

---

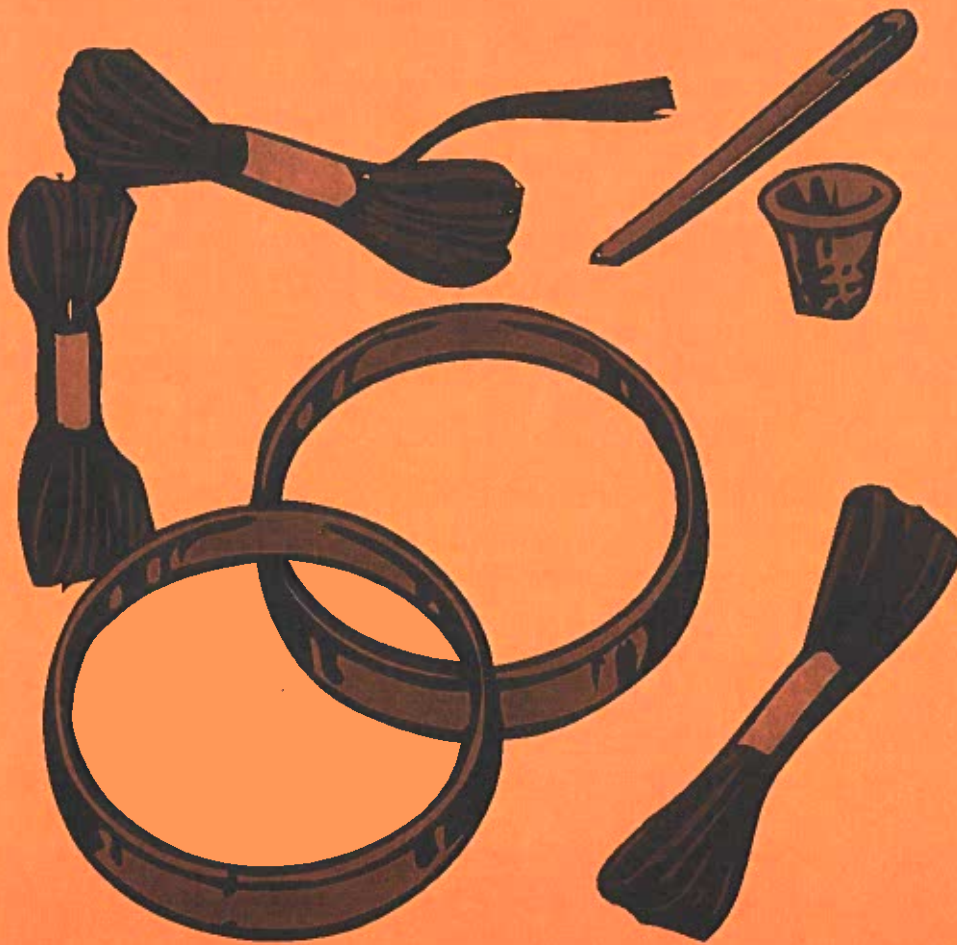
4-H

STATE 4-H OFFICE  
FILE COPY

# Heritage Arts: Needle Arts (Decorative Stitching)

---

MJ0703  
Member's Manual



Colorado  
State  
University  
Cooperative  
Extension

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Colorado State 4-H Heritage Arts committee prepared the 4-H Heritage Arts series. The committee includes: Linda Carlson, curator and lecturer, Historic Costume and Textiles, and Kathleen Williams, Extension specialist and lecturer, Design, Merchandising and Consumer Sciences Department, College of Applied Human Sciences; Carol Schneider, 4-H Extension agent, Weld County; and Sue Cummings, Extension specialist, 4-H Youth Development, Colorado State University.

Edited by Dell Rae Moellenberg, Public Relations Department, Colorado State University, layout and design by Karen Cagle, 4-H Youth Development Program, Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, and illustrations by Ruth Orton. Graphics courtesy of ClickArt® 125,000 Deluxe Image Pak™; © 1997, T/Maker Co.

## PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE PUBLICATION

Requests for permission to reproduce any parts or all of this Colorado 4-H Youth-Development publication should be directed to

Publications Liaison  
State 4-H Office  
Colorado State University Cooperative Extension  
140 Aylesworth, N.W.  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-4050



Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Milan A. Rewerts, Director of Cooperative Extension, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado. Cooperative Extension programs are available to all without discrimination. To simplify technical terminology, trade names of products and equipment occasionally will be used. No endorsement of products named is intended nor is criticism implied of products not mentioned.

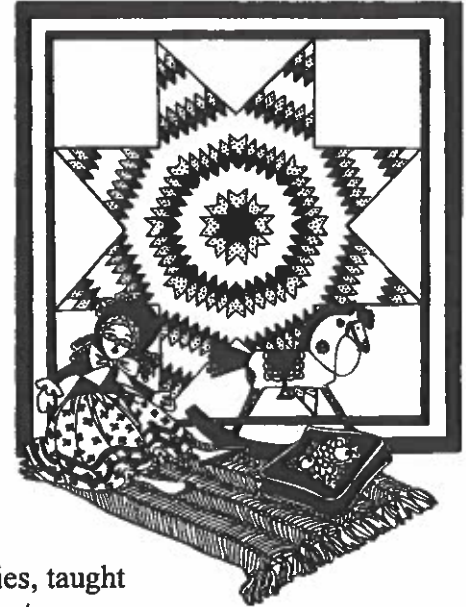
# Introduction

Welcome to the 4-H Heritage Arts project. Without interested individuals, such as yourself, many historic arts and crafts would be lost with the passing of generations.

You will be given the opportunity, through the Heritage Arts project, to choose from a variety of fiber, fabric, yarn arts and crafts. The projects and activities you experience depend upon your enthusiasm and the availability of resources within your home and community.

