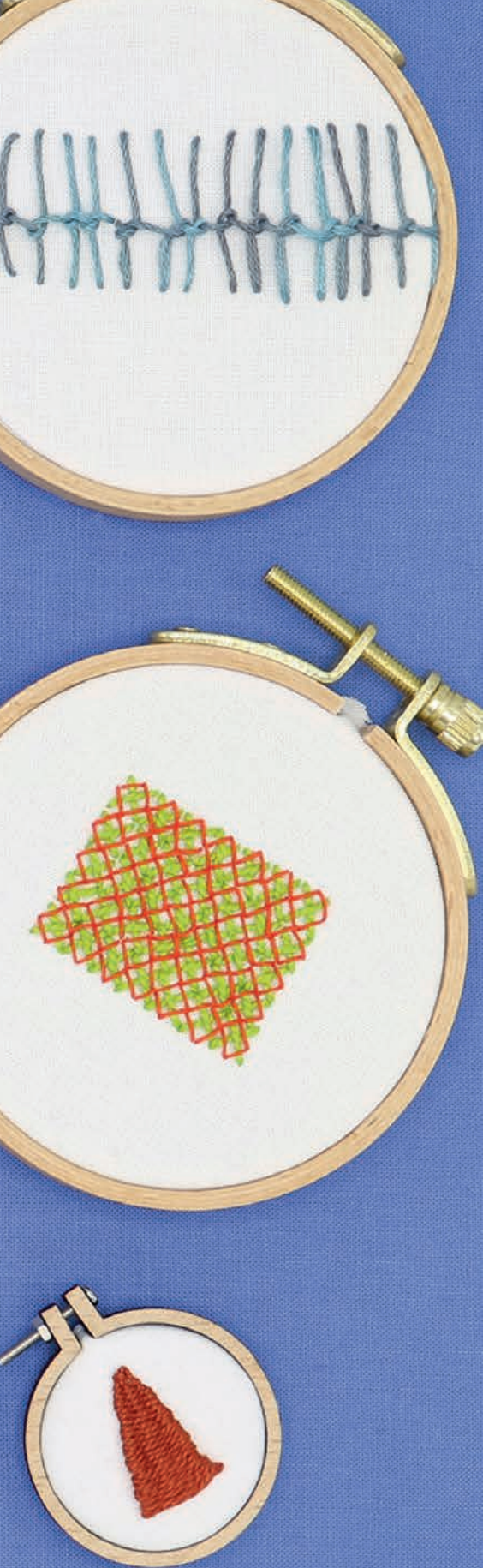
Test the fabric first. Some fabric is very difficult to stitch through. My denim jacket has just a touch of Spandex, making it much easier to stitch.

Be sure to use a needle with a big enough eye to reduce rubbing and fraying perle cotton or embroidery floss that will pass through heavy fabrics many times as you stitch. Try sharpening your needle to make it easier to punch the needle through. (I use my knife-sharpening rod!)

Website: [www.blumoonriver.com](http://www.blumoonriver.com)







# 5

## *Dimensional Stitches*

The stitches shown in this section stand out from other types of stitches—literally. They create texture, dimension, and unexpected designs. Because of their three-dimensional nature, they work best on projects that won't see heavy use and washing. These stitches range from small knots to completely detached stitches that hang off of the fabric.

Incorporating several of these types of stitches into a single project has special considerations. The Embroidered Square Bowl gives you a handle on what order to stitch them in to make easy work and the Abstract Knots Felt Brooch takes them down to a small, wearable art size.

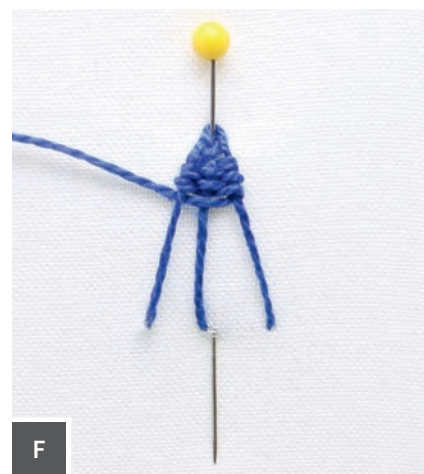
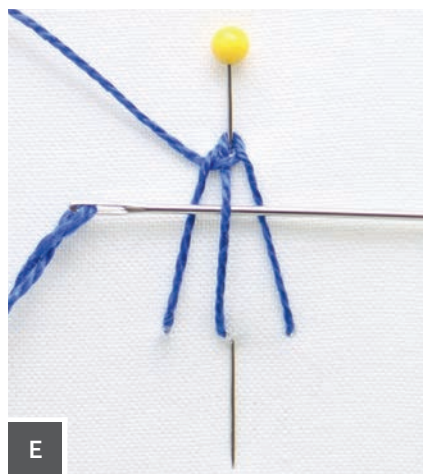
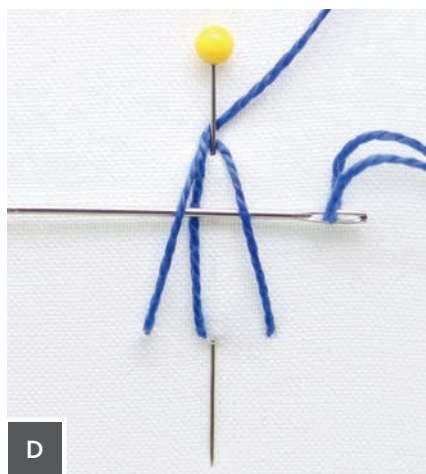
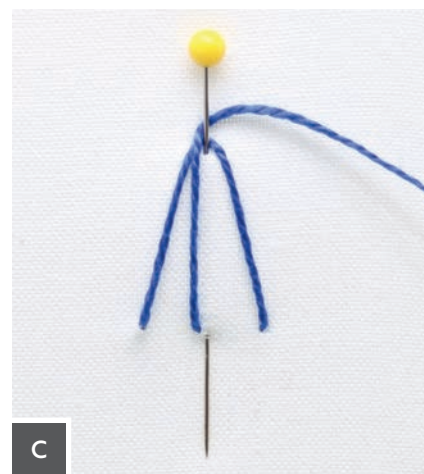
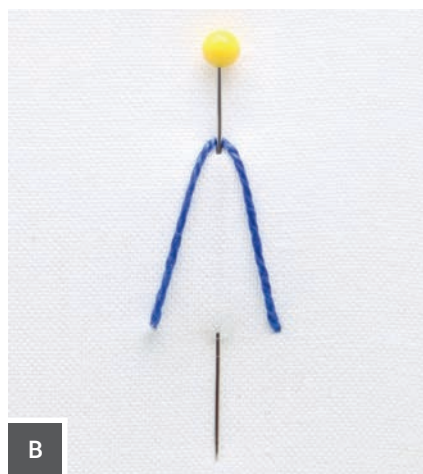
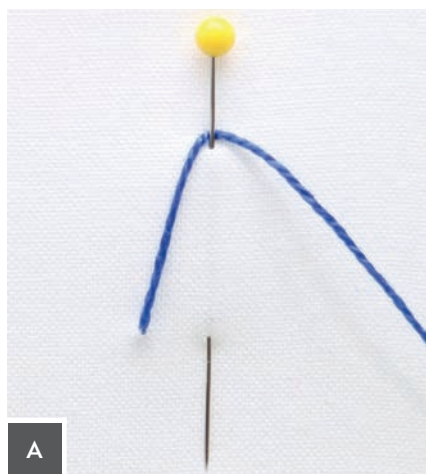
All of the stitch instructions were done in size 5 perle cotton and size 3 embroidery thread.

# WOVEN PICOT STITCH

This is one of those stitches that makes my stitcher's heart go pitty-pat. I just love that it's pure dimension and it's relaxing to simply weave back and forth. While it is a little bit on the time-consuming end, it's easy to master.

1. Place a pin in your fabric.
2. Bring your thread up to the left of the pin and loop it underneath the pin. Go back down through the thread to the right of the pin, even with where you came up in step 1 (A and B).
3. Bring your thread up to the left of the pin even with the other two stitches. Loop the thread behind the top of the pin (C).

4. We will begin creating the body of the picot. This is accomplished by weaving the thread back and forth using the thread frame we created in steps 1 to 3. Begin by passing the needle beneath the two outer threads and carefully pull the thread through. Use light tension but enough so that the threads are firmly set in place (D).
5. Continue weaving by going back in the opposite direction with the thread, this time only going underneath the center thread. Pull through (E).
6. Continue to weave back and forth as explained in steps 4 and 5. Be gentle with your tension. If you pull too hard, you will distort the thread-weaving frame and your picot will lose its shape (F).

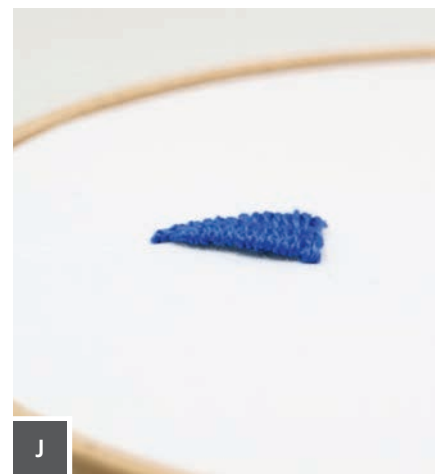
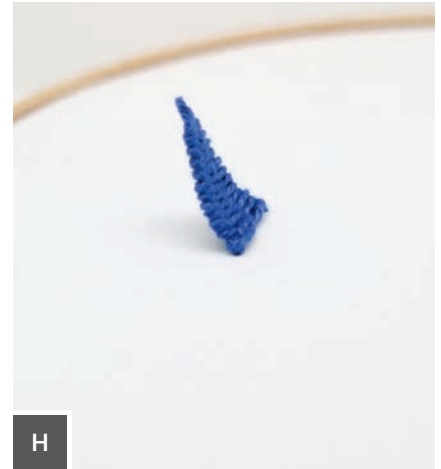
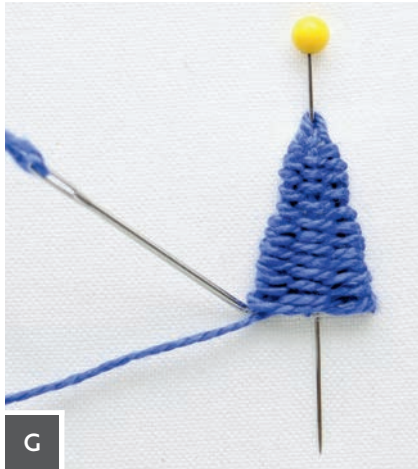




**TIP:** I find it helpful to lightly hold the picot as I add weaving to it. It keeps the previous stitches from moving, and I use my thumbnail to snug the rows up against each other to avoid gaps.

- Weave the picot all the way down to the base of the thread frame, making sure to cover those threads completely. Secure the picot by taking the needle down into the fabric and pulling the thread through completely. This will anchor the picot's base (G).
- Carefully remove the pin from the fabric. The body of the picot is completely detached from the fabric (H).

Optional step: You can secure the picot to the thread if you don't want it loose. Simply do this by bringing your thread up through the loop at the top of the picot. Go back down through the fabric close to where you came up and pull the thread through. Now the stitch will not move from the surface (I and J).



### Woven picot stitch variations



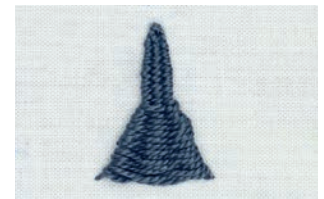
THE PICOTS HAVE BEEN FOLDED OVER AND STITCHED TO CREATE A TUBE SHAPE THAT LIFTS OFF THE FABRIC.



THE CENTER WEAVING POST IS SHORTER THAN THE OUTER WEAVING POSTS, PLUS STRAIGHT STITCHES AT THE TOP MIMIC THE EXPOSED OUTER WEAVING POSTS.



THE TOP HALF OF THE STITCH IS PULLED VERY TIGHT TO CAUSE THE WEAVING POSTS TO DISTORT AND THE PICOT TO FLAIR.

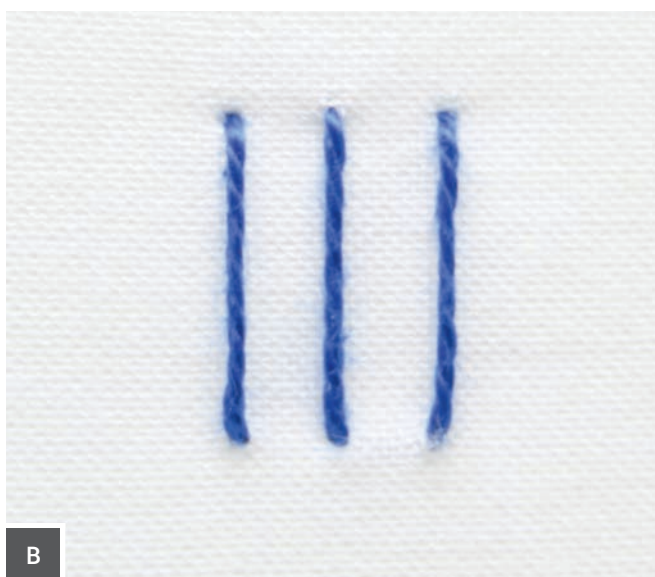
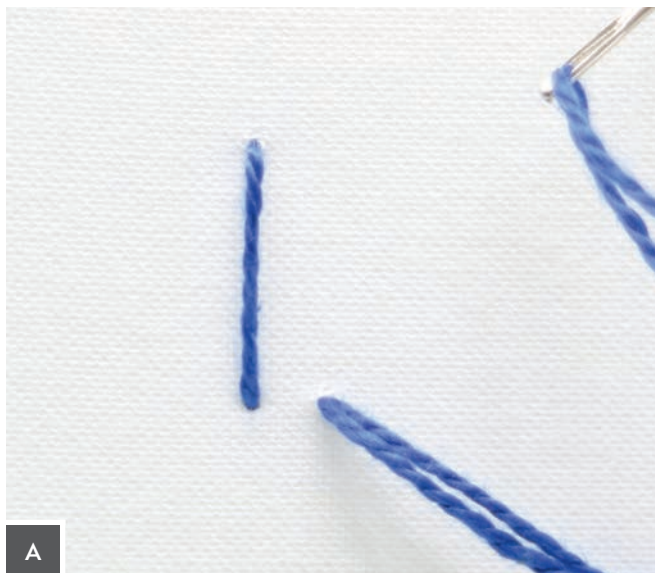


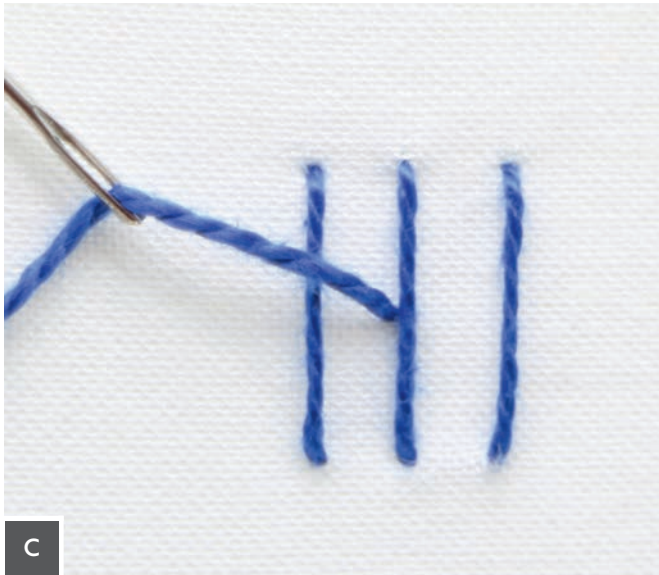
AN EXTRA-LONG PICOT IS TWISTED AND TACKED DOWN IN TWO PLACES TO CREATE A WAVE SHAPE.

