

# ican CROSS STITCH

## How to Cross Stitch

Use the information in this section to help you create the right stitch and select the correct tools to complete your projects.

### WORKING FROM CHARTED DESIGNS

Each square on a chart corresponds to a space for a cross stitch on the stitching surface. The symbol in a square shows the floss color to be used for the stitch. The width and height for the design stitch area are given in number of stitches and in inches; centers are shown by arrows at bottom and right-hand side of chart. Locations of backstitches are shown by heavy lines.

### FABRICS

In our materials listings, we give fabric suggestions that will complement each design. Our stitched samples were worked on 14-count Aida and 14-count perforated paper, which have 14 squares per inch; that number is called the thread count.

### FLOSS

All of our samples were stitched using DMC six-strand embroidery floss. Color numbers are given for floss. Cut floss into comfortable working lengths; we suggest about 12–18 inches. When separating the strands, gently pull apart the strands and regroup as indicated by pattern.

t!p

You can change the colors to match your favorites or your room. Just select a new set of colors, making sure that you choose the same number of colors, and get started!



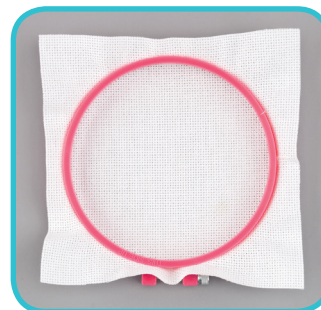
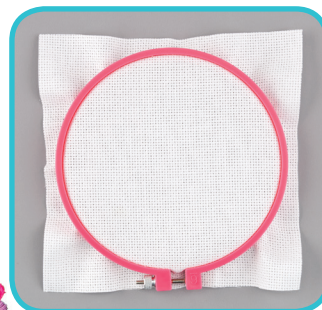
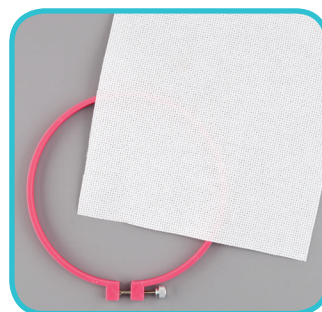
## NEEDLES

A blunt-tipped tapestry needle, size 24, is used for stitching on most 14-count fabrics and papers. The correct-size needle is easy to thread with the amount of floss required, but is not so large that it will distort the holes in the fabric. When threading needle, insert one end of strand or strands of floss and pull through.



## HOOPS & Q-SNAPS

A hoop or Q-Snap, which is a square fabric holder, is used to keep fabric pulled taut when stitching. Always use a hoop that is comfortable to hold while working and will be right for the project. If using a hoop, take care not to tighten hoop too much or it will distort stitches. Center project fabric in hoop or Q-Snap and lock in place by tightening the top screen on a hoop or snapping sides down on a Q-Snap; adjust placement as necessary or when stitching a different area. Never use a hoop or Q-Snap on perforated paper.



Front of hooped  
Aida fabric

Back of hooped  
Aida fabric

## SCISSORS

Good scissors are a necessity for stitching and are used to cut fabric and floss. Always be careful when using sharp scissors or when trimming your designs; ask an adult for help when using sharp scissors.

## IRON

You can remove the wrinkles caused by your hoop by gently ironing the fabric around your stitched piece. An iron is also needed when you adhere your stitched piece to something like a bag or pillow, and you will use iron-on fusible interfacing to do that (see page 36 for more instructions).

Remember to always protect your work by placing a press cloth between the iron and your stitched piece. Never iron perforated paper, and ask an adult for help when ironing.



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## THE STITCHES

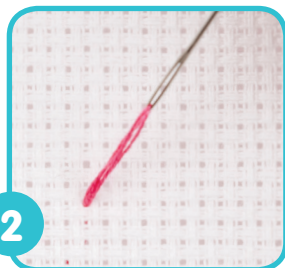
The number of strands of floss used for stitching will be determined by the thread count of the fabric used and the pattern. Refer to the chart and instructions to determine the number of strands used for cross stitches or backstitches.

