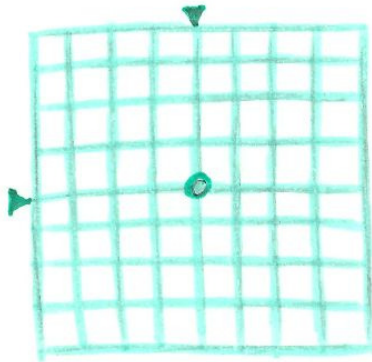
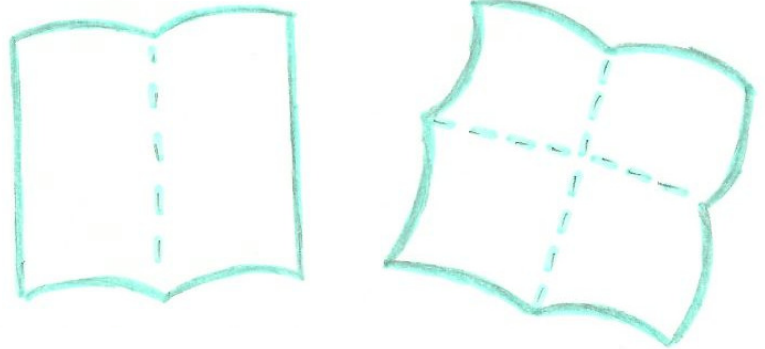


How to Cross Stitch

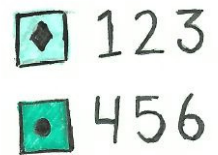
Getting Started

- Before you begin stitching, you will need to find the middle of your Aida cloth. This helps you to centre the pattern so you can stitch the design evenly on the fabric. Take your piece of Aida cloth and fold it in half, crease and unfold. Turn and fold in half the other way, crease and unfold. The point where the creases meet will be the centre of your fabric.

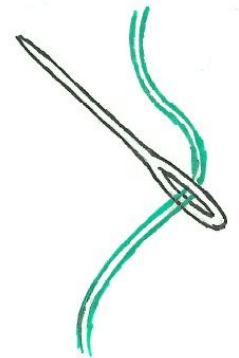


- Next, take your pattern and find the centre point. The pattern may have arrows at the top and side that indicate the middle; follow them down and across the grid to find the centre of the pattern. If there are no arrows, you can just count the number of squares along the top and side to find the middle.

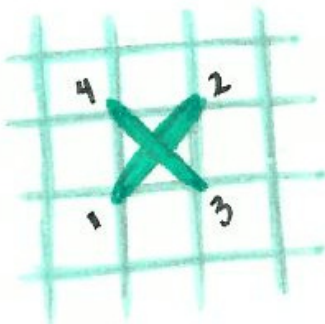
- Now, find a patch of colour near the centre of the pattern and select a piece of embroidery floss that matches that colour. There will be a key that tells you which symbol on the pattern corresponds to which colour of embroidery floss. All WistfulBird patterns and kits use DMC brand embroidery floss.



- Embroidery floss is made up of six strands. You will only need two or three strands to stitch with, so make sure you separate out the number of strands you need before threading your needle. Using three strands will make your stitches look fuller and show less of the fabric beneath. However, if you are brand new to cross stitching or if you anticipate making mistakes, you might want to only use two strands to make sure that you will have enough embroidery floss to finish your project. Thread the floss onto your needle.



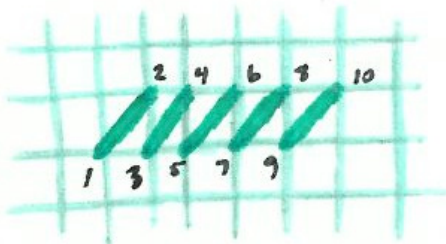
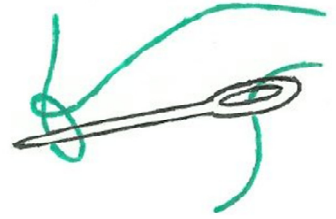
The Cross Stitch



- The weave of Aida cloth forms a grid with holes at the corners of each square. Each stitch will form an X over one of these squares. From your pattern, count how many squares the first stitch you are going to make is from the centre. Then count that same number of squares from the centre of your fabric.

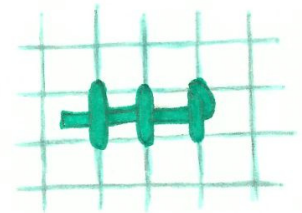
- To start your first stitch, bring your needle up through the back of the fabric at the lower left corner of the square. Go back down through the upper right corner. For the second half of the stitch, come up through the bottom right corner and back down through the upper left. This will complete your first X.

- To attach the embroidery floss to your fabric, there are a couple of different techniques you can use.
 - You can make the first half of your first stitch, leaving a generous tail of embroidery floss at the back of the fabric. Tie a loose knot at the end of the floss and then slip your needle through the knot. Pull the floss through until the knot is tight against the back of your fabric.
 - Or, you can leave a short length of floss at the back of your fabric and stitch over it as you go.



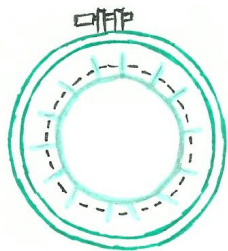
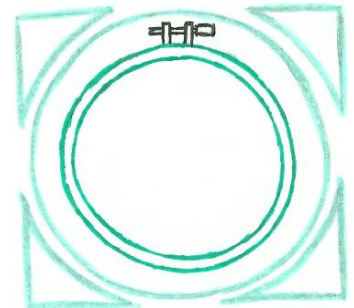
- When you have a row of stitches in the same colour, you can stitch the first half of all stitches in the row, moving from left to right. When you get to the end of the row, work your way back from right to left, completing the second half of all stitches in the row. This will put you back at the beginning of your row and in a good position to start the row beneath if it happens to be in the same colour.

- When you finish the section of colour you are working on, you will need to attach the end of your embroidery floss to your project so your stitches don't unravel. You can do this by flipping over your fabric and running your needle under the backs of the last few stitches you made. Pull the floss tight and trim off the excess.



Finishing Your Project

- Once you have completed stitching the pattern, handwash your fabric in lukewarm water with a mild detergent and then rinse. Lay flat and let air dry. Once dry, lightly iron the back of the fabric.
- To frame your work in an embroidery hoop, loosen the screw at the top of the hoop and separate the two pieces. Place your fabric on top of the inner hoop. Place the outer hoop on top of your fabric and press down, sandwiching the fabric between the two parts of the hoop. Tighten the screw to hold the fabric in place. Pull at the edges of the fabric to make it taut and try to centre the design. Tighten the screw again to keep everything together – you can use pliers or a screwdriver to tighten it further. Trim the edges of your fabric, leaving approximately a half inch around the hoop.



- There are several methods you can use to finish the back of your project, the simplest of which is just to run hot glue around the inside of the inner ring of the hoop and press your fabric into it. For a slightly more polished look, you can sew a running stitch around the edge of your fabric and pull your thread tight to gather the fabric (I would suggest using a nylon thread for this rather than the cotton embroidery floss, since nylon will be less likely to snap when you pull it tight). You can then cover up the back with a piece of felt or another fabric – cut to the size of your hoop and attach to the Aida cloth with a blanket stitch.