*Heritage Arts* is defined as the practical skills passed down from preceding generations that were developed to provide basic family needs, such as apparel, home furnishings, or decorations. It also is defined as a traditional craft and the methods that have been maintained throughout history and passed on to others, often by observation and example.

Classes on traditional crafts are available in many communities, taught by skilled local artisans. The techniques taught often incorporate new techniques and materials with the old, traditional methods to enhance the craft.



## P roject Objectives

The Heritage Arts project is designed to help you:

- Learn about a variety of historic arts and crafts.
- Create a craft that connects you to the past.
- Learn about historic influences on arts and crafts.
- Have fun learning.
- Gain skills that might lead to a home-based business.

## P roject Expectations

Members are encouraged to learn about and try a variety of different historic crafts. Think of fun places in your community where you can learn more. Ask about interesting, creative artisans who are willing to share their skills with you. Take a field trip to local museums that feature historic fabric and yarn displays. Take a trip to the library and look up interesting facts about a craft that is of particular interest to you. Evaluate or judge fabric and yarn crafts and do a demonstration to share your skills with others. The more activities you do, the more you learn.

To complete your project, respond to all questions on the Heritage Arts Record. Check with your Cooperative Extension office for county fair requirements *if* you want to exhibit your project.

# Textile Crafts

What is a textile craft? It is defined as any method of creating a unique design with fiber, fabric or yarn. Patchwork and applique quilting are examples of textile crafts that use fabric as the main design ingredient. Needlepoint, embroidery, crochet and weaving are textile crafts that use yarns as the design tool. All textile crafts have one thing in common—they use fibers, fabric or yarn to create a design.

With some textile crafts, it means making the fabric, such as weaving, crochet or needlepoint. With other textile crafts, an already existing fabric is changed into something quite different. Quilting and embroidery can change the appearance of a fabric to create an exciting, imaginative design.

## Creating a Design

Once you decide on a heritage craft, it's time to think about the design. Many books show how to create a pleasing design. There also are many printed patterns that can be purchased. There's no better way to enjoy and understand design than to try it! Designing, like most activities, can come naturally once you understand what you are doing.

A design is really a plan—a plan for using all materials so that they look good together. To begin planning the design, examine your materials—whether they are yarns or fabrics or some other material—in a special way. For example, regardless of what materials are used, these basic ingredients are the design:

- line
- shape
- space
- texture
- color

These ingredients are called the *elements of design* and they are important to your plan because they are the visible details of a design. Without a design plan, these elements may seem haphazard or clash. Let's take a closer look at each of these elements of design.

- *Line*

Line is an element that's found everywhere around us. In a garment, lines are created by a seamline, a hem, a dart, a row of trim, a plaid or stripe. A row of embroidery stitches creates a line, as does a row of crochet stitches or the pattern in a quilt square. Some lines are straight and angular, others are curved. Some are thick and sturdy, others fine and delicate. The kind of lines used in a design will affect the character of that design.

- *Shape*

When lines are connected and overlapped, they create shapes: squares, circles, triangles, any shape imaginable. The outline of an applique is a shape, the pieces in a patchwork quilt are shapes, the outline of a garment is a shape, and so on. Just as lines create feelings, so can shapes.

- *Space*

When we talk of space, we mean the actual space an object or a design occupies. When we design, we work within a specific space; so not only must the design itself be well thought out but so must the space around it. That space might be an individual quilt square or entire quilt.

- *Texture*

Texture is the surface characteristic of an object; it may be smooth, fuzzy, soft, pebbly, scratchy, or one of many other textures. Sometimes we don't have to touch an object to know its texture—we can *see* the texture. In planning a design, texture is important to think about because each one we see has a character or feeling, just as lines and shapes do.

- *Color*

When we think of colors, we usually think of color names (or hues) like red, green, yellow or blue. We can create different feelings in a design on the colors we use together. For instance, a design in yellow and green will give you a different feeling from the same design in purple and blue. But, there are other ways we use colors to give a design the feeling we want. The way we use color *values* also can affect a design (value refers to the lightness or darkness of a hue). The same hue can have lots of different values.

Think about all the different kinds of blue (baby blue, light blue, sky blue, peacock blue, navy blue and royal blue). Value can affect the feeling of a design too. Try to visualize a design in all light colors (like lime green, pink, light blue, lemon yellow). Now visualize that same design in dark green, navy blue, dark red, and gold. Does it seem different? How about the same design in lime green and navy blue? Does it seem different in style? The *intensity* of the hues we use in a design also affect the feeling we get from it. Intensity refers to the brightness or dullness of a color. Imagine a design in all bright colors—usually a design made of bright colors is more than our eyes can take! So, use bright colors sparingly!

## Evaluate Your Plan—Pattern to Follow

Take a look at the materials you plan to work with—fibers, yarns, fabrics, or threads. What kind of feeling do you want to create with your design? Do the materials create that feeling in their textures and colors? Can you create the kinds of lines and shapes you want with your materials? Are the materials suitable for the space in which you've chosen to create? If you can say "yes" to these questions, you're on your way to a well-designed piece.

But it doesn't stop there. Because even with all the right materials together, designers still need some guidelines on *how* to use them together. You can think of these guidelines as a recipe for deciding just how much of each ingredient (colors, textures, lines, and other elements) to use and where to add them. These guidelines are called principles of design.

## Principles of Design

- *Proportion*

Proportion is the relationship of all the parts of a design to each other and to the whole garment or article. Each part needs to be in proportion to the rest of the design. No part should overpower the others. If a garment does not have proportion, one part of the design might be too big for the rest of the design. Or, the design may be too big or too small to look good on the garment, or, there may be too much bright, shiny color that overpowers the other colors. Or, if the design is the entire garment or article, it may lack proportion because it is too overpowering for the person wearing it, or the decor in which it will be used.