## GETTING STARTED

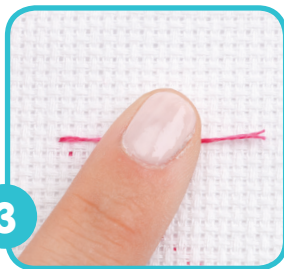
To begin in an unstitched area, bring threaded needle from back through to front of fabric. Hold about ¼ inch of the end of the thread against the back, and then secure it in place by catching it in the back loops of your first few stitches (Photos 1–8).



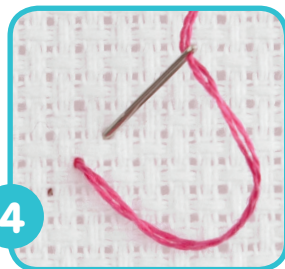
1 Start stitching in the center of a project as indicated by arrows on charts.



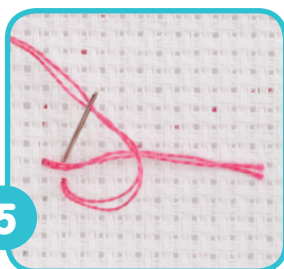
2 Bring threaded needle from back to front of fabric, leaving at least a ½" tail on back. (Front view of hooped work.)



3 Hold thread tail against back of work. (Back view of hooped work.)



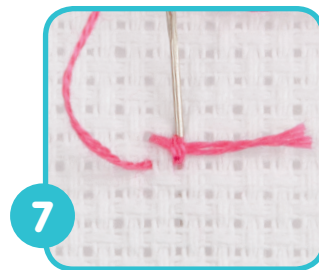
4 Make first leg of stitch to begin "catching" tail on back of work. (Front view of hooped work.)



5 Begin second leg of stitch while "catching" tail on back of work. (Back view of hooped work.)



6 Second leg of stitch. (Front view of hooped work.)



7 Second leg of stitch. (Back view of hooped work)

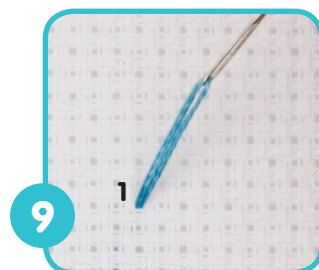


8 Three stitches worked and tail secured. (Back view of hooped work)

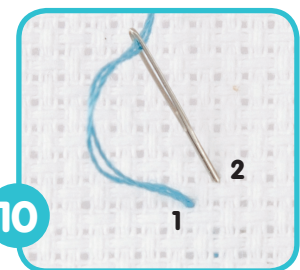
To end threads and begin new ones next to existing stitches, weave through the backs of several stitches. Whenever possible, start stitching in the center of a project as indicated by arrows on charts.

## CROSS STITCH

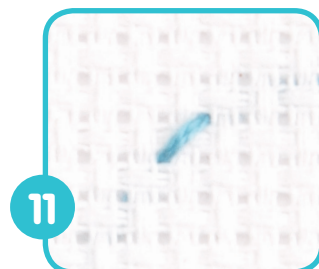
A cross stitch is formed in two motions. Following the numbering in Photos 9–14 below, bring needle up at 1, down at 2, up at 3 and down at 4 to complete the stitch. Work horizontal rows of stitches wherever possible.



