

Cross Stitch Instructions

What is cross stitch?

Cross stitch is comprised of X-shaped stitches done on fabric with an even and open weave like Aida or linen. Designs can be traditional or modern or anywhere in between.

Follow these steps to learn the basics of cross stitch.

Reading a cross stitch chart

A cross stitch chart tells you everything you need to know about where to stitch and what colour to use. The grid on a cross stitch chart corresponds to the grid created by the weave of the fabric, and each coloured square on the chart represents a cross stitch.

A combination of colours and symbols in the squares tell you which colour of floss to use.

Use the chart legend to map the symbols to the floss colours.

When you begin a cross stitch project, it is a good idea to start stitching in the middle of the design. That way you make sure your design is centered in the fabric.

Take a look at your chart and find an area close to the centre to start with. It can be easier to start with a large block of colour instead of part of the pattern that changes colour frequently.

Find the centre of your fabric

To find the centre of your fabric, fold it in half one way and then fold it in half the other way. Pinch and crease the centre point to mark it. You can place a pin in the centre or make a small stitch to further mark the centre point.

Prepare your thread

Pick the colour of floss you are starting with and cut a length about 50cm long. If you go much longer than this, the thread is more likely to get knotted when you stitch.

Most embroidery floss is made up of six strands of thread twisted together. You will typically stitch with only one or two strands at a time.

To separate out a strand, hold the floss with one hand and pinch the end of one strand with the other. Gently and slowly pull the strand up and out until it is separated from the remaining strands. Only pull one strand at a time. Pulling multiple strands may cause the floss to knot.

Thread your needle

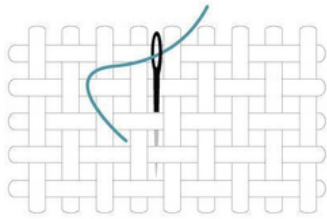
Cross stitch is typically done using a round-end tapestry needle. The size you use depends on your fabric

Thread your needle just as you would a needle for hand sewing. Don't make a knot in the tail end. You will stitch over the tail as you work to secure it without needing a knot. As a general rule, avoid using knots when cross stitching because they can leave lumps in the final piece.

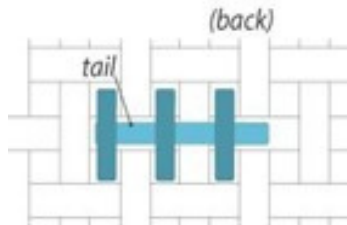
Making a row of cross stitches

Cross stitch is generally worked in rows going from left to right. Refer to your stitching chart to figure out where you want to begin stitching.

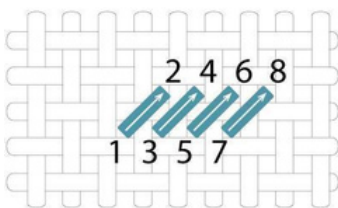
Starting from the back side of the fabric, bring your needle up through a hole toward the front, leaving about an inch of thread at the back. You will cover the tail with your stitches as you work to secure it.



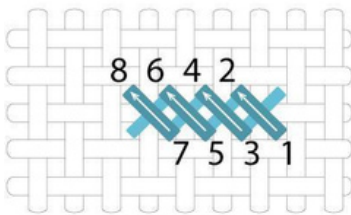
Next pass your needle through a hole diagonally across from where you started to make a slanted half cross stitch (/). Be sure to hold on to the tail at the back of the fabric so it doesn't slip through.



Start your second half cross stitch by bringing the needle back up through the hole that is directly below the one you last used. Before you pull this stitch tight, flip your fabric over to the back and make sure the thread tail will be trapped by the stitch

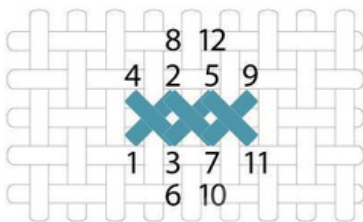


Continuing stitching along the row to make a series of half cross stitches (////).



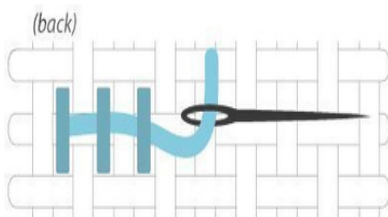
Next return across the row making a series of half cross stitches in the other direction (\\\\\\).

Making individual cross stitches



In some places on your design it may be easier to make a complete cross stitch before moving on to the next stitch instead of working in rows. Follow the diagram below to make individual cross stitches

Ending your thread



Keep stitching until you reach the end of the thread or until you run out of stitches in your pattern. On the back side of the fabric, pass the needle under at least three completed stitches to secure the thread. Trim the remaining thread, being careful not to cut it too close.

Tips & tricks



Moore Crafts

By Lin & Vic

Aim for a nice easy tension on your stitches. Don't pull them so tight that they warp the fabric or leave them so loose that they gap. The stitches should lie flat against the fabric without pulling against it.

