

Embellishing Cross Stitch and Embroidery with Beads

Beads add another dimension to cross stitch as well as embroidery projects. They add sparkle, petite beads are a good replacement for French knots and all in all, they simply 'pretty up' the design.

There is a very specific technique to adding beads to a cross stitch piece. Adding beads to embroidery depends on the various stitches being used. Let's deal with cross stitch first.

The technique is this: (2 Strands in the needle - this is important)

- Proceed as though you were going to make an actual cross stitch but with 2 extra steps:
 - Bring the needle up through the hole - add the bead (first extra step)
 - Go down into the opposite hole - first leg of cross done
 - Come up through the next hole as if to do the second leg of a cross stitch
 - As you go down to finish the second leg, split the strands so that they fall on either side of the bead (second extra step) and then go down into the fabric to finish the second leg.

By using this method you are assured that the bead will not move / wiggle during framing and remains in exactly the position that you placed it in.

Be careful when replacing French knots with beads. The bead might have to lay ON TOP of cross stitches. In this case you simply come up where the french knot would have been made, put bead onto needle and go back down. You can come up again, next to the bead, go through the hole of the bead and go back down on the other side to make the bead more secure

For Embroidery:

The most common method it is simply come up through the fabric, add the bead and go back down into the fabric. You can come up again, next to the bead, go through the hole of the bead and go back down on the other side to make the bead more secure.

However, there are so many more interesting ways to add beads to embroidery.

You could:

- String it onto your thread and then couch the beaded string down
- Incorporate it into your Stem stitch by either adding only 1 bead per stitch and place it so that it is positioned in the 'hook' of the stem OR you could string 5 or more beads onto your needle per stitch and create a beaded stem stitch
- Chain Stitch: incorporate it in every chain so that it is positioned at the base of each chain
- Seeding - mix it in between seeded stitches
- Blanket Stitch - position the bead (s) so that it sits either at the loop of the blanket stitch or the leg of the stitch

There are tons of ways to incorporate beads into your stitching. You just need to play around and see what works for you.

Get Creative!

Needlework Emporium Stocks a complete range of Mill Hill Seed Beads, Mill Hill Petite Beads as well as Delica and Myuki Seed Beads:

<https://www.needleworkemporium.co.za/products/beads>

For more information call me on info@needleworkemporium.co.za

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