



**Designs From Margaret Lee**

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# GUIDE TO CROSS STITCH

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## On Aida



JANUARY 14, 2026  
DESIGNS FROM MARGARET LEE  
[www.margaretlee.com](http://www.margaretlee.com)

# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

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# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

**Cross-stitch** is a delightful form of counted thread embroidery where **X-shaped stitches** are used to gradually build a pattern. Often referred to as "**painting with thread**," it is a wonderful, **meditative** hobby. This guide will walk you through everything you need to begin your journey, covering essential supplies and basic stitching techniques for working on Aida. Many of the same techniques can be use for stamped cross stitch and stitching on linen and even weave fabrics.

## Essential Supplies


For your very first project, we **highly recommend** starting with a small beginner kit. You may also purchase individual basic supplies for a small project using the information in the chart provided below.

Item	Description	Recommendation
<b>A. Fabric</b> 	This is the ground fabric used to make your stitches on. It has an evenweave with perfectly spaced squares and holes.	<b>14-count Aida cloth</b> (The number '14' means there are 14 squares/stitches per inch. Aida is stiff and easy for beginners). Buy a piece of Aida at least 4"-6" larger than the length and width of the design area. As a beginner, avoid evenweave fabrics such as linen, Jobelan and Lugana.
<b>B. Needles</b> 	There are many types of needles to choose from some work much better than others.	<b>Tapestry Needle (Size 24 or 26)</b> . These have blunt tips and large eyes, which are designed to go through the fabric holes without piercing the fibers. <b>Optional: Chenille Needle (Size 24 or 26)</b> . These have sharp tips and large eyes, which are designed to go through the fabric and threads by piercing the fibers.
<b>C. Embroidery Floss/Threads</b> 	The colored threads used for stitching. It typically comes in skeins or spools of 6 strands of thread.	Your pattern will specify the colors often using 6 stranded Cotton DMC (skeins) or Anchor (skeins & spools) embroidery floss. As a beginner avoid specialty threads and fibers.
<b>D. Hoop or Stitching Frame</b> 	Keeps your fabric taut, making it easier to stitch evenly.	You can work 'in hand', or use wooden or plastic embroidery hoop (about 6-8 inches). You can also use Q-Snaps, Scroll Rods and Stretcher Bars.
<b>E. Scissors</b> 	Small, sharp scissors for cutting the threads easier and neatly.	Any small, sharp <b>Embroidery Scissors</b> or sharp craft scissors.
Pattern/Chart	Something specifically designed for cross-stitch.	Choose a small pattern/chart no larger than an 8x8" design area that uses cross-stitches (full, 3/4, 1/2 or 1/4) , backstitches and perhaps French or Colonial knots.

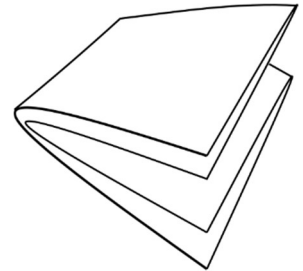
# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

## Preparation Steps

### A. Prepare the Fabric

- a. **Fabric Size:** The cut size of your fabric should be 4-6" larger in width and length than the **design area** of your pattern/chart to allow for framing or finishing when complete. The **design area** should be printed in the instructions on the pattern/chart.
- b. **Prevent Fraying:** For small, quickly-finished cross-stitch projects, most people find that doing nothing to the edges of Aida cloth is perfectly fine. Aida is fairly sturdy, and fraying is usually minimal.
  - ◆ However, if you're working on a project that will take more time to finish, or if you simply find the fraying annoying, there are several easy ways to secure the edges. The best way to prevent fraying is sewing a quick zigzag  stitch around the edges of the fabric, by hand or with a sewing machine. Avoid tapes and glues because they deteriorate over time, and may leave a residue on the fabric and threads.
- c. **Find the Center:** It is easiest to start stitching in the middle of your design to ensure it is centered on the fabric. Fold the fabric in half vertically, then horizontally (into quarters).

Pinch the center point to create a crease. This crease intersection is the center of your fabric. Mark it with a temporary stitch or a safety pin.



### B. Working 'in-hand' or in a Hoop or Stitching Frame

**Working 'in-hand'** refers to holding the fabric directly in your hand, often bunched or rolled up. Many stitchers find this method faster, especially when using the "linen" (passing the needle up and down in one motion).

To help maintain an even tension and make stitches look neater consider using a hoop or stitching frame. **Hoops** are a set of circular frames held together by a screw attached to the larger hoop. Hoops are available at most craft stores and come in many sizes and colors.

A wide variety of stitching frames are available, such as scroll rods, Q-Snaps and stretcher bars. These come in countless shapes, sizes, and configurations, including lap and floor stands, which makes a comprehensive discussion beyond the scope of this beginner's guide.



#### How To place the Fabric in the Hoop (Step by Step):

1. Loosen the screw on the outer hoop and separate the two rings.
2. Place the inner ring (without the screw) on a flat surface.
3. Center your fabric over the inner ring.

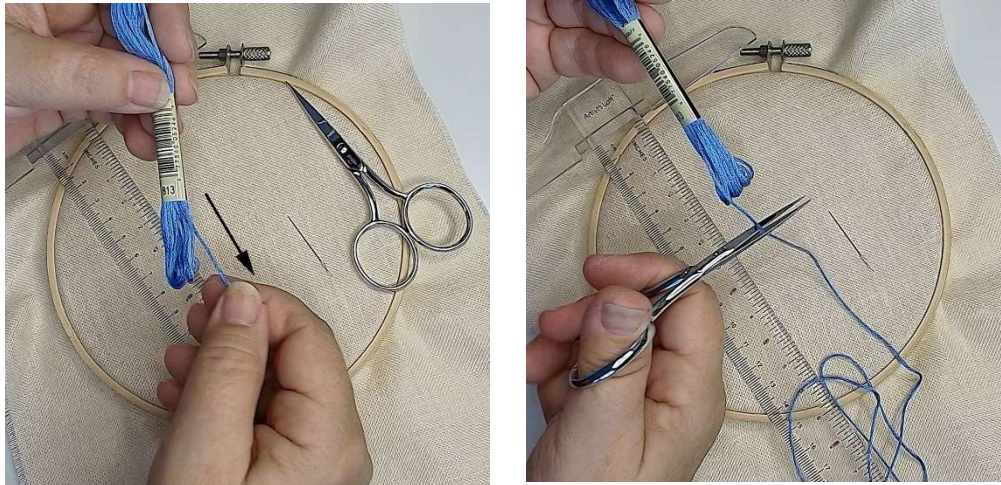


# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

4. Place the outer ring on top and press it down to sandwich the fabric tightly between the two rings.
5. Pull the fabric taut while gently tightening the screw. The fabric should be drum-tight but not stretched or distorted.
6. Generally, the stitching is done on the top of this 'drum' with the screw-side of the hoop on the outside. Consider turning it upside down and stitching in the 'bowl' side, because it keeps loose needles and other small items from easily falling to the floor.