# SHEAF STITCH

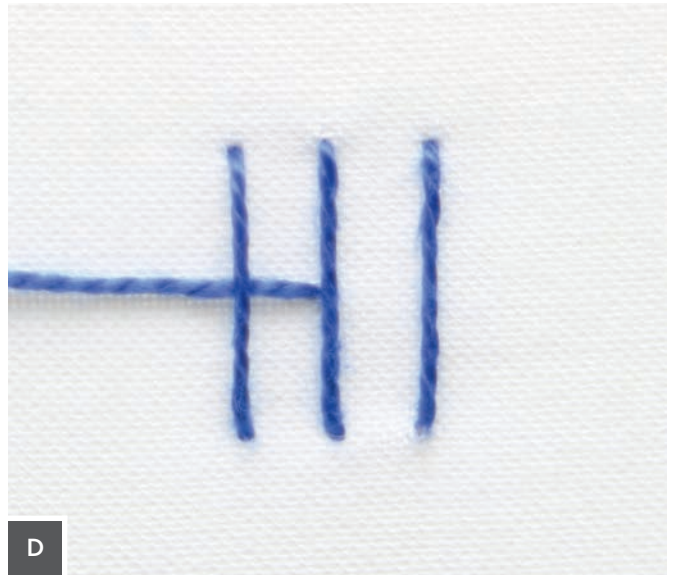
Sheaf stitch is a gathered stitch. Its simplicity allows for a lot of variation, making it good for both decorative borders and filling large spaces.

1. Begin by creating a single stitch in the fabric. Add two more stitches of equal length on either side of it (A and B).
2. Come up through the fabric to the left of the center stitch. Where you come up determines the shape of the stitch, as this will become the gathering mechanism. The basic sheaf stitch is gathered in the center of the vertical stitches (C).
3. Pass the working thread under the left vertical stitch (D).
4. Pass the needle under the right vertical stitch and go back down through the fabric to the right of the center stitch (E).
5. Pull the thread all the way through to the back to complete the stitch (F).

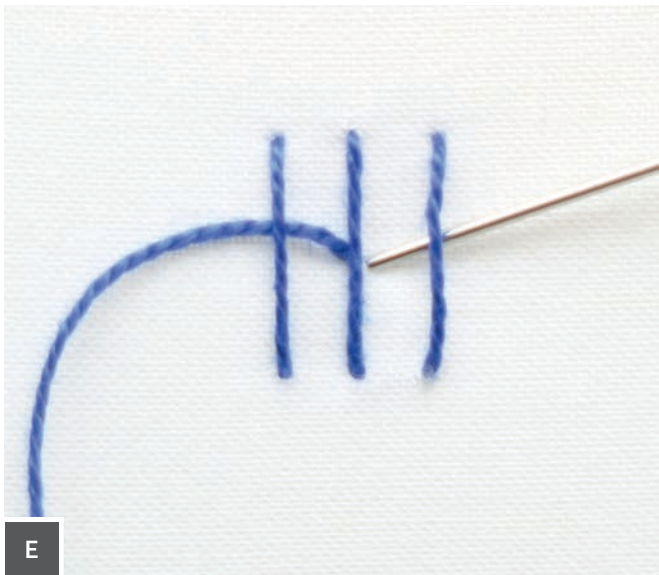




C



D

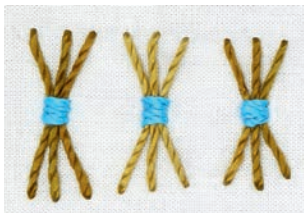


E

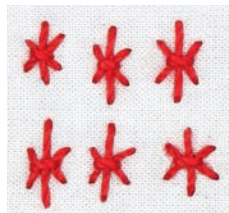


F

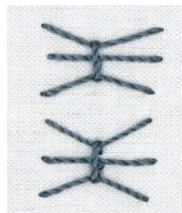
*Sheaf stitch variations*



EXTRA-LONG STRAIGHT STITCHES ARE GATHERED WITH MULTIPLE TACK STITCHES IN A CONTRASTING COLOR.



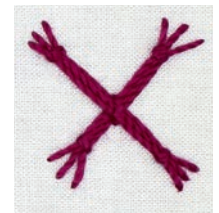
UNEVEN LENGTH STRAIGHT STITCHES.



HORIZONTAL ORIENTATION WITH WIDE SPACING BETWEEN STITCHES TO CREATE A BLOCKIER STITCH.



TACK STITCHES AT THE TOP AND BOTTOM INSTEAD OF THE CENTER.



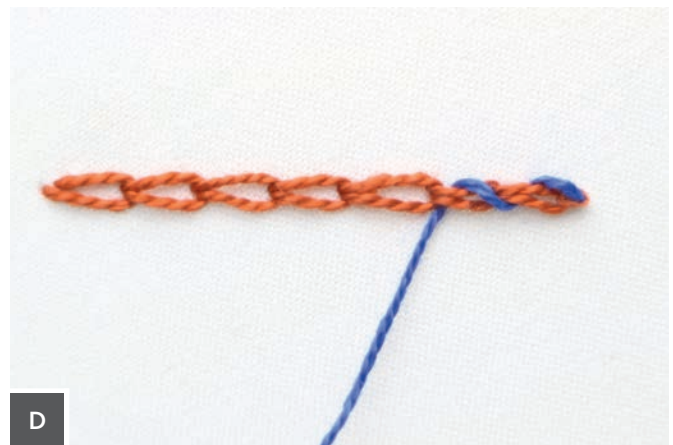
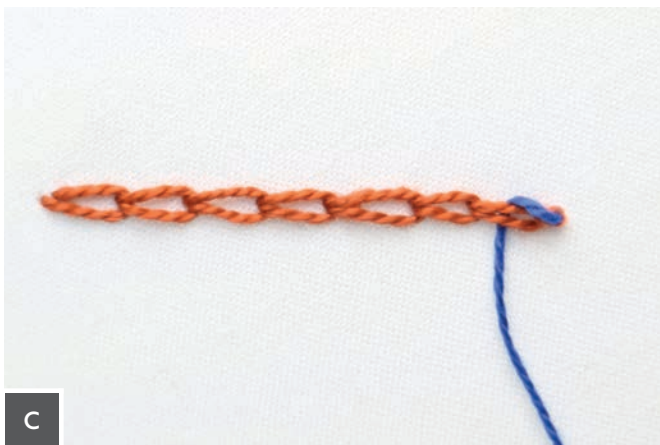
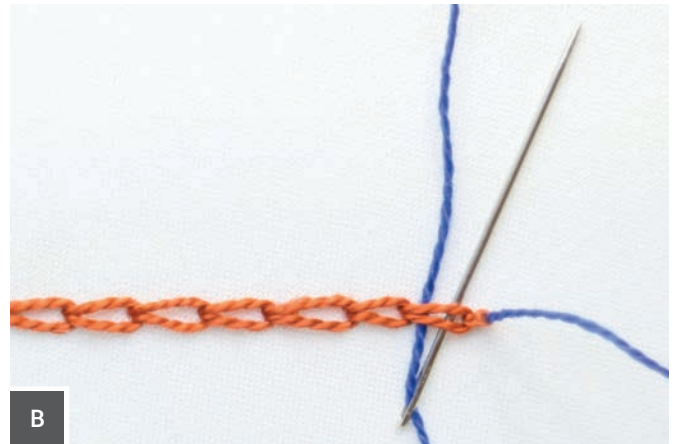
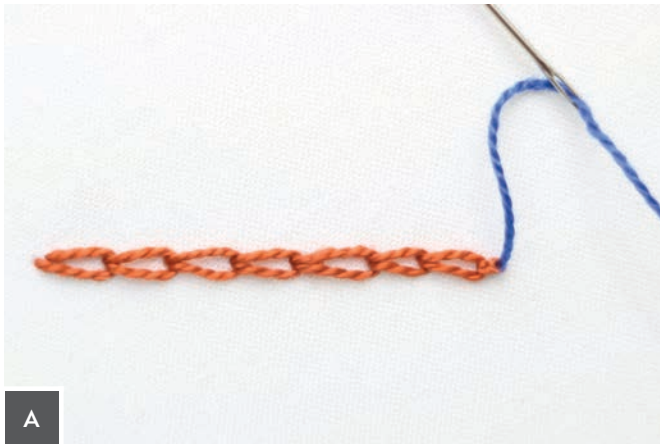
EXTRA-LONG STRAIGHT STITCHES WITH TACK STITCHES AT THE FAR ENDS; TWO STITCHES ARE DONE TO FORM AN X SHAPE.

# WHIPPED STITCH

I like to think of this stitch as the bow on a package. It's a complementary stitch that lies on top of another stitch. This layering creates great dimension. And because this stitch is literally whipped around its counterpart, it alters the original stitch in a way that makes the entire unit unique.

*Note:* I stitched this example in very high-contrast threads for illustration purposes. This stitch is equally as appealing in colors that are similar to each other. The chain stitch was used as the base stitch for these directions but whipstitch can be applied to nearly every type of stitch. Experiment!

1. Begin by creating a row of chain stitch.
2. Bring the working thread up at the end of the chain stitch (A).
3. Pass the needle under the first chain by turning your needle backward so that the eye goes under the thread first. This prevents the needle from snagging the chain stitch because the eye end is blunt (B).
4. Pull the working thread all the way through the chain. Keep your tension gentle so as not to distort the chain stitch (C and D).

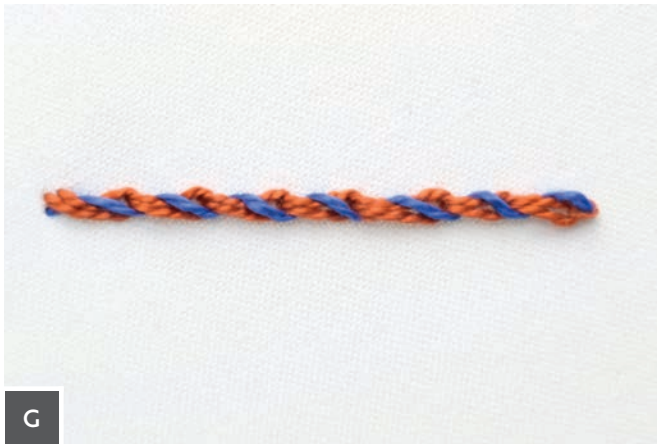




E



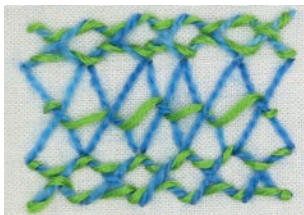
F



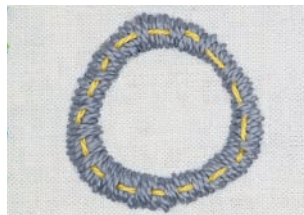
G

5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 along the entire length of the chain stitch (E).
6. Take the working thread down through the fabric and pull through to secure the whipped stitch (F and G).

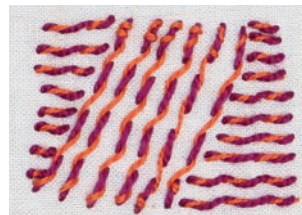
*Whipped stitch variations*



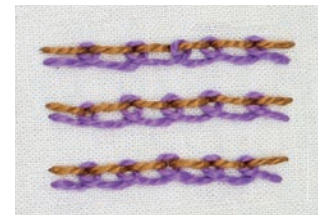
THREE ROWS OF X STITCH WITH THE CENTER ROW HAVING TALLER STITCHES THAN THE TOP AND BOTTOM STITCHES. X STITCHES ARE WHIPPED IN A CONTRASTING COLOR.



ROUND SATIN-STITCHED CIRCLE WITH WHIPPED STITCH IN A CONTRASTING COLOR THROUGH THE CENTER.



RUNNING STITCHES ARE WHIPPED IN CONTRASTING COLORS—CENTER STITCHES HAVE MAGENTA RUNNING STITCH WITH ORANGE WHIP AND HORIZONTAL STITCHES HAVE ORANGE RUNNING STITCH WITH MAGENTA WHIP; THIS CREATES AN OPTICAL-ILLUSION STYLE STITCH.



BACKSTITCH WHIPPED IN A CONTRASTING COLOR TO FORM LOOPS.

# LOOP STITCH

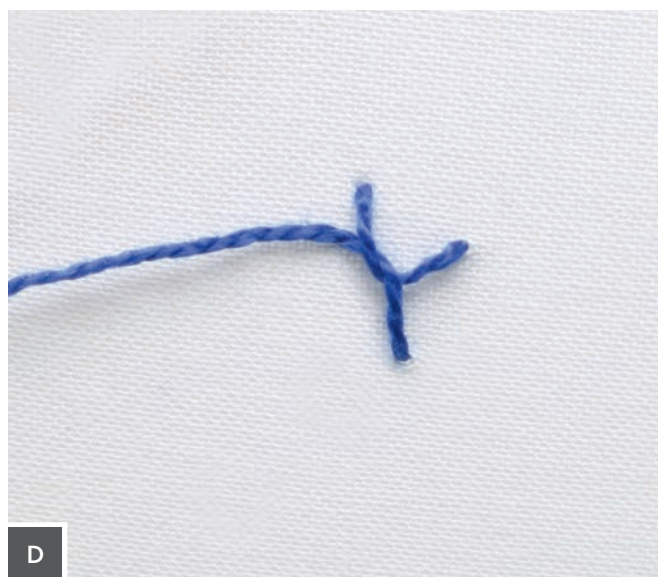
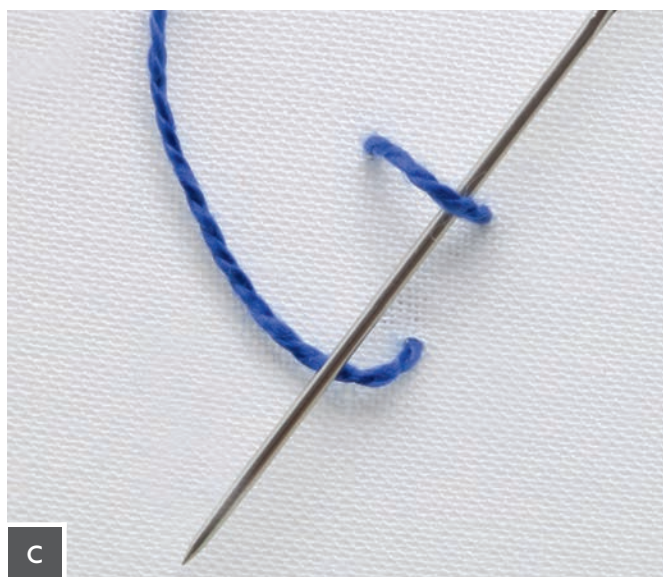
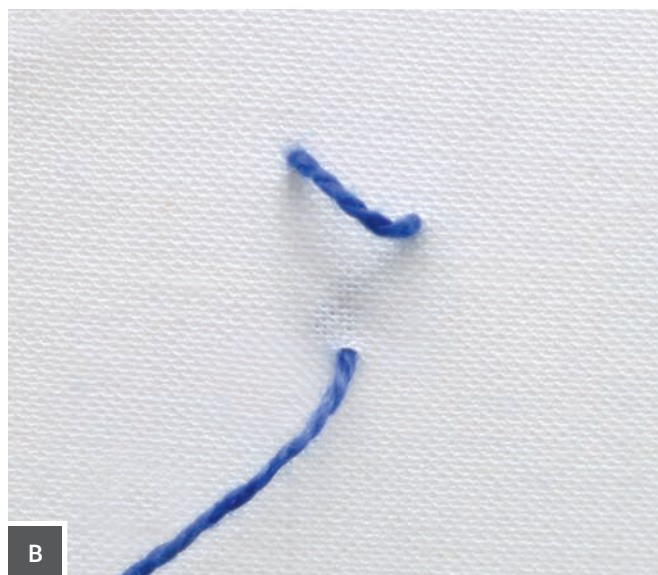
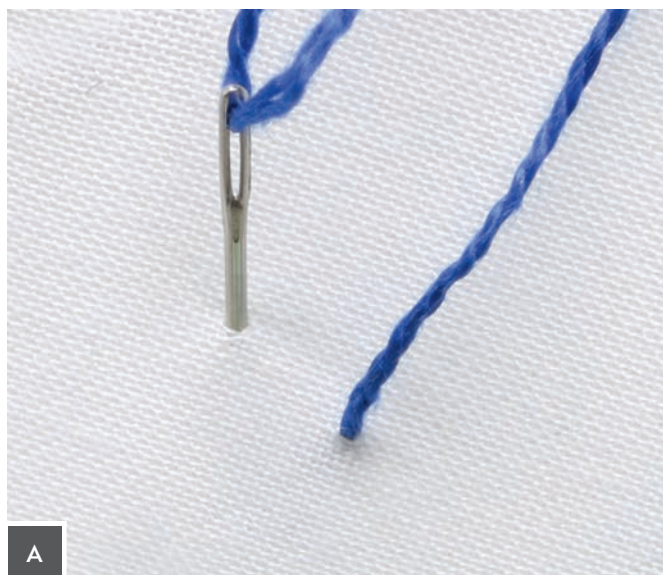
This stitch places the loop along the center of the vertical stitch. It is not anchored at the loop, which makes it both dimensional and delicate.

