

Reading a Charted Design

To begin, determine the center of your chart by locating the arrows. Count from the center up to the top row of the design. Then count to the left or the right to the first symbol and start there. Each square on the chart equals one stitch on the fabric. The symbols within the squares are coded on the color key for a floss color. Usually, each symbol represents a different color. It is usually easier to work all of one color within an area at one time.

Materials Needed For Counted Cross-Stitch

FABRIC: Determine the piece size of the fabric needed by dividing the stitch count by the count of the fabric per inch. Some of the most popular counts of fabric are 6, 11, 14 and 18 threads per inch and Hardanger (22 threads per inch). Most of the linens are stitched over two threads of the fabric.

Needle: A tapestry needle is the needle of choice to use for counted cross stitch, as it has a blunt end and will not split the thread of the fabric. A size 24, 25 or 26 tapestry needle will suffice for most designs.

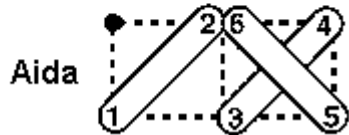
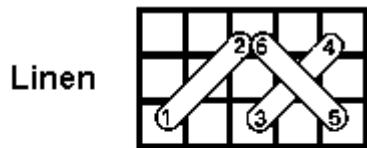
floss: A fine quality six strand 100% cotton floss is most often used for counted cross stitch. The number of strands used depends upon the count of the fabric. Generally, use 6 strands for 6 count fabric; use 3 or 4 strands for 11 count; use 2 or 3 strands for 14 count; use 1 or 2 strands for 18 count and use 1 strand for 22 count. Backstitching uses 1/2 the number of cross stitch strands: 6ct./3, 11ct./2, 14ct./1, 18 & 22ct./1.

Other items you will find useful: A hoop or frame, scissors (small, sharp embroidery scissors), water erasable pen, line minder and a good light source.

Prepare your material: To prepare the material for stitching, machine stitch or whip stitch by hand around edges of fabric with sewing thread to prevent raveling.

Locate the center of your fabric: Measure, or fold the fabric in half two times, lengthwise and crosswise. Add at least a 4-6" border for finishing. Mark your center by creasing the folds, or by basting a temporary guide line of thread, or with a water erasable marker

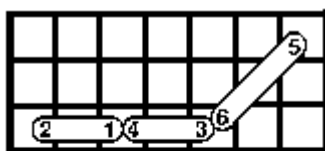
Stitching the design: Place the fabric in the hoop or on a scroll frame. Carefully tighten the fabric and then tighten the screw of the hoop. To begin, thread needle (do not knot thread). Leave a short tail hanging on the back of the fabric, and work your first few stitches over this tail, to secure it. Use a two step method to cross stitch. Continue across the row to the end. When you reach the end of the row, turn and come back, crossing the first stitches as you go.



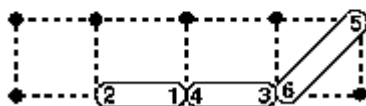
Cross stitch is also called Sampler Stitch, Berlin Stitch and Point de Marque. Bring the needle up at 1 and down at 2. Continue across the row. Complete the other half of the cross by bringing the needle up at 5 and down at 6. When one color runs consecutively, all bottom halves may be worked in one direction and the top halves worked coming back.

Always cross your stitches in the same direction throughout the design. You may jump over a few stitches to get from one area to another, but never more than one inch. **Never** jump from one area to another over material that will remain unworked; it will show through the material to the front of the piece. To finish off a thread, run the needle under several (at least four) stitches on the back of your design, and then cut it close to the fabric on the back of the design.

Counted cross-stitch over two threads: Quite often a pattern will call for stitching a design over two threads of the fabric. This term can sometimes be misleading, as you are really stitching over a block of four squares. You must count over two threads and up two threads to keep your design in square. This technique is most often used when working with linen or linen-like fabrics.



Linen



Aida

Backstitch is also called Point de Sable. Bring the needle to the front at 1 and down at 2. Continue by coming up ahead of the next stitch. May be worked horizontally, vertically and diagonally.

To finish: Wash completed design in warm water with a mild detergent. Rinse well under cold running water. **DO NOT WRING!** Wringing will leave wrinkles on the fabric that will be

almost impossible to get out. Iron dry while still damp with the design face down on a towel or other padded surface.