



EMBROIDERY 101

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EMBROIDERY BASICS

TOOLS

Hoops: An embroidery hoop keeps tension in the material you are embroidering. You can purchase hoops in various sizes and finishes, usually bamboo wood or plastic. Some are working hoops that will be removed and reused, while others are completed for displaying as a finished piece of art. In addition, specific projects can be done without a hoop. The important thing is just to keep tension over the material as you work.

HISTORY

Embroidery has been practiced for decades as a practical and decorative art. Although embroidery was sometimes a sign of wealth when used to elaborately decorate, it was also used to reinforce, tailor or mend clothing or household items.

Modern embroidery has taken on a new role and is now often used as a method of fiber art in creating unique home decor or customizing clothes and more. It's also a valuable skill that I find very calming and rewarding.

Learning a collection of stitches on one project is often called a Stitch Sampler. A stitch sampler is a great way to learn the basic stitches and create a reference for future projects.



Hoops come in different sizes

EMBROIDERY BASICS (cont.)

Needles: Embroidery needles are slightly larger than sewing needles. They come in different sizes, and I like to use No. 5 - No. 3. The size range starts with the low number for the larger eyes, with 3 being the largest. A good rule of thumb is you want the eye of your needle to be about the size of the threads you are using. For example, you will want a smaller eye (No. 5) for one floss thread, whereas six threads will fit nicely in a needle with a larger eye (No. 3).

Needle Threaders: A needle threader is optional but useful, especially when working with all six strands of floss. There are different needle threaders available, including versions specifically for embroidery floss. To use the threader, insert the needle threader loop through the eye of the needle and let it fall to the base of the loop. Next, place the thread through the loop of the threader and pull the needle up the loop and onto the thread. Finally, remove the threader, which leaves you with a threaded needle.

Thimble: A thimble is helpful when working on thicker materials or larger projects as you can use the metal tip to press the needle through instead of putting repeated stress on your fingers. Thimbles are traditionally made from metal, but you can also use a leather thimble with a metal area called a coin thimble.

Rubber Finger Grips: Placed on your pointer finger and thumb, the grips help you hold onto your needle as you work with thicker materials.



Embroidery needles are larger than sewing needles



Needle threaders are optional



Thimbles help with thicker materials



Rubber finger grips help hold the needle

EMBROIDERY BASICS (cont.)

Embroidery Scissors: These small detail scissors, sometimes curved, help snip threads close to the fabric and cut thread as you work.

Pinking Shears: These scissors cut a zig-zag edge to keep the fabric from fraying and dealing with loose strings. They also can add an unfinished decorative edge.

Water Soluble Stabilizer: This material is one of my favorites for tidy embroideries. You can print or draw a design on the stabilizer, cut, peel, and stick the design where you wish to embroider, then rinse it away with warm water.



Embroidery scissors help snip threads close to the fabric



Pinking shears keep fabric from fraying



Stabilizers place your design on your fabric, then rinse away once done

EMBROIDERY BASICS (cont.)

MATERIALS

Fabric: You can embroider on almost any material and premade clothing. Cotton and linen fabrics work well for decorative pieces, in addition to wool felt or wool fabric.

Thread: There are several types of floss, but I prefer DMC Stranded Embroidery Cotton as it is the easiest to work with and the most versatile. Plus it comes in hundreds of colors.



Embroidery thread comes in hundreds of colors

EMBROIDERY BASICS (cont.)

GETTING STARTED

Organizing Your Tools & Materials

Needles: To keep track of your embroidery needles, you can simply store them on the original card. Or use a small pin cushion or large felt ball, a felt needle book, or a magnetic needle box.

Floss: Floss bobbins and bobbin boxes are great for storing and organizing thread. DMC also offers small numbered stickers to mark your bobbins, or you can write the floss number on the plastic with a permanent marker.

Prepping the Hoop

- 1 Loosen the top screw and separate the two rings.
- 2 Cut your material if you plan on leaving it on the hoop. Pinking shears are a great option to keep your fabric from fraying or for adding a decorative edge to felt.
- 3 Place the material over the inner round with your project in the center.
- 4 Place the outer hoop over the inner ring with the fabric between.
- 5 Tighten the hoop with the screws.
- 6 Once it is tightened, tug along the sides of the material to create even and smooth tension, like a drum.