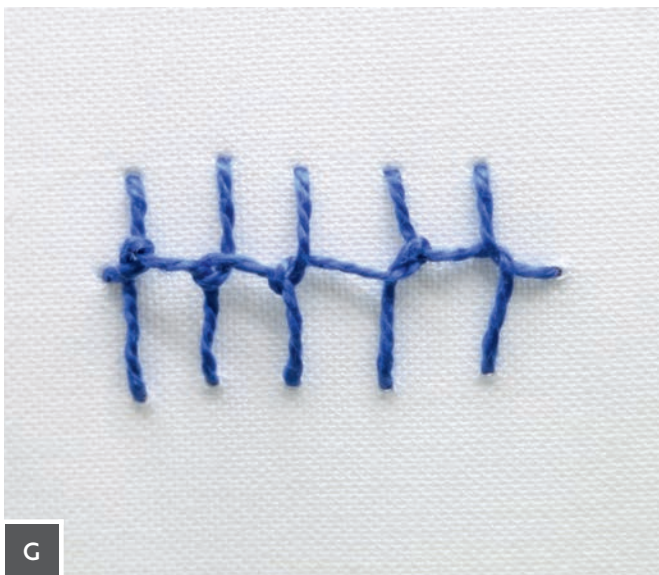
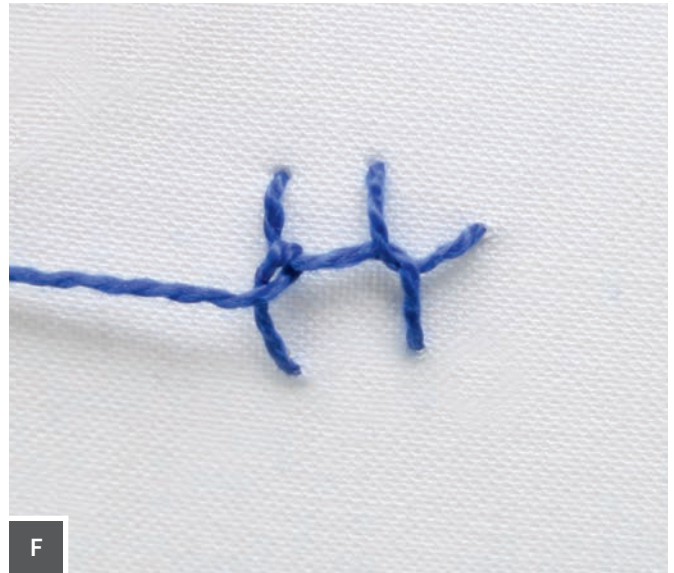
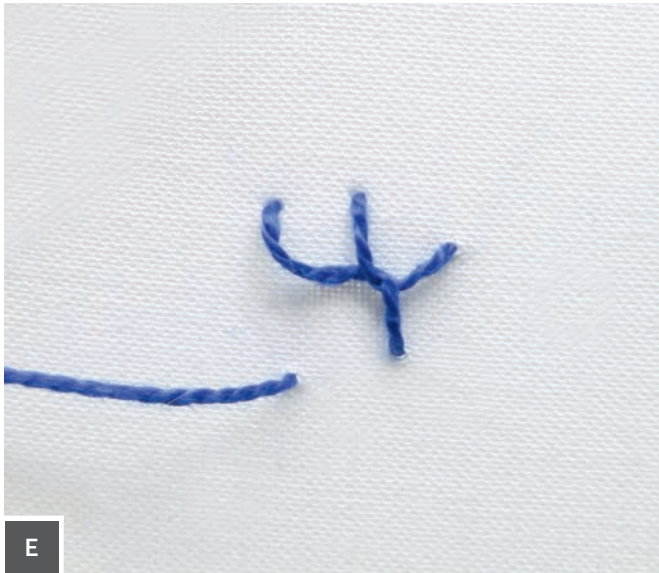
1. Bring the needle up through the fabric. Go back down to the upper left (A).

2. Pull the thread through but not completely flat. Come back up below where you first came up through the fabric (B).

3. Pass the needle through the loop created in step 2 with the working thread beneath the needle as shown (C).

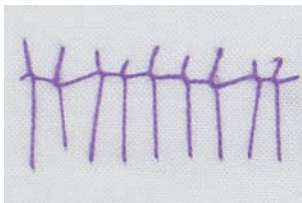
4. Pull the thread through, keeping the tension relaxed so the loop won't distort (D).



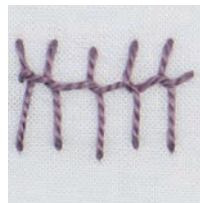


5. Repeat steps 1 to 4 for the desired length (E, F, and G).

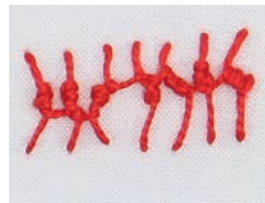
*Loop stitch variations*



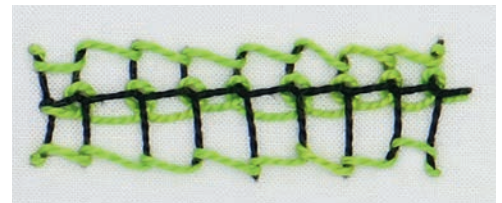
LOOP STITCH WITH THE TWIST POINT LOCATED OFF CENTER. SHOWN IN SIZE 12 PERLE COTTON AND SIZE 5 PERLE COTTON.



LOOP STITCH WITH MULTIPLE WRAPS AROUND THE TWIST POINT.



LOOP STITCH WITH WEAVING AT THE TOP, CENTER, AND BOTTOM LOCATIONS.



LOOP STITCHING WITH WHIP STITCH AT THE END OF BOTH POSTS AND MIDDLE LOOPS.

# COUCHED STITCH

This handy stitch helps hold down a wide variety of things to your stitching project that either can't be sewn through or would become distorted by stitching through.

In the instructions provided, this stitch is used to secure a piece of lace to the fabric. I used contrasting thread for demonstration purposes. You can use thread that blends in better to make it less noticeable or use it as a design opportunity to include an unexpected pop of color.

1. Pin the lace to the fabric.
2. Come up through the fabric near but not through the lace (A).

3. Go back down through the fabric so that the thread will go across a portion of the lace but not through it.
4. Pull the thread flat. Watch the tension—you want the thread to contact the lace so it will hold it down but not tight enough to cause distortion in the lace (B).
5. Repeat steps 2 to 4 around the diameter of the lace. You don't need to stitch in every space, just enough to secure it to the fabric. Couch down as much as you want or leave some portions free to create dimension (C).



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## Couched stitch variations



THICK YARN ARRANGED IN RANDOM LOOPS AND SECURED WITH SMALL STRAIGHT STITCHES.



WOOL EMBROIDERY THREAD ARRANGED CLOSELY IN A SPIRAL SHAPE AND SECURED WITH SMALL STRAIGHT STITCHES.



A LARGE DECORATIVE WOOD BUTTON SECURED TO THE FABRIC WITH LONG STRAIGHT STITCHES.

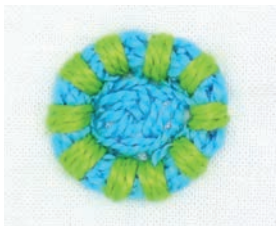
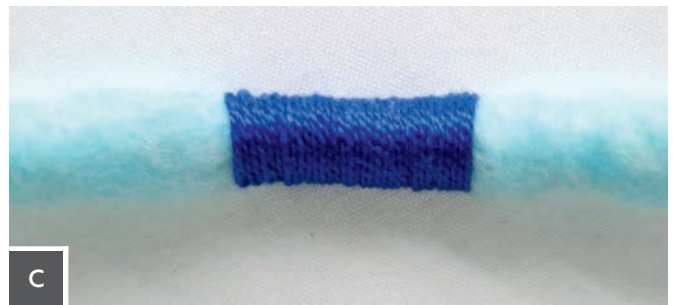
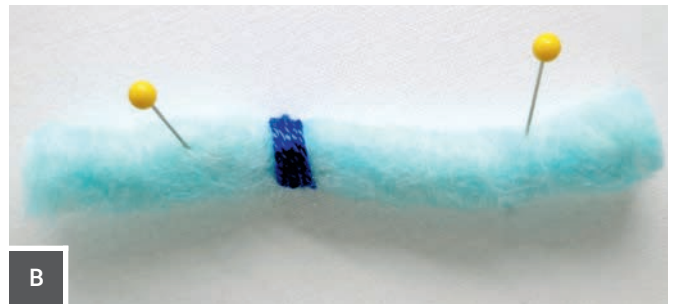
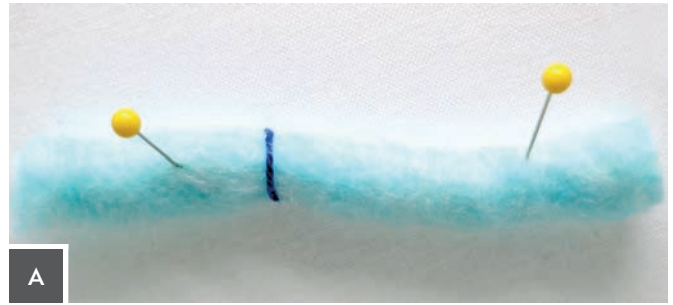


A BULKY TASSEL MADE FROM RECYCLED SARI SILK YARN ATTACHED TO THE FABRIC USING MULTIPLE WHIPSTITCHES IN THE SAME LOCATION.

# PADDED SATIN STITCH

Padded satin stitch gives a traditionally flat stitch a big boost into the world of dimensional stitches. The stitch is worked by laying down a thicker object such as yarn and then satin stitch is worked over the top of it.

1. Pin the base object to the fabric. (The item I used is an incredibly thick novelty yarn I bought from the craft store cut down to a small piece.)
2. Bring the thread up through the fabric, lay it across the yarn, and go back down to create a straight stitch. Do not stitch through the yarn (A).
3. Continue adding stitches, keeping them close to each other so that the yarn doesn't show through (B).
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for the desired length. You can completely cover the yarn or allow the ends to show for interest (C).



A STITCHED CIRCLE CONSISTING OF CHAIN STITCH. AT THE EDGES THE CHAIN STITCH IS STITCHED ON TOP OF ITSELF FOR SEVERAL ROWS TO CREATE A LEDGE. SHORT SATIN STITCH SECTIONS IN A CONTRASTING COLOR CREATE A SECONDARY PATTERN ALONG THE PERIMETER OF THE CIRCLE.



MULTIPLE LAYERS OF DENSE SATIN STITCH IN TWO COLORS FORM A PATTERNED BLOCK.




SATIN STITCH IN TWO LAYERS (LONG VERTICAL STITCHES IN A DARK COLOR WITH SHORT HORIZONTAL STITCHES IN ORANGE DOWN THE CENTER) WITH X STITCH OVER THE TOP.



A PIECE OF ROLLED FELT ATTACHED TO THE FABRIC WITH SECTIONS OF SATIN STITCH TO CREATE A PATTERN THAT ALLOWS THE FELT TO SHOW.

