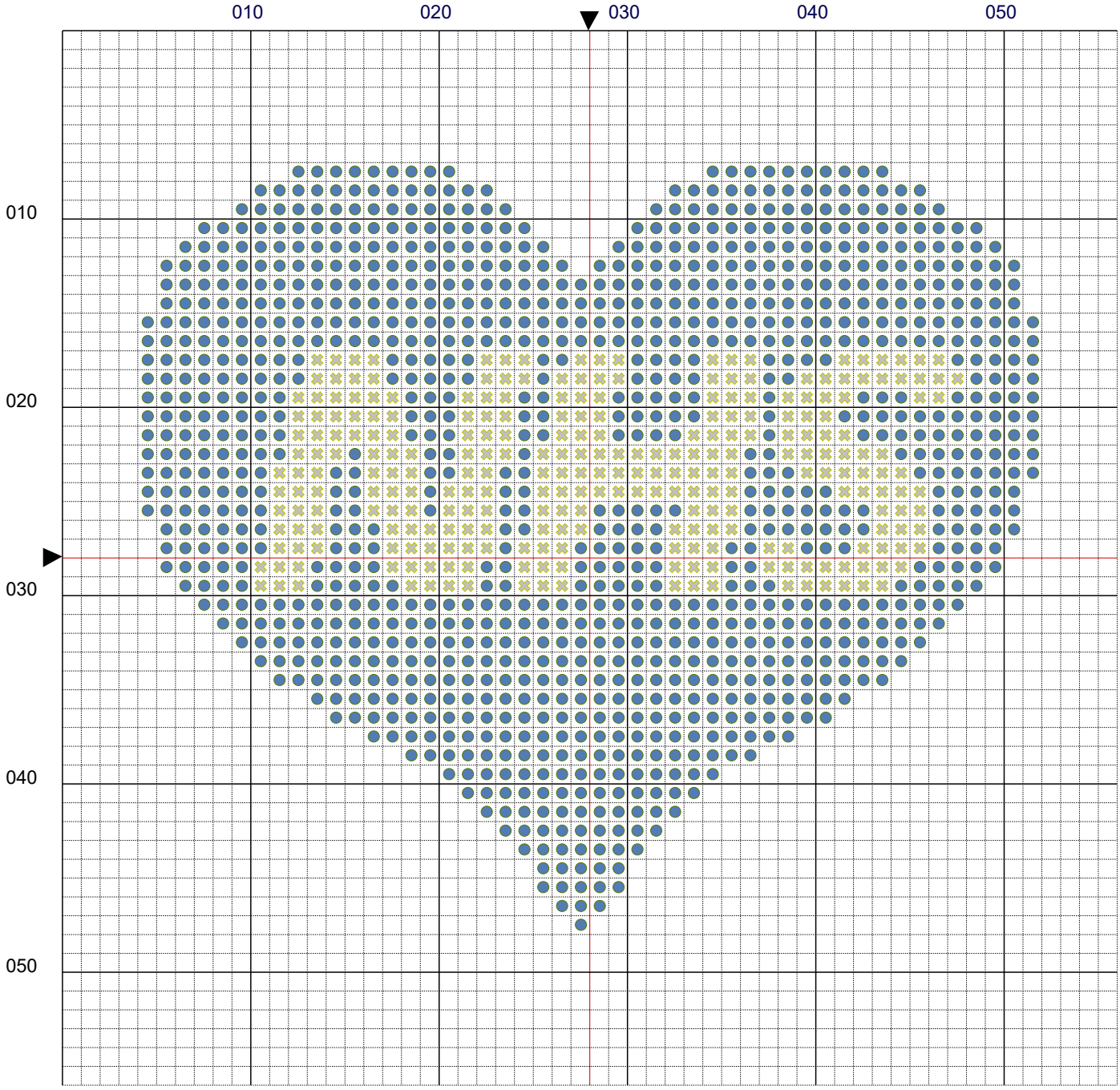
NHS Love

© Fandom Cross Stitchery

NHS Love



© Fandom Cross Stitchery

NHS Love

	Number	Name:	Strands	Length	Stitches
●	DMC 799	Delft Blue medium	2	0.8 skeins	1073
✖	DMC BLANC	White	2	0.2 skeins	276