## C. Prepare the Threads/Floss

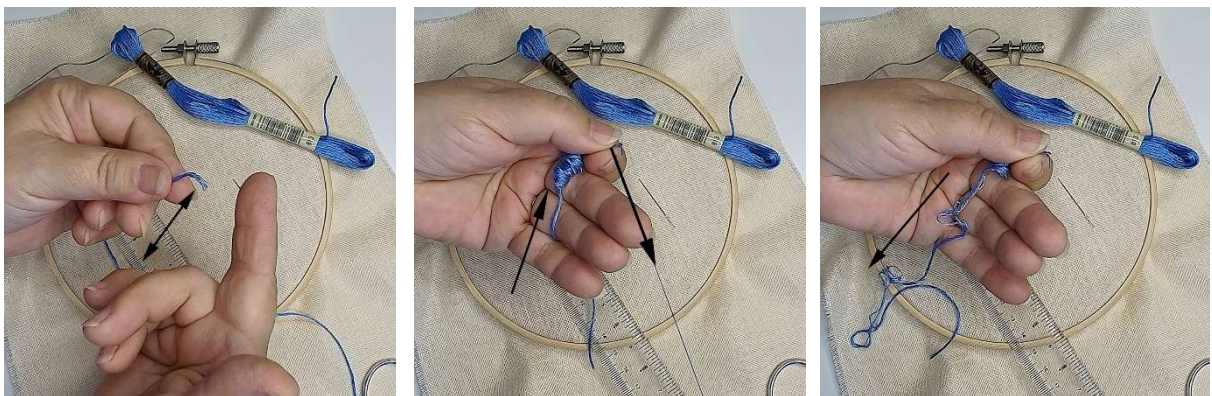
1. **Pull and cut a length of 6-strand floss from a skein of floss.**
  - a. Gently pull from the end with the UPC code and floss number to the threads from tangling.



- b. Using embroidery scissors, cut a length of floss about 18 inches (45 cm) long—too much longer and it will tangle easily.

### 2. **Separate the Strands from the cut bundle:**

- a. Hold the cut six-strand bundle in one hand near the ends, if needed, flick the ends to separate the strands a little.
  - b. Gently pull a single strand free from the bundle with the other hand in one slow, smooth motion. The remaining strands will bunch up but should fall back into place.
  - c. Repeat to separate a second strand or as many as required. Two strands are recommended when

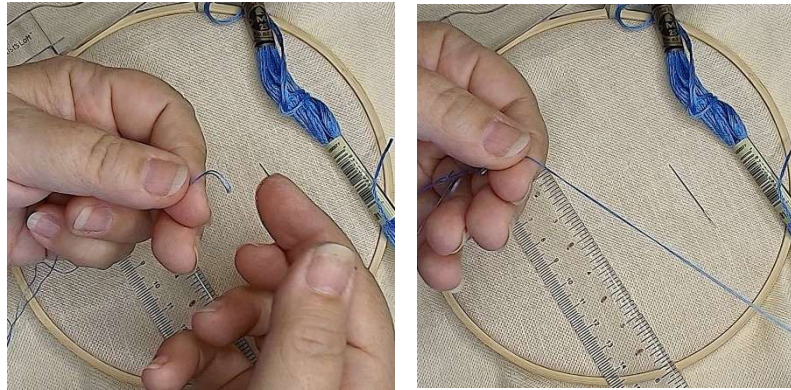


stitching on 14 count Aida.

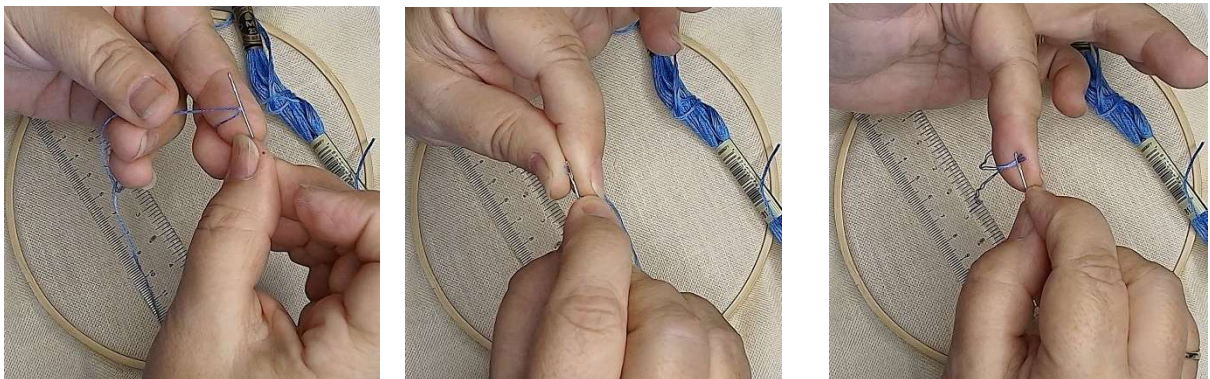
# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

## 3. Thread the Needle:

- a. Hold one end of the two strands of floss together and run your fingers down the length to smooth and align them.



- b. Tightly fold the end of floss over the needle.
- c. Pinch two fingers over the folded floss and needle like you are holding a flea, then slip the needle out.
- d. Slowly push the eye of the needle into your pinched fingers
- e. Adjust the length of the floss. The tail end should be about 15" long and the section near the eye of the needle about 3".
- f. Do NOT tie a knot at either the end.





# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

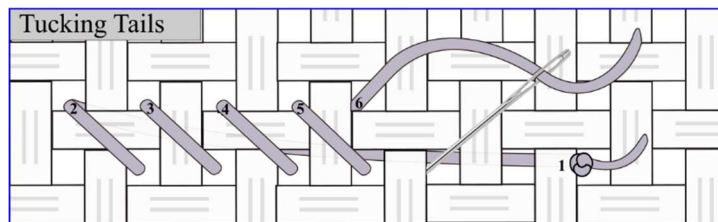
## How to Start, Move & End Threads

### A. Starting New Threads (Knot or Knotless Methods)

There are several methods to secure the working threads. We do NOT want to use knots because they can pull through the fabric.

a. **Tucking Tails:** Using the first few stitches to secure the tail end of the threads:

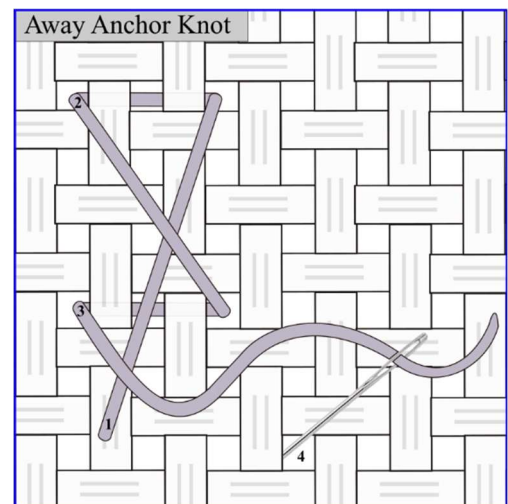
1. **From the Front** of the fabric insert the needle end of the working thread (with or without a knot about an inch from the tail end) such that the section of thread on the back will be covered by the stitches about to be created.
2. Bring the working up through the fabric to begin your first stitch.
3. Continue creating the desired number of stitches.
4. After the section of thread on the back are secured by the stitches created, carefully trim the knot.



b. **Using an Away Anchor Knot:**

This method is particularly useful when you are unsure where to secure your starting threads on the back, such as when beginning single or small groups of cross-stitches, or specialty stitches.

1. Start your needle **from the front** of the fabric (the right side) and insert it into an area a short distance **AWAY** from the section you plan to stitch. Leave a short tail of threads on the front of the fabric.
2. Bring your needle up a few threads or stitches away. Insert your needle over the thread tails to tack it in place.
3. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for added security.
4. Begin creating stitches in the area desired.
5. Once you have completed the required number of stitches or used the desired length of threads, **undo the Away Anchor Knot** and secure the thread using one of the methods in the section **D Ending Threads**.