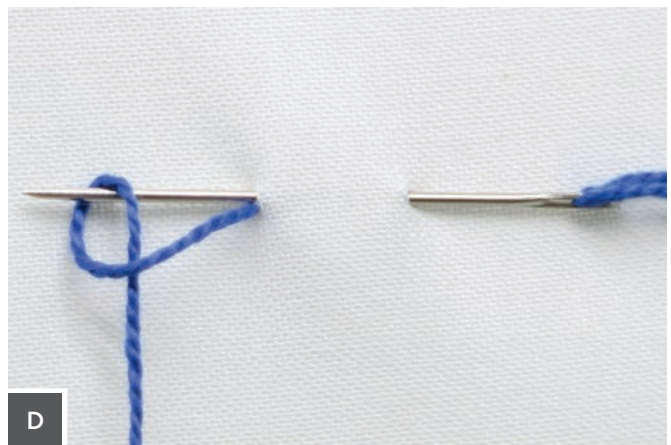
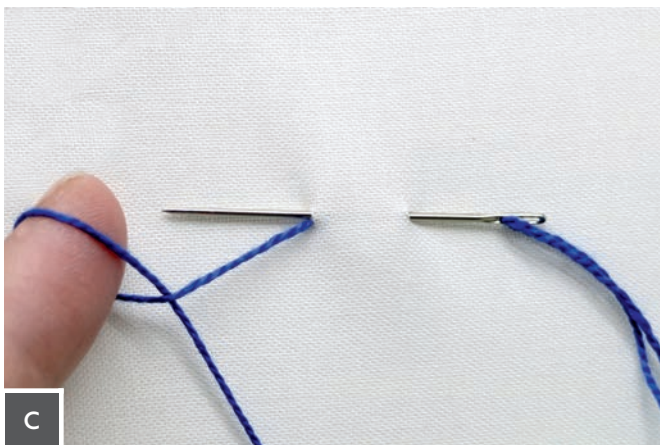
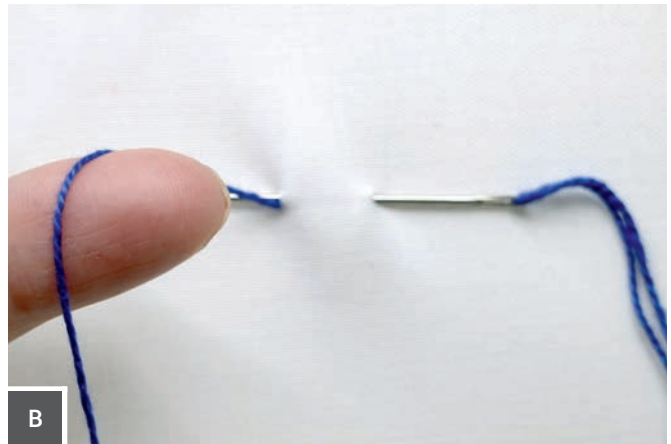
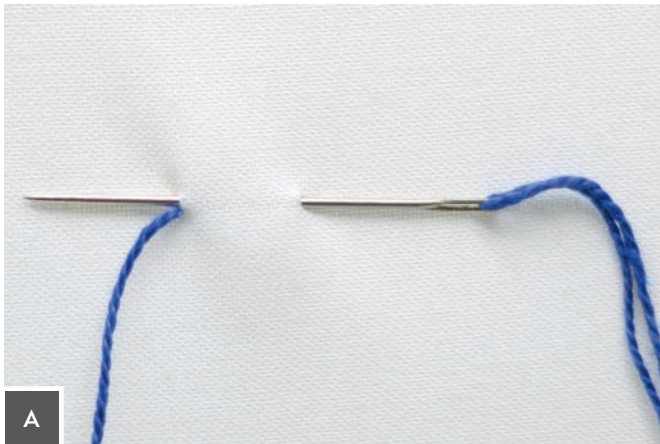
# CAST-ON STITCH

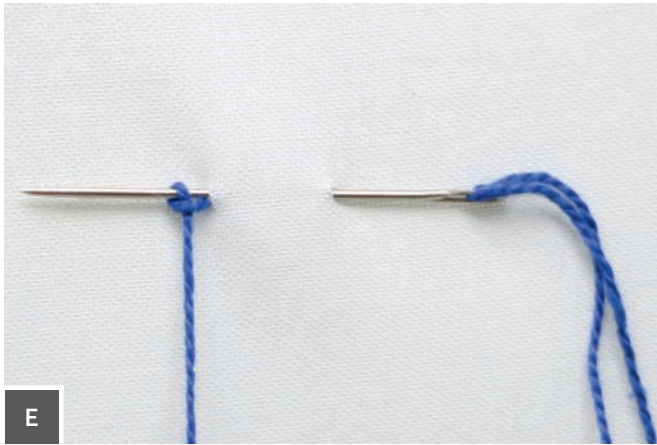
If you are a knitter, this stitch will be familiar to you. It's essentially the same technique used to create the base row in knitting. In embroidery, it creates a textured row of stitches that are completely detached from the fabric.



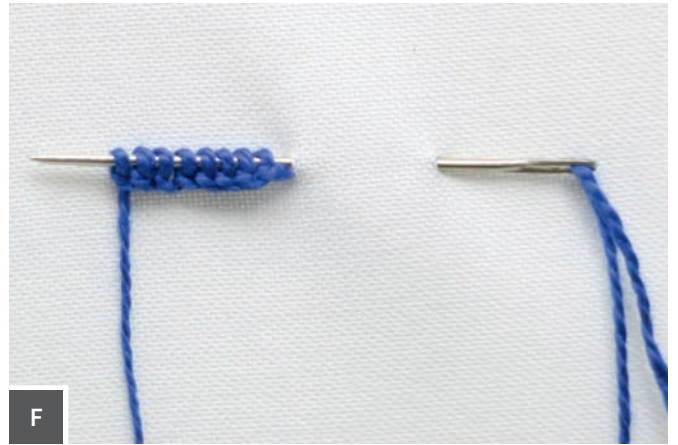
**TIP:** The distance between where you first come up and then go back down to the left determines how many stitches will be added to the needle.

1. Bring the thread up through the fabric. Take the needle back down through the fabric to the left of where you came up and back up next to the hole you initially came up through (A).
2. Lay the thread across your finger as shown (B).
3. Roll your finger away from yourself so it wraps and creates a loop as shown (C).
4. Transfer the loop from your finger to the needle (D).





E



F



G

5. Gently pull the loop until it reaches where the needle is coming out of the fabric (E).
6. Repeat steps 2 to 5 until you have enough stitches on the needle equal to the length to the right where the needle comes in and out of the fabric (F).
7. Pull the needle through the stitches. Work slowly and gently apply pressure to the stitches by holding them between your thumb and forefinger. Continue to pull until the stitches are snugged against the fabric. Secure the row of detached stitches by taking the needle back down through the fabric (G).

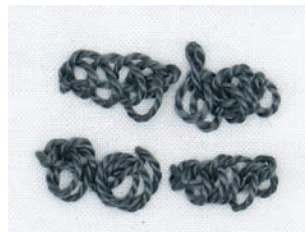
### Cast-on stitch variations



CAST-ON STITCH DONE AT AN ANGLE AND SET CLOSELY TOGETHER TO CREATE A DENSE ALOVER PATTERN.



A LOOP IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT LONG DURING THE CAST-ON PROCESS.



VERY LOOSE LOOPS ARE PRODUCED BY NOT PULLING THE THREAD SNUG DURING THE CAST-ON PROCESS.

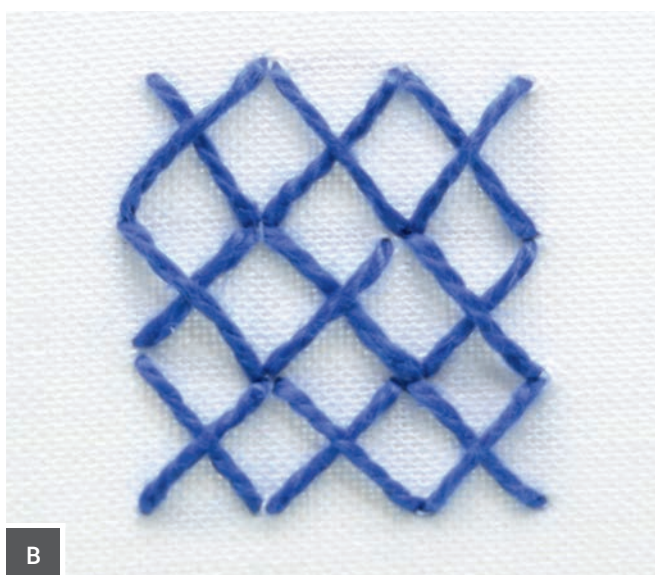
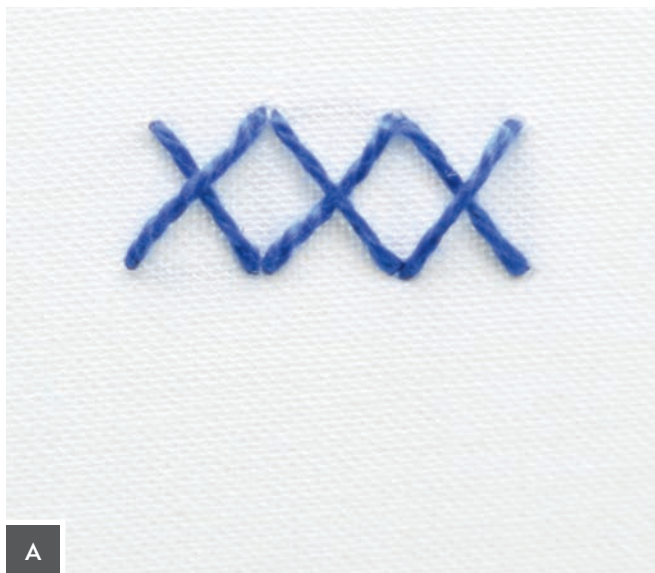


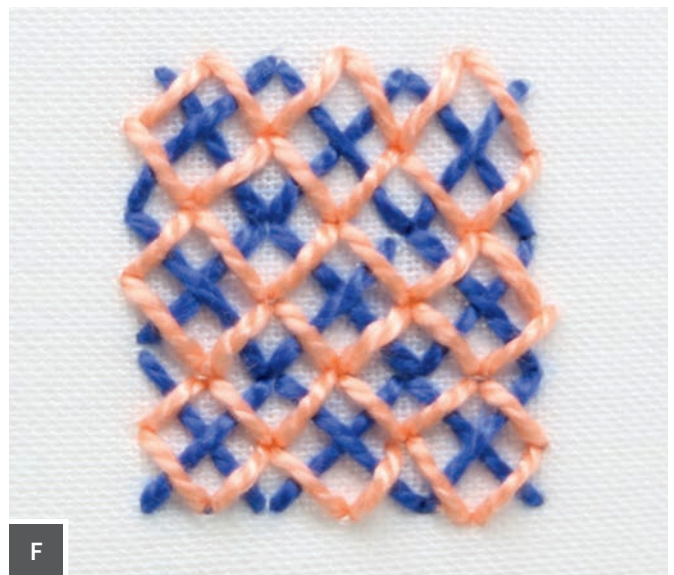
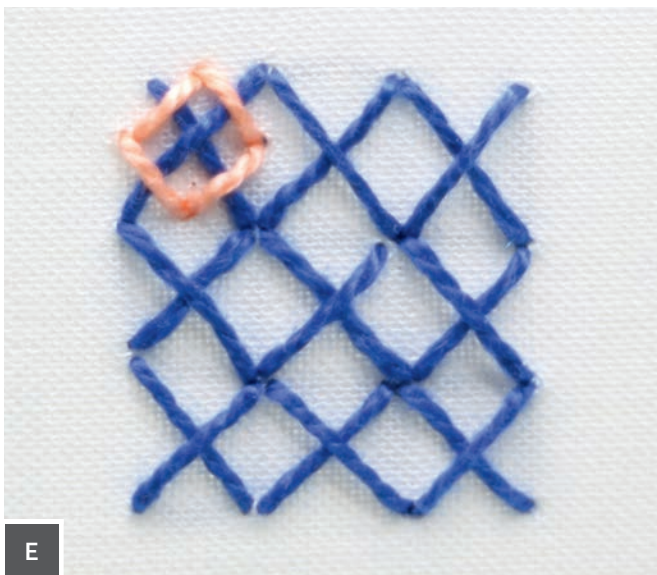
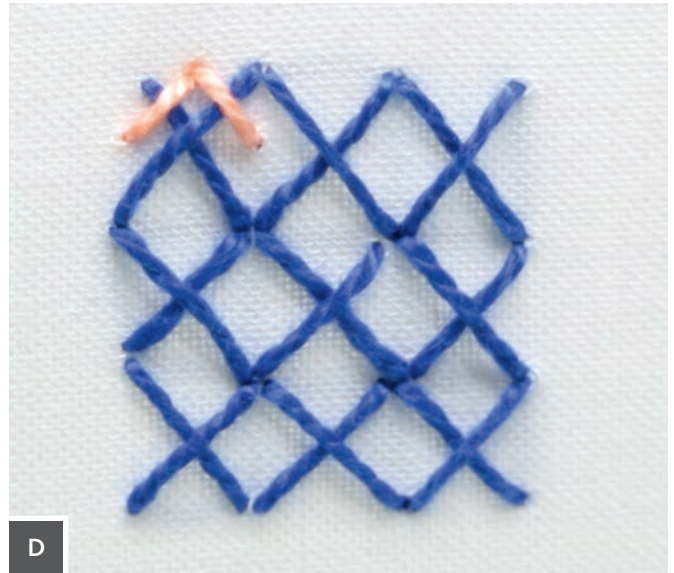
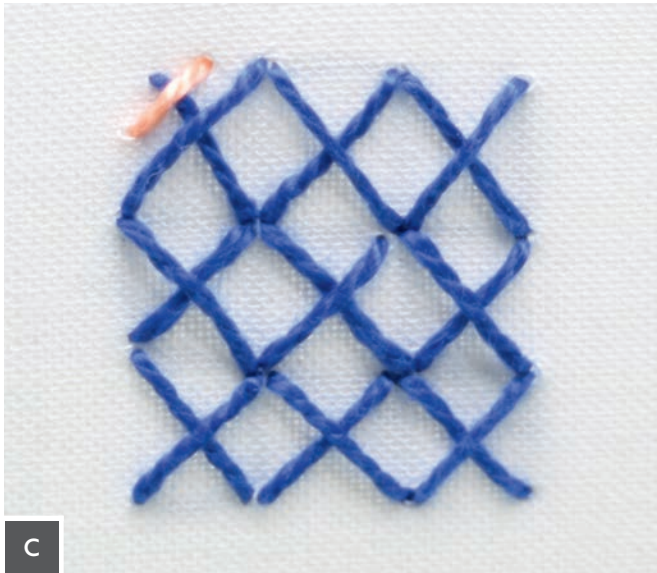
CAST-ON STITCHES ARE WORKED ON EITHER SIDE OF A LINE OF CHAIN STITCH TO CREATE A PICOT EFFECT.

## RICE STITCH

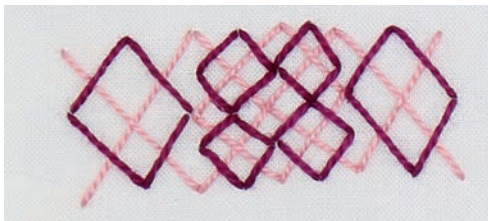
I think this stitch is kind of like magic. It looks incredibly complicated when it's complete, but in reality it's a snap to stitch. This sample was made using two contrasting colors to help illustrate how it's created. You can also work it all in one color to stitch beautiful texture.

1. Begin this stitch by creating a row of X stitches. Stitch them closely together so that the edges touch, creating a kind of diamond pattern (A).
2. Continue to add rows of X stitches until you've covered the desired area (B).
3. Add a short diagonal stitch across the left leg of the base X stitch as shown (C).
4. Add another diagonal stitch to the right leg of the X stitch, touching the previous diagonal stitch to create the appearance of an upside-down V (D).
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 on the bottom legs of the same X stitch. This creates a complete diamond shape (E).
6. Repeat steps 3 to 5 until you've added diagonal stitches across the entire base of X stitches (F).





Rice stitch variations



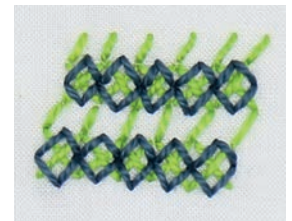
A BOLD PATTERN IS FORMED BY USING STRONGLY CONTRASTING COLORS. SOME LEGS OF THE STITCH ARE LEFT OPEN, AND DIFFERING SIZES OF X STITCH CREATE MULTIPLE PATTERNS IN ONE ROW.



A STAND-ALONE RICE STITCH WITH MULTIPLE DIAMOND SHAPES STITCHED OVER THE BASE X SHAPE. THE EFFECT THAT COLOR HAS ON THIS STITCH IS DEMONSTRATED BY THE SOLID PURPLE VERSUS THE MULTICOLOR VERSION.



EXTREMELY SHORT TACK STITCHES CREATE AN OPEN VERSION OF THIS STITCH.