© Fandom Cross Stitchery

How to Cross Stitch

Before you start

Familiarise yourself with the pattern and decide where you're going to start. The centre is usually the best place as this can easily be found on the pattern (marked by arrows and red lines) and on the Aida fabric (by folding it in half in both directions). Make sure your hands are clean and free from any oils or creams.

You may find it useful to secure your fabric in an embroidery hoop before stitching; this will keep it taut and easier to work with.

Consult the key at the end of the pattern to see what colour each symbol represents.

You will need:

- Cross stitch pattern
- Fabric (Aida/Evenweave)
- Threads
- Needle
- Scissors / thread snips

You may find helpful:

- Embroidery hoop
- Magnetic needleminder
- A quiet place to sit

A note on blended threads:

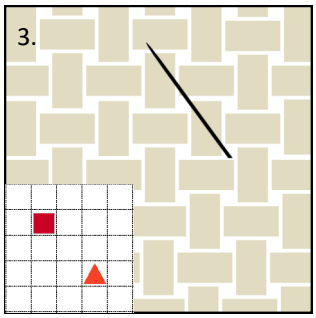
Some patterns require the use of more than one colour per stitch. Blended threads are listed in the 'Number' column as "**DMC CODE [+]**", and defined in the 'Thread Name' column of the thread key. Use one strand of each thread together in the needle. For example:

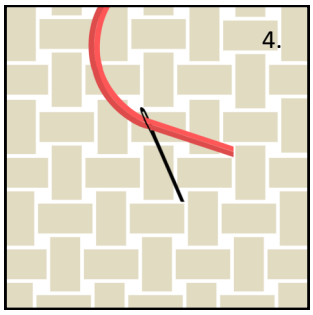
▲	DMC 168 [+]	DMC 168 [+] DMC 645

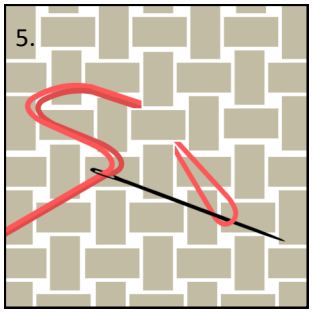
Number: "**DMC 168 [+]**"; Name: "**DMC 168[+] DMC 645**". For each stitch marked by the silver triangle use one strand of **DMC 168** and one strand of **DMC 645** threaded together through the needle.

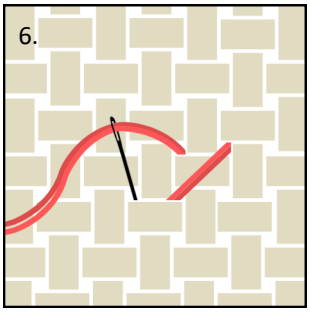
Basic Cross Stitch / Full Cross (full-sized symbol):

1. Making sure your hands are clean before you start, select a colour of thread and remove a single strand.
2. Fold the strand in half and thread through the needle. This gives you a double thread.
3. Bring the needle up through a hole in the fabric, but do not pull all the way through.
4. Push the needle down through the hole diagonally across from where you started (in this case top right to bottom left).
5. Flip the fabric over, pass the needle through the loop, and pull tight. This is a 'knotless loop start'.
6. Turn the fabric right-side up and bring the needle through the top right corner of the next stitch.