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## B. Adding New Threads with Stitches Already in Place

If you run low on threads during a color section, you can seamlessly **introduce a new length** by sliding the needle under a few existing stitches on the back to secure it. Pull through gently and continue stitching.

## C. Stitching Neatly and Carrying Threads

For the best final appearance, it is important to keep the back of your fabric neat and tidy. You can achieve this by following a few guidelines.

- Trim loose threads with embroidery scissors promptly.
- Avoid loose threads, tangles and knots on the back of the fabric while stitching.
- Avoid carrying threads across open areas that will NOT be stitched later.
- Minimize “**traveling threads**” (long carries between stitches).

If it is **only a few stitches** in an area that will be filled with stitches, keep stitching.

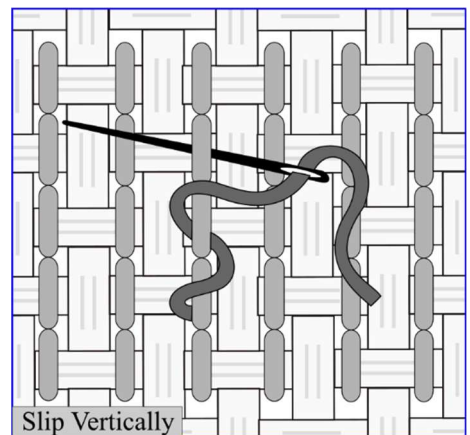
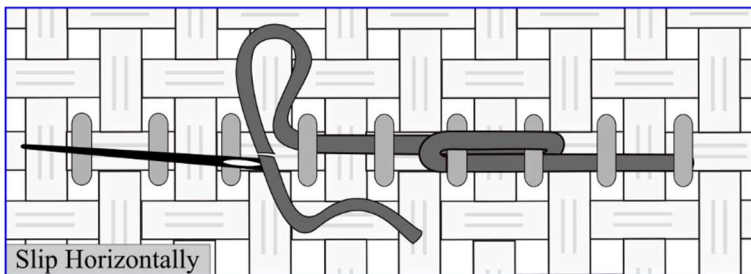
If your next stitching area is **more than a few stitches away** and that distance will be covered by other stitches:

- i. Tuck your threads securely within the existing stitches on the back of your fabric
- ii. Fasten off the current threads and begin a new section in the desired area

## D. Ending Threads

When you run out of threads, or finish a block of color:

1. Flip your work over to the back.
2. Slip the needle and remaining threads through the backs of a few nearby stitches, horizontally or vertically, whichever is neater.
3. Snip the excess threads close to the fabric. This locks the threads securely without a knot.





# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

## Cross Stiches

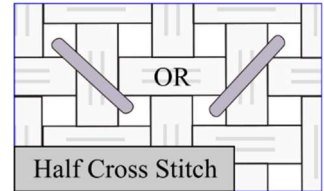
### A. 1/2 Cross-Stitch

A single diagonal line for one stitch, literally half of a full cross-stitch slanting ( \ ) or ( / ),

#### How to make a 1/2 Cross-Stitch (Step-by-Step):

For a full coverage area of half-stitches, Make the half stitch so it lays in the same direction of the top diagonal of the cross-stitches unless stated otherwise in the chart or instructions of the pattern.

1. Using the symbol chart, locate the space on your fabric where the stitch is needed.
2. Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the hole for the starting corner of the stitch and pull the threads through to the front.
3. Insert the needle diagonally across the square, back down through the opposite corner and pull the threads through to the back.
4. This completes one half stitch, forming a single diagonal line ( / or \ ).

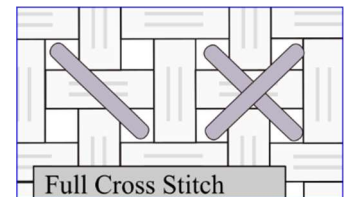


### B. Full Cross-Stitch (The "X")

A full cross-stitch is made of two diagonal legs that cross in the middle to form an 'X'.

#### For best results here are a few tips:

- ◆ All the top diagonal stitches (the second half of the "X") must lean in the same direction.
- ◆ Bring the floss up in the least shared hole and down in the most shared hole.
- ◆ Your stitches should lay flat without pulling the fabric (which is called 'puckering') or distorting the stitch.

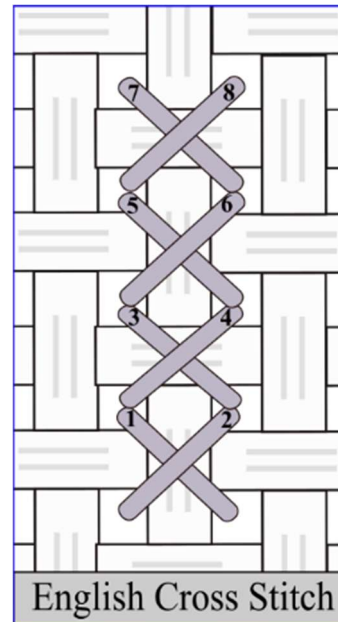
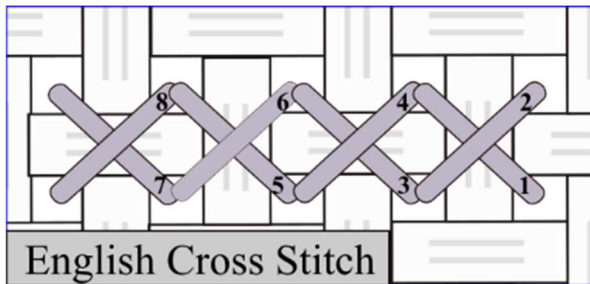


#### How to make a Single Full Cross-Stitch (Step-by-Step):

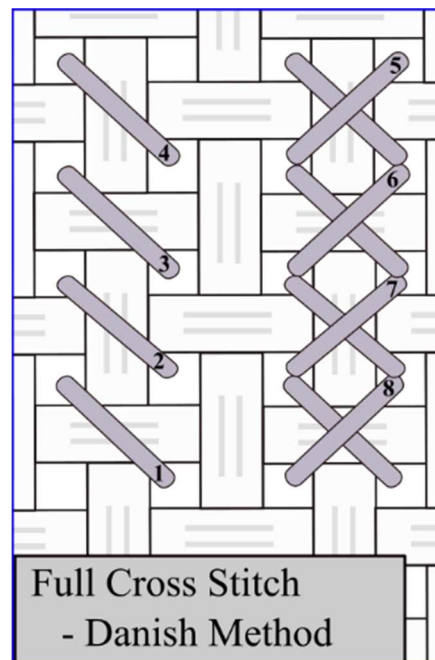
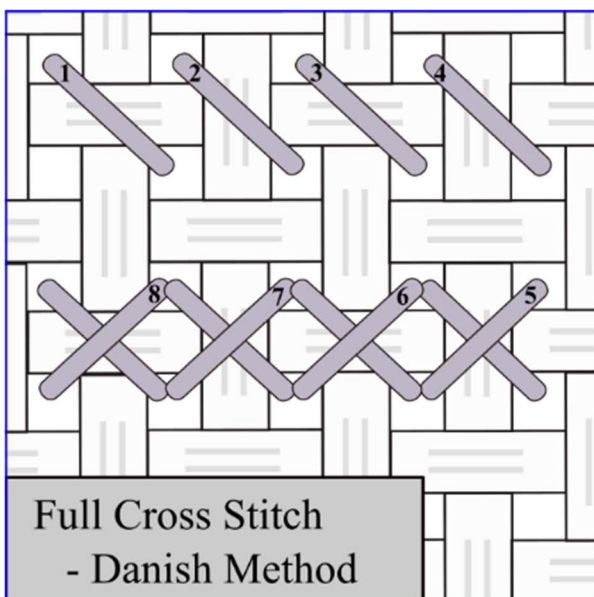
1. Using the symbol chart, locate the space on your fabric where the stitch is needed.
2. Make the lower diagonal stitch (half-stitch) so it lays ( \ ).
  - a. Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the hole for the starting corner, top left or bottom right of the stitch and pull the threads through to the front.
  - b. Insert the needle diagonally across the square and back down through the opposite corner.
  - c. Finish by pulling the thread through to the back and
  - d. This completes the lower diagonal line ( \ ).
3. Make the upper diagonal stitch (half-stitch) so it lays ( / ) on top of the lower half stitch to make an ( X ).
  - a. Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the hole for the starting corner, bottom left or top right of the stitch and pull the threads through to the front.
  - b. Insert the needle diagonally across the square and back down through the opposite corner and pull the threads through to the back.
  - c. This completes the upper diagonal line ( / ) and thus the ( X ).

## Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

**The English method** of cross-stitching – making one cross-stitch at a time, this method is ideal for working scattered and isolated stitches as well as in rows, columns or diagonally.



**The Danish Method** of cross-stitching - making rows or columns in two journeys (XXXXXX). First make one half of the stitches in one direction (first journey), then completing the other half of the stitches (second journey). This method is ideal for working blocks of color and is the fastest way to stitch consecutive cross-stitches.



# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

## The Danish Method of cross-stitch (Step by Step):

1. Using the symbol chart, locate the spaces on your fabric where the stitches are needed, rows or columns.
2. Make the lower diagonal stitches (half-stitches) so they lay ( \ ) as a row ( \ \ \ \ \ ) all in the same direction.
  - a. Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the hole for the starting corner, (top left or bottom right of the stitch) and pull the threads through to the front.
  - b. Insert the needle diagonally across the square and back down through the opposite corner and pull the threads through to the back.
  - c. Repeat across the row or column for the number of stitches needed
3. Make the upper diagonal stitch (half-stitch) so they lay ( / ) as a row ( / / / / / ) all in the same direction, on top of the lower diagonal to make a row of ( XXXXXXXX ).
  - a. Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the hole for the starting corner, (bottom left or top right of the stitch) and pull the threads through to the front.
  - b. Insert the needle diagonally across the square, back down through the opposite corner and pull the threads through to the back.
  - c. Repeat across the row or column for the number of stitches needed
  - d. This completes one half stitch, forming a row or column of ( XXXXXXXX ).

## C. 1/4 Cross-Stitch (Quarter Stitch)

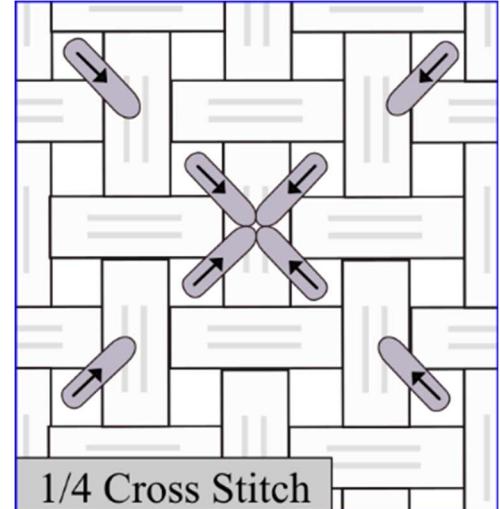
A tiny diagonal line—literally 1/4 of a full 'X' cross-stitch. This stitch is used for details and is part of making a 3/4 stitch.

This stitch requires piercing the fabric in the center of the square. Aida Cloth may require a sharp needle (like a Chenille or Embroidery needle) to pierce exactly through the center of the woven solid block. It's usually easier to stitch on linen or evenweave where a center hole exists when stitching over two threads.

### How to make a 1/4 Cross-Stitch (Step-by-Step):

For detailed areas and shaping follow the symbols or lines of the chart for a diagonal ( \ ) or ( / ),

1. Using the symbol chart, locate the space on your fabric where the stitch is needed.
2. Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the hole for the starting corner of the stitch and pull the threads through to the front.
3. Insert the needle diagonally across the square back down through the center of the stitch and pull the threads through to the back. If it is difficult to get the needle through the center, try using a smaller sized tapestry needle or a chenille needle.
4. This completes 1/4 cross-stitch, forming a small single diagonal line ( / or \ ) from the corner to the center of the square.



# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

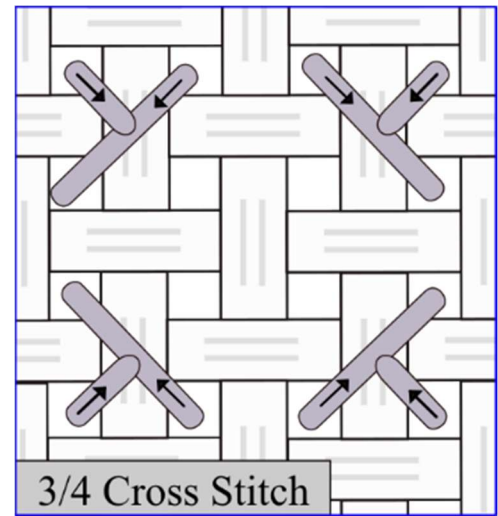
## E. 3/4 Cross-Stitch (Three-Quarter Stitch)

The Three-Quarter Cross-Stitch (3/4 Cross-Stitch) is a fractional stitch used in cross-stitch to round out curves and smooth edges of objects that would otherwise look blocky if stitched only with full cross-stitches (X). It looks like an almost-completed 'X' with one corner left empty.

### How to make a 3/4 Cross-Stitch (Step by Step):

Combine both a 1/2 cross-stitch and a 1/4 cross-stitch, the order doesn't dramatically change the look, but many stitchers prefer to do the quarter stitch first as it establishes the center point. However, if you want to 'tie-down' the Half Stitch, it may be easier to make the 1/2 cross-stitch first.

Using the symbol chart, locate the space on your fabric where the stitch is needed.



#### 1. Make a 1/2 Stitch:

- Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the hole for the starting corner of the stitch and pull the threads through to the front.
- Insert the needle diagonally across the square, back down through the opposite corner and pull the threads through to the back.
- This completes one half stitch, forming a single diagonal line (/ or \).

#### 2. Make a 1/4 Cross-Stitch:

- Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the hole for the starting corner of the stitch and pull the threads through to the front.
- Insert the needle diagonally across the square back down through the center of the stitch. You may go over the Half Stitch or under it as desired. Then pull the threads through to the back. If it is difficult to get the needle through the center, try using a smaller sized tapestry needle or a chenille needle.
- This completes 1/4 cross-stitch, forming a small single diagonal line (/ or \) from the corner to the center of the square, which in turn completes the 3/4 stitch.

## F. Fractional Stitches

If there are fractional stitches, read the directions carefully for specific directions from the designer. If there are NO specific directions, use your best “artistic” judgement. All cross-stitches and fractional stitches should be completed before doing any backstitching. Beware of any backstitch that is parallel to the top leg of a cross-stitch, it can slide and hide in the cross-stitch under some circumstances.