Using Embroidery Floss

- 1 The more you practice embroidery, the better you will get at estimating the amount of thread you will need for your project. Avoid using too long of strands as they will get tangled more often.
- 2 When starting with a new skein of floss, pull the tail from the side with the wide label to avoid tangling.
- 3 You will notice the floss is made of 6 strands of individual threads. You can remove strands to make thinner stitches or use all 6 for extra bulk.
- 4 Choose an appropriate needle for the amount of floss you are using.
- 5 Once your needle is threaded, keep one end of the floss short and one end long.
- 6 On the long end, tie a knot to secure the first stitch you make.

EMBROIDERY BASICS (cont.)

EMBROIDERY 101 KIT

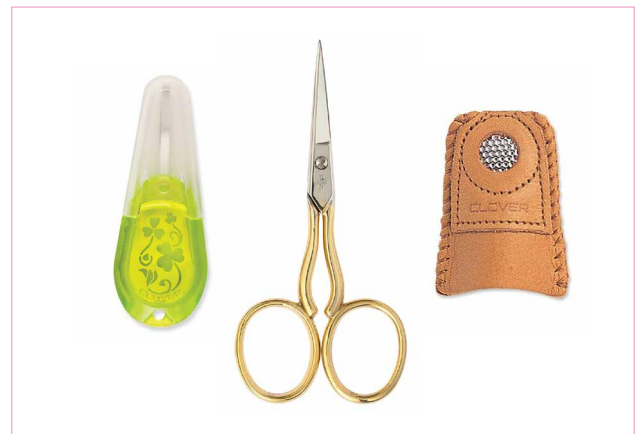
KIT INCLUDES:

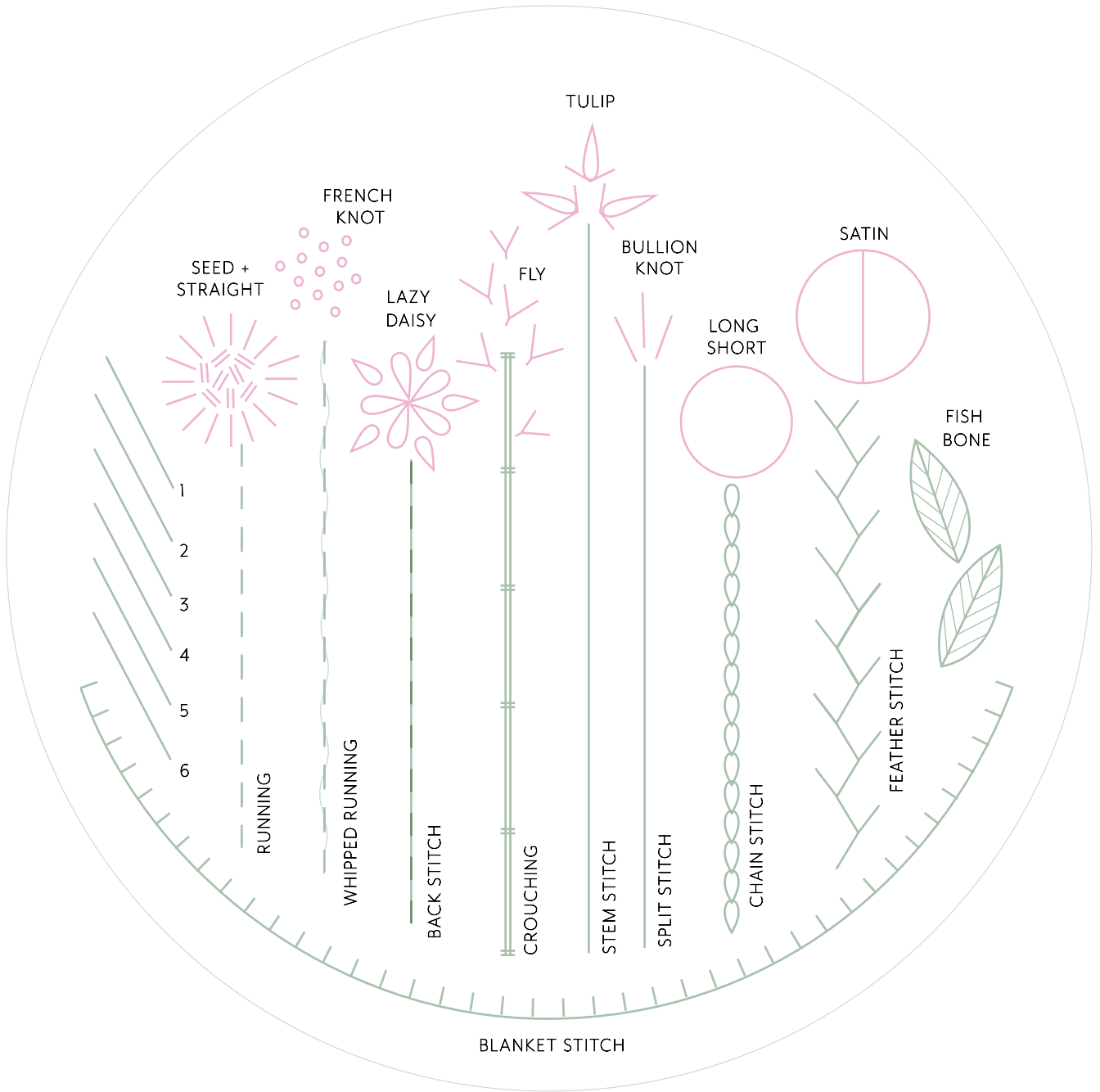
- Printed Linen-Cotton Template
- 7-inch Wood Hoop
- Clover Embroidery Needles (No.3-9)
- DMC Embroidery Floss (3350 & 471)



