

## Cross Stitch – How To

Trying something new can be daunting especially when you are not sure of the how what and where.

Cross stitch is a technique by which thread is used to create a picture. It differs from tapestry as it is:

- done on fabric and not canvas,
- uses stranded embroidery thread and not wool and
- its picture is most times not printed on the fabric.

Cross stitch is split into 2 areas:

- Preprinted fabric
- Counted Cross stitch (fabric is not preprinted)

The technique itself is pretty simple as the stitch is simply an X (or a cross hence the name)

The fabric on which it is stitched is called Aida which is a blockweave fabric into which the Xs are made.

There are 2 ways in which to achieve the stitch:

- Complete crosses one at a time
- Complete rows of half crosses and return to complete the other half of the stitch.

A cross (X) is made by:

- Bringing the needle up at point A, taking it down at B, bringing it up at C and down at D – X MADE!

Starting requires you bring the needle up at A but leave a tail behind the work which will automatically be covered as you go along.

Finish by taking your thread to the back of the work and running a tail underneath previously worked stitches.

Important rules to remember :

- You can choose to stitch from left to right or right to left as long as the top stitches lay in the same direction
- Always start in the centre of the fabric by folding the fabric in half twice. A crease will form in the centre of the fabric and this is then your starting point.
- The starting point on the chart or pattern is indicated by vertical and horizontal arrows. Where they intersect indicates the centre of the chart
- If the pattern calls for you to start in the top left corner then:
  - Measure 7.5cm in from the vertical as well as horizontal edge and that then determines your starting point. This method is mostly used with charts which are printed on multiple (more than 4) pages.
- Every symbol on the chart denotes a different colour thread

- Thread is coded by their shade numbers which are found on the threads themselves or if you are using a kit, then the sorting cards will indicate the shade numbers.
- Always use a tapestry needle which is a blunt needle usually found in sizes 24, 26 or 28 for cross stitch
- Always use 2 strands of thread in your needle unless otherwise indicated on the pattern.
- Some patterns call for outline stitches or back stitch as well as beads – these are stitched in LAST

Cross Stitch is one of those crafts that once mastered, the skill is can never be lost. It is therapeutic and stitchers feel a great sense of accomplishment once the project is complete.

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