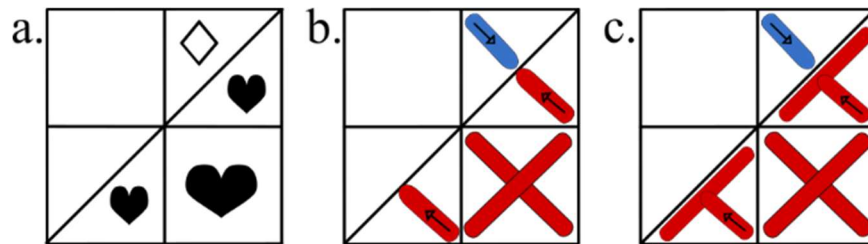
Here are a few examples:



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If a backstitch will be made at a 45-degree angle and a different symbol is on each side, it is usually best to do two 1/4 cross-stitches.

If a 3/4 cross-stitch needs to be made to cover the fabric better, determine which side is in the foreground of the picture and make that side the 3/4 cross-stitch. Consider using the 1/4 cross-stitch to hold down the longer



stitch.

If the backstitch will be made at an angle OTHER than a 45-degree then we need to think a bit more about what to do.

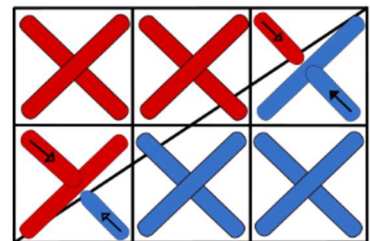
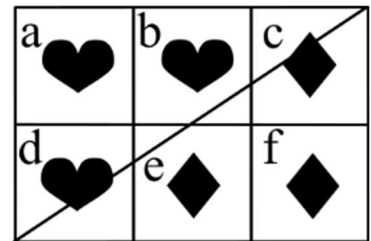
Assume we are stitching the ♥ symbols with red threads and the diamond ♦ symbols with blue threads.

**Sections a and f** - do NOT have a backstitch line passing over them, so we make full cross-stitches for the symbol indicated.

**Sections b and e** - do have a backstitch line passing over them, but it is less than the space of a 1/4 cross-stitch. So, we make **full cross-stitches** for the symbol indicated.

**Sections c & d** - do have a backstitch line passing over them, but it is close to the space of a 3/4 cross-stitch for the symbol, so we make a 3/4 cross-stitch for the symbol. The remaining space is close to the space of a 1/4 cross-stitch, so we fill in the space with the color of the adjacent symbol. Thus

**section c** would get a blue 3/4 cross-stitch and a red 1/4 cross-stitch and  
**section d** would get a red 3/4 cross-stitch and a blue 1/4 cross-stitch.



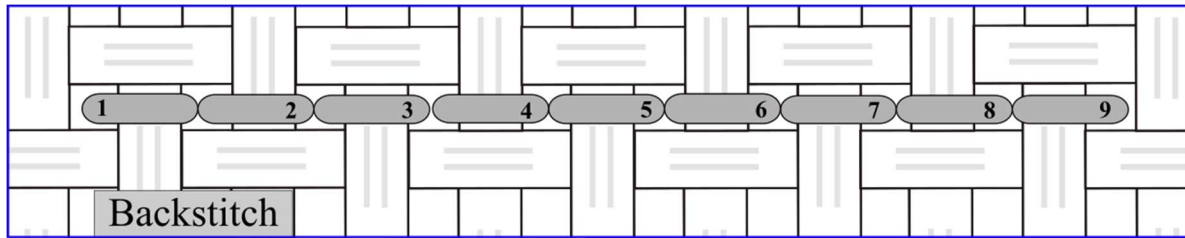
## Line Stitches

### A. The Backstitch ( ----- )

The Back Stitch is widely used for outlining shapes, creating fine details, and for lettering because it creates a clean, continuous line. However, please consider using the Double Running Stitch (Holbein) for lettering and continuous lines NOT within stitched areas, it produces much nicer results.

It gets its name because the individual stitches are made backward to the general direction of sewing. A backstitch is often described as a "two steps forward, one step back" process.

# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida



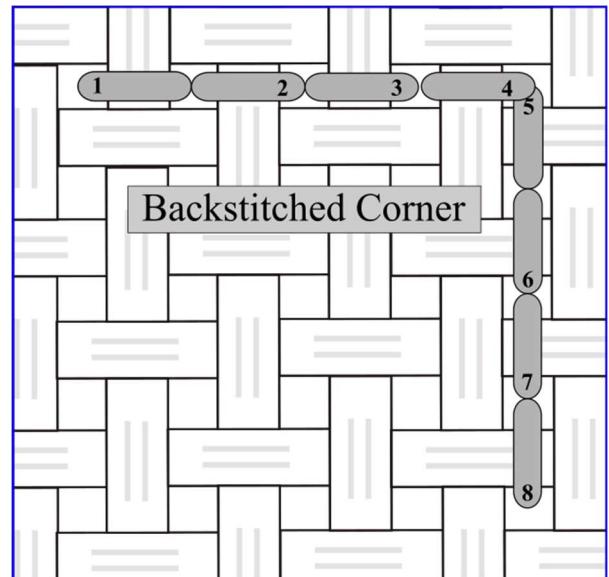
If using the chart above, come up at the number and down at the other end of the stitch.

## How to make the Backstitch (Step-by-Step):

Using the symbol chart, locate the space on your fabric where the stitches are needed, usually indicated by a solid bold line.

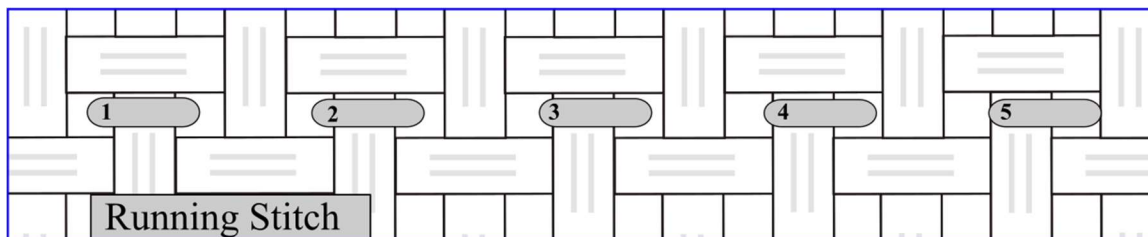
1. Bring your threaded needle up through the fabric at your starting point and pull the threads through to the front.
2. Insert the needle back down into the fabric one square ahead (usually the space of one Full Cross-Stitch) and pull the threads through to the back.
3. Bring the needle up through the fabric again, one stitch length ahead and pull the threads through to the front.
4. Insert the needle where your previous stitch ended (backward) and pull the threads through to the back.
5. Repeat from steps c & d, by coming up a stitch length ahead and going back down at the end of the stitch you just made. This creates a solid line of neat stitches next to each other.

When turning a corner, work the backstitch to the corner, then come back up in the corner and stitch indicated in the steps 1 to 5 above.



## B. Running Stitch

The Running Stitch is a continuous dashed line made by a series of small, even stitches with equal gaps between them. The goal is to have the length of the stitch on the top of the fabric be equal to the length of the gap underneath. Generally, the dash is the width of one stitch. ( - - - - )



# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

If using the chart above, come up at the number and down at the other end of the stitch.