DELUXE KIT OPTIONS:

- Clover Leather Thimble
- DMC Gold Thread Snips
- Clover Embroidery Needle Threader



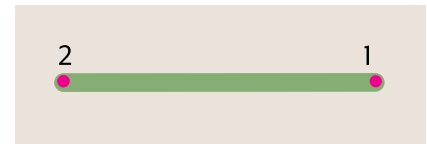


BASIC STITCHES

STRAIGHT STITCH

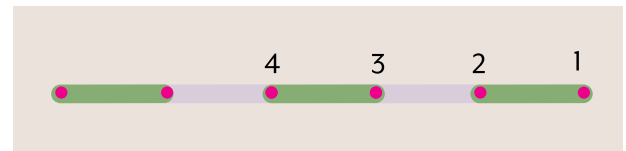
This is the most basic stitch, which is one straight line.

Bring the needle up at 1 and down at 2.

Straight stitch**RUNNING STITCH**

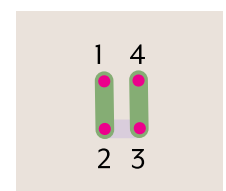
Regularly spaced stitches used for basic lines.

Bring the needle up at 1, down at 2, and up at 3, leaving a gap the same size as the first stitch.

Running stitch**SEED STITCH**

A seed stitch is an individual short stitch, but it's called Seeding when worked together.

Bring the needle up at 1, down at 2, up at 3, down at 4, and repeat the seeded area.

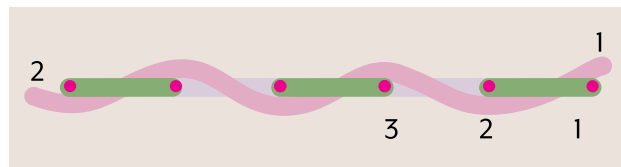
Seed stitch

BASIC STITCHES (cont.)

WHIPPED RUNNING

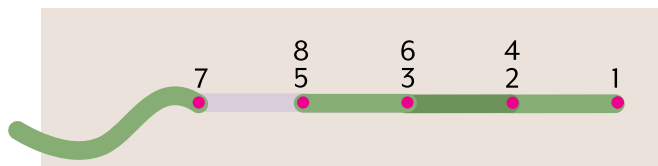
A quick way to outline curves or straight lines.

Start with a running stitch and then weave a second thread through the running stitch, from left to right, until the end of the line. Do not pull this thread too tightly. Use contrasting colors or thicknesses for varied effects.

Whipped running stitch**BACK STITCH**

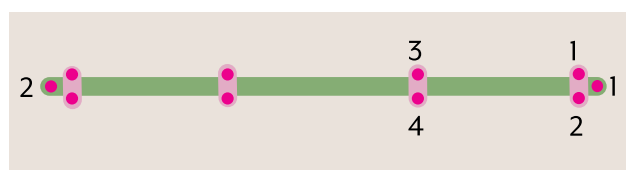
A great stitch for outlining shapes, stitching letters, and more. All stitches should be the same length with no gaps in between them.