- *Balance*

Balance is a feeling of steadiness, of everything in the design looking like it belongs. Balance can be formal (each side of the center is identical) or informal (the sides are different, but “weigh” the same).

- *Emphasis*

Emphasis is the creation of a center of interest. Without the center of interest, a design may seem cluttered and busy, or boring and uninteresting. If a design is not well-planned and is missing emphasis, it may be cluttered with too many colors, different textures, different lines, shapes or sizes. Or, there may not be sufficient contrast to attract attention.

- *Rhythm*

When we look at a design, the eye follows a certain route around the design. It notices differences in lines, shapes, textures, colors, and spaces. The route the eye follows is known as rhythm. In a well-planned design, the eye is led from one to another to the point of emphasis. That rhythm is created in a design by repeating something throughout the design—color, texture, shape, or size. If an item misses rhythm, it may have too many unrelated parts—too many unrelated colors or textures, shapes, lines or sizes. Or, the design may be placed so that it is spotty or scattered and doesn't seem to fit together.

- *Unity*

When we say that a design has unity, we mean that it is complete. Unity is the all the materials fitting together in a pleasing combination. If unity is missing, the characters of colors, textures, lines, shapes and spaces are not compatible, or there may not be a central theme.

## Inspiration Sources

Now that you have learned something about a well-planned design, it's time to begin thinking about developing your *own* designs. How do you start?

Actually, there are several ways to begin. One of them is to become aware of the design of the objects around us. Take a good look; there are examples everywhere! Look at the grain of the wood on a table top. What kind of lines or shapes are created? How does the rhythm in the grain move your eye over the design? Can you create a similar design—perhaps with weaving or needlepoint or with embroidery?

There are many places to get ideas. Look outside at the patches of grass for ideas on shapes and colors, look at the sunsets and clouds for shapes and colors, or the cracks in sidewalks, the frost on windows, the bark on trees. Everywhere you look, there are ideas for colors and textures, shapes and lines. Design examples aren't limited to nature. Look at designs in things around the house like baskets or pictures. Perhaps there's a design on pottery that you'd like to try in embroidery, or the shape of an old bottle gives you an idea for an applique. You can find ideas in magazines, wallpaper and comic books. There are ideas everywhere if you'll just use a little imagination!

Doodle on paper to develop and crystallize a design, or try arranging yarns or scraps of fabric. Try cutting out shapes from construction paper to experiment with a design. It does not matter how, but it is important to plan a design first!

The designer whose work shows fine quality, adapts and stylizes a design to suit the materials used. A designer does not attempt to imitate real objects, such as flowers using thread. Instead, if a flower idea is chosen as a theme for the design, the designer alters it to suit the shape of the article, its purpose and the limitations of materials and tools.

## Resources

There are lots of good sources to help you with the "How-to's" of the textile crafts. Your Cooperative Extension agent can help you locate commercial leaflets available for 4-H members on specific textile crafts. You may want to supplement the leaflets with films and slides. Some are available through your county Cooperative Extension office.

Your talents are an excellent resource for the club. Share your know-how and special interests to help others. Bring the tools and let everyone experiment. Bring in others from the community to share their craft knowledge. A local craft or fabric store may work with you or help you contact someone with an interest in a specific textile craft. Members may decide to make a sampler, shawl, handkerchiefs, or monograms utilizing the various techniques.

Libraries can be an excellent source of information. You can broaden your knowledge of why and how heritage crafts began by reading through historic publications. Magazines are also a terrific source of ideas. Internet web pages provide lots of interesting information as well. Perhaps you will want to clip and file ideas to share and talk about. There also are many craft magazines and pattern books that can be good sources too. Craft Organizations and Councils often provide specific information that may be helpful. Check with your county Cooperative Extension office, library or craft store for contact information.

## Sharing What You Have Learned

Now that you have learned many new things about a heritage craft, why not share? This helps you learn more about the topic and become more comfortable teaching others. Making an exhibit to show at the county fair is another way to share with others. You also may share your knowledge by giving a demonstration and show how to do something.

### Demonstration

Select a topic that relates to something you learned about your project and plan a demonstration. Some ideas include:

- Use of design principles and elements
- Selecting fabric or yarn for a project
- Sharing the history of a craft
- Purchasing supplies
- Steps to complete a craft item
- Can you think of others?

### Evaluation or Judging

Learn the standards of quality for your craft. The exhibit item will be compared to these standards at a fair or during craft competitions. Standards are printed in the 4-H craft project guidelines, or may be found in craft publications or fair judge's guides available through your county Cooperative Extension office. When you apply the standards to a craft item, you judge or evaluate that item against the standard of quality. Evaluating your project yourself will enable you to see how well you applied the skills you learned. How well did your item compare to the standards? What did you do well? Where can you improve? Answers to these questions will help you do a better job next time.

### Community Service

You can learn a great deal about your community when you get involved to help others. You can:

- Make lap robes for elderly people or AIDS victims
- Make quilts for a homeless shelter
- Work on a fund raiser for a local cause
- Go to a local nursing home and visit residents
- Help an elderly or lonely neighbor with household chores
- Help younger members with their projects
- Can you think of others?



## Fair Exhibit

Remember to record all of your activities during this year. It's easier to write them down as soon as you do them rather than wait until the end of the year and try to remember them. Be sure to include in your story not only the things you made, but the experiences you had, special things you learned and how you felt about them.