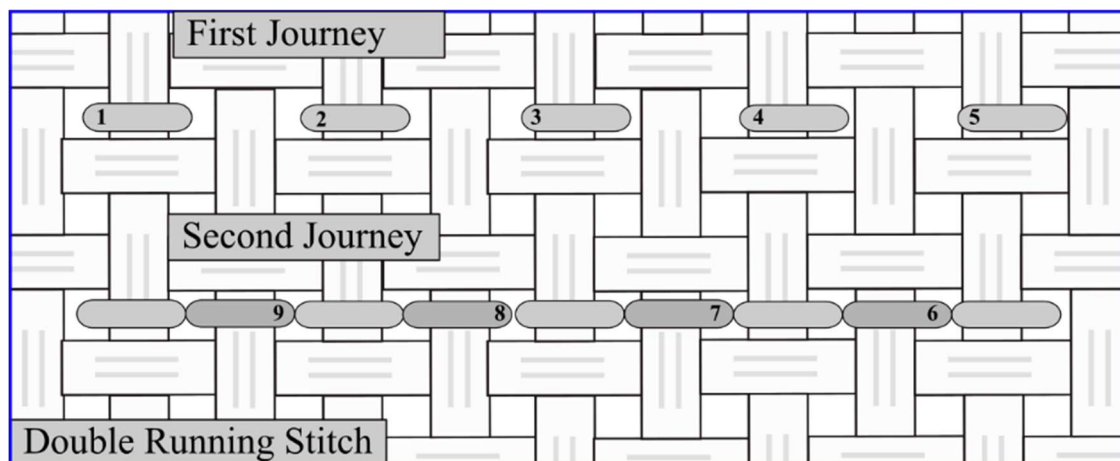
## How to make the Running Stitch (Step-by-Step):

Using the symbol chart, locate the spaces on your fabric where the stitches are needed, usually indicated by a dashed line.

1. Bring your threaded needle up through the fabric at the starting point and pull the threads all the way through to the front.
2. Insert the needle back down into the fabric one square ahead (usually the space of one Full Cross-Stitch).
3. Bring your needle up through the fabric one square ahead (usually the space of one Full Cross-Stitch) and pull the threads all the way through to the front.
4. Insert the needle back down into the fabric one square ahead.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 as needed.

## C. Double Running Stitch (Holbein)

This stitch makes a smoother line than backstitch and is completed in two journeys. It works best in **un-stitched areas** for lettering and vines, especially when using the Interlaced Method. Use the symbol chart to locate the spaces on your fabric where the stitches are needed, usually indicated by a solid line.



## How to make the Double Running Stitch (Step-by-Step):

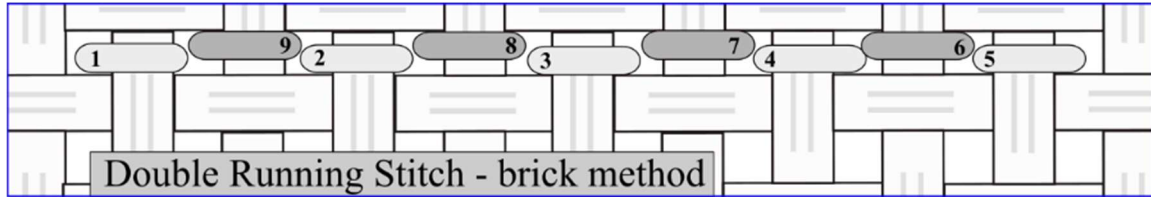
Consistent thread tension and needle placement are the keys to creating the stitch effect you prefer. If using the charts below, come up at the number and down at the other end of the stitch.

1. **The First Journey** - the Running Stitch, stitch every other stitch along a line. If the design has offshoot stitches, work them on the first journey.
2. **Second Journey** – the return journey comes back along the same line and shares holes with the first journey, filling in the gaps.

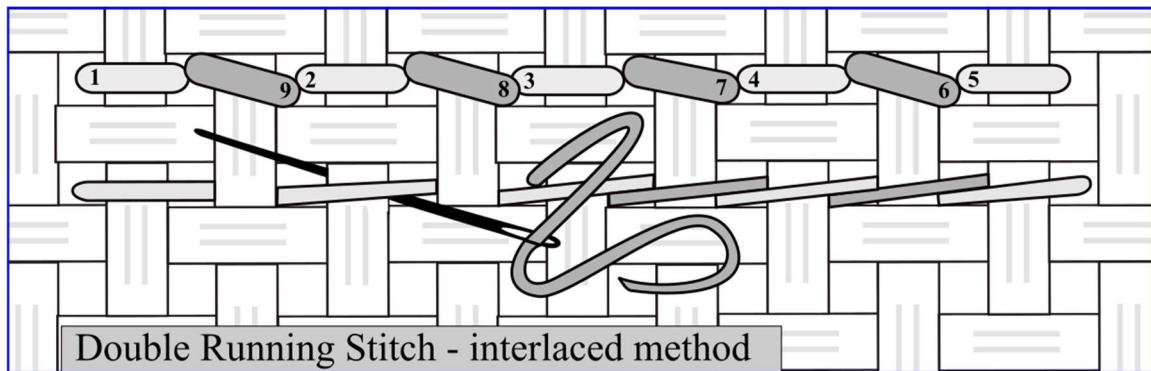
# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

The are several methods to make the second journey, try them out and see the difference.

- ◆ **Bricking Method** – the second journey stitches should be made consistently above the threads of the first journey.

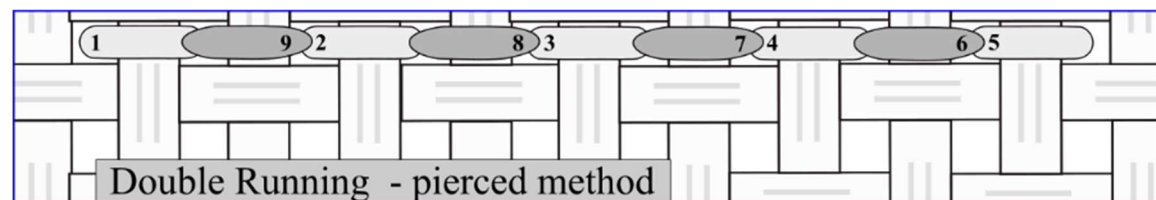


- ◆ **Interlaced Method** – the second journey is made by
  1. bringing the needle up above the threads of the first journey and pulling the threads all the way through to the front.
  2. Travel over the unstitched space.
  3. Insert the needle below the threads of the first journey and continue with steps 1 to 3 as needed.



4. Adjust the tension and you should have a neat straight line.  
To speed up your stitching, try using the sewing method as shown in the chart below.

- ◆ **Piercing** - the threads of first journey are pierced by the threads of the second journey. Piercing is easier if a sharp needle is used, such as an Embroidery or Chenille needle.





# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

## Knots

### A. French Knot

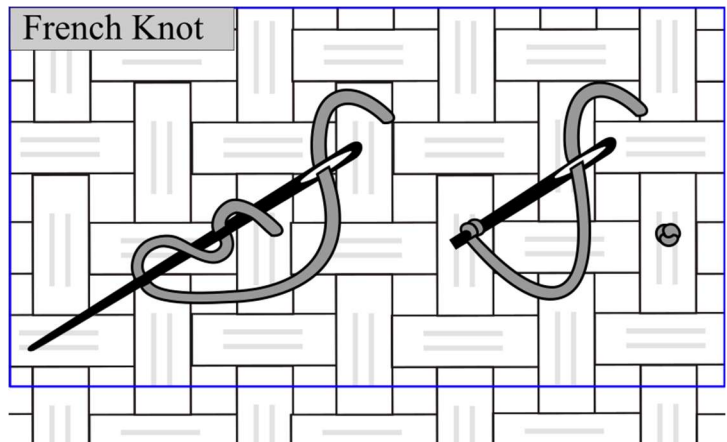
The French knot is a classic isolated, decorative knot that sits raised on the surface of the fabric. The threads are simply wrapped around the needle multiple times in one direction. Despite its small size, it often causes beginners frustration. However, if it is prevented from slipping to the back of the fabric and with the right tension, it creates a beautiful, textured knot.