Bring the needle up at 1, up at 2, up at 3, and back down at 1. Repeat this process to create a line.

Back stitch**CROUCHING**

This stitch lets you lay threads onto fabric and secure them in place with tiny straight stitches.

Start by laying the floss onto the fabric, coming up at 1 and back down at 2. Next, pin the thread down with short stitches, evenly spaced. Use contrasting colors or materials for varied effects.

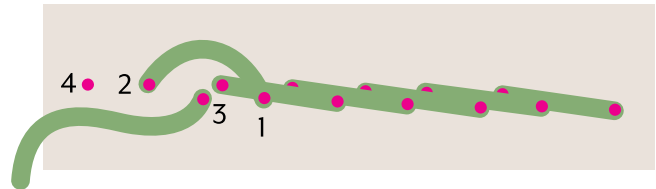
Crouching

INTERMEDIATE STITCHES

STEM STITCH

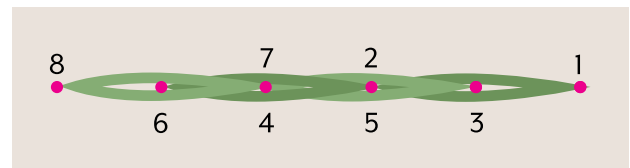
This is a stitch to create a solid outline made of overlapping stitches, perfect for curves and outlines.

Bring the needle up at 1 and down at 2, holding the floss to the side, and bring the needle up at 3 and down at 4 to start the next stitch.

Stem stitch**SPLIT STITCH**

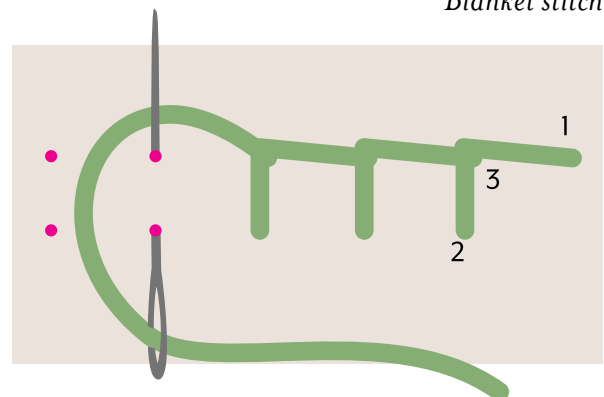
This technique creates a textured, solid stitch.

Make a stitch from 1 to 2. Bring the needle up halfway between the strands, 3, and over to 4. Repeat the process to the end of the line.

Split stitch**BLANKET STITCH**

This is a popular stitch that creates an excellent finisher for edges or applying layers of material.

Bring the needle up at 1 and over to 2, creating a loop. Next, bring the needle up at 3, over the thread, and pull to create a light tension.

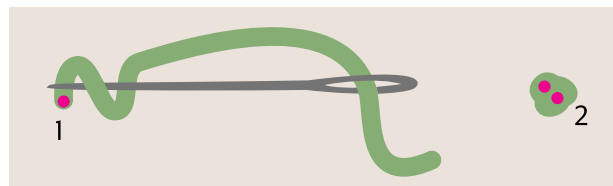
Blanket stitch

INTERMEDIATE STITCHES (cont.)

FRENCH KNOT

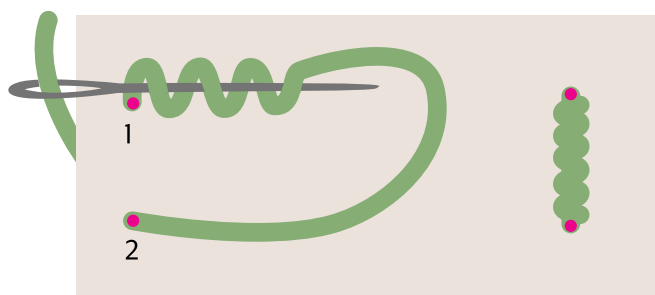
This pretty stitch creates small dots for details.

Bring the needle up at 1, and loop the thread around the head of the needle twice. Hold the floss with tension, bring the needle back down at 2, and pull tight from the knot. Make larger or smaller knots by increasing or decreasing the loops.