You must complete the History Page of the record. Plan early to begin your search for historic information. You have several options as to what you can learn about and share. You can find historic information on:

- the craft itself,
- tools used,
- new techniques developed,
- special uses of the finished items,
- influences of wars or trade,
- interesting artisans within the community, or
- any other related topic.

The key is that the information you provide is directly related to the craft you are exhibiting.

Two photos of your finished product(s) are optional. However, photos of Heritage Arts exhibits enable judges to see how well the items fit your intended use.

If you used a pattern, please securely attach a clear copy to your record. Patterns are most helpful to judges when evaluating the project.

Projects will be divided into three age categories for exhibit based on age of the exhibitor as of December 31 of the year prior to the show. Age categories are:

*Junior— 8 to 10 years of age*

*Intermediate— 11 to 13 years of age*

*Senior— 14 to 18 years of age*

All exhibit items are to be fiber-, fabric- or yarn-based arts and crafts. Crafts exhibited must be those traditional crafts which have been passed down through generations. For a complete listing of Fair Exhibit Requirements, see page 2 of your *Heritage Arts Record Book*, RJ0700.

# Introduction

Through needle arts you will learn to express your creativity in a constructive way while developing a skill that is relaxing and fun. You will also have the opportunity to learn more about the history of needle arts, when and where it originated, how it was passed down through the ages, new techniques and supplies, and much more.



You may want to experiment with different stitches as you learn the basics of needle arts. Visit with artisans in your community to discover how they learned to do needle work, what projects they have completed, and any suggestions they would have for you as a beginner. Check for additional resources in your local Extension office, the Internet, library, or yarn shops to get new ideas. Most importantly, have fun!

## P Project Evaluation

Your needle arts projects will be evaluated on:

### *Overall Appearance*

- Clean and neat
- Suitability of materials for technique

### *Workmanship*

- Construction—appropriate, well made, finishes, matching thread
- Decoration—even stitches, smooth, inconspicuous joining, no unnecessary knots
- Color, design and texture
  - even, harmonizing with background color, type and quality of materials
  - decoration follows general shape of article it decorates
  - one color predominates, all colors in harmony

### *Finishing and Presentation*

- Pressed
- Blocked
- Smooth and secure binding

Note: Your exhibit piece(s) may be mounted and/or framed at time of show.

# History of Needle Arts (Decorative Stitching)

*"The products of American needles have always been prized for their qualities of design, color and workmanship."*

—Jane C. Nylander, "Flowers from the Needle,"  
An American Folk Art from the Shelbourn Museum, p. 42



Needle work is as old as history. For as long as people have attempted to cover themselves with hides and skins, they have somehow laced or bound them together, inventing needles along the way. Needle work as a form of decoration or embellishment is part of our desire to adorn ourselves.

Needle work of all sorts has generally taken two forms—plain and fancy. Plain needle work includes knitting and marking household linens for identification. It requires simple stitches, such as straight running stitches, used to hand sew the essentials—underwear, ordinary clothing, sheets, towels and bed coverings—before the days of the sewing machine. Learning plain needle work is the first step in learning fancy needle work.

Fancy needle work can be both functional and non-utilitarian. Stitches may hold two pieces of cloth together in a very functional manner and be considered plain. At the same time, these stitches may add a decorative touch to those pieces of fabric. Fancy needle work is done to please the eye. In the days of Martha Washington in the 18th century, fancy needle work was viewed as an indication of a young lady's prospects of being a good wife. A good wife would need to be able to sew everything from underwear to suits for her family. At a time when it was not thought necessary for young women to know how to read and write, private schools were established to teach needle work to girls between the ages of 6 and 16.

By the 19th century, fancy needle work had become a stylish lady's most important accomplishment. It was evidence of her good upbringing and of her position or station in life. A lady of leisure could spend her day at her needlework.

Today, needle work is somewhat a lost art. Few people have time for stitching, and we run the risk of losing this knowledge. This is your opportunity to begin creating heirlooms of your own.

## **T**ypes of fancy needle work

### **Embroidery and cross-stitch**

The word embroidery comes from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning a border. It originally described the embellishment of garments. There are a number of traditional stitches used in embroidery. Cross-stitched work is made up of X-shaped stitches and generally uses special fabrics known as even weave.

### **Needlepoint**

Sometimes called canvas work, this hand stitching technique dates back to the Elizabethan era in the 16th century. The decorative fabrics created using needlepoint were used as table carpets, cupboard cloths, chair cushions and bed hangings. In the 19th century, needlepoint was a pastime for Victorian ladies and was known as Berlin work.

### **Candlewicking**

Candlewicking became popular early in the 19th century. The finished project is generally an outline of an object with Colonial knots, which are similar to French knots. It uses a special candlewicking or roving yarn that has very little twist, and may include other embroidery stitches.

### **Crewel**

The word crewel is thought to have originated from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning ball of thread. Crewel work has a rich history in Britain, dating back thousands of years. Crewel work is similar to embroidery, utilizing many of the same stitches, but worked in two-ply wool yarn. The subtleties of color shading are very important to successful crewel work.

### **Lacework**

Lacework projects include needle lace, tatting, filet netting, bobbin lace, lace weaves and hairpin lace. Often used as embellishment to clothing and home furnishing items, lace provides richness to the overall look of the selected project. Individual lacework projects may be used to decorate selected areas of a home as well.

### **Appliqué**

Appliqué is one of the oldest forms of decoration. It is a method of applying small pieces of material onto a background fabric. Initially, it was used to cover a worn piece of cloth. Quilts often have appliquéd designs. Reverse appliqué involves the removal of fabric to form a design.

# Embroidery and Cross-Stitch

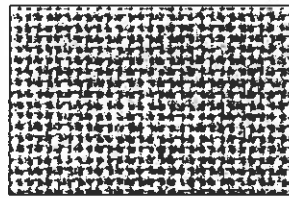
For your first project, select a book of cross-stitch patterns or a transfer embroidery design or a kit that includes all of the materials needed to complete the design .



