

## WORKSHOP: “HAND EMBROIDERY PROJECT – FLOWER STITCH”



**Summary:** We will use 6 embroidery stitches learned in the previous exercise to create a embroidery of a sprig of flowers on plain coloured fabric or denim. The stitches are seed stitch, stem stitch, chain stitch, lazy daisy stitch, satin stitch and French knots. Participants can create their own design for a small scene instead if they prefer. This is part 2 of a workshop will run over two 2-hour classes and participants have the option to continue working on their own between classes if desired.

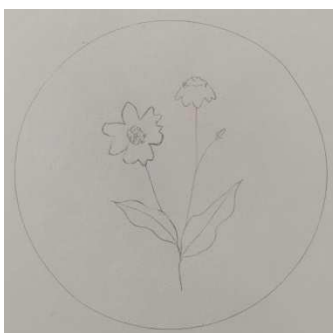
### Materials and Equipment:

4-6 skeins of embroidery threads  
embroidery hoop  
embroidery needle  
small sharp sewing scissors  
flower embroidery design  
transfer paper  
blunt tipped skewer or stylus  
water soluble marker  
instructions/ideas sheet

optional: pencil, eraser, sharpener  
optional: sketch paper  
optional: needle threader  
plain coloured woven fabric  
denim fabric  
masking tape  
water soluble fabric  
pins  
optional: sliding clamp (not provided)

### Class Plan: Hand Embroidery Project, A Sprig of Flowers

1. This project is ideally worked with an embroidery hoop but can be worked without one.
2. You can use the flower design provided or draw your own. Mark out the embroidery space, sketch your design and then darken it by going over it with a black marker.



3. There are a number of different ways to transfer your design to your fabric.

- a. Tracing: Here we used tracing for transferring the design with light coloured light weight fabrics. Tape the fabric over the design. Trace the design onto the fabric using a water soluble marker. The marker will need to be soaked out of the fabric after stitching is complete, so this only works with fabric that can be soaked without damaging.



Test your marker on the fabric first.



- b. Transfer Paper (left): Lay your fabric face up on a smooth table. Place your transfer paper coloured side down on top of your fabric and the design on top of that (middle). Use light coloured transfer paper on dark fabric, and dark coloured transfer paper on light fabric. Pin the layers to hold them in place if needed. Trace over your design using a stylus or ball point needle or a blunt skewer. Be sure to press hard enough for the markings to transfer (right).



- c. Water Soluble Fabric: For thicker darker fabrics, trace your design onto water soluble fabric and pin it to the fabric. Stitch through the water soluble fabric and regular fabric. When finished, soak the embroidery in water to dissolve the stabilizer and wash it out. For this method you need to be able to wet your embroidery and work with colourfast threads.
- d. Free-form: You can work free form and not transfer the design at all.

- e. Heat Transfer Pen: Trace the design in reverse on a lightweight piece of paper, then iron the paper design side down onto your fabric. The heat activates the ink and transfers the marking. The markings do not wash out and must be completely covered with stitching if you don't want them visible.
  - f. Tracing or Tissue Paper: Trace your design onto a sheet of tracing/tissue paper and pin it to the fabric. Stitch through the paper and fabric. When finished gently tear away the paper. Masking tape can help gently remove fragments of paper by sticking it down and lifting it carefully.
  - g. Hot Iron Transfers: These are embroidery patterns that come ready to iron onto your fabric.
4. Stretch your fabric in your embroidery hoop if you are using one. Check your hoop for this side up markings. Place the inner hoop on your table. Place your fabric over top of it, and the outer hoop over top of that.



- a. Watch for fabric distortion when you are stretching it. Check that the warp (lengthwise) threads are straight and the weft (widthwise) threads are perpendicular to the warp threads. Gently pull the fabric to even out the threads and add tension if needed.
  - b. Take your fabric out of the hoop if you aren't going to stitch for several days to reduce fabric stress.
5. Clamping your embroidery hoop to your work surface leaves you both hands free for stitching.



6. Embroidery needles have a larger eye than regular sewing needles to accommodate the floss. It is good to have a few extra available for sewing in ends as you work.
7. Embroidery floss can be separated into individual threads or used anywhere from 1-6 threads at once. It is common to use 1-2 threads at a time. Here we are using 2 threads at once.
- a. To separate one or more threads from your embroidery floss, first cut a length to work with.
  - b. Separate the set of threads to be divided holding them in one hand and gently sliding the other hand down the separation. Allow the threads to re-twist themselves into the new groups as you go to avoid knots.



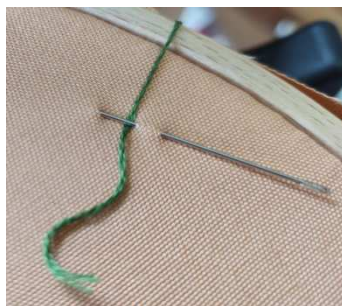
8. We are working with a single set of threads while we stitch. This allows you to slide your needle along your thread to avoid wearing out one section of your embroidery thread in the needle.



