

Seed Bead School Square Stitch

with Emily Miller



Start with a plan!

Creating a graph for square stitch is easy, turn the Loom Weaving [Design Template](#) on its side, or use generic graph paper and color pens. Pro tip: make a mistake in your graph? Use error correcting tape to cover the color you didn't mean to use and add the color you need.

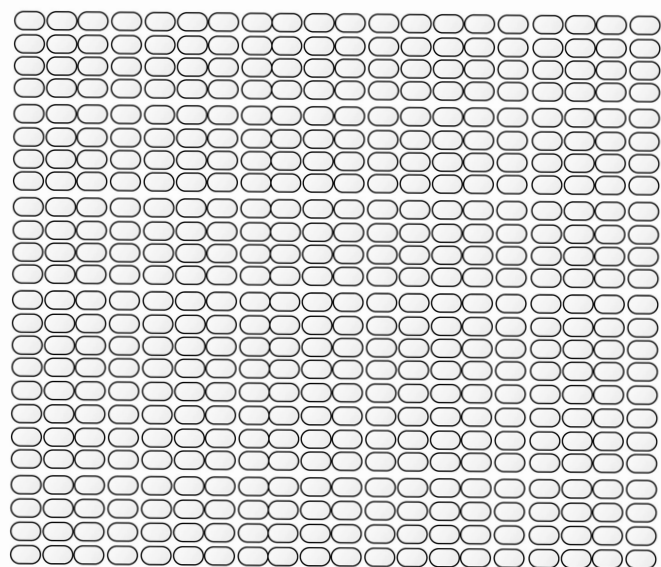
Square Stitch is an off-loom stitch that mimics the look of loom weaving. Emily used a fabric swatch to inspire this bracelet called New Plaid, a cool mix of four colors in size 8/0 seed beads so it works up quickly. Finish with short fringes and a button and loop closure to keep it simple.

Square stitch will work up horizontally, just the opposite of loom.

Look around for inspiration: fabric, graphed patterns for knitting, needle point, any geometric pattern will give you great ideas and can be converted to beads!

For this stitch, Fireline is a great choice, it is extra thin and very tough. Cut a piece about 1.5 yards long, add a needle, and position the needle not quite in the center of the length of thread, using the thread singly. Add a stopper bead (stopper beads are just a bead to keep the first few beads on the thread). Run the thread over a beeswax block to help the thread glide through the beads. Cutting Fireline can be tough to do, try using kid's Fiskars scissors or even flush cutters used for wire and Soft Flex. Fireline in smoke grey is a favorite of mine, but it does have a bit of graphite on the surface, which may come off on your beeswax.

Loom Weaving



Square Stitch begins with a base row for the intended width of the design. The base row can be an odd or even number of beads. If desired, additional width can be added later, with no showing of threads outside the beads. Beads will be added one at a time to create all the subsequent rows, working either left to right or right to left. With many thread passes through each bead the fabric created is durable, but flexible on the vertical. This flexibility is great for bracelets or chokers.

Patterning is easy, like looming. However! If a bead is out of place try to fix as soon as possible. As with any seed bead stitch, avoid splitting the thread already in the beads much as possible.



Generally, for this stitch, I hold my beads on a vertical line, with the stopper bead in the lower left corner to start. As I work, I'll flip the work over so the stopper may be at the top left or bottom left depending on what row I'm working on.

For this project, rows are 12 beads wide. Adjust to your own design as desired!

Step 1

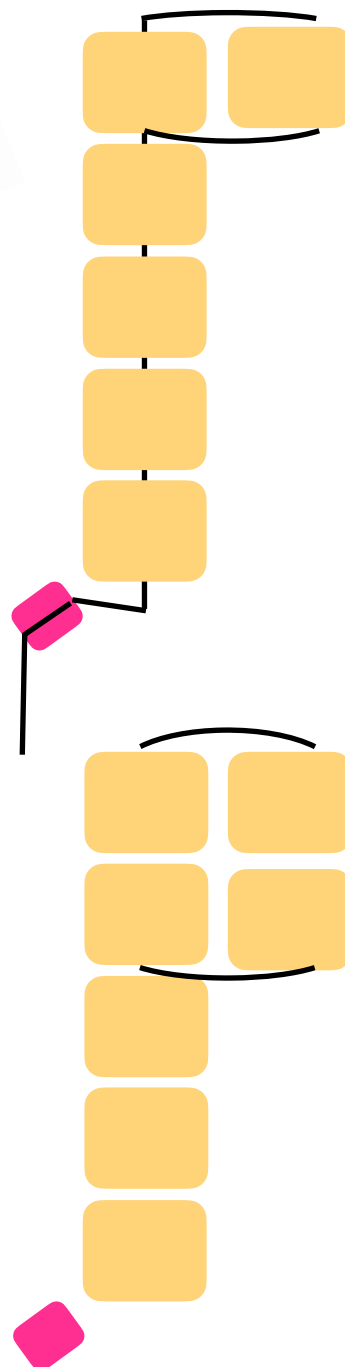
Add 12 beads to your thread, sliding them down to the stopper bead.