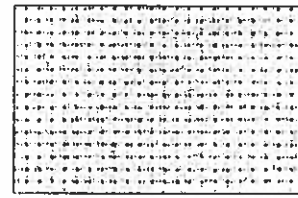
## Cross-Stitch

### Materials:

which comes in sizes of 8, 11, 14, 16 and 18-count, or Hardanger. These fabrics are available at most craft and needlework stores.



*even weave fabric*



*Aida cloth*

2. Six-strand embroidery floss. Depending on the fabric and pattern, use one, two or three strands of floss.
3. For cross-stitch, use a blunt-pointed tapestry needle in proper size for the holes in the fabric and for the number of strands of floss to be used. The needle is inserted between the threads and does not pierce the threads of the fabric.

Recommended floss and needle determined by fabric count				
Fabric	Thread per inch	Strands of Floss for Cross-Stitch	Strands of Floss for Backstitch	Tapestry Needle Size
Aida	8	3 to 6	3	20 or 22
Aida	12	3	2	22 or 24
Aida	14	2 or 3	1 or 2	22/24/26
Aida	16	2	1	24/26
Aida	18	1 or 2	1	24 or 26
Hardanger	22	1	1	24 or 26

4. Oval or round embroidery hoop of wood or metal to hold the fabric taut. Fabric is placed over the smaller hoop; the larger hoop is fit over the smaller hoop and the fabric.

The size of the finished project will vary according to the thread count of the fabric. To calculate the size of a project, divide the number of squares in the width of your design chart by the count of your fabric (the number of threads per inch). This equals the height of your design in inches. Many cross-stitch patterns will list dimensions for various cross-stitch fabrics.

Always locate the center of the chart and fabric. Begin stitching at this point. Many cross-stitch patterns indicate the center point of the design. If it is not shown, locate the center point of the design by counting from the top of your design in to the bottom and divide in half; this gives you the horizontal center. Repeat this process counting from one side of the design to the other side; this gives you the vertical center. Then count out the horizontal and vertical center number to begin your design.

You can find the center of your fabric by folding it in half and folding it again into quarters. Mark the center point with a thread of contrasting color.

## Embroidery

### *Materials:*

1. A light-weight to medium, tightly-woven, 100 percent cotton fabric. Polyester/cotton blend fabrics are acceptable but are more difficult to stitch through.
2. Six strands of embroidery floss. Depending on the fabric and pattern, use one, two or three strands of floss.
3. A crewel or embroidery needle. It is important that the needle have a long eye to accommodate several strands of floss.
4. Oval or round embroidery hoop of wood or metal to hold the fabric taut. Fabric is placed over the smaller hoop; the larger hoop is fit over the smaller hoop and the fabric.

You can either purchase a kit with a pre-printed design, supplies and stitch instructions needed to complete a design. You can also create your own design, selecting the thread and fabric from craft or yarn stores. Use hot-iron transfers or use dressmaker's carbon with a tracing wheel, pencil or knitting needle to transfer the embroidery design onto your fabric.

Embroidery is composed of one or several stitches that all belong to a basic family stitch group. The groups are:

- backstitch
- blanket stitch
- chain stitch
- couching stitch
- cross stitch
- featherstitch
- detached filling stitch
- laid filling stitch
- running stitch
- satin stitch
- weaving stitch

Find an embroidery book at your local yarn/craft store or library to see illustrations of these techniques.

## Hints for Cross-Stitch and Embroidery:

- Wrap the raw edges of fabric with masking tape or zig zag the edges to prevent it from raveling.
- Separate strands of floss carefully, allowing them to untwist. Stitching with two strands is generally appropriate for medium sized fabric. Separate these two strands and allow them to untwist before placing them back together and threading the needle.
- Floss becomes twisted while you are stitching; allow it to hang freely and it will untwist.
- Remove the hoop when not stitching to prevent hoop marks on the fabric.
- Traditionally, knots are not used in embroidery. The stitcher buries the end of the thread in the work. Consider the use of your embroidered or cross-stitched item. If it is a garment that will be washed, it may be a good idea to knot floss. If the piece is to be framed, knots should be unnecessary.
- Always sign and date your work. You have worked hard to create a unique piece of stitchery. Put your initials and the date in the corner or on the back.
- Use a thimble. While it may seem awkward at first, a thimble will help you stitch by pushing the needle through the fabric. A thimble is worn on the middle finger of your dominant hand.
- Be prepared to block your finished work. The threads in the fabric or canvas often get off-grain as you stitch. One of three methods is suggested:

### *Method One*

Block textile, after it has been fully immersed in cold water, by pinning it to the desired shape on a blocking board or any flat surface that is covered with absorbent bath towels. Let the textile dry thoroughly.

### *Method Two*

Pin dry textile on blocking surface to desired shape. Then spray the textile with clear, cold water until damp. Allow to dry thoroughly.

### *Method Three*

Pin dry textile to desired shape on the ironing board. Using a press cloth and a steam iron, steam press the textile, never touching the iron to the textile. Leave the textile pinned to the ironing board to cool and dry for several hours.

(from Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Service, "Guide For Needlework Judges")

## Needlepoint

Needlepoint is a type of embroidery in which stitches are formed on open-weave canvas using yarn or embroidery floss and a blunt needle. The different types of needlepoint are usually classified by the size of the canvas or the number of stitches per inch.

Three common types of needlepoint are:

- *Quick point*—3 ½ to 7 inches per inch
- *Gros point*—8 to 15 stitches per inch
- *Petit point*—16 or more stitches per inch



*Bargello* is another type of needlepoint. It is frequently characterized by long stitches and flame-like designs. *Bargello* is often done with the *Florentine stitch*.

