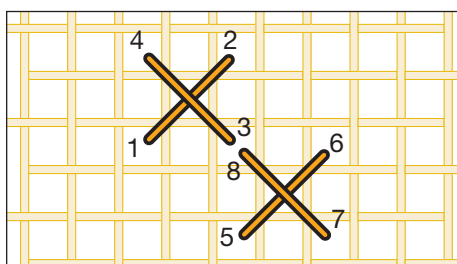


Cross-Stitch Essentials

The written instructions for each project indicate where to begin stitching. For most projects, the starting point is at the center. Every chart in *Cross-Stitch & Needlework*® magazine has arrows that indicate the horizontal and vertical centers. With your finger, trace along the grid to the point where the two centers meet. Compare a symbol at the center of the chart to the key and choose which floss color to stitch first. To find the center of the fabric, fold it into quarters and finger-crease.

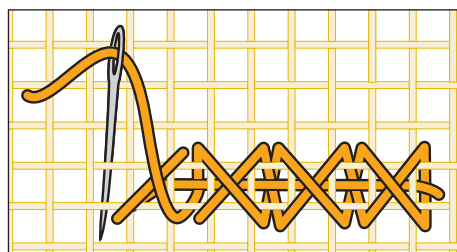
Cut the floss into 15" lengths and separate all six strands. Recombine the strands as indicated in the project instructions and thread them into a blunt-tip needle.



Basic Cross-Stitch

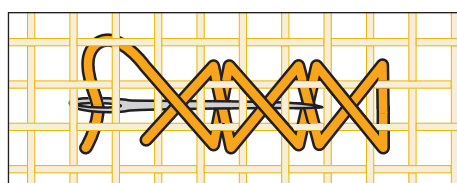
Make one cross-stitch for each symbol on the chart. For horizontal rows, stitch the first diagonal of each stitch in the row. Work back across the row, completing each stitch. On most of the linen and evenweave fabrics, work the stitches over two threads as shown in the diagram. On Aida cloth, each stitch should cover one square.

You also can work cross-stitches in the reverse direction. Remember to embroider the stitches uniformly—that is, always work the top half of each stitch in the same direction.



To Secure Thread at the Beginning

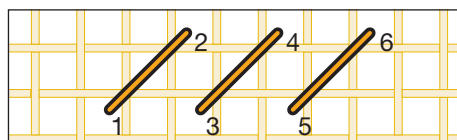
The most common way to secure the beginning tail of the thread is to hold it under the first four or five stitches.



To Secure Thread at the End

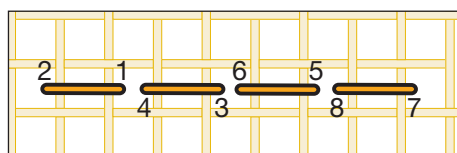
To finish, slip the threaded needle under previously stitched threads on the wrong side of the fabric for four or five stitches, weaving the thread back and forth a few times.

Clip the thread.



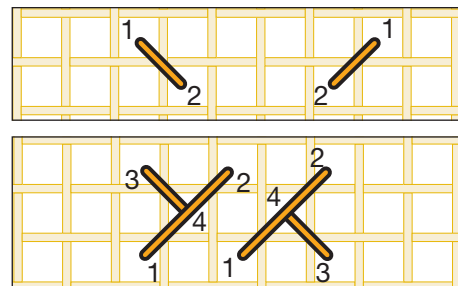
Half Cross-Stitches

They are usually indicated as a pair of small symbols on the chart.



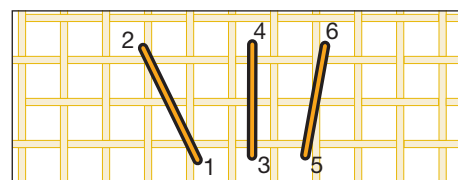
Backstitches

Backstitches define and outline the shapes of a design. For most projects, backstitches require only one strand of floss.



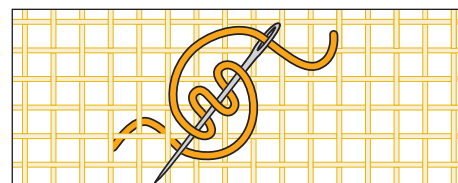
Quarter and Three-Quarter Cross-Stitches

To obtain rounded shapes in a design, use quarter and three-quarter cross-stitches. On linen and evenweave fabrics, a quarter cross-stitch will extend from the corner to the center intersection of threads. To make quarter cross-stitches on Aida cloth, estimate the center of the square. Three-quarter cross-stitches combine a quarter cross-stitch with a half cross-stitch. Both stitches may slant in any direction. Quarter cross-stitches are indicated with one small symbol. Three-quarter cross-stitches are indicated with three small symbols.



Straight Stitches

Straight stitches, made by simply coming up at one point and going down at another, often are used for sun rays, whiskers, and other simple accents.



French Knot

Bring the threaded needle through the fabric and wrap the floss around the needle as shown. Tighten the twists and return the needle through the fabric at the same place. The floss will slide through the wrapped thread to make the knot.