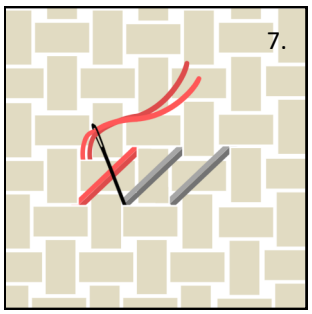


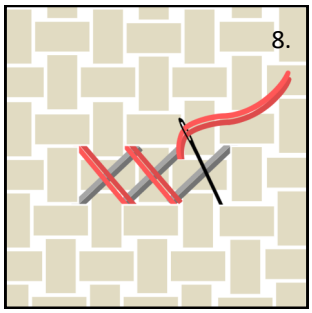




7. Continue making these 'half stitches', following your pattern until the line is complete

8. Turn and work your way back across the line, stitching opposite diagonals to complete the Xs. It doesn't matter in which direction you sew your diagonals, just make sure they are all the same, to ensure a neat, finish.





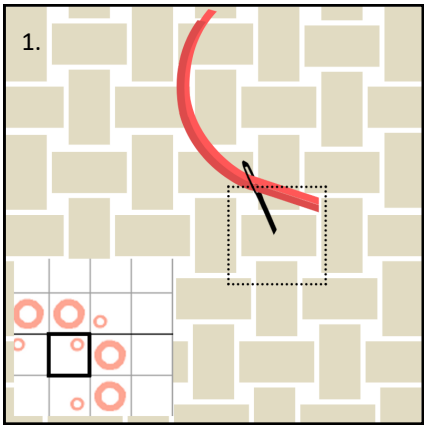
©Fandom Cross Stitchery

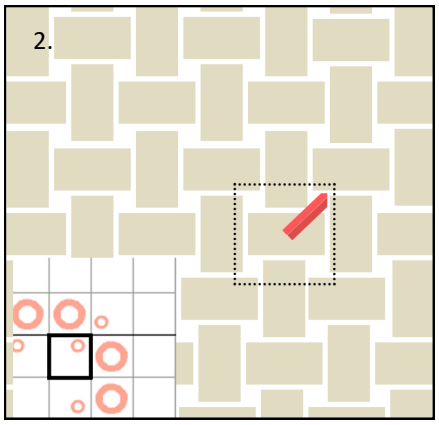
Quarter Stitch (shown as a quarter-sized symbol on your pattern):

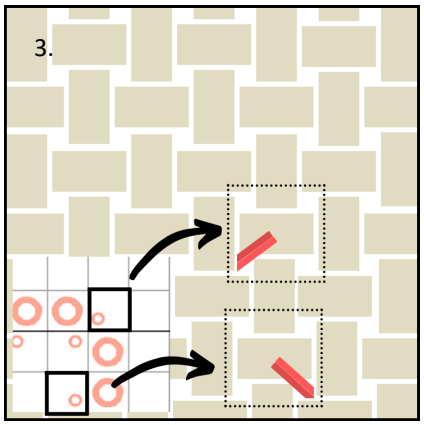
1. Using 2 strands of thread, bring the needle up through the fabric in the same way as for a full cross. Push down through the centre of the square. You may need to wiggle the needle to separate the strands of Aida.

2. Pull tight. Combined with a diagonal half-stitch (in this case top right to bottom left), this forms a three-quarter stitch.

