

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COUNTED CROSS STITCH

for each color. Learn to look at the symbols as well as the colors when you stitch because many cross stitch charts have only symbols.

3. Protecting edges of fabric: Before you begin, fold masking tape over the edges of your fabric. This will help keep the threads of the fabric from unravelling while you work.

4. Finding where to start: Notice that the stitch chart has arrows at the right edge and at the bottom. If you follow these arrows to the center of the chart you will find an x symbol. This is the center of your design and it should be at the center of your piece of fabric or you might not have room for the whole design. To find the center of your fabric, fold it in half and then into quarters. Where all the folds come together is the center of your fabric. Mark this place with a pin (or a bit of thread stitched into the fabric). Unfold your fabric and the marker will be at the center. You should start stitching at the top of the design and work downward. There is an arrow at the top of the stitch chart that shows you where you are to start. By the stitch chart under "To start" are instructions telling you to count a certain number of holes straight up from the center of the fabric and then count a certain number of holes to the right or left. Count the holes on your fabric as directed and mark this place with a pin or thread.

This is where you will begin stitching.

5. Threading the needle: Take a length of the color of floss you are to start with. Starting at one end of the length, slowly pull out 2 of the strands, one at a time. Put the 2 strands back together (to use as one thread), then fold the 2 strands double and put the 4 ends through the eye of the needle. Here is a trick to help you:



FIG. A



FIG. B

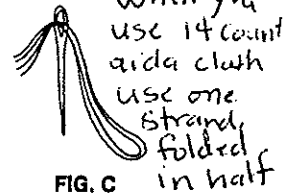
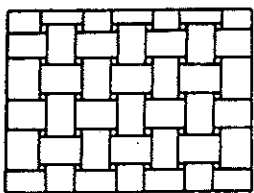


FIG. C

Note:
When you use 14 count aida cloth use one strand folded in half

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Materials: The materials you will be working with are:



FABRIC
Aida Cloth



NEEDLE
Tapestry



LENGTH OF FLOSS
(each length contains six strands)

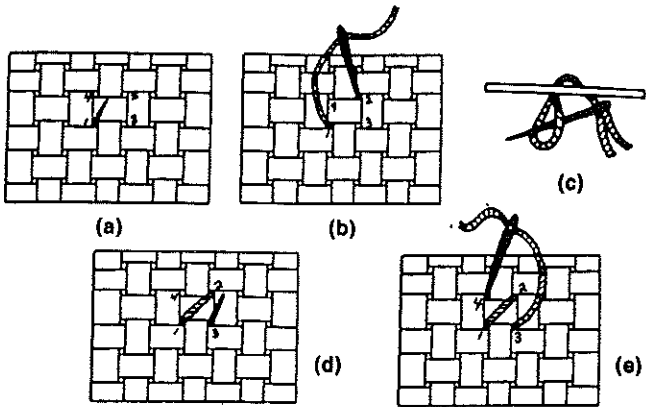
Notice that the fabric is made up of squares with holes at all four corners of each square. Your needle will go down and come up through these holes.

2. Stitch chart: Look at the stitch chart. Each square on the chart represents a square on the fabric. The chart shows the colors of the design but also has a symbol in the center of each colored square. There is a different symbol

- Cut a strip of paper about 2 inches long and not wider than the eye of your needle.
- Fold the paper in half and slip the folded end half way through the needle's eye (Fig. A).
- Spread out the folded end to make a loop. Slip the 4 ends of the floss through this loop (Fig. B).
- Pull on the open ends of the paper to bring paper and floss ends back through the eye.
- Your threaded needle should have a loop at the long end (Fig. C).

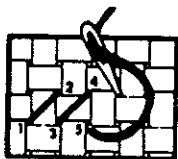
6. To make one cross stitch:

- Bring the needle up through the lower left hole (1) of the square to be stitched. Leave about 2 inches of the looped end extending on the back of the fabric.
- Put needle down through the upper right hole of the square (2).

