



**Part 2: Prepare the fabric:**

**Keep your ground fabric and area clean.**

When working on your project always be sure your hands and work area are kept clean and dry. Oils and/or dirt from your hands and area may discolor your project and be difficult to remove later. Protect your project from mischievous children and pets, those threads are very tempting and needles can be dangerous.



If your fabric has wrinkles or fold lines you can lightly dampen and iron it. Try not to stretch the fabric as you iron it.

DO NOT fully soak the fabric in water and DO NOT wash it in a machine or dry it in a dryer! Doing so will adversely affect the weave and make stitching more difficult. After stitching is complete, there are methods to gently wash your project if needed.

*I use stretcher bars to keep my fabric flat as I work and keep my hands away from the front of the fabric as much as possible, but before we attach our ground fabric...*

**We are going to start by stitching guidelines on our ground fabric.**

Why??? Because the black Celtic knot border around the design (similar to the gold border on older Featherweight Machines) can be tricky to stitch accurately and we might want to stitch other areas of the design first, such as the spools of thread, text, or sewing machine... so I strongly recommend making guide lines using regular sewing thread in a color you can see on the ground fabric.

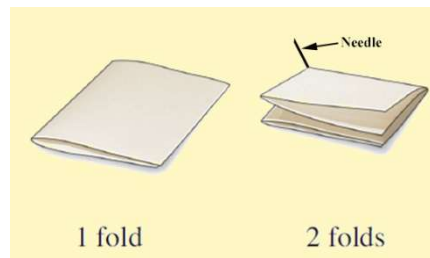
I like to start making the guidelines from the center of the fabric outward, so the outside border is the same distance from the edge of the fabric all the way around – which will be nice when we finish and frame our samplers.



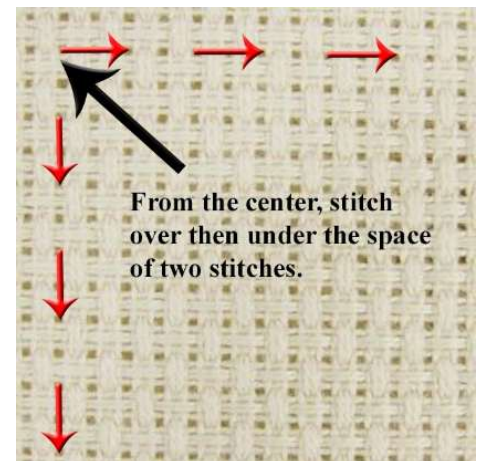
If you have and are using regular sewing thread, use two different colors. Preferably a red for the center lines because it matches the centerline which is often printed on the chart, sometimes the center of the chart is shown using arrows. I tend to use blue for the remaining gridlines which are usually 10 stitches apart, starting at the top left corner of the pattern, and generally do not line up with the centerlines.

**First, Find the center of the ground fabric.**

Fold your fabric in half lengthwise. Without unfolding it, fold it in half again along the folded edge and poke your threaded needle through as shown in the image below.



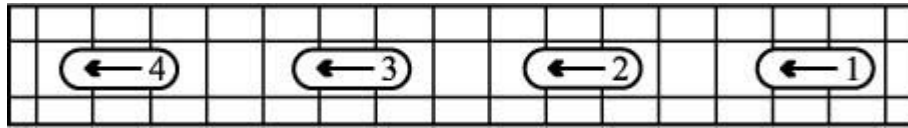
**Next,** from the center, use a long running stitch to make vertical and horizontal basting lines from the center just marked. I like to make the stitch over and under the space of two stitches for easier counting.



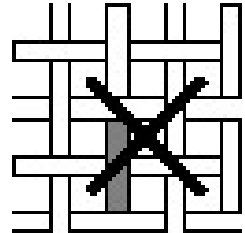
This image is a close up of it on Aida.



The running stitch:



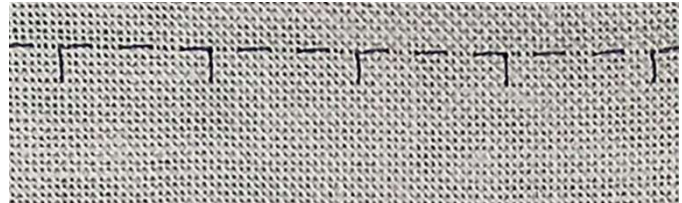
If you are stitching on an even weave fabric (not Aida), poke your needle up at the center of the ground fabric. Look to make sure the needle is at the Lower Left of a Vertical thread, as shown by the darkened portion of of ground fabric thread in the diagram to the right. If it is not, move the needle one thread horizontally and it should be.



Paying attention to the Lower Left of Vertical threads will improve your accuracy when stitching.

*Notice the grey vertical thread. Every corner of the 'X' lands at the lower left of a vertical thread.*

As I am stitching the red center gridlines, I mark the **heavier grid lines** using a **perpendicular stitch (notch)** along the running stitch. **Use the pattern's chart to verify where to put the nearest notches at the center of the fabric.**



After completing the centerlines and the notches along it, I repeat for the outside edge of the pattern.

Once you have finished basting the grid lines, your fabric should look something like this, or have blocks of 10 x 10 stitches, rows and columns.

Notice how I added extra red lines for 'Base of Sewing Machine' and 'Center of Quilt Design' to make stitching those areas easier and more accurate.

**Part III:** We will start stitching with basic stitches: Full and ¼ cross-stitches and back stitch.

With these stitches you can move around if you like to stitch the Bee Quilt (or other quilt pattern of your choice) and the sewing machine on the sampler.

Thank you!

AND Happy Stitching!

Margaret Lee