French knot**BULLION KNOT**

This version of an elongated knot is used for dense textures.

Come up at 1, down at 2, leaving a large thread loop. Bring the needle halfway up at 1 and wrap the looped thread around the needle tip 10 times or the length of the stitch. Keep the wrapped floss as close to the fabric as possible, pinching it between your fingers as you pull the needle through the rest of the way. Tighten the stitch with the wrapped thread pinched between your fingers and then bring the needle back down at 2.

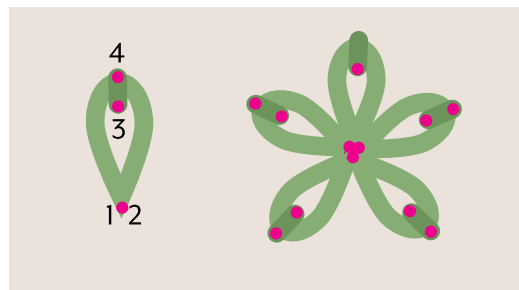
Bullion knot

LOOPING STITCHES

LAZY DAISY

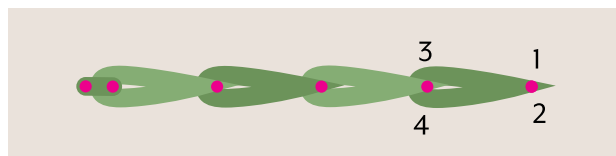
This stitch can be used for a daisy's petals or other flowers.

Bring the needle up at 1 and form a loop, and bring the needle back at 2. Come up at 3 and tighten the loop to desired tension. Come back down at 4 to pin the loop in place.

Lazy daisy**CHAIN STITCH**

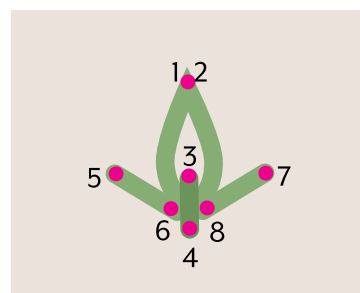
This stitch uses the same technique as the Lazy Daisy but continues to make a detailed line.

Come up at 1 and form a loop. Bring the needle back at 2. Come up at 3 and tighten the loop to desired tension. Then go back down at 4 to form the next loop.

Chain stitch**TULIP STITCH**

This stitch is an excellent example of combining stitches to create a pattern.

First, make a lazy daisy stitch ending at 4. Next, make 2 straight stitches on either side, tucking them under the pinning loop.

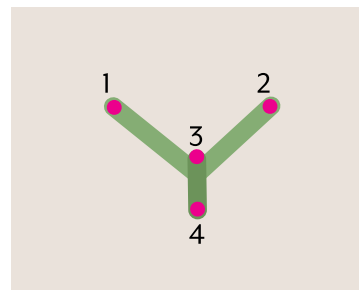
Tulip stitch

LOOPING STITCHES (cont.)

FLY STITCH

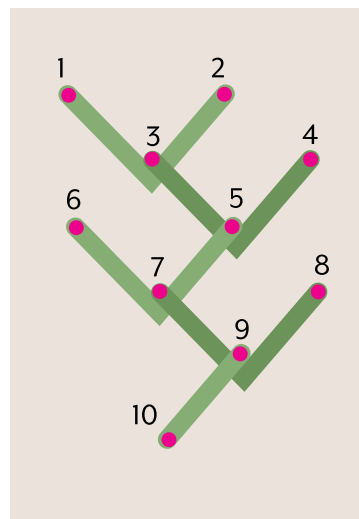
Fly stitches can help embroider tiny shapes and angles.

Bring the needle up at 1 and across to 2, leaving the thread loose. Come up at 3 and pull the floss to the desired tension and down to 4 to pin it in place. Work in rows or lines to create varied effects.

Fly stitch**FEATHER STITCH**

Feather stitch is an embroidery stitch made up of diagonal blanket stitches.

Bring the needle up at 1 and over to 2, leaving the thread loose. Bring it back up at 3 and pull the floss to tension. Next, move horizontally to 4, following the same steps at 1 and 2. Finally, come up at 5 and pull the thread to create tension. Repeat down the line.