3. The position of the symbol indicates which quarter of the square the stitch will sit.





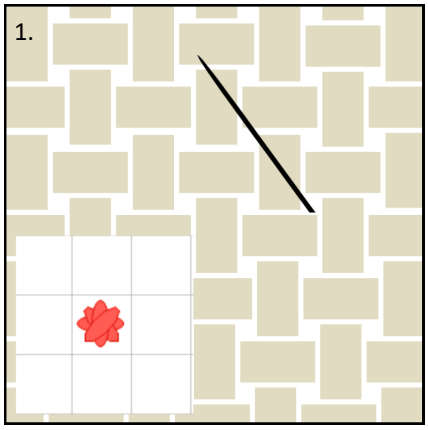


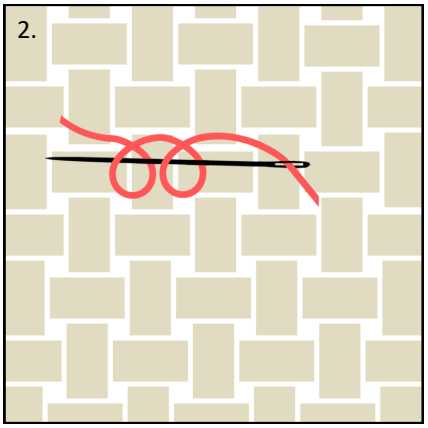
French Knot (shown as an asterisk on your pattern):

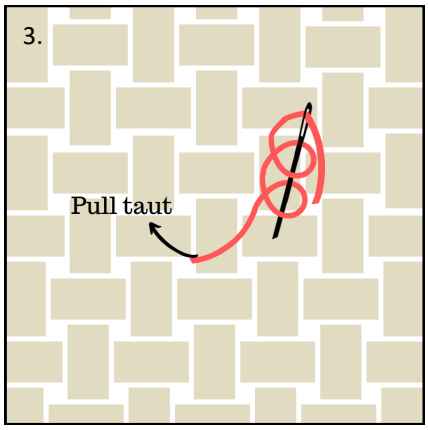
1. Using 1 strand of thread, bring the needle up through the fabric in the same way as for a full cross.

2. Wrap the thread around the needle twice.

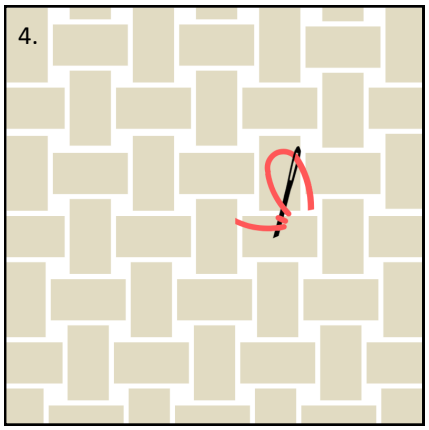
3. Push the needle down slightly away from where you came up. Keep the excess thread pulled taut.

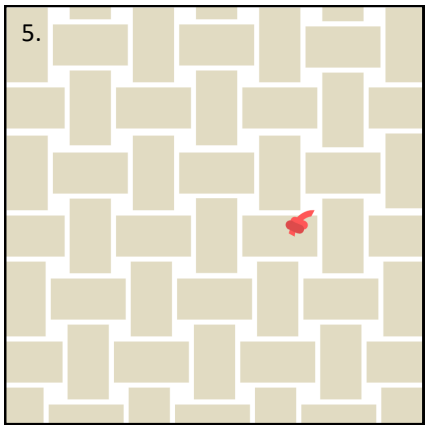






4 & 5. Slowly pull the needle through the fabric, (remembering to keep the excess thread taut) until you have a neat little knot.