9. To start your stitching, secure the end of your embroidery threads.
  - a. This can be done by taking a few tiny stitches in place.
  - b. You can also leave a tail of thread hanging when you start the first part of your design, then tuck the ends behind stitches that are finished on the back or whip stitch them over stitches on the back.

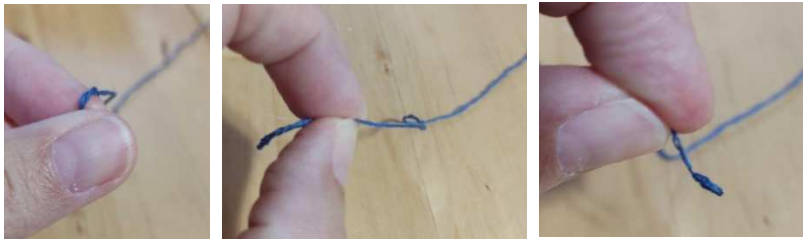


- c. Thread tails waiting to be sewn in can be held out of the way tucked underneath a spare needle on the edge of your fabric.



- d. You can also tie a knot in the end of your threads and take your first stitch from back to front to hide the knot. Loop the end of the threads around your index finger and roll them together between your finger and thumb. Pull the resulting tangle down to the end of your thread to create a knot. This does result in lumps on the back of your work however.





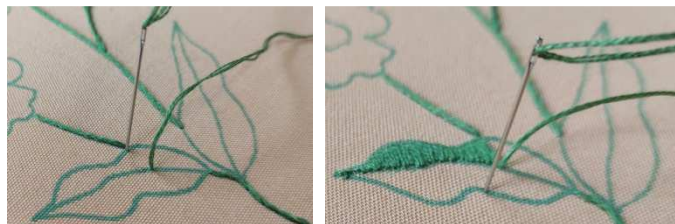
10. Choose a green, brown, beige and yellow embroidery floss or other colours of your choice.



11. Use stem stitch to embroider the stems of the plant, ending each one in place to avoid threads travelling between areas showing through to the front of your fabric.



12. Use satin stitch to fill in the leaves with the same green floss. Work from halfway up each leaf working stitches on only one side of the leaf. Starting halfway up makes it easier to keep the angle of the stitches consistent for the whole leaf. Stitches that stop in the middle of the leaf create a groove for a vein up the centre of the leaf.



13. Work French knots in the centres of each flower using brown embroidery floss.



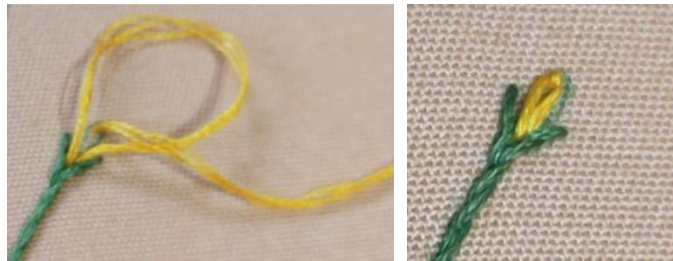
14. Stitch the petals of the flowers with yellow embroidery floss making an elongated chain stitch for the first stitch on the petal, followed by a small chain stitch at the outer edge of the petals. Remember to stitch down on the other side of the last chain stitch to hold them in place. Reposition your needle to the edge of the brown stitches and work outward for each set of two chain stitches.



15. For the petal yellow chain stitches, work rows of stitches straight out from the centre of the flower. Fill in spaces between chain stitches with smaller lazy daisy stitches on the outer edges of petals.



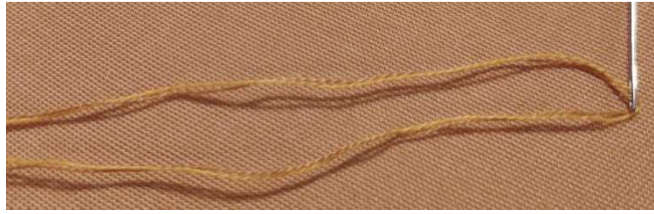
16. Use a lazy daisy or single chain stitch to create the bud flower.



17. For the second flower facing straight up, work rows with a long chain stitch and a short out down from the flower centre with yellow embroidery floss.



18. To shade with a limited palette of embroidery floss colours, combine two or more colours in the same needle. We combined one strand of yellow and one strand of beige for the seed stitches next.



19. Use this mixed colour floss to stitch a scattering of seed stitches over the brown French knots to create highlights and enhance texture in the centre of each flower.