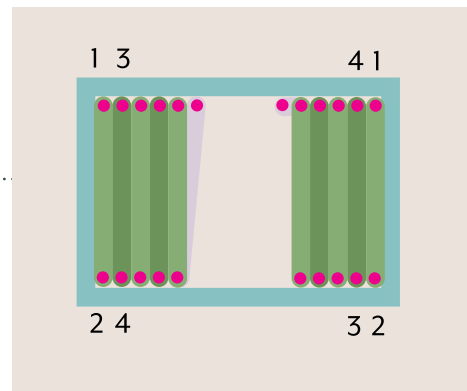
Feather stitch

FILLING STITCHES

SATIN STITCH

This stitch is the most common filler stitch.

A great option with the satin stitch is to outline the area you wish to fill with a backstitch. Next, bring the needle up at 1; across the area you are filling, and down at 2.

Satin/surface stitch**SURFACE SATIN STITCH**

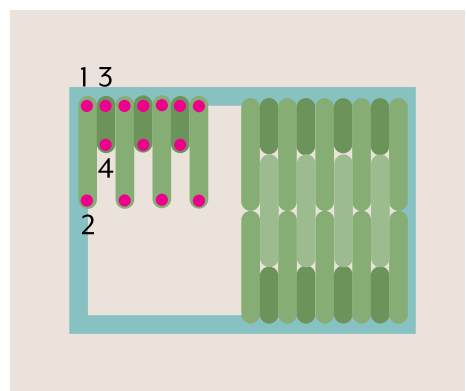
A variation on the Satin Stitch for larger areas as it can save thread.

Bring the needle up at 1 and across the area you are filling to 2. Instead of returning to the top, bring the needle up at 3 and down at 4. Repeat to fill.

*Long short stitch***LONG SHORT STITCH**

A long short stitch is a free-style embroidery stitch where you can use multiple colors. This stitch is often seen to fill in flower petals and bird feathers.

Create alternate long and short stitches along the first row. The next row will be all long stitches interlocking the first row to create fill. Next, adjust the length of the stitches at the bottom of the desired shape.



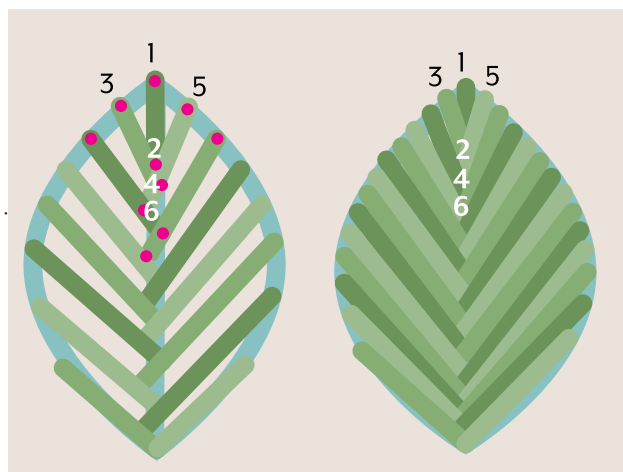
FILLING STITCHES (cont.)

OPEN FISHBONE

Is an excellent stitch for loose, airy leaf shapes.

Start by coming up at 1 and straight down.
Next, bring the needle up at 2 and cross to the side of the first stitch. Next, come up on the other side, at 3, and cross the center line, creating an overlap.

Open fishbone/fishbone

**FISHBONE**

A version of the stitch to create denser, solid leaf shapes.

Use the same technique as above, but leave no gaps between stitches.

FINISHING A PIECE

HOOPED EMBROIDERY ARTWORK

Here are a few steps to finish the piece for projects made with the hoops as their frame.

- 1 On the backside of the hoop, use a loose running stitch, also called a basting stitch, along the outer edge of the fabric.
- 2 Next, pull the thread tight to tighten the material behind the hoop. You can also use hot glue to hide the fabric behind the hoop.
- 3 Cut a circle of felt the same size as the hoop to create a backing.
- 4 Then, use a running stitch, blanket stitch, or hot glue to secure the fabric to the back of the embroidery hoop.

REMOVE HOOP

- 1 For projects with reusable embroidery hoops, remove the project from the hoop, and rinse off the stabilizer if used.
- 2 Once dry, iron with a pressing cloth to remove the hoop indent.
- 3 Make sure all loose threads are secure.
- 4 You can use an iron-on stabilizer to seal the threads for wearable items.

NOTES