To prevent the knot from slipping to the wrong side of the fabric:

- a. Use a sharp needle such as a chenille or even better would be a Milliner's or Straw needle because the eye is the same thickness as the shaft which allows the wraps to slide off smoothly.
- b. Be sure the needle is an appropriate size for the knot you would like to make.
- c. Pierce the ground fabric in an area with a tight weave, or on an individual thread.

#### How to make a French Knot (Step-by-Step):

1. Using the symbol chart, locate the spaces on your fabric where the knots are needed, usually indicated by a solid dot.
2. Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the spot where the knot is located and pull the threads through to the front.
3. Hold the working threads taut with your non-dominant hand/fingers. With your dominant hand, place the needle *under* the taut threads and wrap the threads around the needle two or three times. *(More wraps will make a bigger, looser knot. Fewer wraps using more thread strands will make a tighter, thicker knot.)*
4. While keeping the wrapped threads taut, insert the needle back into the fabric right next to, but not necessarily in the original hole. Going into the same hole with a small knot can pull the whole knot through to the back.
5. Keep holding the wrapped threads in position with your non-dominant hand/fingers while slowly pulling the threads until it is all the way through to the back of the fabric. This will ensure the wraps will keep snug and become a knot on the front of the fabric.
6. To finish release the tension and secure the loose threads on the back of the fabric.



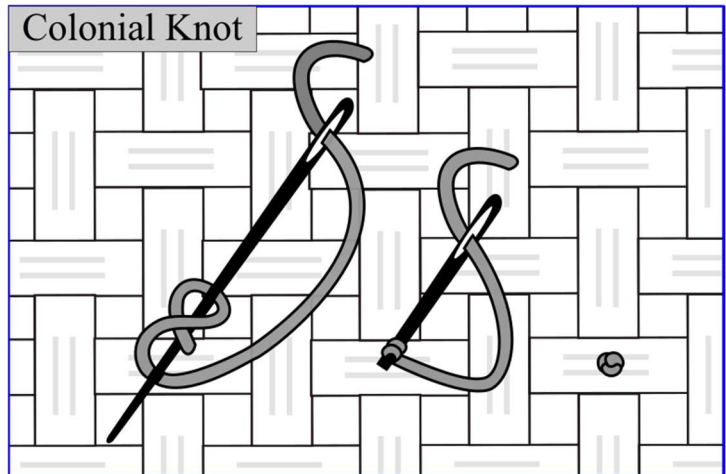
# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

## B. Colonial Knot (Figure-Eight Method)

This knot is created with a tight figure-eight (or hitch) around the needle *before* passing the needle to the back of the fabric. This makes the knot less likely to loosen or slip through the fabric. It is virtually interchangeable with the French Knot in appearance, but is easier to make, tends to sit more upright and stay in place on the surface of the fabric.

### How to make a Colonial Knot (Step-by-Step):

1. Using the symbol chart, locate the spaces on your fabric where the knots are needed, usually indicated by a solid dot.
2. Bring the threaded needle up through the fabric at the spot where the knot is located and pull the threads through to the front.
3. Gently wrap the threads around the tip of the needle in a figure-eight shape.
4. Insert the tip of the needle into the fabric right next to (but not through) the original hole. With your non-dominant hand/fingers pull the threads snugly against the needle and ground fabric.
5. Keep holding the wrapped threads in position with your non-dominant hand/fingers while slowly pulling the threads until it is all the way through to the back of the fabric. This will ensure the wraps will keep snug and become a neat knot on the front of the fabric.
6. To finish release the tension and secure the loose threads on the back of the fabric.



### Final Thoughts & Happy Stitching!

And so, we come to the close to our guide of beginning cross stitch tips and tricks! There is so much more I could tell you however, time and space must eventually limit even the most enthusiastic author. I promise – there will be more.

I truly hope you found the information helpful in making your beginning stitching experience smoother and enjoyable.

Remember, the most important "tip" of all is to **enjoy the process**. Cross stitch is a journey of patience, simple satisfaction and creativity – don't be afraid to change the colors and over time as you learn new stitches, change and add those to any design!

When you have a few moments, visit my website at [www.margaretlee.com](http://www.margaretlee.com) and Etsy Shop at [www.etsy.com/margaretleeneedleart](http://www.etsy.com/margaretleeneedleart) where I have several needlework tools I have designed and my patterns/charts available as digital files you can download and some printed. Several of my patterns are more advance and were taught by me as classes many years ago.

**Happy Stitching! Margaret Lee**

# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

## Glossary

**Aida Cloth** – a popular fabric for beginners of cross-stitch. It is usually 100% cotton and woven in blocks that clearly define the squares with holes for easy stitching. It is generally a stiffer fabric and easier to handle without using a hoop. It comes in 11, 14 & 18 stitch counts.

**Chart** – a paper or digital image of a grid with small squares, usually with darker lines every 10 row and columns from the top left right of the grid. Each small square containing a symbol (such as bgjktwt etc, ) represents the placement of a stitch using the color assigned to the symbol.

**Chenille Needle** – a sharp needle with a larger eye suitable for holding multiple threads. Available in several sizes.

**Counted Cross-Stitch** – a form of counted thread embroidery where the stitcher follows a gridded pattern/chart to create a picture on a blank piece of evenweave fabric. The symbols on the pattern/chart indicate the location and fiber color to stitch X's on the fabric.

**Counted Thread Embroidery** – includes Counted Cross-Stich, and may also include numerous specialty stitches on evenweave fabrics. Stitchers follow gridded patterns/charts and instructions to create a picture on the ground fabric using a variety of fibers.

**Design Area** – the area on the ground fabric covered by the stitched design.

**Evenweave** – a fabric made of the threads in which a square has the same number of threads in vertically and horizontally. It has a smoother, more refined look than Aida. It can be made of cotton, linen, or a blend (like Jobelan or Lugana). Stitches are normally worked 'over two' threads, so a 28 count evenweave makes the same size stitched design as 14 count Aida. It is easier to use for making fractional and specialty. When doing counted thread embroidery, be sure the fabric is NOT an un-evenweave.

**Embroidery Floss** – a type of thread specifically designed for embroidery usually made of multiple strands (commonly six) that can be separated for different thicknesses and textures in needlework.

**Embroidery Needle** – a sharp needle with a normal eye.

**Floss** – see embroidery floss.

**Ground Fabric** – the foundation material which is stitched on.

**Hardanger** – a form of counted thread embroidery, with areas which are cut out after stitching. Traditional Hardanger is white threads on white fabric.

**Linen** – is a natural fiber woven from flax. It is usually stitched "over two" threads.

**Cashel Linen** – has a thread count of 28 per inch (14 count when stitched 'over 2')

**Belfast Linen** – has a thread count of 32 per inch (16 count when stitched 'over 2')

**Milliners' Needle** – a long and slender needle with a small round eye that is generally the same thickness as the rest of the needle shaft. Thus, the needle makes nicer knots.

# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

**Pattern-** Everything the designer includes to help re-create the design including the chart and instructions. The instructions include a symbol key with corresponding floss list, design stitch count, finished design size for the fabric count and recommendations.

**Stamped Cross Stitch** – a tight woven fabric printed with 'Xs', usually in blue that may be washed away after stitching is completed. A pattern and chart are used to determine which color is used to cover each 'X'.

**Stitch Count** – the number of stitches per inch. 14 count = 14 stitches per inch of ground fabric.

**Straw Needle** – see Milliners Needle

**Tapestry Needle** - a blunt needle with a larger eye suitable for holding multiple threads. Available in several sizes.