20. When finished stitching, soak your fabric in cool water to remove the water soluble marker.



21. Happy creating, and please share pictures of your creations if you feel comfortable

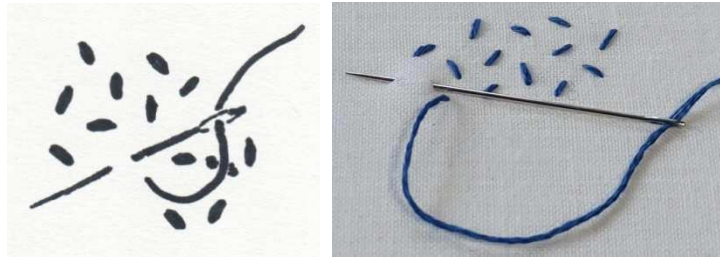
### Class Plan: Stitches for Reference

1. Start all stitches by bringing your needle through the fabric to the right side where you want to begin.

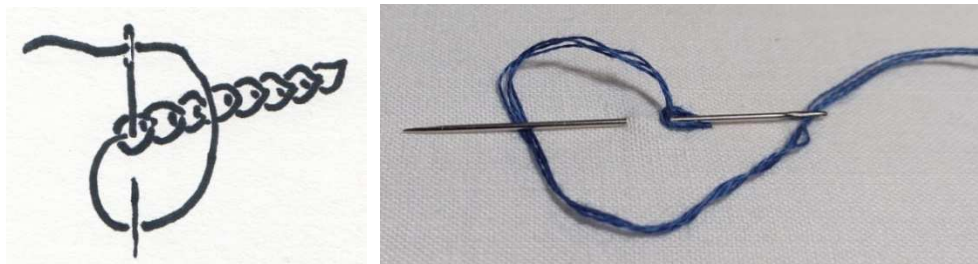


2. **Seed Stitch** is tiny separate straight stitches scattered around an area to create the haze type effect or fill in lightly. Take small detached straight stitches repositioning the needle from the back each time and stitching on a slightly different angle.

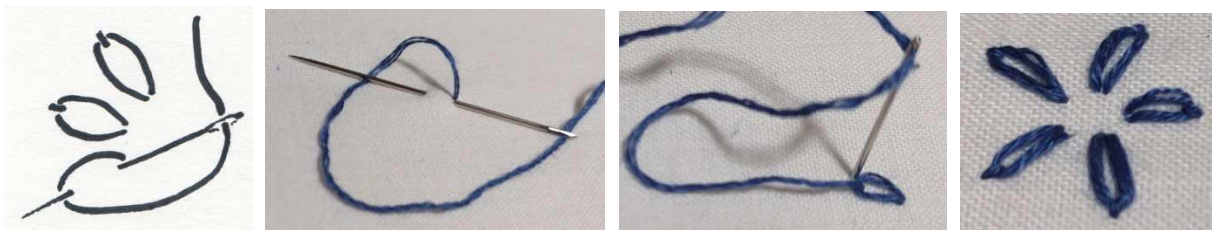




3. **Chain Stitch** is good for creating borders and lettering. It is a row of interlocked loops and is good for creating borders and lettering. Create a loop with your thread and take a stitch into the space in the loop, catching the loop under your stitch and pull the thread snug. Start the next stitch in the previous loop each time, stitching forward and catching your thread loop. For the last stitch, stitch down just on the other side of the last loop to hold them all in place.



4. **Lazy Daisy Stitches** are just detached chain stitches and are great for making flower petals. Create a loop with your thread and take a stitch into the space in the loop, catching the loop under your stitch. Pass the needle through the fabric to the back just on the other side of the loop to hold it in place.



5. **French Knots** are great for making small flowers or filling in the centres of larger flowers. They add texture and dimension. Twist your thread around your needle twice, poke your needle back into the fabric just beside where it came out, and slide the twisted thread down right up against the fabric. Then pass the needle to the back of the fabric.





6. **Satin Stitch** is used for filling in shapes and areas. It is basically straight stitches done side by side of lengths to match the edges of the shape being filled.



7. **Stem Stitch** creates a thin line and is used for outlining shapes and plant stems. Insert the needle (right to left) facing back towards previous stitches. Advance the needle a whole stitch length and come up half a stitch back, always keeping the thread below the needle.

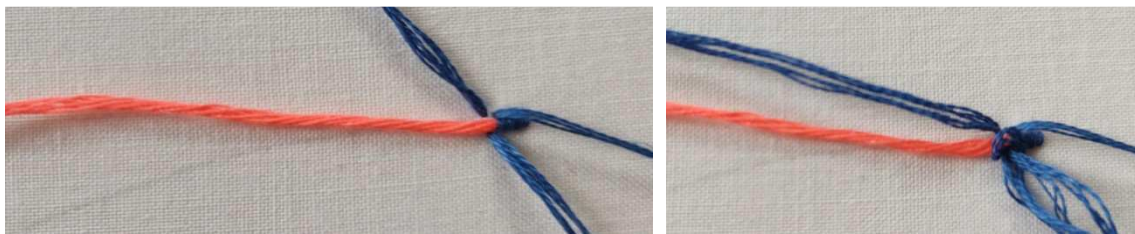


#### Useful Information/Adaptations/Variations:

- There are tons of embroidery stitches. Try doing an online search to see hundreds of options. Buying an encyclopedia of stitches is worth it if you are really into embroidery.
- There are different size embroidery hoops available and having several different sizes is useful. Look for ones that can be tightened using a screw driver if available.

#### Trouble Shooting:

- If your thread tangles a lot, try hanging it from one end and letting the extra twists spin out of it.
- Keep your threads separate when pulling them through your fabric (left) to avoid them pulling other parts of the thread through at the same time (right) causing tangles.



- If your thread breaks, try moving your needle along the thread more often so one area doesn't get all the wear from passing through the fabric while bent over the needle.