Step 2

Pick up a bead, and pass the needle through the last bead in the base row (#12). Pull this up snugly, with the new bead sitting just to right of the base row bead. Pass the needle through the new bead again.

Step 3

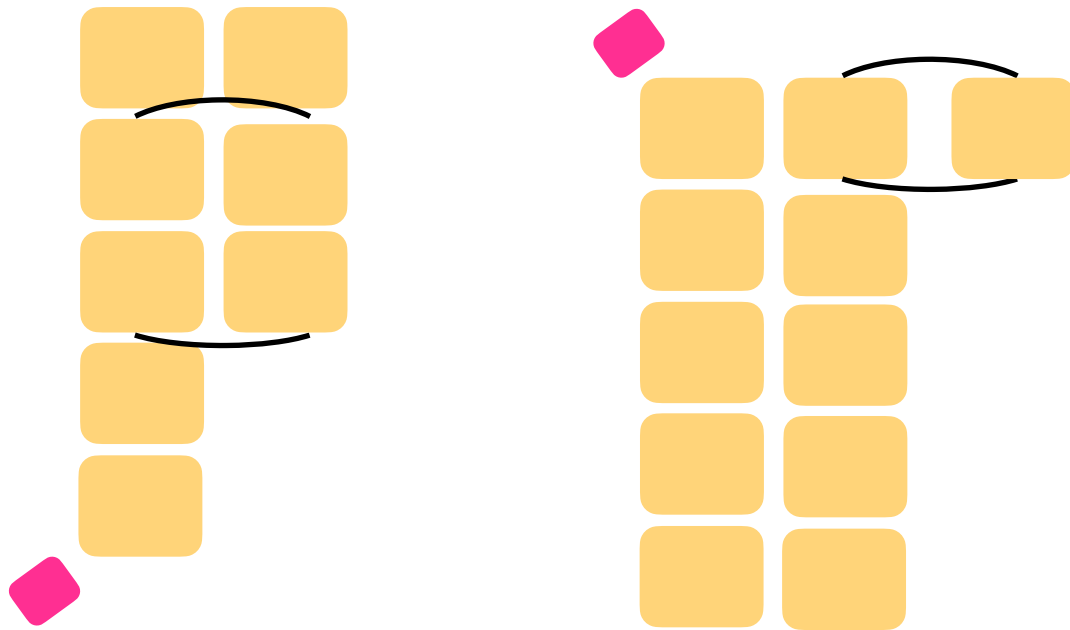
Pick up a bead and pass the needle through the second to last and last bead of the base row, through the first bead of this new row and the bead just added.



Step 4

Continue to add beads, attaching to the previous row (base row in this case) by going through two beads in the previous row then through the last two added beads.

At the end of the row flip the work so that the the last added bead is on the top and continue to add rows.



Time to add thread?

Prepare a second needle and new piece of thread and wax as desired. Starting anywhere in the beadwork (except the edge), weave through the beads, changing direction several times. Exit at the last added bead.

With the old needle, work back into the beadwork, changing directions several times, exit anywhere except the edge, trim off excess.

Add a button and loop clasp

Choose a button in proportion with your completed bracelet. A button with a shank is the best choice to fit with a beaded loop.

To really make a smooth attachment for the button, plan to stitch it into the last couple of rows. Add the button in the center of the weaving, simply add it to a bead, stitching as normal, and treat it as a bead thereafter.

Make the loop on the opposite end. Start with a new thread, doubled. Anchor the thread in the weaving, exiting at the center of the last row. Add enough beads to just fit around the button. Stitch back into the weaving and pass through all the beads in the loop a second time. Bury the end of the thread and trim the tail.

Fringe!

The fun part of any design! To take some of the “squareness” off this project I added some short fringe on each side of the bracelet.

When all the weaving is complete, weave in and trim all thread ends that are left, if any.

Begin a new thread, and pass through all the beads in a row, add 4 beads, skip the last bead and pass back through the row to the opposite side. Repeat fringe, and this pass, move the needle to the next row over, somewhere in the middle to continue. Repeat for the length of the bracelet.

Graphs

Start at left edge, working left to right...when finished with the top portion of graph, then continue with the second graph section.