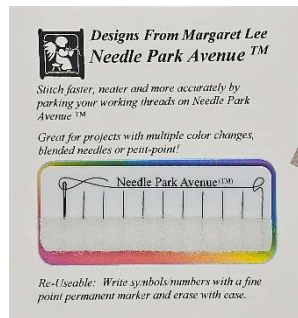
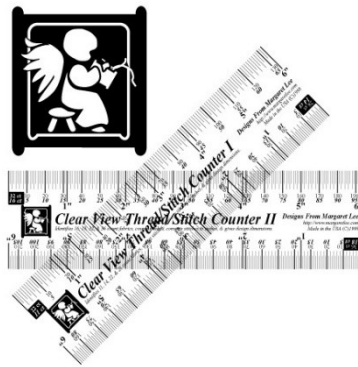
**Thread** – (noun) A thin strand of fiber used for sewing, weaving or stitching. (verb - sewing) The process of passing a thread through a needle.

**Thread Count** – the number of threads per 1 inch of ground fabric.

**Traveling Threads** – the threads that run across the back of the fabric from one stitching area to another without cutting the thread.

**Waste Canvas** – a woven fabric often used to make cross-stitch patterns on clothing. After the design is cross-stitched, the threads of the waste canvas are removed by pulling them out.

Do visit my website [www.margaretlee.com](http://www.margaretlee.com) for more information, patterns and tools which has links to my Etsy Shop [www.etsy.com/shop/MargaretLeeNeedleArt](http://www.etsy.com/shop/MargaretLeeNeedleArt).





# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

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# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida



*Designs From Margaret Lee*  
**"Spring Blooms"**  
ML #308 Designed by Margaret Lee Rigiel

Web Site: <http://www.margareelee.com>

## Materials:

\* 14 count Salem Cloth - cream from Wichel Imports 153-264-60

\* Needles: Tapestry Needles sizes 24 or 26

* Symbol	Color	Anchor /DMC Floss
♥	Rose Wine - Vy DK	897 / 221
♡	Rose Wine - Med	895 / 223
*	Rose Wine - Med Lt	894 / 224
◆	Antique Blue - DK	1035 / 930
◇	Antique Blue - Med	1034 / 931
□	Pine - Med	877 / 3815
■	Pine - Med Dk	878 / 501

**Stitch Count: 56 x 56    Approximate Design Size: 4" x 4"**

**Stitches Used:** Full Cross, Half Cross, Quarter, Three-Quarter and Backstitch or Holbein.

Model stitched using 14 count Salem Cloth. Design may be stitched on Aida or an evenweave fabric of your choice. Allow an extra three to four inches around design area when cutting fabric.

**Read all instructions and review all diagrams before stitching.**

USA \* <http://www.margareelee.com>  
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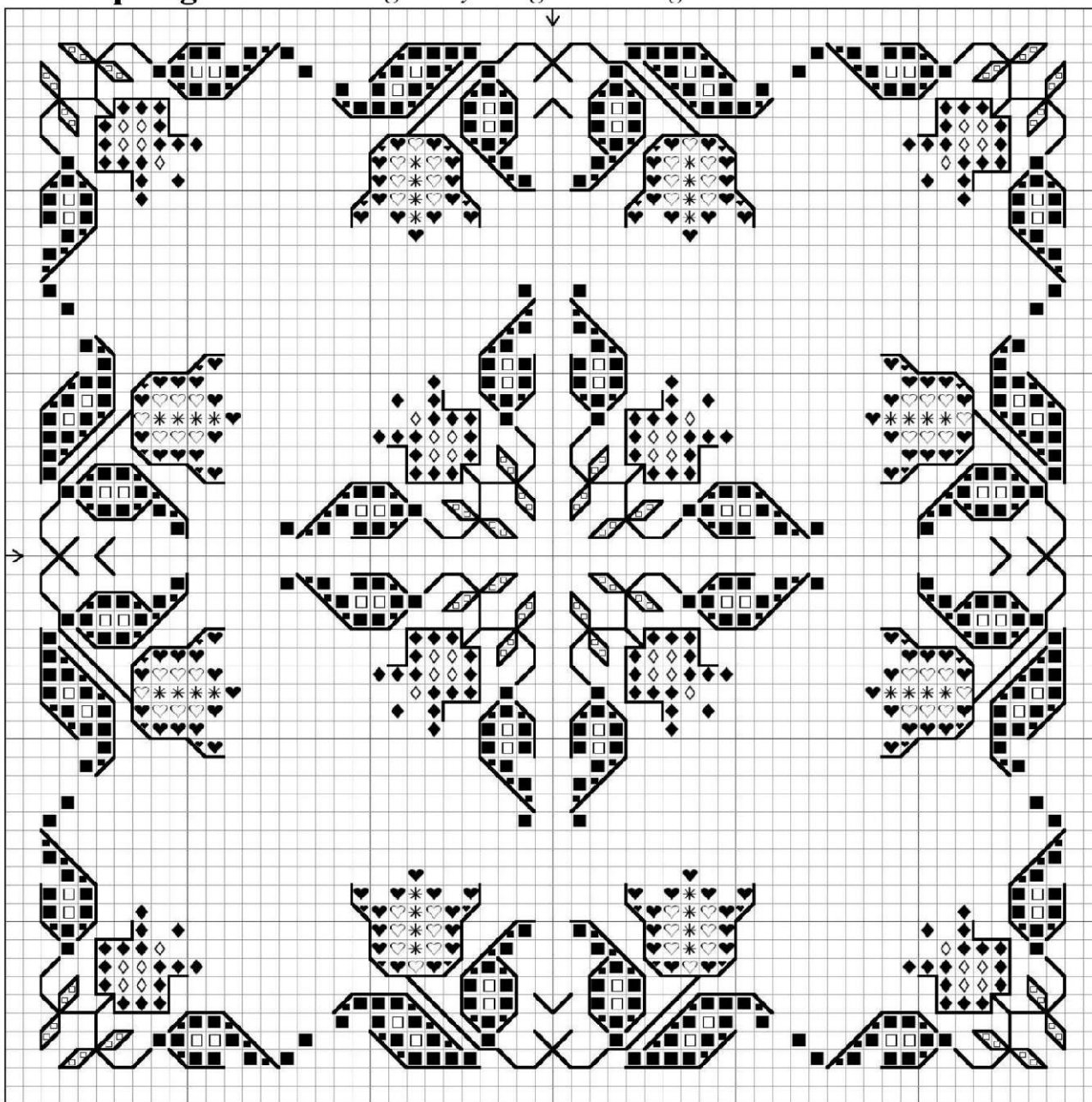
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*Designs From Margaret Lee #308*



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# Beginner's Guide to Cross-Stitch on Aida

## #308 Spring Blooms *designed by Margaret Lee Rigiel*



Symbol	Color	Anchor
♥	Rose Wine - Vy DK	897
♡	Rose Wine - Med	895
*	Rose Wine - Med Lt	894
◆	Antique Blue - DK	1035
◇	Antique Blue - Med	1034
◻	Pine - Med	877
■	Pine - Med Dk	878

**Stitch Count:** 56 x 56    **Design Area:** 14 count fabric 4" x 4"

**Cross Stitches and partial cross stitches:** use two strands of floss for the indicated color.

### Backstitches or Holbein Stitch:

Green leaves and stems: outline with one strand of Anchor # 878

Red tulips: outline with one strand of Anchor #897

Blue tulips: outline with one strand of Anchor #1035



*Designs From Margaret Lee*  
<http://www.margaretlee.com>

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