### Stitches

There are literally hundreds of stitches in needlepoint. Each stitch has a different texture and gives a different effect. After you decide on a design or picture, experiment with different stitches to determine which ones give which effects. Doing fancier stitches in the design and plainer ones on the background will place emphasis on the design.

You may wish to do a sampler containing five to 10 different stitches to practice a variety of stitches. It can serve as a reference piece later. A sampler can be made into many projects, such as a wall hanging or a pillow. It is suggested you use a heavy three strand yarn, a size 18 tapestry needle and canvas with 10 holes per inch for the sampler.

*Tent stitches* are the most commonly used stitches in needlepoint. All tent stitches appear the same from the fabric's right side, but differ in appearance on the wrong side. Two commonly used tent stitches are *continental stitch* and *half-crossed stitch*.

The *continental stitch* uses more yarn than the half cross stitch, but covers the canvas better. Because there is quite a bit of yarn on the wrong side, the continental stitch is suitable for items that receive hard wear, such as upholstery and rugs.

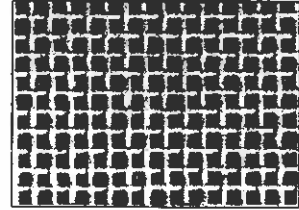
The *half cross stitch* does not cover the canvas as well. Because there is little yarn on the wrong side of the canvas, the half cross stitch is suitable for items that receive minimal wear.



## Canvas:

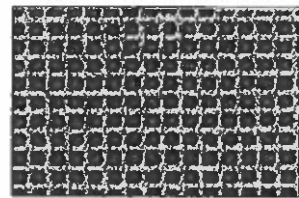
There are several different types of canvas used in needlepoint.

- *Plain canvas* is a single-mesh structure formed by the intersection of a single crosswise thread and a single lengthwise thread.

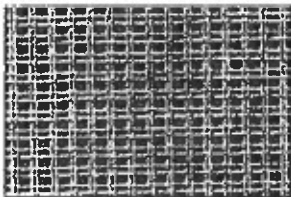


*plain*

- Like the plain canvas, *interlock Mono canvas* is a single-mesh canvas with the single lengthwise thread woven between two slender intertwined horizontal threads. The “locked” construction of the interlock mono provides a stabler working canvas than the plain canvas.

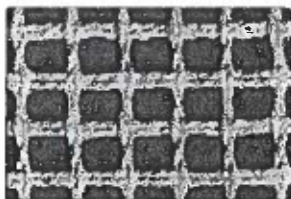


*interlock mono*



*Penelope*

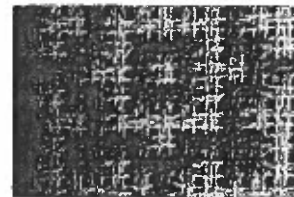
- *Penelope canvas* is a double-mesh construction formed by the intersection of pairs of crosswise and lengthwise threads.



*rug*

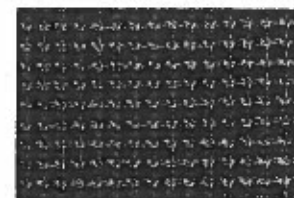
- *Rug Canvas* has a pair of crosswise threads interlocked by two twisted lengthwise threads.

- *Patterned Canvas* has the design printed directly on the canvas.



*patterned*

- *Plastic Canvas* is a molded plastic single-mesh canvas.



*plastic*

## Thread

Needlepoint threads come in several different sizes, weights and textures.

- *Rug yarn* is thick, three-ply, single-strand yarn.
- *Persian yarn* is a two-ply, three-strand yarn made of wool or acrylic. The yarn can be separated into strands or used as one yarn.
- *Tapestry yarn* is a fine four-ply, single-strand yarn made of wool or acrylic. The plies are difficult to separate into strands.
- *Crewel yarn* is a two-ply, single-strand yarn made of wool or acrylic.
- *Embroidery floss* is a multiple-strand thread made of silk, cotton or rayon. The number of strands vary but can be separated
- *Pearl cotton* is a two-ply, single-strand cotton thread that comes in three thicknesses: heavy (no. 3), medium (no. 5) and fine (no. 8).

## Basic Rules for Stitches

- Never knot the yarn. Hold it behind the canvas and catch it as you work.
- Use yarn pieces only 12 inches to 18 inches long at a time.
- When coming to the end of a piece of yarn, take it to the back of the canvas and run it under four or five stitches to lock it in. To start new yarn, also run it under four or five stitches on the back to lock it in. Then bring the yarn to the front.
- Learn to read the graphs and you will be able to do any stitch given to you.

## Needlepoint Project Evaluation

Look at your project or sampler. How does it compare to the following standards for quality needlepoint, gros point or petit point items?

- Canvas is squarely blocked.
- Canvas, yarn and stitches chosen to complement design.
- Stitches all cross in same direction.
- Stitches completely cover the canvas.
- Ends are woven in.
- Yarns are not twisted, kinked, knotted or pulled thin.
- All stitches lie smooth.
- Uniform tension was used throughout.

*Remember:* Have fun and be creative with your needlepoint projects. You are limited only by your willingness to experiment and try new stitches. If you want a special effect and cannot find a stitch which does what you want—invent your own. Be sure to graph your new stitch to help you remember it.

# Candlewicking

Candlewicking is rather unique embroidery. In its most basic form, it outlines an object with Colonial knots. These are similar to French knots. Candlewicking can be made more elaborate by emphasizing details within that outline with other embroidery stitches. You can use your finished candlewick creation in many ways—a pillow, a pincushion, a wall-hanging, a pocket on your *Decorate Your Duds* project—to name just a few.