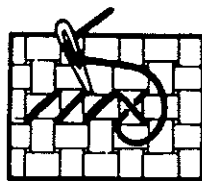


- (c) On the back, put the needle through the loop that is extending, then pull tight. This will secure the floss. You have just made the first half of a cross stitch.
- (d) Bring the needle up through the lower right hole (3).
- (e) Put the needle down through the upper left hole (4). You have just made one complete cross stitch. All your cross stitches should slant in the same direction as this one.

7. To make a row of cross stitches in the same color it is better to make the first half of each stitch in the row and then come back down the row, making the second half of each stitch. Note that stitches share holes with those on each side.

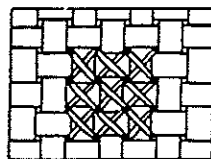


Cross Stitch—
First Half

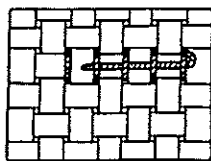


Cross Stitch—
Second Half

8. Continue working the rows of the color area. Note that the cross stitches share holes with those above and below them. Remember that the second half of each cross stitch always slants upward to the left.



9. Ending the floss: When the floss in your needle is almost gone or you have finished one color area, end by "tunneling under", which is running your needle underneath several completed stitches on the back of the fabric. (Knots are never used in cross stitch.) Trim off the end of the floss close to the back as shown. Do not leave any excess or the end may pull through to the front as you stitch.



10. Don't skip over more than 4 squares on the back in order to get to another color area. Instead, end floss as in Step 9 and begin again.

11. Beginning a new color: Start stitching a new color area next to one you have completed. This makes it easier to count stitches. When you start stitching with a new color you may secure your thread by using the loop method as in Step 6 or you may begin by "tunneling under" several stitches on the back to secure the floss (the same as when you ended the floss).

12. Backstitch: This stitch is done after all the cross stitches are completed. It is shown on the stitch chart by heavy solid lines. The dots along these lines show where the needle comes up or goes down. The individual backstitch instructions by the stitch chart will tell you what color and how many strands of floss to use. Notice that there is a separate diagram of each color of backstitching which corresponds to that on the stitch chart. Follow the numbers shown at the dots in order, coming up at odd numbers (1, 3, 5, etc.) and going down at even numbers (2, 4, 6, etc.). To begin, secure the floss with the loop method (Step 6). If the first stitch is quite long, secure the floss by looping the thread around a stitch on the back before beginning the backstitching. If the last stitch is long, make a single loop knot around a stitch on the back, then "tunnel under" several stitches. (To make a single loop knot, loop thread around the back of a stitch, put needle through loop, pull tight.)

HINTS AND REMINDERS

- Remember that no knots are used except sometimes when ending backstitching (see Step 12).
- Remember that the first half of each cross stitch always slants upward from left to right. The second half always slants upward from right to left.
- Don't allow your floss to become twisted. Now and then let the needle dangle to let the floss untwist itself. Also, you can pull the needle up and down the floss once or twice to smooth it out.
- Keep an even tension on your stitches. They should lie firm and straight but not be tight enough to pull the holes of the fabric out of place.
- Don't cross over more than about 4 squares on the back to get to another area. Instead, end floss and begin again.
- If you have trouble finding the right hole when you come up with your needle, use the index finger of your non-stitching hand to help guide the needle.

FINISHING INSTRUCTIONS

- When you are finished with all stitching, lay the design face down on a terrycloth towel and iron on the wrong side.
- Trim off the fabric at the bottom of the design so that 7 rows of squares remain below the lowest row of stitching. Make a fringe by pulling out the threads from the lowest 2 rows of squares. (You will leave 5 rows of squares below the design.)
- Fold under the side edges on each side of the design so that the piece measures 6 inches wide. (Fold along line between rows of squares.) Use iron to press the folded under edges on the back of the fabric.
- Measure one inch from top edge and fold under along this line. Glue edge of turned under fabric to back, leaving a space at the fold for the dowel. (Use white glue.)
- Insert dowel into top fold of fabric. Place an end cap on each end.
- Make a hanger cord with a length of leftover floss. Tie ends of floss to end caps so that hanger will extend about 1½ inches above the dowel. Glue knots. Cut off excess floss.
- Tie bow with ribbon. Glue at center top above design.