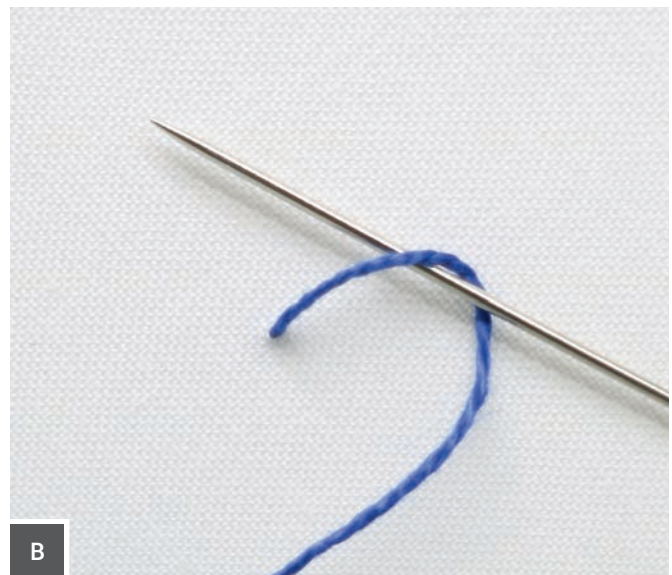
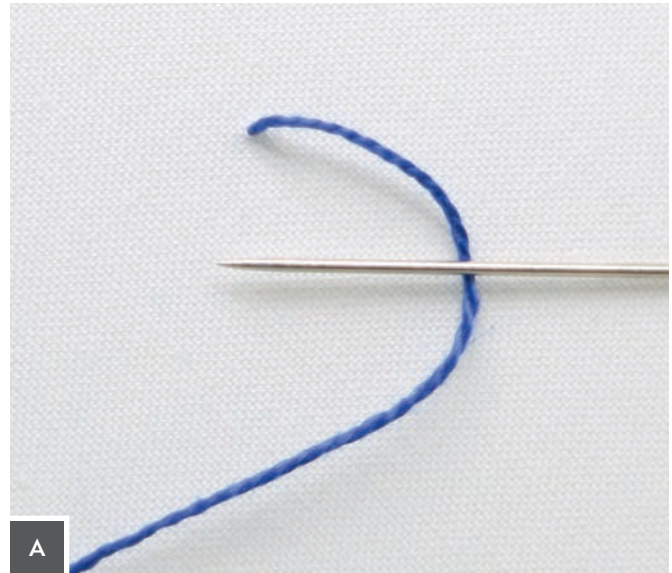


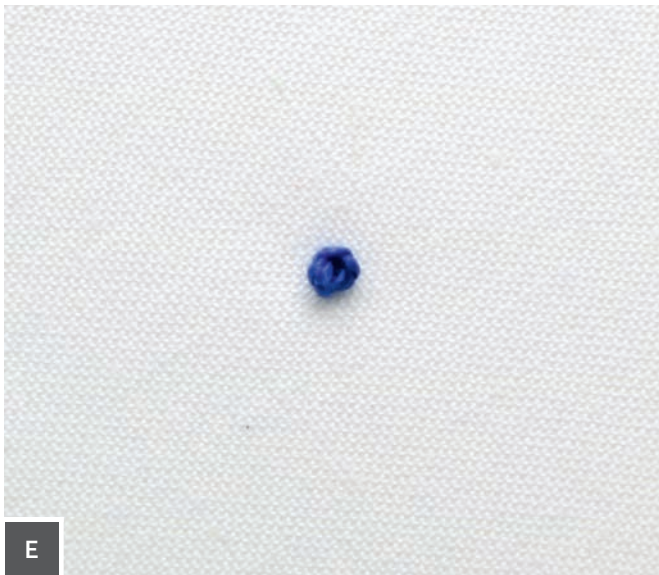
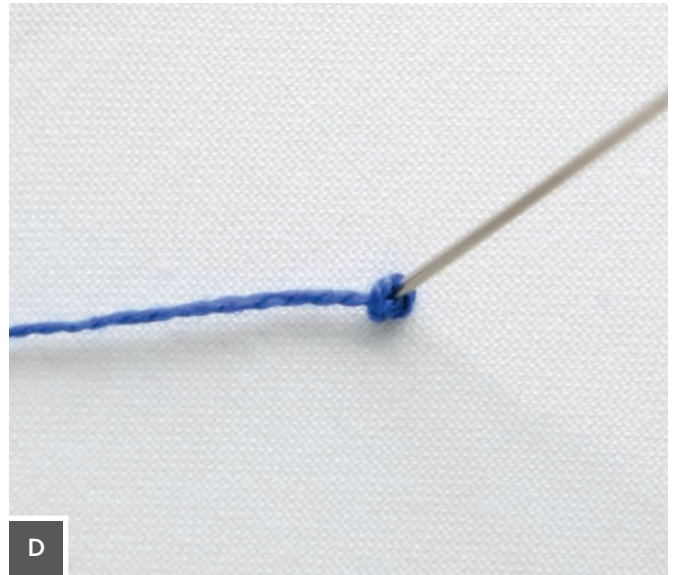
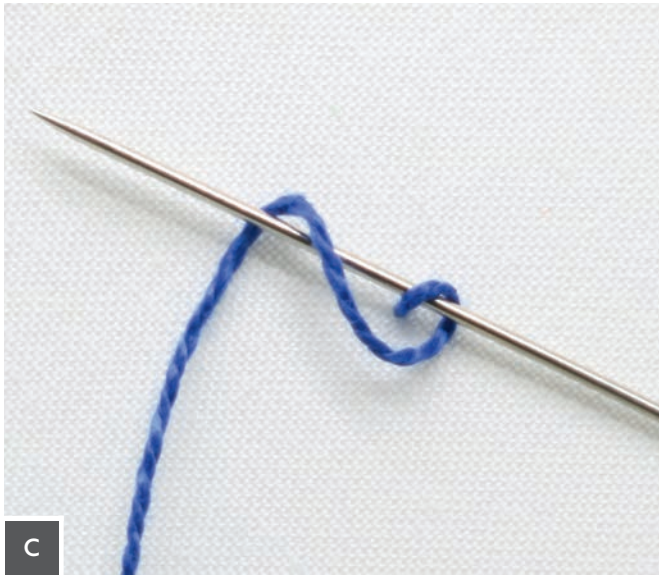
THREE ROWS OF RICE STITCH ARE WORKED CLOSE TO ONE ANOTHER. THE MIDDLE ROW IS LEFT INCOMPLETE, SHOWING ONLY ONE OF THE SLANTED LEGS. THE TOP STITCHES ARE WORKED ON THE TOP AND BOTTOM ROW.

# COLONIAL KNOT

This is a tidy knot that, I think, is neater than its cousin, the French knot. While it has dimension, it's very secure, making it ideal for filling in large spaces without risk of snagging.

1. Come up through the fabric. Create a backward C shape with the thread and lay your needle over the top of it as shown (A).
2. Slide your needle beneath the thread so that it loops over and under (B).
3. Loop the thread over and under the needle a second time to create a figure-eight shape as shown (C).
4. Push the tip of the needle into the fabric to act as an anchor. Gently pull the thread so that it slides down the needle to form a knot (D).
5. Pull the thread all the way through to secure the knot in place (E).

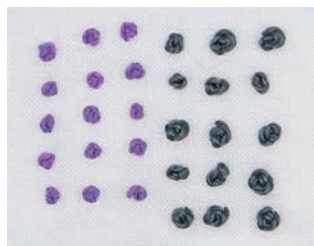




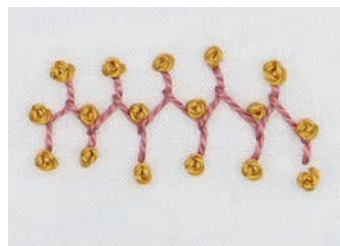
*Colonial knot variations*



THE WRAPS AROUND THE NEEDLE ARE LEFT LOOSE TO CREATE FREESTANDING LOOPS.



A DEMONSTRATION OF HOW THREAD WEIGHT AFFECTS THE LOOK OF THE STITCH. THE PURPLE KNOTS ON THE LEFT ARE DONE IN SIZE 12 PERLE COTTON AND THE GRAY KNOTS ON THE RIGHT ARE DONE IN SIZE 5 PERLE COTTON.



A ROW OF CHEVRON STITCH IS WORKED. COLONIAL KNOTS ARE ADDED AS ACCENTS TO CREATE A MORE DECORATIVE EFFECT.



A STRAIGHT STITCH IS WORKED AT THE BASE OF EACH COMPLETED COLONIAL KNOT TO CREATE A STITCH THAT IS BOTH DIMENSIONAL AND SERVES AS A FILLER PATTERN.

# BULLION KNOT

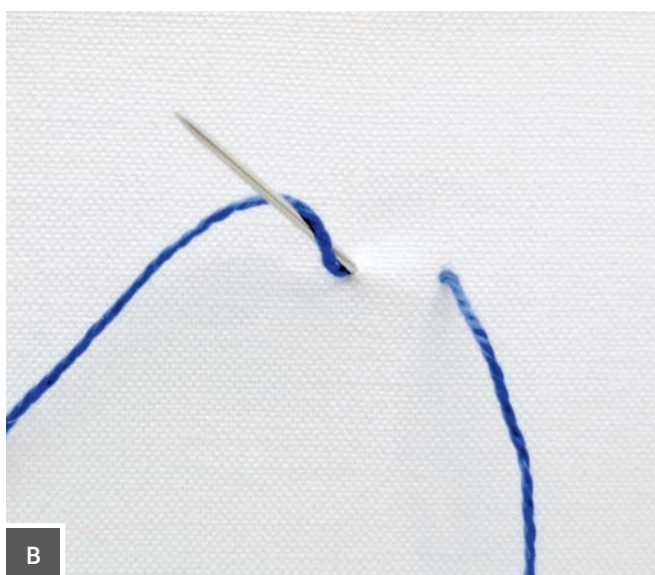
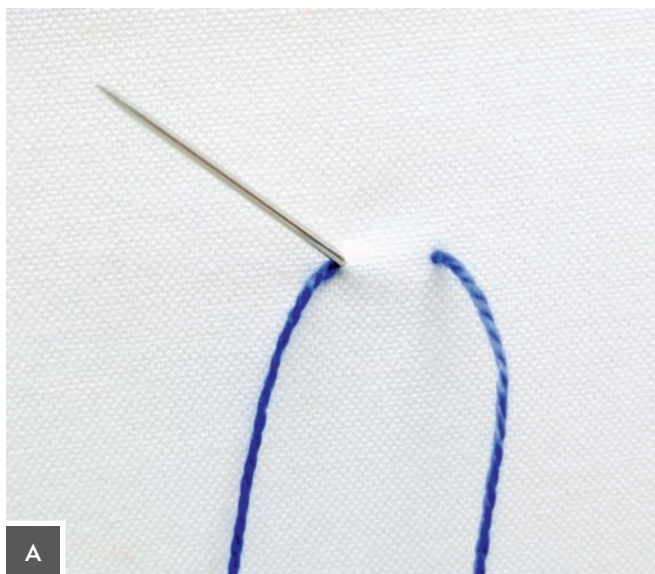
Bullion knot is similar to cast-on stitch in the sense that it is made by wrapping the thread on the needle, creating a completely detached stitch from the fabric. This knot is smoother and works wonderfully for floral stitch patterns.

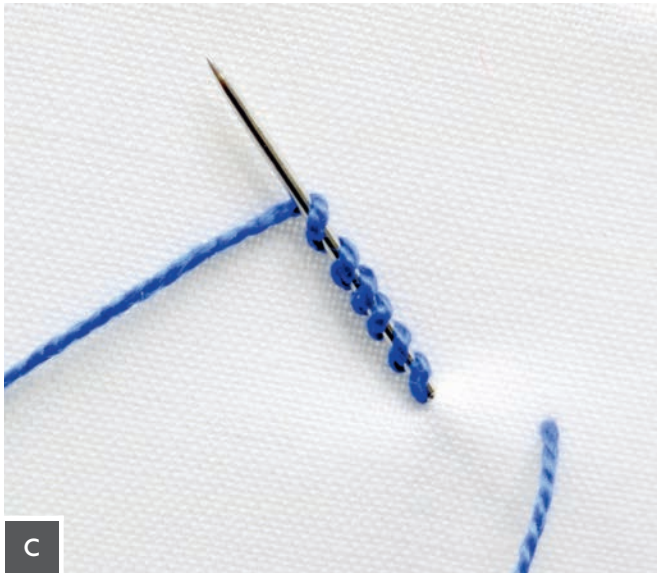
1. Bring the needle up through the fabric. Take it back down a distance to the right, but don't pull the thread flat. Leave a very generous loop. Come back up through the fabric close to where you went down, but bring up only the shank of the needle; leave the eye beneath the fabric (A).
2. Begin to wrap the thread around the needle as shown (B).
3. Continue wrapping the thread around the needle until you've created enough wraps to fill the gap between the needle and where you first came up through the fabric (C).



**TIP: You can check to see if you have enough wraps by twisting the needle to the right. Just be careful to keep the eye behind the fabric (D).**

4. Pull the needle through the stitches. Work slowly and gently apply pressure to the stitches by holding them between your thumb and forefinger. Continue to pull until the stitches are snugged against the fabric (E).
5. Secure the row of detached stitches by taking the needle back down through the fabric (F).

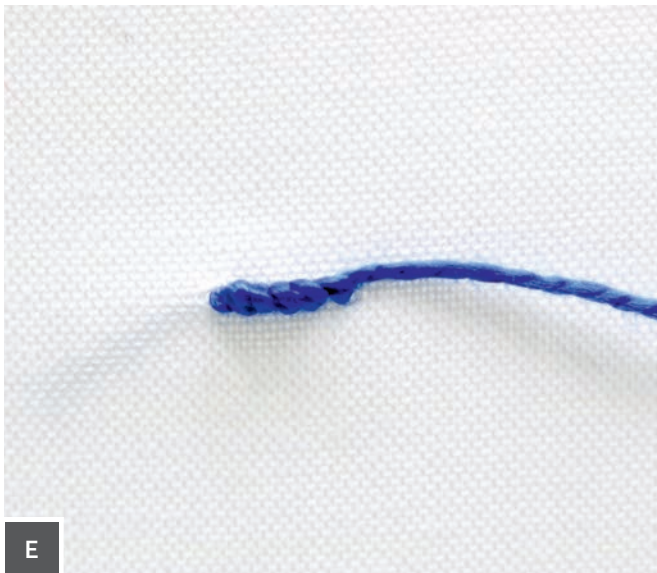




C



D

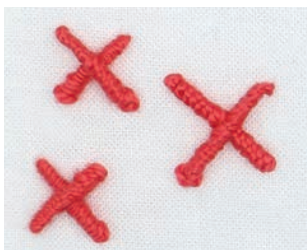


E



F

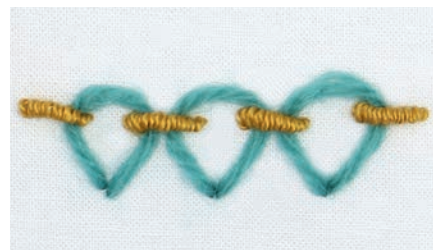
*Bullion knot variations*



THE X STITCH IS CREATED USING OVERLAPPING BULLION KNOTS.



EXTRA WRAPS ARE WORKED ON THE NEEDLE TO CREATE A FREESTANDING LOOP.