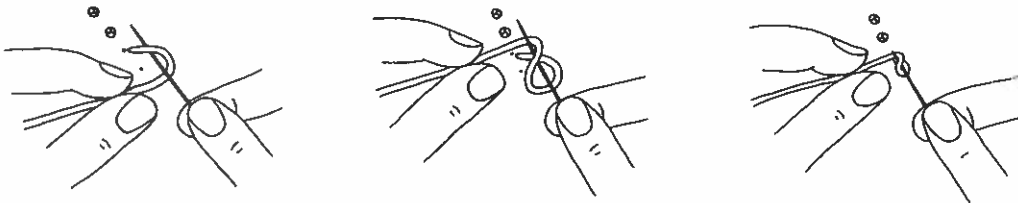


Your creation can be a statement of elegance by using white thread on a white background. Or you can use colored thread on white or colored backgrounds. You can buy special candlewicking thread or you can use regular embroidery floss divided using two or more strands, depending upon pattern size and look you want to achieve. Acrylic yarn may also be used for another look.

## Stitches

### *Candlewicking Knots*

Bring needle up through fabric in the center of pattern dot. Wrap thread clockwise around needle once; lay needle point on top of thread before inserting needle into pattern dot. To finish, gently pull on thread to form a small, uniform knot. Repeat knots in an evenly-spaced arrangement to form the design.



Other embroidery stitches used in candlewicking to dress up outlines:

- *satın stitch*—often used to fill in shaded pattern areas.
- *daisy stitch*—makes a nice leaf or petal (see Dove pattern)
- *back stitch* or *split stitch*—to outline a part of the design, including areas filled with satin stitching (see goldfish fins, butterfly antenna, daisy stem, leaf and center)

Find an embroidery book at your local yarn/craft store or library to see illustrations of these techniques.

## Patterns

Basic embroidery patterns and simple coloring books might also offer ideas and patterns for you to try. Any basic motif—floral, heart, square, diamond, or snowflake shapes to name a few—can be adapted to be used in candlewicking. The clover on the front of this manual could be modified to be used in candlewicking! Candlewicking books and kits also are available commercially.

## Fabric

You can use almost any type of fabric. Usually a plain fabric without a print will work best, but you can experiment with printed fabrics, too. Cotton or a cotton blend works well. Very light-weight fabrics are harder to work with, and thread between knots on the back might show through on the front. Knit fabrics are another option after you are familiar with the needed skills.

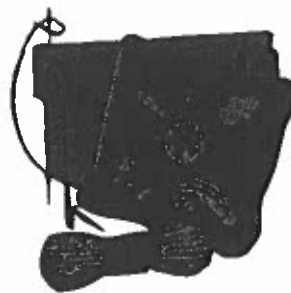
## Other Tools

You will need an embroidery hoop and a needle—size 14 tapestry works well. Smaller or larger needles may be needed depending upon the size of the thread or yarn you are using. Use a transfer or carbon paper to transfer the pattern dots to fabric or you can punch the pattern onto a piece of poster board and trace it on the fabric with a sharp pencil. It is not recommended that you use a pen or marker that wouldn't wash out because stitching doesn't cover all pattern lines exactly. Candlewicking knots should be well-formed, uniform and evenly spaced. Don't hesitate to adjust the spacing on a pattern if it seems uneven, and pay attention to spacing when making your own patterns.

This is a creative type of needlework and you should have lots of fun trying different things.

## Crewel

Crewel is a form of embroidery that uses a firm, two-ply wool thread known as crewel which gives the needlework its name. The best way to get started in crewel is to either purchase a kit with a pre-printed design, supplies and stitch instructions needed to complete a design. or, work a sampler that uses a variety of crewel stitches.



### Patterns

Embroidery patterns can be used for crewel because they are similar in design. You can also create your own design, selecting the thread and fabric from craft or yarn stores. Use hot-iron transfers or use dressmaker's carbon with a tracing wheel, pencil or knitting needle to transfer the embroidery design onto your fabric.

### Stitches

Crewel stitches are many of the same as those used in regular embroidery, such as a chain or stem stitch. Crewel embroidery usually "fills in" the entire design using a variety of stitches. Many of the basic stitches used in crewel to solidly fill a design are:

- chain
- stem
- split
- satin
- long and short
- laid
- Roumanian

Some crewel stitches used for openwork design are:

- French knots
- bullion knots
- herringbone
- wave
- seed
- squared
- burden
- cloud

Find an embroidery or crewel book at your local yarn/craft store or library to see illustrations of these techniques.

### Fabric

Like the fabric used in embroidery, the background fabric used in crewel can be almost any closely-woven fabric that is not variegated and has a smooth surface. Linen and wool have been traditionally used, although cottons and other blends could be used.

## Other Supplies

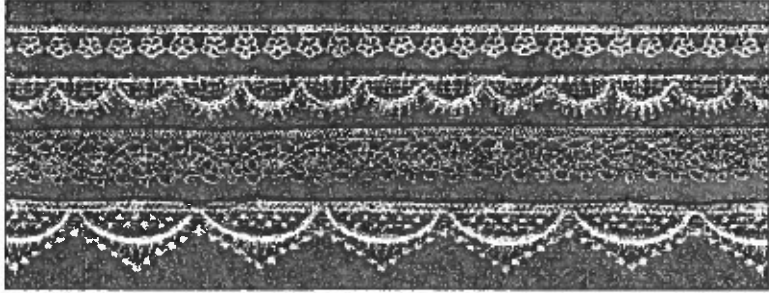
*Crewel needles* should be of medium length with long eyes that are usually labeled crewel or embroidery. The needle should always be slightly thicker than the thread to create an open passage for the thread to pass through easily. This prevents the thread from wearing and breaking.

