

GETTING STARTED with HAND EMBROIDERY

GATHER YOUR SUPPLIES

ESSENTIALS:

fabric
floss
hoop
needle
scissors

NOTE: if you are starting with one of my embroidery kits, you already have all of these except the scissors!

OPTIONAL:

stabilizer
water-soluble pen or pencil
thimble
needle grabbers
thread conditioner
seam ripper
needle threader
transfer or carbon paper

MOUNT YOUR FABRIC IN THE HOOP

- + separate the inner and outer rings of the hoop
- + lay the inner ring on a flat surface
- + place the fabric over the inner ring, with the design centered
- + slide the outer ring over the inner ring and fabric, and while keeping the fabric smooth, tighten the screw
- + you want your fabric nice and taut, but not so tight that it is stretched or distorted. try to maintain a tight surface while you are stitching -- no sagging or wrinkles

THREAD YOUR NEEDLE(S)

i like to pre-load a few needles before i start stitching, so that i can easily start a new color, or continue stitching without re-threading each time.

floss length should be about 18".

floss that is too long = tangles; floss that is too short = lots of stopping and starting.

SEPARATE YOUR FLOSS! (this is important)

my favorite floss is DMC cotton, which comes 6-stranded. you'll need to separate the individual strands to create stitches of varying thickness. using fewer strands of floss will help you achieve smooth and neat stitches; thicker floss will create bulkier stitches and can sometimes be hard to keep smooth.

there's no rule about how many strands to use, but my favorite thickness is 2 strands. for designs with lots of delicate details, fewer strands are better.

START STITCHING

download my 'basic stitches for hand embroidery' guide to learn some of my favorite basic stitches. you'll be stitching in no time!