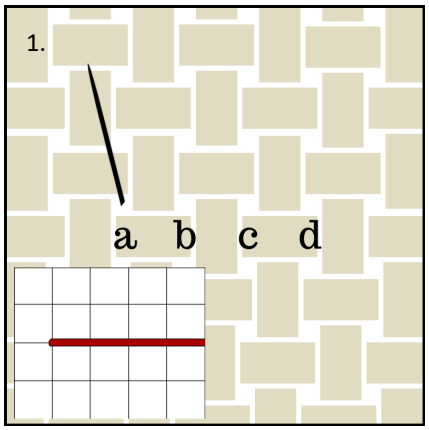


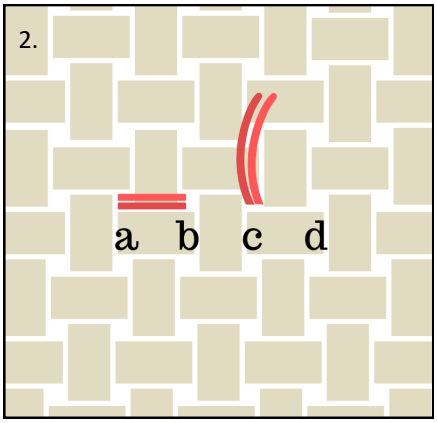


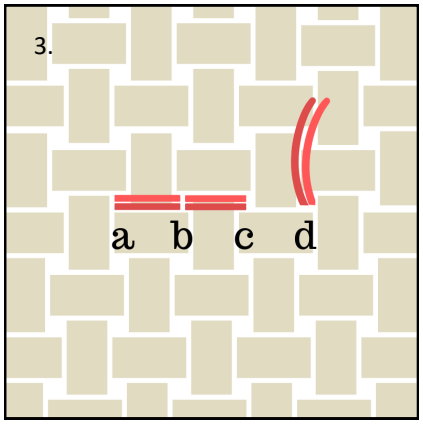
©Fandom Cross Stitchery

Backstitch / Outlining (shown as a line on your pattern):

1. Using a single strand of thread (NOT doubled over) come up through the fabric as usual [a]
2. Sew through the next [b] , and up again through [c].
3. Sew back down through [b] and come up through [d].





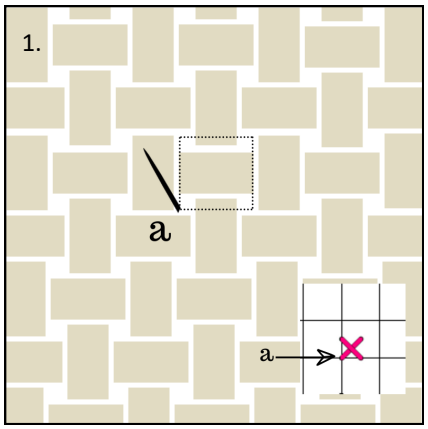


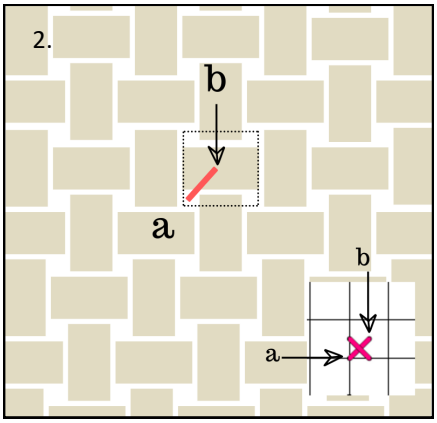
Continue in this way, following the pattern, until your line is complete. Diagonals and longer lines are worked in the same way. To minimise snags and wavy lines, try not to let each stitch span more than 2 squares.
See overleaf for an example of backstitching a shape / letter, the sequence shown from start to finish.

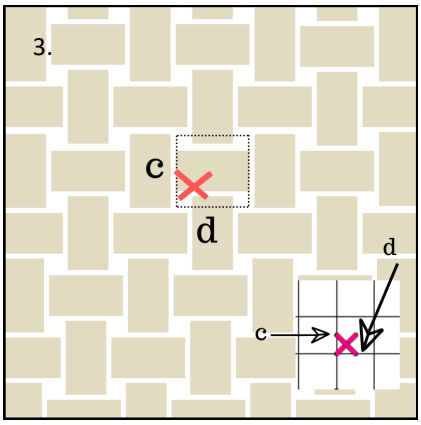
Fractional backstitches

Here we will be working a cross that is a quarter regular size but this method applies to any stitch that does not begin and end on a hole (the corner of a square on your pattern). Come up as you would normally at [a], here shown as the bottom left of our square.