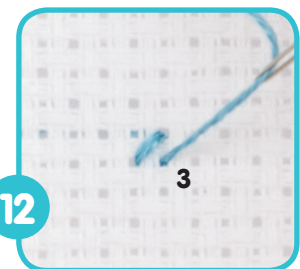
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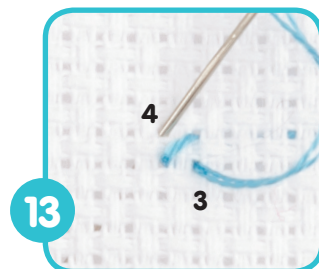
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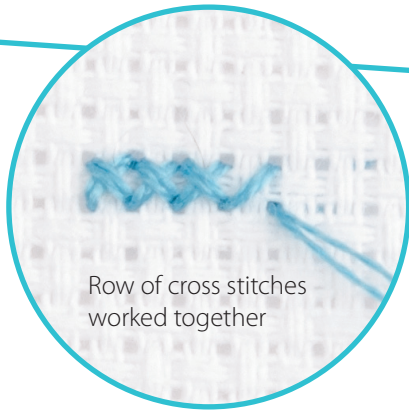
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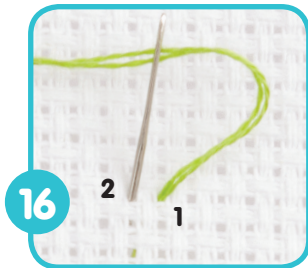
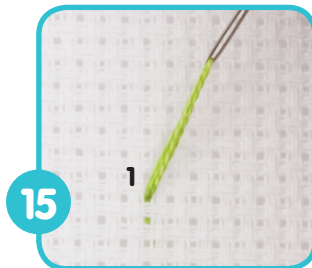


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## BACKSTITCH

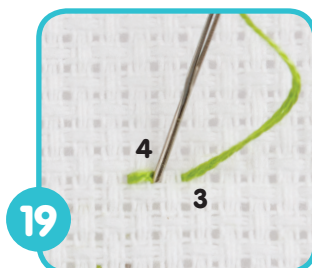
Backstitches are worked after cross stitches have been completed. They may lie in any direction and are occasionally worked over more than one square of fabric. Following Photos 15–17 below, bring needle up at 1 and down at 2 to create one backstitch. Refer to Photos 18–20 for multiple backstitches.



Completed backstitch



Begin second backstitch



19

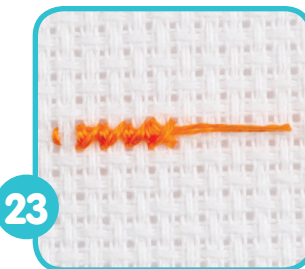
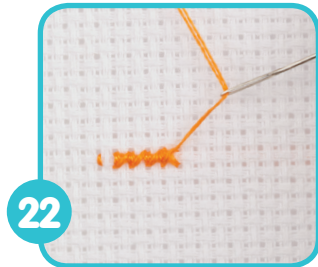
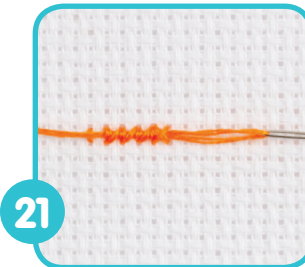


Row of completed backstitch

### FINISHING A THREAD:

After working the desired area of a specific color or when running out of thread, it is important to "lock" your thread before trimming the ends and starting with a new thread. Stop working your stitches when there is approximately 2"–3" of thread remaining. Bring needle to the back of the project; thread through back side of existing stitches (try to go

through 4–5 stitches (Photos 21). Pull thread through snugly but do not snatch (Photos 22). Carefully pass needle back through last two stitches in the row and pull firmly again. Clip ends. (Photos 23).



### PLANNING A PROJECT

Before you stitch, decide how large to cut fabric. Determine the stitched design size and then allow enough additional fabric around the design plus 4–6 inches more on each side for use in finishing and mounting if finishing differently than indicated. Try to allow 6 inches on fabric and 4 inches on perforated paper.

Cut your fabric right along the holes of the fabric. Some raveling may occur as you handle the fabric. To minimize raveling along the raw edges, use masking tape over the raw edges of fabric, which you can cut away when you are finished.

### BEFORE STARTING A PROJECT

- Gather all of your supplies—fabric, floss, needles, scissors, hoop and pattern.
- Wash your hands and dry them really well.
- Hoop or Q-Snap your prepared fabric.

### FINISHING NEEDLEWORK

When you have finished stitching, carefully examine your stitched design. Make sure all thread ends are well anchored and clipped closely. If there are any stains on the stitched design, spot clean carefully with water and a tiny bit of mild soap. Proceed with finishing directions.