*Hoops and frames* are used to hold the work taut and ensures neat and even stitches. Fabric is placed over the smaller hoop; the larger hoop is fit over the smaller hoop and the fabric.

## Blocking

When your crewel project is completed, be sure to block it. The threads in the fabric or canvas often get off-grain as you stitch and blocking will help to straighten them. Follow blocking instructions given on page 13 in the *Cross Stitch and Embroidery* section.

## Lacework



### Needle lace

Needle lace is what the name suggests: lace made with a needle and thread. The structure of needle lace is built entirely of thread, with fabric used only as an anchoring device. Several styles of needle lace exist, but the most familiar is Battenberg or Renaissance Lace. This lace is made of a variation of the buttonhole stitch worked between sections of narrow bias tape in the outline of the design attached to a backing. When the work is done, the backing is removed leaving just the lace surface.

### Tatting

Tatting is a form of lacework that consists of one knot called a double stitch worked in groups over a single thread. This thread is pulled to draw stitches into curved formations called rings and chains. These rings and chains are then joined to form larger groupings or motifs. Primarily tatting is used to make edgings and insertions, however, it can be used to make large items such as a tablecloth. Tatting is usually worked using a fine cotton thread, so it is delicate looking but very strong.

Tatting is done by using a continuous thread wound on a small shuttle. A loop of thread is held in the left hand while the shuttle, held in the right hand, is maneuvered around it; double stitches form over the shuttle thread.

### Filet Netting

Filet netting involves only one knot but can assume a variety of forms. It is a mesh made of diamonds or squares with a design embroidered on it. This mesh technique is the same one used for making fish nets, basketball nets, and net bags; the only difference is the use of heavier cords.

Mesh knots should look crisp and be nearly invisible. Use a smooth, tightly-twisted cord such as a crochet cotton thread for the best results.

### Bobbin Lace

Bobbin lace is a lace woven of pairs of threads wound on bobbins. The threads are plaited, twisted and interwoven over a paper pattern mounted on a pillow or padded board to form a design or motif. Pins are inserted through the pattern into the pillow to hold threads in place; the pattern is called a pricking. The pillow accounts for another name, pillow lace, by which this lace is also known.

### **Lace Weaves**

The lace is created by the technique of waving, which is the interlacing of two sets of threads to form a textile. In lace weaving, warp and weft threads are diverted somewhat from their parallel course to form spaces in the weave. The resulting textile is open and airy, characteristic of lace.

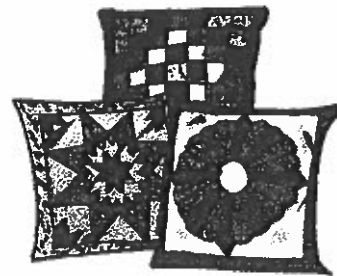
### **Hairpin Lace**

Hairpin lace is a type of crochet worked with a two-pronged fork or hairpin and a crochet hook. Yarn is wound around the hairpin loom to form a series of large loops, held together by a row of crochet stitches worked in the center. Hairpin lace can vary due to the width of strips and yarn weight used.



# Appliqué

Appliqué is stitching or fusing fabric shapes to a background fabric. Shapes can be as simple as a single shape or as complex as a landscape scene. If doing a layered design, work from the background to foreground, and stop stitching before two lines of stitching cross.



## Fabric

- *Background Fabric*  
Select a stable fabric, such as broadcloth or denim. Knit fabrics can also be used; however, more skill will be required to deal with the special fabric properties.
- *Appliqué Fabric*  
Select a fabric compatible in care and weight to the background fabric. Light or medium-weight woven fabrics, such as calicos and gingham, are recommended for beginners.
- *Stabilizer Fabric*  
Use a fabric, such as interfacing, or tissue paper to stabilize the background and to prevent puckering when machine stitching. Iron-on interfacing helps prevent raveling of appliqué fabric.

Preshrink interfacing, if used, and background and appliqué fabrics before cutting and stitching.

## Pattern

Appliqué designs can be adapted from many sources such as coloring books or greeting cards. Like candlewicking, designs should be composed of simple shapes and geometric designs

## Other Materials

For most designs, use an all-purpose *thread* which matches the color of the appliqué fabric. A contrasting or complimentary color can create a special effect.

For hand-appliquing, use *sharps*, a medium-length needle. Straight pins for holding appliqués in place are needed, as well as a pair of small, sharp-pointed embroidery scissors for trimming.

Purchased *fusible webs* can be used to hold the appliqué in place when stitching. Secure the appliqué by fusing it to your background fabric with an iron. Follow manufacturer's instructions that come with the web carefully.

## Stitching

Appliqué may be stitched by hand or machine. Decorative stitches in either can enhance or accent the design. Turn edges under depending on characteristics of appliqué fabrics and the closeness of decorative stitches.

### *Hand Stitching*

A fine slip-stitch is used to secure the appliqué in place. It should hold the appliqué securely in place and remain invisible. An overhand stitch can be used in small areas that tend to fray; these little straight stitches can keep fabric threads from popping out.. Other decorative embroidery stitches such as the cross stitch and running stitch can be used to fasten down the appliqué. Remember, since these stitches will be seen, they will become part of the overall design.

### *Machine Stitching*

Two methods of machine stitching are used in appliqué. One method uses only straight stitching when applying the appliqué; the other method uses a combination of straight stitching and zigzag stitching.

You may add stuffing or padding under the appliqué prior to finishing the decorative stitching and create a three-dimensional effect. This process is referred to as relief appliqué. Reverse appliqué is cutting out background material to expose one or more fabrics underneath.