1. Push your needle down through **the centre of the square** [b]. Wiggle your needle to separate the threads of the fabric.
2. Similarly, come up at [c], centrally between the top left and bottom left holes. Wiggle to separate the threads.
3. Push your needle down at [d], centrally between the bottom left and bottom right holes.





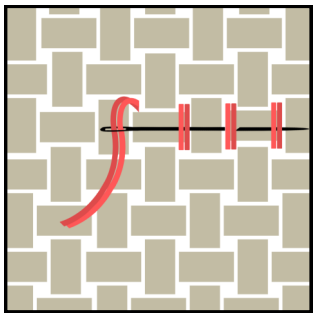


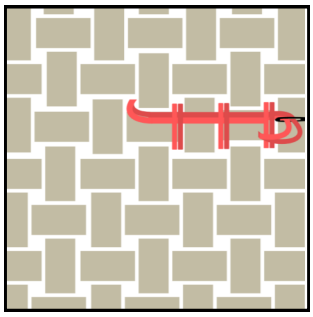
Finishing off:

To secure your thread, you can just weave it under another piece and tie a knot, but this method produces a smoother, neater finish.

Turn the Aida to the wrong side and carefully pass your needle under multiple stitches. Pull tight and trim the excess thread.

The more stitches you run the thread under, the more secure your finish.