BULLION KNOT IS USED TO CREATE THE HORIZONTAL BARS FOR THE OYSTER STITCH.

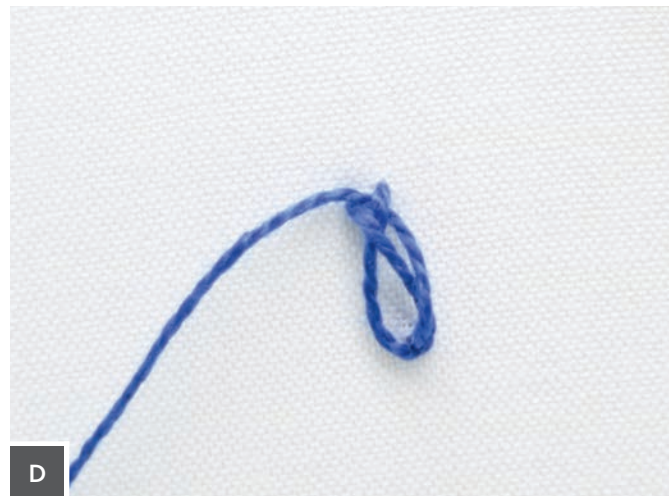
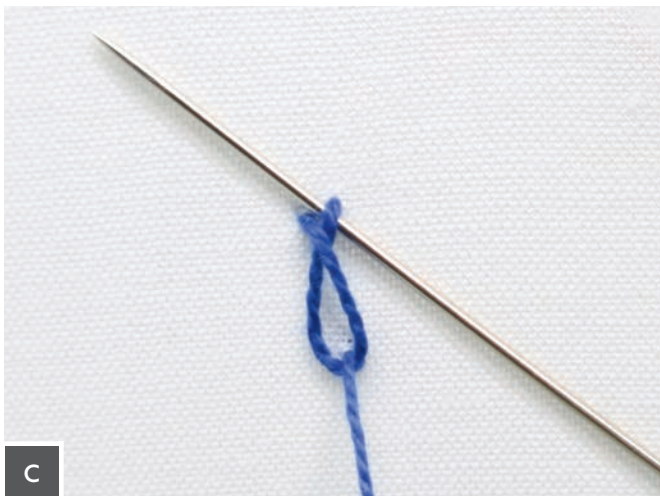
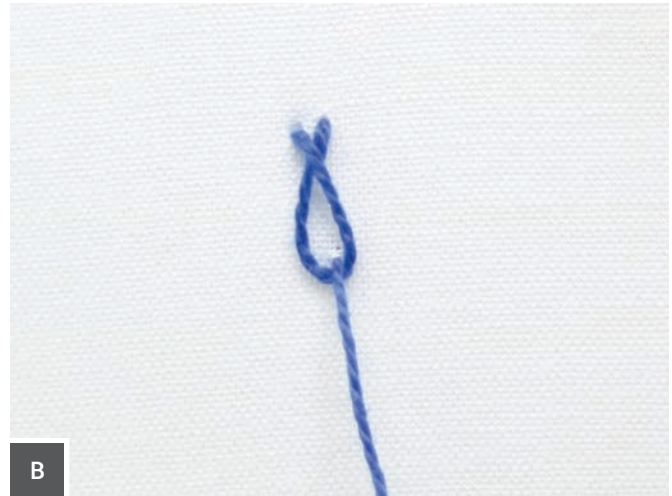
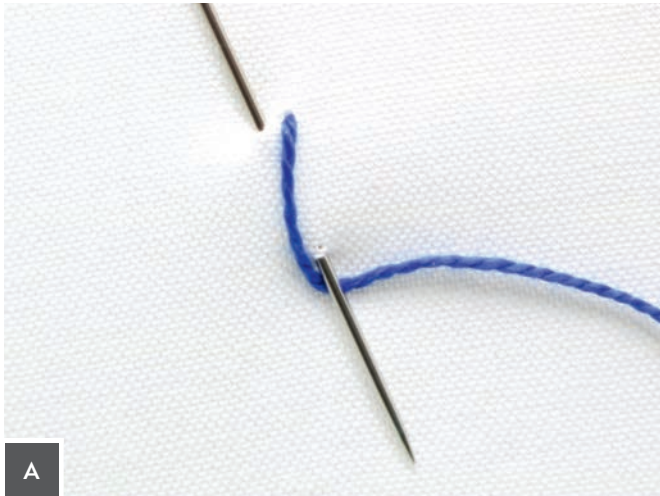


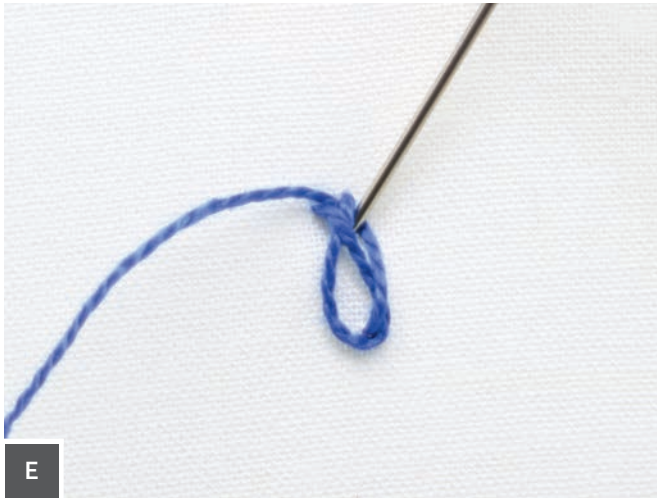
A NEEDLE WITH AN EYE THAT IS LARGER THAN THE SHANK IS USED TO CREATE THESE BULLION KNOTS, GIVING IT A TAPERED LOOK. THEY ARE WORKED AS THE OUTLINE TO THE X STITCHES INSIDE THEM.

# OYSTER STITCH

This stitch is full of loops and twists and turns. It's a wonderful little nested stitch that can act as petals on a flower or even a dimensional filler stitch.

1. Bring the needle and thread up through the fabric. Take the needle back down through the fabric to the left and slightly lower than where you came up.
2. Angle the needle so it comes back through the fabric in line with where you came up. Keep the working thread beneath the needle. Pull the thread through to form a loop (A and B).
3. Pass the needle beneath the thread at the top of the loop as shown. Gently pull the thread through (C and D).
4. Insert the needle into the fabric in the loop you formed in step 3 as shown and pull through, leaving a loop (E).
5. Bring the needle back up through the fabric at the base of the stitch with the loop from the previous stitch beneath the needle (F).
6. Take the needle back down through the fabric to complete the stitch (G and H).





E



F



G



H

*Oyster stitch variations*



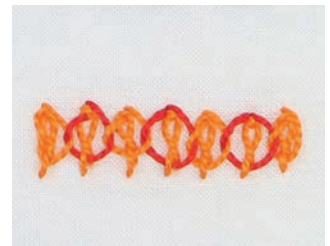
THE OUTSIDE LOOP IS INTENTIONALLY WORKED LARGER THAN THE INSIDE LOOP.



THE MIDDLE ROW OF THE TRIO IS LEFT INCOMPLETE TO CREATE AN ALTERNATING DENSE AND SPARSE PATTERN.



THE OUTER LOOP IS WORKED IN A DIFFERENT COLOR FROM THE INNER LOOP.



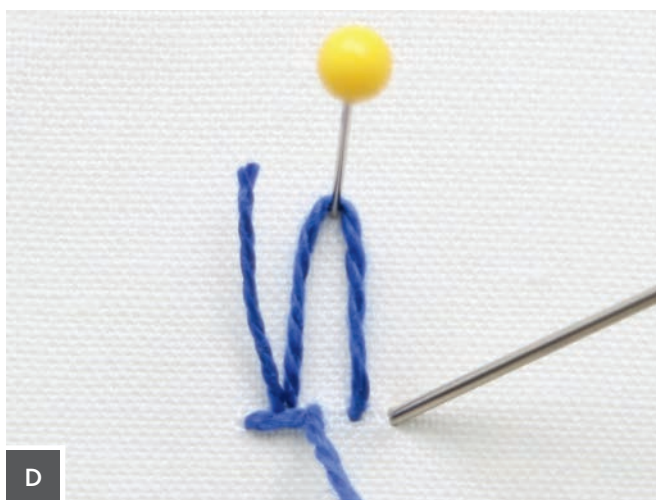
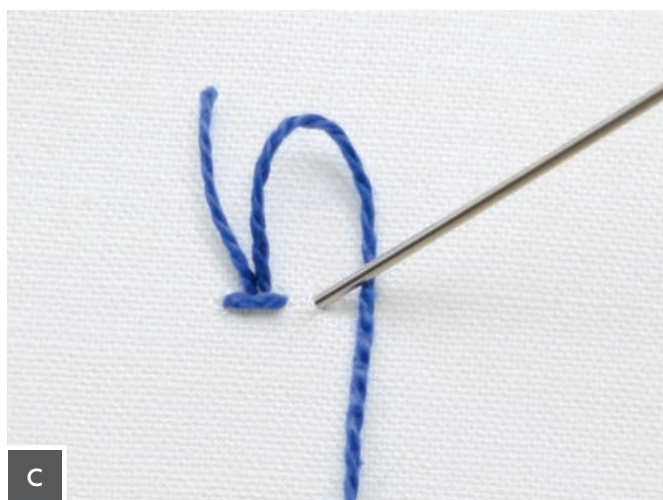
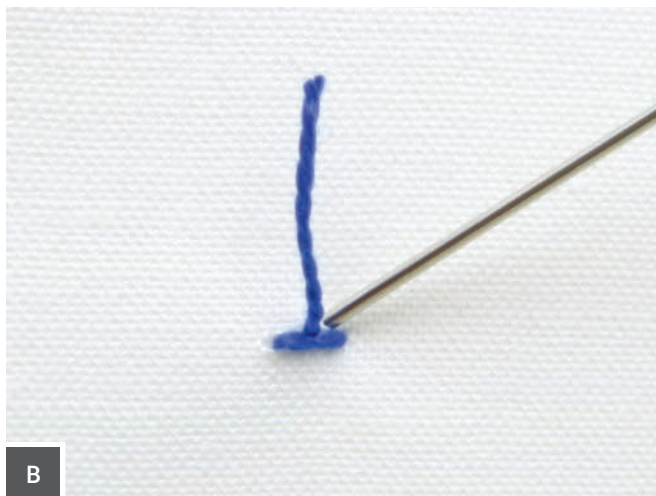
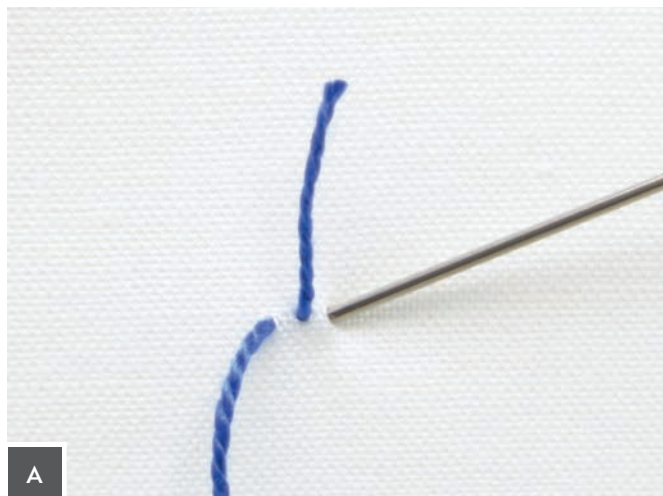
EVERY OTHER STITCH IN THE ROW IS LEFT INCOMPLETE, WORKING ONLY THE INNER LOOP. THE OUTER LOOPS IN RED ARE ADDED AND LOOPED THROUGH THE SIDE OF EACH COMPLETE ORANGE STITCH TO CREATE A LINKED ROW OF STITCHES.

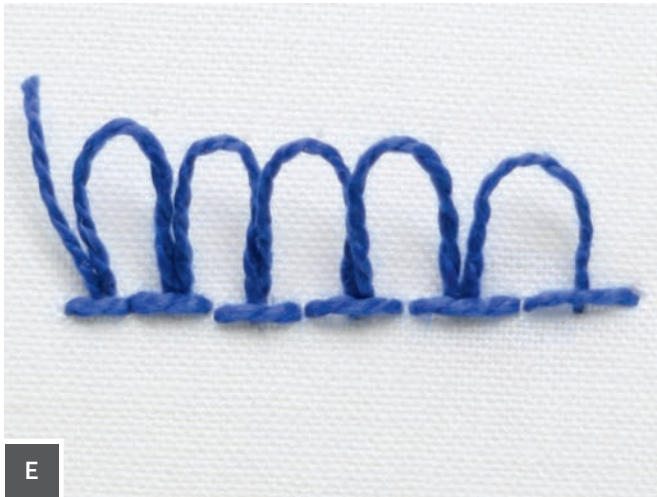
# TURKEY RUG KNOT

This stitch offers texture and dimension like no other. Similar to making pile on a rug, the stitches can be worked in long or short lengths and then later shaped to make your project extremely unique.

1. Take the needle down into the fabric from the *front* and leave a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3 cm) tail. (There is no starting knot for this stitch.) Come back up through the fabric to the left of where you initially went through the fabric and back up to the right of the same location (A).
2. Pull the thread through to create a small tack stitch. This is the stitch that secures the tail from the first step. Go back up through the fabric very close to where you came up for the tail (B).

3. Allow the thread to form a loop about the same length as the tail created in step 1. Go down through the fabric a short distance to the right of the tack stitch created in step 2 (C).
4. Place a pin into the fabric at the top of the loop to help hold it in place. Go back down into the fabric to complete the tack stitch at the bottom of that loop (D).

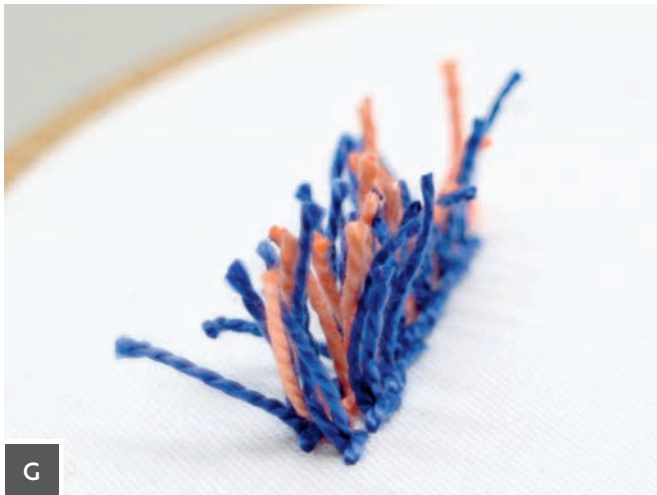




E



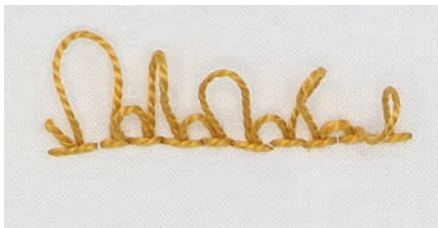
F



G

5. Repeat steps 2 to 4 for the desired length of looped stitches (E).
6. Create several rows of looped stitches. Keep the tack stitch rows very close to one another to create a dense group of loops (F).
7. You have a couple of options at this point. You can leave the loops or you can snip the ends of them to create single tail threads. Either way, the dimension on this stitch is fabulous (G).