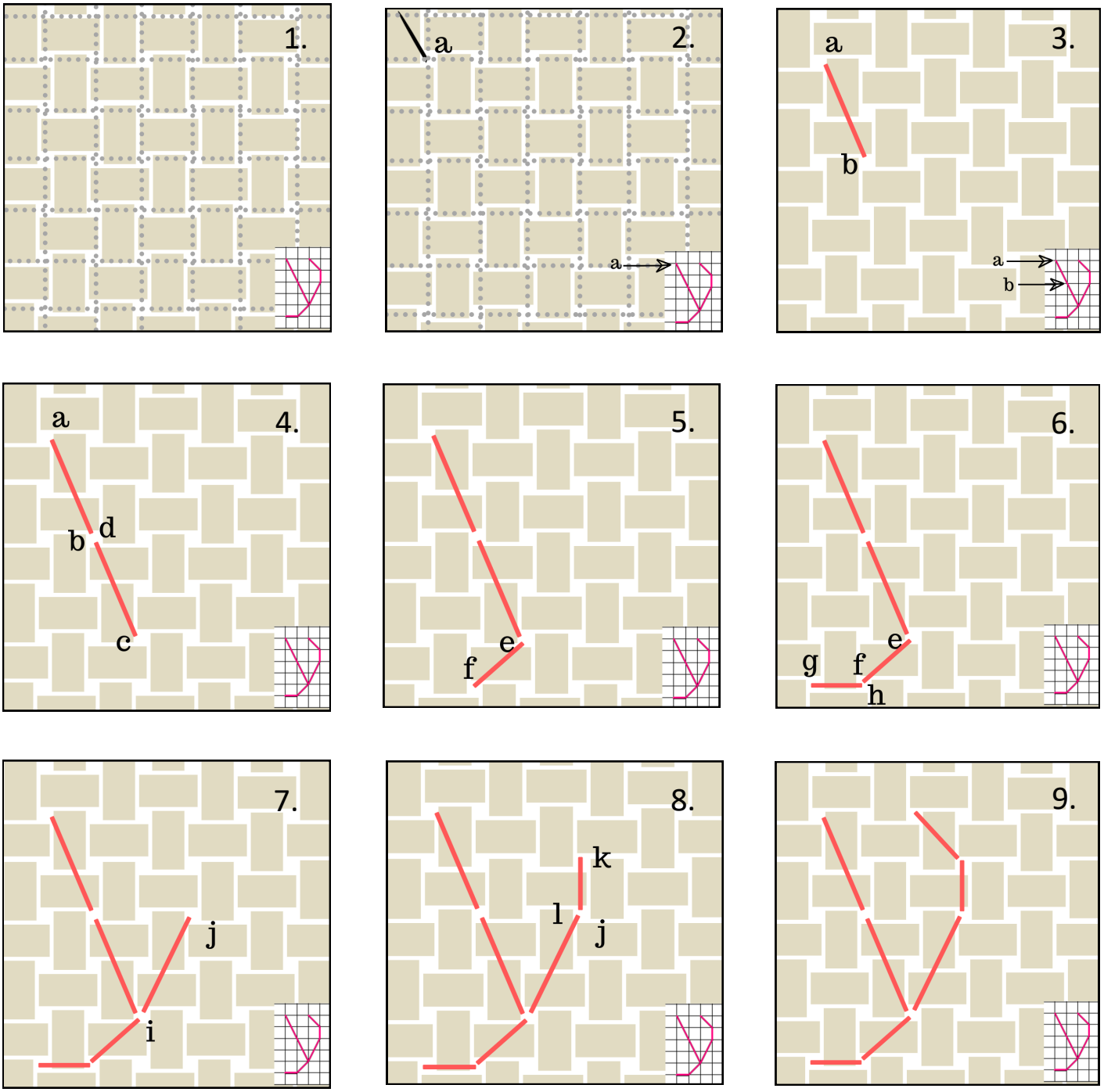




Following the pattern

Try to identify a logical path through the letter / shape, minimising the amount of thread used.

Here is an example of stitching a lowercase ‘y’. The intersections of lines on the pattern correspond with holes in the fabric.



Backstitch can sometimes seem daunting, but remember to keep it simple: break it down to its component lines, try not to stitch over more than 2 or 3 squares, and keep double-checking against the pattern.

And you’re done!

Now you’ve finished your masterpiece, take a moment to pat yourself on the back.

It’s advisable to iron your work to remove any creasing. Do this on a low heat on the reverse. You may want to place a tea towel between the iron and the fabric for protection. You can frame by folding the edges around a sturdy piece of cardboard or foam, stitching in place, then placing in a suitably-sized frame. You can also use an embroidery hoop as a frame (see next page).

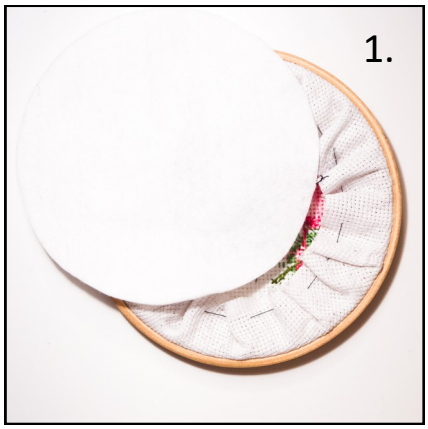
Sit back, and admire the beauty of your hard work!

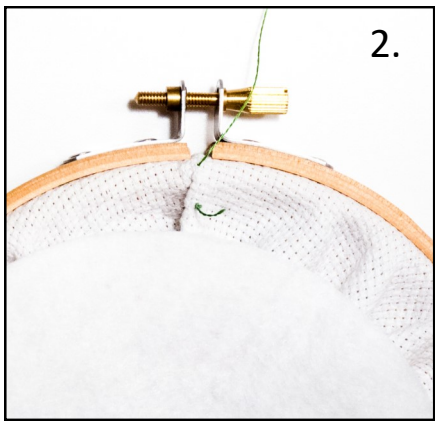
Finishing, Framing, and Backing your Project (optional)