### Turkey rug knot variations



A STAND-ALONE ROW OF LOOPS WITH ALTERNATING LARGE AND SMALL LOOPS. THE LARGER LOOPS CURL BACK ON THEMSELVES. THE LOOPS ARE NOT CUT; INSTEAD, THEY ARE KEPT AS IS TO CREATE A UNIQUE LOOK.



TURKEY RUG KNOT WORKED IN CLOSE ROWS OF ALTERNATING WOOL AND PERLE COTTON. THE WOOL CREATES A FUZZY LOOK WHEN THE LOOPS ARE CLIPPED AND THE PERLE COTTON STANDS OUT CLEARLY FROM IT.



WIDELY SPACED ROWS ARE STITCHED WITH THE LOOPS INTERLOCKING THE ROW ABOVE IT.



# EMBROIDERED SQUARE BOWL

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As an obsessed fan of Mother Nature's work, I constantly find inspiration in all things botanical. The shapes and colors of flowers are so vast that they can provide a lifetime of wonder.

This little bowl pushes the boundaries of these natural wonders by swapping out expected colors with quirky ones and an exaggerated combination of different scale.

## MATERIALS

9" long x 4" wide (23 x 10 cm) piece  
linen fabric

(2) 7½" x 7½" (19 x 19 cm) piece felt  
(one piece will be the inner bowl and  
the other will be the outer bowl)

Embroidered Square Bowl stitch guide  
(page 134)

Carbon transfer paper

Embroidery thread in multiple colors  
and fibers

## TOOLS

Scissors

Chalk pencil

Pins

Embroidery needles—I used size 3  
and size 5 embroidery needles and  
switched sizes based on the thread  
I was using

Clips (optional)

## FEATURED STITCHES

Whipped chain stitch

Colonial knot

Padded satin stitch

Straight stitch

Whipped stem stitch

Woven picot stitch

Oyster stitch

## PREPARING THE FABRIC

1. Cut the linen and felt according to the dimensions on the previous page. I left the edges of the linen raw because I like the “personality” it lends to the project. For a neater look, cut the linen  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6.4 mm) larger on the two longer sides and hem.
2. Use a chalk pencil to mark the center of the linen with a small plus sign. Position the center of the circle in the motif template on the chalk mark.



**TIP: The easiest way to center the circle in the motif is to photocopy or print out the template, cut the paper to the same size as the linen, and transfer the motif using chalk transfer paper (see page 134).**

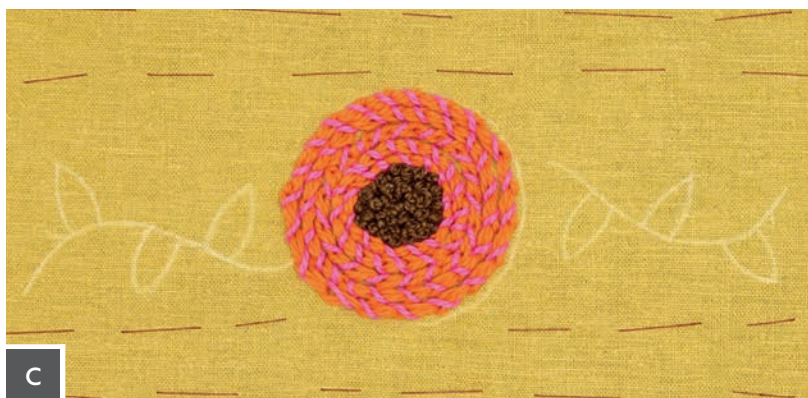
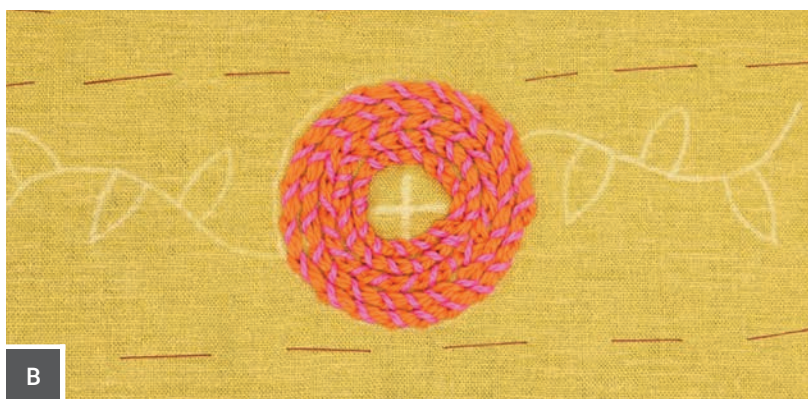
3. Position the marked linen on one of the felt squares. Once again, center the circle in the motif on the center of the square. Pin or baste the linen in place (A).



**TIP: I didn't use an embroidery hoop, but if you prefer you can attach the linen to a temporary background in an appropriate-sized hoop (see page 20).**

## STITCHING THE MOTIFS

1. Begin by chain stitching just inside the circumference of the circle, then adding a whip stitch to the chain. Repeat four more times for a total of five chain/whip rings. Complete the chain/whip combination for each round to make sure that all the rounds fit snugly against one another (B).
2. Fill in the center of the chain/whip circle with closely spaced colonial knots (C).
3. Stitch the outer circumference of the circle with padded satin stitch. To add the padding, wrap the circle twice with worsted-weight yarn, then secure with a loose straight stitch (D). I used a yarn close in color to the fabric for the padding. Even though it will be covered with satin stitch, this will help hide any slight gaps.



- Satin stitch over the padding added in the previous step (E).
- Stitch the vines with a whipped stem stitch. In this example, the base stem stitch is wrapped twice instead of once, and each thread is a different weight and color (F).



**TIP:** At this point in the project the markings for the leaves may have faded.

If needed, use a chalk pencil to sketch them directly on the fabric, referring to the motif template as a guide.

- Add leaves along the vine with woven picot stitch, then add oyster stitch petals around the outside of the flower center (G). The petals are added last because the leaves are stitched with woven picot stitch, which requires inserting a pin through the fabric. Stitching the leaves after the petals would damage the petal stitches.

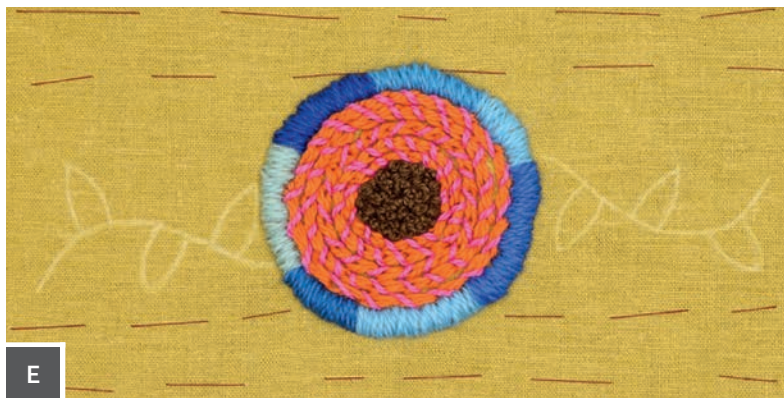


**TIP:** The motif template doesn't include placement markings for the petals to allow for space between them, and to give you complete freedom to choose the thread weight.

(Thicker thread = fewer stitches; thinner thread = more stitches.) The petal stitches are intentionally out of scale with the flower center to create movement in the design.

## ASSEMBLING AND FINISHING THE BOWL

- Carefully remove the pins or basting stitches. Press the fabric only with a hot iron, working around the stitches to avoid flattening them. Fold the edges of the linen fabric around to the back of the felt and stitch into place.
- Lay the stitched inner bowl over the felt for the outside of the bowl. Pin into place along the edges of the linen fabric. Create the bowl shape by pinching the corners together. Secure the corner with a pin or a clip.
- Complete the bowl by stitching each corner with three whip stitches to hold them in place (H).





# ABSTRACT KNOTS FELT BROOCH

---



Often when you hear the term *wearable art* you think of a grand, sweeping gown with incredible detail and clearly countless hours of time invested in its creation. But little projects can also fall into this category. Brooches might sound like something only your grandmother would wear, but I beg to differ. Using only a single type of stitch, you can make these charming jewels to dress yourself up or give as gifts.

## MATERIALS

(2) 2½" (6.4 cm)-diameter pieces  
different color felt  
2" (5 cm)-diameter piece felt  
Size 5 embroidery thread  
1" (2.5 cm)-wide pin back

## TOOLS

Scissors  
Fabric marking pen  
Pins  
Size 18 chenille needle

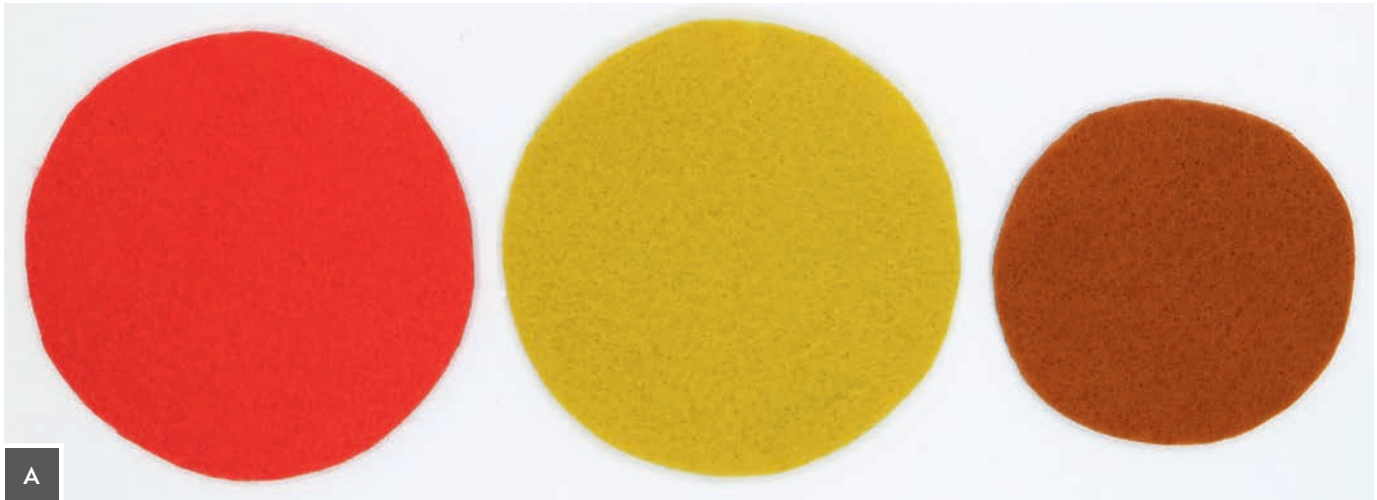
## FEATURED STITCHES

Colonial knot  
Whipstitch

*Note:* See templates on page 137.

---

All three included designs stitched completely (top row left: paisley, top row right: crescent moon, bottom row: spiral)



1. Cut the felt to the dimensions specified in the materials list (A).
2. Trace the design you want to stitch onto paper and place on top of the 2" (5 cm) felt. Mark the design with a pen. Layer the smaller felt circle on top of the two larger ones and pin in place (B and C).
3. Fill the large spiral with colonial knots in a variegated thread (D).
4. Stitch colonial knots in the smaller spiral in a solid-colored thread (E).
5. Using whipstitch, attach the pin back to the back of the brooch (F).

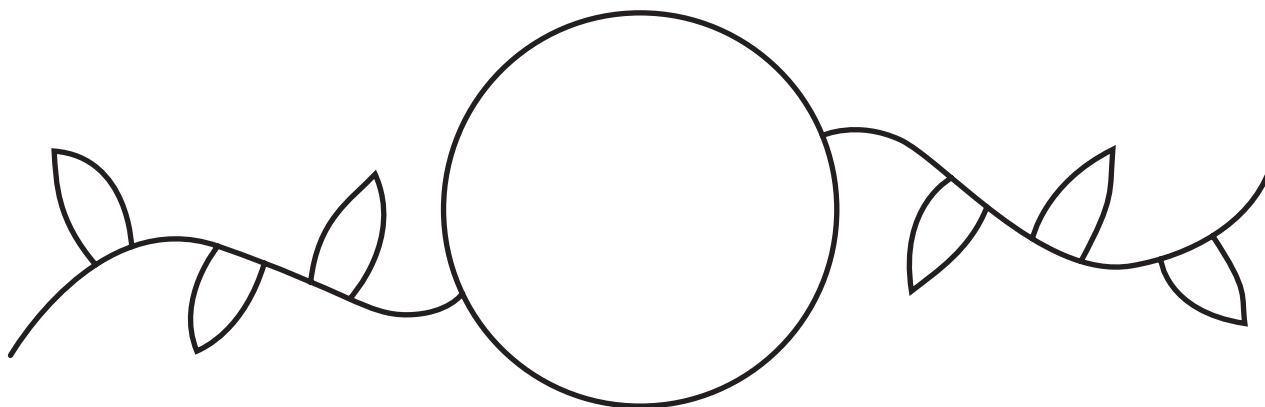




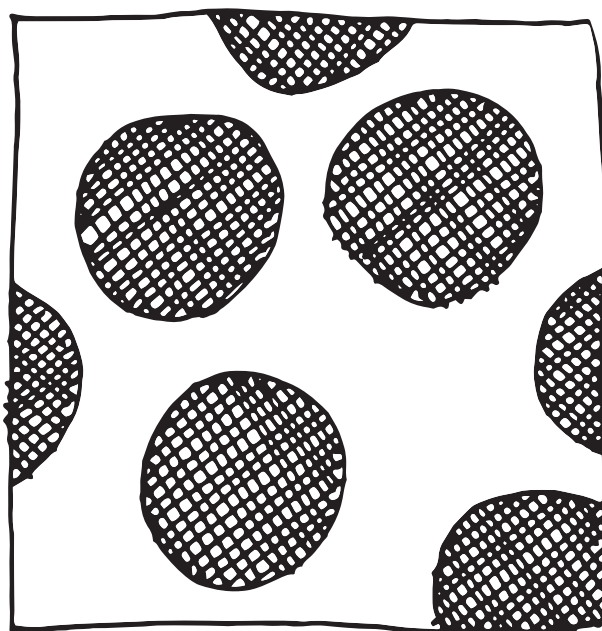
# TEMPLATES AND STITCH GUIDES

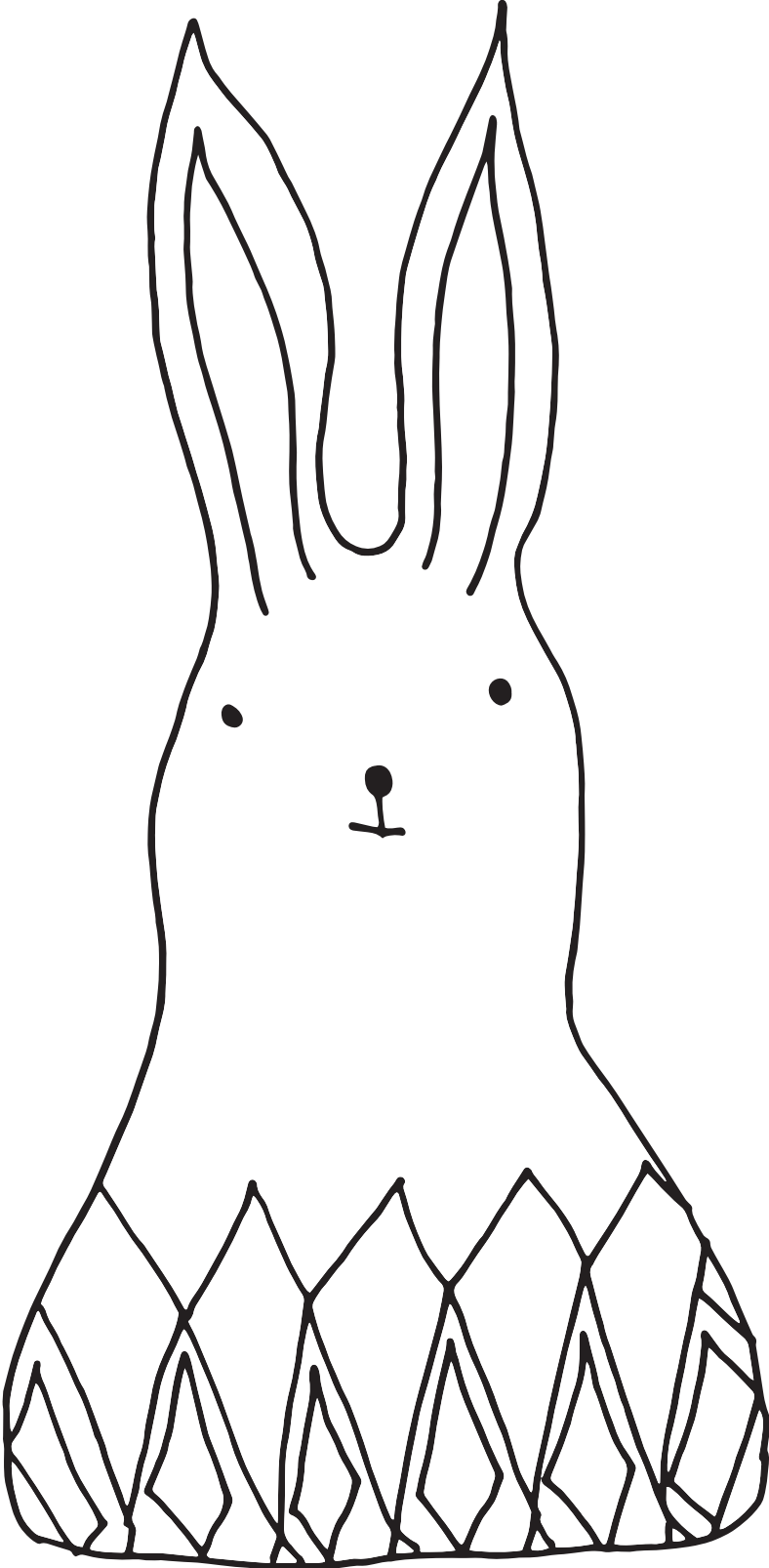
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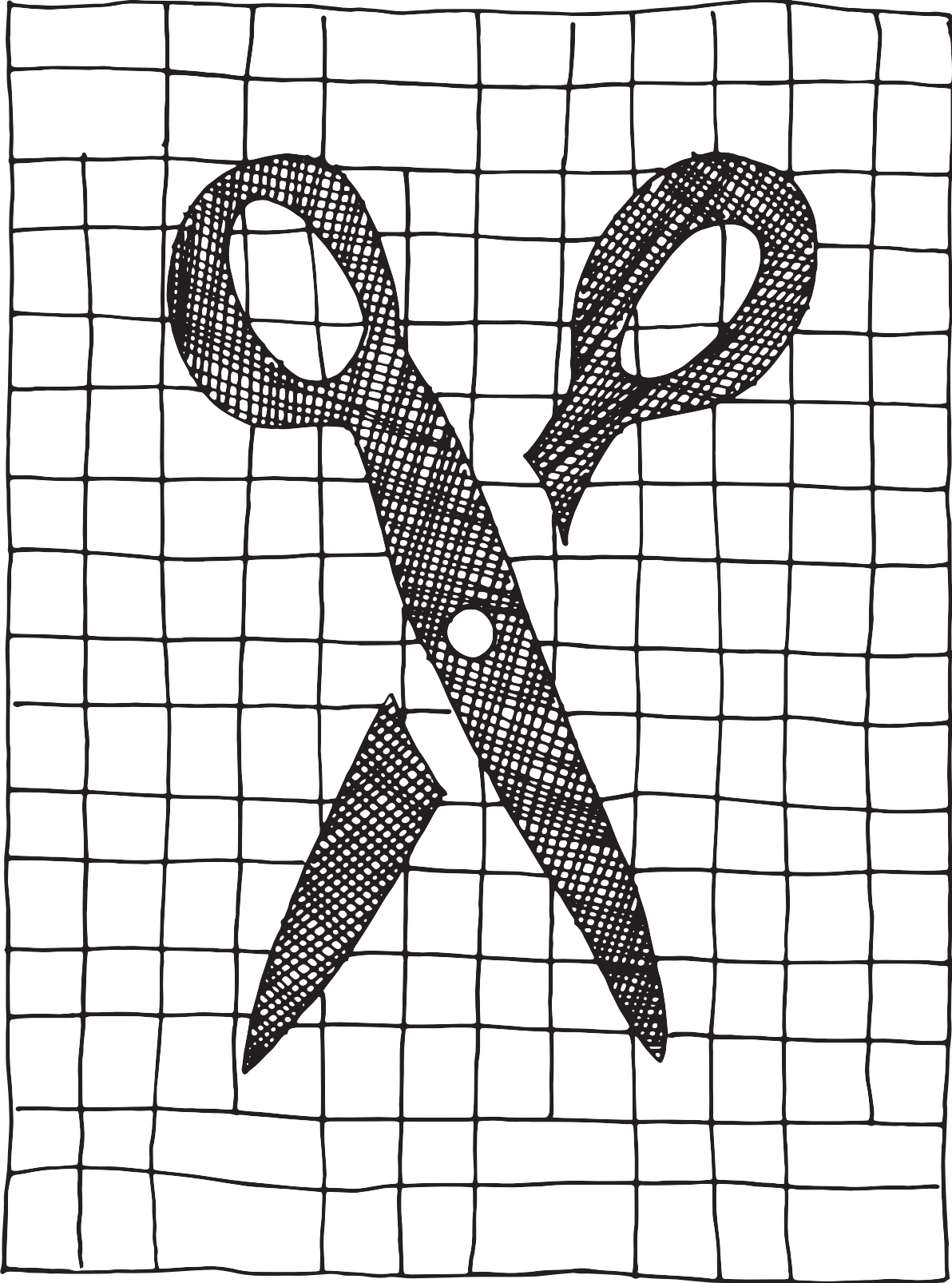
Embroidered Square Bowl stitch guide (see p.127)

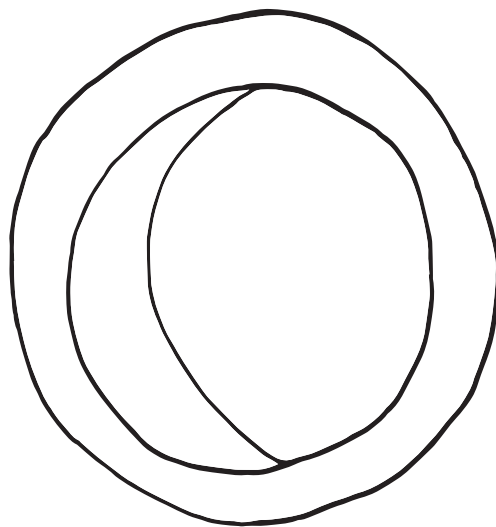
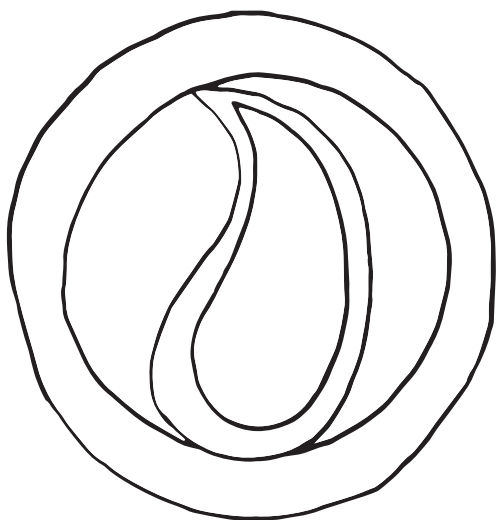
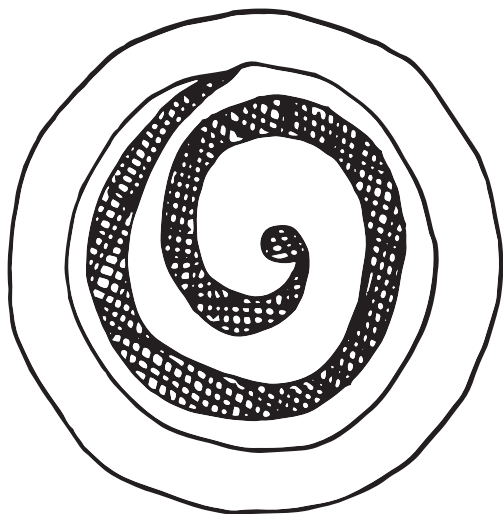


Corner Bookmark template and stitch guide (see p.37)









# RESOURCES

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## Thread

### Art Fabrik

[www.artfabrik.com](http://www.artfabrik.com)

Hand-dyed fabric and hand-dyed perle cotton embroidery thread

### Aurifil

[www.aurifil.com](http://www.aurifil.com)

Six-stranded perle cotton

### Colour and Cotton

[www.colourandcotton.com](http://www.colourandcotton.com)

Hand-dyed embroidery floss and thread club

### DMC threads

[www.dmc.com](http://www.dmc.com)

Hand embroidery threads in cotton, wool, floss weight, metallic, and perle weight; available in most craft stores

### House of Embroidery

[www.houseofembroidery.com](http://www.houseofembroidery.com)

Perle cotton, stranded cotton, silk thread, and rayon thread

### Treenway Silks

[www.treenwaysilks.com](http://www.treenwaysilks.com)

Silk thread in both floss and perle weights

### Weeks Dye Works

[www.weeksdyeworks.com](http://www.weeksdyeworks.com)

Hand-dyed embroidery thread

## Fabric

### Dharma Trading

[www.dharmatrading.com](http://www.dharmatrading.com)

Undyed wool, silk, and cotton

### e-Quilter

[www.equilter.com](http://www.equilter.com)

Quilting cottons

### Fabric.com

[www.fabric.com](http://www.fabric.com)

Wide range of fabrics, including quilting fabric, home décor fabric, and apparel fabric

## Stitching Supplies

### Joann Fabrics and Craft Stores

[www.joann.com](http://www.joann.com)

Nationwide chain of fabric stores

### Michael's Arts and Crafts

[www.michaels.com](http://www.michaels.com)

Nationwide chain of craft stores

### Mistyfuse Transdoodle Transfer Paper

[www.mistyfuse.com](http://www.mistyfuse.com)

Carbon transfer paper for embroidery patterns

### Nordic Needle

[www.nordicneedle.com](http://www.nordicneedle.com)

General stitching supplies such as needles, scissors, and organizers

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Writing a book is no easy feat for anyone involved. The end product is a well-organized symphony between author, editors, and the art department. The combination is nothing short of magic.

I'd like to thank my editors Joy and John for their never-ending patience. Marissa, an incredible art director, helped guide me as needed with a lovely kindness.

Many thanks to Megan Jones for taking all my words and photos and laying them out in such an attractive format. I'm always amazed at seeing it all settle in together with such organization.

I'd like to thank Quarto for once again extending me the space to continue writing. Creating books is one of my biggest passions in life, and I feel so lucky to have been accepted into their family.

I'd also like to thank my mother, my furry supervisor Carter (a dog who never tires of watching me work), my sister-in-law Jill for lending me her illustrator skills, the many pro contributors who helped make this book reach outside of my studio, and the incredible art community I am fortunate to be part of. Creativity is life and it makes the world such a beautiful place to live in. Keep on making.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---

Lynn Krawczyk is a mixed-media surface design artist who focuses on pattern and color. Her work features painting, drawing, and hand stitching on both fabric and paper. Lynn has written nearly fifty magazine articles for such publications as *Quilting Arts Magazine*, *Cloth Paper Scissors*, *Uppercase*, *Fiber Art Now*, and *Sew Somerset*, and is the author of *The Hand-Stitched Surface* (CPI, 2017) and *Intentional Printing: Simple Techniques for Inspired Fabric Art* (Interweave, 2014). She also has a collection of floss with thread manufacturer Aurifil, *Inked by Lynn Krawczyk*, as well as three instructional DVD workshops with Quilting Arts/F&W Media: *Print, Design, Compose*; *Color Theory Made Easy*; and *Thermofax Screen Printing Essentials*. Lynn teaches surface design workshops at various venues throughout the United States. She lives in Plymouth, Michigan.

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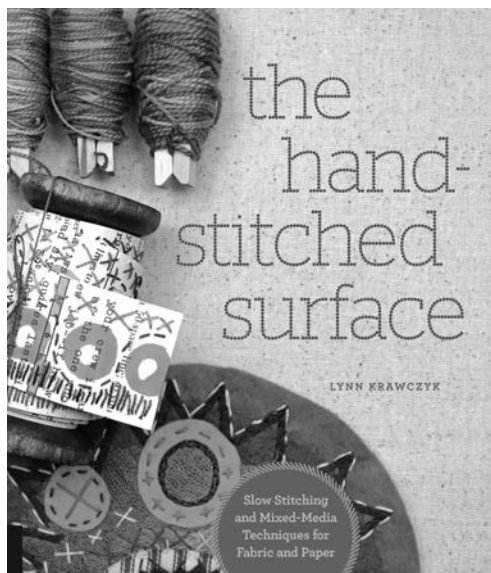
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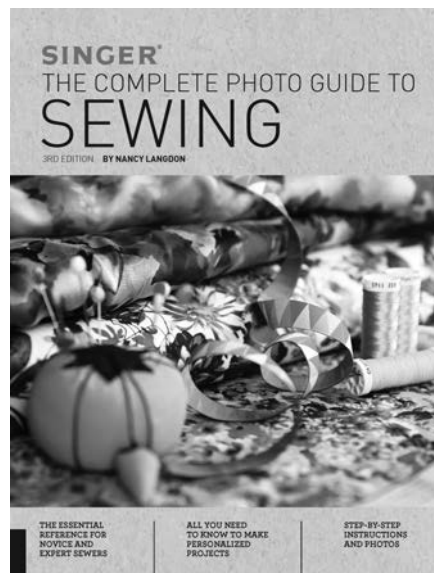
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## ALSO AVAILABLE

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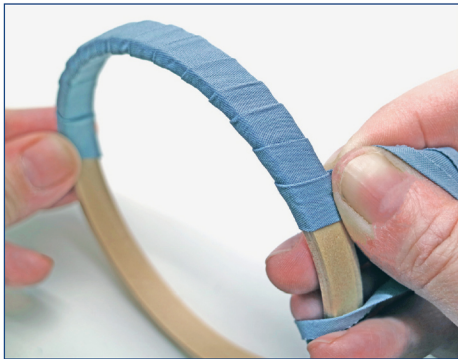
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