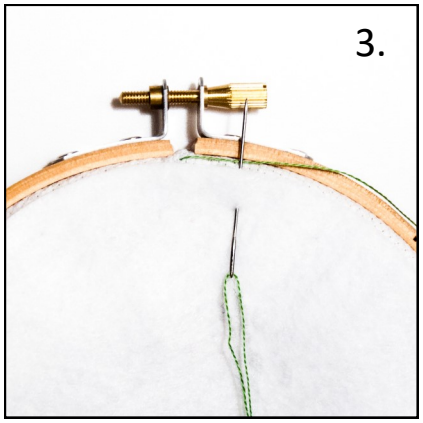
Once you've finished your project, it's advisable to remove it from the hoop, and iron it on a low heat on the reverse to remove any hoop marks. Centre the design in your embroidery hoop and, once you're happy with the positioning, pull the fabric taut around the outside, ensuring there are no wrinkles. Tighten the screw to secure. Trim the fabric to a few inches from the hoop.

1. Thread your needle with your sewing thread* and pass a running stitch (over-under) around the circumference of the excess fabric. Pull taut, and secure. This will keep the excess fabric neatly out of the way.

You can leave it there, but it adds an extra touch of luxury to finish your hoop off with a felt backing.







Check the size of the felt hoop; it should cover the Aida but not the outer frame. If you want to decorate (or autograph!) the backing fabric now's your chance.

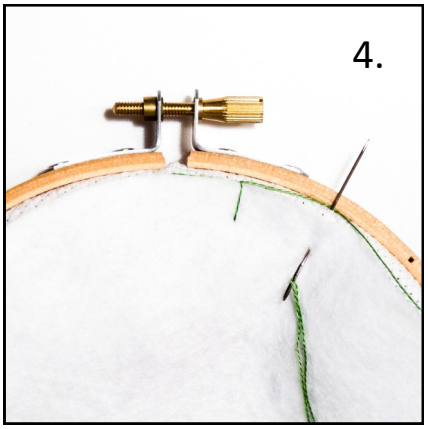
2. Secure your thread* to the Aida and bring your needle up at the 12 o'clock position, close to the wooden frame.

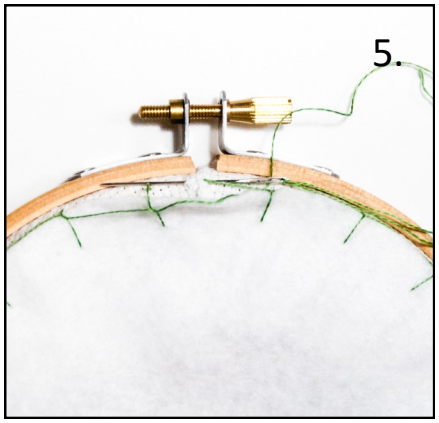
3. Line up the felt circle with the Aida and sew a stitch as shown: down through the felt (and Aida underneath) a little way away from the first stitch, and up through the Aida near the hoop. Before you pull this stitch taut, ensure your needle passes OVER the slack thread near the wood).

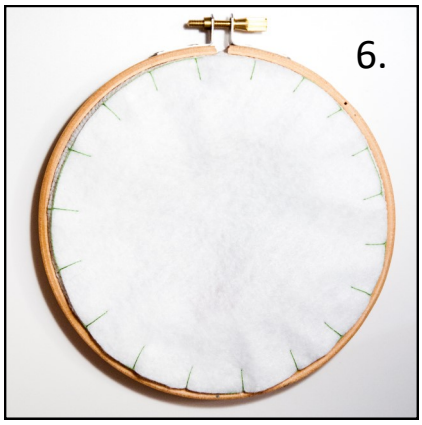
4. Pull the stitch taut and repeat at regular intervals around the circumference of the hoop**.

5. Once you reach the 12 o'clock position again, make one last stitch, and secure the thread end to the Aida, ensuring your knot is hidden under the felt.***

6. Sit back and admire the beauty of your hard work!







*We've used dark threads for illustrative purposes but you'd be better using one that matches your fabric.

** We've deliberately exaggerated the stitches for illustrative purposes—smaller, more closely-placed stitches will produce a neater finish.

*** The stitches in this photo are deliberately slack to show the Aida underneath.